

PREVENTING SEXUAL ASSAULT

HC unhappy at failure to carry out order

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday expressed dissatisfaction over the failure to implement one of its directives from 2009 that committees must be formed at all educational institutions and workplaces across the country for the prevention of sexual harassment.

Bangladesh is much ahead of many other countries in terms of women empowerment, but negligence in constituting the committees at the educational institutions and workplaces is disappointing, the HC said.

The bench of Justice FRM Nazmul Ahasan and Justice KM Kamrul Kader came up with the observation while hearing a writ petition.

Six rights organisations, including Bangladesh National Women Lawyers' Association (BNWLA), filed the plea with the HC seeking its directive on the government to submit a report

on whether the committees were formed at all educational institutions and workplaces in line with the 2009 directive.

In the petition, the rights organisations prayed to the court so that it orders the authorities concerned to submit a list of such committees, if formed, through the registrar general of the Supreme Court.

While concluding yesterday's proceedings, the HC bench adjourned the hearing on the writ petition for a week.

Advocate Fawzia Karim Feroze appeared for the writ petitioners, while Deputy Attorney General ABM Abdullah-Al-Mahmud Bashar opposed the petition.

Following another writ petition, the HC on May 14, 2009 issued a set of guidelines defining sexual misdemeanours to prevent any kind of

SEE PAGE 10 COL 6

Additional IGP killed

FROM PAGE 1

The driver and two other passengers including Farzana, commander (SP), BANFPU, are safe, he added.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina expressed deep shock and sorrow at the death of Rowshan.

In a condolence message yesterday, the PM, who is now in London, prayed for the eternal salvation of the departed soul and expressed sympathy to the bereaved family.

Rowshan Ara Begum, ppm, ndc, joined police in February, 1988 after obtaining masters degree from Dhaka University and served in a variety of high-profile positions, including that of assistant police commissioner of the accounts section, reserve office, traffic division and training unit of the Dhaka Metropolitan Police.

Due to her dedication and hard work, she was the first woman police officer of the Bangladesh Police in the rank of a Superintendent of Police (SP) at the district level.

She successfully performed her duty as the SP of Munshiganj from 1998 to 2000. She later served in different units as deputy commissioner, additional commissioner and acting commissioner of police.

She was awarded with the "Inspector General Good Services Badge" twice for playing an important role in controlling militant activities, arresting militants, and recovering illegal drugs, arms, and ammunitions.

Rowshan was an advocate of women's rights and worked with communities, political leaders, journalists, and others to create awareness on violence against women and children, by championing women's rights issues and combating human trafficking.

In 1999, she was awarded the Anannya award, which is given to outstanding women in Bangladesh by the magazine Anannya.

She served as a crime analysis officer in a UN Peacekeeping Mission in Kosovo, and as chief-of-staff in UNMIS-UNPOL Peacekeeping Mission in Sudan.

At the same time, she served as ex-officio president of Women's Network for UNMIS-UNPOL with members from 42 countries. She was also a recipient of UNMIK Medal and UNMIS Medal.

She left behind her husband, a daughter, colleagues, and a host of well-wishers.



Locals feed jute mill workers, who have not been paid in 12 weeks, in front of Daulatpur jute mills in Khulna yesterday afternoon.

PHOTO: DIPANKAR ROY

Jute mill workers take to streets for arrears

FROM PAGE 1

the streets of Demra, and Rampura-Demra and Demra-Narayanganj roads after 9:00am yesterday, police said.

Armed with iron rods and bamboo sticks, the workers vandalised at least 50 vehicles, said Sub-Inspector Mohammad Hanif, duty officer of Demra Police Station.

The workers descended on the streets as they did not get their arrears, he said, quoting demonstrators.

This led to huge traffic congestion in the area. Many people were seen getting off vehicles and walking to their destinations, the SI added.

Talking to The Daily Star, Siddique Mia, a human haulier driver, said he saw many people swooping on vehicles with iron rods and bamboo sticks around 9:00am in Demra area.

Contacted, Abdul Hossain, former

general secretary, CBA, Karim Jute Mills, said workers had nothing to do with the violence. "We are observing a peaceful demonstration for our dues. It will continue until 10:00pm today," he said last night.

In Khulna, some 35,000 workers of nine state-owned jute mills in the Khulna-Jashore industrial belt have been observing work stoppage since Sunday night.

The jute mills are -- Daulatpur Jute Mills, Khalishpur Jute Mills, Crescent Jute Mills, Platinum Jute Mills, Star Jute Mills, Aleem Jute Mills, Eastern Jute Mills, JJI Jashore Jute Industry and Carpeting Jute Mills.

Some protesters from the jute mills served Kichuri (hotchpotch) to other demonstrators, who did not get arrears of up to four months, and their family members.

Around 1:00pm, our correspondent visited Platinum, Star, Khalishpur, Daulatpur and Crescent jute mills and saw hundreds of workers collecting rice, vegetables and other items to prepare food.

"I should get arrears of over eight weeks," one of the protesters said.

"There are around 1,950 workers like me in my mill. If we don't get the money, how can we run our families with our meagre income?" he asked.

Talking to this newspaper in front of Khalishpur Jute Mills, another worker said, "I'm tired of taking loans from my relatives. I need to pay them back."

Shawon Mahamud, general manager of Star Jute Mills, said they informed the BJMC authorities about the strike, but were yet to receive any response.

In Chattogram city, workers at Amin Jute Mills observed work stoppage for seven hours yesterday as their arrears were not paid within the deadline promised by the BJMC.

The protesters did not work between 8:00pm and 10:00pm on Sunday night and abstained from work yesterday.

They took position in front of the mill and chanted slogans against the authorities.

As the authorities paid the workers' arrears of one week by 11:00am and assured to pay the rest within a week, the workers withdrew the strike, said Kamal Uddin, office secretary of Collective Bargaining Agent (CBA) at the mill.

(Our correspondents from Khulna and Chattogram contributed to the report)

A girl of indomitable spirit

MOHSIN MILON, Benapole

Although she was born without three limbs out of the four, her indomitable spirit to pursue education could not be hindered.

Tamanna Aktar, daughter of a madrasa teacher, was born without both arms and a right leg. She was not only an SSC examinee from Bakra JK High School in Jashore's Jhikargachha, Tamanna successfully secured a GPA-5.

When the results came out yesterday, the joy of her parents Rawshan Ali and Khadiza Parvin could not be contained.

"I cannot be happier," said an elated Rawshan.

He said his daughter had also secured GPA-5 in both her Primary Education Completion and Junior Secondary Certificate exams.

"She wants to be a civil service cadre," he said, adding that she initially dreamed to be a doctor.

"But I could make her understand that her physical limitations may not allow her to fulfill that dream as pursuing a medical sciences degree requires extensive practical work."

Rawshan said although his daughter is physically challenged, she has a sharp memory and is an attentive listener.

With this achievement, however, comes a new challenge -- that of ensuring further education, he added.

"There is no standard college in the area. So, if Tamanna has to get enrolled in a quality college, she will be away from home and someone from the family will have to be with her," he said.

Recalling earlier days, Rawshan said he and Tamanna's mother had to face lot of social obstacles, as it was not easy to raise a physically challenged girl.

Tamanna was born on December 12, 2003.

When she started going to a local nursery, her mother would have to accompany her the whole time.

Growing up, her mother was the one to teach her how to use her only leg for necessary activities such as writing, use a spoon, or even tie or comb her hair, Rawshan said.

She was later taught to operate a wheelchair and uses one till now.

Rawshan said arranging finances was a challenge as Poalia Mahila Dakhil Madrasa, where he is a teacher, is yet to be an MPO-listed institution.

"And so, I have to rely on my income as a private tutor to run the family and raise my daughter and son."



Girls shine as pass rate rises

PASS RATES & GPA 5S				
BOARD	PASS RATE 2019	PASS RATE 2018	GPA 5, 2019	GPA 5, 2018
Dhaka	79.62	81.48	29,687	41,585
Rajshahi	91.64	86.07	22795	19,498
Cumilla	87.16	80.40	8,764	6,865
Jashore	90.88	76.64	9,948	9,395
Chattogram	78.11	75.50	7,393	8,094
Barishal	77.41	77.11	4,189	3,462
Sylhet	70.83	70.42	2,757	3,191
Dinajpur	84.10	77.62	9,023	10,755
TOTAL	82.80	79.40	94,556	1,02,845

FROM PAGE 1

vocational tests under the technical board are taken into account, the combined pass rate would be 82.20 percent, which is significantly higher than last year's 77.77 percent.

Education board officials pointed towards students of madrasa board doing better for the improved combined pass rate and students of Jashore, Cumilla, and Rajshahi boards pushing up the SSC pass rate.

Education Minister Dipu Moni and Dhaka Education Board Chairman Prof Ziaul Haque attributed students' better performances in English and mathematics for the rise in pass rate.

Officially announcing the results at a press conference in the capital, Dipu Moni said, "Parents and teachers took good care [of students] and students worked hard."

Ziaul, also chief of Inter-Education Board Coordination Subcommittee, told The Daily Star, "Teachers became used to the new method of evaluating answer scripts. It is also a reason for the increase in pass rate after two years of decline."

The government in 2017 introduced the new method (standardisation of answer scripts) of checking scripts of the SSC exams.

Trained chief examiners schooled other examiners on the new method following a strict guideline. Chief examiners, along with other teachers, set standardised answers to SSC questions and gave them to examiners, who gave scores accordingly.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in a telephone conference at the press conference congratulated successful students and urged students who failed to be more attentive.

"You should have continuity in your success and keep doing better in the next exams," she said.

As the future leaders of Bangladesh, she said.

This year 16,94,652 students sat for the SSC exam in February.

Like previous years, students of science group fared better than those of

humanities and business studies.

This year 94.72 percent students of science group, 83.03 percent business studies, and 74.32 percent humanities passed.

DHAKA PASS RATE DROPS

Students of Dhaka Education Board did not perform as well as those of last year. Results showed that 79.62 percent of the 5,48,220 who sat for the exams passed. Last year 81.48 percent were successful.

A total of 29,687 students achieved GPA 5s, a seven-year low. The number of GPA 5 achievers had been increasing over the previous five years.

Dhaka board chief Prof Ziaul said students of humanities performed

PASS RATES OVER THE YEARS		
YEAR	TOTAL STUDENTS	PASS RATE
2019	16,94,562	82.80
2018	16,24,423	79.40
2017	14,22,379	81.21
2016	13,00,284	88.70
2015	11,08,683	86.72

poorly this year, bringing down the success rate. Students of Dhaka also did not do as good as students of other boards did in English and maths.

ENGLISH, MATHS

Except Dhaka board, there was a rise in the pass rate in English this year while the pass rate in maths increased in Rajshahi, Cumilla, Jashore, Chittagong, and Dinajpur boards.

Last year, 91.57 percent students of Cumilla board passed English and this year it increased to 98.16 percent.

In the previous year, 90.37 and 85.80 percent students in Jashore board passed English and maths respectively and those rose to 95.86 and 96.77 percent this year.

The performance of students in English and maths always make a

difference in the pass rate of public exams, Rajshahi Education Board Chairman Prof Abul Kalam Azad told this newspaper.

He pointed out that in the last two years, bad performances in these two subjects had brought down the overall pass rate.

GIRLS DID IT AGAIN

Girls once again outshined the boys in terms of pass rate and GPA 5 achieved.

This year the pass rate of the girls was 1.53 percentage points higher than that of the boys across the eight boards.

In 2018, the pass rate of the girls was 1.95 percentage points higher than that of the boys and in 2017 it was 0.98 percentage points higher.

A total of 48,591 girls earned GPA 5s while 45,965 boys got GPA 5s this year. Last year, 51,631 girls achieved GPA 5 against 51,214 boys.

Prof Ziaul said off late, they have observed that girls were more attentive and that has paid off. "Girls are spending more time in studies than boys. In the adolescent years, boys become more adventures and their concentration falls short," he added.

MADRASA, TECHNICAL BOARDS

The technical board saw rises in the success rate and the number of GPA 5 achievers.

However, madrasa board's pass rate went up but the number of GPA 5 achievers dropped.

Some 2.86 lakh out of 3.06 lakh successfully completed their Dakhil examinations under the madrasa board.

Under the technical board, 1.26 lakh students took part in the SSC (vocational) and Dakhil (vocational) exams. The pass rate was 72.24 percent against last year's 71.96 percent.

A total of 4,751 students got GPA 5s this year whereas 4,413 got it last year.

More than 21,27,815 students -- 10,66,527 boys and 10,59,288 girls -- from 28,673 institutions across the country sat for this year's SSC and its equivalent exams under the 10 boards. Of them, 17,49,165 passed.

This year, 2,583 institutions had cent percent students passed against last year's 1,574.

No students passed from 107 institutions, a slight drop from 109 of 2018.

At least 423 Bangladeshi students sat for the tests in eight foreign exam centres and 389 of them passed, and 56 of them got GPA 5s.

Schools across the country wore a festive look ahead of the results yesterday. Students and their parents, with frayed nerves, erupted in jubilation as soon as they received the results. Some danced while others took selfies flashing the V-sign. There were some gloomy faces as well.

Such successes, however, lead to a concern for many students as they would now have to face stiff competition to get into good colleges.

Violence mars

FROM PAGE 1

the BJP.

In recent days rivals Modi and Rahul Gandhi, Congress leader, have engaged in acrimonious exchanges -- with the prime minister taking a pop at Gandhi's assassinated father, former prime minister Rajiv Gandhi.

"Your father was termed 'Mr Clean' by his courtiers, but his life ended as corrupt number 1," Modi told a rally, linking Rajiv to a major defence purchase scandal during his tenure.

"Your Karma awaits you. Projecting your inner beliefs about yourself onto my father won't protect you. All my love and a huge hug," Gandhi tweeted in response.

During the campaign Gandhi has called Modi a "thief" over alleged irregularities in a multi-billion dollar deal to purchase 36 Rafale fighter jets from France's Dassault Aviation.

VIOLENCE

Also voting were parts of the unsettled region of Indian-administered Kashmir, with tens of thousands of extra security forces on duty in India's only Muslim-majority state.

Militants yesterday threw a grenade that exploded near a voting booth, although no one was injured, reported AFP.

On Saturday night Gul Mohammad Mir, who belonged to a local unit of Modi's BJP, was shot dead at his house in south Kashmir.

Protestors in the Pulwama area of Kashmir threw stones at election staff Sunday as they were brought under heavy security to the polling stations.

Police fired at the crowds injuring at least two people, and polling staff were later transported in helicopters for their safety.

Voter turnout in Indian Kashmir -- where thousands have died in clashes in recent decades, most of them civilians -- has barely crossed 10 percent.

Also voting yesterday was Amethi, home to some 1.5 million people and the seat of Congress leader Gandhi, long considered an electoral stronghold for India's Gandhi-Nehru political dynasty that has given the country three prime ministers since independence in 1947.

Smriti Irani, a former actress turned politician, was the main challenger for Gandhi's seat. Irani accused Gandhi of "booth-capturing" as the polling was underway at the constituency, reported The Hindu Online.

Amethi is one of the two constituencies where Rahul is contesting, something that is allowed under Indian election rules -- the other is Wayanad, in the southern state of Kerala, and an easier bet.

Rahul's mother Sonia Gandhi, 72, the Italian-born former head of Congress, was contesting from Rae Bareilly near Amethi, which was also voting yesterday.

Modi has made national security and fighting terrorism his main campaign theme to blunt opposition attacks on his economic record.

Madrasa girl

FROM PAGE 1

additional superintendent of police in Bagerhat.

On Sunday afternoon, he took the girl to a nearby orchard luring her with mangoes and killed her, said Mahfuz.

He then dumped the body in a nearby pond, the police official added.

Police suspect that Shoaib might have raped the girl before killing.

The body was sent to Bagerhat Sadar Hospital morgue for autopsy.

Omar yesterday filed a case with Bagerhat Sadar Police Station.

TWO NUSRAT MURDER ACCUSED CONFESS

Two more accused of the sensational Nusrat murder case yesterday confessed to their involvement in the killing.

Iftekhaier Uddin Rana and Imran Hosen alias Mamun gave the confessional statements before the court of Feni Senior Judicial Magistrate Md Zakir Hossain under section 164, court sources said.

In their statements, they both said they had a good relationship with the madrasa principal Siraj Ud Doula.

Five killed

FROM PAGE 1

declared them dead, the OC said.

Two sub-inspectors were also injured in the "gunfight", he added.

Police recovered 2,200 yaba pills, two locally made guns, seven bullets, and Tk 6.56 lakh cash from the spot.

In the Sundarbans, three robbery suspects were killed in a "gunfight" with Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) at Chandpai Range yesterday morning.

The dead are Panna Bahini chief Panna alias Rana, 28, Julhas, 32, and Kamruzzaman, 39, said Maj Md Shamim Sarder, company commander of Rab-6.

The "gunfight" took place in Khonta Kodail canal area near the Pashur River, where Rab conducted a raid around 6:00am, he said. The criminals tried to flee after opening fire on the Rab men, forcing the law enforcers to retaliate, he said.

After the "gunbattle" subsided, the three suspected robbers were found lying on the spot. They were declared dead after being taken to Mongla Upazila Health Complex, the officer said.

A pipe gun, a shooter gun, and four locally-made weapons were found at the scene.

(Our Cox's Bazar and Bagerhat correspondents contributed to the report.)