

# Three held over rape in Bogura, Patuakhali

**STAR REPORT**

Two minor girls have allegedly been raped in Bogura and Patuakhali, while three have been arrested in connection with the incidents.

One of the victims was allegedly abducted from Bogura on August 16 and kept confined in a remote char area of the Jamuna river in Jamalpur's Islampur upazila, reports our Bogura correspondent, quoting police.

On Thursday, police rescued the girl, 13, and arrested the accused after a case was filed by the victim's father on Sunday.

The arrestee is Afil Uddin, 25, of Lamoniurhat's Kaliganj upazila. He was sent to jail after being produced before a Bogura court yesterday, said police.

Gaziur Rahman, additional superintendent of Bogura police, said Afil developed a relationship with the victim, a seven grader, over mobile phone six months ago. On August 16, Afil asked the girl to come to Bogura town.

When the girl arrived, he took her to Dhigai Mondol Char area of Islampur upazila. He then took away her mobile phone and raped her multiple times, the police official said.

The official said Afil, who is married, primarily admitted to his offence.

The victim will be sent to Bogura

Shaheed Ziaur Rahman Medical College Hospital for medical tests today, the police official said, adding that the court will record her statement on the same day.

In Patuakhali, a 13-year-old girl was allegedly raped in Kalapara upazila town on Thursday night, reports our correspondent there.

Police arrested two yesterday morning for their alleged involvement in the rape. They are Jewel, 20, and Mithu, 20.

Senior Judicial Magistrate's Court in Kalapara sent them to jail after they were produced before the court in the afternoon.

Quoting family members, police said the girl's father went to a nearby river for fishing and her mother went to a pond with the victim. When her mother was bathing there and the victim was returning home.

On her way to home, the arrestees forcibly took the girl to a nearby abandoned house and raped her.

The victim informed her mother of the matter after returning home.

On Thursday night, the girl's father lodged a case against Jewel and Mithu with Kalapara Police Station, said Monirul Islam, officer-in-charge of the station.

Medical tests of the girl were conducted at Patuakhali General Hospital yesterday.



**A Kashmiri Muslim holds her baby as she shouts anti-Indian slogans during a protest at Anchar Soura locality of Srinagar yesterday, following India's decision to strip the disputed Kashmir region of its special autonomy.**

PHOTO: AFP

# Amazon fires a global crisis

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"The French president's suggestion that Amazon issues be discussed at the G-7 without participation by the countries in the region evokes a colonialist mentality that is out of place in the 21st century," Bolsonaro wrote on Twitter.

The European Union yesterday piled pressure on Bolsonaro over fires raging in the Amazon basin, with Ireland and France saying they could block a trade deal with South America, reported Reuters.

German Chancellor Angela Merkel believes it should be discussed by world leaders when they meet for this weekend's G7 summit, her spokesman said.

on climate change in the northeastern city of Salvador ahead of December's summit in Chile.

Climate change activists chanting slogans and waving banners demonstrated boisterously outside Brazil's embassy in London yesterday, urging President Bolsonaro to do more to halt the fires in the Amazon rainforest, reported AFP.

Several hundred protesters gathered opposite the central London embassy, unfurling signs reading "stop destruction now", "save our planet" and "I want you to panic".

They chanted "climate justice" and "save the Amazon".

**NOT 'CAPTAIN NERO'**

"I do not defend the burnings, because there always was and always will be burnings. Unfortunately, this has always happened in the Amazon," Bolsonaro said, referring to dry season, land-clearing fires.

"But accusing me of being a Captain Nero setting fire to things is irresponsible. It is campaigning against Brazil," the president told reporters outside his Brasilia residence.

The reference to Captain Nero appeared to be to the Roman emperor said to have fiddled while Rome burned. Bolsonaro is a former army captain.

Forest fires tend to intensify during the dry season, which usually ends in late October or early November, as land is cleared to make way for crops or grazing.

"Just think, if the world begins imposing trade barriers, our agribusiness will fall, we will start to go backwards, the economy will start to get worse -- your life, the lives of newspaper editors, television owners, the lives of all Brazilians will be complicated, without exception. The press is committing suicide," Bolsonaro said.

However, there are signs of growing concern from within the powerful agribusiness sector over Bolsonaro's environmental isolationism.

The governors of Brazil's Amazon states have also criticized the government for recent decisions by Germany and Norway to suspend Amazon aid projects.

Neighbouring Peru, which contains much of the Amazon basin, announced it was "on alert" for wildfires spreading from the rainforest in Brazil and Bolivia.

Paraguay and Bolivia are battling separate wildfires that have devastated large areas of their rainforests.

**RAPID DEFORESTATION**

Environmental specialists say the fires have accompanied a rapid rate of deforestation in the Amazon region, which in July quadrupled compared to the same month in 2018, according to data from the National Institute for Space Research (INPE).

Bolsonaro instead attributes the fires to increased drought, and accuses environmental groups and NGOs of whipping up an "environmental psychosis" to harm Brazil's economic interests.

"This environmental psychosis lets you do nothing," the president lamented, adding that it was hampering the country's development.

"I don't want to finish the environment, I want to save Brazil," said Bolsonaro, a climate change skeptic who had advocated opening up tribal lands and protected areas to farming and mining interests since assuming office in January.

"These countries that send money here, they don't send it out of charity. ... They send it with the aim of interfering with our sovereignty," he said.

Bolsonaro's comments come as Brazil hosts a UN regional meeting

Supply shortfall

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disappointed by the sudden price hike.

Najma Jahan, a housewife in Chattogram, said, "I bought 1kg of onion for Tk 35 only six days ago; now they are taking Tk 55. It is unacceptable."

About the market situation, Mohammad Kushum, a wholesaler in Dhaka's Karwan Bazar, said the supply of Indian onions went down remarkably in the last seven to eight days.

"This variety has a significant influence on the market. Its price went up due to a supply shortage, which eventually had an impact on the overall price of onions," he added.

Our correspondent in Dinajpur reported that import and export activities through Hili Land Port under Hakimpur upazila remained closed for nine days, from August 10, on the occasion of Eid-ul-Azha and Independence Day of India.

The port operations resumed Monday.

Harun Ur Rashid, president of Import and Export Group of Hili Land Port, said the suspension of imports created a big negative impact on onion supply across the country.

"Although the import is going on in full swing now, the supply shortage still remains. But we think that the market will be normal within a week."

# Indian soldier killed in Pak firing at LoC

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"Preachers in all mosques should make the people aware of India's plans to change the demography of the state (Jammu and Kashmir)," handbills written in Urdu said.

Sporadic demonstrations have rocked some parts of Srinagar, with clashes between stone-throwing protesters and government forces leaving more than 100 injured.

Residents in the Muslim-majority region have complained of a stifling environment as well as the inability to get in touch with family and friends worried about their wellbeing, although some of the restrictions have been eased in recent days.

Kashmir has waged a three-decade-long armed rebellion against Indian rule with tens of thousands of lives, mostly civilians, lost in the conflict.

Ahead of its controversial announcement, India rushed tens of thousands of extra troops to the restive region to join 500,000 already in the valley, and imposed a strict communications clampdown.

The near-total communications blackout has triggered global concern, with a group of UN human rights experts warning Thursday it amounted to "collective punishment" and risked exacerbating regional tensions.

Yesterday, several dozen paramilitary personnel manned at

least two barriers on the main road leading to the office of UNMOGIP in Srinagar and public movement around it was blocked.

Entry into the city's old quarter, which has long been a centre for protests, was severely curtailed, as policemen blocked street after street with concertina wire.

Large swathes of Srinagar remained deserted with shops shut except for some provision stores with shutters half-down, reported Reuters.

Police vans patrolled some areas announcing a curfew and asking people to stay indoors.

On the Dal Lake, long rows of houseboats, which would typically be

packed with tourists this time of the year, floated closed and empty, as police patrolled its mirror-calm waters in boats.

On Thursday, French President Emmanuel Macron met Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi, telling him Paris was keeping an eye on the Kashmir region.

France would "remain attentive to ensure the interests and rights of the civilian populations are properly taken into account in the territories on both sides of the (Kashmir) ceasefire line", Macron said.

French officials had earlier said they would push Modi to explain how he saw things playing out in the region in the coming days and weeks.

# Myanmar govt obstructing

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comprehensive military embargo, the list of suggestions added.

Criticising Myanmar, HRW stated that neither did the government of the country act to improve conditions of Rohingyas nor did it address the causes behind the crisis.

"Two years since the Myanmar military carried out ethnic cleansing of the Rohingya population, the government still denies its troops committed any atrocities," said Phil Robertson, deputy director of HRW Asia, in the statement issued from Bangkok.

In the statement, he also said a United Nations-backed Fact-Finding Mission found sufficient information to warrant the investigation and prosecution of senior military officials for grave crimes, including genocide.

"The bulldozing of Rohingya homes to destroy evidence after the ethnic cleansing is emblematic of the government's campaign to whitewash its crimes."

An estimated 500,000 Rohingyas remain in appalling conditions in Rakhine State. Security forces have confined them to camps and villages and severely restricted their freedom of movement, the statement read.

Myanmar government has denied

fundamental freedoms to Rohingyas and deprived them of access to sustainable livelihoods and basic humanitarian services including adequate food, medical care, and education, the statement added.

The Myanmar government also restricted access to Rakhine State by news media and aid workers and since June 21 has imposed an internet blackout across nine townships, including one in Chin State, the HRW statement read.

The disruption of internet services has increased difficulties for humanitarian agencies and human rights groups to assist vulnerable people in the face of increased fighting in the area.

The government should not use broad, indiscriminate shutdowns to curtail the flow of information, or to harm civilians' ability to assemble freely and express political views, the rights organisation urged.

The government of Myanmar should immediately amend its discriminatory 1982 Citizenship Law to provide Rohingyas equal access to Myanmar citizenship. The government should also take necessary steps to ensure the security of the Rohingya population from abusive security forces and other groups, HRW added.

# Gentleman

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wanted to save themselves from the fire," prison spokesman Elly Yuzar said yesterday.

"They also worried about their families... Even convicted murderers have come back voluntarily," he added, without elaborating.

The riots and demonstrations in the restive region were triggered by the weekend arrest of dozens of Papuan students in Indonesia's second-biggest city Surabaya, where they were also targeted with racial abuse.

In Sorong, search teams had fanned out across the city of some 220,000 in a bid to find the escaped prisoners or contact their families, Yuzar said, adding that a dozen were still on the run.

# Zafrullah

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"A court will soon deliver the verdict of the case filed by Gonoshasthaya Kendra. Nasir is afraid that he will lose the case. This is why he is doing all these. He just wants to harass us," Shishir said.

Javed Masud, officer-in-charge (investigation) of Ashulia Police Station, said they were probing the allegations.

# Ex-US marine says injured by Russian prison guards

**AFP, Moscow**

A former US marine who was arrested in Moscow on espionage charges said yesterday he has been injured by guards in the prison where he is being held awaiting trial.

"I was injured in the prison... the prison doesn't want to tell you," Paul Whelan told journalists from a cage in a Moscow court, which is to decide on whether to extend his provisional detention.

Whelan arrived in the court handcuffed and escorted by two security guards wearing black masks and plain clothes.

"You can see the treatment," he said as he entered.

"I am standing here in great pain due to an injury sustained in the prison by the prison guards," he said, looking pale.

He did not say what type of injury he suffered.

# UPDF man killed

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members, prompting them to fire.

After the exchange of fire between the two groups continued for four to five minutes, the criminals were forced to step back, the press release said.

"In the gunfight, Sumon Chakma, a top armed criminal of UPDF [main group] was killed," said the ISPR, adding that it believed more than one criminals were wounded in the drive.

The situation in the area is under the control of the security force. Similar drives will continue to maintain law and order in the area in future, it said.

Israfil Majumder, officer-in-charge of Sajek Police Station, said that after the incident around 11:00am, police recovered the body and sent it to Khagrachhari General Hospital for an autopsy.

Two firearms were recovered from the spot, he said.

Later in the day, the UPDF issued a statement condemning and protesting what it termed the killing of Sumon, 45, son of Bijoy Chakma of Sajek union.

In the statement, Sachal Chakma, Rangamati district unit organiser of UPDF, however, did not mention Sumon as a member of the organisation.

Shaktimaan Chakma, also the vice president of Parbatya Chattogram Jana Samhati Samity's MN Larma faction, was killed in a gun attack on May 3.

# Two teens killed

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The railway bridge area on the Gumti river bank is a common hangout among people of the city and surrounding areas. The teenagers were among the visitors.

Sub-inspector Mishbaul Alam Chowdhury, in charge of Cumilla railway police outpost, said, "An unnatural death case was filed."