

EXTRAJUDICIAL KILLINGS

Lack of effective measures against impunity: HRFB

Rights body terms law enforcing agencies 'irresponsible'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Incidents of torture, custodial death and extra-judicial killings continued and no visible progress happened although the UN Committee against Torture reviewed Bangladesh's report to this end a year ago, Human Rights Forum Bangladesh said yesterday.

In a media statement, the rights organisation said law enforcement agencies have become irresponsible due to lack of effective measures against impunity.

To end this, the forum called upon the government to take effective steps for immediate implementation of the recommendations made by the UN committee.

It demanded that the government form an independent body for neutral investigation into allegations of all incidents of torture and other cruel, inhuman and undignified behaviour

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For the uncountable basic and civic rights that these underprivileged children are deprived of, being able to be in the arms of nature is probably the one thing that the 'privileged' of society can envy them for. This heartwarming photo was taken from the capital's Chandrima Udyan yesterday.

PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

ARREST OF STAMFORD UNIV STUDENTS

Protesters question role of law enforcers

Batons charged at Barguna human chain

STAR REPORT

"People are no longer afraid of muggers on the streets, they are afraid of police. People are afraid of being framed for carrying yaba or cannabis as police insert those into their pockets."

Leaders of Bangladesh Shadharon Chhatra Odhikar Parishad made the remarks while protesting the arrest of students Shahedul Islam Sifat and Shipra Debnath, who were the crew members accompanying the slain Major (Retired) Sinha Mohammad Rashed Khan.

While the rally was going on in front of Jatiya Press Club in Dhaka, Banna Police in Sifat's ancestral district Barguna, baton-charged a peaceful human chain and beat up students and locals demanding his release.

At least 10 people were injured in the incident, protesters said.

Banna Police Officer-in-Charge Elias Ali termed the protest anti-government. "I came to know that a group of miscreants were forming a human chain against the state without our permission. I dispersed them and told them that the government's image will be tarnished [if they continue]."

Witnesses said that Sifat's classmates arranged the human chain programme at college road area around 12pm. They had announced the programme earlier.

"Suddenly a police team came and snatched the banner during a peaceful human chain," they said.

"Even then the human chain continued peacefully, but the OC ordered policemen to charge with sticks," they added.

Rubel, who was injured in the police baton-charge, said they have known Sifat as a "good boy" and don't believe the drug allegations brought

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Don't hold gatherings on Janmashtami

Hindu leaders urge members of community

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Hindu community leaders yesterday requested all of its members to refrain from arranging any mass gathering like procession and rally on the occasion of Janmashtami, the celebration of Sri Krishna's birth.

This year's Janmashtami, one of the major festivals of the Hindu community of the country, will be celebrated on August 11.

The leaders made the request to prevent the risk of spreading coronavirus. They were speaking at a views-exchange meeting with journalists at Dhakeswari National Temple yesterday, said a press release.

They also urged management committees of all the temples across the country to take sufficient safety measures in celebrating any religious programme.

Besides, all the devotees, who will visit temples, are requested to maintain social distance and to follow government's safety guidelines during this pandemic.

The Hindus also demanded that the government celebrate the Janmashtami as a national programme.

Bangladesh Puja Udjapan Parishad president Milon Kanti Datta and general secretary Nirmal Kumar Chatterjee, addressed the views-exchange meeting, among others.

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VIRTUAL FUNCTIONS

SC chamber bench to sit on Aug 12, 18, 25

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Supreme Court's chamber bench will continue conducting virtual judicial functions for three days virtually till further notice, to contain ongoing Covid-19 pandemic.

Chamber judge of the Appellate Division of the SC Justice Md Nuruzzaman will dispose of cases on August 12, 18 and 25, according to a notification issued by SC administration yesterday.

Justice Md Nuruzzaman will start dealing with the cases from 11:30am on that days, the notification said.

Meanwhile, a six-member full bench of the Appellate Division headed by Chief Justice Syed Mahmud Hossain has been virtually holding hearing

A time to look out for one another

Indigenous volunteers on a mission to help their communities

MATHEWS CHIRAN

In the middle of March, when Covid-19 started sweeping across the nation, Mithun Raksam, a poet and publisher from the Garo community, got a heart-breaking phone call from an acquaintance.

A Garo woman, who had lost her job at a beauty parlour, was on the other end. She told Mithun that not only her, but the pandemic took away jobs of her husband as well.

"The woman, a mother of two, said her family couldn't eat rice for a week and survived on only bread. Their area, Mirpur, was suddenly locked down, and they kept stretching their finances," Mithun said.

Seeing the helplessness of others, with what money he had, Mithun decided to jump into voluntary work to provide relief to such Garo families across the capital. He personally gave relief to 50 families and teamed up with other initiatives within the community.

Like him, there are several



Indigenous youths are going from one community to another, providing relief materials to those in need during the pandemic. This photo was taken from Bandarban.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

indigenous youths who came forward to help those in need, as a duty towards their community and humanity.

Alik Mree, a prominent member of an indigenous students' rights platform, along with other Garo

youths started helping out in the crisis.

They distributed relief among 300 families in Tangail's Madhupur and 200 families in Mymensingh's Fulbaria upazila. For the initiative, they collected money from well-

wishers.

Sharing his experience, Anik said, "Garo people have never faced such a situation. They aren't used to taking relief, and at first, even refused to receive anything. Many didn't inform us about their financial condition out of shyness."

"Although volunteers' safety was a major concern, we tried to involve responsible individuals and provided masks and gloves. Many of them went to infected families to distribute relief, taking proper safety measures," he added.

Tarun Munda, a key member of a students' platform in Rajshahi, also volunteered, but due to lack of funding and support, his efforts could not reach many families.

"In the northern region, we basically work with marginalised communities, including Munda, Santal and Orao. We could only reach 150 families so far in Naogaon, Dinajpur, and Natore," Tarun said.

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14 Tabligh Jamaat members return home from India

STAR REPORT

Fourteen Bangladeshi Tabligh Jamaat members returned home last night after languishing in an Indian jail for 40 days.

Indian immigration police handed them over to the Bangladesh authorities through Benapole check-post around 11:30pm on Friday, said Mohsin Khan, officer-in-charge of Benapole Check-post Immigration Police, yesterday.

The 14 are residents of different areas including Dhaka, our Benapole correspondent reports, quoting the OC.

All the returnees were sent to Gazir Dargah institutional quarantine in Jhikargachha upazila of Jashore for 14 days, said Habibur Rahman, a medical officer of the health department of Benapole check-post.

According to immigration police, 265 Tabligh Jamaat men went to India in February this year. They were staying there during the coronavirus outbreak.

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ANTI-MOSQUITO COMBING DRIVE

DNCC fines 20 house owners Tk 1.28 lakh

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka North City Corporation (DNCC) yesterday conducted the first day of a combing operation to destroy mosquito breeding grounds in order to check the spread of Aedes mosquito.

On the first day of drive, the team visited at least 12,736 houses and establishments and found Aedes mosquito larvae in 87 houses and establishments, according to a press release.

The 10-day drive began simultaneously in all 54 wards under the city corporation to contain the mosquito menace, said a press release.

Additionally, suitable conditions for Aedes mosquito -- such as stagnant water -- were found at 7,301 establishments, including residential houses and under construction buildings in the city area.

During the operation, the DNCC mobile court also fined owners of 20 establishments around Tk 1.28 lakh for hosting Aedes larvae. The team also cautioned several more establishments.

Aedes larvae were found in abandoned tyres, buckets, flower tubs, bottles, water-meters, garages, water houses, broken mugs, floors, water-tanks, plastic containers, roof-drains, yogurt pots, abandoned commodos, coconut shells, broken pots, basement and spaces between two houses, said an official of DNCC.

The 10-day operation will continue every day except August 11, 14 and 15, dividing a ward into ten sectors and a sector into 10 sub-sectors, said the official of DNCC.



With the Dhaka University campus being off-limits for its thousands of students over the last four months due to the Covid-19 outbreak, it's only natural for some to yearn for the greenery and camaraderie the premises brought. A student, passing by the Curzon Hall, takes a picture from behind the locked gate, maybe to share with friends, or maybe for himself only. The photo was taken on Friday.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

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