

How did he 'escape'?

Ctg prison officials looking for loopholes after inmate 'goes missing'; jailer, deputy jailer withdrawn, 2 guards suspended

FM MIZANUR RAHAMAN, Ctg

Officials and guards at Chattogram Central Jail are desperately looking for the "escape points" and loopholes in the security measures after a murder case accused inmate escaped from the prison on Saturday morning.

They are also reviewing the security system to avoid further incidents, said prison sources.

Meanwhile, prison authorities yesterday suspended two prison guards of Chattogram Central Jail, and withdrew its jailer and a deputy jailer for their negligence in discharging duty after the inmate -- Farhad Hossain Rubel -- fled from the prison.

Brig Gen Mominur Rahman Mamun, inspector general of prisons, said a departmental case was also filed against another guard.

Before being withdrawn, jailer Rafiqul Islam filed a case against the escaped inmate with Kotwali Police Station.

"Police are investigating the case and trying to arrest the criminal," said Nobel Chakma, assistant commissioner of police (Kotwali zone).

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'Thousands of us waiting for opportunity to shine'

RASHEEK TABASSUM MONDIRA

Tashnuva Anan Shishir made headlines earlier this week, when news broke that she will start her journey as the first transgender newscaster in the country today. In an interview with The Daily Star, she shared the story of her journey.

"Such initiatives will enable further opportunities for transgender communities, and Boishakhi TV is to be lauded for that," said Shishir. "There are thousands of 'Shishir' waiting for an opportunity to shine. I hope that this will make their journey easier."

Passionate about dancing and acting from a young age, Shishir completed her master's in sociology from National University. "Wherever I went, no matter what I did, I had to prove myself again and again," shares Shishir. "People mocked me, questioned my abilities and I had to prove myself."

Shishir is a dedicated social worker and activist, having worked at Ovibashi Karmi Unnayan Program, National Human Rights Commission Bangladesh, and Bandhu Social Welfare Society.



Tashnuva Anan Shishir

During the pandemic, she helped several struggling transgender individuals with assistance of other cultural activists.

"I was bullied, harassed throughout my life," reminisces Shishir. "I was called names during my school days, no one called me by my official name. Throughout my student life, I had only one or two people I could call friends."

She began her acting career in 2007 with the theatre troupe Natua and has been a part of troupe BotTola for more than two years. She

has appeared in a number of theatre productions with many groups. Shishir is also a freelance voice artiste and a professional model.

She began acting on screen in 2012. "At the time, I worked without any remuneration. I started getting paid for my television projects from 2016," she said.

"My aim is to establish a place of acceptance for my community and myself in the media," says Shishir.

She also spoke about the underrepresentation of transgender actors in the entertainment arena.

"There are many stereotypes surrounding the transgender community, which inevitably impacts our work as actors," she says.

"I worry about my co-workers' behaviour towards me and also directors' acceptance of my acting skills."

Nevertheless, she believes that things are slowly getting better.

"Though our community still faces discrimination and harassment, our lives are getting easier," she added. "People are more educated and aware now. As a result, there is a broader scope for conversations about the transgender community."

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Compensation ordered in only 7pc rape cases

Finds BLAST study

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Under the Women and Children Repression (Prevention) Act 2000, the court imposed fine on convicted rapists in 100 percent of the cases, but converted the fine into compensation and awarded it to the victims' families or survivors in only 6.8 percent of these cases (three out of 44 cases), revealed a latest study of BLAST.

The award of compensation sustained in only one case, as the Supreme Court acquitted the convicts in two out of these three cases where compensation was awarded by the tribunal.

The study titled 'No Justice without Reparation: Why Rape Survivors Must Have a Right to Compensation', was published as part of the Rape Law Reform Now campaign, supported by UN Women and funded by Global Affairs Canada.

The study was published in solidarity with the campaign theme #ChooseToChallenge for International Women's Day 2021, through which BLAST chooses to challenge the almost exclusive focus on punishment of the perpetrator when discussing justice for rape while overlooking the victim or survivors' right to reparation.

It analysed 99 Supreme Court judgements relating to 90 rape cases reported in six law reports of Bangladesh — Dhaka Law Report, Bangladesh Legal Decisions, Bangladesh Law Times, Mainstream Law Report, Bangladesh Law Chronicles and Appellate Division Cases, during the period of 1995 to 2019.

Of these 90 cases, 46 were rape cases filed under the Nari O Shishu Nirjaton Doman (Bishesh Bidhan) Ain 1995, while 44 were rape cases filed under Section 9 of the 2000 Act.

It also found the average amount of fine imposed by the tribunals under the 2000 Act is around Tk 28,000, compared to around Tk 4,700 under the 1995 Act —therefore marking an increase, but remaining inadequate for the purposes of compensation nevertheless.

The minimum amount of fine was set at Tk 100,000 for rape leading to murder and gang rape according to section 9(2) and 9(3) of the 2000 Act.

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Salute to the fearless

UNDP, Star honour five female community workers for service during pandemic

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Having two young children and an ailing mother-in-law at home, it was extremely risky for Haowa Khanam to go outside her home during the pandemic.

Sweeping aside all fear, she installed numerous hand-washing booths all around Karail slum, distributed leaflets and took training sessions about maintaining social distance and hygiene.

On the occasion of International Women's Day 2021, The Daily Star and United Nations Development Program (UNDP) Bangladesh yesterday awarded five female community workers, for their self-sacrificing initiatives during Covid-19 pandemic. Haowa was one of them.

Under "Livelihoods Improvement of Urban Poor Communities Project" (LIUPCP) of UNDP, these women played a vital role in raising awareness about Covid-19 in heavily congested slum areas and impoverished parts of Dhaka.

When misinformation about Covid-19 and its treatment were spreading, Ayesha Siddika (18) took to the streets with a microphone and disseminated correct information and awareness about the virus.

Sajia Akter was six months pregnant when the pandemic hit. However, she went out to distribute hand washing materials to 2,760 families. She also disseminated nutrition-related information for pregnant women and new mothers.

Runa Akter conducted training sessions about hygiene and social distancing, and arranged food assistance for thousands of families when many people were jobless and starving due to the shutdown.

Beauty Rani Sikder went door to door to hundreds of families in Karail slum,

collected health-related information, distributed hand-washing materials and raised awareness.

The Daily Star and UNDP Bangladesh termed these five women "Nirbhaya" (fearless) and awarded a crest and a certificate for their bravery and selfless contributions during an award giving ceremony held at The Daily Star Centre yesterday.

Runa Akter said, "When working during the lockdown, I was not afraid. This was work that I wanted to do. The real challenge was the empty roads, lack of transport, and getting past police and the army and convincing my landlord, who wanted to evict me in fear that I would infect others by going out."

Ashekur Rahman, assistant resident representative of UNDP Bangladesh, said, "Under LIUPCP, we have nurtured 1,500 such volunteers who have made tremendous efforts to ensure hygiene and to raise awareness in the communities."

UNDP Resident Representative Sudipto Mukerjee said, "We are proud to recognise and honour these frontline workers. 50 years ago, freedom fighters of Bangladesh liberated this country through supreme sacrifice. We are really fortunate that 50 years later we could honour these women who also fought bravely to save their communities during this pandemic."

Mizanur Rahman, chief operations officer of The Daily Star, said, "When the pandemic reached Bangladesh, all of us panicked. We saw how sons and daughters abandoned their parents; how dead bodies were left in hospitals in fear of the disease. What these brave women have done for their communities in such a panic-stricken situation is really exemplary."



On the occasion of the historic March 7, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina paid her homage by placing a wreath at the portrait of the Father of the Nation in front of Bangabandhu Memorial Museum at Dhanmondi-32 in the capital yesterday morning.

PHOTO: PTD

Nation observes historic March 7

STAR REPORT

The nation yesterday observed the historic March 7, marking the landmark speech of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

This year, the day's observance marked the golden jubilee of the speech as well as of the country's independence on March 26 while "Mujib Borsho", the yearlong celebration of Bangabandhu's birth centenary is going on.

On the occasion of the historic March 7, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina paid her homage by placing wreaths at the portrait of the Father of the Nation in front of Bangabandhu Memorial Museum at Dhanmondi in the capital yesterday morning, reports BSS.

After placing the wreaths, she stood in solemn silence for some time as a mark of profound respect to the memory of Bangabandhu, the architect of independent Bangladesh.

On October 30, 2017, Unesco recognised the historic speech as part of the world's documentary heritage.

The landmark fiery speech inspired the Bangladeshis to prepare for the Liberation War.

Marking the day, different government and non-government organisations paid homage to Bangabandhu's portrait at Dhanmondi and also held discussions and rallies.

Members of University Grants Commission and Jatiya Press Club paid homage by placing wreaths at the portrait of Bangabandhu at Dhanmondi, said separate releases.

The National Parliament Secretariat held a discussion on the parliament premises, presided over by senior

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'We Answered the Call'

Book of memoirs of freedom fighters launched in capital

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh War Courses Foundation yesterday launched a book titled "We Answered the Call: Memoirs of Freedom Fighters" at a programme at Army Golf Club yesterday.

The book is a collection of stories on young heroes who joined the war to liberate the motherland. These heroes were members of first and second Bangladesh War Courses of Bangladesh Army.

The book was launched yesterday marking 50 years of Bangabandhu's historic speech on March 7, 1971, and 50 years of Bangladesh's independence.

A total of 135 members were in the two batches that were selected and sent to receive officers' training in India during the war.

Most people in those

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Committee formed for reviewing DAP proposal: minister

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government has formed a committee to work on the proposals of REHAB and BLDA to implement the Detailed Area Plan (DAP) for Dhaka.

LGRD Minister Md Tazul Islam, also the convener of DAP review committee, made the comment after holding a meeting with REHAB and BLDA officials at a city hotel yesterday.

Real Estate and Housing Association of Bangladesh (REHAB) and Bangladesh Land Developers Association (BLDA) on February 17 gave some proposals to the DAP committee which included not curtailing any benefit given in DAP in 2010 for the planned areas.

The committee will examine and submit their recommendations to the LGRD ministry, said the minister.

He also said the review can be done anytime as it is an ongoing process and they are working to revise the DAP.

On illegal land filling on flood flow zones, the minister said action will be taken against those who will do anything illegally.

On high-rises, he said it is more important to ensure civic facilities in an area before giving permission for construction of high-rises.

BLDA president Ahmed Akbar Sobhan said there were many loopholes in the earlier DAP.

REHAB president Alamgir Shamsul Alamin said they are demanding involvement of major stakeholders like REHAB and BLDA during preparation of DAP or setting up floor area ratio (FAR).



The awardees with guests at the event, held at The Daily Star Centre. PHOTO: STAR

Three killed in road accidents

STAR REPORT

Three people were killed in road accidents in three districts during the last two days, according to our correspondents.

In Savar, a police officer was killed as a vehicle hit him while he was crossing Ashulia-Tongi-DEPZ road at Narshinghapur in Ashulia of Dhaka early yesterday.

Md Monayem, a sub-inspector of Industrial Police-1, was posted at "Bandu Garment" camp at Narshinghapur, said Faridul Alam, SI of Ashulia Police Station.

The SI said they could not identify the vehicle that struck Monayem immediately.

In Panchagarh, Kartik Chandra Barman (35) died as he was run over by a tractor after he fell off a motorcycle in Debiganj upazila yesterday, said police.

In Thakurgaon, 15-year-old battery-run auto-rickshaw driver Liton was killed as the vehicle collided head-on with a tractor on Thakurgaon-Baliadangi road at Molani in Sadar upazila on Saturday night.



Minibuses, including at least one that carries staffers of the government-run Bangladesh Petroleum Exploration & Production Company Limited (Bapex), are parked illegally on the road in the capital's Panthapath-Tejgaon link road. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: SK ENAMUL HAQ

Bangladeshis waste over 1cr tonne food per year

Says UNEP report

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

On average, a Bangladeshi wastes 65kg food at home per year, according to the "Food Waste Index Report 2021" by the Nairobi-based United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).

Released on March 4, the report -- designed to support global efforts to halve food waste by 2030 under the Sustainable Development Goals -- estimates Bangladesh's annual food waste to be over one crore tonne (1,06,18,233).

The global per capita food waste is estimated at 74kg a year, which is described in the report as "remarkably similar across the countries, both in lower and higher-income ones".

At least 93.10 crore tonnes of food are wasted globally every year, which amounts to 17 percent of total food production.

Out of the total, nearly 57 crore tonnes of food waste, which is 11 percent of global food production, comes from homes, while five percent from food services and two percent from retail establishments, the report states.

In India, the per capita food waste is estimated at 50kg a year, while Pakistan's annual food waste per capita is 74kg.

For Bangladesh, Japan International Cooperation Agency (Jica) conducted studies in Chattagram to prepare the UN estimates.