



A youth shows a clip of a Tk 150-fine imposed on him by a mobile court for loitering in the capital's Chawkbazar area yesterday, violating the lockdown. The small group of people seen behind him were also rounded up for the same reason by law enforcers.



PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

The struggle for a seat in a DU dorm

Students must become political activists to get accommodation, else face wrath of seniors

ASIFUR RAHMAN and SIRAJUL ISLAM RUBEL

Mir Lokman has been a well-known face on Dhaka University (DU) campus since his first-year as a student. He was the founding president of "DU Mime Action" and staged at least 300 mime dramas at that time at various government and non-government institutes.

But despite all his accolades, Lokman was driven out of his residential hall twice by his seniors. In both incidents, he was in no fault. It was the simple whim of the ruling political party's student wing, as according to Lokman, it rules the dorms of DU.

To explain the situation, he shared his experience with The Daily Star.

Lokman, who joined DU in 2009-10 session, comes from a rural area of Narsingdi's Shibpur upazila. As he has no relatives in Dhaka, and his family was not financially able to pay house rent, he requested a senior acquaintance in his hometown to manage a seat (hall accommodation) for him.

He then moved into a "gono room", which had only four beds but accommodated around 25 students, with his bags and started living there. Sometimes, when every student was

present in the room, some then had to resort to sleeping at a nearby mosque.

The "rule" to live in the gono room is to attend the ruling party's rallies and other political activities.

"Whoever could show that they are active in those events got priority to get a good seat. Some took the chance, and when they got a seat, they became inactive. It's just the process," Lokman said.

Asked why he did not complain to the hall provost after being driven out, he said, "Political activists are the supreme authority when it comes to giving seats or cancelling allotment."

This whole situation is nothing new; it's a common experience in the dorms of DU. Residential halls are controlled by the ruling party's student wing. Whoever wants to stay there would have to obey the party leaders or maintain good relations with them, said students who talked with The Daily Star.

Every year, a number of students are driven-out by the ruling party's student wing. As DU turns 100, the institution is suffering from the worst seat crisis ever.

With time, the number of students at the university increased, but residential and other facilities did not.

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DU students sleep on the floor of a "gono room", a space designed for four to six people but often boarded by dozens as an individual seat remains the proverbial El Dorado. The photo was taken early last year at Surja Sen Hall.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

'Please help us find him'

Family of JU student 'missing' for 11 days urges at press conference

OUR CORRESPONDENT, PATUAHALI

Zahid Hasan Raju, a master's student of Jahangirnagar University, has been missing for 11 days, said his family members at a press conference in Barguna Press Club yesterday.

Raju's mother Aklima Begum and wife Hafsa Begum at the event sought government help in finding him. His wife also brought along their 14-month-old girl.

They said Raju went missing from a mess in Dhaka's Mirpur on the night of June 24. Raju, who completed his honours in Chemistry from JU, was doing his master's at the university. He was staying at the mess while searching for a job.

His classmate Mizanur Rahman, who lived in the next room, said Raju went out for prayers around 8:30pm and did not return.

He said around 9pm, two unknown persons entered the room and went out again. Later, he went to Raju's room and saw that Raju's mobile phone and tablet were not there.

Since Raju could not be found, Mizanur filed a general diary with Pallabi Police Station on June 26.

Raju is from Golbunia village of Raipur union in Patharghata upazila of Barguna. His father, Humayun Kabir, is a day labourer and mother a housewife. Raju is their only son.

At the press conference, Raju's wife Hafsa said, "Please help us find him. He was not involved with any unsocial activities. He used to study and support us." The family also sought the prime minister's intervention.

Contacted, Md Parvez, officer-in-charge of Pallabi Police Station, said they are looking into the matter.

Jahangir Mallik, superintendent of Barguna police, said they will also extend their help to the family.

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DNCC opens digital cattle market for Eid

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

To facilitate cattle purchase ahead of the Eid-ul-Azha, Dhaka North City Corporation (DNCC) has inaugurated a digital cattle market for the second year running yesterday.

This year, the city corporation plans to sell one lakh cows through the platform.

Maintaining the guidelines of the Ministry of Commerce, the DNCC digital cattle market-2021 is being implemented by DNCC in association with E-commerce Association of Bangladesh (e-CAB), Bangladesh Dairy Farm Association, Business Promotion Council, A2i, and Ekshop.

To purchase a cow from the haat, one needs to enter

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Hope of a better life, crushed

Minu Akhter, who served jail time by proxy in Ctg, dies in road crash days after release from prison

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Hit by poverty, Minu Akhter had languished in jail for three years for money instead of a convicted accused from 2018.

She did not know anything about the case and agreed to go to jail for a few days in exchange for money to support her family members. Once in jail, she found out that she was serving a life-term imprisonment.

Distraught and traumatised, the only thing that kept her alive was the hope to see her children again.

After learning about the matter, a Chattogram court and jail authorities took steps to free her. After many legal hurdles, Minu was freed from Chattogram Central Jail on June 16. She was finally able to return to her family in Sitakunda upazila. And together, they started dreaming of a better life -- as a

family.

But the reunion did not last long as Minu (33) died at Chattogram Medical College Hospital on June 28 after being reportedly hit by a truck on Bayezid Link Road in the night.



After her death, Anjuman Mofidul Islam buried her as an unidentified person, said Md Kamruzzaman, officer-in-charge of Bayezid Bostami Police Station.

"During investigation, police found out who she was and verified it with her family members," he said.

The OC said they were trying to identify the killer truck.

Minu's lawyer advocate Golam Mowla Murad told The Daily Star, "She went missing after coming out of her brother's residence to go to her son's madrasa. We will request

court to investigate the incident."

Minu served three years in jail instead of convicted Kulsuma Akhter from Lohagara upazila of the same district in connection with a case filed for killing one Kohinur Begum.

On March 24, the documents from the Chattogram court regarding the issue reached the High Court for its decision. Later an HC bench ordered to release Minu.

On July 9, 2006, RMG worker Kohinur was killed in her house in port city's Rahmatganj following an altercation over a phone.

A case was lodged over the murder with Kotwali Police Station and police arrested one Kulsuma Akhter and sent her to jail in 2007.

On November 30, 2017, a court in Chattogram sentenced Kulsuma to life-term imprisonment in absentia after trial.

Couple held for torturing 12-yr-old domestic help

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Police on Saturday night detained a couple from Dhaka's Topkhana Road area on charge of torturing their house help.

During the drive, the law enforcers also rescued the victim, a minor, who has several injury marks.

Sweety (12) was admitted to one-stop crisis centre at Dhaka Medical College Hospital for treatment.

According to police, the girl has bruises, including on her face, and burn wounds on her hip.

A team of police rescued her after a neighbour of Sweety's employer shared her photographs on social media, which a journalist later forwarded to the police's official Facebook page, said Sohel Rana, assistant inspector general (media) of Police Headquarters.

Police detained the couple -- Tanvir Ahsan and his wife Nahid -- who employed the victim from a disadvantaged family in Kishoreganj's Mithamoin Upazila, nine months back, he said.

Jahangir Hossain, a sub-inspector of Shahbagh Police Station, said the girl told police that the couple used to torture her on regular basis over trivial matter.

"We called the victim's family to Dhaka. Filing of a case is underway," he said.

Meanwhile, some neighbours of the couple demonstrated in front of Dhaka Reporters Unity, demanding their exemplary punishment for torturing the girl.

MJF concerned over rise in abuse of house helps

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Manusher Jonno Foundation yesterday expressed deep concern over torture of house helps and demanded exemplary punishment for perpetrators.

The organisation came up with the demand in a statement a day after police detained a couple from the capital's Segunbagicha area on charge of torturing their 12-year-old house help.

MJF said this was not an isolated incident; such incidents are happening one after another. Although some perpetrators were detained, they remained unpunished. They manage to evade punishment by either misusing power or due to legal loophole.

Quoting a statistics of Ain O Salish Kendra (ASK), the organisation said a total of 18 house helps have been tortured from January to May this year. Of them, eight have died.

Besides, a report by MJF titled, "Child Affairs Report 2020: From the Pages of Newspapers", said some seven domestic helps were tortured last year. Of them, three died.

The statistics were prepared on the basis of news reports of eight newspapers.

The government has a policy -- "The Domestic Workers Protection and Welfare Policy, 2015". MJF worked with the government to formulate it.

The policy has some specific provisions to ensure physical and mental welfare of domestic helps, good behaviour from employers, regular payment of their wages and alimony as well as granting sufficient vacations.

MJF demanded immediate formulation of law on the basis of the policy.



As strict as the lockdown is, the financial pinch that comes with it is more difficult to deal with for many. With their incomes squeezed, many are opting to move to cheaper areas, while others have already moved back to their homesteads. This photo was taken yesterday from Chattogram New Market area.

PHOTO: RAJIB RAIHAN

STUDENTS GOING ABROAD HC inquires about their vaccination

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday asked the attorney general's office to talk to the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS) and inquire about vaccinating Bangladeshi students, on priority basis, who will go abroad to study.

The bench of Justice M Enayetur Rahim told DAG Samarendranath Biswas to ask Attorney General AM Amin Uddin to talk to DGHS on the issue.

DAG Samarendranath can also communicate with DGHS to know necessary steps in this regard, the bench said.

Many Bangladeshi students are admitted to different foreign universities by depositing money, and their academic sessions will start in August or September. Therefore, the HC wants to know how they will be vaccinated, said Justice M Enayetur Rahim.

The HC bench came up with the observation after Supreme Court lawyer SK Jahangir Alam verbally pointed out the issue and prayed for an order.

Contacted, DAG Samarendranath said he has informed the HC order to the attorney general. He said he will talk to the DGHS office and will inform the outcome to the HC.