

Pregnant woman

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after the 20-year-old woman filed a case against three people, including a another woman.

But alleged rapist Sabbir, 21, and Asma Begum, 30, who allegedly beaten up the victim along with Sagor and Sabbir when she told her about the incident, went into hiding, said police.

According to the case statement, Sabbir and Sagor went to the victim's house in Baipail area around 3:30pm on Sunday and wanted a matchbox from her. Her husband, who is a construction worker, was not at home at that time. As she went to the room to bring the matchbox, Sabbir entered the room and Sagor locked the door from outside.

Sabbir then raped the three-month pregnant woman. After that, he asked Sagor to open the door and Sagor opened it and the duo left the spot. The victim disclosed the incident to her husband around 5:30pm after he returned home.

Later, the victim's husband informed neighbour Asma Begum of the incident. Asma then asked them not to share the incident with anybody. As they protested, Asma, Sabbir and Sagor beat up the duo, the case statement added.

Contacted, Shubrata Roy, sub-inspector of Ashulia Police Station and also investigation officer of the case, told The Daily Star that Sabbir was made the prime accused in the case, while Sagor was accused of abetting the rape and beating up the couple and Asma for assaulting the couple.

"We already arrested Sagor. And the victim was sent to One-stop Crisis Centre at Dhaka Medical College Hospital for tests," said the police official, adding that they were trying to arrest the other accused.

Liberal Deuba

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and control the spread of the coronavirus that has infected more than 658,000 people and killed nearly 10,000 of them - figures experts say fail to reflect the true toll.

"The biggest challenge of the new leader is to free every citizen from suffering from Covid-19 by inoculating them," said Prakash Sharan Mahat, a senior leader of Deuba's party.

More than 1.3 million people have had a first dose of Covid-19 vaccine and are awaiting a second shot as the government scrambles to protect its people.

Deuba, 75, head of the centrist Nepali Congress party, will head a coalition with former Maoist rebels and a party representing a minority community dominant on Nepal's southern plains, the latest development in a months-long political crisis that left the country without a parliament.

Deuba, who has served as prime minister four times in the past, must win a vote of confidence in parliament in the next month.

The Supreme Court on Monday ordered Deuba be appointed in place of K P Sharma Oli, who had failed to win a vote of confidence and dissolved parliament twice in recent months, which the court ruled was unconstitutional.

Deuba, a staunch democrat, will aim to end corruption and create conditions for free and fair elections due next year following the latest bout of political instability, Mahat said.

But Krishna Khanal, who teaches political science at Kathmandu's Tribhuvan University, said Deuba had struggled when he led governments before.

"The country has faced major crises every time he was prime minister in the past," Khanal told Reuters.

'Increased risk' of rare nerve disorder after J&J Covid vaccine: US

AFP, Washington

The US Food and Drug Administration updated its warning labels Monday for the Johnson & Johnson Covid-19 vaccine to include information about an observed "increased risk" of a rare neurological disorder called Guillain-Barre Syndrome (GBS).

The news is a further blow for the company, which was granted an emergency use authorization for its shot in February but has played a minor role in America's coronavirus immunization campaign.

Based on analysis of a federal vaccine safety monitoring system, officials have identified 100 preliminary reports of GBS after approximately 12.5 million doses administered, people familiar with the matter said.

Of these reports, 95 of them were serious and required hospitalization. There was one reported death.

GBS is a neurological disorder in which the body's immune system damages nerve cells, causing muscle weakness or, in the most severe cases, paralysis.

It affects an estimated 3,000 to 6,000 people each year in the United States, and most go on to recover.



Patients receive care underneath a tent, erected on the compounds of a hospital to handle an influx of people suffering from the Covid-19 coronavirus, in Yogyakarta yesterday, as Indonesia faces its most serious outbreak driven by the highly infectious Delta variant.

PHOTO: AFP

Traffickers abuse visit, on-arrival visas

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and investigating some recent trafficking incidents.

According to the SB database, around 1,99,864 men and woman have left the country for Dubai with tourist visas from January last year to June 30 this year.

Of them, only 2,1754 came back. Although the visa of the others had already expired, they did not return.

"Analysing the travel documents, we have come to know that most of the people are aged 18 to 40. We suspect these people might have converted their visas and have acquired working permits and some others may have tried to enter European countries illegally," said an SB high official.

In Dubai, there is a provision that says a traveller can change their visa to a work visa by paying 2,000 Dirham, according to officials.

"A group of traffickers has been using Dubai as a transit route to send their victims to Europe. We are trying to get details of the locations of these travellers," the SB official, requesting anonymity, told The Daily Star.

UN data shows that at least 760 different nationals of different countries have died trying to cross the Mediterranean between January 1 and May 31,

Last year, the number was 1,400.

NEW ROUTE, CONTACT MARRIAGE
SB officials said a transnational syndicate -- operated by Bangladeshi and Pakistani nationals -- recently found the means of arranging

"contract marriage" in order to traffic people abroad.

The traffickers first take their victims to Kazakhstan and Ukrained from Dubai after arranging contract marriages for them there. Each marriage costs around \$400-500, the officer said.

Once the marriage documents are submitted, the traffickers get residence cards for the victims, which are then used to enter Europe.

The CID said it has also found two new routes that traffickers have been using over the last month, as traffickers made online advertisements regarding trips to Poland, Germany and Canada.

The syndicate charge Tk 10 to Tk 13 lakh as fee for anyone who responds to the ad, SS Khan, special superintendent (human trafficking) of the CID, told The Daily Star.

"To go to Poland, the traffickers first take the victims to Delhi and then to Uzbekistan on tourist visas. Later, the migrants are forced to make their journey to Poland through tough hilly roads," Khan said.

For Germany and Canada, the traffickers take the victims to Togo, which offers on arrival visas for Bangladeshi travellers.

The syndicate was found using two routes, one of which led from Kolkata, to Mumbai, Ethiopia and finally Togo.

Through second route, the syndicate sent migrants to Thailand and then Ethiopia before Togo, he said.

The CID has come to know about these two new routes after eight

victims returned to Bangladesh from Uzbekistan and Togo in March and April of this year.

These victims have filed five separate cases with Paltan, Gulshan, Mirpur and Bhatara police stations and with Gopalganj's Kotalipara police station, said officials.

"We have already started investigating and arrested five people. Four were arrested for illegally trafficking people to Uzbekistan and one for trafficking people to Togo," said Khan.

Sources claim the traffickers are getting the scope of sending migrants on visit visa after making sure there are no hurdles at the airport.

"We have to pay around Tk 40 thousand and sometimes even Tk one lakh to manage the airport while sending people abroad," claimed Md Habib, an executive of Helpline Travel and Consultancy.

Once the airport hassles are taken care of, the authorities do not stop anyone from boarding a plane, he added.

Monirul Islam, SB deputy inspector general (immigration), however, refuted the allegation and said immigration is not involved with the irregularities.

"It is the brokers who collect extra money in the name of immigration." **THE ARREST, JOURNEY**

On a tip-off, the CID arrested Ahsanul Bari, the mastermind behind trafficking people to Uzbekistan from the capital's Kakrail on June 17.

Later, three others -- Yeasir Bari Ahad, his wife Habiba Khatun Liza,

The New York Times

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last month is a devastating indictment of the West Pakistani military crackdown in Bengal. It strongly challenges the [US] Administration's policy of continuing both military and economic support for the Yahya Khan regime in Islamabad. This official confirmation of earlier widespread reports of barbaric action in East Pakistan renders inexcusable any further shipment of American military equipment to the Pakistani armed forces.

"There are clear grounds for suspending all further military and economic aid to the Pakistani Government, excepting relief supplies, until the reign of terror in East Pakistan is ended and steps are taken to restore power to elected representatives of the people who are currently in prison or in hiding," added the newspaper.

SOVIET ENVOY REGRETS US ARMS AID TO PAKISTAN

Mir Qasimov, vice-consul of the Soviet Union at Calcutta, deplored US arms aid to Pakistan and said it would only aggravate the situation in Bangladesh. He emphasises that the situation in Bangladesh should be tackled by arriving at a political settlement between the leader of the Awami

League Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and Pakistan President Yahya Khan. The diplomat further said the influx of evacuees from Bangladesh to India had created a "colossal human problem".

FIERCE RESISTANCE AT BELABO

Bangladeshi guerrillas put up a fierce resistance against the Pakistan army at Belabo, Narsingdi. Seven freedom fighters embraced martyrdom during the fight.

JAPAN STUDYING METHODS OF SETTLEMENT IN BANGLADESH

The Japanese government was anxious for a political settlement in East Pakistan and was examining how best that could be done, Ataushi Uyama, Japan's ambassador in India, said in Calcutta. He added that the large-scale influx of refugees from East Pakistan was no doubt a serious problem which had put great strain on India's economy.

REFUGEES SENT TO MIDNAPORE

Midnapore received the first batch of 1,500 refugees from Bangladesh. On their arrival in Midnapore station they were immediately sent to Brindabanpur camp by 20 reserved buses.

Shamsuddoza Sajen is a journalist and researcher. He can be contacted at sajen1986@gmail.com

Speaking to The Daily Star, Saidur said that he had signed a Tk 15 lakh contract with a travel agency. "I paid them Tk 6 lakh and the contract said it would send me to Italy."

He reached Togo on December 31 via Thailand and Ethiopia. In Togo, a Bangladeshi -- Nurul Alam Sumon -- received him from the airport and took him to a hotel.

"There, Sumon took \$1,200 from me. But three days later, they shifted me to a rented house.

"An African named Tudo then confined me with dozens of other Bangladeshis and began the torture. He would only provide us with rice and a piece of meat a day and sometimes [there would be] no food. If anyone protested, they would be beaten up."

He added, "I was forced to contact my family in Bangladesh and make them pay Tk seven lakh in two instalments to their local agent -- Tuhinuzzaman Bhuyan. One day, we found a cell phone access and managed to communicate with an NGO."

"The NGO, aided by local police, then rescued us and helped us come back. But they failed to take any action against Tudo as he seemed to be too powerful... In the torture cell, there were at least 50 to 60 Bangladeshis. They would take away everyone's passports and torture people unless they would get a hefty amount of money."

CID's SS Khan said, "We are investigating the cases and a drive is underway to arrest those involved."

WHO warns against mixing

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-- Sinovac -- with a viral vector vaccine such as AstraZeneca.

"We can't wait 12 weeks (for a booster effect) in this outbreak where the disease is spreading fast," he said.

"But in the future, if there are better, improved vaccines... we will find a better way to manage the situation."

The UN health body also said rich countries should not be ordering booster shots for their vaccinated populations while other countries have yet to receive Covid-19 vaccines.

WHO Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said deaths were again rising from the Covid-19 pandemic, the Delta variant was becoming dominant, and many countries had yet to receive enough vaccine doses to protect their health workers.

'IT'S GREED'

"The Delta variant is ripping around the world at a scorching pace, driving a new spike in Covid-19 cases and death," Tedros told the briefing, noting that the highly contagious variant had now been found in more than 104 countries.

"The global gap in Covid-19 vaccine supply is hugely uneven and inequitable. Some countries and regions are actually ordering millions of booster doses, before other countries have had supplies to vaccinate their health workers and most vulnerable," said Tedros.

He said vaccine nationalism was "prolonging the agony" and there was only "one word that can explain this... it's greed".

Tedros also singled out vaccine makers Pfizer and Moderna as companies that were aiming to provide booster shots in countries where there were already high levels of vaccination, reports Reuters.

He said they should instead direct their doses to COVAX, the vaccine sharing programme mainly for middle-income and poorer countries.

Mike Ryan, head of the WHO's emergencies programme, said: "Right now, we are condemning hundreds of millions of people to having no protection."

"We will look back in anger, and we will look back in shame", if countries use precious doses on booster shots, at a time when vulnerable people are

still dying without vaccines elsewhere, Ryan said.

"These are people who want to have their cake and eat it, and then they want to make some more cake and eat it too," he said.

The pandemic has killed at least 4,044,816 people since the virus first emerged in December 2019, according to an AFP compilation of official data yesterday.

Russia yesterday set another record for coronavirus-related deaths over a 24-hour period, despite efforts from authorities to slow a rampant third wave of infections. A government tally reported 780 pandemic fatalities and 24,702 new cases.

Germany is not planning to follow France and other countries in introducing compulsory Covid-19 vaccinations for parts of the population.

"We do not intend to go down this road," Chancellor Angela Merkel said in Berlin after visiting the Robert Koch Institute (RKI) public health agency.

COVID TREATMENTS

Scientists have used CRISPR gene-editing technology to successfully block the transmission of the SARS-CoV-2 virus in infected human cells, according to research released yesterday that could pave the way for Covid-19 treatments.

Writing in the journal Nature Communications, researchers in Australia said the tool was effective against viral transmissions in lab tests, adding that they hoped to begin animal trials soon.

CRISPR, which allows scientists to alter DNA sequences and modify gene function, has already shown promise in eliminating the genetic coding that drives the development of children's cancer.

The team in yesterday's study used an enzyme, CRISPR-Cas13b, that binds to relevant RNA sequences on the novel coronavirus and degrades the genome it needs to replicate inside human cells.

Lead author Sharon Lewin from Australia's Peter Doherty Institute for Infection and Immunity told AFP that the team had designed the CRISPR tool to recognise SARS-CoV-2, the virus responsibly for Covid-19.

"Once the virus is recognised, the CRISPR enzyme is activated and chops up the virus," she said.

Muezzin

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Quddus had been missing since Monday afternoon.

The muezzin headed towards Shailgachhi market on Monday afternoon and had remained missing ever since, said the victim's family members.

Later, the workers of the brick kiln found his body floating in the pond, they further said, adding that the workers then informed the victim's family.

Suspecting the death to be a murder, the officer-in-charge said, the body bore injury marks.

"It is believed that some miscreants beat him, tied his hands, and threw him into a pond," he said.

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

No case was filed until this report was filed.

Pain-free blood

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Understandably, some diabetes sufferers avoid the painful process by minimizing their tests.

However, this latest test works by embedding an enzyme that detects glucose into a transistor that can then transmit the presence of glucose, according to Paul Dastoor, Professor of Physics at the University of Newcastle in Australia, who led the team that created it.

Since the electronic materials in the transistor are inks, the test can be made through printing at a low cost, Dastoor said.

"The holy grail of glucose testing has been something that is non-invasive," said Dastoor. "[This test] really does open up the prospect of pain-free, low-cost glucose testing and hopefully much better outcomes for diabetes sufferers," he said.

The new test, Dastoor said, was created by chance as scientists were working on solar cells.

Bangladesh Development Bank Ltd.		
Head Office, BDBL Bhaban 8, Rajuk Avenue, Dhaka-1000		
Real Estate Department Invitation for Tender		
Ref. No. 06.3/200/		Date: 13/07/2021
Tender is invited from the reputed Companies/Firms for Operation, Servicing & Maintenance of 04 (four) Nos. Passenger Lift in Monthly Payment basis for 03 (three) years at BDBL Bhaban-2, 12, Karwan Bazar C/A, Dhaka-1215. Necessary information's are given below:		
01.	Procuring entity	Real Estate Department, Bangladesh Development Bank Limited (BDBL), Head Office, BDBL Bhaban (Level-09), 8, Rajuk Avenue, Dhaka-1000.
02.	Procurement method	Through Open Tendering Method (OTM) of Public Procurement Rules, 2008 and The Public Procurement Act, 2006.
03.	Invitation for tender No.	BDBL/RED/OTM/2021/03
04.	Source of funds	BDBL own fund.
05.	Brief description of the goods and services	Operation, Servicing & Maintenance of 04 (four) Nos. Passenger Lift in Monthly Payment basis for 03 (three) years at BDBL Bhaban-2, 12, Karwan Bazar C/A, Dhaka-1215.
06.	Name & address of receiving tender document	Real Estate Department, Bangladesh Development Bank Limited (BDBL), Head Office, BDBL Bhaban (Level-09), 8, Rajuk Avenue, Dhaka-1000.
07.	Last date and time for selling tender schedule	02/08/2021 up to office hour.
08.	Last date and time for submission	03/08/2021 up to 12:00pm.
09.	Date, time and place for tender opening	All tenders will be opened at Real Estate Department, Head Office, Dhaka on 03/08/2021 at 12:30pm (Intending tenderers or their authorized representatives are allowed to attend at the time of opening of tender).
10.	Eligibility of tenderer	1. The tenderer must have 05 (five) years of general experience in contracting industries in public/private sector as Prime Contractor/Management Contractor. 2. The tenderer must have specific experience as a Prime Contractor in providing non-consultant service of at least 02 (two) contracts of similar nature, complexity and methods/technology completed over a period of last 03 (three) years each contract with a value of at least Tk 20.00 (twenty) lac. 3. The tenderer must have minimum amount of liquid assets i.e. working capital or credit line(s) of Tk 10.00 (ten) lac.
11.	Tender security	Tender security of an amount of Tk 2,00,000.00 (Taka two lac) only will be required in the form of Pay Order in favor of Bangladesh Development Bank Limited, Head Office, Dhaka.
12.	Price of tender schedule	Tk 1,000 (Taka one thousand) only (non-refundable).
BDBL reserves the right to accept or reject any or all tender either in part or full without assigning any reason whatsoever.		
Engr. Md. Reazul Islam Deputy General Manager Real Estate Department ☎ : 02-9555582 ☎ : 0171130641		
GD-1342		