

‘Law enforcers stood mum’

The series of communal attacks that ravaged Hindu communities across parts of the country last month have left victims traumatised. Recounting the horrors they experienced during the violence, victims of the Chattogram region spoke of their persisting feeling of insecurity at a public hearing yesterday.

ARUN BIKASH DEY, Ctg

Law enforcers stood mum as the marauders conducted their mayhem at the puja mandaps during Durga Puja, several of the victims told the hearing while giving their deposition to it.

In many cases, police and administrative officials did not respond to their calls for help immediately, which allowed the miscreants to carry out their atrocities unobstructed. In places where members of the Hindu community challenged them, they were injured by the attackers, the victims said.

They were providing deposition before the mass commission formed to investigate into the series of communal and fundamentalist violence in Bangladesh, hosted at the port city’s Shilpakala Academy.



PHOTO: STAR

One of the victims speaking at the public hearing yesterday.

Ekattorer Ghatak Dalal Nirmul Committee and the Parliamentary Caucus on Ethnic and Minority Affairs jointly formed the commission chaired by Justice Shamsuddin Chowdhury Manik.

During the hearing, the victims alleged that the police are yet to arrest the main culprits who are roaming free in their respective areas, issuing threats to withdraw cases filed against them.

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They rounded us up with ease, beat some of us up and hurled brickbats at others. Thirty-five of us were injured in the attack. One of them, Jaharal Ghosh, got hit on his head by a brickbat and is now fighting for his life at hospital.

RAJIB GUHA
PRESIDENT OF NAPONA SHEKHER KHIL SARBAJANIN KALIBARI MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

As I protested, they threatened to kill me. Some of them dispersed and started entering Hindu houses in the neighbourhood. One of them even kicked a pregnant woman.

SAJAL DAS
VICE PRESIDENT OF KARNAPHULI THANA PUJA UDJAPAN PARISHAD

Widen, not narrow, the path to justice

20 rights orgs concerned over judge’s observation, direction in Raintree hotel rape case

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Human Rights Forum Bangladesh (HRFB), a forum of 20 human rights organisations, yesterday expressed grave concern over the recent observation and direction made by judge Mosammat Kamrunnahar during the verdict of the Raintree hotel rape case.

Kamrunnahar, judge of the case, instructed law enforcers that no rape cases should be filed if 72 hours have passed since the incident.

Speakers at a virtual press conference also suggested that it is imperative to arrange training for the judges so that they are better aware of laws and the constitution, and of their powers and jurisdiction.

According to the forum, actions should be taken by the High Court to ensure accountability of the judge concerned, as such a stance has created risk of distrust about the justice system among the public.

The forum members also said the key responsibility of the court is to widen the path towards justice for victims through various observations and instructions, rather than narrow it.

Such directive from the court is contrary to existing legal provisions and will create

RECOMMENDATIONS

- » Arrange training for judges
- » Pass victim, witness protection bill
- » Ensure justice for victims
- » Widen path towards justice thru observations, instructions

The observation of the court, in this case, is out of judicial attitude and contradicts various landmark judgments and directives of the High Court regarding justice for rape victims.

TAMANNA HOQ RITI
HRFB COORDINATOR

more obstacles in ensuring justice for victims, they added.

During her keynote presentation, Tamanna Hoq Riti, coordinator of the forum, said, “The accused can also be convicted if the allegations against the accused are proved by oral testimony of the victim and other circumstantial evidence, other than medical examination.”

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Overcharging continues

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Despite ongoing mobile court drives against overcharging from passengers, bus operators are still collecting extra fare in Dhaka and Chattogram.

Some operators have even collected extra fare in the name of seating services yesterday, going against the decision of their associations to abolish the so called services by Saturday.

Yesterday, ten mobile courts of Bangladesh Road Transport Authority (BRTA) fined 245 buses in the two cities Tk 2.72 lakh for overcharging passengers. Of them, 198 were diesel-run and 49 were CNG-run buses, according to a BRTA press release.

Moreover, two buses in Dhaka were fined Tk 8,000 for hoisting illegal sticker of seating services.

With this, BRTA’s mobile courts have raised Tk 15.68 lakh fine from 1,573 buses in the six days since November 8, when the new bus fares came into force following the fuel price hike.

Although the government has decided to ramp up bus fares up to 28 percent,

A photograph showing a group of people, including some in uniform, standing near a bus. They appear to be engaged in a discussion or inspection.

- » 10 mobile courts conducting drives
- » 245 buses fined Tk 2.72 lakh in Dhaka, Ctg yesterday
- » Of them, 198 diesel-run and 49 CNG-run
- » Tk 15.68 lakh realised as fine from 1,573 buses since November 8

many operators were charging as much as 50 percent higher fares, even the CNG-run ones, for whom the hiked fares do not apply.

Amid these allegations, Bangladesh Road Transport Owners Association on Wednesday announced that they would abolish seating and gate lock services within three days.

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They’re too busy to get promoted

HC blasts officials of home, law ministries for delay

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday blasted the home and law ministries for not responding to its rule issued for introducing biometric data management system in prisons in order to properly identify the prisoners.

“Why have we issued the rule and what is the benefit of its issuance if the ministries don’t reply? They could have sought time from this court through submitting affidavit to respond to the rule. But, the officials concerned of the ministries did not feel any necessity to do so. They are too busy to get promoted,” the HC bench of Justice Jahangir Hossain Selim and Justice Md Atoar Rahman said.

The bench made the comment during hearing an appeal and petition filed in connection with a murder case of Chattogram in which an innocent Minu Akhter has served jail sentence instead of convicted Kulsuma Akhter.

During their hearing, the HC bench on June 28 asked the respondents to explain in two weeks why they should

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Verdict in Abrar Fahad murder case on Nov 28

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka tribunal yesterday fixed November 28 to deliver the judgment in Buet student Abrar Fahad murder case.

Judge Abu Zafar Md Kamruzzaman of the Speedy Trial Tribunal-1 of Dhaka set the date on completion of closing arguments in the case, Special Public Prosecutor Abu Abdullah Bhuiyan told The Daily Star.

During the closing arguments, prosecution told the tribunal they were able to prove the charges against all 25 accused and sought capital punishment



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Online gambling agents using MFS accounts: CID

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Online gambling agents are using the business accounts of mobile financial services (MFS) to run the illicit trade in the country, found an investigation of the Criminal Investigation Department (CID).

According to the CID, online gambling reaches a peak during international sports tournaments, such as the World Cup, Indian Premier League, Big Bash, and English Premier League. It found transactions of at least Tk 3-5 crore every day through MFS in just one or two districts.

“There are at least 40-50 agents in a district. There are transactions of over Tk 10 lakh a day from some of these numbers,” CID Additional Deputy Inspector General Kamrul Ahsan told a press briefing at its headquarters in Malibagh yesterday.

Kamrul Ahsan said they were investigating the online gambling site, 1xbetbd. Although the site is operated from Russia, it has agents in Bangladesh.

“The 1xbetbd agents, in particular, are using mobile financial services, especially Nagad. Sales representatives and depo managers of MFS in some districts are also linked

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Out of robbers’ jaw, into loan sharks’

From being robbed to paying high interest loans, anglers of Sundarbans cannot catch a break



- » From 2016-18, 328 robbers from 32 gangs surrendered
- » Gov declared the forest ‘robber free’ in 2018
- » But loan sharks have ascended in their place
- » Making use of power, they force anglers to take loans
- » High interests rates are determined
- » Tk 30 to Tk 40,000 interest for every lakh
- » ‘Dadon’ loans also make them sell fish at very low rates

A major fishing hub of the country, the Sundarbans attracts almost 20,000 anglers from Satkhira, Khulna, Bagerhat, Barguna and Pirojpur every year. But a majority of them get tangled up in high interest loan and hardly make any income at all.

MOHAMMAD JAMIL KHAN, back from Dublar Char, Sundarbans

It seems the efforts to make the Sundarbans safe and secure for anglers is still far from fruition. Finally rid of robbers in 2018, they have now become “captive” to a high interest loan or “dadon” system, which they have to subscribe to even get access to the forest’s waters.

These loan sharks, belonging to an influential group, offer the anglers loans at high interest or a dadon loan -- which must be repaid with products (their haul) as interest. However, there’s no way to opt out of this, as the same group handles the forest department’s “permission tickets” that one needs to fish inside the forest.

Following the surrender of around 32 robber groups in 2018, the anglers started to think the tides may have finally turned for them. But this only led to the ascent of syndicate members -- that the anglers call “saheb” (sir) --, around 15 whom run the whole network.

This means that despite their hard work, the anglers can seldom earn their worth back, as a large chunk of their money goes towards these interests.

As an example of dadon, when this correspondent visited the

Sundarbans earlier this month, he found that anglers were selling medium-sized shrimp for only Tk 90 per kg. Asked why, they said it’s because the sahebs buy from them at this price.

For comparison, the same variety of shrimps go for Tk 600 to Tk 700 per kg at kitchen markets in Dhaka, while the price is Tk 450 to Tk 500 per kg in Khulna.

However, to prevent anglers from getting to know this price, members of the syndicate switch off the network service towers inside the forest, local sources alleged. Of note, the forest only has four towers by the state-owned Teletalk.

At Dublar Char, this correspondent came across Mintu Howlader, who has been fishing in the area for the last 10 years.

Just the night before, their fishing net had been torn due to the sheer weight of the fish they caught.

“Every season, we get huge catches from the sea, but we can only keep so much as most of it has to go to repay dadon. As we have to sell our catch to the sahebs for the very low price, we’re very poorly compensated when compared with the prices at the city markets [where the fish are sold],” he said.

“We kind of have to take the loan, as it’s expensive to fund a trip to the

sea. We can’t get it from an authorised source as no one’s providing it, and this is where the sahebs step in,” Azad said in frustration.

Whenever anyone takes out a loan, they have to sign on a stamp, promising sales after coming back from the trip, sources said.

For every Tk 1 lakh loan, the local syndicate charges around Tk 30 to Tk 40 thousand in a season. In the Sundarbans, a season means a period of five months, from November to April.

A major fishing hub of the country, the Sundarbans attracts almost 20,000 anglers from Satkhira, Khulna, Bagerhat, Barguna and Pirojpur every year. But a majority of them get tangled up in the dadon system and hardly make any income at all.

Kamal Uddin alias Kamal Mama is the leader of the syndicate, who primarily controls the racket, according to locals.

Talking with this correspondent, he said they are always fair with the anglers. “We only do this with the intention to help them out,” he claimed.

‘CALLS FROM ROBBERS STILL HAUNT THEM’

In post-2018 Sundarbans, at least the

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A photograph of a man in a dark suit and white shirt, climbing a silver step ladder. He is holding a pair of binoculars to his eyes. The background is a soft-focus image of clouds.

MANAGEMENT TRAINEE OFFICER

The logo for Padma Bank, featuring a stylized sailboat on a river, with the text "PADMA BANK" and "TOGETHER IN EVERY STEP" below it.

MANAGEMENT TRAINEE PROGRAM (MT Program)
Padma Bank Limited, one of the progressive Banks in the Country with an excellent working environment and corporate culture, is looking for talented, young and energetic individuals in the position of **Management Trainee Officer**.

The entire recruitment process will be conducted through outsource company/ team. The bank will not be involved in any part of recruitment process. Any persuasion with Padma Bank will not work in any circumstances

MT Program: The MTP is a two-year training and development program geared towards highly motivated individuals having the potential to excel as future leaders in Padma Bank. It provides trainees with rotational assignments of increasing operational, managerial and leadership responsibility in the banking sector. Upon successful completion of the program, the Management Trainees are qualified to occupy middle management positions in Padma Bank Limited.

Required Qualifications & Competencies:

- Postgraduates from a reputed university with minimum CGPA 3.00 in all academic record.
- Age not exceeding 30 (thirty) years as on 31.10.2021.
- Above average language skills both in Bangla and English.
- Exposure to extra-curricular activities.
- Ability to take decisions and get things done.
- Possess excellent communication skills.
- Adequate level of Computer literacy and IT skills.

Padma Bank offers:

- A compensation package with competitive salary. MTP is a two year long (ie 24 months) program of which consolidated gross salary for first year is BDT 50,000 and consolidated gross salary for second year is BDT 65,000
- Real responsibilities and the environment to make contributions quickly.
- A fast-paced, challenging workplace that values a balance between time at work and a life outside work.
- Substantial on-the-job learning and specialized leadership training.
- Opportunities to move up across the board.
- Mentoring and coaching from senior leaders in the organization.
- The selected candidates will be appointed as Management Trainee Officer and they will be on probation for a period of 02 (Two) year. After successful probation period they will be absorbed as Executive Officer.

Selection Methodology:

- Only Shortlisted Candidates will be communicated.
- Eligible candidates will first appear in Written Exam, applicant qualifying the Written Exam will be required to undergo the subsequent stages of the selection process.
- Candidates who couldn't achieve high score to qualify in MTO program but score qualifying marks in the merit list below may be offered as Junior Trainee Officer with the salary package as per pay scale of the Bank.

The selected Officers will be required to serve at any Branch / Office of the Bank anywhere in or outside Bangladesh. The Management of the Bank reserves the right to accept or reject any application without assigning any reason whatsoever.

Application Procedure
Interested candidates are requested to apply through our website www.padmabankbd.com/career-job-openings within November 30, 2021. For any query please feel free to contact @ 0174 925 3702

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