

Two jailed for raping 10-yr-old

OUR CORRESPONDENT,
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A Habiganj court yesterday sent two men to jail after police arrested them on Tuesday on charges of raping a fifth grader in Habiganj Sadar upazila.

The two accused – Abdal Mia, 25, of Bamkandi village, and his accomplice Mamun – were arrested from the upazila's Boglabazar area.

According to the case filed by the 10-year-old victim's father, Abdal and Mamun took the child to an abandoned home and raped her there. When news of the incident spread in the area, some locals tried to hush it up.

However, upon information, Mahfuza Akter Shimul, additional superintendent of police of Sadar Circle, and other officials visited the spot. The criminals, however, had fled by then.

Golam Mortuza, officer-in-charge of Habiganj Sadar Model Police, said they rescued the victim from the spot and then admitted her to Habiganj General Hospital for treatment and necessary medical tests.

"After raiding several areas, we detained the two accused based on the victim's information and they were shown arrested after the father filed a case with our station on Tuesday night."

US eases some sanctions on Venezuela

AFP, Washington

The United States is easing some of its tough sanctions on Venezuela to encourage dialogue between President Nicolas Maduro's regime and its opponents, a senior official said Tuesday.

"The United States is undertaking a number of measures at the request of the Venezuelan interim government and the Unity platform of opposition parties negotiating with the Venezuelan regime, to support their decision to return to the negotiating table in Mexico City," the US official said.



Motorcyclists riding their vehicles on a sidewalk in the capital's Bangla Motor area yesterday, leaving little room for the pedestrians who are actually supposed to be using the space. This disregard for the safety of pedestrians is a common sight whenever there are traffic jams in the capital.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

Ease barriers to green energy

UN chief asks countries as climate change indicators hit record highs in 2021

REUTERS, Washington

The UN secretary-general yesterday called for a global coalition to speed the deployment of battery technology, urging countries to ease intellectual property constraints to hasten the transition from fossil fuels and combat climate change.

Antonio Guterres' plea comes as the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) released its annual report, which found that four key climate change indicators – greenhouse gas concentrations, sea-level rise, ocean heat and acidification – set new records in 2021.

In video remarks released alongside the WMO State of the Climate, the top UN official called the report "a dismal litany of humanity's failure to tackle climate disruption" and laid out five actions that governments need to take to "jumpstart" the energy transition.

"The global energy system is broken and bringing us ever closer to climate catastrophe," Guterres said, adding that



while the cost of renewable technologies like wind energy and solar power have dropped significantly, major barriers inhibit widespread deployment.

Guterres called on countries, manufacturers, technology firms and financiers need to join forces to fast track the deployment of batteries, which he said was a common good and should not be held

back by intellectual property constraints.

He called for international coordination to scale up and diversify supply chains for renewable energy technology and raw materials, which are concentrated in a handful of countries.

The top UN diplomat also urged countries to speed up the permitting process for renewable energy projects – similar to a recent proposal by the EU, and renewed his calls for governments to eliminate fossil fuel subsidies.

In order to give the world's developing nations more access to renewable energy to power their growing populations, Guterres also called for private and development banks to triple investments in renewables to \$4 trillion an year and help poor countries with upfront costs associated with wind and solar power.

"Commercial banks and all elements of the global financial system need to dramatically scale up investments in renewables as they phase out fossil fuels," he said.

BNP has a history of rigging polls

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The blatant rigging, she said, triggered a movement which forced Khaleda Zia's then government to step down and hand over power to a neutral caretaker government to hold the national election.

She also referred to the February 15 parliamentary election in 1996, held during the tenure of Khaleda's then government, which was boycotted by opposition parties and shunned by voters.

Elections were also rigged by BNP in 1981 and by Ziaur Rahman in 1977, 1978 and

1979, the PM said.

Hasina said the BNP, knowing quite well that they would suffer a huge defeat in the next general election, is now trying to raise question about it.

"The BNP has no leadership at all. All are convicted criminals. It is not possible to win any election with convicted criminals."

The premier said the development of the electoral system is the brainchild of the AL. In this regard, she mentioned about the introduction of voter list with photo, transparent ballot box and EVM.

Hasina, also the AL president, said her party was elected by the people and it has returned the voting rights to the people.

She said the country's massive development is owed to the AL because it has been in power for a long time.

Coming down heavily on a section of intellectuals and economists for unnecessary criticism based on false information, Hasina said how could they talk foolishly like this.

She mentioned that this section of people is saying that the government has done a grave mistake

by implementing mega projects, like Rooppur Nuclear Power Plant and Padma Bridge rail link.

"They feel pain whenever we do anything for Bangladesh.... They do not see anything good for Bangladesh. They do not feel good when Bangladesh moves forward."

Hasina said mega projects are taken up in the interest of the people of Bangladesh.

"Can others who were in power show a single example of doing anything for the country or its people or brighten the image of the country? No, they can't.

They just made Bangladesh a nation of beggars," she said.

The premier directed the AL leaders and activists to strictly follow the party's policy and ideology as it can give something to the people.

She asked the knowledgeable-intellectual people to join politics if they wanted to run the country.

The AL observed the 42nd homecoming day of Hasina on May 17.

On this day in 1981, she returned home after a long exile in India. Hasina was elected the AL president in

her absence in the party's national council held on February 14-16 in 1981.

PM's comments

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heard, Mahfuz Anam – they went to America, went to the State Department, and sent email to Hillary [Clinton] . Anyway ... the then World Bank president Mr [Robert Bruce] Zoellick on his last working day, not at any board meeting, stopped the funding for the Padma bridge project.

However, it has turned out to be a blessing in disguise in one sense."

Monitoring may begin

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development partner.

In recent dialogues, Washington put strong focus on Bangladesh's labour rights issue.

Earlier in 2013, the US suspended the GSP (generalised system of preferences) facility due to concerns over labour rights. Bangladesh also cannot avail the US's International Development Finance Corporation (DFC) facility for the same reason.

"I think we will discuss the restoration of the GSP in the Economic Forum," Momen said.

He added that Bangladesh is currently unaffected from the lack of DFC funding. "However, if there are additional

benefits, the government will ask for it."

On labour reforms, Momen said the government regularly discusses the issue with the European Union and the International Labour Organization.

He said there is an inter-ministerial committee comprised of secretaries of the ministries of foreign affairs, law, home, labour and commerce that meet from time to time and assess the progress.

About specific issues that the US raise regarding labour rights, the foreign secretary said some include the formation of trade unions, the right to association, stopping any kind of intimidation and child labour.

HC discards bail

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The HC bench delivered the order after hearing a petition, filed by the Anti-Corruption Commission, seeking cancellation of Samrat's bail.

Samrat's lawyer Munsurul Hoque Chowdhury said his client was sick and receiving treatment at the Coronary Care Unit of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University (BSMMU).

The HC cancelled his bail due to some mistakes by the lower court, he said.

The senior lawyer said Samrat will surrender to the lower court in line with the HC order and will move a fresh petition before that court, seeking bail on medical grounds.

On Monday, the ACC filed the petition with the HC challenging the lower order granting bail to Samrat.

Citing the petition, ACC lawyer Khurshid Alam Khan said the lower court concerned granted bail to Samrat on medical grounds although he was undergoing treatment at the BSMMU.

Samrat cannot be granted bail because of the gravity of his offence, Khurshid told The Daily Star.

Samrat was released on bail on May 11 after Judge Al Asad Md Asifuzzaman of Dhaka Special Judge Court-6 granted him bail that very day. He spent over two and a half years in jail in four cases.

Yesterday, ACC lawyer Khurshid and Deputy Attorney General AKM Amin Uddin Manik opposed bail of Samrat while senior lawyer Munsurul presented arguments before the HC bench in favour of bail.