

Five to die for gang rape in Khulna

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

A Khulna court yesterday sentenced five people to death for gang raping a girl in the city over 11 years ago. Women and Children Repression Prevention Tribunal-3 Judge Abdus Salam Khan also fined them Tk 20,000 each, court sources said. Two accused Ali Akbar alias Hriday and Mehdi Hasan alias Ibu were present at the court. Three other accused -- Sohel, Abdullah and Md Mohon -- are absconding, confirmed Special Public Prosecutor Farid Ahmed to The Daily Star. According to the prosecution, on March 23 in 2011, Mohon, a neighbour of the girl, called her to buy her some food. Then she was taken to a banana plantation on Ali Akbar's motorcycle. The other accused were present where she was gang raped. Later, the victim's

SEE PAGE 4 COL 5

Made in China, repaired in Bangladesh

Local experts bring imported but inoperative trains back on track

KONGKON KARMAKER, Dinajpur

In 2013, the government imported 20 sets of DEMU (diesel-electric multiple unit) trains from China's Tangshan Railway Vehicle Company Limited. The import cost was Tk 650 crore. The trains were supposed to run for at least 35 years -- or that's what the Chinese company committed to. But all 20 trains went off the tracks within four years of operation. This not only wasted so much money but also made people suffer, as they had to deal with lack of regular locomotives for travelling. Bangladesh Railway was baffled when it contacted the supplier company in 2018 for repairing the trains, as the charge they demanded was almost equal to the import cost. This left the authorities clueless, as they had to abandon the DEMU train project as a result. But in 2020, local experts came to the rescue. Two of the 20 trains were brought to Central Locomotive Workshop in Parbatipur upazila of Dinajpur. Md Rafiqul Islam, chief executive of the workshop, said these trains are "software-electric, module-controlled vehicles", which is something new to local experts.



Each train has 40 electric software modules for operation, he explained. The experts didn't give in; they planned on playing to their strengths. The modules were replaced with inverters. Batteries made in China were replaced with a set of batteries available in local markets. All the parts used for modifying and customising the trains were bought at a cheap rate from the local

market, said the engineer. It was yet to be estimated how much was spent to repair each train, but sources told this correspondent that it was around Tk 50 lakh. The locomotive engineers collaborated with engineers of Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology for this endeavour, Rafiqul added. Initiatives will be taken to repair the other inoperative trains, he said.



Their hard work of more than a year finally paid off, as one of the repaired trains, ready to be up and running again, was handed over to Bangladesh Railway recently, after a successful trial run from Parbatipur to Panchagarh, confirmed the railway officials in Parbatipur. Another test was held on Thursday. The other train will also be back on track soon, said the officials. Initiatives will be taken to repair the remaining,

they added. It can carry at least 700 to 800 passengers, said Harun Ur Rashid, a driver of the train. Monjur-Ul Alam Chowdhury, additional director general of railway, said, "Local experts successfully repaired the train at a much cheaper rate, which helped us save funds." "Our experts proved and showed their skills," he said.

FAMILY VIOLENCE Cricketer Al-Amin sued again

COURT CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh national team cricketer Al-Amin Hossain was sued again yesterday by his wife over family violence. Ishrat Jahan, wife of Al-Amin, filed the case with a Dhaka court claiming Tk 1,00,000 as maintenance per month under Domestic Violence (Prevention and Protection) Act, 2010. Metropolitan Magistrate Md Shafiuddin recorded her statement. The court also took cognisance of the charges and summoned Al-Amin to appear before it on September 27. On Tuesday, the High Court granted eight weeks' anticipatory bail to Al-Amin after he surrendered before it, seeking bail in another case. It was filed on charges of torturing his wife and demanding Tk 20 lakh as dowry from her. In yesterday's complaint, Ishrat alleged that her

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3

Bilkis Banu, mother to 74 children

S DILIP ROY

Biologically, she is a mother of two. But she is known to be a mother to 74 children, all of whom are growing up and getting all their needs fulfilled under her care. This is the story of Bilkis Banu, popularly known as the mother of orphans in Kurigram's Nageshwari upazila. Forty-eight-year-old Bilkis started teaching orphans and underprivileged children back in 1998, after completing her higher secondary education. In 2009, she established Golap Khan Shishu Sadan at College Para area, from her deeply-rooted love for these children. Back then, there were only 13 children in the orphanage. Shishu Sadan is currently an abode for 74 children, of whom, 24 are girls and 50 boys. "I feel boundless joy when the children call me Maa," she told this correspondent. Bilkis' love did not only end with rehabilitating these children. As someone who realised the importance of education, she established a primary school in 2012 and a secondary school in 2014 to ensure



that underprivileged children of the area have access to education. Around 300 children are currently studying free of cost at the two schools with 20 teachers and eight staffers. Asked how she is financing the schools and orphanage, Bilkis informed that she owns a market in the upazila, where she rents out spaces to different shops. Besides, she has set up a girls' hostel for college students.

"The amount I earn from the market and the hostel are not enough to run the schools and orphanage. We can only meet half of the total expenses; the rest comes from donations," said Bilkis. "However, things got particularly difficult during and after the pandemic," she added. Amir Hossain Rana, a resident at Shishu Sadan, said, "I could complete my higher

SEE PAGE 4 COL 5

Heroin worth Tk 5cr seized

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

Members of Rapid Action Battalion claimed to have arrested a drug peddler with 5kg heroin worth Tk 5 crore from Chapainawabganj Sadar early yesterday. The arrestee was identified as Humayun Kabir, 37, said Rab-5 Lt Col Riyaz Shahriar at a press conference. Acting on a tip-off, a Rab team arrested him from a house at 4:00am, he said. Humayun was a member of a narcotics gang who sold drugs in different areas of Rajshahi and Chapainawabganj, the official claimed.

Gold trader stabbed to death

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

A gold trader was killed allegedly by a group of miscreants in Chattogram's Patiya upazila on Tuesday. The deceased -- Biman Dhar (40) used to operate his business in the port city's Rahattarpul. The gang attacked Biman while he was on his way home in Patiya from the city around 11:00pm, said Mofazzal Hossain, sub-inspector of Patiya Police Station. They stabbed him in the chest and neck, leaving him dead on the spot, he said. On information from locals, police recovered the body and sent it to Chattogram Medical College morgue for autopsy, he said. A case was filed.

Boxes for brooding

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Moulvibazar

Wild geese laying eggs in artificial wood boxes! Although readers might be surprised by this development, for 15 years now, Sreemangal's Hail Haor Wildlife Sanctuary in Moulvibazar has been aiding the wild geese of Baikka Beel in this manner. These artificial wooden boxes now serve as an effective "brooding" site, a phase where the mother goose sits on her eggs. These geese hatched their eggs in the last days of monsoon in these boxes like the previous years, said Piar Ali, president of Baragangina Resource Management Organization.



"This is how the swampy Baikka Beel has benefitted from the man-made conservation initiative. Every year those boxes are renovated and restocked," he added. By habit, the cotton pygmy goose, also called the cotton teal



and locally known as the "balihash", builds its nest in an old tree. They may also adopt a quiet spot in abandoned houses waterside; even a monastery or temple will do. Yet despite their adaptability, numbers have been in decline for a lack of suitable nesting sites, or at least they were in decline until breeding boxes were discretely added to the landscape. These geese are long-time residents of Baikka Beel, said Md Rezaul Karim Chowdhury, divisional forest officer in Moulvibazar. Moniruzzaman Chowdhury, site officer of Center for Natural Resource Studies (CNRS), said wild ducks laid eggs in seven wooden boxes this year. A maximum of 15 and a minimum of 10 eggs were found in a box. "Our team has conducted regular

monitoring so the ducks can lay eggs without any issues," he said. A total of 22 boxes were constructed as part of the Baikka Beel Fisheries Sanctuary project and placed at convenient nesting sites for wild ducks. The first box was installed in 2006 by CNRS, which was the first artificial breeding site in Bangladesh. In 2007, wild ducks started laying eggs there, said Md Minnat Ali, member of Baragangina. He said the projects in Baikka Beel are mostly supported by USAID. Baikka Beel is a government-declared permanent fish sanctuary in Moulvibazar's Hail Haor. The internationally acclaimed sanctuary has been instrumental in conserving fish production and species diversity and biodiversity in the haor.

10 held with 216 phones in port city

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Police claimed to have arrested 10 people and recovered 216 stolen mobile phones from their possession during a raid at Chattogram city's New Market area yesterday. The arrestees used to snatch phones and sell them in the area, said law enforcers. On Tuesday, police arrested four muggers from different areas in the city, said Jahedul Kabir, officer-in-charge of Kotwali Police Station. While interrogating them, the law enforcers came to know that the stolen phones were being sold at New Market. After getting information, police conducted a raid in the area around 7:00pm yesterday, and arrested 10 people who were involved in the same crime, the OC said. "We also recovered 216 mobile phones of different brands," the police official added. Law enforcers were in the process of filing a case against the arrestees with the police station in this connection till filing of this report around 9:00pm last night.

## OPENS TODAY

You are Invited to visit & witness

New Innovations in PRINTING, PACKAGING, PAPER & PLASTICS

presents

2nd International Technology Tradeshow on Printing

# PRINTECH

BANGLADESH 2022

Concurrent with :

PAPER PLASTIC PACKAGING

**8-10 September 2022**

(Hall 2) International Convention City, Bashundhara, Dhaka.

Entry free !! Timings : 11.00am - 7.00pm

Visit & Source latest Products from Intl Suppliers of Offset, Digital & Screen Printing, Paper, Packaging, Plastic goods Manufacturing machines, Consumables, Accessories and Raw Materials.

75+ Leading Global Suppliers

Launching New Machinery & Technology

Trade Opportunity to meet new Suppliers Looking for Agencies

Live Demo of New Technologies

Face to Face Meetings for Networking

Get Updated about the Emerging Trends

Jointly Organised by :

ASK

Futuretex >>

India Pavilion by :

IPAMA

ORSIR PRINT

Supported by :

spai

Government of Bangladesh

Contact : 01894583601 / 01711340056 Email : info@astradex.com