



CUSTODIAL TORTURE Police yet to file case despite court order

Directive came after 3 women
detainees submitted injury note

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barishal

Even after a Barishal court on March 12 ordered that a case be filed against Babuganj police for torturing three women in custody, police are yet to record one.

Judicial Magistrate Md Nurul Amin passed the order that said the case must be filed within 24 hours.

After being detained for "playing loud music", the three women, Akashi Begum, Rashida and Mala Begum were tortured in police custody by officials of Babuganj Police Station on March 3.

The victims submitted an injury note from Sher-e-Bangla Medical College Hospital, attesting to the fact that they have injury marks on their hands, head and several other places.

On March 3, Babuganj police received a public nuisance complaint from the residents of Dehergati village saying there was a picnic in the locality, where loud music was being played late into the evening.

The police intervened and tried to confiscate the sound system, leading the party-goers to retaliate.

In a case filed by police, they alleged that the picnic attendees attacked and obstructed them, and injured a sub-inspector and some others, SI Hannan, of the police station and investigation officer of the case, told this

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THE SHY ONE ... A Bengal Slow Loris lives up to its Bangla name – lojjaboti banor (shy monkey) – after being spotted at Sylhet's Patharia Hill Reserve Forest. These timid primates, native to the Indian subcontinent and the Indochina region, are not only nocturnal but they like to remain hidden away from sight unless it's absolutely necessary (to find food, mates etc). As a matter of fact, when spotted, they tend to hide their faces with their hands. Evident from their English name, they are slow moving and are considered to be quite lazy. While they are generally harmless, these adorable primates can defend themselves with a venomous bite when needed. Arboreal creatures, the Bengal Slow Loris can be found in some forests in the country. However, due to deforestation and hunting, their numbers have been declining. As a result, the IUCN's Red List has categorised them as endangered species.

PHOTO: TIMU HOSSAIN

AL leader held after taking away EVM panel from centre



STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Police yesterday detained a local Awami League leader in Chattogram's Boalkhali upazila over taking the ballot unit of an Electronic Voting Machine out of a polling centre during the by-polls to the upazila chairman post.

The detainee, Ratan Chowdhury, is the president of Jayshtapura union AL, said police.

According to sources, Ratan took the ballot unit out of the polling centre at Jayshtapura Ramani Mohan High School during polling around noon.

He took the machine to an electoral camp of the AL's

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MEDITERRANEAN SHIPWRECK Faridpur families sink deeper into despair

No news yet on 11 missing youths

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Faridpur

At least 11 young men from Faridpur who were believed to be onboard the recently capsized boat in the Mediterranean Sea remained missing as of yesterday.

Meanwhile, with each passing day, their family members back home sank deeper into despair without any news about the youths.

Thirty people feared to have drowned after the boat capsized in bad weather on Sunday. A total of 17 others were rescued in the shipwreck incident and brought ashore by the Italian authorities on Monday, Italy's coast guard told Reuters.

The missing youths are Al Amin Matubbar, 20, Mahfuz Mollah, 22, Nazmul Mollah, 23, and Akramul Bapari, 27, of Krishnanagar village; Sawpan Fakir, 27, son of Ishak Fakir of Basgari village; Shamim Kazi, 21, son of Seken Kazi, Bipul Matubbar, 25, son of Sorowar Matubbar, and Biltu Sheikh, 25, son of Malek Sheikh of Sankarpasha village; Miran Sheikh, 22, son of Soleman Sheikh and Tuhin Sheikh, 20, son of Isdrish Sheikh of Shrigal village; and Shaown Takukdar, 22, son of Kashem Talukdar of Naruyahati village.

The youths, from Dangi union in the district's Nagarkanda upazila, were headed to Italy from Libya.

All of them went abroad illegally through Murad Fakir, a member of a human trafficking gang, said officials of local administration.

Topu Raihan, a local journalist,

said, "A total of 12 youths from the Dangi union were on that boat. Of them, four were from my village Shankarpasha. One of them, Mehedy Hasan, was rescued. He sent a message to his family saying that the three others could not make it to the shore."

Soleman Sheikh, father of Miran Sheikh, said, "I want my son back. We are losing sleep as we're worried sick about Miran."

Kashem Talukdar, father of Shaown Takukdar, said, "Murad and his men lied to us. They said they would send my son on a ship but they sent them on a small boat."

Bulbul Sardar, former chairman of Dangi union parishad, told The Daily Star, "It has been confirmed so far that 11 youths of Dangi union are missing. Their family members are in extreme anxiety."

The youths went abroad illegally on a contract of Tk 8 lakh per person through Murad Fakir of Krishnanagar village, he said.

Kazi Abul Kalam, chairman of Dangi union parishad, said, "Murad is a human trafficker. He sent at least 200 youths abroad illegally and earned a lot of money."

According to villagers, Murad has been involved in human trafficking with the help of several others in the district.

Miraj Hossain, officer-in-charge of Nagarkanda Police Station, said, "No one has filed a complaint in this regard so far. If a case is filed, the matter will be investigated."

HAJJ PACKAGE Ministry asks Biman to reduce airfare Hajj registration time extended again

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The religious affairs ministry yesterday asked Biman to reduce the airfare so that pilgrims can perform hajj smoothly.

In a circular last night, the ministry said they had negative reactions from different quarters, including pilgrims, hajj agencies, and the media, immediately after fixing of the hajj package.

The airfare was fixed at Tk 1.97 lakh for pilgrimage.

The ministry asked the national flag carrier to bring the fare down to a reasonable level. It, however, didn't say anything about the fare.

It also mentioned that hajj registration was yet to be completed due to high airfare.

"A writ petition has been filed with the High Court over the hajj package. The court opined for reducing the airfare," said the ministry said, adding, "The parliamentary standing committee also recommended reducing the airfare."

In another development, the government earlier extended the deadline for

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New spacesuit for Artemis moon landing revealed

AFP, Houston

Nasa and the private aerospace company Axiom Space unveiled a prototype on Wednesday of the next-generation spacesuit that astronauts will wear on the next walk on the Moon.



The suit revealed at an event at the Johnson Space Center in Houston features greater flexibility and thermal protection than those worn by the Apollo astronauts who first stepped foot on the lunar surface more than 50 years ago.

The pressurised garment has multiple protective layers, a backpack with life support systems, and lights and a high definition video camera mounted on top of the bubble-shaped helmet.

The US space agency's Artemis programme aims to return humans to the Moon in late 2025 for the first time since the historic Apollo missions ended in 1972, an initial step towards an eventual voyage to Mars.

Axiom Space was awarded a \$228.5 million contract to design the suit -- the Axiom Extravehicular Mobility Unit in space jargon -- for the mission known as Artemis III.

Axiom Space chief engineer Jim Stein appeared on stage at the Nasa facility wearing the suit, waving his arms, performing squats and dropping to one knee to display the range of motion it provides.

The spacesuit modeled by Stein featured a

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