

Death-row war criminal held in Gazipur

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Rapid Action Battalion has arrested a fugitive war criminal, who was sentenced to death for crimes against humanity during the Liberation War.

Montaz Ali Bapary alias Montaz, 76, was arrested from Gazipur's Chandra area Saturday night, Lt Col Arif Mohiuddin Ahmed, commanding officer of Rab-3, told a press briefing yesterday.

The Rab CO said Montaz had been hiding since 2016.

He moved to his son's house in Chandra in November 2022 from where Rab members arrested him.

On October 15, 2019, the International Crimes Tribunal handed death penalty to five people of Gaibandha, including Montaz for committing crimes against humanity during the Liberation War.

According to the tribunal's investigation agency, the war criminals including Montaz were involved in four incidents of killings, abduction, confinement, torture, arson and looting.

Equal wage still elusive

No increase in remuneration for temporary tea workers

MINTU DESHWARA

Hundreds of temporary tea workers in the country are suffering due to a poor pay structure. Many of them are paid around 30 to 50 percent lower wages than permanent workers.

In August last year, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina directed tea estate owners to raise the daily wage of tea workers to Tk 170 from the previous Tk 120.

As per her directives, the tea estate owners are now paying Tk 170 for permanent workers. However, the wages of many temporary workers were not raised.

"Most temporary tea workers



discrimination in terms of wages but to no avail.

Asked, Golam Mohammad Shiblee, chairman of the Sylhet chapter of Bangladesh Tea Association, a platform for tea garden owners, said, "Plucking is the main work in a tea garden. Temporary workers, who pluck leaves, get wages equal to permanent workers. But those who work less than eight hours or work on contract or shift are paid a lower wage."

The association's chairman M Shah Alam said, "I'm not entirely aware of this. We have received no such complaints regarding wage discrimination."

According to the latest data from the Statistical Handbook on Bangladesh Tea Industry-2019, there are 166 tea gardens in the country where 1,03,747 permanent workers and 36,437 temporary workers are involved.

Contacted, Major General Md Ashrafur Islam, chairman of Bangladesh Tea Board, said, "We have asked all tea estate owners to pay equal wages to permanent and temporary workers."

"We will investigate in case any such wage discrimination is taking place," he added.

I work as much as a permanent worker but get paid way less. It is very difficult to survive with such a poor wage.

BRITISH ROY
Temporary tea worker

get Tk 120, while some others get only Tk 70 to Tk 80. Rubber workers get Tk 110," said Karthik

Nayek, president of Sonachara Tea Garden Unit of Bangladesh Tea Workers Union.

Moreover, the families of permanent workers are entitled to food rations, which is not the case for temporary workers. Even, family members of permanent workers get food rations.

"I work as much as a permanent worker but get paid way less. It is very difficult to survive with such a poor wage," said British Roy, a temporary tea worker

at Moulvibazar's Sreemangal upazila.

As per Bangladesh Labour Act, 2006, workers must be paid equal wages for equal work, said Rajat Biswas, general secretary of the Moulvibazar district unit of the Bangladesh Trade Union Sangha.

Pankaj Kondo, vice-president of Bangladesh Cha Sramik Union central committee, said that they have repeatedly requested tea garden owners to end the

RAPE CASE SC chamber judge stays bail of Tangail AL leader

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A Supreme Court chamber judge yesterday stayed a High Court order that granted anticipatory bail to Golam Kibria Boro Moni, an Awami League leader, and his wife Nigar Aftab in a rape case filed in Tangail.

Justice M Enayetur Rahim, chamber judge, also directed Golam Kibria, elder brother of Tangail-2 AL lawmaker Tanvir Hasan Soto Monir, and his wife to surrender before the lower court concerned in two weeks, said DAG Sarwar Hossain Bappi.

Sarwar said Kibria, who is the vice-president of Tangail town AL unit, has been sued over the rape and torture of a teenager.

According to the case statement, the 17-year-old victim is now pregnant due to the rape. Nigar Aftab was also accused of torturing the girl, according to the case filed with Tangail Sadar Police Station on April 6.

'It's unacceptable, unconstitutional' Activists concerned over barring female UNO from performing guard of honour

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Women rights activists and groups have expressed their shock and serious concern over an incident involving Krishak Sramik Janata League leader Abdul Kader Siddique, who prevented the Sakhipur Upazila Nirbahi Officer from performing a guard of honour for deceased freedom fighter Abdul Hamid, simply because the UNO was a woman.

According to news reports, Siddique also proposed that the guard of honour should be performed by a male official.

Bangladesh Mahila Parishad in a statement has deemed Siddique's actions as "unacceptable, unconstitutional, and against the human rights of women."

They have demanded that the government, administration, and political parties resist any such discriminatory practices.

Khushi Kabir, coordinator of Nijera Kori, described the incident as "disgraceful".

"Namaz-e-Janaza (funeral prayers) and guard of honour are two different things, just like state and religion. Although he (Siddique) wanted to raise a religious issue here, he must acknowledge that a guard of honour has nothing to do with religion. It's about paying last respects to a freedom fighter on the state's behalf," she explained.

"In a country, where the prime minister is a woman and receives guard of honour, it is difficult

Namaz-e-Janaza (funeral prayers) and guard of honour are two different things, just like state and religion. Although he (Siddique) wanted to raise a religious issue here, he must acknowledge that a guard of honour has nothing to do with religion. It's about paying last respects to a freedom fighter on the state's behalf.

KHUSHI KABIR
Nijera Kori Coordinator

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