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## TORTURE ON BCL MEN

### Whoever is guilty will be punished

DMP chief tells journalists

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

New DMP Commissioner Habibur Rahman yesterday said if allegations of torture on BCL leaders by suspended ADC Harun Or Rashid and other officers are proven true, they will face punishment.

The home ministry has formed an inquiry committee in this regard. Based on the results of that committee, action will be taken if there is a crime committed by police, he told journalists at a press meet at the DMP Media Centre.

"Our [home] minister has said – whoever does wrong will be punished accordingly. I want to reiterate the same thing," he added.

Regarding involvement of president's Assistant Private Secretary (APS) Azizul Haque, he said, "His department will take action as per government rules."

Meanwhile, the three-member police probe body formed to investigate torture of two BCL men at Shahbagh Police Station allegedly by ADC Harun and other law enforcers could not yet submit their report.

The committee got a fourth deadline extension on Sunday.

On September 9, ADC Harun and some other police officials took two BCL leaders to the police station around 9:00pm and tortured them for about an hour, BCL leaders alleged.



Dust covers the Gabtoli-Sadarghat-Beribadh road, blurring the vision of commuters and making it risky for drivers to ply through. The situation is particularly concerning as Dhaka is often ranked as the city with the worst air, with a WHO report stating that outdoor air pollution led to 240,000 deaths in Bangladesh in 2019. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

## DENGUE OUTBREAK

### 11 more die, 2,596 get hospitalised

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

At least 11 more people died from dengue in 24 hours preceding 8:00am yesterday as the country grapples with a record outbreak of the mosquito-borne disease.

Of the 11 deaths, three were reported outside the capital.

At least 2,596 dengue patients were hospitalised in the 24-hour period, according to data from the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS).

Dengue has so far claimed at least 1,017 lives this year and nearly 2,08,884 were infected, making this the deadliest year since the first recorded epidemic in 2000.

According to DGHS data, 9,283 dengue patients were undergoing treatment at different hospitals across the country. A total of 1,98,584 patients have so far been released this year.

Hospitals, especially in Dhaka, are struggling to accommodate the large number of patients suffering from high fever, joint pain, and vomiting, health officials said. The government has taken initiatives to limit the spread of mosquito-borne diseases, they added.

There is no vaccine or drug that specifically treats dengue, which is common in South Asia during the June-to-September monsoon season when the Aedes aegypti mosquito, the carrier of the deadly virus, thrives in stagnant water.

## Solar power plants the way forward

BloombergNEF study says Bangladesh's plan to use hydrogen, ammonia to reduce carbon emissions not cost effective

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government's plan to use hydrogen and ammonia for reducing carbon emissions from fossil fuel-based power plants will not be cost-effective for the country, said a study by BloombergNEF – a global strategic research provider.

The study calculated the levelised cost of electricity (LCOE) with all kinds of power plants, including fossil fuel-based and renewables, and said solar power plants will be the cheapest option for Bangladesh to meet growing electricity demand.

LCOE is a measure of the average net production cost of electricity for a power plant over its lifetime, including all the costs of investment and repayments.

According to the BloombergNEF report, revealed yesterday through an online press briefing, currently the LCOE for a new utility-scale solar project in Bangladesh ranges from \$97-135/MWh, compared to \$88-116/MWh for a combined cycle gas turbine

and \$110-150/MWh for a coal power plant.

"By 2025, solar will become the cheapest option, thanks to continued technological cost reduction. By 2030, solar with batteries will also achieve a cheaper LCOE than new thermal power plants," reads the study.

BloombergNEF estimates solar photovoltaic-plus-energy storage using batteries (PVS) in Bangladesh is already cost-competitive against some diesel and oil generators due to the latter's high fuel costs.

By the 2030s, onshore wind paired with batteries is also expected to become cheaper than new coal and gas-based power plants, it said.

Bangladesh is seeking to reduce emissions from fossil-fuel-based power plants via co-firing coal with ammonia, blending natural gas with hydrogen, and applying carbon capture and storage technology as a way to reduce carbon emissions from the power sector, which will only

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1

## FEMALE HOUSE HELPS

### 21pc face physical abuse at work

Says BILS study

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Around 21 percent of female domestic workers in Dhaka experience physical abuse at the workplace, while 91 percent don't know about the hotline number 999 to seek help for gender-based violence, said a study conducted by Bangladesh Institute of Labour Studies.

The study, which surveyed 465 domestic workers from Mirpur, Mohammadpur, Badda, and Khilgaon of the capital, revealed the findings during a discussion session titled "Role of Media in Ensuring the Rights of Domestic Workers" at UCEP Bangladesh headquarters yesterday.

It was jointly organised by Dushtha Shasthya Kendra and UCEP Bangladesh. The report titled "Decent Work and Gender Violence at Workplace: A Study on Women Domestic Workers in Bangladesh-2022", was conducted under SUNTI Project (Securing Rights of Women Domestic Workers). It was supported by Global Affairs Canada and Oxfam.

“  
Domestic workers have challenges obtaining formal employment recognition due to their exclusion from the Bangladesh Labour Act.”  
DR MD ABDUL KARIM  
Executive director of UCEP Bangladesh

As per the report, 67 percent of women domestic workers face mental torture whereas 61 percent get verbally harassed.

None of them have any official agreement of employment, as the process is done verbally, and 26 percent of them face a reduction in salary if they get late or remain absent from work.

Only seven percent of the respondents received maternity leave, while three percent received payment during the leave. At least 87 percent did not receive any weekly holidays.

According to the report, 84 percent of women domestic workers have been living below the poverty line, with an average monthly salary of Tk 5,311.

Dr Md Abdul Karim, executive director of UCEP Bangladesh, said domestic workers have challenges obtaining formal employment recognition due to their exclusion from the Bangladesh Labour Act. The Domestic Workers Protection and Welfare Policy 2015 is not yet a law.

## JOURNO NADIM MURDER

### SC stays HC bail of accused

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Supreme Court chamber judge yesterday stayed for eight weeks a High Court order that granted bail to Moniruzzaman Monir, an accused in Jamalpur journalist Golam Rabbani Nadim murder case.

Justice M Enayetur Rahim passed the order following a petition filed by the state.

Monir cannot get released from jail, said Assistant Attorney General Md Saiful Alam.

Nadim, who was the Jamalpur district correspondent of Banglanews24.com and also the Bakshiganj upazila correspondent of Ekattor TV, died on June 15, a day after allegedly being attacked by supporters of suspended UP chairman Mahmudul Alam Babu.



Golam Rabbani Nadim

## B'BARIA, LAKSHMIPUR BY-POLLS

### EC to decide after meeting today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Election Commission is set to decide whether it would hold by-elections to Brahmanbaria-2 and Lakshmipur-3 constituencies after a meeting today.

"The issue of the two by-polls is on the agenda of the meeting," said an EC yesterday.

The parliament secretariat on Sunday announced the constituencies vacant after former aviation and tourism minister and Lakshmipur-3 lawmaker AKM Shahjahan Kamal and Brahmanbaria-2 lawmaker Abdus Sattar Bhuiyan died on Saturday.

There is confusion whether the EC would hold the by-elections just months ahead of next general elections which is likely to take place in early January.

A top EC official said the EC is highly likely to announce by-elections to the two vacant seats, as the constitution says a vacant parliamentary seat must be filled through election within 90 days.

The present parliament has till January 29, with more than 120 days' time, the official added.

## HC BAIL FOR SHAHED

### Stay petition sent to full bench

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Supreme Court chamber judge yesterday sent to its full bench a petition filed challenging a High Court order that granted bail to Mohammad Shahed Karim, chairman of Regent Group, in a corruption case in which he was sentenced to three years' imprisonment.

Justice M Enayetur Rahim, chamber judge of the Appellate Division of the SC, also set October 16 for hearing of the stay petition filed by the Anti-Corruption Commission.

Shahed's lawyer senior advocate Shah Monjurul Hoque said his client cannot get released from jail as he was arrested in another case.

## Education cadres demand service reform

Abstain from work

STAR REPORT

Education cadre officers of Bangladesh Civil Service yesterday abstained from performing their duties demanding reforms in their service.

Activities including classes and examinations were suspended from 9:00am to 3:00pm at all government colleges, Alia madrasas, secondary and higher education directorate and boards.

Their demands include eliminating inter-cadre discriminations, promoting all eligible officers to supernumerary positions, provision of earned leaves, and cancelling officer recruitment rules of primary schools and madrasas.



With despair and frustration painted all over her face, a woman holding her sleeping baby finally gets to purchase subsidised rice and flour from a government truck after a wait of two hours under the scorching sun. With hikes in the prices of essentials, the desperation of low-income people for affordable food is increasing every day. This photo was taken in Mohammadpur yesterday.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

## Samrat's bail extended till January 15

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday extended bail of expelled Jubo League leader Ismail Hossain Chowdhury Samrat till January 15, 2024 in a Tk 222 crore money laundering case.

The judge also granted the petition submitted for adjournment of hearing on charge framing in the case.

Judge Monjurul Imam of Special Judge's Court-6 passed the order after Samrat's lawyer Afroza Shahanaj Parvin Hira submitted two separate applications – one for extension of his bail and another for the adjournment of the charge framing hearing. The judge did not pass any order on the application submitted for lifting the travel ban.