

7 held after woman raped in Dhaka's Khilkhet

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A woman was raped in the capital's Khilkhet area on Friday night while she was visiting the area with her husband, said police.

The victim, 37, filed a case against six people under the Women and Children Repression Prevention Act with Khilkhet Police Station yesterday, Dhaka Metropolitan Police Assistant Commissioner (Cantonment Zone) Sheikh Muttajul Islam told The Daily Star.

Khilkhet police have arrested seven people, including three juveniles, over the incident.

The arrestees include Abul Kashem Suman, 39, Mehedi Hasan Hridoy, 22, Mir Azizul Islam Tutul, 23, and Robin Hossain Dewan, 28.

Citing the case statement, the AC said the woman and her husband went to a relative's house in the Kawla Bazar area. From there, she went walking with her husband towards Khilkhet around 8:30pm. When they reached Bonorupa area around

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Navigation has become almost impossible in this old channel of the Buriganga as water hyacinths cover the river in Muslimbagh of the capital's Kamrangirchar. The area has turned into an ideal breeding ground for mosquitoes also. The photo was taken on Friday.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

Faisal bought savings certificate worth Tk 2.55cr

DIPAN NANDY

Controversial taxman Quazi Abu Mahmud Faisal had purchased family savings certificates worth Tk 1.45 crore for himself and his relatives in three months, according to the Anti-Corruption Commission.

On June 27, a Dhaka court ordered the authorities concerned to confiscate all moveable and immovable properties of Faisal, a first secretary (taxes legal & enforcement) of the National Board of Revenue.

Faisal has accumulated about Tk 1,000 crore by taking bribes for transferring income tax officials, intimidating taxpayers and resorting to other irregularities, according to documents submitted by the ACC to the court on Thursday after its preliminary investigation.

ACC decided to investigate Faisal last year after allegations of misuse of power and accumulating significant wealth through bribery.

Among the documents were proof of Faisal's purchase of savings certificates worth Tk 2.55 crore between June 2019 and November 2023 in his and his family's names. Of them, family savings certificates (Paribarik Sanchayapatra) worth Tk 1.45 crore were bought between November 12, 2020 and February 10, 2021.

Faisal, who joined the NBR in 2005 as a BCS cadre in the

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Black money holders get amnesty

Criticism of think-tanks, lawmakers ignored

MAHMUDUL HASAN

Parliament yesterday approved a provision that will allow black money holders to legalise their undisclosed wealth without any scrutiny by paying a 15 percent tax, disregarding widespread condemnation from various quarters.

The provision will take effect in the upcoming fiscal year that begins on July 1.

Think-tanks, watchdogs, chambers and several lawmakers criticised the provision, terming it unethical, unjust and unacceptable.

"This represents sheer insensitiveness of the members of parliament to growing public concerns about widening floodgates for corruption, illegality and corruption, which this provision facilitates," said Iftekharuzzaman, executive director of Transparency International Bangladesh.

The move also undermines Article 20(2) of the constitution that makes black money clearly illegal, he said.

It is also discriminatory against honest income earners, who have to pay up to 30 percent tax while black money holders are being rewarded instead of being subjected to accountability and getting the provision to pay only 15 percent, he said.

"In effect, the government is inviting people at large to be corrupt, immoral and dishonest to earn black money throughout the year with the guarantee that they will be rewarded and given impunity for earning any amount of income disproportionate to the legal source. Unfortunately, the state is being pushed further down the

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Gaza civilians living in 'unbearable' conditions

Warns UNRWA as huge mounds of rotting trash pile up across the Palestinian enclave

AFP, Geneva

Gazan civilians are forced to live in bombed-out buildings or camp next to giant piles of trash, a United Nations spokeswoman said Friday, denouncing the "unbearable" conditions in the besieged territory.

Louise Wateridge from UNRWA, the UN agency supporting Palestinian refugees, described the "extremely dire" living conditions in the Gaza Strip.

"It's really unbearable," she told reporters in Geneva, via video-link from central Gaza.

Wateridge, who returned Wednesday after four weeks outside the territory, said that even in that time the situation had "significantly deteriorated".

"Today, it has to be the worst it's ever been. I don't doubt that tomorrow again will be the worst it's ever been," she said.

Nearly nine months into the offensive, Wateridge said the Gaza Strip had been "destroyed". She said she had been "shocked" on returning to Khan Yunis in central Gaza.

"The buildings are skeletons, if at all. Everything is rubble," she said. "And yet people are living there again. There's no water there, there's



no sanitation, there's no food. And now, people are living back in these buildings that are empty shells," with sheets covering the gaps left by blown-out walls.

With no bathrooms, "people are relieving themselves anywhere they can".

Wateridge said the struggle to bring fuel into Gaza and distribute it safely was having a knock-on impact on the ability to deliver aid.

"Without the fuel, the humanitarian response really grinds to a halt," she said.

Wateridge was speaking from a guesthouse as there was no fuel to go out and undertake missions.

About 150 metres away, she said, a pile of around 100,000 tonnes of waste was building up, with makeshift tents pitched all around it.

"The population is living among it," she said. "With the temperatures rising, it's really adding misery to the living conditions."

Wateridge said that before the offensive, sanitation units would clear all the trash from refugee

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ACC probe into Benazir, family's wealth at final stage

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Anti-Corruption Commission has completed a thorough analysis of documents and field-level investigations regarding former inspector general of police Benazir Ahmed, as its two-month-long inquiry reaches its final stages.

The anti-graft body did not accept Benazir's written claims that his assets were acquired legally.

The ACC team is now preparing a comprehensive report to submit to the commission. The report may recommend filing charges against Benazir Ahmed, his wife Jissan Mirza, and his two daughters, Farheen Rishita Binte Benazir and Tahsin Raisa Binte Benazir.

There is, however, some uncertainty within the commission regarding whether to request a detailed wealth statement from Benazir. Depending on the directives received, the ACC team might either issue a notice for asset details or directly recommend filing charges.

An ACC high official, seeking anonymity, told The Daily Star, "Benazir and his family have claimed in written statements that their wealth was legally acquired. But their explanations don't add up and thus unacceptable. The ACC team will soon submit their report to the commission based on the analysis of the collected data."

Benazir and his family's written statement was submitted to the ACC chairman on June 20, said ACC Secretary Khorsheida Yasmin.

"Hopefully, we will be able to file the report with the court as per our schedule."

However, ACC's asset management unit plans to

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Vinicius comes alive for Brazil

REUTERS

Vinicius Jr unleashed his inner beast in a little over 45 minutes of pure Brazilian football mayhem to guide the five-time World Cup champions to their first 2024 Copa America win against Paraguay on Friday.

The 23-year-old electric winger scored twice and delivered a much-needed statement performance that Brazilian fans have long been waiting for. The Real Madrid rising star may be one of the best players in the world but until now that fiery spark has not been seen in his national team performances.

Even in Brazil's Copa America opener this year - a goalless draw against Costa Rica - Vinicius ended up being substituted halfway through the second half after not managing a single scoring attempt. After that, Brazil manager Dorival Jr changed tack and that decision paid back in a major way.

Instead of being deployed as more of an orthodox winger wide on the left against Costa Rica, Dorival gave Vinicius the freedom to roam across the front line on Friday against Paraguay and fans were shown why he is a strong contender to win the Ballon d'Or after guiding Real to a

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Brazil forward Vinicius Junior celebrates scoring his team's third goal against Paraguay in their Copa America Group D match at Allegiant Stadium in Las Vegas yesterday. The Real Madrid star scored twice as the six-time champions eased some pressure following a goalless draw against Costa Rica in their first match of the 16-nation tournament.

PHOTO: REUTERS

Radioactive rhino horns to curb poaching in S Africa

AFP, Mokopane

South African scientists have injected radioactive material into live rhino horns to make them easier to detect at border posts in a pioneering project aimed at curbing poaching.

The country is home to a large majority of the world's rhinos and as such is a hotspot for poaching driven by demand from Asia, where horns are used in traditional medicine for their supposed therapeutic effect.

At the Limpopo rhino orphanage in the Waterberg area, in the country's northeast, a few of the thick-skinned herbivores grazed in the low savannah.

James Larkin, director of the University of the Witwatersrand's radiation and health physics unit who spearheaded the initiative, told AFP on Tuesday he had put "two tiny little radioactive chips in the horn" as he administered the radioisotopes on one of the large animals' horns.

The radioactive material would "render the horn useless... essentially poisonous for human consumption" added Nithaya Chetty, professor and dean of science at the same university.

