

15 return home from Indian jail

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Benapole

Fifteen Bangladeshi women and children returned home through the Benapole check post on Friday night after spending two years in an Indian jail.

The group, consisting of nine women and six children from Narail, Khulna, and Satkhira districts, was handed over by Petrapole Immigration Police of India to Benapole Immigration Police at 10:30pm for travel permit processing. Yesterday morning, Rights Jessore, an NGO, received them and took them to a shelter home.

Jamaat ameer calls

FROM PAGE 3

you call minorities? Don't lecture us on communal harmony. This country has a long history of communal harmony, and the people of Bangladesh have always demonstrated that."

The Jamaat ameer emphasised that in

Bangladesh, there is no concept of majority and minority.

"Everyone is a proud citizen of this country," he stated, calling on the party leaders and activists to unite and work together for the betterment of the nation's future.

Security beefed up yet fear persists

FROM PAGE 3

However, his absence did little to quell the mob's anger.

On December 14, ten days after the attack on Hindu neighbourhood, police filed a case and arrested four people.

The arrestees are Alim Hossain, 20; Sultan Ahmed Raju, 20; Emran Hossain, 26, and Shajahan Hossain, 21. All four are members of the banned Bangladesh Chhatra League, said OC Zahidul Haque.

Of the accused, 12 are named and 150-170 unnamed, he added.

THE TRAUMA

The next morning, Minoti and her child left the village. She returned three days after that, but even now, fear lingers.

"Though I have returned, I am still scared. I live alone

with my child because my husband works abroad," she said.

Others shared similar experiences.

Sixty-year-old Milon Rani Das recalled hiding in the nearby jungle as the mob attacked. "We left the village silently when the mob left after over an hour. But when I returned on December 6, I found my house destroyed and belongings stolen. It's hard to feel safe despite repeated assurances," she said.

Pinki Rani Das, Akash's sister-in-law, recounted the moments leading up to the attack.

"On the evening of December 3, police officers, local leaders, and others came looking for Akash. We handed him over, hoping it would prevent violence. It didn't."

The mob left scars—both physical and emotional.

Fifty-five-year-old Subodh Das suffered severe injuries, beaten with sticks. "My hands, legs, and hip were injured. I'm still undergoing treatment at Sylhet MAG Osmani Medical College Hospital and cannot return home anytime soon," he told The Daily Star over the phone.

Sixty-five-year-old Pranati Bala Das, who fled with her daughter and granddaughters, broke into tears while recalling the night. "We left the village the next morning and returned after five days. Even now, I can't sleep at night," she said.

Kalpna Rani Das, whose bedridden husband was attacked, echoed these fears. "They broke into our

house, hit my husband on the forehead, and took away everything."

The shop owned by Roni Das, located by the main road, was among the first to be attacked. "They looted and vandalised goods worth over Tk 2 lakh. It was my family's sole income source. Now, I don't know how I'll look after my family," he said.

Besides, the Loknath Temple and two family temples were vandalised.

Mohammad Ilias Mia, deputy commissioner of Sunamganj, said, "Given the present context, even a house hit with a stick can be considered an attack."

"The Loknath Temple was given Tk 50,000, and two other family temples in the village received Tk 25,000 each. Besides, 10

families of Manglargaon village received Tk 10,000 each as compensation.

"To avoid further incidents, we had a meeting in the upazila. We have decided to form social committees with representatives from all religions to work on upholding communal harmony."

VIGILANCE, GLIMMER OF HUMANITY

In the aftermath, police set up an outpost, and the army often patrols the area.

The steps taken by the administration have been successful in preventing further attacks. Reassured, many families, who left on the night of December 3, have returned.

However, the trauma stays. Men of the village still stay awake at night to guard

against further attacks.

"Many families, especially women, have not returned," said Birendra Das, a village elder. "We don't know when life will feel normal again."

When the situation spiralled out of control, Maulana Ekramul Haque, the Imam of Dowarabazar Central Mosque, rushed to Manglargaon to help.

"My home is adjacent to Manglargaon, and we've lived in harmony with the Hindu community for decades," he said.

"Islam does not support vandalising or looting. Although we couldn't save the houses already attacked, we tried our best to control the mob. Otherwise, the destruction could have been far worse," added Maulana Ekramul.

Hassan Ariff will be remembered

FROM PAGE 3

a vacuum in the Supreme Court Bar. He was one of the lawyers who worked with compassion for the country," he added.

Supreme Court Bar Association President Barrister A M Mahubb Uddin Khokon said no one can raise a question over Ariff's integrity as he earned respect from everyone during his long professional career.

Bangladesh Bar Council Vice-Chairman Zainul Abedin said, "In 2001, the then prime minister Khaleda Zia asked me to find a good lawyer suitable for appointing as the Attorney General. Later, I introduced Hassan Ariff

to her. Finally, Ariff was appointed Attorney General and served for a long time."

He was known as a good lawyer in the legal field, Zainul said, adding that his vacuum cannot be fulfilled in the country.

Bangladesh Bar Council Enrollment Committee Member Ruhul Quddus Kajal said, "There are very few people who have served in important positions in the state during both the caretaker government and the interim government."

Hassan Ariff was a very learned and honest man, he said, adding that as the Attorney General, he played a crucial role in the field of law and justice.

International Crimes

Tribunal Chief Prosecutor Muhammad Tajul Islam said, "Ariff had many dreams for Bangladesh. He always thought for the country's welfare."

Meanwhile, the third namaz e-janaza of Hassan Ariff was held at the Bangladesh Secretariat on the same day.

Environment Adviser Syeda Rizwana Hasan and Secretary of the Ministry of Civil Aviation and Tourism Nasreen Jahan attended the janaza, among others, said an official handout.

While delivering a memorial speech after paying tribute to Hassan Ariff, Rizwana said Hassan Ariff was a perfect lawyer whose contributions to

establishing environmental justice, in addition to his professional responsibilities, remained unparalleled.

His professional integrity, compassionate outlook, and application of law for environmental conservation stand as an inspiring model for all, she said.

"As an environmental lawyer, whenever I sought his guidance, he prioritised advising on cases involving encroachments of sand, hills, and rivers, setting aside personal legal matters," she said.

After the namaz e-janaza, various ministries paid rich tributes to the late adviser Ariff by placing wreaths on the coffin.

Naripokkho

FROM PAGE 3

On the other hand, the AF Mujibur Rahman Foundation, founded in 1985, supports a wide range of institutions and activities.

Its primary mission is the expansion of educational opportunities and improvement in the quality of education with a special emphasis on mathematics.

The release says yesterday's ceremony opened with a musical performance by noted singer Farida Parveen.

Prof Naila Kabeer and Prof Perween Hasan then spoke on behalf of the foundation, while Barrister Sara Hossain and Prof Firdous Azim spoke on behalf of Naripokkho.

Political will key to police reform

FROM PAGE 3

comprehensive code of conduct. Intelligence agencies, he noted, should be subject to review to ensure accountability.

ASM Nasiruddin Elan, director of Odhikar, criticised the police for serving as political tools to suppress opposition and perpetuate corruption.

"False cases and misuse of power have become systemic issues," he said, doubting political parties' commitment to genuine reform.

Shafiqat Munir, senior research fellow at BIPSS, added that the militarisation of the police has hindered their ability to serve the public effectively. "Specialised units with overlapping roles only create inefficiencies," he said.

Nurul Haq Nur, president of Gono Odhikar Parishad, highlighted similar issues in the judiciary, where promotions and positions are often dictated by political affiliation.

"Internal democracy within political parties is essential for any meaningful reform," he said.

Barrister Andaleev Rahman Partho, president of the Bangladesh Jatiya Party, called for citizens to ensure that future governments avoid authoritarian tendencies.

Sohrab Hassan, joint

editor of Prothom Alo, pointed out that the July uprising brought minimal change. He criticised the reform commissions for lacking inclusivity and representation.

"The deaths of police officers in recent conflicts also need thorough investigation," he added.

Rashna Imam, a Supreme Court lawyer, argued that the colonial-era Police Act of 1861 perpetuates a mindset of suppression. "Guidelines to prevent misuse of the act are often ignored, and a lack of judicial independence exacerbates the crisis," she said.

Former IGP Muhammad Nurul Huda emphasised that the police must not be politicised. "Public servants must not become private servants of political parties," he said, advocating for laws to prevent the excessive use of force.

Former Judge Iktered Ahmed highlighted systemic failures, citing a conviction rate of less than five percent in cases investigated by the police.

Former IGP Dr M Enamul Huq, a member of the Law Commission from 2004 to 2007, proposed forming a commission to evaluate the implementation of previous reform recommendations.

The dialogue also underscored the need for greater transparency and

accountability.

ANM Muniruzzaman called on the media to act as independent watchdogs, while ASM Nasiruddin Elan noted that police reforms have been consistently hindered by political motivations.

AK Azad, publisher and editor of Samakal, urged the establishment of actionable guidelines for law enforcement reforms that remain binding regardless of the ruling party.

Zahir Uddin Swapon, adviser to the BNP chairperson, questioned whether reforms should focus on enhancing police service or maintaining police control.

Despite these challenges, former IGP Nurul Huda reminded attendees that reforms are inherently slow processes requiring persistence.

Kazi Rakib Hossain, a student representative, said an apology from law enforcement is insufficient without justice and accountability. He questioned the necessity of Rab, citing its troubled history.

Beximco

FROM PAGE 3

congestion, long-distance vehicles travelling from North Bengal to Dhaka were redirected through Gazipur and the Kaliakoir-Dhamrai regional roads, he added.

Assistant Superintendent of Police of Gazipur Industrial Police Abu Taleb said vehicle movement started around 2:00pm after joint forces drove away the protesting workers from the highway.

Talking to reporters, the agitating workers said they had received their salaries and allowances on time until August 5.

However, the factory closures have left thousands of workers unemployed.

This situation has left thousands of workers struggling to cover daily necessities, fund their children's education, and repay debts to local shops.

However, this correspondent could not reach the factory authorities for comment.

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh Local Government Engineering Department Host and FDMN Enhancement of lives through Infrastructure Improvement Project (HELP) Workshop Bhaban (Level-3), Agargaon, Sher-e-Bangla Nagar, Dhaka-1207. www.lged.gov.bd

Memo No. 46.02.0000.560.07.004.24.04

Date: 19/12/2024

REQUEST FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST (REOI) (CONSULTING SERVICES – FIRM SELECTION) [INTERNATIONAL]

Country: Bangladesh

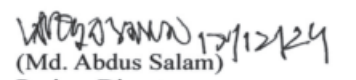
Name of Project: Host and FDMN Enhancement of lives through Infrastructure Improvement Project (HELP)

Assignment Title: Consulting Services for Design & Supervision

Reference No: HELP/S-01

Credit No: IDA-7545-BD

- The People's Republic of Bangladesh has received credit & Grant from the International Development Association (IDA) of the World Bank Group toward the cost of the Host and FDMN Enhancement of lives through Infrastructure Improvement Project (HELP) and intends to apply part of the proceeds for the consulting services of Design and Supervision (D&S).
- The consulting services ("the Services") include: The Design & Supervision consultancy Firm will support the implementing agency in the Design phase to prepare the initial and final detailed designs; technical specifications, bill of quantity (BoQ), cost estimate and procurement support including bidding documents, and followed by the Supervision phase including contract management, construction supervision, and project management support. The firm will also support the preparation of the site screening and environmental and social reports required by and complied with the World Bank's new Environmental and Social Framework (ESF); developing, maintaining and improving the Information, Communication Technology (ICT) based monitoring and decision support systems and integrating with the LGED and the concerned project, etc.
- The detailed Terms of Reference (TOR) for the assignment and soft copy of prescribed format for submission of Expression of Interest can be found at the following address and website: www.lged.gov.bd. The duration of the assignment will be about 48 (Forty-eight) months covering the full project period. The assignment is expected to commence on June 2025.
- The Local Government Engineering Department (LGED) now invites eligible consultancy firms ("Consultants") to indicate their interest in providing Design & Supervision Consulting Services. Interested Consultancy firms should provide information demonstrating that they have the required qualifications and relevant experience to perform the Services. The shortlisting criteria are:
 - General Experience of the Firm (core business and years in business);
 - Experience in similar assignments of compatible size, complexity and technical specialty in the required area. International experience and experience in development partner-financed contracts will be considered an advantage;
 - Firm's financial strength;
 - Firm's in-house staffing resources with relevant expertise (extent of relevant expertise available among the staff who are on the firm's regular payroll). However, CVs of individual staff will not be evaluated in the EOI/shortlisting stage.
- Consultants are requested to submit at least the following supporting documents in support of the above-mentioned criteria: (a) The Firm's Incorporation/Trade/registration documents from the country of the firm; (b) JV agreement/letter of intent (if applicable); (c) Firm's brochure; (d) Audited financial reports for last 3 years; (e) list of the firm's in-house/regular staff with relevant expertise (f) description of experience of similar assignments in Project Data Sheet (which shall include, among others, project & assignment name, scope of services, contract amount, duration of the assignment, total person-months of the assignment, name of the client with address, period of contract (date of contract signing to date of completion), funding agency(s), location/country of service, description of the project with components, services actually performed etc.) completed during the last 10 years.
- The attention of interested Consultants is drawn to Section III, paragraphs, 3.14, 3.16, and 3.17 of the World Bank Procurement Regulations for IPF Borrowers (Fifth Edition, September 2023) ("Procurement Regulations") setting forth the World Bank's policy on conflict of interest.
- Consultants may associate with other firms to enhance their qualifications but should indicate clearly whether the association is in the form of a joint venture and/or a sub-consultancy. The qualifications of sub-consultants will not be considered in the EOI evaluation and Shortlisting process. In the case of a joint venture, all the partners in the joint venture shall be jointly and severally liable for the entire contract, if selected, and it is preferable to limit the maximum number of JV partners to 04 (four) including the Lead Firm. In the case of an association (JV or Sub-consultancy), the Consultants must explain in the EOI submission (a) the rationale for forming the association and (b) the anticipated role and relevant qualifications of each member of the Joint Venture and/or of each sub-consultant for carrying out the assignment, to justify the proposed inclusion of the JV members and/or sub-consultants in the association. Failure to provide the above explanation in the Expression of Interest may risk the association not being shortlisted for the assignment.
- A Consultant will be selected in accordance with the Quality and Cost Based Selection (QCBS) method set out in the World Bank Procurement Regulations for IPF Borrowers (Fifth Edition, September 2023).
- Further information can be obtained at the address below during office hours from 09.00 to 16.00 hours local time.
- Expressions of interest must be delivered in a written form to the address below in person, or by mail or by email by 15.00 local time (GMT+ 6 hours) on or before 26 January, 2025. In the case of hard copy, one original and three copies should be submitted.


(Md. Abdus Salam)
Project Director
HELP Project, LGED
e-mail: pdhelp.lged@gmail.com

PRAYER TIMING
DECEMBER 22

Fajr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib	Esha
AZAN 5:25	12:45	3:45	5:24	7:00
JAMAAT 6:00	1:15	4:00	5:27	7:30

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

FOR SALE
BGIC Tower,
34-Topkhana
Road, Dhaka. 5700
sqft. commercial
9th floor.
Cont: 01818367255
01979367255

NOTICE OF PERMANENT CLOSURE OF REPRESENTATIVE OFFICE

This is to notify all concerned, including clients, partners, and stakeholders that GRASIM INDUSTRIES LIMITED will be closing its Representative Office at 10B, Ataturk Tower, 22 Kemal Ataturk Avenue, Banani, Dhaka-1213, Bangladesh, effective 25th March, 2025. As such, the Representative Office in Bangladesh will cease all activities and operations on the aforementioned date.

We would like to express our sincere gratitude to all of our partners, clients, and employees in Bangladesh for their support and collaboration throughout our time in the country. We remain committed to maintaining strong relationships with all stakeholders.

We appreciate your understanding and cooperation during this transition period.

Thank you for your continued trust in GRASIM INDUSTRIES LIMITED.

Vice President (F&C)

Grasim Industries Limited
Dhaka, Bangladesh.