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BREACHING DISCIPLINE Govt to revoke passports of ex-envoy, family

DIPLMATIC CORRESPONDENT

The foreign ministry has initiated departmental action against Mohamud Harun Al Rashid, former Bangladesh ambassador to Morocco, for breaching discipline.



Harun Al Rashid

In a statement yesterday, the ministry said it also instructed the relevant authorities to revoke the passports of Harun and his family.

According to the statement, Harun was recalled on December 11, 2024, and ordered to report immediately.

However, citing multiple excuses, he delayed his return and formally relinquished his position on February 27. He has since reportedly moved from Rabat, Morocco, to Ottawa, Canada, the ministry said.

Harun was expected to return to Dhaka from Ottawa on March 6 but did not, the ministry added.

Yesterday, he posted on Facebook a

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Shoppers checking out clothes at a holiday market in front of Motijheel Ideal School in the capital. This market, which sits every Friday, is bustling with customers as Eid approaches. Prices of products are relatively low here. The photo was taken around 11:30am yesterday.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

'We are still in shock' Says sister of deceased Magura girl

STAR REPORT

The sister of the deceased eight-year-old Magura girl yesterday said the family wanted the highest punishment for the perpetrators.

"My family is still in shock, and we are still processing her death. My mother hasn't stopped crying yet," she told The Daily Star.

Her deceased sister, a third grader, was fatally injured when she was choked and allegedly raped. She died at the Combined Military Hospital in the capital on Thursday.

According to a case filed by her mother on March 8, the girl was raped while visiting her elder sister's house in Magura town.

Police arrested the sister's husband, his parents and brother.

Muhammad Alauddin, inspector of Magura Sadar Police Station, said police were waiting for the autopsy report.

He said the authorities assured him that the report would be released soon.

On Thursday, locals vandalised the house of the accused and set it on fire, said police.

Yesterday morning, angry locals threw stones at the burned down house in Magura town.

Protesters, mostly students, yesterday submitted a memorandum to the district administration, demanding prompt justice.

[Our correspondent in Benapole contributed to the report.]

Star INTERVIEW

SpaceX hails govt move to cut red tape Says high official of US company

MAHMUDUL HASAN



The interim government's push to promptly bring Starlink satellite internet to Bangladesh signals its commitment to eliminate bureaucratic hurdles and create a business-friendly environment, said a top official of SpaceX, the parent company of Elon Musk's satellite venture.

Referring to the Chief Adviser Prof Yunus' February 19 letter asking for SpaceX connectivity in 90 work days, Richard H Griffiths, a senior adviser at SpaceX, said, "It was a very good sign and a great signal of how this interim government is responding to business."

In an interview with The Daily Star, he said Prof Yunus made a very focused effort during a phone call to highlight the need for Starlink in Bangladesh.

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Intimidation, harassment for speaking up

Anti-rape female protesters allege non-cooperation of law enforcement

NILIMA JAHAN

Female activists leading the recent anti-rape protests and the July uprising are enduring continuous intimidation and harassment, both online and offline.

One such activist is Prapti Taposhi, a Jahangirnagar University student and a coordinator of the July Movement, who has been vocal in the ongoing anti-rape protests.

"Every day, I receive 10 to 12 rape threats on my profile. And it's not just me -- any woman who speaks out faces the same."

While digital harassment has existed for some time, it has escalated not just in numbers but in intensity since July last year, she said, adding that harassment has now become widespread.



"We are challenging extremists, Islamist factions, the government, its supporters and even pro-Awami League sympathisers. They all use social media to attack us -- because targeting women is the easiest way to silence dissent."

Prapti receives daily explicit threats, including messages such as: "I'll rape you to show you what freedom feels like!"

Videos of her have been circulated across social media, some manipulated into 'revenge porn'.

Despite not fearing the constant attacks, she feels helpless as law enforcement agencies are not taking any action to identify the perpetrators.

Her family, too, has been targeted, with rape and death threats and links to revenge porn, leaving her parents deeply concerned for her safety.

Shima Akhter, a vocal critic of the Awami League and a member of the Bangladesh Student Federation, is in the same boat.

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A group of students celebrating Holi at Dhaka University's Jagannath Hall yesterday. The Hindu festival of colours signifies the victory of good over evil.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

Back truce, or face sanctions

United G7 warns Russia, calls for permanent ceasefire in Gaza

AFP, Charlevoix

The Group of Seven powers yesterday warned Russia of new sanctions unless it accepts a ceasefire with Ukraine, in a forceful show of unity after President Donald Trump rattled the club of democracies.

Meeting at a rustic hotel in rural Quebec, G7 foreign ministers also backed Ukraine's fight for its "territorial integrity" and spoke of Russia's "aggression," terminology earlier eschewed by Trump as he reached out to Moscow.

The consensus on Ukraine came despite mounting tension within the G7 - Britain, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan and the United States as Trump slaps

punishing tariffs on allies and questions the very sovereignty of host Canada.

A G7 statement backed a US-led call for a 30-day truce embraced by Ukraine and "called for Russia to reciprocate by agreeing to a ceasefire on equal terms and implementing it fully."

"They discussed imposing further costs on Russia in case such a ceasefire is not agreed, including through further sanctions, caps on oil prices, as well as additional support for Ukraine, and other means," such as using frozen Russian assets.

The Group of Seven also noted the "need for robust and credible security arrangements to ensure that

Ukraine can deter and defend against any renewed acts of aggression."

It did not elaborate further, and Trump has closed the door on admitting Ukraine into Nato, an idea loathed by Russian President Vladimir Putin.

Trump since his return to power has stunned allies by reopening dialogue with Putin and briefly cutting off US aid and intelligence sharing that has been vital to Ukraine since Russia invaded three years ago.

But the diplomatic picture changed dramatically Tuesday when US Secretary of State Marco Rubio, who participated in the G7 talks in Quebec, and Trump's national security advisor Mike Waltz met Ukrainian officials in Saudi Arabia.

3 children raped, four suspects held

STAR REPORT

Three cases were filed over the rape of a seven-year-old, an eight-year-old, and a nine-year-old in Lalmonirhat, Chapainawabganj, and Sirajganj, respectively, between Thursday night and yesterday morning.

In Lalmonirhat, a 22-year-old man was arrested in a case filed over the rape of a seven-year-old girl in Hatibandha upazila.

Jahurul Molla Sagar, 22, was arrested with the help of locals on Thursday night, said Hatibandha Police Station Officer-in-Charge Mahmudun Nabi, reports our local correspondent.

According to the case, the incident took place Thursday afternoon when Jahurul

was visiting the victim's house at Doani Pittifata village. He raped her there when he found the child alone.

He fled when the child's mother and locals rushed to the scene, hearing screams. They rescued the child and admitted her to the hospital.

The OC said based on the victim's medical report, a charge sheet would be prepared and submitted to the court.

In Chapainawabganj, three people were arrested yesterday in a case filed over the rape of an eight-year-old speech-impaired girl in Shibganj upazila.

One of the arrestees is Sakhawat Hossain, 19, SEE PAGE 6 COL 5

Prime Bank

PRAYER TIMING

MARCH 15

Fajr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib	Esha
AZAN 4:52	12:45	4:30	6:08	7:45
JAMAAT 5:02	1:15	4:45	6:23	8:15

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

SEHRI, IFTAR TIMING

RAMADAN	MARCH	SEHRI	IFTAR
14	15		6:08
15	16	4:50	6:08
16	17	4:49	6:09

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