

HC asks DC, SP to protect Barguna child rape victim

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday directed the Barguna deputy commissioner and its superintendent of police to provide protection to the child rape victim, whose father was found dead a day after he filed a case in that regard, and her family.

It also ordered the government to assign a social welfare officer to take necessary measures for the welfare of the child, a fifth grader.

At the same time, the HC asked the authorities concerned of the government to ensure the security of the family of Magura's child rape victim, who died at Dhaka Combined Military Hospital (CMH) on March 13 and to take necessary care of her elder sister.

The HC bench of Justice Farah Mahbub and Justice Debasish Roy Chowdhury issued the orders

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A woman cries while sitting on the rubble of her house, destroyed in an Israeli strike, in the Nuseirat refugee camp in central Gaza Strip yesterday; Palestinians ride on a truck as they flee their already destroyed homes in northern Gaza after the Israeli army issued fresh evacuation orders; and people search for items to salvage in a building destroyed in Israeli strikes.

PHOTO: AFP, REUTERS

JU suspends

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at a press briefing yesterday, following a syndicate meeting held on the previous day at the university's new administrative building.

Prof Kamrul, who presided over the meeting, said the university formed a high-level committee to further probe the incidents.

Among the suspended BCL activists, those who have already graduated will have their academic certificates withheld, while those who have completed their exams and viva will have their results withheld.

The VC added, "Nine teachers have been suspended for their alleged role in abetting the attacks. A committee has been formed to gather further evidence against other teachers who may have been involved."

Besides, former JU VC Prof Md Nurul Alam and former registrar Abu Hasan, who have retired, will have their pension benefits suspended due to their alleged complicity, the VC added.

The nine suspended teachers are former Pro-VC (Academic) Prof Mohammed Mostafa Feeroz, ex-proctor Prof Mohammad Alamgir Kabir, Prof Esrafil Ahmed, Associate Prof Mehedi Iqbal, former dean of Faculty of Social Sciences Prof Bashir Ahmed, Associate Prof ASM Firoz ul Hasan, Associate Prof Hosne Ara, Associate Prof Nazmul Hassan Talukdar, and Prof Tajuddin Shikdar.

Meanwhile, JU pro-VC (administration) Prof Sohel Ahmed, also a syndicate member, told this correspondent that the six-month suspension of six students for their alleged involvement in the killing of BCL leader Shamim Mollah will end on March 19.

Shamim was beaten to death on the university campus on September 18 and the suspension was imposed the following day.

Besides, the withholding of academic certificates for six months of two students allegedly involved in the murder will expire on March 19.

In another major decision, the university syndicate has decided to rename the dormitories named after the family members of deposed prime minister Sheikh Hasina. A committee has been formed to oversee the renaming process, said JU Registrar ABM Azizur Rahman.

Meanwhile, July 15 has been officially declared as Black Night at JU to observe the violent attack on students, the registrar added.

Dhaka to get semi-auto signals to tackle jam

FROM PAGE 1

The move follows a two-decade-long struggle to implement an efficient system of traffic management. Over the years, the authorities spent over Tk 119 crore on modernising the equipment, but Dhaka traffic is mostly managed manually.

Under the new initiative, DNCC will oversee 14 intersections and Dhaka South City Corporation eight.

In the beginning, DSCC will install lights at the intersections near InterContinental hotel and Banglamotor, and DNCC at Saarc Foara roundabout and Farmgate.

Whether more places will see the change will depend on the outcome of the lights at the four intersections, officials say.

There will be a switch at the traffic police booths, allowing officers to toggle between automatic and manual modes. Cameras and loudspeakers will be installed for better enforcement, they add.

ENDLESS TAILBACKS

On a recent afternoon at the Sergeant Ahad Police Box in Gulistan, one of

against Hamas with increasing military strength," the statement said.

US National Security Council spokesman Brian Hughes blamed Hamas, saying it "could have released hostages to extend the ceasefire but instead chose refusal and war".

Hamas said Israel had "decided to overturn the ceasefire agreement", calling it "a decision to sacrifice the occupation's prisoners and impose a death sentence on them".

Hamas also accused Israel of attacking "defenceless civilians" and urged mediators to hold the Netanyahu administration "fully responsible" for "violating and overturning" the ceasefire.

Hamas said the head of its government in Gaza, Ezzam al Dalis, was among several officials killed.

In the southern Gaza Strip, AFP footage showed people rushing stretchers with wounded people, including young children, to hospital. Bodies covered with white sheets were also taken to the hospital's mortuary.

Mohammed Jarghoun, 36, was sleeping in a tent near his destroyed house in Khan Yunis when he was awoken by huge blasts.

"I thought they were dreams and nightmares, but I saw a fire in my relatives' house. More than 20 martyrs and wounded, most of them children and women."

Ramez al-Amarin, 25, described carrying children to a hospital southeast of Gaza City.

"They unleashed the fire of hell again on Gaza," he said of Israel.

The health ministry in Hamas run Gaza said the bodies of 413 people had been received by Gaza hospitals, adding "a number of victims are still under the rubble".

A spokesman for the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies said at a briefing in Geneva "that many medical facilities are literally overwhelmed across Gaza".

UN chief Antonio Guterres was "shocked" by the renewed strikes, a spokesperson said, while UN rights chief Volker Turk said he was "horrified".

Meanwhile, Tom Fletcher, head of the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, yesterday said the Israeli strikes have plunged residents of Gaza into "abject fear" once again.

"Overnight our worst fears materialized. Airstrikes resumed across the entire Gaza Strip," he told the UN Security Council in a video

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meeting.

The council meeting was called -- prior to the air strikes -- by several member states to discuss the humanitarian situation as Israel has blocked aid into Gaza Strip since March 2.

Britain and France both called for the renewed hostilities to end.

Hamas backer Iran denounced the wave of attacks as a "continuation of the genocide and ethnic cleansing" in the Palestinian territories.

Russia and China warned against an escalation, while Egypt, Qatar, Jordan and Turkey condemned the violence.

Egyptian President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi said in a statement that the strikes were part of "deliberate efforts to make the Gaza Strip uninhabitable and force the Palestinians into displacement".

Trump has floated a proposal to move Palestinians out of Gaza, suggesting that Egypt or Jordan could take them in.

Both countries have rejected the notion, but some right-wing politicians in Israel have embraced it.

Netanyahu's Likud movement yesterday said that the far-right Otzma Yehudit party would rejoin the government, having withdrawn in January in protest of the truce.

Brokered by Qatar, Egypt and the United States, the ceasefire took effect on January 19, largely halting the war triggered by Hamas's October 7, 2023 attack on Israel.

That first phase of the deal ended in early March, and the two sides have been unable to agree on the next steps.

During the first phase, Hamas released 33 hostages, including eight deceased, in exchange for Israel freeing around 1,800 Palestinian detainees.

Hamas has consistently demanded negotiations for the second phase, which should lead to a lasting ceasefire. Israel had sought to extend the first phase until mid-April, cutting off aid and electricity to Gaza over the deadlock.

Critics of Netanyahu said the Israeli PM, in the first place, had any intention of moving to the second phase of the ceasefire, which would have meant Israeli forces withdrawing from Gaza, in effect leaving Hamas as its de facto ruler.

Since October 7, 2023, the Israeli offensive in Gaza has killed at least 48,577 people, also mostly civilians, according to figures from the two sides.

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semi-automatic systems will fail," he says.

For traffic lights to work, there must be enough pedestrian infrastructure like footpaths, and BRTA, the road transport authority, must regulate the number of vehicles, he adds.

The junctions at Gulshan 2, Hatirjheel, and Dhaka Cantonment seem orderly because of strict enforcement, he says.

"In Gulshan, there are no rickshaws, easy bikes, or erratic buses."

EARLIER ATTEMPTS

In the last 20 years, the authorities installed automatic lights, countdown timers, digital displays, and even AI-aided systems at major intersections spending over Tk 119 crore. But nothing reduced the length of tailbacks.

Automatic traffic lights installed between 2001 and 2005 went out of order allegedly because of poor maintenance.

In 2012 and 2013, DSCC revived the system, but it barely lasted a month.

At one point, police used remote controls to operate the lights. But that

BRITA's poor regulatory oversight needs to change too, he says.

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Prof Shamsul says without trained personnel and a fundamental shift in discipline, future projects are likely to meet the same fate as previous ones.

The cantonment area can be a model because traffic lights have functioned effectively for over two decades, he says.

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