

Man gets life term for raping girl

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Benapole

A Meherpur court yesterday sentenced a man to life term rigorous imprisonment for raping a child.

The court also fined the convict named Rigan, of Tergharia village in Sadar upazila, Tk 2 lakh in default of which he will have to suffer one more year in jail.

Judge Tajul Islam of the Meherpur Women and Children Repression Prevention Tribunal delivered the verdict.

According to the case details, on March 15, 2023, around 11:00am, a third grade schoolgirl went to visit her grandparents' house at Sholmary village.

While playing near a local shop, Rigan lured her with chocolates and took her into a room, where he raped her. The victim lost consciousness during the assault.

Locals later rescued the child and admitted her to a hospital.

Following the incident, the victim's uncle filed a case with Meherpur Sadar Police Station.



A farmer weeds a soybean field while holding his young son in his arms. The photo was taken at Ramkathi village in Barishal yesterday.

PHOTO: TITU DAS

PUBLIC OFFICES

Women demand breastfeeding corners in Pabna

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Pabna

Women under the Upazila Network Committee of Cooperative Societies in Pabna have demanded breastfeeding corners and women-friendly facilities in all local offices, citing difficulties faced by mothers visiting service centres with infants.

On Monday, a memorandum signed by 2,000 members, including 1,500 women, was submitted to Pabna Sadar Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO) Tamara Tasbiha at a programme held at the CCDB-CPRP office in Jalalpur.

Hamida Khatun, president of the network committee and a union parishad member, said mothers often struggle while accessing services.

"We have to bring our babies, and when feeding is needed, the lack of private space causes distress," she said.

CCDB Gender and Advocacy Coordinator Marzia Prova said the High Court in November 2023 directed all offices, factories and transport hubs to ensure breastfeeding corners, but compliance remains limited.

UNO Tamara Tasbiha assured steps to establish such facilities across Pabna within the year. Local officials and CCDB representatives also pledged support for implementation.

A festival of hope and new

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To address this, Akbar introduced a new calendar system. Under his directive, astronomer Fathullah Shirazi developed a calendar combining the solar cycle with the Hijri system.

Introduced in 1584, it was initially known as the Fasli San and later evolved into the Bangla calendar.

History, however, remains layered with debate.

Folk researcher Aminur Rahman Sultan said, "There has long been debate among historians regarding the origins of the Bangla New Year. Some believe it began in Agrabayan, while others consider Baishakh as its foundation. Experts generally refer to four different interpretations."

"A section of historians argues that the Bangla calendar was introduced during Akbar's reign — a view supported by Meghnad Saha, Kashi Prasad Jayaswal, and Amartya Sen. However, scholars like Ahmad Sharif disagree, stating that Akbar introduced the 'Tarikh-e-Ilahi', not the Bangla calendar, as also noted in Abul Fazl's writings. Another opinion traces the origin to the Sultanate period under Husain Shah," he added.

He further explained, "When Akbar ascended the throne in 1556, the Hijri year was 963. By adding 232 years, or calculating from that point, the structure of the current Bengali calendar can be understood. It was later the Nawabs of Murshidabad who institutionalised the

calendar for administrative purposes, particularly for tax collection, in a system known as 'Punya'."

Celebrations at the household level predate these administrative changes.

On the eve of the festival, women would soak rice with water and tender mango twigs; the next morning, rituals like 'Amani' were performed to ward off evil and welcome prosperity.

With the expansion of trade, the practice of Halkhata emerged, giving the festival a broader social dimension.

Folk performances such as Gambhira, Maljora, Kabigan, Palagan, and Chaitra songs once formed the heart of rural celebrations. In modern times, urban elements like the Mangal Shobhajatra and symbolic masks have been added, blending folk belief with civic expression.

Reflecting on this evolution, Aminur Rahman Sultan said, "Traditionally, rural households celebrated with simple food like soaked rice, green chillies, onions, and roasted peppers. The addition of hilsa is a more recent, urban development."

"Folk culture, after all, is a living expression — it evolves, adapts, and survives through transformation," he added.

Beyond historical debates, the festival is deeply rooted in everyday life. As the last day of the year became a time to settle accounts, the first day emerged as a symbol of renewal.

Landowners hosted gatherings, and traders opened new account books in the Halkhata tradition — a ritual reflecting trust, continuity, and fresh beginnings.

Across rural Bengal, the celebration flourished through community life. Homes were cleaned, new clothes were worn, and fairs brought together artisans and families.

Traditional games, music, and shared meals turned the day into a collective expression of joy.

During the Pakistan period, when cultural expression faced pressure, the festival gained deeper significance.

In 1967, the cultural organisation Chhayanaut began welcoming the New Year with music at Ramna Batamul — an act that reaffirmed identity through art and tradition.

Following independence, the celebration expanded in scale and symbolism. The introduction of the Mongol Shobhajatra (recently renamed the Baishakhi Shobhajatra) by the Faculty of Fine Arts at Dhaka University in 1989 gave the festival a powerful visual language of resistance, hope, and unity.

Today, Pahela Baishakh transcends divisions of class, religion, and geography. It is a day when differences fade, replaced by a shared sense of belonging.

As the first sun of the new year rises, it reminds a nation that renewal is always possible — and that culture, when carried in the hearts of people, never fades.

BPSC rolls out

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approach over the past year to address problems including overlapping BCS examination schedules, lengthy recruitment procedures, reliance on manual systems, and capacity constraints. A coordinated roadmap was prepared to streamline examination schedules, which helped resolve multiple ongoing BCS processes at the same time and improve coordination across different stages of recruitment, he added.

The BPSC has also introduced a "One BCS, One Year" approach to ensure a predictable and time-bound recruitment cycle.

Ismail Zabiullah, prime minister's adviser on public administration, said the report reaffirms a commitment to the countrymen that fairness, integrity, and merit would remain the foundation of public recruitment.

Md Abdul Bari, state minister for public administration, said merit would be the final determinant in government recruitments.

Policy and strategy adviser on information, broadcasting and cultural affairs Zahed Ur Rahman said the BCS exam questions should be made harder so that those unsuited to the BCS would move towards other professions earlier.

The report said the reforms were guided by four institutional values — merit, integrity, impartiality, and efficiency — and backed by the BPSC's first five-year strategic plan for 2025-2029.

It mentioned major improvements in exam management, including reduced time for written script assessment from around a year to about three months, alongside digital improvements and automated systems to enable publishing results within around a week.

Moreover, reforms focused on ensuring fair, structured and consistent assessment include changes in question-setting procedures, stronger confidentiality protocols, refined evaluation methods, and introducing competency-based viva exams.

The commission said the introduction of online applications, automated result processing, and unique candidate IDs had improved efficiency, accuracy, and transparency at different stages of recruitment, while application fee has also been reduced to lower financial barriers and widen participation.

A road to cut through

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According to BELA, various structures have been built in the park over the past seven years under the guise of renovation, significantly restricting access. While regulations allow a maximum of 5 percent infrastructure development in parks, urban planners say about 23 percent of Osmani Udyan has already been occupied.

They also noted that Bangladesh's laws strictly prohibit the use or transfer of parks and open spaces for purposes other than their intended use. Courts have repeatedly directed authorities to protect such spaces and remove unauthorised structures.

"This is a terrible decision," said Adil Mohammed Khan, former president of the Bangladesh Institute of Planners (BIP) and chief executive of the Institute of Planning and Development.

"Destroying parks and playgrounds to accommodate private cars is unacceptable. If this road is built, it will cause irreversible damage to the park's environment."

He added that under existing laws, including the Open Space Conservation Act 2000, there is no scope to interfere with parks in this manner.

Former BIP president Mohammad Fazle Reza Sumon said, "When we don't even have one square metre of park space per person — where at least nine square metres are required — such a move will only worsen the situation for city residents."

"Out of Dhaka's 265

parks, only 42 remain. If the government does not protect them, what will we tell future generations?"

The World Health Organization recommends at least nine square metres of open space per person within a 15-minute walking distance from home.

IMPLEMENTATION DELAYS

The Osmani Udyan modernisation project, originally scheduled for completion in 2018, has faced repeated delays. Work was stalled for around two years after the initial contractor's contract was cancelled in 2022 over alleged irregularities.

A new contractor was appointed in September 2023, but the project has since missed multiple deadlines. The latest deadline was June 2025, with about 95 percent of the work completed so far.

Officials estimate that at least three more months will be needed to complete the remaining work.

The July monument component is about 70 percent complete and is also expected to be finished by June.

The project includes boundary walls, entry gates, walkways connecting key government facilities, a library, a food court, drainage systems, lake development, an indoor games zone, and parking facilities.

Osmani Udyan, once a key urban green space, is home to rare trees, small lakes, sand islands, sculptures, and an auditorium — features that environmentalists say should be preserved rather than compromised.

Dhaka urges New Delhi

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with through a transparent judicial process," Humaiun Kobir said.

"We told [the Indian side] she [Hasina] is a terrorist. She is irrelevant to Bangladesh. People have moved on."

Humaiun said Dhaka is expecting a goodwill gesture on resuming visas, particularly medical and business, in the coming weeks.

Meanwhile, Indian High Commissioner Pranay Verma yesterday paid separate courtesy calls on Speaker of Bangladesh National Parliament Hafiz Uddin Ahmad, Deputy Speaker Barrister Kayser Kamal at the Bangladesh Jatiya Sangsad, according to an Indian High Commission statement.

They expressed interest in promoting deeper exchanges with the Parliament of India, while also discussed possible opportunities for exchanges between the parliamentary committees, capacity-building opportunities for MPs and parliament officials and mutual visits of parliamentary delegations.

Pranay Verma briefed them on various institutional initiatives by the Indian Parliament to strengthen and modernise resources and practices, while also stressing the potential collaboration between the libraries of the parliaments of the two countries.

During a courtesy call, Minister of Information and Broadcasting Zahir Uddin Swapon at the Secretariat and Pranay Verma agreed to enhance exchange visits of media delegations between the two countries to promote mutual understanding.

They also exchanged views on cooperation in films, including the organisation of film screening and film festivals between the two countries, as well as

collaboration in production and post-production technological support.

Shama Obaed seeks Algeria's support for energy State Minister for Foreign Affairs Shama Obaed requested enhanced cooperation from Algeria in the energy sector to ensure long-term energy security.

She made the request when Algerian Ambassador Abdelouahab Saidani paid a courtesy call on her at the foreign ministry yesterday.

Both sides discussed avenues to strengthen cooperation in trade and investment, particularly in the energy, infrastructure, pharmaceutical, shipbuilding and manpower sectors.

Shama Obaed emphasised the importance of increased collaboration in the education sector and welcomed the ongoing process of establishing a Joint Consultative Commission.

The ambassador reiterated Algeria's commitment to strengthening cooperation in labour recruitment, as well as collaboration in energy, education and agriculture.

Barrister

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and its Secretary Mahfuzur Rahman Milon, among others, attended the janaza.

Earlier, his first janaza was held at his Indira Road residence around 11:00am.

The third janaza took place at the Central Shaheed Minar before his burial.

Barrister Shafique died at 5:30pm on Sunday while undergoing treatment at Bangladesh Medical College Hospital in Dhaka. He was 89.

Chief Justice Zubayer Rahman Chowdhury expressed shock at his death.

No appeal filed yet to challenge

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According to the source, the HC bench judges are busy with urgent tasks, including handling cases and writing judgements and orders.

Defence lawyer Advocate Mohammad Shishir Manir said the trial court had convicted 14 accused. Of them, eight were sentenced to death and six to life imprisonment.

"The HC commuted the sentences of seven death-row convicts. One of them has been given life imprisonment, while the remaining six were sentenced to 10 years in prison," he said.

"Accused Mawlana Akbar and Mawlana Abu Taher were released based on a short order of the HC judgement, as their sentences have already been served. Convicts Arif Hasan Sumon, Mawlana Abdul Hai, Mawlana Shofiqur Rahman, Mawlana Sabbir Shahadat Ullah Zuel, and Hafez Jahangir are in jail in connection with the CPB bomb blast case," he added.

Contacted, Deputy Attorney General Sultana Akter Rubi, who represented the state during the hearing, said she had submitted a note to the Attorney General's Office suggesting an appeal before the Appellate Division to uphold the trial court verdict.

She added that the AG's office would decide on filing an appeal after receiving the full text of the HC judgement.

On April 14, 2001, two bombs exploded during Pahela Baishakh celebrations organised by Chhayanaut at Ramna Batamul, killing 10 people and injuring several others.

Following the incident, two cases were filed — one for murder and another under the Explosive Substances Act.

On June 23, 2014, a Dhaka court sentenced eight Huji members to death for their roles in the attack: Mufti Abdul Hannan, Mawlana Akbar Hossain alias Helaluddin, Mawlana Mohammad Tajuddin, Hafez Jahangir

Alam Badar, Mawlana Abu Bakar alias Selim Hawlader, Mufti Shafiqur Rahman, Mufti Abdul Hye, and Arif Hasan Suman.

Six others — Mawlana Abu Taher, Mawlana Sabbir alias Abdul Hannan, Mawlana Yahiya, Mawlana Shawkat Osman, Mawlana Abdur Rouf, and Shahadat Ullah — were sentenced to life imprisonment.

Of them, Mawlana Yahiya and Mawlana Abdur Rouf have died in jail, while Mufti Abdul Hannan was executed on April 13, 2017, at Kashimpur High Security Prison in a separate case over a grenade attack on then British High Commissioner Anwar Choudhury in Sylhet on May 21, 2004.

PRAYER TIMING
APRIL 14

Fazr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib	Esha
AZAN 4-35	12-45	4-45	6-24	7-45
JAMAAT 5-10	1-15	5-00	6-28	8-15

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

Dhaka South City Corporation
Engineering Department
Electrical Circle

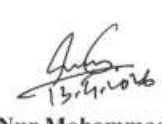
Memo No-46.207.007.09.22.13.2026 Date-13/04/2026

Tender Notice

Tender notice is invited through e-GP Portal (<https://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) by Executive Engineer, Electrical Circle, Dhaka South City Corporation for the Procurement of following packages :-

No	Tender ID	Description of Work	Last Selling (Date & time)	Closing (Date & time)
1	1236461	Supply, Fitting & fixing of necessary spare parts for maintenance & repair of existing Air Coolers at Gandaria Community Center, Sutrapur Community Center, Johir Raihan Cultural Center and Outfall Staff Quarter under Zone-5 of DSCC.	26-APR-2026 12.30 PM	26-APR-2026 02.30 PM

This is online tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP portal and hard copies/offline will not be accepted. To submit e-Tender, registration in the National e-GP System Portal (<https://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) is required. The fees for downloading the e-Tender documents from the National e-GP System portal have to be deposited online through any registered bank branches. Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System portal and from e-GP helpdesk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd). If necessary, information please contact to the PE's Support Desk (02-223386009).


(Nur Mohammad)
Executive Engineer
Electrical Circle
Dhaka South City Corporation.
Phone:02-223386009

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