



Date: 22 February 2017

Press Release

High Court Division issues directions on extra-judicial punishment by Union Parishad Chairman in Lakshmipur District

Today, the High Court issued further directions regarding the matter of the Chairman of the Char Martin Union in Lakshmipur imposing extra-judicial punishment on a man and woman in December 2016. The Court ordered the Judicial Magistrate of the Kamalnagar Police Station to submit a report by 09.03.2017 explaining whether he informed the courts on 14.02.2017 about the Suo Motu Rule No. 03 of 2017 when granting bail for the Kamalnagar Police Station Case No. 10, to Yousuf Ali, Chairman of the Char Martin Union.

The Court also ordered the UNO of Kamalnagar to submit a report by 09.03.2017 on whether the Char Martin UP Chairman had taken part in any official activities from 14.02.2017 to 20.02.2017. It ordered the Char Martin Union Parisad (UP) Chairman Yousuf Ali and Akul Chandra Biswas, OC, Kamalnagar to be present in court on 09 March 2017.

These orders were issued by a Division Bench comprising Mr. Justice Gobinda Chandra Tagore and Mr. Justice A. K. M Shahidul Haque. Deputy Attorney General ASM Nazmul Haque appeared for the State.

Background:

An online news report, containing an allegation regarding the UP Chairman's imposing extra-judicial punishment on a man and woman in the name of 'fatwa' during a *shalish* held at Char Martin, on 31 December 2016, was published by bdnews24.com on 14 February 2017. The Court took this matter into consideration that very day, when the incident was brought to its attention by Adv. S. M Rezaul Karim, Legal Advisor and Director, BLAST, assisted by Advocate Sharmin Akhter, Senior Staff Lawyer at BLAST.

The High Court issued a Rule Nisi on 14 February 2017, requiring the concerned authorities to show cause as to why a UP Chairman's involvement in the imposition of extra-judicial penalties on a man and woman at a local *shalish* should not be declared to be illegal and without lawful authority and why legal action should not be taken against him, and also as to why legal action should not be taken against the Officer-in-Charge for his negligence in discharging his duties. The Court issued this Rule upon the Secretary, Ministry of Home Affairs; the OC at Lakshmipur Police Station; the Chairman



বাংলাদেশ লিগ্যাল এইড এন্ড সার্ভিসেস ট্রাস্ট (ব্লাস্ট) Bangladesh Legal Aid and Services Trust (BLAST)

of Char Martin Union Parishad and 8 other respondents. The Court also ordered the Chairman and the OC to appear in court on 22 February 2017 and give their respective statements. The Court ordered the SP at Lakshmipur to ensure the safety and security of the man and woman who had been victims of the extra-judicial punishment and to ensure that those involved with the incident were present in Court on the required date.

For further information, please contact:

Ms. Mahbuba Akhter

Deputy Director (Advocacy), BLAST

Mobile no.: 01776060113

E-mail: mahbuba@blast.org.bd