

Woman dies in RAB custody

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Online Desk: A woman has allegedly died under the custody of Rapid Action Battalion (RAB) following her arrest from Naogaon town. Sultana Jesmine died in RAB custody following her arrest at about 10:30am on Wednesday from Muktir Crossing area in Naogaon town. She died at about 9:00am on Friday.

Jesmine was an office assistant at Chandipur Union Land Office under Naogaon Sadar upazila in the district. Family members alleged that 45-year-old Jesmine was arrested on the basis of a previous complaint. RAB said there was a complaint against her of her involvement in fraudulent practices. She was arrested on the basis of the complaint. Jesmine fell sick immediately after her arrest. However, the family members alleged that Jesmine died of torture under the RAB custody.

Deceased Jesmine's maternal uncle Naogaon Municipality's former councillor Nazmul Huq Montu said, "My niece came out of home on Wednesday morning to go to her office. When she reached Muktir crossing at about 10:30am, a group of RAB personnel picked her up on board a white microbus. Then we started to know which RAB camp she was taken to. After 12 noon, we learnt that Jesmine was undergoing treatment at Naogaon Hospital. We rushed to the hospital and found RAB personnel there. My niece couldn't tell anything else. After some time, she was taken to Rajshahi Medical College Hospital where she succumbed at about 9:00am on Friday while underwent treatment there. Her body was handed over on early Saturday afternoon." Jesmine was buried on Saturday evening.

Nazmul Huq Montu said Jesmine had divorced her husband some 17 years ago. Since then she had been rearing her only son going through acute financial constraints. She lived at a rented house at Janakalyan area in Naogaon town and provided education expenses of her son who is studying at Chittagong University. "Jesmine was nothing but a low-ranked employee at the local land office. None could make any allegation of irregularities against her," he said.

Shahed Hossain Saikat, son of Jesmine, said, "My mother is a victim of conspiracy. We have learnt that inhuman and brutal tortures were inflicted upon her under RAB custody. She died due to torture on her." RAB-5 company commander Major Md Nazmus Sakib said, "There were allegations that she was involved in financial irregularities. A fraudulent case was also filed against her recently. She was arrested on the basis of an old case. But, she fell sick at one stage of interrogation. Then she was taken to the intensive care unit (ICU) of the hospital where she died while underwent treatment."

Naogaon General Hospital's resident physician Dr Moumita Jalil said some RAB personnel brought a sick woman at the hospital on early Wednesday afternoon. She was given primary treatment at the emergency department. After examining her, doctors anticipated that she suffered heart attack. Then she was referred to Rajshahi Medical College Hospital (RMCH) for better treatment.

Dr M Shamim Ahmed, Director of the RMCH, said, "As far as I know that the woman received head injuries after falling on the ground during the interrogation by RAB. Then she was taken to Naogaon Hospital and admitted there. As her condition deteriorated, she was brought here at the RMCH. After CT scan, it was learnt that the woman died due to internal bleeding of her brain."