



ISMAT ARA ENTERPRISE
6-2 GULSHAN D.C.C. MARKET (SOUTH)
DHAKA-1212, BANGLADESH
PHONE: 5886799, 5881719, 9896402
FAX: 580-2-8884850

COMMITTED TO
People's Right to Know

REGD. NO. DA 781

VOL. XIII No.196

DHAKA MONDAY AUGUST 4, 2003

SRABAN 20, 1410 BS

ZAMADJUS-SAANI 4, 1424 HIRU

20 PAGES PRICE: Tk. 7.00

www.thedailystar.net

Frigate case

Hasina, ex-navy chief chargesheeted

Abdul Awal Mintoo, 3 other navy bigwigs also face charge



BSS, Dhaka

Charges were pressed yesterday against former prime minister Sheikh Hasina and five others including a former navy chief in a corruption case regarding the purchase of a Korean frigate for the Bangladesh Navy in 1996. It was alleged that the purchase

made the public exchequer count Tk 511.17 crore in losses.

After a yearlong investigation, the Bureau of Anti-Corruption (BAC) submitted the chargesheet to the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate (CMM)'s Court, Dhaka yesterday.

The five others accused in the case are former chief of staff of Bangladesh Navy Rear Admiral

(ret'd) Nurul Islam, former assistant chief of staff (Operation) of Bangladesh Navy Commodore (ret'd) AKM Azad, former director (Naval Plan) Commodore (ret'd) Haroon-or-Rashid, Chairman of Trans World Engineering and Trading Company Limited Abdul Awal Mintoo and Commodore (ret'd)

SEE PAGE 11 COL 4

'AL man' shot dead in Savar, commissioner's son arrested

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

An alleged criminal, son of a ward commissioner candidate, shot a truck driver dead at Tarapur in Savar yesterday noon.

Tutul, son of BNP-backed ward commissioner candidate Abdur Rashid, shot Shamsheer Ali, 35, point blank following a brawl. Shamsheer was hit in the chest and died on the spot.

Witnesses said a motorcycle, which Tutul and two other youths were riding, hit Shamsheer near Tara Mosque when he was returning home after attending a procession at about 12 noon.

The procession was brought out by a local ward commissioner candi-

SEE PAGE 11 COL 6

Exports suffer as taxmen go on with strike

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The export sector suffered huge loss as the strike by customs officials, particularly at the Dhaka Customs House and the Internal Container Depot (ICD), continued.

A huge number of containers remained stranded at those points as only 15 to 20 were released from the ICD, while no major activities took place at the Dhaka Customs House.

The exporters have demanded immediate government intervention to resolve the crisis.

Exporters have been badly affected by the strike at different important customs points, said the

acting president of the Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA) SM Nurul Hoque to The Daily Star yesterday.

He urged the customs officials to get their demands fulfilled through legal options.

Normal activities at the ICD and the Dhaka Customs House, like releasing and exporting goods, preparing documents and assessment functions, were severely hampered during the last two days owing to the strike called by the customs and VAT officials.

Exporters are also affected by non-release of imported raw materials by the customs. The Dhaka

Export Processing Zone is directly hit by the activities relating to export and import coming to a halt.

It was, however, reported that normal activities took place in Chittagong and partial activities took place in other customs points.

The Bangladesh Customs Excise and VAT Executive Officers Association called the non-stop strike from Saturday last to protest the arrest and harassment of 12 customs officials facing charges of tax evasion.

The leaders of the Association, however, have agreed to call off the strike only for today (Monday) following the assurance of Finance

SEE PAGE 11 COL 1



Members of the Bangladesh Rifles walk to Gullistan Bus Station yesterday as part of the joint forces' drive to flush out criminals from the transport sector.

Mob kills 4 in Ctg

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Mob beat four to death and injured four others severely in separate incidents at Patiya and Sitakundu, Saturday suspecting them as dacoits.

Among the dead two were identified as hathkata Nasir, a recognised criminal of Patiya, and Delwar Hossain of Sitakundu, police said.

Believing them to be dacoits, a crowd beat three to death at a local bazaar at Shantirhat in Patiya at 10:00pm, police said.

The other victims were unidentified till filing of this report at 7:00pm yesterday.

Police recovered the bodies.

In the other incident, hundreds of local people roughed up five mercilessly suspecting them as dacoits at Keshabpur in Sitakundu at midnight, witnesses said. Delwar Hossain succumbed to his injuries on way to hospital, Sitakundu police said.

The injured were identified as Nurunnabi, Jamal Uddin, Rubel and Mamun. They were admitted to Chittagong Medical College Hospital.

PHOTO: STAR



Banks asked to change torn, dirty notes

STAR REPORT

The Bangladesh Bank (BB) yesterday directed the commercial banks to accept and change torn and dirty notes without harassing customers.

Otherwise, the central bank will consider adversely when they would apply for new branch or dealership licences.

The BB has asked the banks to post notices announcing that dirty and torn notes can be changed in their branches. They have also been directed to open separate counters for this purpose.

BB Governor Dr Fakhruddin Ahmed at a meeting with the chief executives of all banks highlighted the plight of clients possessing damaged notes.

He also reminded them that it is the duty of the banks to replace such notes with good ones.

The meeting over, Deputy Governor Nazrul Huda told journalists that the central bank has sought help of the commercial banks to completely drive damaged money out of circulation by next year.

But bankers presented a different picture in the meeting when they said the BB officials do not cooperate with them when they want to change old and torn notes.

The governor then assured them of looking into the matter and monitoring the situation.

Sources said the BB will print 800 million pieces of new notes of different denominations within the next three months. These will then replace the old and torn notes.

Plans are also underway to introduce coins of two taka denominations soon. Later, Tk 10 coins may also be considered.

SEE PAGE 11 COL 1

Identify high-rises sans building code

PM's directive to develop quake management system

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia yesterday stressed the need for developing an adequate management system to face possible earthquakes and handle post-quake rescue operations.

She directed the authorities concerned to identify the buildings in Dhaka and other major cities constructed without following the building code and make the residents aware of the risk of those

buildings.

She said an effective earthquake management and rescue system would require involving people and all ministries and departments concerned.

Khaleda said steps should be taken to minimise the risks of buildings constructed shoddily. She also instructed that the code must be followed strictly in construction.

She asked for speedy completion of the work on seismic centers in the

SEE PAGE 11 COL 4

Bail petition of BNP MP's brother rejected

COURT CORRESPONDENT

The bail petition of Reazuddin Ahmed Monir, brother of ruling BNP MP Nasiruddin Ahmed Pintu and an accused in the Keraniganj double murder case, was rejected by the Speedy Trial Tribunal-4, Dhaka Division, yesterday.

Judge Jahangir Alam Mollah issued the order on a bail petition filed by the defence lawyers.

Meanwhile, the tribunal did not pass any order on the petition for withdrawal of charges against Monir and nine others as a writ petition was filed with the High Court Division challenging the legality of the withdrawal order.

The tribunal, however, fixed August 10 for order on the issue.

The home ministry sent a letter on July 15, asking the metropolitan public prosecutor for necessary steps to withdraw charges against Monir and nine others.

On receiving the letter, Special Public Prosecutor Harun-ur-Rashid Khan submitted the letter to the tribunal for the next step.

Two men named Amir Abdullah Shakil, 26, and Sentu, 30, were shot dead on February 16 last year by a gang of assassins.

Amir Hamza, Shakil's brother, filed a murder case with the Keraniganj Police Station accusing Monir and nine others on the same day.

Probe blames MV Nasrin-1 capsized on faulty design

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government probe committee submitted its report on the sinking of MV Nasrin-1 to the shipping ministry yesterday, about four weeks after the overcrowded double-decked launch went down in the river Meghna near Chandpur.

In the 250-page report, the committee blamed the vessel's faulty design, overloading and its skipper's inadequate professional skill for the country's worst launch disaster that killed some 600 people on the midnight of July 8.

SEE PAGE 11 COL 1

BDR major closed for 'excesses' during Khulna joint drive

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

A Major of the Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) has been closed to the Khulna sector headquarters for alleged excesses at Khalishpur Nayabati in Khulna on Saturday in the name of the anti-outlaw joint operation.

Locals alleged that a team of the joint forces led by Major Nizam ransacked the 'Shaikh Bari' in the name of search, beat up Major Shabbir Ahmed Tapash, who was on leave, dragged elderly women out of their bedrooms and injured many others in a four-hour frenzy.

BDR sector headquarters sources hinted that punitive actions would be taken against the officer after investigation. It was, however, not clear whether the members of the team who acted under the orders of the officer will face similar punishment.

An officer of the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) in Dhaka last night said the authorities were aware of the 'untoward incident' in Khulna.

High officials are investigating the incident and will take steps

SEE PAGE 11 COL 4

92 Gram Sarkar bodies formed on 2nd day

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Ninety-two Gram Sarkar units were formed on the second day of the process yesterday in what is still tipped as a relaxed pace.

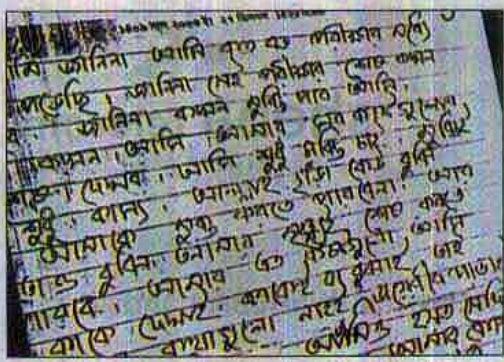
According to official accounts, 17 units were formed in Cox's Bazar, eight in Feni, three in Kishoreganj, nine in Munshiganj, one in Mymensingh and 10 in Khagrachari.

Nine units were formed in Kurigram, 11 in Laxmipur, three in Jessore, one in Chandpur, seven in Gopalganj, two in Barisal, one in Habiganj, two in Jamalpur, three in Gaibandha and two in Comilla and three in Faridpur.

On the first day on Saturday, only 21 units were constituted.

Sources at the Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperatives Ministry said the authorities asked all concerned to add pace to the constitution of the units of Gram Sarkar, the lowest tier of local government and auxiliary to the union parishad (UP).

SEE PAGE 11 COL 2



Harried by a gang of brothers, Nazirhat College student Umme Habiba Rumi (L) committed suicide; her tormentors including Mohammad Azam (2-L) are still absconding; the leaf of Rumi's diary bares her frustration (3-L); her mother Monwara Begum (4-L) whose world never stops crying; and father Abul Kalam (R) only stares vacant.

STAR REPORT

Rumi wanted freedom and freedom she knew could come only in death.

She finally got it from the teasers when she committed suicide by hanging herself Friday. But her memories came rushing back yesterday when she was laid to rest at her Roshangiri village under Fatikchhari thana.

"I may not be there that day," Umme Habiba Rumi, a second-year bright student of Nazirhat

College, had written in her diary a few days before she was forced to commit suicide. Tormented by two local brothers Mohammad Azam and Mohammad Nazim, she wrote, "I do not know when I will get freedom... when the end will come to all my miseries and wounds. That day I will not be here. But my memories will

remain...they are eternal." But her painful memories could do little to arresting the two offenders.

Police are yet to nab the two brothers two days after her death, who had teased and instigated her to commit suicide.

Relatives alleged that police are not sincere about arresting the

culprits. "They did nothing since Friday to arrest Azam or Nazim," said a cousin of Rumi.

However, Additional Police Super of the district Abdul Khaleque refuted the allegations. "Police are looking for the accused brothers," he told The Daily Star yesterday.

Rumi, daughter of Abul Kalam

who works in Saudi Arabia, was continuously teased by the brothers - Azam and Nazim - who used to sledge her on her way to college.

"When will I see an end to my pangs? None but Allah can smother them," Rumi felt. But her mother desperately looked for worldly solutions. Only

a few days before her suicide, she asked the local Union Parishad chairman to hold an arbitration to stop teasing by the brothers. But this did not deter Azam and Nazim from their activities.

And so, Rumi had to be laid to rest at her village graveyard yesterday afternoon after her father Abul Kalam had arrived from Saudi Arabia.

"Who do I share my sorrows with?" Rumi's grief-ridden diary read. "Who will understand them?"

SEE PAGE 11 COL 2

Four to die for killing SSC examinee

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Chapainabaganj

Four persons were sentenced to death yesterday for killing SSC examinee Hasina Khatun in 1999. Three others were acquitted in the case tried under the Special Tribunal Court-1 for Women and Children Repression.

Four convicted are Imrul, 33, Kader, 30, Masdur, 25, and Jahangir, 30.

The court acquitted Saidur, 35, Kamrul, 31, and Arif, 21, as allegations brought against them could not be proved. Another accused Nuru Kabiraj died in custody during the early days of the trial.

The prosecution story is that

SEE PAGE 11 COL 8

One nabbed with revolver at Dhaka court

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A young man with a revolver was arrested yesterday from the premises of the District and Sessions Judge's Court, Dhaka.

Plainclothesmen arrested Abdul Harun, son of late Aslam Bepari of Nautala under Chandina upazila in Comilla district and now resident at 13 KM Das Lane, Sutrapur in the city, while he had been mixing with an accused brought from the jail custody at 11:15am.

Police recovered a foreign-made revolver loaded with five rounds of bullets from his possession. Police

SEE PAGE 11 COL 5