

10 youths arrested for abducting teen

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Mymensingh*

Police on Saturday night arrested 10 youths on charge of abducting a teenage girl in Haluaghat upazila of Mymensingh.

The arrestees are Shakil, 21, Shariful Islam, 21, Mizanur Rahman Dipu, 20, Ratul Islam, 18, Monatjel Al Mahi, 17, Awlad, Nayan Mia, 16, Shahjahan Somrat, 17, Shahab Uddin, 18, and Ashik, 17.

All of them are from different villages in Haluaghat and adjacent Phulpur upazila, said Biplob Kumar Biswas, officer-in-charge of Haluaghat Police Station.

Shakil had long been stalking the girl and proposed her several times.

But as the girl refused him every time, an enraged Shakil devised a plot to kidnap her.

Riding on four motorcycles, the youths went to the girl's house to abduct her on Saturday afternoon.

As they dragged the girl out of her house, locals encircled them and called 999 for police help, the OC said, adding that a police team later went to the spot and arrested the perpetrators.

Victim's father filed a case in this connection on the same night, OC Biplob said.

A Mymensingh court sent the arrestees to jail after they were produced before it yesterday.

Crackdown on corruption

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Emphasising on trainings, Hasina said she always thinks that training is the most important as the armed forces can protect the sovereignty and independence of the country as well as do social work more competently through trainings.

She mentioned that the armed forces have been playing a significant role in the social and infrastructural development in the country. "The fame [of the armed forces] has increased as they work very competently," the PM said.

About the fresh graduates, she said they have acquired knowledge of warfare and contemporary national and international affairs during their 45-week DSCSC course.

The PM said this acquired knowledge would help the graduates perform duties and responsibilities as well as face any challenge. They can also contribute more to the socioeconomic development of Bangladesh.

Hasina said her government formulated the "Forces Goal 2030" and is now implementing it for the development of the Armed Forces.

Against the backdrop of the emerging security scenario, the DSCSC training curricula have been modernised with contemporary modules and the computer-assisted war-game has been played on the campus for the first time, through which the college campus has turned into a digitised one, she said.

Hasina described the 54 foreign graduates as goodwill ambassadors of Bangladesh on foreign lands. "I hope, you will remain friends of Bangladesh... you will remain as goodwill ambassadors and will never forget Bangladesh."

Focusing on the development of Bangladesh in the last one decade

under her government, Hasina said the GDP growth reached 8.15 percent and the per capita income nearly \$2,000, but the inflation rate remains at 5.4 percent.

Speaking about the poverty rate dropping to 20.5 percent from 41 percent in 2005-2006 fiscal year, she said her government wants to cut it down further. "If we can bring it down to 14-16 percent, we can declare Bangladesh as a poverty-free country," she said.

A total of 235 officers, including 125 officers from the army, 34 from the navy and 22 from the air force, and 54 overseas officers from 21 countries of the world graduated this year.

The 21 countries from where overseas officers attended the DSCSC 2019-2020 course are China, India, Indonesia, Kuwait, Malaysia, the Maldives, Nepal, Nigeria, Pakistan, Palestine, the Philippines, Saudi Arabia, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Tanzania, Turkey, Uganda, the USA and Zambia.

Commandant of the college Major General Md Enayet Ullah delivered the welcome speech.

The PM handed over the certificates among the graduate officers.

Senior military and civil officials and vice-chancellors of several universities were present at the graduation ceremony.

The Defence Services Command and Staff College is a prime military institution of the Bangladesh Armed Forces.

It provides professional military education to selected mid-career officers of the three services and prepares them for assumption of increasing responsibilities both in command and staff appointment.

A total of 5,253 officers, including five police officers and 1,165 overseas students from 42 countries, have so far graduated from the college.

A good initiative failing

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Due to the lack of upkeep, many shops are on the verge of ruin, the chairman added, demanding the market be demolished as it is not running in accordance with its original purpose.

Asked about the maintenance, the chairman claimed he could do nothing.

Female traders were supposed to pay a minimal monthly rent to the UNO, through the union parishad, which could have been used for maintenance -- but nobody do this, he added.

Apart from supports from the authorities, local female traders say, a shortage of capital and noncooperation from male traders are to blame for being unable to compete in the market. Their male counterparts, however, blamed it on women's lack of experience.

Visiting the market recently, this correspondent talked to a woman, Pila Rani, who runs a small shop selling singara.

"The shop is in poor state as there has been no repair since it was first built," said Pila, who has been running the shop alongside her husband for the past decade.

Hena Rani is the other female entrepreneur in the Women's Corner.

According to her, female traders not having sufficient funds to sustain their business amid competition with influential male traders is the main obstacle.

"Satbaria Bazar itself is a rich rural market. There are many influential wholesale traders here. When we

start a small business with a meagre amount of money, we cannot survive here. We do not get any assistance from these traders," said Hena.

There are no women on the market management committee at Satbaria Bazar.

The Women's Corner is also at the literal corner of the market, where customers seldom go. The women were also not able to choose their shop location, said Hena, demanding initiatives to revive the Women's Corner.

Talking to The Daily Star, Md Abdur Rashid, president of Satbaria Banik Shamity, acknowledged the problems faced by female traders.

"The Women's Corner is located towards the back of the market, where most customers don't go. The traders there also lack sufficient funds to run profitable businesses," he said.

However, he also claimed female traders who previously ran the shops did not have enough patience to build up their business and abandoned the place.

Over 200 shops in the Satbaria Bazar run smoothly, with the exception of the Women's Corner. Failing to run for over a decade now, it has become a deadweight in the market.

Without support from the grassroots level, the administration alone cannot ensure success of good initiatives, said Sujit Debnath, Sujanagar upazila nirbahi officer.

"It was a good initiative to promote female entrepreneurs, but wasn't effective due to a lack of sufficient support from locals," the UNO said.

Tigers staring

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Islam before completing his hatrick by removing Mahmudullah Riyad and creating history in the latter stages of the day.

The first innings' top-scorer Mohammad Mithun was the last batsman to fall on the day as Yasir Shah got him for a duck, leaving skipper Mominul Haque, unbeaten on 37, looking helpless at the other end.

However, Bangladesh replied well with the bat despite losing opener Saif Hasan after scoring 16. He was undone by Naseem's fiery pace but the experienced Tamim Iqbal showed glimpses of hope and looked compact until he was trapped leg before by Yasir on 34.

Skipper Mominul Haque tried to hang on from the other end until Naseem's brilliance later on in the day eradicated all the hard work the Tigers had done.

The Tigers started the day well and managed to bundle Pakistan out for 445 after they had resumed the day on 342 for 3.

Abu Jayed, who scalped two wickets on the first day, dismissed centurion Babar Azam in the first over of the day for 143. Ebadat Hossain then removed Asad Shafiq, who added just five runs to his overnight score of 61.

Haris Sohail then took charge but was dismissed after scoring 75 runs by left-arm spinner Taijul Islam while pacer Rubel Hossain cut off the tail, picking three wickets in the end.



Throwaway plastic products and other garbage have nearly stopped the water flow of Kanachharea canal in Sylhet city. This may lead to waterlogging in some areas in the coming monsoon. The photo was taken at Tilagarh yesterday.

PHOTO: DWOHA CHOWDHURY

24,074 incidents, Tk 330cr loss

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same electric cable, which may lose temper over time, for years."

Of the fire incidents last year, 39 percent was caused by electric short circuit and 18 percent by stove fire, said the report released recently.

The number of casualties also went up last year. At least 185 people lost their lives and 586 people were injured in fire incidents last year. The death toll was 130 in 2018.

Seventy people were killed in the Chawkbazar tragedy -- the highest in a single fire incident -- in February last year. Besides, devastating fire tore through FR Tower in the capital's Banani, Bhasantek slum, a plastic factory in Keraniganj and a fan factory in Gazipur.

Sazzad said it is possible to bring down the number of fire incidents if

electrical equipment is checked and replaced periodically.

"Developed countries maintain this practice regularly. We should introduce this system here," he told this newspaper.

According to Bangladesh National Building Code, fire exit routes have to be designed in a way that they remain unobstructed. A building will have fire-rated doors and be connected directly to the road for easy access and exit.

The Fire Service DG said fire incidents have been rising due to a lack of awareness and also unwillingness to put in place fire safety measures.

"We must understand that these measures have to be taken for the sake of our life and property."

According to the Fire Service data,

of the fire incidents last year, 4,153 were caused by burning cigarettes. This means fire from burning cigarette butts accounts for 15 percent of the total fire incidents, making it the third biggest cause of fire.

The report said fire originating from burning cigarettes caused damage to properties worth around Tk 18 crore last year.

It also mentioned that fire incidents increased more than thrice in the last 15 years.

The number of such incidents was 7,140 in 2004.

Last year, fire broke out in 997 industrial units and 165 garments factories. Besides, 174 fire incidents occurred in slums in Dhaka, Chattogram and Rangpur, show the data.

Asked about fire prevention,

First Bangladeshi infected in Singapore

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The control room of the DGHS published the report a day after authorities stepped up surveillance in all land ports and seaports in line with the three international airports.

"We have initiated this surveillance reporting system from today [Sunday]. This will help us monitor every inbound passenger to prevent novel coronavirus from entering the country," Dr Ayesha Akter, assistant director of the control room of DGHS, told The

Daily Star.

Earlier on Thursday, the Center for Disease Control (CDC) at the DGHS sent 35 hand-held infrared thermometers, devices that check body temperature without coming in contact with patients, to all ports across the country.

Meanwhile, Director of the Institute of Epidemiology, Disease Control and Research (IEDCR) Professor Meerjady Sabrina Flora in her daily briefing urged everyone, especially journalists and doctors, to protect the patients'

privacy.

"Maintaining confidentiality of the patients suspected, tested or confirmed as infected is important. Otherwise, their personal and social security could be hampered," the IEDCR director said.

She also urged people not to panic about the virus.

Meanwhile, the student who returned from China's Anhui province 11 days ago and was admitted to Rangpur Medical College Hospital with breathing problems, is

Ex-AL leader murdered in Noakhali

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Noakhali*

A former union-level Awami League leader was murdered in Noakhali's Companiganj upazila on Saturday night.

Sohrab Hossain, 50, was the former president of Char Elahi Union's Char Balua ward in the upazila.

Abdur Razzak, chairman of the union, said some 10 criminals wearing masks beat up Sohrab and then slit his throat when he was returning home.

On information, police recovered the body and sent it to Noakhali General Hospital morgue for an autopsy early yesterday, said Rabiul Haque, officer-in-charge (investigation) of Companiganj Police Station.

Police are trying to identify the killers, he said.

Mega plan

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Responding to a question from AL MP Benjir Ahmed from Dhaka-20, the state minister said that the government had taken initiatives to build 39 different types of water vessels for the inland route.

Sazzad said they regularly organise awareness programmes in various big establishments and also in slums.

"This year, we will intensify the programmes."

He said they are keeping fire-fighting vehicles at major points in the capital to reduce the response time.

Talking to reporters yesterday, Motaher Hoshan Khan, president of Electronics Safety and Security Association of Bangladesh (ESSAB), said, "The government has taken initiatives to turn Sylhet and Chattogram into smart cities. But no such initiative has been taken for the capital."

It is high time the government put in place a modern safety and security system to deal with fire incidents all over the country, he added.

now well.

He has no symptom of novel coronavirus, the medical team confirmed after completing his health check-up, our correspondent reports.

On Saturday evening, cough and blood samples from the patient was sent to IEDCR in Dhaka for tests.

"We will inform about the test result as soon as we get it in hand," ASM Alamgir, principal scientific officer of IEDCR, told The Daily Star.

"Even if reported cases might be peaking, we don't know what is happening with unreported cases," he said.

Major cities and capitals announced new travel restrictions as concern over the spread of the virus increased.

Chinese-ruled Hong Kong introduced a two-week quarantine on Saturday for all people arriving from the mainland, or who have been there during the previous 14 days. Malaysia expanded its ban on visitors from China.

France issued a new travel advisory for its citizens, saying it did not recommend travelling to China unless there was an "imperative" reason. Italy asked children travelling from China to stay away from school for two weeks voluntarily.

The latest patients outside China include five British nationals staying in a mountain village in Haute-Savoie in the Alps, French health officials said, raising fears of further infections at a busy period in the ski season.

Princess Cruises, operator of the Diamond Princess cruise ship quarantined off the coast of Japan, said a further six people had tested positive, bringing the total cases aboard to 70.

Seven suffer burn injuries in iron factory

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Seven workers suffered burns when they were melting iron at a steel mill in Kadamtali area of the capital early yesterday.

The injured are: Russel, 32, Redwan, 27, Sohagh, 25, Babar, 35, Dulal, 30, and Shujon, 27. They were melting iron at Kamal Steel Mills.

Shanjit Mondal, a supervisor of the factory, said the workers were melting iron in the night-shift. Around 3:30am, the melted iron bubbled and splashed on the workers, leaving them injured.

They were rushed to the burn unit at Dhaka Medial College Hospital.

Of the seven, three were discharged after treatment.

Cooperation, Tunku Abdur Rahman, Bangabandhu offers full cooperation to the representatives of the Secretary-General to visit Mirpur, the non-Bengali suburb.

Bangabandhu says, "I should like to assure your excellency that life and property of non-Bengali population here are secure, in spite of many provocations over the past nine months. The feeling against them is now so bitter that for their protection the government must maintain for some time the protective cordon, but there is nothing to hide and the Secretary General's representative will be extended full cooperation to visit Mirpur.

In contrast to the situation here, Bengali residents in Pakistan are living in a state of terror and are being subjected to harassment and personal indignities. It is a matter of regret that you haven't felt it necessary to say anything about the position of the

Bengalis in Pakistan.

I have also to recall with regret that during the last nine months when three million Bengalis in Bangladesh were killed in cold blood by the West Pakistani forces, you didn't raise your voice to stop the killings of innocent Muslims and members of other communities in the second largest Muslim state."

40,000 BENGALIS TO BE REPATRIATED

About 28,000 Bengali officials and men belonging to defence services of Pakistan and another 12,000 Bengali civil servants in the Pakistan Central Government will be soon allowed to go on leave for repatriation in Bangladesh, informs official sources of the Pakistan government.

SOURCES: February 11, 1972 issues of Dainik Bangla, The Daily Ittefaq, Azad, Morning News, The Bangladesh Observer and Purbodesh.

"Recognise first, then talk"

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sovereign independent state. JAPAN ACCORDS RECOGNITION

JAPAN today recognises Bangladesh. Japanese Prime Minister Eisaku Sato has sent a telegram to Bangabndhu felicitating the birth of the new South Asian nation and praying for its future development.

Welcoming the Japanese government's decision to recognise Bangladesh, Bangabandhu says, "I have no doubt that the areas of cooperation between our two countries will steadily expand in the future to the mutual benefit of our two peoples. On behalf of my government and people, I take this opportunity to extend our warm greetings and felicitations to the government and people of Japan."

NON-BENGALI'S LIFE, PROPERTY SECURE

In a telegram to the Secretary-General of the Organisation of Islamic