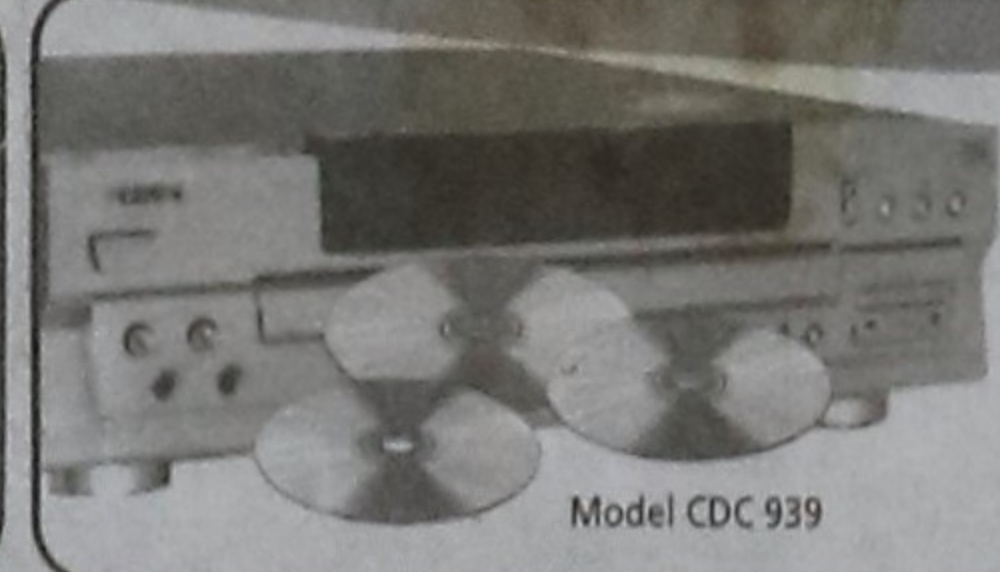


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8 Indians arrested at Akhaura

From Our Correspondent
BRAHMANBARIA, Oct 5: Eight Indian citizens were arrested on Wednesday night by police at Akhaura.

Police arrested them when they were moving suspiciously in the bordering area of the district.

They were produced before a magistrate's court here today. The magistrate sent them to jail here today.

ASP Circle (Nabinagar) said they were arrested as they could not show any valid document for travelling to Bangladesh.

Minor girl kidnapped

By Staff Correspondent

A three-year old girl was kidnapped from Bara Maghbazar area in the city on Wednesday.

Fariya, daughter of Abdul Hannan was abducted at about 7-30 pm.

Father of the kidnap victim filed a case with Ramna police station accusing two people for their alleged involvement in the kidnapping.

All Akbar and Ali Hossain lured the girl away and took her to some unknown place. Ramna police said quoting the FIR.

Police said the alleged kidnappers are employees of a biscuit factory owned by Abdul Hannan. They claimed Tk 10 lakh as ransom from the businessman for the child's release.

Police could not trace the girl till writing of this report last night.

Businessman mugged at Gulshan

By Staff Correspondent

Muggers snatched away Tk 2 lakh from a businessman in front of Southeast Bank at Gulshan in the city yesterday morning.

Mahmudul Haq, a businessman in Gulshan area and resident of Lichubagan in Badda, drew Tk 3 lakh from a branch of Islamic Bank at Gulshan. He was waylaid by four muggers near Southeast Bank at about 11:30 am.

One of the muggers snatched away Tk 2 lakh, which was kept in the right pocket of his trouser and sped away from the area.

A case was filed with Gulshan police in this regard.

9 fishermen buried

From Our Correspondent

CHITTAGONG, Oct 5: The bodies of the nine fishermen found inside the cold storage of a fishing trawler yesterday, were buried in Sandwip today after autopsy.

None of the dead have yet been identified. The autopsy confirmed that the victims were locked inside the cold-storage of the trawler 'FV Shafiqullah'. The autopsy were done at Sandwip morgue.

No mark of injury was found on the bodies. The bodies could not be sent to the relatives of the victims as they had begun to decompose, Sandwip TNO and police sources said.

Local people found the bodies when the trawler beached at Baoria canal of Sandwip after being carried by tidal current. The cold storage door was stuck under the pressure of huge logs of wood from outside, confining the fishermen inside which led to them being frozen to death.

However, police are yet to find the owner of the vessel to know the number of fishermen on board. Such trawlers usually carry 15-16 fishermen and some of them may have jumped off into the sea while trying to escape, police suspect.

Police are continuing investigation.

PM goes to Benapole today

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina will visit flood-hit Benapole land port today, reports BSS.

This will be the fourth visit of the Prime Minister to the western flood affected districts in a week.

Hasina will fly to Benapole from the capital to see the situation there and distribute relief materials among the affected people.

From Benapoles, she will go to Puthkhal, one of the worst affected areas of Jessore district, by river and distribute relief materials among the flood victims.



A vast area in the country's southwestern region is under water. As captured in the camera of Hossain Seraj, like many, the disaster has forced this family in Amuria village of Sadar upazila in Magura to move with whatever they could salvage, in search of high land (left) and some of the Bangladeshis stranded in India due to floods are seen braving their way into this side of the border as Bhomra land-port went under water (right).

Over 100 Bangladeshi women trafficked to Pakistan a day!

By Naimul Haq

There are about one million 'undocumented' Bangladeshi women in Pakistan, a significant number of whom are believed to have been trafficked.

One hundred to 150 Bangladeshi women are trafficked to Pakistan every day as 'human cargo', according to a report by the Lawyers for Human Rights and Legal Aid (LHRLA) of Pakistan.

Contents of the report were received from LHRLA President Zia Ahmed through e-mail.

Over 2,000 Bangladeshi women are languishing in jails and government shelters in Pakistan, according to the report.

The Manila based Coalition Against Trafficking in Women-Asia Pacific puts the figure at a much higher rate -- 200 to 400 a month.

In a report it said "most of the cage prostitutes" in India come from Bangladesh but did not give any figure on the trafficked women and children.

Trafficking of women and children in South Asian countries, particularly from Bangladesh and Nepal, has increased alarmingly and the traffickers have changed their strategy, women and human rights organisations say.

"What is alarming is that a large number of garment factories are now acting as recruiting stations for the traffickers", Farida Akhtar, Executive Director of UBING told this correspondent.

Farida said, women were trafficked in groups earlier and they had to be approached and motivated by agents. But a recent UBING study found that women, mostly victims of violence, are them-

selves coming out of houses and falling prey to traffickers or sexual abuse.

The organised traffickers are using a variety of excuses such as labour migration, entertainment and marriage, another human rights organisation said.

The Bangladesh National Women Lawyers Association (BNWLA) in a study in 250 villages identified as 'recruiting, transit and collection' areas found that over 7,000 women and children were trafficked to India and Pakistan every year.

"The actual number will be much higher", Executive Director of BNWLA advocate Salma Ali told this correspondent.

Salma Ali, who has been working in the field for long with a great deal of success, said, "The number of women and children rescued so far is very insignificant compared to those trafficked."

She said, "In 1999 we rescued only 116 children along with some women from West Bengal where we get very good co-operation from human rights activists."

"It is very difficult to work in Pakistan where a large number of Bangla speaking women are trafficked every year. They are 'stateless'. During my recent visit, I met the minister concerned and I was assured of all co-operation. But despite the assurance we are having difficulties in arranging their repatriation."

Khaleda urges govt to resign for failure to rescue victims

BENAPOLE, Oct 5: Leader of the opposition in parliament Khaleda Zia today asked the government to resign forthwith for failure to rescue the flood victims and reach them relief, reports UNB.

"A government that cannot save people from distress has no right to stay in power", she said while conducting relief mission.

Khaleda alleged India in a planned way deluged different thanas and districts of Bangladesh by opening floodgates of dams on different rivers. "The Awami League government knew this beforehand", she said.

The BNP chairperson was addressing a number of public gatherings after visiting flood victims and distributing relief goods in the flood-affected areas of Satkhira and Jhikorgachha.

Thousands of flood victims rush to the opposition leader and narrated their plight. They demanded food and medicine and complaint that adequate relief and drugs were not reached to lakhs of marooned people.

Khaleda assured that BNP stood beside and would remain with the flood-stricken people in See page 11 col 6

PM tells affected people None will starve to death due to flood

KOLAROA, Satkhira, Oct 5: Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina today said her government will not let anyone to starve to death as she announced plans for rapid rescue, relief and rehabilitation of the flood victims, reports UNB.

"We have engaged all forces providing all necessities to save people of the flood-hit areas of this region", she said addressing a gathering of flood victims at Kolarowa High School ground in the afternoon.

The government is trying to solve the problems using local resources, it will not seek international help as long as it can tackle the situation with its own resources, she said.

The Prime Minister went round different flood centres talking to the homeless people, hugged distressed women and children out of deep affection and consoled them saying, "I am with you and I will remain with you."

Earlier she visited flood shelters at GKMK Pilot High School, Sheikh Amanullah College and Damdam.

Hasina distributed relief materials, including rice, saris and lungis and assured the flood

victims all help during their stay in the camps and after return home.

"We'll give you food relief against VGF cards until next crops are harvested and rebuild your homes and give fresh agriculture loans to recoup your losses," the PM told them.

The members of army, BDR, navy, airforce, police and administration are working day and night to save the people. The workers of the ruling party are also working with them, she said.

Refuting allegation of opposition leader about the Indo-Bangla water treaty the Prime Minister said India also faced severe floods this year. For the Ganges water sharing treaty desertification process in North Bengal has stopped, she added.

She also called upon the affluent class to come forward in aid of the flood victims with food and clothes.

The teachers and students of Tala Mohila College handed over a cheque for Tk 10,000 to the Prime Minister for flood victims. Prime Minister said this cash assistance will be spent for buying baby foods.

India waives restrictions on Bangladeshis due to flood

India will waive restrictions on the return of several thousand Bangladesh nationals stranded in Indian cities following devastating floods in West Bengal, sources in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) said, reports BSS.

India's Deputy High Commissioner Pinak R Chakraborty was called to MOFA on Wednesday and informed of the hardship faced by Bangladesh nationals, who got stranded there after their visit to that country recently.

India said yesterday it agreed to waive the restriction on the limitation of visa duration for the return of Bangladesh nationals to their homeland and also the restriction of using the particular route for the return. Normal practice is that any Bangladesh national going to India must return within the limit of visa. See page 11 col 8

Indian flood victims in Meherpur, Chuadanga asked to go home

MEHERPUR, Oct 5: The Indian national, who have taken shelter in flood centres of Meherpur and Chuadanga districts after being displaced by flood have been asked to prepare to go back home, reports UNB.

The instruction was given when Assistant High Commissioner Murali Dharan and Visa Officer Amit Mukherjee of Indian High Commission in Dhaka visited Ballapur and Bhabrapara in Meherpur, and Natudah and Shibnager in Chuadanga on Wednesday.

The Indian flood victims told the diplomats that they have received all kinds of cooperation from local administration, political parties and villagers. They expressed their gratitude to all of them for the help and assistance during their stay in Bangladesh.

Meanwhile, an Indian woman, who has taken shelter in a flood centre here, gave birth to a baby boy at Ballapur Mission Hospital in Mujibnagar in Wednesday.

Halima Begum, wife of Minarul Pal of Mallapota in Tehatta thana in West Bengal and her newborn were in good health.

Community pry teachers end hunger strike

By Staff Correspondent

Teachers of Community Primary Schools, at Central Shaheed Minar ended their hunger strike yesterday after BNP Secretary General Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan assured them of meeting their demands if the party is voted to power.

Representatives of some 3,500 Community Primary Schools went on hunger strike Sunday morning to press for inclusion of their job in the National Pay Scale. Simultaneously, they started work stoppage in schools for an indefinite period.

The BNP leader went to the Shaheed Minar in the morning, expressed solidarity with the striking teachers, and assured them of his party's all-out support.

BNP leaders Noim Jahangir, Abul Khair Bhuiyan, Habibul Islam Chowdhury Boby and Shahab Shah Shaheen were also present.

	Sun Rises	Sun Sets
Oct 5		5.41 pm
Oct 6	5-52 am	

Prayer Timings

October 6		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	4-45	5-15
Juma	12-15	1-15
Asr	4-15	4-30
Maghrib	5-50	6-55
Esha	7-45	8-15

Source: Islamic Foundation

Airbus case

Court. From page 1
Khaleda along with nine others allegedly misappropriated Tk 175 by abusing power during her tenure.

Harun-or-Rashid, Inspector of the Bureau of Anti-Corruption filed a case with Motijheel thana on August 30, 1998 accusing 10 people including Khaleda Zia.

The Investigation Officer of the case submitted a charge sheet against 10 people including Khaleda Zia before the CMM's court, Dhaka on September 5.

Green channel

From page 1

In his inaugural speech the NBR chairman said, "It is a part of reform measures taken to ease the regulatory system". In future we will go for generating more facilities by expanding and simplifying the reform measures like green channel", he added. The policy in detail about green channel operation would be announced soon.

Presided over by BGMEA president Anisur Rahman Sinha, the function was also addressed by Commerce Secretary Golam Rahman, Shipping Secretary Suhel Ahmed, NBR member Abul Kasem and vice president of BGMEA, Chittagong unit, Khalilur Rahman.

2 CU students injured as terrorists attack them

CHITTAGONG, Oct 5: Two students of Chittagong University were fatally injured when a group of terrorists attacked them with sharp weapons near the University Rail Station today, reports BSS.

According to police and university sources, a group of terrorists intercepted Nur Alam Siddiqui and Shakil Mahmud on their way to university campus. At a stage of the altercation with them the terrorists attacked them with sharp weapons.

The students received injuries on their head and backs. They were rushed to university medical centre and later referred to Chittagong Medical College Hospital.

Hospital sources said the condition of Nur Alam Siddiqui 2nd year student of Chemistry Department was critical.

The other injured Shakil Mahmud is a third year student of Public Administration Department.

The incident was a sequel to previous quarrel, students of Shahajalal Hall said.

A case was filed with Hathazari thana in this connection.

Energy sector cooperation

US wants involvement of all political parties

US government official Calvin Humphrey yesterday said his country wants to institutionalise energy sector cooperation with Bangladesh involving all political parties in the process, reports UNB.

"We want to institutionalise our cooperation in this sector so that it continues whoever wins the next election in the United States in November and in Bangladesh," he told newsmen before his departure ending a five-day visit to Bangladesh during which he pursued US oil companies' option for gas export.

Humphrey, principal assistant secretary for international affairs of the US Department of Energy, said the primary goal of the US is to develop energy infrastructure in Bangladesh to help the people

earn hard currency.

"Our primary concern is bilateral relationship, not export of gas. We're not demanding or insisting that Bangladesh export its natural gas. Whoever is in charge of the government has to take the decision considering welfare of the people," he said.

He said even if the government decides now, the export is five years away. It will take at least five years to make the infrastructure for gas export and companies from the US or other countries may be involved in it.

Prospective countries to import gas are India, Pakistan or China.

"Companies are investing in LNG. India needs that LNG ... If you wait five years to decide, the export will be in 2010. That will

be too much delay."

Humphrey also spoke of providing power to the people as only 15 per cent Bangladeshis have access to electricity, and the use of gas in fertilizer or petrochemical plants.

He said Washington is exploring a programme called Clean Cities Initiative to help Dhaka get rid of air pollution as the situation here is even worse than New Delhi and Mexico city.

The CNG can be used in the city's automobiles, he said, adding that it will also reduce the import bill.

"Domestic need is a priority to any government. Meet your domestic demand and then look into the future. But we think export of gas is the best decision to make."

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