

Rohingya refugees

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 remaining 15,000 Rohingyas at the camps and expediting the repatriation process but is yet to take up the issue of missing refugees, he added.

A police official in Cox's Bazar said smuggling of consumer goods, drugs and arms through Bangladesh-Myanmar border is increasing and suspected that the 'refugees' might be involved in drugs and arms smuggling. He said the authorities have asked police to trace the missing refugees and arrest them if they are found anywhere in the country.

Repatriation officials noted that although Bangladesh and Myanmar authorities and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) signed a tripartite agreement to expedite the repatriation process, the Myanmar authorities kept on delaying the process by imposing fresh conditions one after

another. Their delaying tactics include 'reconfirmation of refugees at a much slower rate and refusal to accept split or left behind families.' These two categories comprise families whose members could not return home together on schedule due to illness of one or more of them or some other unavoidable factors and those families which failed to return due to similar reasons, officials added.

A total of 250,877 Rohingyas of 51,722 families had crossed into Bangladesh and taken refuge from October 1991 to June 1992 to escape persecution by Myanmar's military regime.

"The repatriation process has come to a virtual halt as the Myanmar authorities are not sincere about resolving the decade old problem. The process will never end if they don't come forward to take back their nationals," said a senior government

official at Cox's Bazar. He went on, "The number of refugees is increasing every day as the rate of repatriation is less than the rate of new births in the two camps."

Sources alleged that a number of people under the cover of various organisations have long been provoking the refugees not to return home and permanently settle in Bangladesh. Violent activities of the refugees in the two camps in late 1997 were an outcome of such provocation, they noted.

"In many cases, government officials cannot control such activities of different organisations because of their links with international bodies. Therefore, people involved with these organisations do not care the officials and misguide the refugees," an official said.

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RU admission

Date of distribution, submission of form extended till Oct 25

RAJSHAHI UNIVERSITY, Oct 15: The date of distribution and submission of admission forms for first year Honours classes for the academic session 2000-2001 has been extended from Oct 19 to Oct 25, reports BSS.

The fee for applying to each of the 44 departments of the university has been fixed at 75 taka like the previous year and an admission seeker may apply for admission to as many departments as he likes.

A total of nearly 70,000 admission forms have been submitted so far. The admission test will start from Nov 1 and continue till Nov 15.

Rubel's mother cross-examined in court

By Court Correspondent

Jahanara Begum, the mother of late Shamim Reza Rubel was cross-examined yesterday in the court of the Third Additional Metropolitan Sessions Judge, Dhaka. She is the 24th prosecution witness in the Rubel murder case.

Jahanara Begum, in her statement, said that Rubel was picked up by DB police from in front of Shahidullah's shop at about 4 p.m. on July 23. On hearing the news, she, along with her daughter-in-law, went to Mukuli Begum's house and requested Mukuli to help free Rubel. But as Mukuli refused, they came back to the house.

Jahanara also told the court that her two sons went to the DB office at Minto Road to find out about the arrest of Rubel. She further said that her elder son came back home and informed them about the death of Rubel.

Dacoits kill one in Banskhal

CHITTAGONG, Oct 15: One person was shot dead and five others were injured as dacoits opened fire on villagers at Jangle Khain under Banskhal thana here last night, police said today, reports BSS.

The victim was identified as Montul Islam.

The villagers caught one of the dacoits and handed him over to the police.

Dacoits looted valuables worth about Taka two lakh from three houses, police said.

A case was filed with Banskhal thana in this connection.

Indian police seize 30 kg explosives

NEW DELHI, Oct 15: New Delhi police and federal detectives today said they had arrested two men and seized 30 kilograms (66 pounds) of plastic explosives intended for Sikh separatist rebels in the northern state of Punjab, reports AFP.

P.C. Sharma, a director of the federal Central Bureau of Intelligence said two men, Pyare Lal and Baldev Raj, from the Punjab town of Amritsar were arrested in the Indian capital late Saturday.

He said 30 kilograms of the powerful plastic explosive RDX and a cache of weapons were recovered from them.

The arms and ammunition seized have an enormous lethal potential and the consignment was meant to be passed on to a very active militant Babbar Khalsa group in Punjab, he said.

Gandhi's newspaper relaunched in S Africa

DURBAN, South Africa, Oct 15: A newspaper founded just under a century ago by Mahatma Gandhi in South Africa's east coast city of Durban and dormant for about 40 years was relaunched today by Deputy President Jacob Zuma, reports AFP.

Gandhi established the "Indian Opinion" in 1903, using it to highlight the injustices of colonialism and white domination and promote his principles of non-violence, truth and welfare for all.

The newspaper, now called "Opinion", had a role to play in influencing South Africa's transformational and reconciliatory agenda. Zuma told the 1,000 people at the relaunch ceremony, at the Phoenix settlement also established by Gandhi.

Flood

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inadequate. They are also facing acute scarcity of pure drinking water, baby food and medicines.

One flood victim, identified as Prasad Kumar Moridal, who took shelter on Khulna-Satkhira road, was killed today in a road accident. Four other victims were injured in the accident.



In a country of cheap labour, children offer their services even cheaper. Hence they are popularly used at all levels of employment. These young children, quite oblivious to the fact that they too have rights to play and lead a life as any other child in the world, are on their way to work at the Karwan Bazar kitchen market as coolies, breaking their back, literally bearing the brunt of a society that gorge itself on their sweat without caring to ensure their basic rights to them.

Farmers urged to strengthen Integrated Pest Management

Agriculture Minister Matia Chowdhury yesterday called upon the farmers to pursue their best efforts for popularising the on-going Integrated Pest Management (IPM) programme to boost agriculture production and protect environment by controlling pests and insects, reports BSS.

Inaugurating a five-day workshop on "Conventional Nuclear Technique for Pesticide Residue Studies in Food and Environment" at Savar, she said rampant use of chemical pesticides to protect crops from the pest attack and other diseases were in fact becoming detrimental to public health and environment.

"These pesticides are manufactured by poisonous elements and that is why we should give due emphasis upon the IPM programme," she said, suggesting limited use of pesticide in crop

'New century will be shaped, dominated by Hindus: RSS

AGRA, India, Oct 15: India's minority Muslims and Christians should acknowledge their common Hindu ancestry as the new century would be shaped and dominated by Hindus, the head of a powerful Hindu right-wing group said here today, reports AFP.

K.S. Sudarshan, chief of the RSS, or National Volunteer Corps, allied to Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee's ruling BJP party, said a shared past could help in forging a common future and religious brotherhood.

"The 21st century is going to be the century of Hindus," he claimed.

Sudarshan told some 75,000 RSS activists attending the last day of a three-day event held to mark the group's 75th anniversary, that an overwhelming majority of Muslims were descendants of Hindu converts.

He claimed they had the "blood of Rama and Krishna in their veins," a reference to the two most popular gods in the Hindu pantheon.

Sudarshan said the same of India's Christians and asked members of both communities to join India's "cultural mainstream," risking inciting wrath and indignation among Christians, Muslims and Hindus alike.

The RSS leader also condemned the Vatican, claiming that it had asserted in a recent document that all religions were not equal.

fields. "We should also take into consideration how we can protect our environment," she added.

With the Atomic Energy Commission Chairman Engr M Habibuddin in the chair, the function was also addressed by Agriculture Secretary Dr AMM Shaukat Ali, Dr Nayeem Chowdhury, Dr MA Malek and expert of the International Atomic Energy Agency Dr Janos Lantos.

Matia Chowdhury called upon the scientists to conduct research on the residual affect of these chemical pesticides on food and environment to determine an acceptable level of their use in the country.

She also emphasised on the need for educating the farmers about the bad effect of residues of these pesticides.

As many as 25 scientists are taking part in the workshop.

Hasina-Clinton

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She is scheduled to arrive here tomorrow.

The official talks will focus on issues of mutual interest of both the nations.

The issues include extradition of the killers of Bangladesh Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, increasing US investment in Bangladesh, duty free and quota free access to Bangladesh goods to the US market, legalisation of stay of undocumented Bangladeshis in US, education facilities for brilliant Bangladesh students in US and allowing trade union activities at EPZs in Bangladesh.

The Prime Minister was received at the VVIP lounge of Heathrow airport by a representative of the British government, Shahwar Sadeque, Bangladesh High Commissioner to UK, AH Mahmood Ali and President of UK branch of Bangladesh Awami League Shamsuddin Khan.

During her stay here, Sheikh Hasina will attend a reception at Camden Centre by the Bangladeshi community in the afternoon.

Her itinerary includes several interviews with BBC, World TV, Asia Today, Bangla TV and BBC's Bengali service. She will also be interviewed by editors of five Bangla weeklies in London.

Sheikh Hasina will leave here for Andrews Air Force Base in Washington DC on Monday morning.

A BSS report from London adds: Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina arrived here this morning on a day's visit en-route to Washington DC for her high profile visit to the United States at the invitation of President Bill Clinton.

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Two injured at Adamjee Jute Mills

From Our Correspondent

NARAYANGANJ, Oct 15: Two people were critically injured in Adamjee Jute Mills labour colony when part of the roof caved in at a room in Colony No 4 at 11:30 a.m. on Saturday.

Uttam, 18, and Kulsum, 17, were taken to a hospital in Dhaka.

None of the buildings of the labour colony has been repaired for a long time, putting the workers at great risk.

5 more killed in Bihar

NEW DELHI, Oct 15: Five people have been shot dead by gunmen in the lawless Indian state of Bihar, the Press Trust of India reported today, says AFP.

State police chief identified those killed as lower caste Hindus and said they were shot late Saturday night in the district of Nalanda, some 60 km from the state capital of Patna.

Heavily-armed men belonging to a private army of a feudal landowner stormed a village and opened fire on their victims, killing all five of them instantly.

Eight of the attackers have been arrested, Nalanda's chief administrator Rajesh Agarwal said.

Nalanda has been the site of recent Hindu-Muslim sectarian violence.

The latest murders came in the wake of a massacre of 11 Hindu men and women by Muslim gunmen in the northern Bihar town of Siwan on Friday.

The police have attributed the massacre to a drawn-out feud between rival followers of an ancient poet cum religious cult leader, Sant Kabir, who has devotees both from the Hindu and the Muslim communities.

Bihar is prone to caste conflicts. Clashes between private militias operated by upper caste landlords and Maoist guerrillas have left more than 500 people dead over the past two years.

With a population of 110 million, Bihar has India's lowest per capita income and its highest crime rate, with an average 5,000 murders, 3,000 abductions and 600 train robberies a year.

Police say the creation of a new state of Jharkhand, carved out of the mineral-rich southern districts of Bihar, could spark more bloodletting after the administrative handover of the new province next month.

The leftwing rebels, who look at Jharkhand as their bastion, have been waging an armed campaign in Bihar for more than two decades on behalf of poor farmers held in bondage by Bihar landowners.

Rtd govt official

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The victim, who used to live at Rampura, was taken to Chailish Ghar Slum and killed there.

Family members blamed 'Kala Palash group' for the killing.

Ramna police recovered the body and sent it to DMCH for autopsy.

A case was filed in this connection.

A mob beat to death an alleged mugger at Narinda in Sutrapur thana at about 8 am yesterday. He was identified as Mohammad Ashiq, 25.

Police quoting the witnesses said Ashiq along with his gang tried to snatch away money from a pedestrian.

Beaten by the mob, Ashiq was admitted to DMCH where he died at about 9:30 am yesterday.

A case was filed with Tejgaon police in this regard.

In another incident, an unidentified man aged about 25 was stabbed to death and his body was recovered by police from a house at Ambagan in Ramna area yesterday morning.

Miscreants killed him, police said without giving details. They recovered his body and sent it to DMCH for autopsy.

A case was lodged with Ramna police in this regard.

BNP condemns attack on Joynal Abedin Faruk

BNP secretary general Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan has condemned attack on opposition whip Joynul Abedin Faruk by 'Awami terrorists' at Senbagh on Saturday, reports UNB.

Arguing that the first round was marred by vote-rigging and fraud, the Democratic Party (DP) has called on its followers to stay away from the polls and DP candidates in Tirana as well as four other towns close to the capital have bowed out of the race.

The boycott call however is not expected to be widely followed across the country.

"Only 30 DP candidates of the roughly 160 on the ballot have pulled out," Dalipi said.

The party contested that estimation however, saying that 95 percent of its candidates had withdrawn from the races.

The Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), which had sent 200 observers to monitor the October 1 round, declared the vote fair.

Elections held in Albania

TIRANA, Oct 15: Voters went to the polls today in Albania for the second round of municipal elections despite a call by the Democratic Party of former president Sali Berisha to boycott the vote, reports AFP.

Vote turnout was reported at between 35 and 40 per cent by midday, the Central Electoral Commission (CEC) said.

"The elections are taking place calmly," said CEC spokesman Aldrin Dalipi.

Albanians are to elect mayors in 28 municipalities and 128 towns following the October 1 vote in which the governing Socialist Party won control of local councils throughout the country.

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Breakthrough expected in Rajkumar's kidnapping

BANGALORE, India, Oct 15: Mediators seeking the release of a matinee idol held hostage by India's most-wanted bandit said today a breakthrough was expected later in the day, reports AFP.

"Positive information about the release of actor Rajkumar can be expected tonight," mediator P. Nudumaran's office said in a statement released in the southern Indian city of Madras.

Nudumaran did not give details of his negotiations with bandit Veerappan, who has been holding Rajkumar and three others in the forests along the southern Indian states of Tamil Nadu and Karnataka since July 30.

R.R. Gopal, another mediator, also sounded optimistic.

"Our negotiations are going on. We expect some good news towards the end of the day," a statement issued by Gopal's Madras-based weekly news magazine, Nakeeran, said.

However, the Karnataka state administration, which appointed Gopal as its official negotiator, was not as optimistic that he would be freed on Friday.

"We do not know whether the release is imminent or not (today) but we expect Rajkumar to be released in two to three days," a Karnataka government spokesman told AFP in the state capital of Bangalore.

Depression may intensify

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issued by the Met office at 9 pm said the depression was centred at about 770 km south-west of Chittagong port 3 pm yesterday.

It is likely to intensify further and move in a west-northwesterly direction, the bulletin said.

Maximum sustained wind within 44 km of the depression centre is about 40 kph per hour, rising to 50 kph in gust/squalls. The sea will remain moderate.

Maritime ports of Chittagong, Cox's Bazar and Mongla have been advised to keep hoisted distant warning signal No. two.

All fishing boats and trawlers in the north Bay and in deep sea

have been advised to remain close to the coast and proceed with caution.

The depression pushed the mercury up, raising the day temperature to 36 degree Celsius at Cox's Bazar and 33.9 in Dhaka city. The day temperature will remain unchanged today.

Appearing first as a well-marked low in the east-central Bay and adjoining west-central Bay on Friday, it turned into a depression on Saturday.

It had brewed from the south China Sea which churns out cyclones during March-May and October-December.

Taliban ban on opium not for int'l recognition: Omar

KABUL, Oct 15: A total ban on the cultivation of opium in Afghanistan is not designed to win international recognition of the country's Taliban regime, the ruling militia's supreme leader Mulla Mohammad Omar said in a report today, says AFP.

Omar told the official daily Anis newspaper that he ordered the ban last month only to reform Afghan society and control a rise in the number of opium and heroin addicts.

The decree which the Islamic Emirate (Taliban) has issued is not for its recognition," the newspaper quoted Omar as saying.

"We have banned this thing with the sole intention of reforming the Afghan Muslim nation," he said, adding the Taliban had not been tempted or encouraged by external elements to do so.

Afghanistan last year emerged as the world's largest opium producer with a record yield of 4,600 tonnes.

However, a United Nations report last week said the country's opium crop dropped this year to 3,275 tonnes, marking a 28 percent decline.

The United Nations Drug Control Program annual opium survey confirmed poppy cultivation in 125 out of 344 districts in the country.

The survey estimates that there were 82,172 hectares of land under poppy cultivation in the 2000 season, showing a 10 percent reduction from 1999 season, the report said.

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