



Some of the 2450-year-old artifacts recently found at a Narshingdi village: (1) the only piece of a rare knobbed ware discovered so far in the country, (2) flakes of semi-precious stone beads, (3) high-tin bronze knobbed ware, and (4) northern black polished ware.

Another UK minister due in city Jan 14

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Another British minister is arriving in Dhaka on the heels of Prime Minister Tony Blair's just concluded visit to Bangladesh.

Hilary Benn is likely to arrive on January 14 on a four-day official visit. Benn is minister in charge of the Department For International Development (DFID) which oversees British development assistance programmes overseas.

During the trip, seen as a follow-up of the British premier's visit, the sides would work out a strategy for further expansion of investment and economic cooperation between the two countries.

DFID has large operational presence in Bangladesh. Britain funnels a lot of assistance for different programmes through DFID. It gives assistance of nearly Tk six billion in such sectors as poverty alleviation, with special focus on education, health care and infrastructure.

The minister is expected to sign an agreement on Financial Sector Reform in Bangladesh.

British investment in Bangladesh now stands at one billion pounds with some 55 major companies having holdings in the country.

The number of Bangladeshi expatriates in Britain is the highest compared to that in any European country.

Industrialist murder DB men off to Magura to arrest suspected killer

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A team of detectives left the city for Magura yesterday to arrest Dulal, brother of Farida, arrested in connection the killing of industrialist Alam and his three housemaids.

The team took along another brother of Farida, Yusuf, whose statement was recorded in the court on Sunday.

Following information provided by Farida, police recovered some bloodstained clothes from the house of Dulal on Sunday.

Sources in the investigation team confirmed Dulal's involvement in the gruesome killing. "The team was sent to Magura as we came to know that Dulal went into hiding in his village in Magura after the murders," said an official.

Unidentified miscreants slaughtered industrialist Alam and three of his maid-servants, Rahima, Sakhina and Kamala, in his New Jurain residence on the night of January 2.

3 acid burnt in Khulna, Madaripur

UNB, Khulna

A couple suffered serious burn injuries in an acid attack at Talimpur in Rupsha upazila on Sunday night.

Police said three unidentified youths hurled acid at Montu Kumar Datta, 27, a day-labourer of a match factory, and his wife Jotsna Rani Datta, 22, in their house at about 11 pm.

The terrorists ran away as local people rushed to the house hearing screams of the victims. Previous enmity was thought to be the reason behind the heinous attack.

The victims were being treated at General Hospital.

BSS from Madaripur adds: Moina Begum, 32, a housewife, received serious burn injuries when her husband allegedly threw acid on her body in a remote village of the district on Thursday night.

Police said Moina, daughter of day-labourer Hafiz of Takerhat village under Rajoir upazila, became victim of acid attack by her husband following a family feud.

Indian anti-dumping duty comes into force

MONJUR MAHMUD

India imposed anti-dumping duty on the country's lead acid battery export on January 1 ignoring repeated requests from Bangladesh to consider the issue.

Bangladeshi battery used to enjoy preferential tariff facility under the South Asian Preferential Trading Agreement (SAPTA).

The duty is likely to see an end to battery export to the next door neighbour as Indian importers now will have to pay as high as 131 per cent duty on the item from Bangladesh," said a local battery manufacturer.

Generally, battery import duty in India is 64.21 per cent, but under the preferential arrangement, the importers were paying 38.33 per cent duty, he said.

Indian authorities imposed anti-dumping duty at a rate of US\$2.53 per kg on Bangladeshi batteries, which weigh between 7kg and 30kg a piece. Last year, 61,203 pieces of batteries worth \$1,306,344 were exported to India,

which was only 0.63 per cent of the total Indian market share, exporters said.

Despite the government's requests, the Indian authorities took the decision based on fabricated figures and information on exports during January to September 2000, according to sources.

"According to Indian authorities, the country exported 275,480 pieces of batteries worth \$610,228 during the period while according to the Export Promotion Bureau, the actual export was 37,399 units worth \$728,325," said the manufacturer.

Commerce Minister Amir Khosru Mahmud Chowdhury on November 29 last year requested his Indian counterpart Murasoli Maran to drop anti-dumping case against lead acid battery exports from Bangladesh and resolve the issue under the provisions of SAPTA. But ignoring the request, India finally issued a notification imposing the duty on December 7 last year.

The Indian authority alleged Bangladeshi battery exporters had not cooperated with the anti-dumping investigation requirements. But

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Police lack device to trace reckless highway drivers

ABUL KALAM AZAD

Due to lack of vehicles and device to determine over-speeding, the traffic wing of police is unable to prosecute a driver of passenger bus for reckless driving, resulting in accidents like the one on Dhaka-Aricha highway at Salepur yesterday.

As the law enforcers remain handicapped, there is a rise in the number of road accidents in the country, causing loss of so many lives. In less than two weeks, at least 66 people were killed in two bus

accidents and many were injured. Traffic police sources admitted that police 'never' prosecute any passenger bus driver for reckless driving or over speeding. But they said that due to lack of infrastructure support, they remain inactive as regards over speeding passenger buses.

"We do not have any vehicle to chase a reckless driver for over speeding," said a senior official of traffic wing of DMP. "We cannot also prosecute a reckless driver because we are not equipped with required tools like speedometer for scientific evidence of over speeding. And we

have never been told to check whether a vehicle is over speeding or not."

He also said, "We have no way to determine if a driver is driving under the influence of alcohol or any other drugs because we do not have any drug tester."

Another official said there is no record that a bus driver has been fined or prosecuted for reckless driving. "A driver is prosecuted, fined and even jailed only when an accident kills people. Otherwise, he is never asked to follow the rules."

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Bingo... Pakistan all-rounder Abdur Razzaq's off-stump is airborne thanks to Enamul Hoque (not in the picture) during the third day's play of the drawn three-day tour match against Bangladesh A at the BKSP on Monday.

Jute mills workers protest sell-off

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Several hundred workers of Daulatpur Jute Mills and Star Jute Mills held a demonstration yesterday protesting against the government move to bring the mills under privatisation, and threatened a greater movement from January 15 if the tenders are not cancelled by then.

The government has invited international tenders for selling these two jute mills to private parties as part of its denationalisation programme.

Yesterday was the last day for submission of tenders. It could not be known how many tenders were submitted for purchase of the two mills.

Six of the 15 jute mills under Khulna zone of BJMC have already been privatised; the rest nine will also follow suit, sources said.

These jute mills have become losing concerns of the government due to the huge burden of debt. Production cost is higher than market price, and dull marketing coupled with unbridled corruption in the management for years together have made the jute mills

Combing operation Arms, ammunition recovered, 1403 held

BSS, Dhaka

Police recovered 12 firearms and 107 rounds of bullet during a 24-hour countrywide combing operation that ended at 6 am yesterday, a police headquarters press release said here yesterday.

Police also arrested 1403 alleged criminals including five identified terrorists from across the country. Of them, 662 people were arrested against warrants, 722 under various investigation charges and 14 in connection with the arms recovery.

The identified terrorists arrested during the drive included Sajmon of Norail, Robi and Kalam of Jessor, Nurul Islam Mondal and Abul Bashar of Chittagong.

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Law ministry to draft acid control bill

UNB, Dhaka

In an effort to curb acid attacks, an inter-ministerial meeting here yesterday decided to entrust the law ministry with the task of enacting a draft law titled "Acid Control Bill 2002."

After reviewing the current aspects of acid attacks, its consequences and ways to prevent those attacks, the meeting also advocated setting up a 'National Acid Control Council'.

Chaired by Women and Children Affairs Minister Khurshid Jahan Haque, the meeting was addressed by Home Minister Altaf Hossain Chowdhury. Representatives from

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CHT district councils likely to be formed tomorrow

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Khagrachhari

The government is likely to announce the formation of the three new CHT district councils tomorrow.

Sources said the list of the proposed names of chairmen and members of the councils has already been sent to the Prime Minister's Office from the Ministry of CHT Affairs for approval.

The Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) may nominate its own party men for the proposed councils. Nakhatra Lal Dev Barman, vice-president of the district BNP for Khagrachhari, Dr Manik Lal Dewan,

former dean of the Bangladesh Agriculture University for Rangamati and Marmachari, a BNP leader for Bandarban, have been enlisted as chairmen, the sources added.

Another source said former chairman of the Khagrachhari district council Samiran Dewan and former PCJSS leader Saktipada Tripathi are also lobbying for the post of chairman.

Meanwhile, Jyotirindra Bodhipriya Larma alias Santu Larma, chairman of the CHT Regional Parishad, yesterday went to Dhaka to discuss the matter with the BNP

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Govt orders more changes in admn

UNB, Dhaka

The government continues to bring changes to the administration by making more transfers and postings as well as OSD yesterday.

Additional Secretary Abu Saleh has been made vice chairman of Export Promotion Bureau for one year on contract canceling his LPR, according to a notification of the Establishment Ministry.

In another notification, three naval officers who were in Coast Guard on deputation have been sent back to Bangladesh Navy. They are Commander M Fazlur Rahman, Lt Commander Saleh Ahmed and Commander M Mostebehuddin.

Three other naval officers have been attached to the Home Ministry to join the Coast Guard on deputation. The officers are Lt Commander M Enamul Haq, Lt JMHQ Alam and Lt M Tafsiur Uddin Ahmed.

Major Pervez Ahmed Khan and Major M Anisur Rahman who were in Survey of Bangladesh have been attached to the Armed Forces Division for their return to Bangladesh Army, said another notification.

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Five arrested at Fatikchhari for killing two BCL men

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Police yesterday arrested five persons from Shahanagar of the violence-ridden Fatikchhari area in connection with the murder of two BCL supporters the day before.

Four of the arrested were identified as Gura Mia, Monsor, Kabir Ahmed and Alamgir. A firearm was also recovered from Gura Mia's possession.

Police also arrested Gura Mia's mother Moriom Begum, 40, who attacked an on-duty assistant sub

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