

Woman jailed for 30 yrs for kidnapping girl

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A tribunal in Dhaka yesterday sentenced a woman to 30 years' rigorous imprisonment for kidnapping an eight-year-old girl for trafficking.

Judge Mohammad Mujibul Kamal of the First Special Tribunal for Prevention of Woman and Children Repression handed down the verdict on the convict Dipali Rani Chakrabarty.

According to the prosecution, Dipali kidnapped the girl Sultana, daughter of Rana Miah of Shuvapur Rajphulbaria, Savar, on June 18 in 2001 and took her to Kalihati in Tangail. But the local people with the help of Mirzapur police caught the kidnapper and rescued the victim six days into the incident.



PHOTO: PID

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia hands over cheques for Tk 2 lakh to each family of five policemen, who were killed in political violence including hartals, at her office in the city yesterday.

Changes in top posts at two medical college hospitals

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government has replaced the heads of Dhaka and Mymensingh medical college hospitals and the Central Medical Store Depot (CMSD).

CMSD Director Brig. Gen. MA Matin replaced the Director of Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) Brig. Gen. Nazmul Huda who has been withdrawn, according to official notification issued yesterday.

Director of Mymensingh Medical College Hospital (MMCH) Brig. Gen. Abdus Shahid Khan was transferred as director of CMSD and Col. Muhammad Golam Mostafa has been appointed as MMCH director on deputation.

Meanwhile, Secretary of the Bangladesh Jute Mills Corporation (BJMC) Abu Bakar Siddique was made an OSD and Deputy Secretary of the land ministry Faizur Rahman transferred to the finance ministry.

Additional Director General of Directorate of Food Sharif Taibur Rahman has also been made chairman of Bangladesh Fisheries Development Corporation.

One beaten to death

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A mob beat a man to death after suspecting him of theft at Motijheel in the city in the early hours of yesterday.

The victim was identified as Abul Kalam, 30, a resident of South Mugda under Sabujbagh Police Station.

Local people beat him to death in front of Kamalapur graveyard and left the body there.

Police recovered the body in the morning and sent it to Dhaka Medical College and Hospital morgue where Kalam's mother Anwara Begum identified the body.

Neglect of IWT sector causes environmental hazards

Speakers tell workshop

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a workshop yesterday said neglect of inland water transport (IWT) sector for the last several decades has caused many environmental hazards leaving the common people in utter distress.

They said massive construction of roads and highways from the 60's has contributed to the reduction of cultivable land and increased the possibility of huge flood.

The national workshop on 'Development strategy for inland water transport' was jointly organised by Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority (BIWTA) and World Bank (WB) at LGED auditorium in the city.

"Navigability of rivers means easy access to irrigation, more production of fish and low-cost safe transport," said LGRD Minister Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan.

He stressed the need for developing inland water system by dredging the rivers and linking those with others to help expedite economic

development.

Bhuiyan said the water in some rivers has become so polluted that it is very hard to fully purify them. On the other hand, underground water is also not safe in many places due to arsenic contamination, he added.

Besides, the surface water in some southern parts of the country is getting salinity contributing to scarcity of drinking water, he said.

"We talk for the development of the poor, but do not plan for the improvement of the waterways," said Shipping Minister Akbar Hossain.

He said allocation in IWT sector in the first five-year plan was 16.02 percent of the national budget which declined to 5.16 percent in the fifth five-year plan. Whereas allocation in road and highways sector in first five-year plan was 31.39 percent which increased to 67.13 percent in fifth five-year plan.

"Due to this fund constraints, shipping ministry failed to dredge the rivers that resulted siltation in

most of the rivers," Akbar said.

He however said the present government has completed four development projects and six more are scheduled for implementation by 2007.

Besides, BIWTA has taken a long-term dredging programme for maintaining navigability of waterways, he added.

Acting Country Director of World Bank David Hughart said, "The IWT can continue to provide a low cost, environmental friendly and safe mode of transport for both freight and passengers. Besides, through country boats, the IWT sub-sector remains strongly pro-poor both in terms of employment generation and in providing rural mobility."

Engineer Qamrul Islam Siddique, chairman of Water Partnership Bangladesh, Economic Relations Division Secretary Ismail Zabihullah, Shipping Secretary Md Rafiqul Islam, BIWTA Chairman Riaz H Khandaker and noted water expert Dr Ainun Nishat also spoke.