

Sister sues cops for 'murdering' 2 brothers

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, *Khulna*

A woman yesterday filed a case with the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court (CMM) against seven policemen and their informer accusing of torturing her two younger brothers to death for failing to pay a bribe of Tk 1 lakh.

Fatema Begum of West Mekot Road under Khulna Police Station (PS) accused Sub-inspectors (SI) Anisur Rahman, Ranjit Kumar Das and Shah Alam, assistant SIs Habibur Rahman and Shamim-ar-Rashid, constables Mohammad

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WHEAT SCAM Probe team finds importer, agent, customs staff guilty

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, *Ctg*

A three-member customs inquiry committee in its investigation found the importer, the shipping agent and some customs officials guilty of secretly unloading over 10,000-metric tonnes (MT) of imported wheat from a ship and selling it to local markets without paying customs duty.

Sources in customs believed that the shipping agent and the importer are equally responsible for the

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No Ulfa in Bangladesh

Police HQ says

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Police Headquarters yesterday claimed there is no existence of the United Liberation Front of Assam (Ulfa) in Bangladesh.

"There is no Ulfa insurgent in Bangladesh," Addition Inspector General of Police Anwarul Iqbal said a press briefing, 10 days after a top official of India's Border Security Force (BSF) claimed that Ulfa runs seven hotels and operates three bank accounts in Bangladesh.

Asked about Ulfa's alleged involvement in smuggling of a huge

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No move yet for fresh voter list, EC reforms

CEC to talk with political parties to build confidence

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Election Commission (EC) has not yet taken any move to prepare a fresh voter list for the next parliamentary election and reform the electoral rules as demanded by the mainstream opposition parties.

Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) MA Aziz however said yesterday the commission will discuss the issues soon and take decisions.

The CEC also said he will hold dialogue with the political parties to build confidence as the mainstream opposition parties have rejected his appointment.

Talking to reporters after a meeting on law and order ahead of Narsingdi-1 by-polls, he said the EC will start demarcating constituencies after getting the latest census report.

On the Narsingdi-1 by-election slated for June 22, Aziz said the EC is taking all necessary measures to hold the polls in a free and fair man-

ner. Sources said the EC is still undecided whether it will move with the six-point reform proposal submitted to the president by MA Syed, the immediate past CEC.

TIGHT SECURITY FOR NARSINGDI BY-POLLS

The EC meeting yesterday directed the law enforcement agencies to take tight security measures to ensure peaceful atmosphere in the Narsingdi by-polls.

The meeting, chaired by the CEC, reviewed the situation in Narsingdi following Saturday's killing of a BNP supporter and asked the law enforcers to take adequate measures to avoid such incidents ahead of the polls.

A supporter of BNP was chopped and shot dead by miscreants at Karimganj in Narsingdi Sadar upazila Saturday night.

The meeting decided that army personnel will be deployed on June

21, a day before the polling, in addition to a huge contingent of the police, BDR and ansars.

"All necessity steps should be taken to conduct the polls in a free and fair manner," the CEC told the meeting attended by top officials of law enforcement agencies.

Meeting sources said Election Commissioner AK Mohammad Ali expressed doubt about free and fair polls unless law and order situation improve.

CEC DECLINES TO COMMENT

MA Aziz declined to comment on the writ petition filed on Saturday with the High Court challenging the validity of holding two constitutional offices by him of a judge of the Supreme Court and the CEC.

"The matter is sub judice and let it be disposed of in the high court," he told reporters.

PADMA BRIDGE

Land acquisition starts this month

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Preparatory physical work, including land acquisition, for constructing the longest bridge in the country over the Padma river will start this month, Communications Minister Nazmul Huda said after a high level meeting at his ministry yesterday.

Construction of the 5.58 kilometre long bridge at Maoa-Jajera point, costing around \$1.35 billion, will be the biggest ever project in the country and contribute to better communications of the southern and western parts of the country with the capital, Dhaka.

"We have got a positive response from the donors for the project and we want to start land acquisition from this month so that the project could be started earlier

and implemented expeditiously," the communications minister said.

The construction of the bridge is scheduled to start in October 2008 and finish in 2013.

The World Bank and other multi national donor agencies will sit very soon to mobilise the fund for the project, the minister said, adding that the government is also contemplating collecting money from share markets through forming a company.

The project concept paper (PCP) was submitted to the planning ministry, and the Economic Relations Division is negotiating with the bilateral and multilateral donors for funding the project, the meeting said, adding that Asian Development Bank and Japan Bank of International Cooperation already

agreed to finance the project.

The government expects a major declaration from Tokyo about Japan's contribution for the project during Prime Minister Khaleda Zia's upcoming visit next month.

The meeting also decided to conduct an economic and environmental survey on the project sites and to make a video record of the existing land condition so that the unscrupulous people can not take advantage of the government's land acquisition.

A separate division for the Padma bridge headed by a secretary will also be set up under the Ministry of Communications for quick implementation of the project.

Last month, the Japan

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This busy road at Bijoy Nagar in the capital dug up by Dhaka Wasa exposes vehicles and passers-by to the risk of accident.

PHOTO: STAR

NARSINGDI BY-POLLS

HC rejects stay plea

BDNEWS, *Dhaka*

The High Court (HC) yesterday rejected a writ petition, which sought a stay on holding the June 22 parliamentary by-election to Narsingdi-1.

The HC bench of Justices Shah Abu Nayeem Mominur Rahman and Mainul Islam Chowdhury passed the order after Ferdous-ur Rahman, whose nomination paper for the by-election was rejected, filed the

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PM to meet Nepal king, Qatar emir in Doha

BSS, *Dhaka*

Foreign Minister M Morshed Khan yesterday said Nepal has asked Bangladesh to hold a meeting between King Gyanendra and Prime Minister Khaleda Zia in Qatar on the sidelines of the Second South.

Morshed said Gyanendra and Khaleda would have the opportunity to discuss bilateral and regional

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BSF beats up Bangladeshi to death

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Kushthia*

Border Security Force (BSF) beat up to death a Bangladeshi youth in Sonapur village in Mujibnagar upazila, Meherpur in the early hours yesterday.

Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) sources said the BSF held Faruk Hossain, 18, son of Raju Ahmed of Sonapur, when he was crossing the Hridoypur border point in India at about 2:00am.

The BSF severely beat Faruk up and left him dead near the pillar No.

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One gets 30yr for trafficking boy as jockey

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday sentenced a man to 30 years' of rigorous imprisonment for trafficking an eight-year-old boy to Dubai as a camel jockey in 2000.

Judge Shamsul Arefin of the Fifth Special Tribunal for Prevention of Women and Children Repression, Dhaka handed down the verdict in

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Prayer Timing		
June 13		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	4-05	4-40
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	5-00	5-15
Maghrib	6-50	6-55
Esha	8-15	8-45

Source: Islamic Foundation

2-km crack in Jessore village creates panic

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Jessore*

Panic has gripped several thousand people in Dalennagar and Andalpota villages in Jessore sadar upazila as a crack has developed on the earth surface of the area stretching about two kilometres.

The crack is up to two feet wide and 10-14 feet deep at places, villagers told this correspondent yesterday. The area is about 20 kilometres off the district town. They said the stretch of the crack is increasing.

A norwester blew over the area Monday evening when houses shook, possibly due to a tremor, the

villagers said.

The next morning they saw the long chasm on the earth surface.

People offered special prayers as they thought it was a sign of a powerful tremor yet to come.

Ainal Haq, headmaster of a local government primary school, said many panicked villagers are thinking leaving homes.

Jessore Deputy Commissioner Mohammad Abdul Wazed visited the area yesterday.

He told the villagers that he will inform authorities concerned in Dhaka about the incident and ask to send a team of seismologists to investigate the matter.

Listed criminal killed in "crossfire" with police

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, *Ctg*

A listed criminal of the district was killed in a "crossfire" between police and his accomplices in Rangunia upazila under the district early yesterday.

Detective Branch police led by Additional Police Super Jahangir Hossain Matubber arrested Md Salim alias "Karate Salim", 34, along with his three accomplices from a hotel in the city's Chawk Bazar area on Saturday night, police said.

During interrogation, Salim confessed of possessing more than 30 illegal firearms that he rented out to robbers in different areas of the district.

Police went out to search for illegal firearms taking Salim with them at a hideout of criminals in Majumderkhil under the upazila at around 3.30am.

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Rapid Action Battalion members take top criminal Arman to the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court, Dhaka, yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

Arman taken on remand again

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday remanded Arman, one of the 23 top police-listed criminals, in police custody for another seven days in a murder case on completion of his seven-day remand in an arms case.

The Rapid Action Battalion (Rab), while seeking the fresh remand, told the Court of Chief Metropolitan Magistrate, Dhaka that Arman has divulged important information on the August 21 grenade attack on an Awami League rally and on Malibagh killings on February 13, 2001.

Sub-inspector (SI) Abdur Rouf of Rab-4, the investigation officer (IO)

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US air strikes kill 40 insurgents in Iraq

REUTERS, *AFP, Baghdad*

US air strikes killed an estimated 40 insurgents in western Iraq on Saturday, the military said, but in Baghdad a suicide bomber attacked the headquarters of an elite police unit, killing three.

Seven precision-guided US air strikes on the outskirts of the town of Karabilah killed the insurgents who were stopping vehicles at gunpoint and threatening Iraqi civilians, said a US military statement.

The strikes came Saturday, after at least 43 people were killed in attacks in Iraq over the past 24 hours as a spate of bomb attacks shattered a relative calm in

Baghdad since US and Iraqi forces launched a sweep for insurgents three weeks ago.

The military said there were no US casualties when Marines engaged large groups of insurgents armed with rocket-propelled grenades, machine guns and AK-47 assault rifles.

The US military said there were no reports of civilian casualties. It was not immediately possible to confirm the insurgent casualty figures independently.

While US forces struck guerrillas in their heartland of Anbar province, a former Iraqi police commando blew himself up in a failed bid to assassinate the leader of the anti-insurgent

Wolf Brigade in Baghdad, Major General Mohammed Qureishi, killing three other policemen in the attempt, the Interior Minister said.

The motive was unclear but the mainly Shia Muslim force has been at the centre of controversy about aggressive methods and accusations of a sectarian "dirty war" on minority Sunnis.

In an Internet claim of responsibility, the Sunni insurgent group linked to Osama bin Laden's al-Qaeda said: "Our brother would not accept the humiliation of ... Sunni men and women."

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