

Cop dies, 6 hurt as Tariqul's escort car meets crash

UNB, Pabna

Although Forest and Environment Minister Tariqul Islam had a lucky escape, a police constable of his protection team died and six others were injured in a road accident near Dashuria in Ishwardi yesterday.

The minister left Dhaka in the morning to attend an official function at the Sugarcane Research Institute at Ishwardi. As his car reached Dashuria at about 12:30pm, one of the wheels of the police protection car suddenly burst and the vehicle crashed into a speeding

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Flash flood turns worse

Vast areas in Barisal, Patuakhali, Barguna, Sherpur, Netrakona, Sirajganj inundated

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Torrential rain and onrush of water from India have resulted in flash flood throughout a vast expanse of several districts, destroying crops, washing away houses and creating untold sufferings for millions of people.

A large area in Barisal, Patuakhali, Barguna, Sherpur, Netrakona, Sirajganj has been submerged as water level in different rivers rose further.

People in the various flood-

affected areas are living a miserable life, suffering from scarcity of food and pure drinking water, while children are falling sick in hundreds.

Around 5 lakh people of Sherpur district were marooned as onrush of water from across the border broke the Chellakhaly and Vogai river dams and inundated some forty unions of the district.

Floodwater washed away a part of the Satla-Bagda embankment and submerged a huge area of Uzirpur and Agailjhara upazila in Barisal district.

The three-day non-stop down-pour has sent almost the entire Patuakhali town under water, while some 300 metres of the flood control dam in Kalapara was washed away by the consistently rising floodwater.

Flood situation has also deteriorated in Netrakona. Six upazilas of the district are marooned, creating untold suffering for some two lakh people.

Six upazilas of Sirajganj district have been badly affected by the

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Jute, textile workers call hartal for tomorrow

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Jute, cotton and textile mill workers enforce a dawn-to-dusk hartal across the country tomorrow demanding reopening of all closed mills and factories, declaration of minimum wages and checking price hike of essentials.

Left-leaning 11-party, Bangladesh Samajtantrik Dal, Bangladesh Trade Union Kendra and other leftist parties have extended their support to Jute, Cotton and Textile Mill Workers Sangram Parishad's hartal and

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Charges framed against robber sergeant

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday framed charges against Sergeant Julfikar Ali arrested for robbing a businessman of Tk 14.47 lakh in local and foreign currencies on June 29.

Metropolitan Magistrate Mir Ali Reza of the Court of Chief Metropolitan Magistrate, Dhaka rejected the discharge petition filed by Julfikar's lawyers and framed charges against him.

Sergeant Julfikar pleaded not guilty and demanded justice after the charges were read out to him.

The court also rejected his bail petition, fixed July 19 for trial and

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DRIVE AGAINST GRAFT

ACC plans to set up offices at 3 ports

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) has decided in principle to set up permanent offices at three ports for round the clock surveillance to prevent tax dodging.

"We've decided in principle to set up offices at Zia International Airport (ZIA), Chittagong Port and Benapole Port," commission Chairman Justice Sultan Hossain Khan said yesterday.

"Now, we will write to the ministries

concerned for office spaces and the National Board of Revenue (NBR) for cooperation."

The commission took the decision Tuesday against the backdrop of widespread corruption at major ports in which the government ends up with a staggering loss of crores of taka. The commission consulted with its legal advisor before taking the decision.

The commission, however, failed to decide at yesterday's meeting

over submission of the charge-sheets on 21 corruption cases as Commissioner Prof Maniruzzaman Miah argued with the ACC chairman and other Commissioner M Maniruddin Ahmed to have a rule for approval procedure first.

The commission also decided to send watchdogs frequently to other ports including Sylhet International Airport, Sonamasjid and Hily land ports for inspection.

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19 Bangladeshis detained on Russian border

UNB, Dhaka

Nineteen Bangladeshis have been detained outside a checkpoint on the Russian-Ukrainian border, the Russian Federal Security Service's Department for the Central Federal District reported.

The detainees have been placed in a pre-trial detention center, RIA Novosti agency reported from Russian Voronezh on Wednesday.

More than 150 illegal migrants have been detained while trying to cross the border between Russia and Ukraine since the start of 2005, the report said.



PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

A woman in a desperate bid to collect drinking water tries to adjust suction of a tube-well with dirty water after the entire neighbourhood of Matuail in the capital submerged due to deluges.

10 get life for killing two cops

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

A court here yesterday awarded life imprisonment to ten people out of 36 charged with killing of two policemen of Shiali camp under Rupsha upazila of the district.

The court also fined the convicts Tk 50,000 each, in default they are to suffer three more years in jail.

Judge Abdus Samad of the Divisional Speedy Trial Tribunal acquitted the remaining 26 accused as charges brought against them were not proved.

The lifers are Mustafizur Rahman alias Akash, Mahub Shaikh, Mizan Mina, Haroon Shaikh, Kibria Morol, Raja Shaikh, Kamrul Shaikh, Nannu Mia alias Nayan, Nasir Shaikh and Dino Shikder. Five of them are still absconding.

According to the prosecution, Sub Inspector Shamsul Huq and Havildar Abu Bakar Siddique of Shiali police camp were gunned down and then slaughtered at Bamendanga at 10:30am on July 3, 2003. The bodies were later thrown into the Atharobenki river of Rupsha upazila. Police recovered the bodies from the river the following day.

The officer-in-charge (OC) of Rupsha Police Station filed a case as complainant accusing 37 people

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PHOTO: STAR

Workers conduct soil test on Joykali Mandir Road in the capital to check the feasibility of the site for Gulistan-Jatrabari flyover yesterday.

'BNP won't win next polls unless HC's anti-fatwa order annulled'

Amini says

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Ruling Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) will not win the next general elections unless it annuls a High Court (HC) order making Fatwa illegal, said the chairman of Islami Oikya Jote yesterday.

"No political party is able to come to power without support of the Islamic forces and the Alem community," Fazlul Haq Amini, MP told a rally at Muktangan in the capital.

Islami Oikya Jote, a partner of the ruling coalition, also submitted a memorandum to the Dhaka district administration.

At the rally organised by the Committee for Enforcement of Islamic Law, Amini also demanded that the government should recognise the certificates of Kawmi Madrasa education.

"We can realise our demands by means of struggle because we have the largest number of diehard activists prepared to sacrifice their lives," he said.

He however ruled out the possibility of supporting the main opposition Awami League (AL).

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Saudis 'significant source' of terror funds: US

AFP, Washington

The US government has suggested wealthy Saudi individuals remain "a significant source" of funds for Islamic terrorists around the world, despite widely-publicised efforts by the desert kingdom to shut down these channels.

The statement by Treasury Undersecretary Stuart Levey before the US Senate Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs, contrasted with earlier upbeat assessments by US officials that Saudi Arabia was making good progress in stemming the flow of private money to terrorist groups.

Levey said challenges posed by terrorist financing from within Saudi Arabia were "among the most daunting" his agency had to face as it tries to persuade Islamic nations to strengthen controls over their banks and charitable organisations.

"Wealthy Saudi financiers and charities have funded terrorist organisations and causes that support terrorism and the ideology that fuels the terrorists' agenda", Levey told lawmakers Wednesday.

"Even today, we believe that Saudi donors may still be a significant source of terrorist financing, including for the insurgency in Iraq,"

he added.

US officials expressed particular concern about three Saudi-run charities that operate around the world: the International Islamic Relief Organisation, the World Association of Muslim Youth and the Muslim World League.

The Saudi government has moved to establish an oversight commission for its charitable sector and ordered an end to uncontrolled collection of charitable donations at mosques and retail shops.

But US officials argued they wanted to see convincing proof that these proclaimed initiatives have become reality.

Assistant Secretary of State Anthony Wayne told senators American diplomats continue to stress in their discussions with the Saudis "the need for full implementation, including a fully functioning charities commission."

Republican Senator Richard Shelby, who chairs the committee, cited the case of the New York branch of Arab Bank, which is under investigation by the Justice Department on suspicion it had been used to channel funds to the radical Palestinian group Hamas and al-Qaeda.

"At the core of the Arab Bank case sits the Saudi Committee for

the Support of the Al Quds Intifada, a known conduit for money destined for terrorist organisations in the West Bank and Gaza," Shelby fumed.

Administration officials also voiced alarm that Saudi supporters of al-Qaeda and anti-American insurgents in Iraq were increasingly turning to individual couriers rather than financial institutions to move cash across the border.

"It is critical that Saudi Arabia and other Gulf countries lower reporting thresholds for cross-border transfers of cash and enforce these provisions aggressively," Levey said.

So far, Saudi officials have not publicly responded to the new criticism,

but Adel Al-Jubeir, a foreign policy adviser to Crown Prince Abdullah bin Abdul Aziz, said Wednesday his government had punished institutions and individuals suspected of providing financial support to terrorists.

"With regard to combating terror financing, Saudi Arabia has put in place one of the strictest financial controls in the world to ensure that no funds reach evil-doers intentionally or unintentionally," he said in an

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Saarc FMs to meet in Aug

UNB, Dhaka

Foreign Ministers from the Saarc (South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation) countries are expected to meet in Pakistan in mid-August, reports Online news agency, according to Hindustan Times.

The meeting will discuss the agenda for the 13th Saarc summit to be held in Dhaka in November.

The summit was originally scheduled for January, but was postponed to March due to the December 26 tsunami. However, the March summit could not be held after India's refusal to attend it following the royal coup in Nepal in February.

The Saarc comprises India, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Maldives, Nepal Pakistan and Sri Lanka, and aims to accelerate economic and social development in the member states.

Prayer Timing		
July 15		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	4-15	4-50
Juma	12-30	1-15
Asr	5-00	5-15
Maghrib	6-54	6-58
Esha	8-15	8-45

Source: Islamic Foundation