

Boat now only means of transport for DND people

BDNEWS, Narayanganj

Boats have become the only means of transport for lakhs of people marooned in the DND area. Boats have been selling like hot cakes for the last few days at Fatulla Bazar. The flood-affected people have opted for boats anticipating that the artificially created flood may not be over any time soon. With the demand for boats very high, the prices of boats are also showing an upward trend. Locals said, on an average 50 to 60 boats are selling a daily. At Fatulla Bazar a small-sized kosha boat is selling at Tk 12,00 to 15,00 while the large ones at Tk 25,00 to Tk 3,000. Osman Gani of Jalkuri area of DND, a buyer said, the solution to water stagnation problem is taking longer than expected. I have built a platform in my home and took the cattle to a nearby road. There is no alternative to boats for transport.



Writer Shahriar Kabir speaks at a discussion on 'European Human Rights Conference on Bangladesh Extremism, Intolerance and Violence' at WVA auditorium in the city yesterday. The Committee for Resisting Killers and Collaborators of 1971 organised the event.

Govt tried to foil London confce on human rights

Speakers tell discussion

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government tried to foil in a planned way the 'European Human Rights Conference on Bangladesh Extremism, Intolerance and Violence' held in London on June 17, said the speakers at a discussion yesterday. The discussion on the outcome of the conference was organised by Ekatturer Ghatak-Dalal Nirmul Committee (Committee for Resisting Killers and Collaborators of 1971) at the Women's Voluntary Association auditorium in the city. 'The government representatives including Bangladeshi High Commissioner in London left no stone unturned to foil the conference, but they failed,' said Justice KM Sobhan who led an 11-member Bangladesh delegation to the conference. Lord Avebury, vice-chair of UK Parliamentary Human Rights

Group, termed as false the statement of High Commissioner AH Mofazzal Karim who tried to hide the actual human rights situation in Bangladesh, he said. Justice Sobhan said the comment of the high commissioner that 'it is not a significant event if one lakh Ahmadiyyas are affected against a 13 crore Sunni Muslims in the country' was vehemently criticised by the audience and speakers at the conference. The fascist attitude of the four-party alliance was clearly understood in the conference, said Shahriar Kabir, noted writer and acting president of the committee. Claiming the conference as success, he said the representatives of different countries expressed their grave concern over the deteriorating human rights situation in Bangladesh. Kabir said the persecution of minority people in Bangladesh must be stopped to safeguard

democracy and the spirit of the liberation war. 'The government brings allegation of tarnishing the country's image against me for protesting the killing of my father, but how the image of the country would be saved when the BNP men had killed him?' asked Dr Reza Kibria, son of slain former finance minister Shah AMS Kibria, while speaking at the discussion. 'If there were only 10 people of Ahmadiyya community in the country, it would have been the obligation of the government to ensure their basic rights,' he said. Ekatturer Ghatak-Dalal Nirmul Committee Advisor Prof Ajoy Roy, Supreme Court Bar Association President Advocate Mahbub Alam, Ain O Salish Kendra Executive Director Sultana Kamal and Bangladesh Adibashi Forum President Promod Mankin MP also spoke on the occasion.



Appeal for help

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The parents of Shara Washima, a six-year-old girl who has been suffering from blood disorder, have appealed for financial assistance for the treatment of their daughter. She requires blood transfusion at least three times every week, which costs a lot of money. Doctors have advised her parents to take her abroad for bone marrow transplantation, which involves about Tk 30 lakh. But her parents managed to collect a small part of the total amount. They appealed to the generous persons to extend a helping hand to save their daughter. Contributions can be deposited to the following account: Rashida Rahman, Savings account No.-34120331, Agrani Bank, Asad Avenue, Mohammadpur, Dhaka.



Debashish, a meritorious student of Khulna Engineering University, is fighting with death in a hospital bed in the city, says a press release. He is suffering from deadly Hepatitis-E, and has been in coma for the last one and a half months. His father, who works in Ghorashal Power Plant, has already spent over Tk 7 lakh and is now unable to bear his treatment cost anymore. Doctors have said Debashish is improving, but he needs further treatment which will cost around Tk 8,000 a day. Small help from people and organisations can give a new lease to a promising life. Contributions can be sent to Debashish, c/o Kanan Rani Bhawal, Savings Account No 002154956, c/o Shukhomoy Bhawal, Savings Account No 01671816701, c/o Kanan Sarker, Savings Account No 34058118, Agrani Bank, Mohammadpur Branch, Dhaka.



Light to moderate rain likely

UNB, Dhaka

Light to moderate rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty wind is likely at many places over Rajshahi, Dhaka, Khulna and Sylhet divisions till 6:00pm today. Moderately heavy to heavy falls are also expected at places over Rajshahi division during the period. Day temperature may rise slightly over the country, Met Office said. Highest temperature 34.0 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday at Mongla and lowest 23.0 degree Celsius at Sylhet. The sun sets in the capital at 6:48pm today and rises at 5:22am tomorrow. Highest and lowest temperature and humidity recorded in some major cities and towns yesterday were:

Table with 4 columns: City/Town, Temperature in Celsius (Max, Min), Humidity in percentage (Morning, Evening). Rows include Dhaka, Chittagong, Rajshahi, Khulna, Barisal, Sylhet, Cox's Bazar.

India's poverty feeds modern-day slave traffic

REUTERS, Surajbar Jot, India

Joloy Sor Mallik doesn't question her 16-year-old daughter too closely about the time she was drugged and kidnapped by strangers near her north Indian village. 'Whatever she tells me, I believe,' she says, squatting on the dirt floor of her verandah, in front of a mudwashed wall with a childish outline of a heart and arrow painted by her daughter, Sunita. Sunita and her 30-year-old sister-in-law, Urmila, were kidnapped a few months ago by two Nepali men posing as lawyers helping her brother, who was in jail for timber smuggling. They came from a tiny, close-knit Indo-Mongoloid tribe known as the Dhimal, who live in what they call the 'Land of the Sun' in eastern India near Nepal. Their version is that they escaped soon after finding themselves in the city of Pune, near Bombay, the nation's financial and entertainment capital, after being held for a brief time. They say they later worked as servants for a local Nepali family to raise the money to come home. But their story has many holes, including how they escaped so easily and how they found a friendly family in a strange city. What goes unsaid among this tribe

of barely 900 with little knowledge of the outside world is that they were victims of people traffickers feeding India's brothels. 'We are not asking about it too much, because it is a matter of shame and embarrassment,' says school-teacher and tribal leader Garjan Kumar Mallik, who helped bring the women back. 'We don't have things like prostitution in our society and it's hard for people to believe this.' MODERN DAY SLAVERY Although the women have been accepted back by the tribe, they have moved to a nearby town, ostensibly in search of work. The United States, which has put India on a watch list for failing to combat people trafficking, says this is the world's third-largest source of money for organised crime after drugs and weapons. The State Department says it is also the fastest growing crime, with 600,000-800,000 men, women and children trafficked every year. 'Human trafficking is nothing less than modern-day slavery,' Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice said recently. 'Whatever form of cruel servitude it may take, trafficking victims live in fear and in misery.' Neighbouring Nepal is a major source of trafficked women and

children, many smuggled across the porous border just a few kilometres away from Surajbar Jot. The Dhimal are mainly subsistence farmers, animists who worship the jungle and rivers around them. They live in crude bamboo huts in an area still menaced by wild elephants searching for food and the local haria rice wine. Joloy was with Sunita and Urmila the day they were taken. The fake lawyers took the three to a tea stall. Then they said they needed the younger women to sign some documents to free Joloy's son, Chaupal, and took them away. 'I had only 4 rupees on me,' she says. 'I spent it all in the tea shop and still they never came back and that really got me worried.' Eventually, the two women got word back to their family or were found by people sent to look for them. How is unclear. 'I felt really good when they came back,' Joloy says. 'I couldn't work, I couldn't do anything when they were gone. They were very weak when they came back.' Joloy, whose husband was the village witchdoctor until he died, hopes to meet the two 'lawyers' again one day. 'If we find these two guys, I feel like killing them.'

BOOK READING PROGRAMME Citibank, Prothom Alo launch fund raising campaign

Like previous years, Citibank Bangladesh and Prothom Alo jointly launched yesterday a six-month-long fund raising campaign for a special book-reading programme of Liberation War Museum, says a press release. Under the programme, the museum aspires to develop a linkage with different educational institutions by providing a selection of books to 102 schools in six districts. The joint campaign would also support the book-reading programme through mobile museum, which would display special documentary films with other cultural events to be held at different times during the next six months. Under the campaign, Citibank will make contribution to the museum against each international payment or reimbursement that the bank will process on behalf of its clients who use Citibank network to effect their international payments against imports and remittances abroad. 'We received significant response from our previous campaigns, and hope to create more enthusiasm about book reading in the society,' said Mamun Rashid, Citigroup Country Officer to Bangladesh.

Expat ministry condoles death of Shihara

UNB, Dhaka

The Ministry of Expatriates Welfare and Overseas Employment yesterday expressed profound grief and condolences at the tragic death of Shihara Islam, a Bangladeshi Muslim born in Britain, who fell victim to the recent bombings in London. In a message, the ministry expressed 'deepest sympathy to the members of the bereaved family and prayed for the eternal peace of the departed soul'. The girl from Sylhet had been missing since the July 7 blasts. Her body was handed over to the family on Thursday and buried in London on Friday.

Foundation of new building at Ucep Ismail School laid

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The foundation of 'The Swan', a new building of Ucep Ismail School, was laid on its premises at Mirpur in the city yesterday. Niels Severin Munk, ambassador of Denmark to Bangladesh, laid the foundation. The Royal Danish Embassy in Dhaka is assisting the construction of the building. Speaking on the occasion, the ambassador praised the Ucep-Bangladesh for its commendable role in the education and skills development of the working children. M Sirajul Islam, vice-chairperson of Ucep Board of Governors, thanked the ambassador and the people of Denmark for associating themselves with the Ucep programme since its inception in 1972. Ucep Executive Director Brigadier General (Retd) Aftab Uddin Ahmed said the building is being constructed for multipurpose uses including a dormitory for lady teachers of Ucep who will come to Dhaka for training.



Keraniganj Press Club executives

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Md Abu Taleb (Ittefaq) and Md Abdul Gani (Inqilab) have been elected president and general secretary of the Keraniganj Press Club for 2005-2007. The election to the 13-member executive committee of the press club was held on July 6. Other office-bearers are Md Siddik Sebul -- vice-president, Md Raihan Khan -- assistant general secretary, Sultan Mahmud treasurer, Md Alamgir Hossain -- organising secretary, Ziaur Rahman -- sports and cultural secretary, Md Majibur Rahman -- publicity and publication secretary, and Abdul Aziz Labu -- office secretary. The members are Kazi Abul Basher, Md Johurul Haque Jahir, Md Selim Hossain and Md Abdul Hai. Founder-president of Keraniganj press club Md Shafiq Chowdhury conducted the election.



Long-route buses remain stranded at Bohaddarhat bus terminal in Chittagong as the Jute, Cotton and Textile Mill Workers' Sangram Parishad enforced a dawn-to-dusk hartal yesterday.

SAUDI FIRE Bodies of 7 workers to arrive this month

BSS, Dhaka

Bodies of seven Bangladeshi workers, who died of suffocation in Taef in western Saudi Arabia, is expected to arrive in the country by the end of this month. 'It is likely to take another 15 days to complete all necessary formalities to bring back the bodies of all the seven Bangladeshi workers,' said A K M Shamsuddin, secretary in-charge of the Ministry of Expatriates Welfare and Overseas Employment yesterday. He said the ministry is in contact with Bangladesh consulate in Jeddah to bring back the bodies within the shortest possible time and to realise all outstanding dues and legitimate compensation for the dead workers. 'As per directive of the ministry, the Bangladesh consulate in Jeddah is

also maintaining contacts with the company concerned and the Saudi authorities so that the families of the victims get compensation as early as possible,' he said. Seven Bangladeshi and an Yemeni expatriate workers were suffocated by fumes when a fire broke out in a locked furniture warehouse in Taef in western Saudi Arabia on July 9. They could not come out of the locked room where they were asleep. The bodies were kept at the mortuary of King Faisal Hospital in Taef, sources said. The dead Bangladeshi workers are Abdur Rouf and Dalim from Noakhali, Naser from Laxmipur, Naser from Cosba in Brahmanbaria, Nizamuddin from Laksham in Comilla, Nurunnabi from Sonagazi in Feni and Rafiq from Khashial in Narail.

Garment worker murdered

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A garment worker was stabbed to death allegedly by his two cousins at Badda in the city early yesterday over a property dispute. The victim, Khorshed Alam, 24, was talking to his cousins Nizam and Israfil at their bachelor's mess at South Badda, but soon they were locked into an altercation over their property at Phulgazi in Feni.

At one point, the two brothers stabbed Khorshed in the head and stomach with a bati (large kitchen knife) at around 1:00am, police said. Local people rushed Khorshed to Dhaka Medical College and Hospital (DMCH) at 1:40am where he died in the morning. Police arrested the two brothers who confessed to attacking their cousin, Badda police said.



ETV Chairman Abdus Salam gives away certificates among the newly trained aspiring television professionals at a ceremony at the Russian Cultural Centre in the city yesterday.



Seminar

Bangladesh-Thai Chamber of Commerce & Industry and Thai-Bangladesh Business Council jointly organise a seminar on the 'Potentials of Trade and Investment between Bangladesh and Thailand.' Venue: Sonargaon Hotel, Time: 10.00am.

BU seminar

Bangladesh University organises a seminar titled 'Financial Sector Reforms' with Bangladesh Bank Governor Dr Salehuddin Ahmed as chief guest. Venue: University Auditorium, Iqbal Road, Mohammadpur. Time: 11.30am.

Roundtable

Centre for Policy Studies organises a roundtable titled 'Islamic unity: Importance and responsibilities' with former chief election commissioner Justice Mohammad Abdur Rauf as chief guest. Venue: Hotel Purbani, Time: 10.00am.

JSD dialogue

Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal organises a dialogue to reach a consensus on basic issues in national politics. Venue: Seminar Room of Diploma Engineers Institution,

Kakrail, Time: 10.00am.

RU meeting

A meeting of the executive committee of Rajshahi University Old Students Association will be held. Venue: 5/5 Block C, Lalmitia. Time: 5.30pm.

Meeting

A meeting of the National Committee to Protect Oil-Gas Resources and Power-Port will be held. Venue: 21/1 Purana Paltan (CPB Central Office). Time: 6.00pm.

Rally

Sylhet Division Development Action Council organises a rally to submit a memorandum to the prime minister demanding compensation for the victims of Tengratilla gas fire. Venue: Muktagong, Ramna. Time: 4.30pm.

Musical evening

Muldhara, a forum of writers, journalists and artists, organises an evening of music. Venue: Zakia Alam Auditorium, House-15, Road-7, Dhanmondi. Time: 6.30pm.

Japanese minister to visit Dhaka in Aug

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A top ranking minister from Japan will arrive in Dhaka in the third week of August to expedite the implementation of decisions and agreements signed between the two countries during the visit of Prime Minister Khaleda Zia to Japan. Aso Taro, who is holding a number of important portfolios and a senior minister in Japanese cabinet, is expected to arrive on August 22 as special envoy of Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi, said Foreign Minister M Morshed Khan. He added that Taro is coming to Dhaka as the Japanese prime minister could not visit Bangladesh during his recent visit to India and Pakistan.

Ensure production of quality seeds

Speakers say at workshop on jute industry

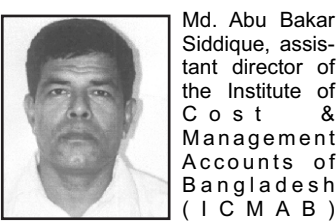
STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a workshop suggested ensuring production and distribution of quality jute seeds and finding out a mechanism so that the jute growers get fair price for their produce. They also called for development of the domestic market for jute industry, particularly for jute packaging, composites and geo textiles. The International Jute Study Group (IJSJ) in association with the International Trade Centre (ITC) and the Common Fund for Commodities (CFC) organised the workshop on 'A Roadmap for the Jute Industry' at a city hotel recently. The workshop brought together the industrialists, experts, technologists, scientists and policymakers to assess the present status of the jute industry, identify potential market segments and producers, analyse existing supply constraints and examine the gap in technology, research and development. Abdur Rahsid Sarker, secretary of the textile and jute ministry, inaugurated the workshop. T Nanda Kumar, secretary general of the IJSJ, Jean Romnicianu, chairman of the IJSG, AFM Sarwar Kamal, secretary of the health ministry, Parvinder Singh of the CFC and Anthony Sandana of ITC, took part in the workshop.

Obituary

Dr Khodeja Khatun Sarkar, wife of late Wajed Ali Sarkar died at her residence at Siddeswari in the city at the age of 87, says a press release. She left behind her four daughters and three sons to mourn her death. Dr Khodeja will be buried at the Banani graveyard after nama-jezanaza at the Aminbagh Jame Mosque after Zohr prayers today. Her kulkhwani will be held at her New Bailey Road residence after Asr prayers on July 19.

Md Abu Bakar Siddique



Md. Abu Bakar Siddique, assistant director of the Institute of Cost & Management Accounts of Bangladesh (ICMAB) passed away due to cardiac arrest on Friday, says a press release. He left behind his wife, two daughters and a host of admirers to mourn his death. He was buried at his village home at Veramara in Kushtia. Officers, staffs and students of the Institute expressed deep shock at his sudden death and prayed for salvation of the departed soul and conveyed sympathy to the members of the bereaved family.