22 fishermen, crew members of 3 trawlers arrested in West Bengal

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Barisal*

Twenty-two Bangladeshi fishermen and crew members of three fishing trawlers have landed in the custody of Indian police after a storm in the deep sea forced the trawlers to cross into Indian water.

Eighteen more fishermen and crew members went into hiding with the aid of local fishermen to escape arrest after the trawlers -- FB Manir, Pinki and Rizia -- anchored at a fishing port in the Indian state of West Bengal on September 10, sources said.

The trawlers sailed from Patharghata coast of Barguna district on September 8 to catch fish in the deep sea, said the owners of the trawlers.

The trawlers were caught in the storm on the night of September 9 and as the visibility was very low, the fishermen took shelter at Kakdwip fishing port, said Golam Mustafa Chowdhury, president of the Barguna District Trawler Owners' Association, quoting Gopal Chandra Saha, a fish importer in West Bengal.

Of the arrested, 12 fishermen were sent to jail and the others were undergoing treatment at a local hospital under police custody.

Mustafa said they were maintaining contact with the Indian fish traders and the Bangladesh High Commission office in Kolkata to get the trawlers back and free the fishermen as early as possible.

CPB protests high-ups' pay hike

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Communist Party of Bangladesh (CPB) yesterday protested the salary hike for the president, prime minister, ministers and lawmakers, saying that the ruling party has misused its power for its own interest through passing a bill in this regard.

While the government has announced two-day weekly holiday to save fuel expenses, the salary hike is nothing but a mere waste of money, said the CPB leaders at a rally in the city.

The countrymen will never accept such unfair burden when the unbridled price hike of essentials has already choked them, they added.

They also called on the people to forge a strong unity to resist the communal forces and its patrons involved in the recent bomb attacks.

Presided over by CPB President Manzurul Ahsan Khan, the rally was addressed by Muzahidul Islam Selim, Sahidullah Chowdhury, Prof MA Akash, Ruhin Hossain Prince, Sazzad Zahir Chandan and Ahsan Habib Lablu.

Quota for disabled at RU demanded

RU CORRESPONDENT

A seven-day art workshop and competition for the disabled children concluded yesterday with a colourful function at Premtoli Girls High School playground under Godagari upazila of Rajshahi.

At least 41 disabled children from 16 districts participated in the art workshop and competition, jointly organised by Action on Disability and Development (ADD) and Society for Fine Arts (SOFA).

Workshop coordinator Manjur Elahi in his inaugural speech briefed about the objective of the competition.

Rajshahi University Vice Chancellor Prof Altaf Hossain was present as chief guest while District Disable Federation President Shamsul Alam presided over the concluding function.

ADD country representative Mosharaf Hossain, Premtoli Degree College Principal SM Akter Hossain, RU Fine Arts Department Chairman Prof Shiddhartho Sangkor, RU Physiology Department teacher Prof Enamul Haque, former MP Sirajul Haque, Rajshahi Art College Principal Shamsul Haque, Shaw-Unnayan Director Mustafizur Rahman Alam were present as special guests in the function.

Firoza Akter Sheema, a disabled, in her speech expressed appreciation about the art workshop and competition and demanded quota for the disabled students in Rajshahi University.

Disabled students will get chance for higher education if RU authorities create quota for them. We want to participate in our national development, she added.

Prof Altaf said that he would place a proposal for quota for the disabled students in the coming syndicate.

The speakers urged cooperation of all section of people for the development of the disabled children in Bangladesh.

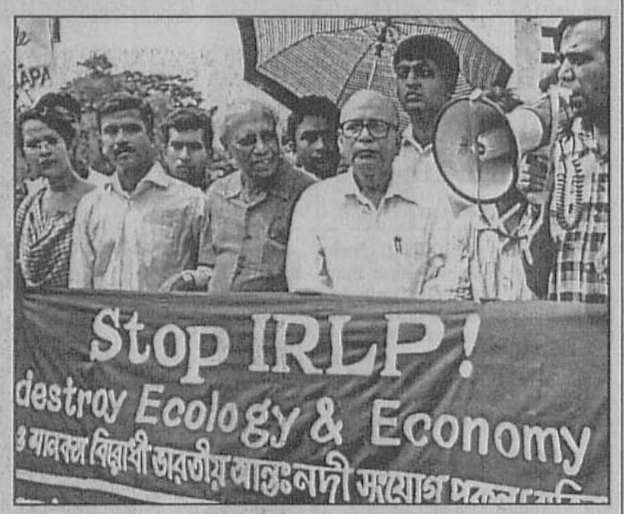
Prof Altaf also distributed prizes and certificates among the participants.

A drama titled 'Rahimar Shopno' and Rajshahi's famous 'Gomvira' dance were also performed by the disabled children.

Cancel Indian river-link project

Demand environmentalists

STAFF CORRESPONDENT



Bangladesh Paribesh Andolon (Bapa) stages a demonstration in the city on Monday protesting Indian River-Linking Project.

Environmentalists at a rally on Monday demanded cancellation of the Indian river-linking project, saying that it will destroy the ecology, economy and livelihood of the people and displace millions from their traditional homesteads.

The project, once implemented, will seriously affect the life and livelihood of the people not only in Bangladesh but also in nine Indian states, they added.

"It is an unrealistic and short-sighted project," said noted economist Prof Muzaffer Ahmad at the rally organised by the Bangladesh Paribesh Andolon near the Sonargaon Hotel, where a meeting of the Indo-Bangla Joint River Commission (JRC) was going on.

"The project to divert water from cross-border rivers is unethical, against international conventions and damaging for Indo-Bangla relations," said Prof Ahmed, also the president of Bapa.

India should not undertake such project on the basis of mere technical feasibility, he said, adding that its impact on the people, ecology and economy must be taken into consideration.

India must review the project in an open dialogue and exchange information about it in the light of the Ganges treaty, other bilateral treaties and international conventions, Prof Ahmed said, laying emphasis on regular JRC meeting.

"We are grateful that India helped us during the War of Liberation, but we have every right to protect our sovereignty, ecology and economy from the deadly impact of the Indian project," said Mihir Biswas, joint secretary of Bapa.

In the face of protests against the project, India has always shown two excuses that the project is at the conceptual stage and that it would not do anything without consultation with the neighbours, said Zakir Hossain.

But India is not making any information public though it is going ahead with the river linking project, he added.

Whatever steps India has taken regarding the project without any consultation with Bangladesh are in violation of international laws on rivers and environment, said Dr Asif Nazrul of Dhaka University.

Former vice-chancellor of Jahangirnagar University Prof Kazi Saleh Ahmed, architect Iqbal Habib and Dr Nuruddin also spoke.

Representatives from the Coalition for the Urban Poor, Green Voice, Peace, Sheba, The Hunger Project and Old Dhaka Environment Improvement Forum joined the protest.

Dengue fever spreads to fresh areas in city

22 hospitalised in two days

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Dengue fever is spreading to fresh areas in the capital with at least 22 patients admitted to different hospitals and clinics in the last two days.

Ten people attacked with the viral fever, transmitted by Aedes mosquito, were hospitalised yesterday and the day before, most of them from new areas including Gulshan, Baridhara, Khilgaon and Basabo.

Control room sources at the Directorate of Health yesterday said 71 dengue-infected patients are now under treatment in city hospitals and clinics.

As many as 398 dengue patients were hospitalised across the country since January 18, and 327 of them were released till yesterday.

When contacted, Dr Nasim Us Seraj, senior insect control officer of Dhaka City Corporation (DCC), said 11 dengue patients were admitted to city hospitals on Monday, raising the number to 90. He however could not give yesterday's figures since it was a public holiday.

About the steps taken to combat the spread of dengue fever, another official said the DCC is carrying out a special drive to destroy both adult Aedes mosquitoes and their larva.

The breeding ground for Aedes mosquitoes is clear water in containers and flowerpots mostly at houses, and coconut shells and abandoned tyres at places where DCC spray teams or cleaners are not allowed, he pointed out.

WEATHER TODAY

Light to moderate rain likely

UNB, *Dhaka*

Light to moderate rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty wind is likely at most places over Rajshahi, Dhaka, Sylhet, Barisal and Chittagong divisions and at many places over Khulna division till 6:00pm today.

Moderately heavy to heavy to heavy falls are expected at places during the period, Met Office said forecasting 1-3 degree Celsius fall in day temperature over the country.

Highest temperature 34.5 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday at Rajshahi and lowest 23.1 degree Celsius at Swandip.

The sun sets in the capital at 5.56pm today and rises at 5:47am tomorrow.

Highest and lowest temperature and humidity recorded in some major cities and towns yesterday were:

City/Town	Temperature in Celsius		Humidity in percentage	
	Max	Min	Morning	Evening
Dhaka	29.7	23.8	89	95
Chittagong	26.4	24.8	96	97
Rajshahi	34.5	26.6	81	84
Khulna	30.5	27.6	84	95
Barisal	28.0	25.0	98	98
Sylhet	28.0	24.8	95	96
Cox's Bazar	--	25.5	83	--

Two women killed for dowry in Chittagong

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, *Ctg*

Two young housewives were killed for dowry in two separate incidents in Chittagong in the last two days.

The victims were identified as Taslima Begum Tuli, 18, daughter of Nurul Amin of Jamal Khan area in the city and Tania Tasneen Karnia, 21, of Patiya upazila.

Hanif Mohammad, 26, of Shantirhat Kusumpura in Patiya tortured his wife Tania for dowry since they got married some six months ago, sources said. Hanif picked up a quarrel with Tania for dowry on Monday and at one stage he strangled her.

Victim's uncle Morshed Ali filed a case accusing Hanif and other members of his family in this connection.

In another incident, young housewife Tuli died within two hours after her husband Alamgir Bhutto took her to nearby Nibedita Hospital in Panchlaish in critical condition at around 6:30am.

He fled the hospital immediately after Tuli's death.

The victim's family claimed the death as a "murder" for dowry and alleged that Alamgir married Tuli forcibly for money. In a complaint with Panchlaish Police Station, victim's father Nurul Amin alleged that Alamgir married Tuli without their consent on August 21.

Since then Alamgir along with his accomplices, Shafiullah and Hasan, had been demanding Tk 5 lakh as dowry from Tuli's family and threatening for dire consequences unless the demand was met, alleged Amin in the complaint.

It was further said that Alamgir demanded the dowry for the last time on Saturday when he warned Tuli's family to be ready to receive her body. Tuli's father said he received the news of his daughter's death from Alamgir at around 11:30am.

Save youths from HIV/Aids

Speakers tell workshop

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a workshop yesterday called for saving the youth from the scourge of HIV/Aids by giving them an access to awareness programme.

Terming the teenagers as high-risk group, they said most of the young people have very limited knowledge of HIV/Aids because society makes it difficult for them to obtain necessary information.

The workshop on 'Young People and HIV/Aids' was organised by Life, a UN-associated NGO, at its office at Lalmatia in the capital. Experts and 35 representatives from 10 different NGOs took part in it.

The speakers urged the NGOs, development partners and the government to take initiative so that the awareness programme about HIV/Aids can reach the young people throughout the country.

They said the youth are most vulnerable to HIV/Aids and other sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) as they have no counseling in this regard from their guardians and teachers.

Over 7,500 young people get infected by AIDS while about 8,200 die of the fatal disease across the world everyday, they added.

UNB Chairman and Life Advisor Amanullah Khan said over the years more than 60 million people have been infected with HIV globally, half of them belong to age group 15-24.

Sixty percent of all new HIV infections are among the young people belonging to 15-24 age group," said Kamrul Islam Sony, founding chairman of Life while presiding over the workshop.

"Despite over 15 years of international recognition of the need for education and communication to prevent HIV/Aids, young people still today have only limited opportunities to learn about the virus and disease," he said.

Dr Rezwan Hossain of Dhaka University, Founder of Performing Art Centre Poet Rezauddin Stalin, Acting Secretary of Life Monir Hossain Tutul, Salma Jahan of Children's Voice, Nayeema Islam of Youth Scholar's Council, Kutubuddin of NBSS, Shafiqul Islam of SKUS, Rajib H Khan of Pacific Samity and Engineer Rezwan Hossain of Abohoman attended the workshop moderated by Amirul Islam, senior programme officer of Life.

POLITICAL, SECURITY SITUATION

McKinnon keen to extend cooperation

UNB, *Dhaka*

Commonwealth Secretary General Don McKinnon called on Foreign Minister M Morshed Khan on Friday on the sidelines of the 60th UNGA session in New York and discussed various international issues.

They discussed a wide range of international issues, including development and trade, with Commonwealth perspective.

McKinnon inquired about political and security situation in Bangladesh, and expressed his willingness to extend possible cooperation in this regard if requested by the Bangladesh government.

The Foreign Minister briefed the Secretary General about the situation and various steps taken by the government to arrest the perpetrators of the recent bomb attacks.

The Secretary general appreciated the situation and praised the government efforts.

Morshed Khan also attended the Annual Coordination Meeting of the Commonwealth Foreign Ministers, the handout added.

The meeting discussed Doha development round with a focus on the Hong Kong meet in December and development challenges by Small Island developing states.

Obituary

Musammat Saifunnesa, a former teacher of Adarsha Girls' School in Faridpur and Moniza Rahman Girls' School in Dhaka, passed away due to old-age complications at a clinic in Dhaka on September 9 at the age of 74, says a press release.

She was the wife of Md Syedul Huq, editor of the now-defunct daily Nabajat, and mother of Imranul Huq, AGM of the Janata Bank.

She is survived by her husband, three sons and four daughters.

She was buried at Shahjahanpur graveyard in Dhaka.

Kaniz Tahera Ferdousi

Kaniz Tahera Ferdousi, project manager of Khan Foundation, passed away in the early hours of September 19 at the age of 36, says a press release.

She had been suffering from diabetes and kidney diseases.

She was buried at her family graveyard at Beura village in Kaliganj, Gazipur.

Executive director of Khan Foundation Advocate Rokhsana Khandaker expressed deep shock and conveyed sympathy to the bereaved family members.

Khushi Ara Begum

Khushi Ara Begum, a former teacher of Shaheed Nabi and Wari High Schools, passed away at the Birdem Cardiac Hospital in the city on Monday at the age of 65, says a press release.

Founder of Khushi Ara Sangeet Academy, she is survived by her husband MA Sattar, a former official of BCIC, and two daughters.

Her qulkhwani will be held at her residence after Asr prayers tomorrow.

Death anniversary

Today is the 25th death anniversary of noted dance artiste and director Gauhar Jamil, says a press release.

Founder of the Jago Art Centre, he was awarded Ekushey Padak posthumously.

The Jago Art Centre will hold a discussion and cultural function on its premises at Swamibagh in the city at 6:30pm to mark the day.

SM Haque

The eighth death anniversary of SM Haque, former president of Bangladesh Railway Workers Union, will be observed today, says a press release.

He was also the founder vice-president of Trade Union Centre (TUC) and vice-president of the Communist Party of Bangladesh (CPB), Chittagong district unit.

Qurankhwani and doa mahfil will be held at his residence today.

Alhaj Munshi Mia

Today is the second death anniversary of Alhaj Munshi Mia, an industrialist and social worker in Chittagong, says a press release.

On the occasion, milad and doa mahfil will be held at the residences of his daughters in Dhaka and Chittagong.

'Weekly dose of zinc reduces risk of death among children'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A weekly dose of zinc can substantially reduce the risk of illness and death among the young children in developing countries, says a study published in September 17 issue of the LANCET.

The study was carried out by a team of scientists from the International Centre for Diarrhoeal Disease and Research, Bangladesh (ICDDRB), Centre for Health and Population Research in Dhaka and Johns Hopkins University of the US led by Dr Abdullah Brooks.

Children in Dhaka aged from two months to two years who received a weekly dose of zinc had markedly fewer deaths during a one-year period of preventive treatment. The benefits from the zinc were especially noticeable in protecting the children against fatal cases of pneumonia, said a press release of ICDDRB.

Globally, about two million children under the age of five die of pneumonia making it a leading cause of death in this age group.

Previous studies, also from Bangladesh, showed that zinc could shorten the duration of pneumonia when given along with standard antibiotic treatment, but this new study found that zinc also prevents deaths from pneumonia when given regularly.

During the study from April 1999 to August 2000, the investigators treated 1474 children in Dhaka. Half of the children received 70 mg of zinc weekly and the other half received a placebo.

The children who received the zinc had somewhat fewer illness episodes of both pneumonia and diarrhoea, but most striking was an 85 percent reduction in overall number of deaths in the two groups.

There were only two deaths among the children taking zinc, but 14 deaths in those receiving the placebo.

Most of the deaths in the placebo group were due to pneumonia, but there were no pneumonia deaths in the zinc group.

ICDDRB Executive Director Dr David A Sack said, "Our centre is currently implementing a programme to scale up the use of zinc for children in developing countries. This new study by Brooks and colleagues adds valuable evidence demonstrating the life-saving benefits of regular intake of zinc.

The World Health Organisation and Unicef recommends a 10-day course of zinc (20 mg per day) as part of routine treatment for children whenever they have an episode of diarrhoea.

If this recommendation is followed, a child's diarrhoeal illness improves more rapidly, and the zinc treatment reduces the risk of subsequent episodes of diarrhoea and pneumonia, especially of fatal pneumonia."

The study was funded by the United States Agency for International Development and the Swiss Development Corporation.

The ongoing programme on scaling up the use of zinc is funded by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.

PHOTO: PID

Cabinet members receive Prime Minister Khaleda Zia at Zia International Airport in the city on Monday on her return from New York where she attended the 60th UN General Assembly session.

ELECTION TO 9 RESERVED SEATS OCT 4

Women BNP leaders start lobbying

BDNEWS, *Dhaka*

More than 50 women Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) leaders have been lobbying for getting nominations to nine vacant seats for women in the Jatiya Sangsad.

The Election Commission has already announced schedule for election to those vacant seats. According to the schedule, the election to the seats will be held on October 4. The last dates for submission of nomination papers and withdrawal are September 25 and September 29.

As per the law, the nine seats, allocated to the opposition Awami League, remained vacant as the party did not nominate any candidate for the seats. According to the Election to Reserved Women's Seat Act, the seats will now be added to the ruling party's quota.

In the first phase of the elections 30 BNP candidates, three from Jamaat, two from Jatiya Party and one from BJP were elected unopposed as there were no other contestants.

The aspirant female BNP leaders, who failed to get nomination for the 30 seats of the party, have started lobbying again with fresh vigour to get nomination for the nine vacant seats. They are visiting the residences and offices of the BNP senior leaders, influential ministers and MPs, and going to the party office to win nominations.

It has been learnt that Rajshahi district Mohila Dal leader Kazi Shahidun Nahar Hena is well ahead in the race for nomination. She was among the 30 who got party nomination in the first phase of the election to women's reserved seats. But she was later dropped as she could not submit the papers regarding her resignation from the Railway job till last day of the submission of nomination papers. Later, She was replaced by Rajshahi city Mohila Dal leader Jahan Panna.

The top leaders assured Hena of giving her nomination in the last phase of the elections.

Others among the nomination seekers are: Mamaching (Bandarban), Kamrun Nahar Dastagir (Chittagong), Shirin Sultana (Dhaka), Farida Moni (Kushtia), Shamima Islam Rony (Chandpur), Rabeya Ali (Mymensingh), Shammi Akhter (Habiganj), Shahana Akhter Sanu (Feni), Ajmeri Begum Chhanda (Munshiganj), Ashifa Ashrafi Papiya (Chapai Nawabganj), Motia Haq (Rajshahi), Prof Lutfunnessa Hossain (Rajshahi), Laila Yasmin (Patuakhali), Feroza Talukder (Jamalpur), Mahmuda Salam (Jamalpur), Saimun Begum (Lakshmipur), Rawshan Ara Hena (Bhola), Ruby Mostafizur Rahman (Bagerhat), Namunnahar Baby (Chandpur), Fahima Hossain Jubilee (Dhaka), Newaz Halim Arly (Magura), Rahima Shikder (Munshinganj), Rabeya Siraj (Tangail), Feroza Bulbul Koli (Jessore), Rawshan Ara (Gaibandha), Saima Jalil (Barisal) and Hosne Ara Buli (Pirojpur).

BNP sources said, the decision of the parliamentary party would be final regarding the nominations. No fresh interviews will be held. But it has not been confirmed whether the nominations will be made on the basis of the interviews taken earlier.

A total of 265 female leaders of BNP applied for nomination for 30 seats in the first phase.

20 killed in road crashes in districts

FROM PAGE 12

others were injured when a bus collided head-on with a truck on Tangail-Dhaka highway at Kadimthalla in Mirzapur upazila on Monday.

One died on the spot and three others succumbed to their injuries at a local hospital. The identity of the victims could not be known.

Twenty-eight injured peoples were admitted to Mirzaur Kumudini Hospital.

Meanwhile, a correspondent from Tangail said one person died and 10 others were injured when a Dhaka bound bus from Pabna collided with a Natore bound ambulance from Dhaka at Nagar Jalpai near Tangail town.

The patient, Chhaher Uddin Mollah, 40, travelling in the ambulance died on the spot.

The 10 injured were admitted to Tangail General Hospital.

Our staff correspondent from Sylhet said three persons were killed and 15 others were injured in a road accident on Sylhet-Sunamganj highway yesterday afternoon.

The accident happened as a mini-bus bound for Derai upazila from Sylhet skidded off the road near Noagaon in Sunamganj around 12:30pm. Two of the dead, who died on the spot, were identified as Razia Begum, 50, hailing from Noapur of Derai upazila and Shamsul Huda, 25, of village Khashipur in Shulla upazila.

An unidentified man aged about 30 succumbed to his injuries while he was being taken to MAG Osmani Medical College Hospital in Sylhet. Bdnews from Mymensingh reports three persons were killed and at least 38 others were injured in two separate road accidents on Mymensingh-Dhaka highway yesterday.

Police said a Sherpur bound bus coming from Dhaka turned turtle on the road when its driver lost control of the bus around 9:30am at Bharaduba in Bhaluka upazila.

Two unidentified persons died on the spot and 34 others were injured.

Meanwhile, one person was killed on the spot and four others were injured when a fish laden truck lost control and plunged into a roadside ditch at Boilor in Trishal upazila in the early hours on the same highway. The dead was identified as Ratan, 32.

DHAKA TODAY

Conference

Institute of Hazrat Mohammad (SAW) organises a conference to mark the International Day of Peace. Venue: Brac Centre auditorium, Mohakhali. Time: 7:00pm.

Inaugural ceremony

The inaugural ceremony of a photographic exhibition by Lino Dalle Vedovea will be held. Venue: Gallery of Alliance Francaise de Dacca, Dhanmondi. Time: 7:00pm.

Introduction ceremony

Lions Club of Dhaka Central will hold introduction ceremony of new members. Venue: Hotel Purbani International. Time: 7:15pm.