

52 smugglers held in Bay

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

A patrol team of Bangladesh Navy arrested 52 smugglers and held seven engine boats with over 1,400 tonnes of salt and sugar on Wednesday afternoon on Sandwip Channel of the Bay of Bengal.

Navy sources said while on a regular patrol, an anti-smuggling patrol team of Bangladesh Navy spotted the seven engine boats at around 3:00pm on Wednesday and challenged them. Sensing presence of the navy, the smugglers tried to escape but failed.

The navy team brought the 52 smugglers and the boats filled with goods worth around Tk 4.70 crore to the Karnaphuli Channel and handed them over to the Patenga police yesterday afternoon.

Police said the gang was trying to enter the Bangladesh territory of the Bay of Bengal illegally with the

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Trade, terrorism top C'wealth agenda

Summit starts today in Malta

AFP, Valletta

Leaders of the 53 Commonwealth nations representing one fifth of global trade began gathering in Malta yesterday for a summit which officials hope will deliver a fresh impetus to upcoming WTO trade talks.

Foreign ministers meeting in preparatory sessions since Wednesday have put trade and closer cooperation on terrorism at the top of the agenda for the three-day summit, which Queen Elizabeth II will open heretoday.

Developing countries attending the biennial summit are expected to lobby British Prime Minister Tony Blair to press the European Union for further cuts in farm subsidies in WTO talks in Hong Kong in three weeks' time.

The EU and other rich countries have agreed to cut agriculture subsidies and boost aid, but developing countries -- the majority of the club of mainly former British colonies -- say much more needs to be done.

Despite widespread pessimism of a breakthrough at the December talks

on a global trade deal, Commonwealth Secretary General Don McKinnon retains some hope of achieving a shift.

"If heads this weekend can come out with a clear political message to their negotiating teams to maintain a high level of ambition, then our 53 leaders may be able to give the WTO the shot in the arm it requires at this critical moment."

"We account in the Commonwealth for one fifth of global trade, so we have a

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KAMRUL KILLING
OC Rafiq denied bail again

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court has again rejected bail to suspended officer-in-charge (OC) AKM Rafiqul Islam of Motijheel Police Station in the Kamrul Islam Momin murder case.

After the hearing, Judge Mohammad Momin Ullah of the Court of Metropolitan Sessions Judge yesterday passed the order.

Earlier on October 16, the same court rejected the OC bail and sent him to jail after he had surrendered seeking ad-interim bail.

Criminal Investigation Department (CID) sought a five-day remand for the OC and the court in two phases remanded him for six days.

Dhaka Commerce College student Kamrul Islam Momin, 22,

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Prime Minister Khaleda Zia lays the foundation stone of the new building for the Public Service Commission in Agargaon in the city yesterday.

PHOTO: PID

Abdul Halim new cabinet secretary

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

ASM Abdul Halim was appointed as the new cabinet secretary yesterday replacing Dr Saadat Hussain. This was Halim's second term contractual appointment.

Halim's first contractual appointment as the secretary to establishment ministry was supposed to expire on December 31 this year. Now his earlier contract stands cancelled and he was given a fresh contractual appointment as the cabinet secretary until August 31, 2006.

This is the first example of giving contractual appointment to the government's topmost administrative position.

Born in Jamalpur, Halim joined the East Pakistan Civil Service in 1970. During his long career, he served in many responsible positions, including that of the secretary to the ministry of agriculture.

Dr Saadat Hussain, the retiring cabinet secretary and a career bureaucrat, came to the office in the morning and spent some time with his colleagues and staff before saying his farewells.



PHOTO: STAR

A worker of Dhaka City Corporation hauls up rubbish dumped into the water of Dhanmondi Lake in the capital yesterday.

BSF kills one in Chuadanga

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kushtia

The Indian Border Security Force (BSF) shot dead a Bangladeshi national in Chuadanga on Wednesday night.

The dead was identified as Sazzad Malitha, 37, a farmer of Goshpur village in Jibonagar upazila in the district.

Sources in 18 Battalion of BDR said, BSF patrol team of Udaypur checkpoint dragged Sazzad inside the Indian territory when he went to look for his missing cattle near the border at about 8:00pm.

Later, the BSF men shot him to death and left the body near the border pillar no-79.

The BDR sent a letter protesting the incident and asking for a flag meeting.

BDR sources said no reply came from their Indian counterpart till the filing of this report yesterday evening.

Earlier on November 18, BSF shot dead another Bangladeshi citizen on Darshana border in the district.

Textbooks portray distorted culture of indigenous people

ASHIQRU RAHMAN

The culture and lifestyle of the country's indigenous populations have been presented in the primary school textbooks in a negative way, giving an impression of their inferiority on the young minds, indigenous people and educationists alleged.

The indigenous people have long been demanding to bring about a positive change in the contents on them in the primary school textbooks, but no governments have ever paid any attention to the issue, they alleged.

"Reading these textbooks, a Bangalee child may develop an idea that an indigenous person is a near

human being rather than a perfect one," Bangladesh Adibashi (indigenous people) Forum General Secretary Sanjeeb Drong said.

"Instead of depicting the history, struggle, culture and heritage of the indigenous people positively, these textbooks mainly focus on two things: their food habits and ways of dressing, mentioning that the indigenous people eat ant, snake, frog, rabbit etc and the women wear short sari and blouse," Drong said in an aggrieved note.

Referring to a number of examples from the textbook titled "Poribesh Porichiti Samaj" of class IV and V, he

said these textbooks have been written with a mindset that considers the indigenous people "strange and inferior".

"Is it very important to teach the children that a Garo's ears and a Khasia's heels are bigger in size or that the Marma men cannot marry out of the community but their women can?" Drong said.

He strongly opposed using the word "upojati", meaning tribe, instead of "adibashi", meaning indigenous people, in the textbooks. He also quoted a lot of wrong and baseless information on the indigenous people and

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People suffering from insecurity

Says Hasina

UNB, Dhaka

Awami League (AL) President and Opposition Leader Sheikh Hasina yesterday accused the BNP-led alliance government of turning the country into a land of bomb and grenade attacks by patronising the militant outfits.

"Countrymen are suffering from insecurity. Bombings in mosques, temples, shrines, administrative buildings, courts and at political meetings made human life insecure," she said in a statement, condemning the attacks on

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AUG 17 BLASTS

Charge sheet against 10 in Meherpur

UNB, Meherpur

Police yesterday pressed charges against 10 people for their alleged involvement in bomb blasts in the district during the August 17 country-wide serial bombings.

The accused are Khondoker Arif, Sanjur Rahman alias Sunny, Tanvir, Shamim Hossain, Mustafizur Rahman alias Shaheen, Sabbir Rahman alias Polak, Anwar Zahid alias Setu, Kamrul Hasan alias Lotus and Rasedul Islam.

Of the accused, four are now in jail while the remaining six are still at large.

Bombs were exploded simultaneously at seven points in the town on August 17. A case was filed in this connection.

Sub-Inspector Sawkat Ali submitted the charge sheet to a first class magistrate's court.

Mild tremor jolts Ctg

UNB, Ctg

A mild tremor, measuring 2.4 on the Richter Scale, shook the port city and its adjoining areas yesterday morning.

There was, however, no report of any causality or damage.

Met office said the tremor that jolted the port city at 6:08:12am lasted only eight seconds.

The epicentre of the earthquake was 62-km off the Chittagong Earthquake Observatory Centre.

48 killed in twin Iraqi suicide bombings

GI dies from injuries

REUTERS, AFP, Mahmoudiya

A suicide car bomber attacked a hospital south of Baghdad yesterday, killing 34 people while another bombing in a crowded market killed 14 others in Hilla.

Dozens more were injured in the twin suicide bombings as militants stepped up their campaign of violence ahead of elections next month.

The explosives-packed car detonated as Iraqi security forces were gathered outside Mahmoudiya General Hospital and as US civil affairs soldiers were visiting the facility to look at ways to improve it, the US army and witnesses said.

Four US troops were wounded in the blast, but most of those killed and injured were civilians, including Hoda

Ali Mahmoud, a 30-year-old woman who had just visited the hospital with her young son, who needed treatment for a cold.

The head of the emergency room at the hospital said the explosion had killed 34 people, including seven policemen, three Iraqi soldiers, a doctor and five

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3 foreign criminals' den busted in Bandarban

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bandarban

The army yesterday busted three dens of foreign criminals at Murong Tong in Bandarban near the Myanmar border and seized seven rifles, parts of firearms and some documents.

The security personnel, however, could not be arrest any criminal during the operation at Sangu Reserve Forest, 183 kilometres off the district headquarters, army sources said.

Three groups of army have been

conducting a special operation on the Bangladesh-Myanmar border since November 8 to crack down on the criminals. About 900 troops from Bandarban, Lama and Alikadam cantonments are taking part in the operation.

Local sources said Myanmar rebel groups Democratic Party of Arakan, Arakan Army and Arakan Liberation Party are active in the deep forest along the border. The

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2 bombs go off near mosques

None hurt

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kushtia

Two bombs went off in front of two mosques in the town in a span of one hour beginning on Wednesday night.

Police said the first bomb exploded in front of Shahi Mosque at Choulerborder around 11:00pm and the second one in front of Harishankarpur Jame Mosque around 12:00am.

The police collected the splinters of the exploded bombs but could not speculate who are behind the blasts. They said there were no casualties.

Japanese spacecraft lands on asteroid

AP, Tokyo

Japan's space agency said Wednesday its spacecraft had successfully touched down on an asteroid 180 million miles from Earth despite an earlier announcement that it had failed.

On Sunday, JAXA officials had said the Hayabusa probe, on a mission to land on the asteroid

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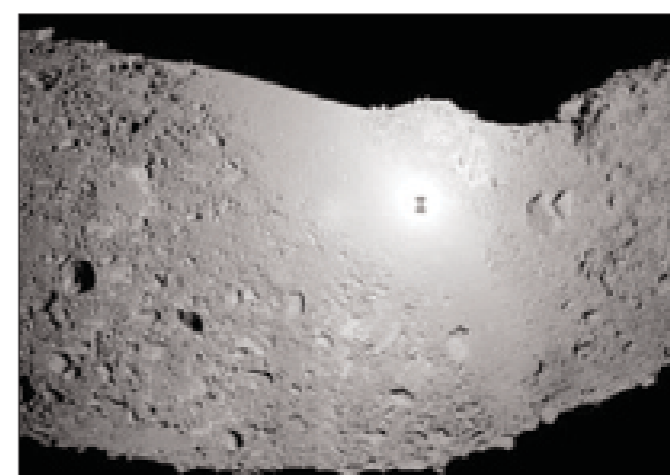


PHOTO: REUTERS

The 548-metre long asteroid, '25143 Itokawa', is seen nearly 186 million miles from earth in this handout picture taken November 20, 2005 by the Japanese unmanned Hayabusa probe.

Prayer Timing		
November 25		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fair	5-10	5-45
Juma	12-30	1-15
Asr	3-45	4-00
Maghrib	5-19	5-22
Esha	7-00	7-30

Source: Islamic Foundation

