

Fingerprint mismatch puzzle still unsolved

400 workers denied entry to KL live in uncertainty

PORIMOL PALMA

More than 400 workers, who were sent back home from Malaysia following mismatches of fingerprints at the immigrations in Kuala Lumpur, do not know what the future holds for them.

The Bangladesh government is also in a predicament as it has yet to identify the reasons behind the mismatches of fingerprints in the biometric system, and also for its failure to convince the Malaysian government to consider allowing those workers in the country.

Matching fingerprints through biometric system is recognised as

the best technology to detect fraud during migrations.

"We asked the Malaysian government to consider the issue of the workers, but it took a strong position against our proposal and said it will in no way allow entry of the workers with fingerprint mismatches," said Abdul Matin Chowdhury, secretary to the Ministry of Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment.

The issue was raised during the secretary's visit to Malaysia last month but the Malaysian authorities said it would create further trouble in the system if they accepted the workers with finger-

print mismatches, Matin added.

According to the new system, workers intending to go to Malaysia must submit their fingerprints to the office of Bangladesh Association of International Recruiting Agencies (Baira) in Dhaka.

Once the workers reach Kuala Lumpur immigrations after all necessary formalities, they are allowed to enter the country only if their fingerprints match with the recorded ones.

According to experts, fingerprint is such a biological feature that does not change and therefore

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2 missing in Arialkha boat capsized

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barisal

A woman and a baby girl went missing when a boat with 13 passengers on board capsized in the Arialkha river yesterday morning.

The missing two are Halima Begum, 38, wife of Jahangir Malabbar of Uttar Kazir Char under Muladi upazila, and Niramoni, 4, daughter of Humayun Sikdar of Char Hogolpatia under Babuganj upazila of Barisal district.

Police said the boat left Khalashir Char ferryghat in Muladi for Jahapur in Babuganj at about 11:00am and capsized in the Arialkha due to strong current.

Fishermen rescued eleven passengers. The rest two—Halima and Niramoni—remained missing as of 7:00pm yesterday.

Earlier on April 19, eight people died after a boat capsized in the same river.



Members of the family of National Poet Kazi Nazrul Islam offer prayers at his mazar on the poet's 108th birth anniversary yesterday.

CLIMATE CHANGE Ban's envoy for consultation with Iftekhar

UNB, Dhaka

Dr Gro Harlem Brundtland, former prime minister of Norway and Special Envoy of UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon on Climate Change, telephoned Foreign Adviser Dr Iftekhar Ahmed Chowdhury Thursday evening for consultations on how the UN should respond to global threats arising out of climate change.

Brundtland is one of the three special envoys appointed by Ban Ki-moon to consult with select global leaders on the subject, said an official handout yesterday.

The others are former president of Chile Dr Ricardo Lagos Escobar and former foreign minister of South Korea Dr Han Seung-Soo.

The foreign adviser told Dr Brundtland that Bangladesh placed the highest priority on the subject. It is one of those countries likely to be hardest hit by global warming and consequent rise in the sea level, he said, adding that Bangladesh would welcome strong UN initiative in this regard.

Iftekhar Chowdhury said Bangladesh wholeheartedly endorsed the holding of a high level summit on climate change during the forthcoming UN General Assembly Session in New York.

He said Bangladesh would participate in that summit at the highest level and also in the preparatory process.

The foreign adviser suggested to Brundtland that the UN might think of creating a special fund to assist the developing coastal countries.

Brundtland thanked the foreign adviser for the active support Bangladesh has been lending to the UN in this regard including participating in the Summit Council debate on the subject in April this year.



One of the 12 injured in yesterday's roof collapse at stranded Pakistanis' camp at Mohammadpur in the capital, this girl is being taken back to the same house after treatment.

Rab arrests 2 abductors in Khulna

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) arrested two abductors at Mollapota under Khulna Sadar Police Station on Thursday night.

The arrestees are Manaf Ahmed Munna, 25, and Mohammad Naeem, 28. Rab personnel also recovered Tk 2,000 and a mobile phone set from their possession.

Rab sources said Munna and Naeem kidnapped a boy named Chayon Islam Rabin from Khalishpur area on April 28 and demanded Tk 5 lakh ransom for his release.

The kidnappers released the

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6 more GLs killed in Iraq as war budget passed

AFP, Baghdad

Six more US soldiers have been killed in Iraq, the military said yesterday, as US Congress grudgingly passed a 120-billion-dollar war funding bill despite plunging public support for the mission.

While attention has focused on the hunt for three kidnapped American troops and the debate in Washington, military casualties have been mounting; at least 44 more US soldiers have died since the trio was captured on May 12.

US command has confirmed that

one of the hostages is dead and on Friday announced that six more soldiers have been added to the week's toll, bringing the total number of military dead since the invasion to 3,442.

These latest casualties came as a CBS News/New York Times opinion poll showed that a record number of Americans — 76 percent — think the war is going badly and 61 percent think the March 2003 invasion was a mistake.

Nevertheless, congressional Democrats gritted their teeth and voted to endorse another huge slice

of cash for President George W. Bush's strategy, after he refused to allow them to tie funding to a timetable for withdrawal.

Lacking votes to override a presidential veto and fearful of being blamed if funding cuts hurt the military in the field, Democrats handed a tactical victory to the Republican minority by giving Bush what he wanted.

However, in a sign of how far the political wind has shifted in the four years since a US-led invasion force toppled dictator Saddam

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India in driving seat

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh spent a full day of a Test match without any success for the second time as India took the control of the second and final Test on the opening day at the Mirpur Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium yesterday.

After getting a pair in Chittagong, Wasim Jaffer smashed unbeaten 138 and his opening partner Dinesh Karthik 82 not out off 153 balls before both leaving the field with cramps on a hot and humid day to help India amass 326 without loss at stumps.

Skipper Rahul Dravid was batting just 12 runs short of a century while master batsman Sachin Tendulkar (9 off 31 balls) accompanied him after the home captain had inserted the tourists erroneously on a placid wicket.

Despite overcast condition and a wet outfield following heavy overnight rain, the pitch hardly produced anything for the bowlers.

The Tigers' strategy of fielding three seamers including Mohammad Sharif, who played Test cricket after a gap of five years

replacing cold-hit paceman Shahadat Hossain, simply backfired.

It was hard work in extreme conditions but under-pressure Jaffer and in-form Karthik stuck to the basics to end the first session on 67 in 26 overs before being separated on the total of 175.

In the sight of his maiden Test hundred, the 21-year old Karthik limped off the ground on the stroke of tea.

Karthik built his innings with some eye-catching shots including successive boundaries through extra-cover off ace left-arm spinner Mohammad Rafique to complete his fourth fifty in 13 matches.

He, however, was lucky twice. First not to be taken at slip by Shakib Al Hasan off Syed Rasel when on 10 and then Australian umpire Daryl Harper ignored a thin edge off an upper-cut to wicketkeeper Khaled Mashud off Sharif on 74. Karthik struck a dozen fours in his nearly four-hour stay.

His senior partner Jaffer too retired after tea due to dehydration but before that, the Mumbai

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Indian opener Wasim Jaffer, right, hits the ball through covers for a boundary on way to his hundred as Bangladesh wicketkeeper Khaled Mashud looks on during their second and final Test at Mirpur stadium yesterday.

Pay phone shop employee attacked, robbed of Tk 30,000

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A criminal stabbed a pay phone shop employee after attempting to strangle him and looted three cellphones and Tk 30,000 from a shop at North Shajahanpur in the city yesterday.

The injured employee was identified as Mohammad Ferdous, 13.

Ferdous told The Daily Star that a local criminal Kalu entered the shop around 10:00am and ordered him to close the shop. Kalu also enquired where he could find Litu, the owner of the shop.

Kalu then tried to strangle Ferdous using a rope that left him unconscious. He regained consciousness around 4:00pm at Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH).

Family sources of Ferdous said Litu went to Ferdous's home at Shajahanpur Railway Colony slum around 11:30am and accused

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JRC to resume work for survey of three trans-border rivers

IQBAL SIDDIQUEE, Sylhet

The Joint River Commission (JRC) will resume its activities after about one and a half years for the joint survey of three trans-border rivers in the Sylhet-Assam region.

GM Shamsur Rahman, superintending engineer of Sylhet Water Development Board (WDB) and a member of the commission, yesterday said the activities of the survey remained suspended due to the inaction of their Indian counterpart.

"But recently we received an official letter from the Indian authority for resuming the work," he said, adding, "We hope to invite the Indians to the next meeting likely to be held in Sylhet or at Zakiganj border."

The surveys will be conducted on a 6km area upstream Indian river Barak, a 10km area of common river Kushiya, and a 5km area on the Surma in Bangladesh territory.

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"We have sent a Tk 25 lakh proposal to the Ministry of Water Resources for meeting the relevant expenditure...We are trying to start the work as soon as possible," the WDB official said.

Besides the joint survey, Bangladesh and India at the 13th JRC meeting in 1999 for the first time agreed on dredging rivers in both the countries. The objective was to save Bangladesh land on the Kushiya banks from severe erosion, increasing water flow in the Kushiya and Surma, and maintain ecological balance in the vast areas of Barak valley.

The meeting also agreed to ensure an even flow of water in the Surma and Kushiya.

But Bangladesh has already lost about 3,000 acres of land—while huge tracts of land have emerged on the Indian side—due to severe erosion along these two rivers only due to lack of initiatives to implement the survey and dredging programme.

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12 injured as building collapses at Geneva camp

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

At least 12 children and women were injured as parts of a building at the Mohammadpur Geneva camp in the city collapsed yesterday.

The injured were identified as Jasim, 5, Dalia, 6, Sayem, 3, Meghna, 8, Simran, 4, Qurban, 3, Sheema, 5, Nago, 20, Rani, 25, Alo, 25, Jyotsna, 25, and Asiya, 80.

Locals and police rescued the injured and admitted them to Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) and Pongu Hospital.

The police said some sector-2 parts of the L-shaped old relief

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Prayer Timing May 26		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	4-05	4-40
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	5-00	5-15
Maghrib	6-40	6-45
Esha	8-00	8-30
Source: Islamic Foundation		

Court asks Towhid Trust to hand over Kajla bldg to Galib

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

A Rajshahi court on Thursday ordered an organisation named Towhid Trust to hand over its five-storey building at Kajla in the city to its ousted member — detained militant kingpin and Ahle Hadith Andolon, Bangladesh (Ahab) chief Asadullah Al Galib — within 15 days.

Galib, who is also a Rajshahi University Arabic teacher, was arrested in February 2005 after captured JMB militants named him as their spiritual leader.

Zahangir Alam Mollah, judge of Public Safety Tribunal and Second Special Sessions Court in his ruling turned down a lower court order that in 2004 adjudged Towhid Trust and its contemporary officio as tenant of the building.

Towhid Trust Chairman Abdus Salam, Secretary General (SG) SM Mahmud Alam, Assistant SG Rezaul Karim and their lawyers termed the judgment 'unilateral and

biased' and said they would challenge it in the High Court.

Abu Bakar, a trust lawyer, said Galib founded the trust and established the building, but he was expelled from the trust in January 2002 following allegations of misappropriation of money and abetting so-called Islamist militants.

"The trust is an organisation, not a private property. The committee that will represent the trust would be the tenant as per rules of the land," he said.

Another lawyer Habibur Rahman said that Towhid Trust chairman Abdus Salam, the main defendant in the suit, was not called to the court during hearing on May 22 last.

Moreover, Towhid Trust lawyers were not heard thoroughly and they were interrupted during delivering speeches, he said.

At a stage of heated debate in the open court, the judge said that the property belongs to Galib and it

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