

Kidnapped Danida staff rescued after 2 weeks

STAR REPORT

Law enforcers yesterday rescued Danida official Shahid Suman near a stream in the remote forest of Thanchi upazila after two weeks of his abduction.

A 20-member patrol team of Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) found Suman near Sampajhiri stream, 110km away from Bandarban district. The BDR suspected that the kidnappers left the Danida staff in the face of their guerrilla operation.

Suman was found ill at the time of rescue at 10:30am. He was immediately taken to the Chhoto Modok BDR camp by stretcher and boat as there was no facility for helicopter landing in that remote area.

Later, Suman was flown to Chittagong Combined Military Hospital (CMH) at 5:15pm from the BDR camp 10km off the Bangladesh-Myanmar border.

Sources said Suman's legs were

swollen and scratched from long walks in the hilly area. Suman is a patient of diabetes and blood pressure and had to spend the two weeks without medicine. CMH sources however said his blood pressure was normal.

Our Bandarban correspondent

reports: The kidnappers left Suman at Sampajhiri as the law enforcers continued their combing operations and cordoned the kidnappers' den between BDR camps at Chhoto Modok and Yangrai last Friday.

Danida Programme Officer Suman was abducted on June 25

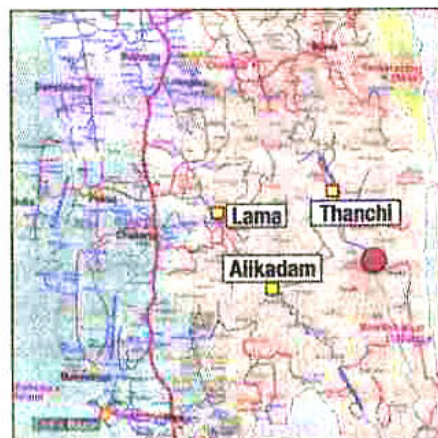
along with his driver during an official visit to Kya Buri Para village in Thanchi upazila.

Later, Danida driver Md Hanif was rescued unconscious some 40km away from Kya Buri Para. The law enforcers recovered seven sets of combat uniform and utensils from the place.

More than 400 law enforcers including commando troops continued their operations in the rugged terrain of the hilly region to rescue Suman ignoring hailstorm and continuous rain. They cordoned around 100km area in the dense forest of Thanchi.

The law enforcers arrested 26 people in the area following the kidnap and revealed after quizzing them that five of them were involved with the abduction.

Local journalist Anupam Marma meanwhile said the people were scared and did not come to the local market following the



Shahid Suman

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VIP PRISONERS Govt looking for houses to set up sub-jails

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government has decided to set up sub-jails outside the prisons for the VIP prisoners as several of them fell ill recently due to the stark living conditions in jails.

The jail authorities have already started searching for suitable government or non-government houses that can accommodate some 50 to 60 prisoners.

"Since the government order has already been issued, with the help of police we are now looking for government or non-government houses that can be managed for the makeshift jail," Deputy Inspector General (Prisons) Major Shamsul Haider Siddique told a private television channel yesterday.

The authorities would take decisions about setting up any such jail after considering the security issues of the place and its distance from the court and hospitals, he added.

The jail would be in such places

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Hasina raps intelligence

It is not their duty to make or break political parties, she says

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Awami League (AL) President Sheikh Hasina yesterday categorically blasted an intelligence agency saying that a civilized and democratic society cannot let an intelligence agency control everything while it is 'arresting and torturing politicians and forcing them to say what the members of the agency like to hear'.

Asking the Directorate General of Forces Intelligence (DGFI) to stop operating beyond its mandated boundary of ensuring national security, the former prime minister also called for allowing politicians to carry out political activities.

"I will ask the caretaker government to stop the agency from carrying out the atrocities and to make it carry out its real responsibilities. It is not their duty to get involved in politics or to break up and build political parties. The people did not give them that right," said the AL chief.

Hasina made the remarks while

talking to journalists at a hospital in the capital where she went to see hotted singer Sabina Yasmin, who is undergoing treatment there for cancer.

"If an undemocratic and uncon-

stitutional government stays in power for long, then the problems of the people are not going to be solved, rather those will be intensified," Hasina said.

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A woman tries to talk with Awami League chief Sheikh Hasina in front of Labaid hospital in the capital yesterday. Hasina went there to visit ailing singer Sabina Yasmin.



Singer Sabina fighting for life

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Sabina Yasmin, one of the most melodious voices of all times in the Indian subcontinent, is struggling for life at the city's Labaid Specialised Hospital.

The singer of songs like "Sab koto janala khuley dao na", "Ekti Bangladesh tumi jagrata janata", "Shei rail-liner dharey", "Majhi nao chhaira dey", "Uttar dinkhin purba pashchin" and hundreds of others has been suffering from

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DHAKA-KOLKATA SERVICE

First train arrives on trial run

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A passenger train from India reached Dhaka yesterday afternoon on its trial run resuming the long-awaited train service between the two neighbouring countries that remained stopped for 42 years.

The train 'Maitree' with seven coaches reached the Dhaka Cantonment Railway Station at 6:17pm carrying a delegation of 30 Indian officials.

It is also the first-ever direct train in the independent Bangladesh from India as the train service between the two countries was snapped in 1965 during the India-Pakistan war.

Shafiq Alam Mehdi, joint secretary of communications ministry and Belayet Hossain, director of Bangladesh Railway among other high officials, received the delegation.

The Indian delegation would sit

with their counterpart in several meetings for two days starting from today to fix some unresolved issues regarding the train service.

Additional Secretary of Indian Home Ministry AE Ahmed leads the 12-member team accompanied by 18 other technical personnel. Two other officials from the Indian High Commission in Dhaka would join the team in the meetings.

A 13-member team led by Additional Secretary of Communications Ministry KM Ismail would represent the home team.

Both sides would try to resolve issues like train fares, immigrations and custom checking points.

According to a proposal, there will be three categories of fares of \$8, \$12 and \$20. Bangladesh will keep 78 percent of the revenue while India will get the rest, as the

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Wheel trouble forces Biman hovering for 30 minutes

GMG flight also makes emergency landing

STAR REPORT

A Bangladesh Biman flight from Dubai with 230 passengers and crew on board was forced to hover in the sky for about half an hour due to wheel trouble before landing in Chittagong yesterday afternoon.

The same day in the capital, a Bangkok-bound GMG airlines flight made an emergency landing at the Zia International Airport (ZIA) for problems in its propeller.

Our staff correspondent from the port city reports: With technical glitches in its nose landing gear, the national flag carrier flight BG-048 finally touched the ground at the Shah Amanat International Airport at 1:45pm.

Coming from the Middle East, it was scheduled to arrive at 1:15pm but as it entered the Chittagong sky the pilot sensed something was wrong in the landing gear.

"As the front wheels did not open up he [pilot] decided not to land at that moment," said Squadron Leader Sajjad Hossain, the airport manager.

"Instead, he and the other crew members tried to find out the problems first," he said adding that after detecting the difficulties, they

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PHOTO: STAR

The troubled DC-10 aircraft of Biman Bangladesh Airlines stranded yesterday at Shah Amanat International Airport in Chittagong.

'Minus two' theorists enemies of democracy Says Khaleda

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Former prime minister and BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia yesterday said those who are 'hatching' the 'minus two' theory are the enemies of democracy.

She also blasted 'pro-reform' BNP leaders saying, "Those who joined BNP from other parties, are conspiring to destroy the party in the name of reforms, taking the opportunity of the state of emergency."

Addressing a Jubo Dal meeting in New York over the phone, Khaleda also said the 'conspiring' leaders who came from other parties 'do not love BNP, they just want to stay close to the state power at any cost and have no ideal, they just love power'.

BNP Secretary General Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan and Joint Secretary General Ashraf Hossain, both top pro-reform leaders, joined BNP splitting from National Awami Party during late president

Ziaur Rahman's regime. Another pro-reform leader Maj Hafiz was previously in Jatiya Party.

"Those who are hatching the minus two conspiracy are the enemies of democracy and democratic politics. Since they have no mass support they are looking to usurp power through the back door," Khaleda said.

Khaleda, who has been restricted to her residence and occasional visits to the doctor, also said, "BNP is a big party. A handful of people are trying to conspire against this mighty organisation."

"The people of Bangladesh believe in democracy. They will never allow the democratic institutions to be destroyed," she added.

Khaleda stressed, "Personally, I also believe in reforms. But for meaningful reforms, party offices should be allowed to open and indoor politics also has to be allowed."

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