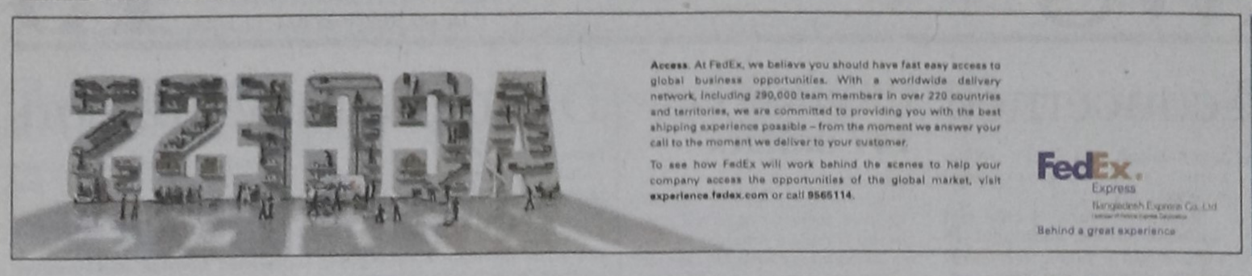

Swindlers inflict loss on people 8 times more than other criminals

KAILASH SARKAR

Thirty-year-old Morsheda Begum (assumed name) had sold a piece of land and paid Tk 1.2 lakh to Tofazzal Hossain for a job in Saudi Arabia. He sent her to the Gulf nation through a recruiting agency on April 29. Soon after she landed on the airport, she realised she fell victim to fraud.

"Four to five people took me to an unknown hilly place and gang-raped me. As I tried to resist, they swiped at me and eventually forced me into prostitution.

"After some days, a customer agreed to listen to my ordeals. He made a phone call to my husband, who informed Rab [Rapid Action Battalion]. The Rab forced the recruiting agency to bring me back home," Morsheda said.

After her return she filed a case with Gulshan Police Station accusing Tofazzal and his accomplices Abdul Mannan and Ahmedur Rahman Majumder on July 4.

Rab-3 chief Wing Commander Sultan Hossain Nurani told The Daily Star: "Informed, we conducted an investigation and found the agency was involved in cheating women to traffic them."

Like human trafficking, active criminals now resort to being tricky instead of using firearms or other means of violence. This new wave of swindling inflicts loss on city people eight times higher than that by robbers, thieves, muggers and extortionists, intelligence reports reveal.

The intelligence unit of Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP) and Detective Branch (DB) have prepared separate reports based on the cases filed in 11 months since January 1 last year. The reports also substantiate the new trend of crimes.

In the 11 months, robbers, thieves, muggers and extortionists

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PHOTO: STAR

The Rakhaine community in Kuakata of Patuakhali yesterday join forces to relocate this two-tonne ancient idol of Buddha to its new home, which the government built spending around Tk 1 crore.

Submergence tolerant variety to boost rice output

PORIMOL PALMA

Scientists have developed a submergence resistant variety of rice that can withstand inundation, compensating for the yearly loss of yields to flash floods.

The variety, known as Swarna-Sub 1, holds out great hope for Bangladesh where recurrent floods wreak havoc on the Aman crop.

Floods keep around 70 percent flood-prone areas in Bangladesh inundated for one-two weeks on average, while the other areas remain under water for up to one month, said Saiful Hossain, executive engineer at Flood Forecasting and Warning Centre in Dhaka.

Scientists, however, said the new variety developed by International Rice Research Institute (IRRI) and Bangladesh Rice Research Institute (BRRI), would go through participatory field tests till 2010.

Trials have shown that Swarna-Sub 1 springs back to life even after being submerged for 10-17 days.

"Bangladesh has more arable land for Aman than for Boro. But then, Boro yield is way high because floods damage vast swathes of Aman fields almost every year, cutting down its production," said Prof Dr MA Sattar Mandal of Bangladesh Agriculture University.

Floods damage Aman seedlings, forcing farmers to go for low-quality seedlings once the water recedes, he said.

"The new variety would surely boost our rice production when made available for farmers," Prof Mandal said.

However, its production costs need to be taken into account before introducing it to farmers, he said.

After field tests at BRRI stations in Rangpur and Gazipur, Swarna-Sub1went through trials on farmers' fields in Rangpur, Kurigram, Lalmonirhat, Nilphamari, Gaibandha and Sirajganj with the help of IRRI and NGOs during last year's Aman season, said Dr MA Mazid, principal scientific officer of BRRI in Rangpur.

"The rice plants were kept submerged on ten fields for 5-9 days, they remained under water twice for 2-14 days on 12 fields and on two fields for 3-10 days. But yields in these fields were 3.88, 3.76 and 3.51 tonnes per

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PHOTO: INTERNET

Md Abdul Mazid, right, of Bangladesh Rice Research Institute stands in a field of flood- and water-logging resistant variety of paddy in Rangpur.

Sonia certain govt will win confidence vote

AFP, *New Delhi*

The head of India's ruling Congress party, Sonia Gandhi, said yesterday she was certain the government would win a confidence vote triggered by the withdrawal of support by left-wing allies.

The parliamentary vote, set for July 22, will decide if the world's largest democracy will have to go to early polls before the end of the year and not when the government's mandate ends in May 2009.

A bloc of left-wing and communist parties pulled their support for Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's Congress-led alliance after he decided to push ahead with a controversial deal on sharing nuclear technology with the United States.

At present, the government has 225 assured seats in India's 545-member directly elected lower house, far short of the number required for a simple majority.

Last week, the regional socialist Samajwadi Party with 39 MPs promised to vote for the government, but still far away from a

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Public servants can wed foreign national if president allows

UNB, *Dhaka*

The Public Servant (Marriage with Foreign National) (Amendment) Ordinance 2008 has been promulgated allowing a public servant to marry or promise to marry a foreign national with the permission of the president.

The amended ordinance said the president, on an application, may grant a public servant permission to marry or promise to marry a

SEE PAGE 15 COL 8

UN to investigate Benazir killing

AFP, *United Nations*

Pakistani Foreign Minister Shah Mehmood Qureshi reached a tentative deal with UN chief Ban Ki-moon Thursday on setting up an independent panel to probe the slaying of former prime minister Benazir Bhutto, the world body said.

A UN statement said broad understanding was reached on the nature and composition of the proposed panel, funding modalities, unhindered access to all sources of relevant information and elements to safeguard "the objectivity, impartiality and independence" of the commission.

It said Ban told Qureshi during their meeting here that "further consultation with Pakistan and others within the Organisation would be required to examine the modalities and structure" of the panel.

Last month Pakistan's new government officially asked the world body to set up an international panel "for the purpose of identifying the culprits, perpetrators, organisers and financiers" behind the Benazir Bhutto assassination last December.

Benazir Bhutto was killed in a gun and suicide bomb attack on December 27 in Rawalpindi, a garrison city near the capital Islamabad.

The Pakistani government accused tribal warlord Baitullah Mehsud of plotting the attack, though he denies the charge.

Benazir Bhutto

PHOTO: STAR

Freedom fighter Golam Mustafa Bir Bikram with his grandchild go by a motorised wheelchair in front of Suhrawardy Hospital in Dhaka yesterday. He received one of the 13 such chairs presented to FFs by Bangladesh Muktijoddha Kalyan Trust in 2005.

Criminal gang's bid to capture Khasia land

Police apathy alleged

IQBAL SIDDIQUEE, *from Jaflong in Sylhet*

Indigenous Khasia community at Jaflong in Sylhet is passing their days in fear of attacks by organised criminals who have been trying to grab their betel-leaf plantations.

The Khasia people recently foiled an attempt by a criminal gang to capture their lands at Jaflong of Gowainghat.

Nerula Tynsong, the owner of a betel-leaf farm, said a group of criminals attacked her workers at the enclosure on 18 June. But the workers foiled the attack and drove them out of the place, she added.

There are allegations that Shahin Alam, a stone trader, and his men have been trying to capture the betel-leaf plantations stretching over 10 acres of land on the upper side of a sand and stone quarry at Jaflong.

SEE PAGE 15 COL 3

BB, US treasury dept probing cases of money siphoned off Bangladesh

Envoy to US says

STAR REPORT

Bangladesh Bank (BB) and the US treasury department are investigating the cases of money being siphoned out of Dhaka by corruptionists, said Bangladesh Ambassador in Washington DC Humayun Kabir.

He said the amount or the persons involved however cannot be identified since the secrecy act in the US is very strict, reported News World yesterday.

The news agency was citing Kabir's interview with Bangla Patrika, a Bangla weekly published from New York.

The central bank is working to bring back the money from the US, he added.

Asked if Interpol has any red alert issued against any Bangladeshi holed up in the US, the envoy replied in the negative.

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Prayer Timing

July 12		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	4-10	4-45
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	5-00	5-15
Maghrib	6-55	7-00
Esha	8-17	8-45

Source: Islamic Foundation

PHOTO: STAR

Dhaka City Corporation finally starts repairing streets but at the rush hours instead of the usual night-time causing traffic jams. The photo was taken at Shyamoli yesterday.

QULKHWANI

Bismillaher Rahmaner Rahim

It is with the deepest sorrow that we announce that
Mr. Abu Nasr Mainuddin, son of the
late Mr. A.K.M. Hafizuddin and the late Mrs. Zahida Hafizuddin,
passed away on July 9th 2008, in Dhaka.
Qulkhwani for Mr. Mainuddin will be held
at the Azad Mosque in Gulshan
on Saturday, July 12th 2008, after Asr prayers.

- Mrs. Shireen S. Mainuddin & Mr. Ali Arsalan
- Mrs. Selina Khaleque & Mrs. Nasreen Shamsuddin
- Mrs. Fariha Harun & Mrs. Adeela Panni
- Tina, Tara and Kieran

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The Daily Star offers campus based weekly magazine 'Star Campus' - the ultimate magazine for the young generation - a common platform for the college and university students and academicians - to share their ideas, thoughts, dreams, opinions and views.
Star Campus is an endeavour to bring into the center stage the visionary aspects of our college and university students, alongside their lifestyle, cultural trends and their multidimensional talents.
Star Campus is a magazine broadly based on campus life! It contains articles, academic news, achievements, travelogues, interviews, book reviews, quiz, milestones, academic tips, profiles of educational institutes, cultural and extra-curricular activities in campus, jokes, cartoons, photographs and much more. This is a magazine Of the Students, By the Students and For the Students.
Star Campus helps link young minds together.

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Biman Bangladesh Airlines Ltd. invites applications from interested competent candidates for appointment of the Managing Director & Chief Executive Officer of the company. The position demands the following requirements:

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   - Knowledge of international aviation & safety regulations
   - Knowledge of airlines marketing techniques
   - Experience in local & international market
   - Knowledge of aviation agreements and labour laws
   - Proven record of leadership & ability to work as a team player
   - Ability to deal and negotiate with foreign airports, other airlines, and airlines services providers, regulators, insurance companies, suppliers of aircraft & aircraft spares & all other forms of airlines industry benchmarking.
3. Salary: Negotiable. Candidates are encouraged to mention salary expectation.

Interested candidates are requested to apply by 21 July 2008 to the following address:

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