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# Toxic ship gets scrap nod

Shipping ministry ignores blacklisting of the oil tanker by Greenpeace

PINAKI ROY

Playing down the environmental and public health concerns, the shipping ministry has allowed a ship-breaker to scrap an oil tanker blacklisted by environmental group Greenpeace for containing hazardous substances.

Environmentalists say the MT Enterprise—earlier christened as Ocean Enterprise, Atlantia, Taiko and the like following each re-registration—is riddled with asbestos, heavy and toxic metals like lead, mercury, cadmium, copper and zinc.

If dismantling the ship goes on as planned, it will pose serious threats to the fragile coastal marine ecology, they said.

The MT Enterprise is now waiting at the outer anchorage of Chittagong seaport, ready for scrap. The importer, Madina Enterprise, allegedly took out the No Objection Certificate (NOC) for the ship from the shipping ministry, managing the officials concerned.



This toxic oil tanker which has been renamed several times is now set to be dismantled on Sitakunda beach.

PHOTO: SEAPIXONLINE.COM

Ship breakers had earlier attempted to bring in three more hazardous craft—SS Norway, MT Alfaship and MT Apsheon—to break at their Sitakunda facility, but failed in the event due to strong protests from environmentalists.

Experts say an oil tanker like the MT Enterprise, contains by default harmful materials like asbestos fibres, dust and heavy and toxic metals like lead, mercury, cadmium, copper and zinc.

Besides, these ships house other

organometallic substances like tributyltin, PCBs and polyvinyl chloride (PVC) and compressed gas. It is learnt that the importer first clinched the shipping ministry's clearance providing wrong information.

As environmentalists raised voice against the move, the ministry's chief chemist, Dr Md Mosharaf Ashraf, later cancelled the NOC (No 08070384, issued on August 13), on grounds of the ship's being on the Greenpeace blacklist.

The importer later filed a writ petition to the High Court. The court, however, directed the people concerned not to beach the tanker.

The importer then produced to the court an inspection certificate issued by the shipping ministry, which said inspectors did not find anything hazardous in the ship, earning a go-ahead from the court.

The ministry however did not include the other party in the inspection process.

Allowing such ships into Bangladesh waters is a violation of

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## 1971 KILLINGS 19 sued in Rajshahi

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

A case was recorded yesterday at the Mohonpur Police Station against 19 people on charges of killing 15 villagers during the liberation war.

The case was recorded following higher authority's approval on September 13 after primary investigations, said the police.

A Rajshahi court one and a half months ago directed Mohonpur police to investigate and take necessary actions after day labourer Nezarul Islam of Birsoil filed the case with the court against 19 people.

The accused include Shafiqullah, Momen Uddin, Boyen Uddin of Modonhati, Daud Ali, Nur-e-Alam, Shamsuddin, Sirajul Islam, Matur Rahman and Awal of Berabari Bamonbari, Alam, Abdul Hai, Abdul Mannan of Mohisbatan, Abu Sayeed of Durgapur, Jan Bux, Abdul, Merajul and Kalim of Paba upazila.

The plaintiff alleged that the accused helped the Pakistani forces to abduct 15 villagers, who

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## Outlaw killed in 'shootout'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

A wanted criminal and member of the underground Sarbahara Party was killed in a crossfire between police and his accomplices at Birkutsa Sahapur areas in Bagmara upazila of Rajshahi early yesterday.

The dead man was identified as Abul Hasen alias Kana Abul, 43 of Alokmagar village in Hamirkutsa union of the upazila.

Sahabuddin Khalifa, officer-in-charge (OC) of Bagmara police station said, police arrested Abul from his home on Sunday noon.

Police then took him along to retrieve arms from an area, based on information revealed in his statement. When they reached the spot, Abul's gang members

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# Lanka violence claims 20 more Tamil Tigers

EU voices concern at escalating violence

AFP, Colombo/Brussels

Fresh fighting broke out across Sri Lanka's tense north, leaving 20 Tamil Tiger rebels and one soldier dead, the defence ministry said yesterday.

The ministry said 22 rebels and 14 troops were wounded in Sunday's fighting in Welioya, Kilinochchi and Vavuniya.

The Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) did not comment on military casualty claims.

Sunday's fighting raised the number of rebels killed by troops since January to 6,542, while 635 soldiers have lost their lives during the same period, according to a

ministry toll.

Troops are focused on dismantling the rebels' northern stronghold after ejecting the guerrillas from the east in July 2007.

Tens of thousands of people have died on both sides since the LTTE began fighting for a separate homeland for minority Tamils in 1972.

Meanwhile, EU Humanitarian Aid Commissioner Louis Michel yesterday expressed 'grave concern' at the escalation of violence in Sri Lanka and called for human rights laws to be respected.

"I'm deeply troubled by the escalation of the violence in Sri Lanka and the terrible impact it is

having on the lives of so many innocent civilians," Michel said in a statement.

"The situation is made all the worse because international relief efforts are having to be suspended because the safety of humanitarian workers cannot be ensured," he added.

"I would remind all sides to fully respect international humanitarian law."

Fresh fighting has broken out across Sri Lanka's tense north, leaving 20 Tamil Tiger rebels and one soldier dead, the defence ministry said Monday.

Sunday's fighting raised the

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# 23 zakat seekers killed in Java stampede

AFP, AP, Jakarta

At least 23 people were killed in a stampede in Indonesia yesterday as they crowded an alley to receive zakat (cash handout), which doled out during holy month of Ramadan, police said.

Another 11 people were injured in the crush as thousands packed the narrow sidewalk in Pasuruan, East Java province, to receive a cash gift of 30,000 rupiah (3.30 dollars) each from a rich family, police and news reports said.

"Too many people came and they were afraid they wouldn't be able to get the money so they pushed each other. That's why the

## 23KG HEROIN 2 traffickers get 30 yrs

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday sentenced two members of an international drug smuggling syndicate to 30 years' rigorous imprisonment (RI) each for possessing 23.5kg heroin in November last year.

Judge AHM Mustaque Ahmed of the Speedy Trial Tribunal-2 handed down the sentence in presence of the convicts Ariful Islam Bhuiyan of Shantinagar and Mahmud Ali of Agamosi Lane of Kotwali in the capital.

The court fined them Tk two lakh each, in default of which they will have to suffer another five years' RI in jail.

In his judgement, the judge said that as the charges brought against the two drug peddlers were proved beyond any doubt the punishments were meted out to the two.

This is the second largest heroin haul in Bangladesh.

Earlier, the prosecution and the defence had completed their arguments and the court recorded statements of 16 prosecution witnesses.

On November 12 last year, SEE PAGE 15 COL 2

## Credible polls cannot be held compromising with corrupt Says Dr Kamal

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Gono Forum President Dr Kamal Hossain yesterday said a free, fair and credible election cannot be held compromising with the corrupt people.

Dr Kamal was briefing reporters after a party standing committee meeting at his Baily Road residence in the capital.

"How can 200 people get bail on a single day?" Dr Kamal asked, referring to the issue of bail granted to detained political leaders in large numbers.

"It cannot be accepted. We demand an inquiry into it," he added. He said, "The government must do everything in a transparent way and let people know it."

The anti-corruption drives launched after 1/11 have gone in favour of corrupt people in many cases, said a party resolution, adding questions arise about the role of the caretaker government after the release of corrupt people.

## Farmers stage demonstration for fertiliser

UNB, Faridpur

Farmers yesterday staged a demonstration at Bagdi Bangeishardi village in Boalmari upazila demanding adequate supply of fertiliser.

Local sources said about 2,000 farmers came to the shop of sub-dealer Quddus at about 8:00am for fertiliser. But the dealer said it is not possible to give them fertiliser as per demand as he has only 140 sacks of urea in his stock against the demand for 300 sacks.

Later, the angry farmers confined Bangeishardi union block supervisor Marjina Begum for two hours from 9:00am. Police rescued her.

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PHOTO: PLO

Chinese Assistant Foreign Minister Hu Zhengyue welcomes Chief Adviser Fakhrudin Ahmed on his arrival in Beijing on a four-day visit.

## IMED FINDINGS

# Projects fail over lax planning, monitoring

REJAUL KARIM BYRON

Poorly designed projects and their haphazard implementation in the absence of strict monitoring led to total failure of many projects and wastage of public funds.

Computer labs were set up and left unused, computers purchased for official use were taken away by officials for private use and modern medical equipment bought for hospitals were lying unused.

Project authorities purchased motorbikes, power tillers, power sprayers, germinators, seed refrigerators and tubewells for agricultural extension at a cost of crores of taka, but many of these remained unused even after completion of a project.

These were some of the findings of Implementation Monitoring and Evaluation Division (IMED) in case of a number of projects com-

pleted in fiscal 2005-06.

The government planned dredging of 118 km of the 200-km long Kabadak river to maintain its navigability, facilitate farm irrigation during dry season and reduce severity of flooding. But ironically, the Tk 26 crore project that began in 2000-01 fiscal year ended with dredging of only 47 km of the river at a cost of Tk 25 crore, the IMED said in its evaluation report.

"The project totally failed as navigability of the river could not be restored. Moreover, during rain-flooded, the river devoured nearby houses, and agricultural land went under water. This happened for limited budget and dredging of limited part of the river without any scientific plan."

The report mentioned that under Horticulture Centre Development Project for Chittagong and Cox's Bazar, the

government purchased power tillers, power sprayers, germinators, seed refrigerators and tube wells but most of those remained unused.

The agriculture ministry spent Tk 15 crore to develop 17 horticulture centres in that region. IMED inspected six of the centres and found various anomalies there.

Many of the motorbikes purchased under the project were found packed even after implementation of the project.

Besides, computer bought for use at Matiranga Horticulture Centre was found at the residence of an official.

"The reason behind all this is that the materials were supplied without scrutinising the actual requirements," the report said.

The IMED found financial anomalies and very low standard

SEE PAGE 15 COL 2

# US-led troops repelled from Pak border

40 militants killed in clashes

AFP, Peshawar

US-led coalition troops based in Afghanistan tried to cross into a Pakistani tribal area in helicopters but were repelled after warning shots were fired while Pak troops killed at least 40 militants in a restive tribal area near the Afghan border yesterday.

The incident happened about 100 metres (yards) from South Waziristan late Sunday on the Afghan side of the border, but there were no casualties.

"The US-led coalition troops in helicopters came close to the border and they tried to enter into Pakistan territory but shots were fired by Pakistani troops and the coalition troops retreated," a security official said.

An unnamed Pakistani army spokesman confirmed an incident took place but denied its involve-

ment.

"There was firing but our troops were not involved," he told AFP. "Firing was heard but there was no violation of Pakistan territory," he said.

A second security official based in the area said that local tribesmen joined in the firing after Pakistani soldiers played bugles to alert local people to the threat of an incursion.

The Pakistan army's chief military spokesman, Major General Athar Abbas, denied there had been any such incident.

"These reports are not correct," he said.

"We have checked, there is an FC (Frontier Corps) post in the area. No helicopter came inside our side of the border, nor did our troops fire at any," Abbas said.

The apparent incident took

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## Debapriya new president of Unctad-TDB

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Permanent Representative of Bangladesh in Geneva Ambassador Debapriya Bhattacharya has been unanimously elected president of the Trade and Development Board (TDB) of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (Unctad) for one year.

Debapriya took over the charge yesterday after he was elected by the 193 UN member states.

TDB is the highest policy making body after the quadrennial ministerial conference of the

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Sehri, Iftar timings			
Ramadan	Sep	Sehri	Iftar
15	16		6-05
16	17	4-26	6-04
17	18	4-26	6-03

  

Prayer Timing		
September 16		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	4-25	4-31
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	4-45	5-00
Maghrib	6-05	6-15
Esha	7-45	8-15

Source: Islamic Foundation

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