

# Smugglers pouring in garments, cosmetics ahead of festivals

'Luggage parties' active on buses and trains

A CORRESPONDENT, Benapole

Huge amounts of goods are being smuggled in daily through direct passenger buses and trains running on Dhaka-Kolkata-Dhaka route as a section of passenger passengers known as 'luggage party' are pouring in different types of garments and cosmetics from India ahead of the Eid and Puja festivals.

Smugglers' syndicates of the two countries are using the buses and trains as a 'safer medium' for bringing Indian goods to supply it to the local market.

Valuables including gold and US dollars are also allegedly smuggled using these transports.

On August 4, Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) seized Indian sari worth Tk 36 lakh from a bus of transport company 'Souhardo Paribahan' running on Dhaka-Kolkata route.

On August 8, law enforcers seized 59 bags containing Indian saris and three pieces of lehenga, worth about Tk one crore, from another bus of the same company.

Every day four 'direct' buses run on Dhaka-Kolkata route through Benapole border.

At Dhaka Cantonment station on August 12, Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) raided Moitree Express train coming from India through Darshana border and recovered high quality Indian saris, 'three pieces' and other garments worth about Tk 3 crore. They also arrested 15 people in this connection.

As goods worth crores of taka enter Bangladesh through illegal ways, the



PHOTO: STAR

Police arrest a member of a smuggling ring with a huge number of Indian saris from Chittagong city's Mansurabad area yesterday.

import through land ports sees a decline, depriving the government of huge revenue, officials said.

There are allegations that a section of bus drivers and supervisors in collaboration with customs officials at Benapole and Petrapole smuggle these goods.

"As 'luggage party' smugglers buy a good number of bus tickets in advance, common passengers often find it difficult to get tickets as per need. Although Customs and

BDR conduct joint raids on the buses, they rarely check the baggage of the 'luggage party' passengers," said a Bangladeshi passenger travelling in a bus of Souhardo Paribahan.

In Chittagong, police seized Indian garments worth Tk 10 lakh and arrested one person yesterday from the city's Mansurabad area under Double-Mooring police station.

The arrestee was identified as Jafar, 25, son of one

Moham Miah of Chaudhagram upazila in Comilla, reports our staff correspondent.

Acting on a tip off, police led by Assistant Commissioner of Police Tanvir Arafat of the Double-Mooring Zone detained a truck in Mansurabad area at around 7.30am.

"We seized 647 pieces of Indian salwar kamiz and 552 pieces of Indian saris worth Tk 10 lakh from the truck," Tanvir said.

The garments were being taken to Chawkbazar, Tanvir added.

Meanwhile, members of Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) on Sunday noon recovered smuggled Indian cloths worth Tk 20 lakh from Kali Bazar area in Dharmoghor of Habiganj district.

Acting on a tip-off, a team of BDR raided the area and recovered 360 pieces Indian saris and 30 three-piece sets which were hidden under a pile of straw.

# 13 outlaws freed on bail in Khulna in last 7 months

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Thirteen underground operatives, detained on specific murder charges, were released on bail from Khulna district jail from December 27 in 2009 to August 9 this year.

Seven out of the 13 outlaws could be identified while names of the remaining six were not disclosed by Khulna district authorities.

According to Jail Superintendent Shah Alam Khan, Azad Hossain, an armed cadre of Janajuddho faction of outlawed PBCP was released on December 27 last year. He hails from Moishaguni village under Rupsha upazila.

On March 3 this year, Mashikul Islam of the same party was released from jail. The outlaw hails from Ikhri village under Terokheda upazila.

Most wanted outlaw Giasuddin of New Biplobi Communist Party (NBCP) of Dakkhindihi village under Phultala upazila was released on April 13.

On last June 28, Rafique Joarder of the banned outfit came out of Jail. He is from Dumuria upazila. On the same day, outlaw Shahin Sheikh of PBCP Janajuddho faction and a chargesheeted accused in Journalist Harun-or-Rashid murder case was released

from Jail. Mashiur Rahman Palash, an armed cadre of PBCP Janajuddho faction was released on August 9. He hails from Terokheda upazila. Sakhawat Hossain Saki, an armed cadre of outlawed NBCP, was released on the same day. He hails from Dumuria upazila.

All the outlaws were released on bail after serving five to eight years prison term. They are accused in sensational murder cases filed with different police stations of Khulna division, Jail sources said.

The law enforcers are keeping a close watch not only on the movement of the released outlaws but also on all the listed others to arrest them against the backdrop of their alarming rise and involvement in secret murders and extortions at different places of Khulna Division and Khulna city, said KMP Commissioner Helaluddin Badri.

According to sources in different intelligence agencies, there are over 8,000 armed cadres of nine different underground organisations in Khulna city and 10 districts in Khulna division. Most of these outlawed parties are also maintaining women squad, which is a matter of grave concern for the law enforcing agencies, the sources said.

## WATER LOGGING IN THAKURGAON

# Farmers besiege DC's office

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Thakurgaon

Farmers of eight villages under Thakurgaon Sadar upazila yesterday besieged the deputy commissioner's office to save their aman plants on 35000 acres of land from water logging.

They also formed a human chain at Mothurapur village under the upazila protesting construction of an earthen road blocking a drainage channel connected with Nornoi beel (water

body). The farmers urged the district administration to stop construction of the road to save their land from water logging within the next 24 hours. Otherwise, they threatened greater agitation.

They alleged that a farmer dug a big pond at Nornoi beel area for fish farming. He has raised embankment around the pond to prevent it from overflowing during heavy rain and is building the earthen road to go to his farm.

They further said if the construction of the road is not stopped, aman plants on about 35000 acres of land at Fakdanpur, Rohimanpur, Laxmipur, Gawalpara, Morolpara, Khalpara, and Molani villages will go under water.

Additional Deputy Commissioner Abdul Mannan received the memorandum on behalf of the deputy commissioner. He assured the farmers of taking necessary steps to save their land from water logging.

# Nasirullah's death shatters dreams of his family

RABIUL HASAN, Chapainawabganj

Air became heavy as the death news of Rajshahi University student Nasirullah Al Nasim reached his Chalknarendra village home in Shibganj upazila of Chapainawabganj.

Nasim's mother Jannatun Nesa fell unconscious while his three sisters Monira Begum, Sumaiya Khatun and Afroza Khatun were too grief-stricken to speak.

Nasim, a fourth year student of history department of RU and an activist of Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL), was critically injured as supporters of a faction of BCL beat him up following a row over distribution of iftar token on the occasion of National Mourning Day at Shah Makhdum Hall in RU on August 15.

Later, the attackers pushed him down from the first floor of the hall,



Nasirullah Al Nasim

leaving him unconscious. Residents of the hall rushed Nasim to Rajshahi Medical College Hospital. As his condition deteriorated, doctors sent him to Dhaka Medical College

Hospital (DMCH). After fighting for life for eight days, he died at DMCH on Monday afternoon.

"Nasim's father Moslem, who serves as a teacher of a school at Chandpur village in Shibganj upazila, often told us that he would like to see his son as a university teacher. But the tragic death shattered all his dreams," said his neighbour Zaman.

Sirajul Islam, who taught Nasim at school, said, "He was a brilliant student. He got scholarship in classes five and eight. He was the only brother of three sisters who also dreamt that their brother would be an ideal man as a university teacher."

Our Rajshahi Correspondent adds: Nasim's body was taken to RU campus where his namaj-e-janaja was held yesterday. He was buried at the graveyard of his village in the evening.

## Two held for mugging, truck looted in N'ganj

UNB, Narayanganj

Police in separate drives arrested two people on Monday night on charge of looting Tk 14 lakh from a businessman at Nitaiganj in the town.

The arrestees were identified as Mukul, 35, and Kamal, 32.

Mukul, ringleader of a mugging gang, was held at Chittagang Road in Siddhirganj here while Kamal picked up from Panthapath in Dhaka.

Police also recovered Tk 10,000 from the possessions of Mukul.

Businessman Golam Farid Mithun was robbed of Tk 14 lakh and some documents by an armed gang in Nitaiganj on the night of August 8.

Meanwhile, a T-shirt laden truck was looted by criminals at Panchabati BSCIC industrial area in Fatulla thana early yesterday.

Waiz Uddin, owner of the goods, said he along with three other partners bought 11,050 pieces of wastage T-shirts worth Tk three lakh from Goria Fashion at No. 1 lane of BSCIC.

A gang of armed muggers blocked a truck carrying the goods, beat up five people on board and took away the truck at gunpoint at about 4am, he said.

## BCL activist gets 12-yr RI for mugging

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet.

A Sylhet court yesterday sentenced an activist of Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) to 12 years rigorous imprisonment in a mugging case.

Judge Hossain Helal of anti-crime tribunal fined the convict, Shamim Iqbal, Tk 20,000, in default he is to suffer another year in jail.

According to the prosecution, a gang of four snatched a gold chain, and Tk 50,000 from one Mariam Sultana in the city's Darshan Deuri area on September 7, 2004.

A case was filed with Kotwali Police Station the same day. After investigation, police submitted a charge sheet only against Shamim Iqbal, an activist of Chhatra League city unit.

Shamim hails from Shah Sikondar village in Dakshin surma upazila of Sylhet district. He has been absconding since filing of the case.



PHOTO: STAR

Different areas of Hakimpur upazila, including Hilli land port, in Dinajpur district have gone under water due to heavy rain for the last two days. Photo shows a submerged road at the upazila headquarters.



PHOTO: STAR

Demand for banana has increased significantly in the Ramadan. Traders from across the country crowd this half a kilometre long market at Baneswar under Puthia upazila of Rajshahi every day to collect quality banana at reasonable prices.



## Gratitude



## IPO of First Janata Bank Mutual Fund Oversubscribed by More Than Four Times

Janata Bank Limited and RACE Management PCL are proud to announce that the IPO of First Janata Bank Mutual Fund has received a total subscription of over Taka 434 Crores against a total IPO size of total 100 Crores. This represents an over subscription of 4.34 times for one of the largest Mutual Fund IPOs in the Bangladeshi Capital Market.

We would like to offer our sincere gratitude and humble thanks to all retail, institutional, domestic and international investors who participated in the First Janata Bank Mutual Fund subscription process. Your enthusiasm and confidence are very much appreciated.

We would also like to thank the Bangladesh Bank, the Securities and Exchange Commission, Dhaka Stock Exchange, Chittagong Stock Exchange, all our Bankers to the Issue, Merchant Banks and all others who have directly or indirectly provided valuable support and guidance to Janata Bank and RACE during this process.

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