



These red crabs living in the mud along the shores of Kattali beach in the port city of Chittagong are a constant source of enjoyment to visitors.

PHOTO: AURUP KANTI DAS

## 2 Hizb-ut men held in Rajshahi

A RU CORRESPONDENT

Two suspected members of banned Islamist outfit Hizb-ut Tahrir were arrested yesterday in the city.

The arrestees are Piarul Islam and Rabiul Awal, of Darampur village in the district.

Motihar police yesterday received information that Hizb-ut Tahrir men were distributing books and CDs on religion at Budpara near Rajshahi University, and arrested the two members around 1:30pm from the area, said ASI Mazed Ali of Motihar Police Station.

He said, "Steps would be taken against the arrestees after interrogation".

Earlier on September 26, police arrested seven activists including four women of the organisation from the same area with around 200 books, CDs and leaflets.

The arrestees admitted that they are activists of Hizb-ut Tahrir.

The seven arrestees were produced before a court in the city on Wednesday and the court placed them on remand.

## Parjatan Board to be functional soon

Says GM Quader

BSS, Dhaka

Much demanded Bangladesh Parjatan Board, formed last month with the participation of the private sector, would soon start to function, to brand Bangladesh as an exciting tourist destination.

"The finance ministry has already allocated some funds to set up a separate office for the board which will start working in full swing soon," said Civil Aviation and Tourism Minister GM Quader to the news agency.

From now on, the 17-member board including five from the private sector will be responsible for tourism promotion, development and policy formulation. Meanwhile Bangladesh Parjatan Corporation will concentrate only on commercial operation including running the motels and other tour activities, the minister said.

The board will help the government take an integrated tourism development effort as it has the participations of all crucial ministries and private sectors, Quader observed.

The board was formed last month under "Bangladesh Parjatan Board Act-2010", headed by the Civil Aviation and Tourism Secretary Shafique Alam Mehdi as chairman.

Shafique Alam said it is a long felt demand of the people working in tourism industry to form a high-powered independent national tourism organisation with the private sector's

participation for proper development of tourism.

He said the first task of the board would be to formulate a vision for developing a sustainable, eco-friendly and responsible tourism industry in the country.

"We will work to identify, conserve and develop the favourite tourist destinations as well as promote the sale of our tourism related products to local and international markets," he said.

Tourism secretary said the board would work as a bridge between the government and the private sector, helping to increase investment in the sector.

A tourism research cell will also be set up under the board to make a tourist database and conduct various researches on potential tourism, he added.

Other board members are chief executive officer (CEO) with additional secretary level status, joint secretary level representatives from ministries of finance, local government, law, home, environment and forests, foreign affairs, land, cultural affairs and Chittagong hill tracts affairs, chairman of the Bangladesh Parjatan corporation, representatives from Association of Travel Agency of Bangladesh (ATAB), Tour Operator Association of Bangladesh (TOAB) and Tourism Resort Industries of Bangladesh and two resource persons on tourism.

## Ethnic people reel with fear of land grabbers' attacks

ANWAR ALI, back from Naogaon

Around 47 families, mostly indigenous, are living in tiny huts made of palm leaf, straw and bamboo, which are otherwise used for keeping goats and chickens.

A person can barely lie down to sleep or stand in the five to six-foot long, four feet wide and three-feet high huts.

It is not that these families are not able to build houses like other villagers but they live here in fear of attacks by land grabbers, they told this to the correspondent while visiting the area on Thursday evening.

In the last three months, Shariful Islam and his 60 men attacked their dwellings twice. The houses are situated on a 72-bigha land at Nakhoil Boarambari village in Niamatpur upazila of Naogaon.

On July 12, the houses were completely destroyed and then, on September 23, the people were beaten up along with their women and children by the land grabbers. The attack left some 30 indigenous people injured, 10 of them seriously.

"They (land grabbers) want to evict us

from this land which we ancestrally inherited," said Provati Mardi, who along with her three-year old son fell victim to the September 23 attack.

"They may attack us any time again as local administration always spares them," she added. Laxmiram Murmu and Mainu Mardi of the village gave similar statements.

Of the nine Muslim families living among the indigenous ones, Nadira Begum said, "We were not beaten, but the attackers kept us confined to a paddy field nearby so that we could not rescue our neighbours."

The victims alleged police to be in favour of land grabbers as Shariful Islam, an influential local of neighbouring Karalipara village, has good connections with the ruling Awami League.

Some of the attackers of the September 23 incident include Shariful, Kasimuddin, Abdul Khalek, Manik, Nazrul Islam and Raj.

"The incident of Nakhoil is not separate. Around 2,500 plain-land indigenous people in 10 northern districts have

so far lost some 6,000 acres of their land to grabbers and forest department due to lack of action," said Jatiya Adibashi Parishad General Secretary Rabindranath Soren.

Gono Forum Presidium member Pankaj Bhattachariya termed the recent attack barbaric and demanded exemplary punishment to the attackers.

He also went to meet the Naogaon deputy commissioner (DC) on Thursday but failed as the DC was in Dhaka and other officials were holding meetings.

Shakti Pada Tripura, organising secretary of Bangladesh Indigenous Peoples Forum, said, "Indigenous people are not separate from other citizens of the country."

"We therefore demand democratic rights to land for the indigenous people and constitutional recognition of these ethnic groups," he added.

"Present government assumed power promising to ensure human rights and indigenous people's rights and so should not allow anyone, even their own men, to affect the indigenous groups," he added.

## 4 killed, seven hurt in road crashes

STAR REPORT

At least four people were killed and seven injured in road accidents in Joypurhat and Barisal yesterday.

Of the four, three including a father and his daughter were killed, and seven wounded in a road accident on the Dinajpur-Joypurhat highway in Panchbibi of Joypurhat, reported our Dinajpur correspondent.

Panchbibi police quoting witnesses said the accident occurred when a Dinajpur-bound bus collided head on with a battery run three-wheeler leaving the three people dead on the spot around 2:00pm.

The deceased were identified as Md Babu and his 12-year-old daughter Kaniz Begum of Chandipur village of Hakimpur upazila of Dinajpur and Muhammad Ali 45, of Hakimpur village of sadar upazila.

The critically wounded Md Idris Ali, Samsunnahar, Nazma Begum, Maya Rani, Hena, Haidar and Shuvo were rushed to Hakimpur Upazila Health Complex. Later, they were shifted to Joypurhat Modern Hospital as their conditions deteriorated.

After the accident locals blocked road communication between Dinajpur and Joypurhat which was restored by police an hour later.

In another accident, a Ziaur Rahman Zia, 6, was killed on spot after a truck crashed him while he was crossing a road with his parents near Ashokathi bus stand in Gournadi of Barisal around 5:00pm yesterday.

## AL advisory council meets today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Awami League Advisory Council, the think tank body of the ruling party, sits today to discuss overall socio-economic and political situation of the country.

The meeting will be held at Prime Minister and AL President Sheikh Hasina's official residence, Gono Bhaban, at 7:00pm with her in the chair.

AL General Secretary Syed Ashrafur Islam urged all the members of the party presidium to attend the meeting on time.



Channel i inaugurates the celebration of its 12th anniversary by flying balloons in the air.

PHOTO: FOCUS BANGLA

## Youth rescued after abduction in Rajshahi

A RU CORRESPONDENT

A youth was rescued yesterday after five days of his abduction in Rajshahi.

The youth identified as Abdullah Al Mamun, 18, son of Abdul Mazid of Usufpur village under Charghat upazila.

Police said, on information, they rescued Mamun packed in a sack from a sugarcane field in Hariar area adjacent to the city after five days of his abduction from his village. Mamun was taken to the Police Station for interrogation after being given first aid.

Quoting the victim's family members police said Mamun was abducted from his house after responding to a call from an unknown mobile phone on September 25.

Following the incident, victim's father Abdul Mazid lodged a general diary (GD) on the same day, police said.

Maruf Hossain, Sub-Inspector of Matihar Police Station, said they were just interrogating the youth.

"No case was filed in this connection. We will investigate the matter according to the GD filed by the victim's father," he added.



Bangladesh Paribesh Andolon (Bapa) forms a human chain in front of the National Press Club in the city yesterday demanding an end to the production and use of poly bags.

PHOTO: STAR

## UK trade team arrives Monday

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

A fourteen-member UK trade team from Coventry and Warwickshire Chamber of Commerce will arrive here on Monday on a five-day visit.

The delegation aims to take the growing UK-Bangladesh trade ties to an elevated level by interacting with local counterparts and identifying areas of future collaboration.

Members of the delegation include chemical, technology, IT, healthcare, food and investment specialists.

Commenting on the visit, Kevin Ringham, head of UK Trade and Investment at British High Commission in Dhaka, said "The UK is a strong trading nation with an excellent track record in exporting a vast array of goods and services."

"In view of the deepening relations between Britain and Bangladesh and a growing interest among British Bangladeshis to do business in Bangladesh, this trade delegation will not only secure existing ties between the two countries but also contribute to the economies of Bangladesh and Britain," Kevin said.

A "Meet the Trade Team" session is also being arranged at the Westin Hotel in the capital from 1:30pm to 4:00pm on October 4, in which local business and media have been invited, according to a British High Commission press release.

## MOHAMMADPUR FERTILITY SERVICE CENTRE Provide indoor service

Directs health minister

UNB, Dhaka

Health and Family Welfare Minister Dr AFM Ruhul Haque has directed the authorities concerned to provide indoor service within a week at Mohammadpur Fertility Service Centre, a newly built six-storied complex.

The minister gave the directive while visiting the centre yesterday.

As per the directive, the indoor service on limited scale would begin from October 10 at least in one ward and the service would be fully functional within three months.

Ruhul Haque asked the director of the centre to prepare a list of "whatever is needed to start operation of the centre on urgent basis" and send the list to the joint secretary (administration) of the ministry.

He ordered immediate recruitment of manpower to the posts already created for the centre and also prepare a rational proposal for creating additional posts apart from the approved posts to smoothly run the fertility centre.

The minister also asked the director general of Family Planning to take the initiative for filling up the vacant posts of physicians in the directorate on ad-hoc basis.

Describing infertility treatment and the related services as a very technical matter, he said there must be experienced physicians at the fertility service centre to ensure world standard service.

DG Family Planning Begum Dillruba, Joint Secretary (admin), of Health Ministry M Ashraf Ali and

director of the Fertility Centre Begum Rina Parveen were, among others, present.

## Man crushed under train

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

An unidentified man of around 28 was crushed to death under the wheels of an inter-city train in Parbatipur of Dinajpur on Thursday night.

Railway police quoting witnesses said the man was traveling on rooftop of Ekata Express heading for Dinajpur. He was knocked down on the track by overhead telephone lines, just after the train had left the station at 8:30pm. He died on the spot.

Police sent the victim's body to Dinajpur Medical College Hospital for an autopsy.

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