

NEWS IN *brief*

Smuggled berthing rope seized

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Coast guard members in a drive seized 1,900 metres of smuggled berthing rope worth Tk 35 lakh from Bangla Bazar Ghat area under Bandar Police Station here yesterday.

Coast guard sources said when a patrol team of Bangladesh Coast Guard (east zone), acting on a tip off, halted a truck, the smugglers fled, leaving the truck beside the road around 4:00am.

The coast guard seized the ropes and the truck and handed those over to the customs authority,

2 held with Indian pesticide

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

Rapid Action Battalion (Rab)- 5 members arrested two people and seized 50 pots of smuggled Indian pesticide, worth around tk 20,000, and two bicycles from their possession at old bus stand area in Bagha upazila in Rajshahi yesterday.

The arrestees are Rejaul Karim, 30, and Tawfiq Hossain, 25, of Gokulpur village of the upazila, said

CCC sacks teacher on alleged sexual assault charges

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Chittagong City Corporation (CCC) sacked a schoolteacher yesterday on charge of alleged sexual assault on a female student.

The accused Suman Kanti Shil was the assistant teacher of Krishna Kumari City Corporation Girls High School.

CCC sources said Suman called the victim to his home on February 14 and sexually assaulted her.

The victim's parents complained to the school authority after which the authority took only an undertaking from the teacher. Dissatisfied, the parents filed a complaint with the city Mayor M Manjur Alam on April 6, said the sources.

The mayor ordered the CCC education department to submit a report after a probe.

CCC Chief Education Officer (acting) Sarwar-E-Alam said on receiving the report, CCC sent a show cause notice to Suman on August 8, to which he



The portraits of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and her Indian counterpart Manmohan Singh are ready to be hung up around the city prior to Manmohan's visit here tomorrow. The photo was taken from Public Works Department yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

Manmohan's Dhaka visit a test for Delhi's neighbourhood diplomacy

Say Indian analysts

PALLAB BHATTACHARYA, New Delhi

As Prime Minister Manmohan Singh flies to Dhaka on Tuesday on a visit that will put to test New Delhi's neighbourhood diplomacy, there is total unanimity among Indian area analysts that India should travel the extra mile to help Bangladesh in trade, river water sharing, and power sectors and that the upswing in ties should be sustained irrespective of which party is in power in that country.

The analysts agree that the Indian PM's visit provides an opportunity to take India-Bangladesh relations to a higher trajectory and the positive momentum in bilateral relations generated during Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's visit to Delhi in January 2010 must be continued by accelerating implementation of the joint communiqué signed during her visit.

Bangladesh has taken steps to address India's security concerns and it is time India shows sensitivity to Bangladeshi concerns and come out with a comprehensive assistance and cooperation package for Bangladesh, they opine.

"If the new strategic partnership between Bangladesh and India takes the expected step forward when Prime Minister Manmohan Singh visits Dhaka next week, it could herald a new beginning for the eastern sub-region of South Asia", opined Dr Sanjaya Baru, former media adviser of Manmohan Singh and well known foreign policy analyst.

Bangladesh, he said, is keen on sub-regional cooperation in hydropower sector involving also Nepal and Bhutan and seeks a "more equitable share of Teesta river water and this should be possible in theory and could become the game-changer for the region".

Singh's visit to Bangladesh "could help begin a new era in closer and better connectivity between India and Bangladesh opening up the possibility of new land-based infrastructure projects that will enable road and rail links between South Asia and South East Asia", Baru says.

The important thing about the India-

Bangladesh relationship at this point in time is that there is strong political commitment to a movement forward at the highest levels in both the countries, he adds.

Baru argues the significance of strong India-Bangladesh ties goes beyond the bilateral context and good relations between India and Bangladesh will have positive influence on the region and countries like Nepal, Bhutan, Myanmar, and Thailand will benefit from trade and transit connectivity between India and Bangladesh.

C Raja Mohan, senior fellow at the Centre for Policy Research, said the Indian PM's visit to Dhaka "promises to be a game-changer not just for Indo-Bangla relations but for the entire sub-continent" including Nepal, Bhutan, Myanmar, and China.

"Much of the credit for creating the new strategic opportunity goes to Dhaka and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina.... Hasina has lent concrete meaning to the idea of regionalism in the eastern subcontinent", said Rajamohan.

According to him, Hasina has recognised that Bangladesh could transform itself into an economic bridge between South Asia and ASEAN and understood that the key to her country's emergence as an economic powerhouse lies in moving the relationship with India to a higher level by resolving all outstanding bilateral problems.

"Singh and Hasina have an opportunity next week to look beyond their success on bilateral front and outline a shared agenda for the future of the eastern subcontinent", Rajamohan opined.

G Parthasarathy, India's former high commissioner to Pakistan, points out that Bangladesh has cracked down on Indian separatist groups, which had become used to operating from its soil and India, and in turn, has reciprocated by becoming more forthcoming on resolving complex problems of river waters and border management, which have bedevilled relations between the two neighbours.

He, however, says India "unfortunately has a

reputation of being slow and tardy in implementing developmental projects in its neighbouring countries and one hopes that arrangements for supplying 250 MW power promised to Bangladesh are put in place expeditiously".

He said an area where Bangladesh has a legitimate grievance will hopefully be addressed during Singh's visit -- the growing trade deficit.

Parthasarathy said India-Bangladesh relationship "has to be strong enough to withstand changes in government on both sides. It was only appropriate for (India's External Affairs Minister) Mr SM Krishna to have called on the Leader of the Opposition, Begum Khaleda Zia, when he visited Dhaka (in July this year), despite her known anti-India propensities".

"We need to build on this through more multi-party parliamentary exchanges. It is unfortunate that sustained efforts are not being made to cultivate parliamentarians from Bangladesh, irrespective of their political affiliations", commented the retired diplomat.

According to Biswajit Dhar, director general of leading Delhi-based thin-tank Research and Information System for Developing Countries, "there is no doubt that the onus of taking India-Bangladesh relations to a higher plane lies on India".

He said there is a case for at least further increase in India's import quota of garments from Bangladesh from 10 million pieces at present.

Pointing out the narrow base of Bangladesh's exports, Dhar said this clearly shows the supply side constraints in a range of sectors that constrict its ability to export and India can play a role by supporting establishment of trade-creating investments in Bangladesh.

The focus of such efforts should be on small and medium enterprises that can easily be set up in sectors like marine products, processed foods, and light engineering where India has considerable expertise, Dhar said.

'Urge Messi to vote for the Sundarbans'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Wonders Promotion Foundation yesterday urged the government to take initiatives so that internationally renowned footballing icon Lionel Messi votes for the Sundarbans to help it win in the new Seven Wonders of the World.

The foundation Founder and President Muhammad Ata Ullah Khan made the appeal through a press release yesterday.

The foundation also reiterated its call for the prime ministers of both Bangladesh and India to jointly vote for the Sundarbans during the Indian prime minister's visit.

This is a big opportunity to make the Sundarbans known to the world, said the release, urging all to vote for the Sundarbans as much as possible.

If the Sundarbans wins, the country's tourism industry would flourish while the economy would be enriched, it said.

To vote for the Sundarbans, one needs to type SB in the short message service (SMS) option of a mobile phone and then send it to 16333.

Woman stabbed by stepson

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A woman and her pregnant sister were stabbed by her teenage stepson at her city residence in Sher-e-Bangla road of Hazaribagh area yesterday.

Local people caught the boy Babu, 17, and handed him over to Hazaribagh police.

The victims Salma Begum, 26, and her sister Sajeda Akhter, 18, who is seven months into her pregnancy, were admitted to Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH).

Sajeda told reporters at DMCH that she came to visit Salma on September 31. Early hours yesterday, she awoke hearing Salma's screams and saw Babu indiscriminately stabbing Salma.

When she tried to open the door and seek people's help, Babu caught and stabbed her, she said.

Officer-in-Charge Rafiqul Islam of Hazaribagh Police Station, quoting Babu, said he wanted to take revenge on Salma for luring his father Bahar Miah to marry her about two and a half years ago.

Woman gang-raped

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

A woman was gang-raped on the hilltop of Jungle Silimpur under Sitakunda upazila in Chittagong early yesterday.

Victim is now undergoing treatment at One Stop Crisis Centre (OCC) in Chittagong Medical College Hospital (CMCH), said police.

Duty officer of CMCH Police Outpost Bivash Chowdhury said the woman was a tenant of Jan-e-Alam on the hilltop of Jungle Silimpur.

Bivash quoting the victim said Jan-e-Alam, Iqbal and their accomplices lifted her from her shanty around 3:00am yesterday and raped her repeatedly.

Hearing her scream, locals rescued her and rushed her to the CMCH, he said, adding that Jan-e-Alam and his accomplices, however, managed to flee.

ILLEGAL KIDNEY TRADE

Another arrested

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

Joypurhat police arrested another alleged intermediary of illegal kidney trade in Kalai upazila.

Police arrested Md Mosarraf Hossain, 55, son of Mofiz Uddin of Joypur-Bahuti, Saturday night. On August 28, police arrested Md Abdus Sattar, 40, Golam Mostafa, 28, and Abdul Karim, 32, at the same village in connection with involvement in the illegal trade.

Police say that at least 42 people in the area sold their kidneys.

Md Fazlur Karim officer-in-charge of Kalai Police Station said a team led by him arrested Mosarraf. The three arrested before had provided police with information about Mosarraf and villagers identified him for the police.

Mosarraf, who already sold one of his kidneys, denied his involvement in the trade. He claimed before reporters yesterday that he was a victim of conspiracy.

Police claimed that Mosarraf is involved in the illegal kidney trade and this illicit business is a way to make money quickly. Police yesterday produced the arrestees before the Chief Judicial Magistrate's Court in Joypurhat seeking five days' remand for each. The court will hear the remand prayers on September 7.

Md Abdul Mannan Divisional Commissioner of Rajshahi visited the village Saturday. He told the villagers that those who sold their kidneys out of poverty will be rehabilitated and given medical assistance.

He said nobody who sold their kidneys would be punished but if this happens again in future legal actions will be taken.

Two separate medical camps were set up yesterday at Boiragihat and Matrai Bazaar of the upazila to treat the people who sold their kidneys.

NEGLIGENCE

Ibn Sina doc, 2 nurses freed on bail

COURT CORRESPONDENT

Six employees, including a doctor and two nurses, of Ibn Sina Hospital in the capital were released from jail yesterday, hours after they obtained bail in a case related to the death of a newborn because of their alleged negligence.

The employees are physician Anwarul Abedin, nurses Amena and Aysha, general manager Aminul Islam, and administrative officers Kamrul Hasan and Akhter Hossain.

They came out of Dhaka Central Jail around 5:30pm after completing all the formalities.

Earlier in the day, Metropolitan Magistrate Mohammad Ismail Hossain granted them bail on a bond of Tk 2,000 with two guarantors for each after their lawyers submitted the bail petitions.

Police arrested the employees on August 25 hours after Idris Sikder, father of the deceased baby, filed a case with Dhanmondi Police Station accusing two doctors and two nurses of the hospital. The newborn died on August 9.

On August 26, the physician and two nurses were placed on a two-day remand in connection with the case while three other staff members were interrogated at the jail gate.

Another accused in the case, doctor Shahida, is on the run.

Following a report aired by private television channel Boishakhi on August 15 on deaths of three newborns in that hospital, the court on August 17 issued a suo moto rule upon the hospital officials and doctors to explain why they should not be punished for the offence.

On August 25, the High Court after a hearing directed police to take action under Criminal Procedure Code against the officials, doctors and nurses of the hospital, who were responsible for the loss of life.



PHOTO: BNP

Indian High Commissioner Rajeev Mitter calls on Leader of the Opposition in Parliament and BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia at her Gulshan office yesterday.

Khaleda invited to meet Manmohan

UNB, Dhaka

The Indian government has formally invited Leader of the Opposition in Parliament Khaleda Zia to meet Prime Minister Manmohan Singh during his visit to Dhaka on September 6-7.

Indian High Commissioner in Dhaka Rajeev Mitter called on Khaleda at her Gulshan office last night to formally invite her.

The formal meeting between Khaleda and Manmohan will take place at Hotel Sonargaon at 4:00pm on September 7 where the Indian premier will be staying during his visit.

Briefing reporters BNP Vice Chairman Shamsher Mobin Chowdhury said the Indian high commissioner termed


Manmohan's Dhaka visit very important saying it would cast positive impact on bilateral relation between Bangladesh and India.

Khaleda welcomed Manmohan to Bangladesh and said good relation between the two countries is the expectation of all.

She said key objective of the good relation is to ensure mutual benefit of the peoples of the two countries.

She hoped that the two countries would work together to reach that desired relations. Shamsher said Khaleda would discuss all bilateral matters during her meeting with Manmohan.

Replying to a question, he said the Bangladesh government is yet to give any invitation to BNP on the occasion of Manmohan's visit.



WEATHER
TODAY

No change in temperature

UNB, Dhaka

Light to moderate rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty or squally wind is likely at many places over Khulna, Barisal, Chittagong and Dhaka divisions and at a few places over Rajshahi, Rangpur and Sylhet divisions in 12 hours as of 6:00pm today.

Moderately heavy to heavy falls are also likely at places over southern part of the country, Met office said.

Day temperature may remain nearly unchanged over the country.

The sun sets in the capital at 6:13pm today and rises at 5:42am tomorrow.

Country's highest temperature 35.8 degrees Celsius was recorded yesterday at Sylhet and lowest 24.5 degrees Celsius at Rangamati.

Highest and lowest temperature and humidity recorded in some major cities and towns yesterday were:

City/Town	Temperature in Celsius		Humidity in percentage	
	Max	Min	Morning	Evening
Dhaka	33.6	26.8	71	63
Chittagong	33.4	26.2	69	77
Rajshahi	33.8	26.4	75	77
Rangpur	35.4	27.5	70	72
Khulna	31.7	26.8	88	78
Barisal	32.5	26.0	83	76