

Gang leader

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around 5:30pm.

Tareque made the confession as he was produced before reporters at DB office in the capital. Following the press briefing, he was handed over to Officer-in-Charge F Karim of Kalai upazila police in Joypurhat.

His gang used to collect kidneys from the poor in three unions of Kalai.

The transplants were conducted in Apollo Hospitals Dhaka, United Hospital Limited, Birdem Hospital and

Kidney Foundations in the capital and "in case of rich patients" in Singapore, Madras and Vellore, OC

Karim quoted him as saying,

In 2006, Tareque gave an advertisement seeking a kidney for his cousin. Many responded to the ad and requested him to arrange them kidney receivers in exchange for money.

Tareque, who hailed from Khulna and could not do well in his Jhut (garment wastage) business, then decided to be involved with the illegal trade.

OC Karim said they already have the names and addresses of 38 persons who sold their kidneys.

According to police, about 42 people of the upazila sold their kidneys to the well-off at home and abroad.

Additional Deputy Commissioner Moniruzzaman of DB said they so far traced three gangs linked to kidney business. He did not disclose further details.

BJP sees

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Alliance (UPA) allies.

It also sought to know how much Indian territory had been given away to Bangladesh from Assam to settle the enclave issue, claiming there is a huge resentment among the people of the state after the visit.

Before leaving for Bangladesh, Prime Minister Manmohan had held a meeting with BJP Parliamentary Party leader LK Advani, Leader of the Opposition in Lok Sabha Sushma Swaraj and her Rajya Sabha counterpart Arun Jaitley.

The opposition had issued a statement seeking details of how the enclaves were to be exchanged and cautioned that Indian territory should not be compromised and local sentiments of people at the Indo-Bangla border should not be hurt.

In an interaction with the media here yesterday, in an apparent reference to Paschim Banga Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee's opposition to a treaty on the sharing of Teesta river waters, Jaitley said this was a "glaring example" of how differences within UPA have affected India's foreign policy initiatives.

On enclave exchange, he said the government should clearly state what has been done in this regard and share details of the treaties signed.

Many BJP leaders said they feel the government is not keen on sharing details regarding the land boundary treaty.

"There had been no discussion with us on giving land from Assam to Bangladesh...We don't know what they have done," Swaraj said, adding 600 acres of land in Assam had reportedly been given away to the neighbouring country.

Boy dies

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11:30am, said the family and Khajanchi Union Parishad Chairman Nizam Uddin.

The boy was then taken to a private physician's at the upazila headquarters. The doctor declared him dead.

Mokbul Ali said his son had been suffering from acute fever for the last three to four days. "Even in over two hours, I could not talk to any doctor at the hospital yesterday," he added.

Nizam Uddin added there had been allegations of skipping duties against the hospital physicians for long.

Contacted, Medical Officer Shahin Ahmed of the health complex said "I was late yesterday due to repair of a wheel of my car. I got the message about the child patient through a ward boy. But he had died before I reached the hospital."

Upazila Health and Family Planning Officer Ardhendu Deb said he had got the complaint. They will look into the matter, he added.

BNP top brass

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insiders said.

BNP and its like-minded parties are trying to mount pressure on the government to realise their demands including restoration of caretaker government system in the constitution to oversee the next parliamentary election.

A number of political parties including Bikalpa Dhara Bangladesh and Liberal Democratic Party have already expressed solidarity with BNP's stance regarding caretaker government and declared to stand beside the main opposition party during the upcoming movement.

"Standing committee will sit on Saturday night to finalise the agitation programme. We are also holding discussions with our like-minded parties. A programme for a tougher anti-government movement will be announced soon," party acting Secretary General

Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir said yesterday.

He was talking to reporters after placing wreaths at the grave of late president Ziaur Rahman at city's Sher-e-Bangla Nagar on the occasion of Jatiyatabadi Mahila Dal's 33rd founding anniversary.

Besides chalking out the programme, the standing committee will also discuss of the pattern of the upcoming movement as BNP's like minded parties want to go for agitation programme from a common platform while some BNP leaders are in favour of a simultaneous movement, party insiders said.

They, however, said the possibility of announcing a hartal is thin considering the strong anti-hartal sentiment among the people.

The party, however, will consider announcing hartals if any big incident happens due to any obstruction created by the law enforcers during the agitation programme, they added.

Aminbazar tragedy

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The villagers now want punishment of those who instigated a mob.

The probe committee, which was formed by a High Court directive and which submitted its report to the Supreme Court registrar, also found that the on-duty policemen neglected their duty of saving the students.

The six students were beaten to death by the mob at Kebab Char of Aminbazar when they reached the spot on July 18, the night of Shab-e-Barat.

The Daily Star yesterday saw changes in the belief of the villagers, who earlier vehemently said that robbers were beaten to death. None of them agreed to name the people who actually took part in the beating.

They now say that ignorance and incorrect information from the neighbourhood watch prompted villagers to take such steps against the

students. They demanded punishment of the people who misled the villagers.

"It was our mistake as we [the villagers] injudiciously swooped on them without checking," said a pharmacist at the village.

He said he went to the spot moments after the beating was over. There he learnt that the villagers were very disturbed by recent robberies and they became fierce when they heard some robbers were caught.

Another villager at Bardeshi bazaar in the area said other investigation committees are taking time to submit their reports, creating doubt among villagers if the victims were actually robbers.

"Everyone knows who had instigated the villagers and who had beaten them [victims]. We want their punishment of those who made us believe that they were robbers...", said a trader of the bazaar.

Khilgaon flyover

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another plate down is unusual, he added.

Mukta Dhar, assistant commissioner (traffic) of Sabujbagh Police Station, said they first got information around 7:00pm that there was something wrong with the flyover.

"We then went to the spot and found guard rails of the flyover leaning away by around 2 inches than usual. We suspended movement of all vehicles on the flyover as a precautionary measure," Dhar said.

The 1.9km long and 14-metre wide flyover was designed by local engineers and they supervised and monitored its construction.

BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia, then prime minister, in her flyover inauguration speech lauded the efficiency and skill of the LGED engineers and hoped they would contribute more through similar projects.

Visiting the spot, DCC Chief Engineer Brig Gen Abul Hossain said the sinking could be blamed on many things including plying of overloaded vehicles, soil condition, and vibration caused by trains that run under the structure.

After visiting the spot, chief technical adviser of the flyover Eng Abdul Hamid said it is a minor problem.

Initiative to repair the struc-

Interpol issues

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Meanwhile, Libya's de facto premier Mahmoud Jibril warned in his first address in Tripoli that the hardest battles still lay ahead as fighters loyal to the new rulers closed in on Gaddafi's hometown yesterday.

"The battle of liberation is not finished," Jibril said late Thursday after National Transitional Council troops inching towards Bani Walid southeast of Tripoli came under rocket fire from old regime loyalists inside the oasis town.

And a party of 14 Libyans, including General Ali Kana, a Tuareg who commanded Gaddafi's southern troops, a second general and two other top officials had arrived in Agadez in northern Niger in a convoy of four-wheel drive vehicles on Thursday afternoon, security sources in Niger said.

Reuters reporter in Agadez said the four senior officials were staying at a Gaddafi-owned hotel in the town.

15,000 expat

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"This is something good as many of our people were finding it difficult to return home from Malaysia. Now they are able to return," Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment Secretary Zafar Ahmed Khan told The Daily Star yesterday.

The Bangladesh High Commission in Kuala Lumpur has issued travel documents to 10-15 thousand undocumented workers since the registration process started on August 1, he said quoting the HC.

Some of them are already back home and the rest are preparing for their return trip, an official at Bureau of Manpower, Employment and Training said.

Meanwhile, a six-member team comprised of officials from the ministries of expatriates' welfare, home and foreign affairs will go to Kuala Lumpur tomorrow to see the status of the Bangladeshi workers there.

The amnesty programme declared late June allows the irregular expatriates either to return home without facing any penalty or get regularised to stay there and work. To take the advantage, they must register with the Malaysian immigration department.

The authorities registered a total of 23,20,034 foreign workers, including 2,67,803 irregular Bangladeshis until August 31.

An estimated 5 lakh Bangladeshis live in Malaysia. Of them, many irregular workers had been facing various problems, including threats of arrest and police harassment.

Though the August 31 registration deadline is already over, the Malaysian government has said any undocumented expatriate can still take the opportunity.

The expatriates' welfare ministry has asked the home ministry for 2 lakh more passports to be sent to the Bangladesh mission to make sure the irregular workers get passports promptly to avail themselves of the opportunity of the regularisation process.

Secretary Zafar Ahmed hoped they would complete issuing passports to all Bangladeshis as required by December.

The government had earlier sent 1 lakh handwritten passports there.

ACC crippled

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constituted the ACC on November 21, 2004 and made Justice Sultan Hossain Khan its chief with the status of a Supreme Court judge.

Staff working with the bureau of anti-corruption were taken in the newly-formed ACC.

But the commission failed to keep the anti-graft watchdog functional and came under criticism for its "partisan role."

Sultan and two other commissioners resigned during the tenure of the caretaker government in response to a call for them to step down from the then president Iajuddin Ahmed during the state of emergency.

Lt General (ret'd) Hasan Mashhud Chowdhury, who was appointed ACC chairman on February 22, 2007, also echoed Saifur's view on the efficiency of ACC staff, said another leaked US embassy cable.

In a meeting with the Australian high commissioner on March 14, 2007, the ACC chief said he has little confidence in his staff, most of whom joined the ACC from the notoriously ineffectual and corrupt bureau of anti-corruption.

"Moreover, his staff lacks significant investigative expertise, including critical forensic accounting skills and familiarity with property cases," the cable said.

Hasan Mashhud Chowdhury resigned on April 2, 2009 and the AL-led government appointed Ghulam Rahman, a former bureaucrat, the ACC chief. Since then, no significant step has been taken by the current government to revamp and strengthen the anti-graft body.

Top criminal

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Rab personnel did not seek cooperation of local police in this regard, the OC said.

Bidhan, who is wanted in at least seven criminal cases including three for murder filed with Raozan Police Station, was a fugitive for a long time, the OC added.

Major Ashfaque, however, refused to give any details of the arrest or identify the arrestee. Rab-7 officials also remained mum about the arrest.

Sources seeking anonymity said a Rab team, with Bidhan with them, were raiding different areas looking for illegal arms.

They said Bidhan was a former cadre of now-defunct National Democratic Party and a close aide to detained BNP leader Salauddin Quader Chowdhury.



People of Angorpota-Dahagram enclave now can use the Tin Bigha Corridor 24/7 following a deal during Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's recent visit to Dhaka. PHOTO: STAR

Bangladesh gained a lot

FROM PAGE 1

Dahagram and Angorpota has freed its 15,000 inhabitants from the incarceration at night.

He said Bangladesh has also obtained the right to land transit through India to Nepal and Bhutan and this has opened enormous possibilities of trade and cooperation in power and water sectors.

The demarcation of the disputed 6.5km boundary and the agreement on coordinated management of border will ensure that border hostilities and killings will become a thing of the past.

The decision to remove duties on the export of Bangladesh garment and textile products will greatly help narrow down the trade deficit with India, he said.

"If we do not recognise the gains that the country has made, we are simply misleading people. We owe it to the people of Bangladesh to place facts before them and let them make up their minds," he told The Daily Star at the Prime Minister's Office Thursday.

"Sadly, even the most significant achievements have been obscured by the fact that the agreement on Teesta was delayed. Teesta was one important part, but certainly not the only important issue. We have much to celebrate and we must not obscure these successes simply for our desire to play party politics. The boundary agreement is of historic importance and it has at a stroke resolved many of the issues that have dogged relations between the two countries."

"Like everyone else in Bangladesh we were disappointed that the Teesta agreement could not be finalised but as friends we understand the difficulties of New Delhi...India is a federal democracy and it has to carry the states when an agreement directly affects a particular state," he said.

He said Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh had been talking to Paschim Banga Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee but sadly

that discussion could not be completed by the time he arrived in Dhaka.

He pointed out that it was ironic that the Indian prime minister in his public comments and talks with the press took full blame for the failure to sign the agreement but our media and the opposition leaders are adamant in blaming it on the government.

Rizvi said at the official talks a fair and equitable share of Teesta water was agreed upon in principle and that a deal would be signed as soon as the process is complete.

Asked what would happen if New Delhi fails to convince Mamata, the adviser said, "This is for India to decide... the ball is in their court. We will wait and encourage them to do it as quickly as possible."

In response to a question whether Bangladesh would contact Mamata, Rizvi said, "Mamata is a very close friend of Bangladesh, she loves us and will not do anything that might hurt us...Our relationship with her will continue and grow. But, she will have to resolve her issues with New Delhi," he said.

While stating that Teesta is one of the important issues, he pointed out that the real significant outcome of the visit lies in the signing of the framework agreement, which he termed historic and forward-looking.

Rizvi said it opens up areas of cooperation in power, water, connectivity and other fields never dreamt before.

For the first time in our history, India has agreed to two sets of tripartite cooperation with Bangladesh-India, Bhutan, Bangladesh, and India, Nepal Bangladesh--for developing joint hydroelectric projects in Bhutan and Nepal, the foreign adviser said.

Rizvi claimed that the power deficit is holding Bangladesh's progress back and with the electricity problem solved, at least three percent of extra annual growth could be achieved. He said, "Double digit growth looks so easily attainable."

On not signing a protocol

on the Chittagong and Mongla seaports, he said it was expected to be signed but at the final meeting questions were raised by both sides on certain clauses that required clarifications and changes in language. Therefore, both sides agreed to review those before signing and it will take some time.

Asked if the protocol was not signed because India deferred the Teesta deal, Rizvi said while such a conclusion may be drawn but "Our relationship is based on goodwill and trust and not on marketplace haggling. We have abandoned the earlier tactic of the previous governments of tradeoffs as they have patently failed. We want to resolve all problems across the board through mutual understanding and goodwill."

On criticism that Manmohan's visit was a failure and two advisers--foreign affairs and finance adviser to the prime minister--were to blame, he said he would not go for personal defence.

He, however, said, "The Indian prime minister already acknowledged that the problem was not on the part of Bangladesh. We must remain focused on issues and facts. From the point of view of national interest, this visit has secured enormous advances..."

On complaints that the ministries concerned and the cabinet were not aware of the deals with India, he said no agreement is made by the Prime Minister's Office. They originate in the ministries, who provide the drafts and agreements, and are vetted by the relevant ministries and inter-ministerial committees, and when necessary placed before the cabinet. At the end of the day, everyone works under the direction of the prime minister."

To say that the cabinet was not aware and the ministries were not aware makes sensational news for papers but it is not based on facts, said the PM's adviser.

Freedom

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The corridor was totally closed from 1947 to 1992. Following an agreement with Bangladesh in 1992, India kept it open for six hours a day till 1996.

Later, the time was extended by another six hours during the previous Awami League government's tenure. Since then it was open from 6:30am to 6:30pm.

This correspondent met 75-year-old Mokabbob Munshi on his way to the mainland through the corridor yesterday.

"Maybe I will die soon But I'm all so happy to see this corridor open," said Mokabbob, his face all electric. But he is also sad because his elder brother, who participated in movements demanding opening of the corridor, died three years ago.

On March 10 last year, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in a video conference assured the villagers of keeping the Tin Bigha Corridor open for 24 hours.

The agreement to this end was signed on Tuesday during Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's Dhaka visit.

The opening will offer more employment and better livelihood, said Dahagram union Chairman Habibur Rahman.

"We're free now. We're entering the mainland day and night. We now look forward to have better roads, educational institutions, healthcare services and job opportunities here," he said.

England take 2-0 lead

SPORTS REPORTER

England extended their lead to 2-0 over India in the 5-match one-day series as they recorded a three-wicket victory in the third game at The Oval in London yesterday.

Chasing a rain-revised target of 218 in 43 overs, the home team reached there with 7 balls to spare when number nine Graeme Swann stole a quick single to mid-off off Munaf Patel.

Earlier, Ravindra Jadeja and captain Mahendra Singh Dhoni led India's fightback as the tourists recovered from a dismal start to reach 234-7 after being sent in to bat first in the day-night game.

India lost the second one-day match at the Rose Bowl on Tuesday, after the first match was rained off.

SCORES IN BRIEF

INDIA: 234 for 7 in 50 overs (Jadeja 78, Dhoni 69, Ashwin 36 not out, Raina 21; Anderson 3-48, Bresnan 1-32)

ENGLAND: 218 for 7 in 41.5 overs (Kieswetter 51, Bopara 40, Bresnan 28; Ashwin 3-40) Result: England won by 3 wickets (D/L method).

Man-of-the-match: Ravindra Jadeja.

Shrinking Teesta wreaks havoc

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December-March because India holds back almost all water in that period.

The flow in February used to be 4,000 cusecs at the minimum before India built Gazoldoba barrage in 1985.

Recently, The Daily Star correspondents have visited several villages along the river and talked to locals there to know how their lives are being affected by the retention of water in the upstream.

Fishermen, farmers, boatmen and small traders said many of them have been forced to change livelihood, as the river stays dry for at least six months a year.

Abdul Khaleque, 60, of Panjur Bhanga village in Kawnia upazila under Rangpur district is a fisherman. He said he can catch hardly 10 percent of the fish he used to catch 20 years ago.

Porimol, 65, of Char Vuthnath in the same upazila said his income from fishing started to decrease 15 years back, and things got so bad that he had to sell his boat 10 years ago. Now he uses a hand-net to catch fish, but what he earns that way is not enough to feed his family.

Life is even harder for the boatmen. Nazir of Char Vuthnath said he sits idle

from September to March as the river runs dry during that period.

Latif, 50, a bamboo trader at Dushmara Char under Kownia upazila, said he used to carry hundreds of bamboo poles to Dhaka by the river all year round. "But the water flow now is low for nine months a year, leaving barely three months for us to do trade," he added.

Mohiuddin of Kalmati in Lalmonirhat said that farmers like him were once used to bumper years for rice. "But those days are long gone. Harvests have been very poor particularly in the last 10 years."

Around 30,000 acres of char (land emerged from river) on the Teesta lies unused for years as farmers cannot grow rice and other crops there for lack of water in the river, said sources at the Department of Agriculture Extension in Lalmonirhat.

The water table has been going down by around two feet a year in the northern region due to excessive use of ground water for irrigation.

Many Boro farmers are switching to tobacco cultivation since they cannot get the water needed to grow Boro rice in February and March. This trend is adversely affecting the coun-

try's food production.

Tobacco cultivation, which needs less water but poses serious hazard to human health and ecology, has almost doubled in the northern districts in the last couple of years.

The insufficient flow of water has also rendered useless the Teesta barrage, which Bangladesh built at Dalia point in Nilphamari for Tk 1,500 crore in 1990.

Originally, the barrage project planned to irrigate around 300,000 hectares of land in Rangpur, Nilphamari, Gaibandha, Dinajpur, Bogra and Joypurhat districts during the dry season.

Under phase-I, the barrage was supposed to irrigate some 50,000 hectares of land in Rangpur and Nilphamari, said officials at the Water Development Board. But records show it could irrigate hardly 15,000 hectares of land on average.

Phase-II, which was aimed at irrigating areas in Dinajpur, Bogra, Gaibandha and Joypurhat, could not be implemented for lack of water in the river.

Sources close to the project said at least 40,000 cusecs of water is needed to irrigate the entire cultivable land in winter. Without this, the objectives of the project

are bound to fail.

Sufferings of the people in the northern districts continue in the rainy season as well when too much water released from the upstream causes floods.

India started building Gazoldoba barrage some 70 kilometres upstream from Dalia point soon after Bangladesh began constructing the Teesta barrage in 1983. The Indian barrage opened after two years, while Bangladesh's took seven years to be in operation.

Originating from the Indian portion of the Himalayas, the Teesta enters Bangladesh at Kaliganj village under Satnai union of Dimla upazila in Nilphamari district. It courses 45 kilometres through Nilphamari, Rangpur, Lalmonirhat and Gaibandha districts before meeting the Brahmaputra in Kurigram.

The river has lately come into public discussion, as there were high expectations that an agreement would be reached on its water sharing during Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's visit to Dhaka on September 6-7.

However, the deal fell through at the eleventh hour, to utter frustration of millions living by the Teesta.