

BSF beats Bangladeshi to death

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Benapole
Indian Border Security Force (BSF) beat to death a Bangladeshi cattle trader along Putkhalhi frontier in Benapole early yesterday.
The deceased was identified as Shahadat Hossain, 35.
Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB) and local sources said Shahadat was caught by BSF men while he along with other cattle traders was bringing cattle from India.
Though his companions managed to flee, Shahadat was beaten mercilessly leaving him dead on the spot, said Joyanal Abedin, Putkhalhi camp commander of BGB 26 Battalion.
Police recovered the body of the deceased near the frontier, said Hasan Hafizur Rahman, officer-in-charge of Benapole Port Police Station.
The body, which bore marks of injury, has been sent to Jessore Sadar Hospital for autopsy, he added.

Donors' aid sought to repair coastal embankments

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
Food and Disaster Management Minister Abdul Razzaque yesterday sought assistance of the development partners in repairing the coastal embankments, which he said was the biggest challenge for Bangladesh.
"Due to resource constraints, the government is not being able to repair the coastal embankments and build adequate cyclone shelter centres," he told Special Representative of the UN Secretary General on Disaster Risk Reduction Margareta Wahlstrom.
Wahlstrom, who arrived in Dhaka yesterday on a four-day visit, held a meeting with Razzaque on various ministries concerning disaster management, says a press release.
The coastal embankments, constructed in the 1960's, got damaged in many parts and require repairing. The embankments need to be heightened and strengthened, Razzaque said.
This is crucial because the frequency and intensity of cyclones have gone high in the recent times, he explained to the UN official at his ministry.

WB waits

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"As we have stated before, we are waiting for the preliminary outcome of some ongoing investigations," WB Country Director Ellen Goldstein told reporters after a meeting at the Economic Relations Division (ERD) office in Dhaka.
"But while doing that, we are maintaining our dialogue with the Bangladeshi authorities on this particular issue and on the implementation of our entire programme here," she added.
The Washington-based lender suspended the funding of the \$2.9-billion Padma bridge project last October over a corruption allegation in the bidding process. The project has been stalled since then.
Canada is investigating the allegation as questions had been raised over appointing a Canadian consulting firm for the project.
ERD Senior Secretary Iqbal Mahmood said the meeting with the development partners did not discuss any specific project.
On Padma bridge, the biggest-ever infrastructure project in the country, he said, "It is an ongoing project and will continue."
Bangladesh had signed loan agreements with the WB for \$ 1.2 billion, Asian Development Bank for \$ 615 million, Japan International Cooperation Agency for \$ 400 million, and Islamic Development Bank for \$ 140 million to construct the 6.15-kilometre Padma bridge.

Thai trade show begins in city

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
The three-day Thailand Trade Show 2012 kicks off from today at Pan Pacific Sonargaon Hotel in the capital.
Open for all from 10:00am to 8:00pm, the fair is going to showcase products of 14 categories, including food and beverage, gift and decorative items, health and beauty aids, household and kitchenware, construction materials and hardware, and rice mill, garment and textile machinery.
A total of 46 Thai manufacturers and exporters are participating in the show.
Commerce Minister GM Quader expects that the trade between the two countries will exceed \$ 1.5 billion within this year compared to last year's \$ 1.25 billion and \$ 909.9 million in 2010.
The bilateral trade, however, is largely in favour of

Energy-starved Pakistan turns to solar power

AFP, Muzaffarabad
From mosques, to homes and streets, Pakistanis are increasingly seeing the light and realising that year-round sun may be a cheap if partial answer to an enormous energy crisis.
"It's the best thing I bought this winter," says Sardar Azam, a former civil servant retired to a riverside home in Pakistani-administered Kashmir, showing off his water-heating solar geyser installed on the terrace.
"The biggest advantage is that you spend money once and it runs on sunlight which is free," Azam added.
Pakistan needs to produce 16,000 megawatts of electricity a day but only manages 13,000 megawatts, according to the Pakistan Electric Power Company.
The shortfall means that millions endure electricity cuts for up to 16 hours a day, leaving them freezing in winter and sweltering in summer while hitting industry hard, exacerbating a slow-burn recession.
Voters say it is their biggest single concern, secondary to the war against Al-Qaeda and the Taliban, and so the government has been increasingly vocal about redressing the problem as it eyes elections within a year.
"We can't afford to be selective of where we

BNP reminds govt

FROM PAGE 1
front of the party's central office at Nayapaltan in the capital.
BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia at the March 12 grand rally in the city issued an ultimatum to the government to reinstate the caretaker government system within 90 days.
Hundreds of party leaders, workers and supporters joined yesterday's rally followed by a procession from Nayapaltan to Moghbazar through Kakrail, Shantinagar, Malibagh and Mouchak.
Besides colourful banners, placards and posters, the party men bore portraits of Ziaur Rahman, Khaleda Zia and Tarique Rahman in the procession. They also chanted slogans against the government while marching to Moghbazar.
Fakhrul said, "BNP is a pro-liberation party... a party of independence proclaimer." He urged all to unite and take a vow to protect the country's independence and sovereignty, and to restore democracy.
Demanding release of the detained political leaders, the BNP leader said they would continue their protest until the government fulfilled their demand for the caretaker government to oversee the next general elections.
He also asked the government to withdraw the cases

Leopard

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The Daily Star last night over telephone.
Locals believe the leopard entered the village from forests beyond Bangladesh territory.
Kabir who rushed to Panchagarh from Dinajpur following the incident returned with the body of the leopard, which was 6.5 feet (head to tail) long.
Villagers said they first used fishing nets to capture the leopard alive. But as the enraged animal attacked the villagers, injuring five persons including a minor boy, they beat the leopard to death.
It was then hung from a tree and put on display.
The injured Shohar Uddin, 60, Alam, 30, Saddam Hossain, 20, Shaheed, 18, and Monju, 10, were first admitted to Panchagarh Sadar Hospital. Alam and Shaheed were released after first aid while Shohar, Saddam and Monju were shifted to Rangpur Medical College Hospital in critical condition.
Informed of the incident, Boda Upazila Nirbahi Officer Jahurul Islam accompanied police to recover the dead animal and handed it over to the forest department, the UNO said.
Contacted, Range Officer of Debiganj Forest Department Abdul Majid told this correspondent that his office sent the dead animal to Dinajpur Divisional Forest Office for further action.
According to Bangladesh Wildlife Protection Act 1974, a person could be imprisoned for six months to up to a year and penalised Tk 500 to Tk 1,000 for killings such animals.
However, section 37 of Bangladesh Wildlife Protection Bill 2011 denotes killing of rare animals, like leopard, as a punishable offence. The killer would be imprisoned for three years or fined Tk 3 lakh or charged with both the punishments for such a crime.

Renewal

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between the commerce secretaries of the two countries at the Udyog Bhavan, which houses the Indian commerce ministry.
A formal announcement of the two decisions is expected on the second and final day of the meeting between Commerce Secretaries Golam Hussain of Bangladesh and Rahul Khullar of India with a joint statement.
The existing trade agreement between the two countries, which had gone into force April 1 in 2009, will be renewed through a Letter of Exchange. Bangladesh apparently wanted to renew the trade accord for only six months, pending further discussions on some contentious issues.
The two countries yesterday also discussed the issue of tariff and non-tariff barriers in the way of boosting bilateral trade and setting up four more border haats on either side of the demarcation with northeastern state of Tripura.
The issue of standardisation norms of the two countries also came up in the meeting. India has already accepted the certification of products by Bangladesh Standards and Testing Institution.
However, India raised the issue against using a certain chemical in dyeing jamdani saris, which reportedly causes skin problem but it is to be examined by Indian Standard Institution, sources said.
The commerce secretary level meeting was held after a gap of more than eight years with the previous one being held in 2003 in New Delhi.
India-Bangladesh trade is currently heavily skewed in favour of India, as exports from Bangladesh have long been restricted due to Bangladesh's narrow manufacturing base and imposition of numerous non-tariff and para-tariff barriers by India.
The trade gap was \$4.57 billion in 2010-11, according to the data of Export Promotion Bureau (EPB) of Bangladesh.
After the meeting between the two commerce secretaries, Hussain called on Indian Commerce and Industry Minister Anand Sharma.
During the meeting, Sharma listed various steps taken by India to give tariff concessions under SAFTA to Least Developed Countries (LDCs) in SAARC and reiterated New Delhi's commitment to expand the facility.

Body found

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Darussalam area.
During primary interrogation, Zahirul has admitted to have strangled Tanmoy to death for money, police said.
The dead, Sifat Ali Tanmoy, was a student of Class II at Model Academy at Mirpur's Paikpara Staff Quarters.
Zahirul, a mechanic at a garment factory, was living with his wife and daughter in a rented room in the two-storey building Tanmoy's father owns.
Tanmoy went missing on Monday, said Abdul Malek, officer-in-charge of Darussalam Police Station.
"My son was playing with some children of the neighbourhood around 11:30am [on Monday], as it was a holiday," Tanmoy's father Hazrat Ali told The Daily Star yesterday.
Around 12:00 noon Tanmoy's mother Shakila Begum began looking for him as he was nowhere to be

A sad day for DU

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Several hundred graduates created disorder while receiving the gift items for the upcoming 46th convocation at the Teacher Student Centre. The unruly students took away convocation caps and gift bags more in numbers than actually allocated for them.
Although each graduate was allocated one cap and one gift bag, they took away five to six caps and bags by storming into the TSC's indoor games room where these items were stored, said witnesses.
The university authorities estimate that some 1,500 graduates took away around 500 caps and 1,000 gift bags in excess.
They authorities also caught some 100 graduates red-handed while they were getting away with the extra items. But Proctor MA Ali let them go after seizing the additional stuffs.
The convocation gowns were being distributed from the TSC premises, while the caps and gift bags were being distributed from the indoor games room.
The authorities began the distribution around 9:30am among 16,800 graduates who have registered to join the convocation scheduled for March 31.
Several thousand graduates gathered in front of the TSC indoor games room in

Model kills

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Family members of deceased Mainul Haque Ali, 38, said he worked as a model in TV advertisements for hair colour and other products.
Police recovered his body from his house and sent it to Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) morgue for a post-mortem.
Quoting family members, Officer-in-Charge (OC) Md Shah Alam of Ramna Police Station said at about 3:00am Mainul's parents woke up after they smelled something burning and saw that smoke was coming from Mainul's room.
They found his body hanging from the ceiling fan and the clothes he was wearing were on fire. The bed sheet was also burning.
Entering the room they found a stub of a burning cigarette on the bed, the OC said.
Mainul had married two and a half years back, said OC Shah Alam adding that his wife, however, went to her father's house six months back and they had no relationship since then.
The OC said that he had been informed that Mainul was taking drugs.
DMCH morgue sources said it was a case of suicide and different parts of the body were burnt.

3 fraudsters

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Maya and Habibur Rahman Morol.
This is one of the two cases so far filed upon instructions of the finance ministry following recommendations by the government's investigation committee to legal action against the stock market manipulators.
Judge Mohammad Aminul Haque of the First Additional Metropolitan Sessions Judge's Court also set May 15 for starting trial against the trio.
The case states that Sirajuddoula, Maya and Rahman were involved in artificial active trading through bulk transactions in shares of Peoples Leasing and Financial Services Ltd (PLFSL).
They bought a huge quantity of PLFSL shares and sold them at the same time, causing the company's share prices jump high. With this, the accused pocketed a huge amount of money illegally.
Earlier in the day, the court rejected their bail and issued arrest warrants against them, as the accused were absent from the court without taking any steps about their non-appearance.
The court ordered their arrest following an application submitted by Special Public Prosecutor Rezaul Karim.
Mahbubur Rahman Chaudhury, director of the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC), lodged the case with Dhaka Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court on August 21, 2011.
The probe body, headed by Bangladesh Krishi Bank Chairman Khondkar Ibrahim Khaled, in its report said retail investors lost at least Tk 20,000 crore to some dishonest traders, who were in a deep collusion with stock market regulators.
Many of them could be tried under the existing laws of the SEC, the report said, suggesting detailed investigations before putting them on trial.
The collapse during January-February last year was unavoidable following abnormal rise in share prices up to December 2010. The benchmark index of Dhaka Stock Exchange rose to its highest ever level at 8,918 points on December 5.
"We will not step back from our fight against the construction of the Tipaimukh dam project. If the government responds we will be happy, if not we will continue our movement," Nobokishore said.
He said if Tipaimukh dam project came up, nearly 26,000 hectares of forestland in Manipur would be affected and 78 lakh trees would have to be felled.
Tipaimukh dam project is a multi-purpose hydropower plan on the border of Kolashib district of Mizoram and Churachandpur district of Manipur where the Tipai River meets Barak River.
The Barak River enters Assam from Manipur before flowing into Bangladesh.

Dhaka in disorder

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of their fellow students who were arrested on Tuesday night.
Gulshan police had detained them after they allegedly vandalised a Bangladesh Parjatan Corporation bar at Mohakhali as the bar authorities refused to give a number of students free alcohol.
Protesting the arrest, the agitating students took to the streets around 11:00am yesterday and put up barricades on both sides of the roads in front of Titumir College, between Mohakhali and Gulshan-1.
They damaged at least 10 vehicles and blocked traffic movement on Gulshan-Mohakhali road and its adjacent areas for more than five hours since 11:00am, witnesses said.
They fought pitched battles till 4:00pm with police who came to disperse the students. The demonstrators also set fire to tires and wooden furniture and hurled bricks at the law enforcers.
At one stage, police baton charged the students. The street battle that followed left at least 20 students and a few police personnel injured, witnesses and police said.
Gulshan Police Station Officer-in-charge Rafiqul Islam was among the injured policemen, Khandaker Lutful Kabir, deputy commissioner of Dhaka Metropolitan Police (Gulshan division), told The Daily Star.
Caught between the street battles, hundreds of people were seen stranded, waiting for transport for hours in vain.
Offices and other businesses in the area were shut and hundreds of vehicles remained stuck on both sides of the roads during the clashes.
The agitating students lifted their barricades around

4:00pm after police released the 26 students against bonds following a meeting with the college authorities.
The college authorities formed a seven-member committee to probe the incidents. The committee has been asked to submit a report within three work days.
A number of students alleged that police "inhumanly tortured" the 26 students after their arrests from the college campus.
Gulshan police, however, dismissed the allegation.
Meanwhile, vehicular movement in Mirpur and its adjacent areas remained suspended for four hours from 9:00am as transport workers took to the streets over rumours that a fellow driver had been taken on police remand.
Yasin, a bus driver, was arrested on Monday night after the death of a Dhaka College student under the wheels of his bus in front of the college. Victim SM Zakaria Dalim, 25, was a master's student of English Literature at the college.
As rumours spread that Yasin had been placed on a seven-day remand, around 300 hundred transport workers poured into the streets, blocking the roads from Mirpur-10 to Mirpur-12 and Mirpur-1 to Farmgate.
The rumours, however, turned out to be baseless. Although the police have appealed for Yasin's remand, the court is yet to issue an order in this regard. Hearing on the remand prayer has been fixed for tomorrow.
Witnesses said the unruly workers vandalised at least four vehicles and beat up the drivers and workers who did not take part in the rampage and also those who tried to operate vehicles.
Traffic resumed after the demonstrators lifted their barricades around 1:00pm,

Indian civil

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north eastern state of Manipur.
The forum's Convener U Nobokishore said the central government and Manipur government were moving ahead with their plan to construct the project but the interest and safety of the people living downstream should be the upper most.
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Strauss-Kahn case returns to US court

AFP, New York
Former IMF chief Dominique Strauss-Kahn, mired in legal trouble in his native France, faces new courtroom worries across the Atlantic yesterday, with the first hearing in a US civil suit.
The hearing in New York state court in the Bronx will be the first in a civil suit brought by the hotel maid whose accusation of attempted rape last year triggered the downfall of one of the world's most powerful politicians.