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KIDNAPPED ABROAD

# 11 return after paying ransom

They tell of months of ordeal caused by Bangladeshi gang

BELAL HOSSAIN BIPLOB and WASIM BIN HABIB

Aleya Begum could hardly sleep in the last five months. She could not even respond to her little granddaughter's query: "Where is my father? When will he come home?"

Waiting for all these months, Aleya's mind was oscillating between hope and despair whether her son Shafiul Alam would return home alive from the grasp of traffickers or not.

Finally, Shafiul came back home yesterday, bringing smile to the faces of his mother and three-and-a-half-year-old daughter.

"Getting my son back is the best ever gift I have received in my life," said Aleya with blissful eyes.

Like 33-year-old Shafiul of Khulna, 11 other Bangladeshi migrants landed at Shahjalal International Airport at 10:35am

after enduring inhuman torture in Iran for months. Rights Jessore, an NGO, with the help of the Bangladesh embassy in Tehran arranged their repatriation.

The eleven others are Mahfuzur Rahman, Forhad Hossain, Mehedi Hasan, Montaz, Shafiqul Alam, Sajib Chandra Nath, Jakir Hossain, Muslim Uddin, Firoz Miah, Jasim Miah and Aminur Rahman. From the airport, the expatriates were taken to the CID office in the capital.

The migrants were abducted last year by a gang of Bangladeshi human traffickers based in Iran. The gang persuaded the migrants in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and Oman to cross into Iran and have lucrative jobs in Turkey, Greece, and Italy with huge salaries.

The victims were held hostage in Iran's port city Bandar Abbas. The gang collected ransoms from 11 migrants while the other

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Seeing his daughter after three years, Shafiul could not hold back his tears at the CID office in Malibagh. Shafiul was among the 12 people who returned from Iran yesterday after being held hostage there for months by human traffickers.

PHOTO: SK ENAMUL HAQ

## WAR TRIAL REMARKS Bergman unhappy as trial begins

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The International Crimes Tribunal-2 yesterday started contempt of court proceedings against David Bergman, a Dhaka-based British journalist, for allegedly demeaning the tribunal.

If convicted, Bergman, the editor (special reports) of English daily New Age, may face highest one year imprisonment or up to Tk 5,000 in fine or both.

The court passed the order after not being convinced with Bergman's explanation about his comments made in his blog on orders and judgments of the

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## Story of torture same; change in characters

Survey reveals 49pc married women tortured for 3 trivial reasons

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Radha in Rabindranath Tagore's short-story "Shasti" was murdered by her husband for daring to argue with him and disobey his orders.

In the 21st century, women in rural areas are still subjected to domestic violence for not complying with their husbands' orders, being late in doing daily chores and expressing opinions opposing their partners', as

demonstrated through a baseline survey by rights organisation Manusher Jonno Foundation (MJF).

The survey was conducted in October 2012 in 11,101 households of 91 villages to collect data on violence against women and was presented at a seminar at The Daily Star Centre yesterday.

As many as 49 percent of the married women during the survey said they had

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## Why apology?

Modi sees himself innocent in Gujarat riot

OUR CORRESPONDENT, New Delhi

BJP leader Narendra Modi in a TV interview on Wednesday night shrugged off the need for his apology over the 2002 Gujarat riots.

The party's prime ministerial candidate for the 2014 general elections also asserted that he should be hanged in a street square if he was guilty.

Asked about the charge of his turning a blind eye

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## India holds biggest round of polling

High turnout as voters cast ballots for 121 seats in 12 key states

STAR REPORT

A huge turnout of voters marked the biggest round of polling in India's marathon national elections with stakes high for two main contenders for power -- ruling Congress party and main opposition Bharatiya Janata Party led by Narendra Modi.

Polling took place in 121 seats spread across 12 states, including the key states of West Bengal, Karnataka, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Maharashtra crossing the

half way mark in the nine-phased elections to 543-member Lok Sabha.

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Bricks meant for the construction of a building in Barisal University lay scattered on the road after students clashed with law enforcers there yesterday.

PHOTO: ARIFUR RAHMAN

## BARISAL UNIVERSITY 20 injured in clash

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barisal

At least 20 people, including 17 students of Barisal University, were injured when students clashed with police over the removal of a roadblock yesterday.

Students put up the brick barricade on the Barisal-Patuaakhali highway at Karnakathi, protesting the assault on a fellow student by local transport workers.

The agitated students threw brickbats at the police and Rab members when the law enforcers rushed to the spot to dismantle the roadblock around 10:15 am, police said.

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## Literary pioneer Márquez dies

THE NEW YORK TIMES

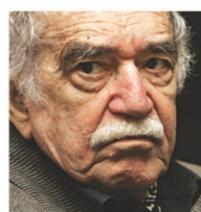
Colombian novelist Gabriel García Márquez, whose "One Hundred Years of Solitude" established him as a giant of 20th-century literature, died yesterday at his home in Mexico City.

He was 87.

His death was confirmed by Cristobal Pera, his former editor at Random House.

Márquez, who received the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1982, wrote fiction rooted in a mythical Latin American landscape of his own creation, but his appeal was universal.

His books were translated into dozens of languages. He was among a select roster of canonical writers -- Dickens, Tolstoy and Hemingway among them -- who were embraced both by critics and by a mass audience.



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The Daily Star

Integral Energy Limited

ONLINE POLL

Do you think Bangladesh would be able to regain GSP facility after submitting the progress report on the 16-point action plan given by the Obama administration?

Yes (23%)  
No (77%)

TOTAL VOTES: 271

TODAY'S POLL

Do you agree with Chief Election Commissioner Kazi Rakibuddin Ahmad that his leave of over a month during the upazila polls did not affect the elections?

PLEASE CAST YOUR VOTE AT www.thedailystar.net

PRAYER TIMING April 18

	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	4-35	5-10
Juma	12-30	1-15
Asr	4-45	5-00
Maghrib	6-28	6-28
Esha	7-45	8-15

নতুন বছরে অটোবির

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20% পর্যন্ত

Bookshelf: Tk 9,435 (Old Tk 11,100)  
 Wardrobe: Tk 70,336 (Old Tk 87,920)  
 Wardrobe: Tk 78,750 (Old Tk 105,000)  
 Bed: Tk 27,750 (Old Tk 37,000)  
 Bed: Tk 35,250 (Old Tk 47,000)  
 Dining Table: Tk 23,184 (Old Tk 25,760)  
 TV Stand: Tk 13,288 (Old Tk 15,100)  
 Wardrobe: Tk 22,466 (Old Tk 25,530)  
 Bed: Tk 19,536 (Old Tk 24,420)

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