



A woman with her two children gets off a Bangladesh Navy vessel at Patenga in Chittagong last night. She is one of the Malaysia-bound fortune seekers rescued in the Bay.

PHOTO: STAR

## Lured into risky sea trip

FROM PAGE 1

One of the victims is 20-year-old Humayun Kabir of Manirampur in Jessore. He passed Higher Secondary Certificate exams in 2012.

Talking to The Daily Star, he said one Milan Hossain, who has been in Malaysia for 10 years, of his village assured him over the phone of an attractive job there.

Being enticed, Kabir along with four other men, mostly farmers, started for Chittagong on November 2. The traffickers kept them in a mess at Bahaddar Hat in the port city for three days before taking them to Cox's Bazar where they stayed in a hotel for a day.

"Then they [traffickers] took us to a hill in Himchhari and detained us there. They took away our mobile phones and other valuables," said Kabir.

The five were supposed to give the traffickers Tk 2 lakh each after reaching Malaysia safely. Their guardians would send the money abroad.

"One early morning, about a week ago, they took us near the sea and got us on a small boat. Later, we were shifted to a small fishing trawler where 20-25 people were already aboard. As the trawler was very small, we had to sit all the time and couldn't lie down," he mentioned.

The traffickers beat them up with iron rods if they tried to complain about anything. They had been on the trawler for five to six days and were given only some rice and two chilies twice a day to eat.

"My father had warned me not to go with the traffickers, but I didn't listen to him. Finally, I've got my reward by being treated inhumanely," he lamented.

Aged 17, Intiaz Uddin Sheith was tempted by traffickers' offer of an

attractive foreign job. He left his village Baghpara in Jessore on November 8. Sonia, wife of a Malaysia expatriate in the village, offered him the job.

But soon he realised that he has been deceived.

Hailing from Merula of Mongdu in Myanmar, Ayesha Akhter, 26, and her two daughters, aged 4 and one and a half years, are among the cheated.

"My husband Wazi Uddin is an expatriate in Malaysia. He told me to go there with my two daughters," she told The Daily Star.

With the help of middlemen, they got on a small boat last week. The following day, the three boarded a trawler in the mid sea.

"I saw the traffickers torturing the males, but the females were spared of," she told this newspaper.

Ismail, 20, of Kurushkul in Cox's Bazar, along with two of his friends was going to visit his elder sister in Teknaf seven days ago. On the way, the three was kidnapped by a group of smugglers from Hnila area, some 15 kilometres off Teknaf.

They were kept confined to a hole in a hill at night. The next morning, they were taken to the sea by a small boat. The kidnapers took away their cell-phone sets and all belongings.

The Navy last night handed over 576 fortune seekers, 11 crews and five traffickers and manpower brokers to police.

Contacted, Kazi Shahabuddin, officer-in-charge of Patenga Police Station, said they will free the Bangladeshis after verifying their identities. The Myanmar nationals will be sued for illegal entry into Bangladesh. The traffickers and brokers will be sued under trafficking act.

## Probe must

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abduction and murder incident but was later expunged from the investigation by the Appellate Division.

In response, Momtaz Uddin said the findings would be put to use in accordance with the law.

Citing from the progress report of the Rab, he told the court that 87 people including members of the elite force had been interrogated.

Now their statements were being examined, he said, adding seven more days would be needed to prepare the complete probe report.

Referring to the report submitted by the seven-member probe body, Momtaz Uddin said the committee had recorded statements of 374 people including ruling Awami League lawmaker Shamim Osman, Narayanganj city Mayor Selina Hayat Ivy, Additional Director General Col Ziaul Hassan of the Rab, Rab-11 officials and the bodyguard of ward councillor Nur Hossain, prime accused of

the case.

The committee needed to interrogate Nur Hossain, now in an Indian prison for illegally entering that country, and some others. It sought four weeks' time to submit the complete report to the HC.

As for the IGP's report, Momtaz Uddin said police protection has been ensured for the witnesses and the family members of the victims.

The HC bench fixed December 10 for passing necessary order on this.

In April, Narayanganj panel mayor Nazrul Islam and his four associates, and senior lawyer Chandan Sarker and his driver were abducted and killed allegedly by some Rab-11 personnel. Their bodies were later found floating in the Shitalakkhya river.

Three sacked Rab officials -- Lt Col Tareque Sayeed Mohammad, Maj Arif Hossain and Lt Commander SM Masud Rana -- are in police custody in connection with the seven-murder case.

## Rise of youth

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marriage is still a threat to human health.

Average marriage age of women in Bangladesh is 15.8, and 65 percent of girls are married off before the age of 18 while 69 percent of deliveries take place at homes.

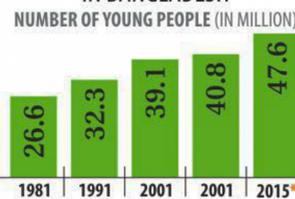
"Now the major question is the quality of education. Are those completing their education can compete in the global level? ... The issue must be looked into seriously," said Matavel.

Stressing the need for introducing sex education in Bangladesh, Matavel said there is no religious bar to imparting sex education to young people.

"Otherwise, they learn from friends and internet, and that may be wrong," she added.

According to the UNFPA report, despite the governments' greater attention to them, the youths still confront many obstacles that keep them from safely transitioning into adulthood and the workforce.

### YOUNG PEOPLE (10-24 YEARS) IN BANGLADESH



SOURCE: BANGLADESH POPULATION CENSUS; UN POPULATION PROJECTION

"Tens of millions do not go to school, or if they do, they miss even minimum benchmarks for learning," it said.

Employment prospects are often dismal, with jobs unavailable or poor in quality, leading to worsening global youth unemployment crisis.

Up to 60 percent of young people in developing regions are not working or in school, or have only irregular jobs, it said.

In Bangladesh, two million young people enter the labour market every

year, but a large number of them are either jobless or have irregular jobs, said Population Council Country Director Ubaidur Rob.

Each woman aged between 15 and 49 now has 2.2 children, meaning that Bangladesh's population would stabilise at 200 million in a few years, said Ubaidur.

Bangladesh now has a huge young population. If the country can ensure proper education and health services for youths, it can become a developed nation, he said.

According to the UNFPA report, "The dividend comes as resources are freed for economic development, and for greater per-capita spending on higher quality health and education services."

"Thus, Economic growth takes off. A virtuous cycle begins where capabilities and opportunities continuously expand."

The report suggested making adequate investments in childhood vaccination, primary health, sanitation and

safe drinking water to reduce child mortality; secondary education, sex education and health services to empower girls; equal opportunities for all youths and their participation in civic activities and policy making.

It urged governments to ensure equal opportunities for health services, education, jobs and wider participation of the young people in the policy-making and civic activities.

The report also recommended proper macro-economic management, open trade, good governance and well-functioning labour and financial markets to spur economic growth and expand employment of young people.

State Minister for Health and Family Welfare Zahid Maleque said Bangladesh has been implementing policies and programmes to give young people quality education and provide better health services.

The results are reflected in social and economic indicators, he said.

## No licence without written test

FROM PAGE 1

Road Transport Authority (BRTA), the licensing authority, however, said such a demand is illegal and irrational.

The workers under different banners in the last few days have been threatening to wage a tough movement if their demand is not met. The threat comes at a time when a country-wide drive against unfit vehicles and unlicensed drivers is underway.

BRTA Chairman Nazrul Islam said it is impossible to meet the demand violating the licensing rules.

As per Motor Vehicle Ordinance 1983, an applicant has to pass written, viva and practical tests to get a driving licence.

"The written test is mandatory to check an applicant's knowledge of driving. It's one of the key prerequisites to be eligible for getting a driving licence," mentioned Nazrul.

Bangladesh Truck-Covered Van Transport Agency Malik Sramik Oikya Parishad, Bangladesh Sarak Paribahan Sramik Federation, and Bangladesh Anta-Zila Truck Chalok Union in the last three days separately raised some

demands. On top of the lists is setting "easy conditions" for issuing driving licence.

Transport workers at a rally in the capital's Tejgaon yesterday announced that they will wage a tougher movement if their demand is not met by December 5.

Bangladesh Sarak Paribahan Sramik Federation, the largest body of road transport workers, has been demanding the authorities issue around 24,700 driving licences to as many applicants without holding written tests.

Shipping Minister Shajahan Khan, also the executive president of the federation, in 2011 had raised the question, "If a driver can sign his name, understand traffic signs and signals, differentiate between a cow and a goat and has good driving skills, what's the problem in giving him a licence?"

Later on July 2012, the organisation gave a list of around 24,700 drivers to the BRTA with recommendations that their licences should be renewed.

Scrutinising the documents, the licensing authority found all those fake.

Finding no other way to get the licences legally, federation leaders have been demanding the BRTA issue new licence to them without written test.

"All these drivers are skilled and have been driving vehicles for over 10 years. But they are not fit for taking the written test as many of them can't write. If a driver has practical skills, good eyesight and can understand traffic signs and signals, he should be given a licence," said Osman Ali, general secretary of Bangladesh Sarak Paribahan Sramik Federation.

The BRTA has so far issued around 14.30 lakh driving licences against over 21 lakh registered vehicles. So it is clear that several lakh vehicles are driven by unlicensed drivers, he added.

Asked about the statistics, BRTA chief Nazrul Islam said of the 21 lakh vehicles, around 11 lakh are motorcycles. Most of the bikers outside Dhaka do not have driving licence. But most of the heavy vehicle drivers are

licensed.

On an average, around 3,000 people die every year in road accidents across the country, according to police records.

The World Bank and the World Health Organization, however, put the figure at 12,000 and 18,000 respectively, says a 2011 report of the Accident Research Institute (ARI) of Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology.

Ilias Kanchan, chairman of Nirapad Sarak Chai, said reckless and unskilled driving is considered as the major reasons for frequent accidents. It would be suicidal if the government accepted the irrational demands of the transport workers, he mentioned.

Tanweer Hasan, director of the ARI, said taking a written test for a driving licence is mandatory in developed countries. The test is necessary to get skilled and responsible drivers.

Road safety cannot be ensured in the country until there is a proper licensing system in place, he observed.

## Bangladesh at high terror

FROM PAGE 1

Bangladesh ranks 23rd among 162 nations in the GTI. Iraq was the country most affected by terrorism, while Zambia is placed last on the list.

Bangladesh is among the 13 countries vulnerable to high terror risk and third South Asian country in such a position besides Sri Lanka and Myanmar. The other countries are Angola, Burundi, Central African Republic, Cote d'Ivoire, Ethiopia, Iran, Israel, Mali, Mexico and Uganda.

The study also identified 102 countries, including Bangladesh, where no death from terrorism took place in 2013.

Three statistically significant factors associated with terrorism are state sponsored violence, group grievances and high levels of criminality, mentions the report.

Weak state capacity, social injustice, illegitimate and corrupt governments, powerful external actors upholding corrupt regimes, extremist ideologies, historical violence and conflict, inequality in power, repression by foreign occupation or colonial powers, discrimination based on ethnic or religious origin and failure of the state to integrate dissident groups of emerging social classes are also the factors.

"Terrorism doesn't arise on its own; by identifying the factors associated with it, policies can be implemented to improve the underlying environment that nurtures terrorism," said Steve Killelea, executive chairman of IEP.

"The most significant actions that can be taken are to reduce state-sponsored violence such as extrajudicial killings, reduce group grievances and hostilities, and improve effective and community-supported policing," he said.

According to the report, terrorism increased by nearly fivefold in fatalities since 9/11. It recorded 18,000 deaths last year, a jump of about 61 percent over 2012, and four terrorist organisations -- ISIS, Boko Haram, the Taliban and al-Qaeda and its affiliates -- are responsible for the casualties.

There were nearly 10,000 terrorist attacks in 2013, a 44 percent increase on the previous year, it mentions, dismissing any correlation between poverty and terrorism.

Religion as a driven ideological force for terrorism has increased since 2000 but religious ideologies as a motivation for terrorism is not a global phenomenon, says the report.

### KEY FACTS

**17,958** people were killed in terrorist attacks last year, that's **61%** more than the previous year.

**82%** of all deaths from terrorist attack occur in just **5** countries: **Iraq, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Nigeria and Syria.**

Last year terrorism was dominated by four groups: **the Taliban, Boko Haram, ISIL, and al Qaeda.**

More than **90%** of all terrorist attacks occur in countries that have gross human rights violations.

**40** times more people are killed by homicides than terrorist attacks.

While it is predominant in Sub-Saharan Africa, MENA (Middle East and North Africa) region and South Asia, in the rest of the world terrorism is more likely to be driven by political or nationalistic and separatist movements.

Five countries -- Iraq, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Nigeria and Syria -- accounted for 80 percent of the deaths from terrorism in 2013 with Iraq was the country most affected by terrorism last year.

"The latest jump in terrorist activity coincided with the start of the Syrian civil war in 2011," says the report which examined 162 countries, covering 99.6 percent of the world's population.

Terrorism is increasing in Afghanistan, with ten percent more terrorist attacks and 13 percent more fatalities in 2013 than 2012.

The report emphasised on longer term priorities including addressing group grievances, ending gross physical rights abuses by the state and improving access to justice and the rule of law.

"Extremist Islamic movements that encourage the use of terrorism need to be counteracted with moderate ideologies within Islam that advocate other non-violent methods of addressing legitimate political grievances."

## Non-formal education bill passed

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Parliament has passed 'Non-Formal Education Bill 2014' aimed at ensuring education for school dropouts and enhancing the quality of non-formal education in the country.

Primary and Mass Education Minister Mostafizur Rahman moved the bill in the House last night which was passed by voice vote.

According to the newly passed law, children's age limit for primary education will be eight to 14 years.

For non-formal adult education, the age is 15 and above.

The non-formal adult education is for the people who have never gone to school or dropped out of the primary stage.

The bill proposed expansion of the country's non-formal education in

## 4 Israelis killed in Jerusalem

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gathered for morning prayers.

Four people were killed and eight wounded, including two policemen, medics said. One person was in a critical condition and three sustained serious injuries, with eyewitnesses saying several had had limbs hacked off.

The attack began shortly before 7:00am when the assailants burst in, waving meat cleavers and a gun at the synagogue in a Jewish seminary in Har Nof.

Three policemen -- two traffic officers and a forensics expert -- arrived and exchanged gunfire with the attackers, killing them, police spokeswoman Luba Samri said.

The assailants were identified by family members as Uday and Ghassan Abu Jamal, cousins from the east Jerusalem neighbourhood of Jabal Mukaber. Both were in their 20s.

Israel vowed a harsh response, with Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu calling the bloodshed a "direct result" of incitement by Palestinian president Mahmoud Abbas and Hamas, vowing to

respond with "a heavy hand".

US Secretary of State John Kerry condemned the attack as an "act of pure terror and senseless brutality", and called on the Palestinian leadership to denounce it.

Abbas condemned the killings. But Hamas praised the assault and called for further attacks, saying it was a "response" to Sunday's death of the Palestinian bus driver from east Jerusalem who was found hanged inside his vehicle.

Police said a post-mortem showed no evidence of foul play in the driver's death, but colleagues said his body showed signs of violence, indicating he was murdered.

The Palestinian pathologist who attended the post-mortem also ruled out suicide, suggesting he may have been drugged then strangled, the family's lawyer said.

Analysts warned of escalation in a situation already fraught with tension.

"This event has the potential of being a game changer," said Kobi Michael, senior researcher at the

Institute for National Security Studies, adding it created a sense that things were "out of control".

Har Nof is also very close to the former Palestinian village of Deir Yassin where Jewish militias massacred more than 100 villagers in 1948.

Shortly after Tuesday's attack, police went to Jabal Mukaber and rounded up family members, sparking clashes with stone-throwing youths, relatives said.

Police arrested nine people but did not say how many were family members.

Arab east Jerusalem has been a tinderbox since early July when Jewish extremists killed a 16-year-old Palestinian in revenge for the murder of three Jewish teenagers, sparking a wave of violence which has shown no sign of letting up.

Defence Minister Moshe Yaalon vowed Israel would hunt down those who sent the perpetrators "wherever they are and in whatever way necessary, both inside and outside Israel's borders".