



NASHEED IN THE SOUP

Police arrest ex-Maldives president on terror charges, triggering protests

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THE THIRD VIEW

Mahfuz Anam writes on contrasting politics of Dhaka and Delhi

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AL-AMIN WITHDRAWN

The pacer called back from WC on disciplinary grounds

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41 killed in launch capsizes

Hit by a cargo vessel, the launch sinks in Padma near Paturia terminal; 65 missing

PANKAJ KARMAKAR and ZAHANGIR SHAH
from Manihganj

At least 41 people, including seven children, drowned and around 65 went missing, as a launch sank after being hit by a cargo vessel in the Padma river in Manihganj yesterday.

The disaster took place hardly six months after a double-decker launch, Pinak-6, sank with more than 200 passengers in the same river near Mawa ghat in Munshiganj, leaving more than a hundred people dead.

The ill-fated launch, MV Mostafa, went down in mid-river on impact of the collision with cargo vessel Nargis-1, barely 10 minutes after it left Paturia terminal for Daulatdia ferry ghat in Rajbari at 11:40am.

Though the launch had a capacity of 140 passengers, it was carrying more than 200, claimed a number of survivors.

Around 80 to 90 passengers were either rescued or they swam about half a kilometre to reach the shore, said witnesses and locals.

Rescuers recovered 41 bodies till 2:00am, Rasheda Ferdous, deputy commissioner of Manihganj, told The Daily Star.

Of the dead, 26 were identified so far, said Rakibuzzaman, officer-in-charge of Shibhalaya Police Station.

The victims include 15 women, said rescuers.

"I was travelling on the upper deck. About 10 minutes after the launch had left the terminal, I saw a cargo vessel hit it on the left side. The launch started tilting to one side," said Golam Mostafa, one of the survivors.

"Immediately, I jumped from the launch and swam to the cargo vessel that hit it," he said.

Another survivor, Jinat Munshi, said he along with many others jumped into the river from the launch's roof soon after the collision.

"Several fishing trawlers and boats came to our rescue. The river police then took me and around 30 others to the shore," Munshi said.

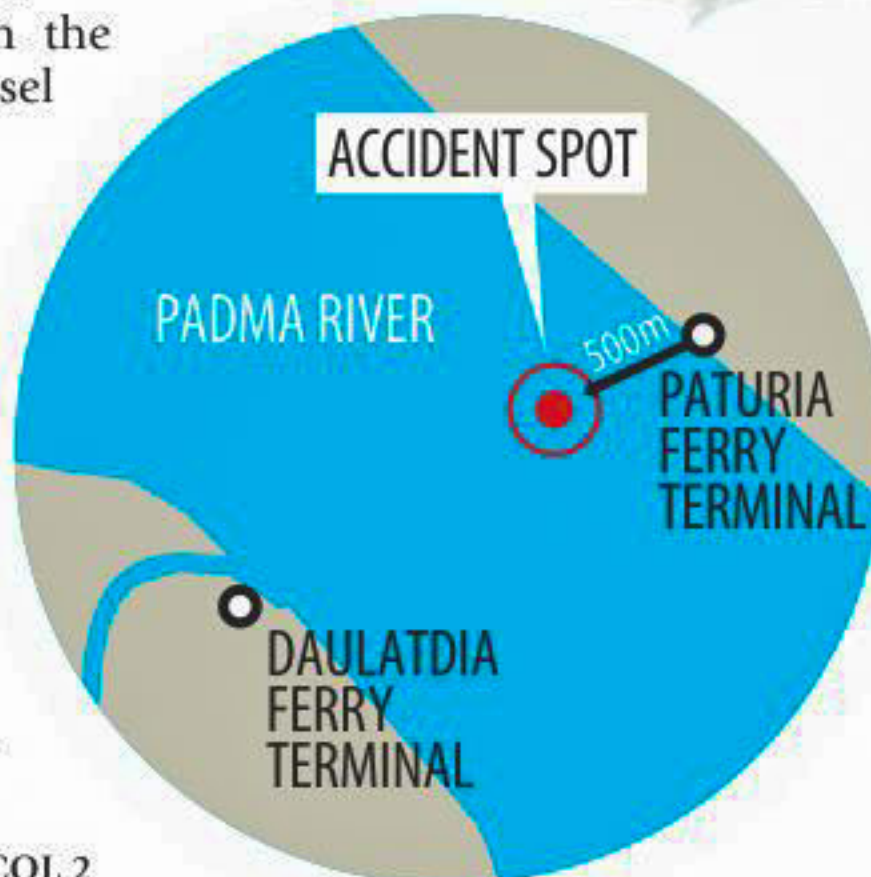
Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority, Bangladesh

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A man breaks down and cries, seeing the body of a family member killed in yesterday's launch disaster. The launch sank after being rammed by a cargo vessel on the Padma between Paturia and Daulatdia launch terminals.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN



Khaleda looking to illegal ways to grab state power: PM

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday said BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia was expecting unconstitutional forces to help her grab state power.

"She is looking to Uttar Para for someone to come from there and take her to power," she said during a discussion at the Krishibid Institution, Bangladesh.

The ruling Awami League organised the programme marking the International Mother Language Day with Hasina in the chair.

Warning about the consequences of unconstitutional means to oust the government, she said, "Ziaur Rahman and Ershad learnt that. And

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'CAUGHT WITH PETROL BOMBS' Three youths beaten to death Sramik Dal leader killed in 'shootout'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A mob beat three alleged arsonists dead at Kazipara of Mirpur early today, police said.

The victims, all aged around 20, could not be identified immediately, Masud, a nayek at Dhaka Medical College Hospital police camp, told The Daily Star.

Moinul Islam, officer-in-charge (investigation) of Mirpur Police Station, told this correspondent that locals caught the three when they were about to hurl petrol bombs at vehicles around 11:00pm last night. A mob then beat them up, leaving them critically injured, he said.

On information, Mirpur police went to Kazipara and

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Militants' training centre busted

Rab raids livestock farm in remote hilly area in Ctg, seizes huge arms, ammunition, arrests 5 suspects

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Rab has busted a militant training camp camouflaged as a poultry and livestock farm in Banskhali of Chittagong and arrested five people and seized some firearms and training equipment.

Their recoveries include three AK-22 assault rifles, six pistols, a revolver, three locally made guns, 751 bullets of different types and three machetes. There were also some equipment for martial art training, Rab-7 said.

After gleaning information from 12 militant suspects arrested at a madrasa in Hathazari of Chittagong on February 19, Rab launched the drive in the Lotmoni hilly area of Sadhanpur union around 5:00pm Saturday, the Rapid Action Battalion claimed.

PHOTO ON PAGE 16

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"The top two political parties will be thrown into the dustbin of history... their place will be in museum if they fail to resolve the ongoing political crisis."

JATIYA PARTY CHAIRMAN
HM ERSHAD
AT A DISCUSSION IN THE CITY



India's opening batsman Shikhar Dhawan spreads his arms wide open to celebrate his century against South Africa during their ICC World Cup clash at the Melbourne Cricket Ground yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

India humble Proteas

Lanka scrape past Afghanistan

REUTERS, Melbourne

India announced themselves as genuine contenders to defend their World Cup title by humbling South Africa's vaunted pace attack before bowling out their rivals for an emphatic 130-run victory at the Melbourne Cricket Ground on Sunday.

In front of a heaving crowd of 86,000, the opener Shikhar Dhawan struck a sparkling 137 and Ajinkya

ning out two batsmen as South Africa were skittled for 177, with 10 overs to spare -- losing their last seven wickets for 44 runs. It was India's first win against South Africa at the

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Rahane an explosive 79 to fire India to a mammoth 307 for seven and ensure their opponents would need a record chase at the stadium to win.

India were then outstanding in the field, sharing the wickets and running

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