

## Packed into trawler unconscious

Remembers one of 37 trafficking victims returned by Myanmar; another says brokers realised with death threats Tk 50,000 from father; police being alerted of possible suspects; cases to be filed

MOHAMMAD ALI ZINNAT, Cox's Bazar

One of the 37 trafficking victims Myanmar handed over to Border Guard Bangladesh on Friday said human traffickers rubbed a balm type substance in his nasal passage before he became unconscious only to later discover himself on a trawler floating in the Bay of Bengal.

Hawking cloths for a living in Dhaka, Sujan Mian, 26, was offered by one Abdul Khaleque of his Kishoreganj village a few months back a low cost trip to Malaysia where he was assured there would be jobs paying as much as Tk 1 lakh per month.

Khaleque took him from his Kishoreganj village to Narsingdi where he boarded a microbus with some 10 others

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## Spare none to uproot human trafficking

### ALERT roundtable urges govt

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Legal experts and civil society members at a roundtable yesterday demanded an all-out drive to arrest and punish human traffickers, irrespective of the strings they pull, to uproot the slave trade menace.

Bangladesh has to first take action against those based locally and establish bilateral and regional collaboration, including intelligence sharing, to root out the international trafficking networks, they said.

"It is surprising how lakhs of people have been trafficked for long through the Bay of Bengal despite active presence of law enforcers -- border guards, coast guards and navy," said Jahangir Alam Khan,

chair of ALERT.

The Association for Law Research & Human Rights (ALERT) organised the roundtable on "ways to prevent human trafficking in the light of the spirit of Liberation War" in the capital's Jatiya Press Club.

Following the discovery of mass graves in Thailand, some 5,000 victims, Rohingyas facing persecution in Myanmar and Bangladesh seeking jobs, have been rescued in Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand and Myanmar since late April.

"We know that many influential people, including a parliament member and a Teknaf panel mayor, are on the government list of suspected human traffickers, but they are out of the government's reach,"

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A large pile of empty containers at a water supply point of the Water Supply and Sewerage Authority testifies how much worse the water crisis has got in Chittagong city over the past several weeks. Wasa blamed groundwater depletion, but said the problem would be solved once a water treatment under construction at Rangunia upazila started operation. The photo was taken in Ashkar Dighi area recently.

PHOTO: ANURUP KANTI DAS

## Ramadan starts in port city amid water crisis

### Repeated complaints over several weeks failed to move Wasa, allege residents

PRANABESH CHAKRABORTY, Ctg

An acute water crisis has been prevailing in Chittagong city for several weeks due to a fall in production by the Water Supply and Sewerage Authority (Wasa).

Sufferings of the city dwellers have persisted with the beginning of the month of Ramadan.

Some locals alleged Chittagong Wasa is sending them bills but it is not supplying water.

Despite repeated complaints from the residents about the matter, Wasa is not paying heed to them, they further alleged.

The situation is worse in Sholakbazar Residential Area, Alkaran, Halishahar, Hemsan Lane, Pathantuli, Dhaniyalapara, Motijharna, Panchlaish, Nasirabad, Battery Goli, Patenga and Chawk Bazar.

"We are suffering a lot in the month of Ramadan. Now I am buying a jar of water at Tk 60 to Tk 100 every day," Md Zulfiqar of Sholakbazar told The Daily Star.

For washing clothes, their domestic help has to go to their relative's house, he added.

Tareque Soleman Selim, a ward council-

lor living in Alkaran, said he did not get even a drop of water in the last two months but he received bills from Wasa.

Madina Begum, a garment worker of Battery Goli, said she did not get water from a pump of Wasa in the area although she had to wait in a long queue for a long time on Friday night.

Some Wasa officials said the production had fallen due to fast depletion of groundwater.

Wasa now produces 21 crore litres of water per day against the demand of 50 crore litres, they said.

Currently, a total of 9 crore litres of water from the river Halda is being supplied to the city dwellers via Mohara water treatment plant while the remaining 12 crore is being extracted from underground through pumps, the Wasa sources said.

AKM Fazlullah, managing director of Wasa, said the water crisis of the city would be reduced by the next year after completion of the construction of a water treatment plant with a capacity of producing 14 crore litres per day at Pomra in Rangunia upazila under Karnaphuli Water Supply Project.

## Woman's "rape videotaped" in capital

Five held

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A woman yesterday filed a complaint with police alleging that she was raped by a man while his cohorts recorded the incident with a video camera in the capital's Shewrapara.

Police detained five people including the alleged rapist after the woman filed the case with Mirpur Police Station, said Sub-inspector Kamal Hossain.

No video footage was recovered, he said.

The SI said they were assessing claims of both the accused and the complainant.

A forensic test on her would be conducted today

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## BGB man's abduction 'shame' for country

Says BNP, demanding govt get him back from Myanmar soon

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP yesterday described the abduction of Border Guard Bangladesh's Nayek Abdur Razzak by Myanmar's border force as a "shame" for Bangladesh and demanded that the government sternly warn the neighbouring state to stop the recurrence of such incidents.

"The publication of the photograph of a BGB member handcuffed and clad in lungi in a national daily of Myanmar has brought our heads down," BNP spokesperson Asaduzzaman Ripon told a press briefing at the party's Nayapaltan central office.

Ripon demanded that

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