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TRAFFICKING VICTIMS 39 more back home from Thailand

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Thirty-nine Bangladeshi trafficking victims, who had been rescued by the Thai authorities from the Andaman Sea two months ago, returned home from Bangkok yesterday.

A flight of Biman Bangladesh Airlines carrying the Bangladeshis landed at Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport at 8:30pm, BM Jamal Hossain, director (Welfare & MRP) at the foreign ministry, told The Daily Star.

Of the returnees, 16 hail from Sirajganj, five from Cox's Bazar, four from Chittagong, three each from Narsingdi and Madaripur, two each from Faridpur, Chuadanga and Rangamati, and one each from Pabna and Magura districts, said a press release of Bangladesh embassy in Bangkok.

They were sent back after getting confirmation of their nationality through police verification. The Bangladeshis were kept at Thai detention centres after being rescued from the sea, Jamal said.

Officials of the foreign ministry and the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) received them at the airport.

The embassy has paid their repatriation cost, including airfare. It has so far repatriated a total of 1,003 Bangladeshis, who had been trafficked into Thailand since the end of 2013, said Saida Muna Tasneem, Bangladesh ambassador in Thailand.

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A woman walks on the road near the Buriganga Bridge in Postagola in the capital as auto rickshaws are parked on the pavement. Locals claim that influential persons in connivance with thugs have occupied the pavement and are using it for parking vehicles. The photo was taken recently.

PHOTO:
ANISUR RAHMAN

38 killed in Darjeeling landslides

OUR CORRESPONDENT,
New Delhi

At least 38 people were killed as heavy rain triggered a series of landslides in the Himalayan mountains of Darjeeling since Tuesday night, officials said.

As many as 21 deaths occurred in Mirik alone where another 13 people were also reported missing, sources in West Bengal's Disaster Management Department said.

The remaining 17 people died in Kalimpong, Lava, Sukhia block and Gorubathan, the sources said.

The landslides in 25 places spread in Darjeeling, Kalimpong and Kurseong sub-divisions also caused extensive damage to national highways, snapping road link to the region.

Security personnel were carrying out rescue operations and the army's help has been sought.

Twenty persons were also injured in the calamity and

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Robiul at DMCH yesterday after a homemade bomb exploded in his hand.

PHOTO: STAR

ABANDONED BOMB Boy injured in blast

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A boy was injured when a crude bomb he had picked up exploded in the capital's Madhya Badda area around 1:00pm yesterday.

Robiul Islam, 10, a madrasa student, received splinter injuries in the explosion and was admitted to Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH), Inspector Mojammel Haque, in-charge of DMCH police camp, told The Daily Star.

Robiul sustained injuries in his right hand and right eye.

He found the bomb, which looked like a taped tennis ball, in Post Office alley near his home in Madhya Badda. He started playing with it, Mojammel said,

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BRIBE FUND OF BARISAL COPS

Go-between gets suspended

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The home ministry yesterday suspended Zillur Rahman, deputy commissioner of Barisal Metropolitan Police (BMP), after he was found involved in the creation of a joint bribe fund to quicken the promotion of 230 Barisal cops.

The ministry issued the order as a primary police investigation revealed that Zillur encouraged and allured low-rank policemen to collect money to bribe "higher officials" for promotion.

Upon the internal inquiry, the Inspector General of Police recommended the suspension, said a police headquarters release yesterday.

"The action was taken against Zillur for breaching discipline, corruption, misconduct and damaging the image of the police department," it added.

Zillur was attached to the office of the Deputy Inspector General of Sylhet Range, reads the home ministry order, signed by Senior Home Secretary Mozammel Haque Khan.

The DC's suspension came days after 10 lower-level BMP cops were suspended over the allegation.

Each of the 230 Barisal police members contributed between Tk 30,000 and 50,000 and created a joint fund of around Tk 77 lakh. The money was to be given to "top officials" to speed up their promotion, due since last October.

Of the money, Tk 17 lakh was deposited to a joint account of ASI Anisuzzaman, Nayek Kabir Hossain and driver Bablu at a Dutch-Bangla Bank branch in Barisal.

They handed the rest of the money over to Zillur to "manage"



Zillur Rahman

SEE PAGE 10 COL 4

HALL-MARK SCAM

Court to hear charges on July 22

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday fixed July 22 for charge-framing hearing against 25 people, including Hall-Mark Group Chairman Jasmine Islam and its Managing Director Tanvir Mahmud, in 11 cases filed for misappropriating over Tk 2,600 crore from Sonali Bank.

Judge Kamrul Hossain Mollah of the Senior Special Judge's Court of Dhaka set the date after getting a report on the death of Atiqur Rahman, an accused in the cases.

On August 25 last year, Rahman, a former Sonali Bank official, died in the prison cell following a heart attack.

Bangladesh Bank in May 2012 unearthed a loan scam of over Tk 3,600 crore in Sonali Bank's Ruposhi Bangla Hotel branch. Of the sum, little known Hall-Mark Group alone took Tk 2,686 crore, using forged

SEE PAGE 10 COL 6



Red Zepplin

The secret airship of Russian military

MAIL ONLINE

Vladimir Putin is set to kit out the Russian military with a top-secret spaceship-like aircraft that promises to be 'lighter than air'.

Work is already underway on the hi-tech 130-metre-long Atlant, which will be created merging the technology from planes, hovercraft and airships.

Capable of taking off and landing without a runway it will be able to carry 200 military personnel or as much as 60 tonnes of cargo at speeds of up to 86mph.

There will also be a smaller, swifter version that can carry up to 16 tonnes at 105mph.

SEE PAGE 10 COL 3

Faulty vessels given facelift for Eid trips

PANKAJ KARMAKAR

With the Eid approaching, there's a growing fear that unscrupulous launch owners will operate unfit vessels to cash in on the huge rush of passengers, putting numerous lives at risk.

Like every other year, many rundown vessels were going through extensive repairs, apparently botched, at different dockyards in Keraniganj on the outskirts of the capital, this correspondent found during a recent visit there.

As per law, ship surveyors of the Department of Shipping (DoS) issue registration and annual fitness certificates after surveying vessels. No unregistered vessel can get route permit from Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority (BIWTA).

Traffic inspectors of the BIWTA are responsible for checking the route permit when a vessel anchors at a port.

Dhaka is home to

SEE PAGE 10 COL 2



Launches are being hurriedly repaired and some are getting fresh coats of paint ahead of the Eid rush. The photos were taken in Keraniganj just across the river from the Sadarghat Terminal recently.

PHOTO:
RASHED SHUMON

Teenager stabbed to death in city

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A teenager was stabbed to death at Jatrabari in the capital following a clash between two groups last night.

The dead is Akbar Hossain, 18, son of Hanif Shikder of Jatrabari's Sutikhalpar area.

Witnesses said the incident took place around 9:30pm when some 20 to 25 boys from nearby Dolphin Alley came to Sutikhalpar area and started to beat a group of boys there.

At one point, a youth stabbed Akbar in his abdomen with a knife, said Anik, who was also injured in the incident.

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SEHRI, IFTAR TIMINGS				
Ramadan	July	Sehri	Iftar	
14	2		6-54	
15	3	3-42	6-54	
16	4	3-43	6-54	

PRAYER TIMING
JULY 2

Fazr Zohr Asr Maghrib Esha

AZAN 3-42 12-45 5-00 6-54 8-17

JAMAAT 3-52 1-15 5-15 6-64 8-45

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION