



Five people, including a couple, were killed in a collision between a bus and a human haulier on Dhaka-Mawa highway at Nimtali of Sirajdikhan in Munshiganj yesterday. At least 15 others were injured in the accident.

Inhuman

FROM PAGE 1

another incident, also early this month, two minor girls of a government orphanage in Barisal were subjected to corporal punishment because they wanted to go home. The victims in Satkhira are Nasim Tarafder, 9, son of Abdul Hamid Tarafder of Joynagar village, and Yasin Tarafder, 8, son of Ismail Tarafder of the neighbouring house.

Golam Mostafa of the same village is a supplier of labourers.

Locals said the Kashimari Union Council recently constructed a road that connected Mostafa's home. To protect the portion of the road that led to his house from damage, Mostafa erected a fence so that people cannot walk through that portion for the time being.

Around 6:30am on July 16, Nasim, a class four student, and Yasin, a class three student, injured themselves as they tumbled onto the fence made of date palm leaves that have thick, sharp thorns. They then removed the fence, said the victims and witnesses.

Mostafa, aged about 50, instantly caught them, tied their hands with ropes and took them inside his homestead. There, he tied them with ropes and iron shackles and kept them standing from 7:00am to 12:30pm.

"When we felt like some water and wanted it, he [Mostafa] pushed dead snails into their mouths," Nasim told this correspondent yesterday.

"He slapped us whenever we wanted to drink water or requested him to set us free," he added.

Nasim's father Abdul Hamid said they came to know about the incident around 10:30am. Hamid's elderly mother then went to Mostafa's house and pleaded with him to free the boys.

"My mother even accepted that the boys made a mistake. She also told him [Mostafa] that they didn't eat anything since morning. She even promised to fix the fence," said Hamid.

But Mostafa did not pay any heed to her request. Instead, his wife drove her away, beating, added Hamid, who filed a case in this regard yesterday.

Later, Mostafa's son Golam Hossain released the boys following an earnest request of Nasim's mother around 12:30pm, he said.

Before his arrest around 12:30pm yesterday, Mostafa told this correspondent, "These boys removed the fence taking it for a fun. That's why I tied them up. But I didn't beat them."

A correspondent of local newspaper Patradoot said he took photos of the torture on July 16.

The paper published one of those photos yesterday after the Eid vacation.

Enamul Haque, officer-in-charge of Shyamnagar Police Station, said they acted immediately to arrest Mostafa after they came to know of the torture.

Moore drew Archie Andrews and his friends on and off from 1953 until he retired in the late 1980s. Annual sales of the comic regularly surpassed half a million during the 1960s, according to the El Paso Times.

"I did one comic book a month," Moore told the newspaper in 1996. "I did everything. We always worked six months ahead. I'd be doing Christmas issues in June and beach stories with a foot of snow outside my window."

After the war, Moore used funding available through the GI Bill to attend a school in New York for cartoonists. He studied under "Tarzan" comic strip illustrator Burne Hogarth.

Soon after, Moore signed up with Archie Comics in New York. Bob Montana created "Archie" in 1941, and Moore took over in 1953.

Archie Comics' editor in chief, Victor Gorelick, who has worked at the company for more than 50 years, said Moore "was a cartoonist's cartoonist."

He noted that Archie Comics invited Moore back to help revamp Archie's friend, Jughead, and remained with the company until he retired.

"Tom was very funny and had a knack for putting together really great, hilarious gags and special pages when he worked at Archie," Gorelick said. "He was probably best known here for inking our 'Jughead' relaunch decades ago. We're all sad to hear this news and wish his family the very best during

the lifetime of the Prophet Mohammad (PBUH) or shortly afterwards," said David Thomas, professor of Christianity and Islam.

Describing it as a "startling result", he added that the text is "very similar indeed to the Quran as it is available today".

"This tends to support the view that the Quran that we now have... very close indeed to the Quran as it was brought together in the early years of Islam," he said.

The leaves, held in the university's Mingana Collection, contain parts of chapters 18 to 20, written in ink in an early form of Arabic script known as Hijazi.

"This is indeed an exciting discovery," said Muhammad Isa Waley, lead curator for Persian and Turkish manuscripts at the British Library in London.

"We know now that these two folios, in a beautiful and surprisingly legible Hijazi hand, almost certainly date from the time of the first three Caliphs."

"According to the classic accounts, it was under the third Caliph, Uthman ibn Affan, that the Quranic text was

Not enough

FROM PAGE 16

"I've heard that these people were tortured and starved to their deaths," he told this correspondent during the latter's visit to the spot on July 13.

"This is cruelty. Those who tortured and killed these people must be punished," Shafiq said, looking at the gravesite.

Over the recent years, the sea routes -- from the coasts of Bangladesh and Myanmar to Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia and even Australia -- have been used by traffickers to smuggle people to the countries.

According to the UN Refugee Agency, some 84,000 people took the sea journey from the coasts of Bangladesh and Myanmar between January 2014 and March 2015. Of them, 300 died at sea.

Since May 1 when the cruelty of the modern-day slave trade came to light with the discovery of a mass grave in Thailand's Songkhla province, Thai authorities exhumed 36 bodies from graves in the Southern region while 139 mass graves were found in Malaysia.

Exactly how many bodies were exhumed from those is not known. This correspondent counted 106 graves at Kampong Tualang.

But the locals believe the number of victims would be a lot higher.

Several NGOs -- including Ain o Salish Kendra (ASK), Ovibashi Karmi Unnayan Programme (OKUP), Brac and Kuala Lumpur-based CARAM Asia Bhd -- received calls from nearly 600 Bangladeshi families reporting about their near ones who went missing after taking the voyage.

However, the governments in the region are accused of not doing enough to end this trade.

Though most of the human trafficking kingpins of the region were based in Malaysia and Thailand, Malaysia is not working vigorously to punish the culprits, said journal-

ist S Aruldas, who covers the northern region -- Penang, Kedah and Perlis states -- for the Malay Mail.

Nine people have so been arrested in Malaysia in connection with human trafficking.

Thai police have arrested 56 suspects -- including politicians, police and government officials, businessmen and an army general.

On June 22, they concluded "the biggest human trafficking investigation in the history" of Thailand. The country sits at the lowest tier of the US State Department's Trafficking in Persons Report.

The Human Rights Watch, however, is skeptical of the investigation's effect.

"It is highly likely that if this investigation turns out to just be window dressing to defuse international pressure, then it will have no impact," Sunai Phasuk, Thailand researcher at the HRW, told Reuters.

Dato' M Ramachelvam, chairperson of Migrants, Refugees and Immigration Affairs Committee of Bar Council Malaysia, said they asked the Human Rights Commission of Malaysia (Suhakam) on June 17 for convening a Royal Commission of Inquiry into the issue. But the Malaysian home ministry rejected it.

Regional Coordinator Mohammad Harun Al Rashid of CARAM Asia, a regional network of NGOs working on migration, thinks Bangladesh is not doing enough to put an end to this.

"Evidence can be collected from the trafficking survivors. But Bangladesh government is not recording statements from the repatriated survivors," he told The Daily Star.

Six suspected human traffickers were killed in so-called crossfire in Bangladesh, and such acts would make it hard to collect evidence, ASK Director Nur Khan Liton commented.

'Archie' creator

FROM PAGE 16

this time."

After retiring, Moore kept tabs on Archie - and disagreed when the comic book company decided to kill off the character.

The El Paso Museum of Art dis-

played some of Moore's work and his vast comic collection about 20 years ago. "I have enjoyed what I've done and I am pleased that others liked it too," Moore said at the time.

"I think it's such a kick that my stuff is going to be hanging at the museum. Who knew Archie would have such universal appeal?" Along with his son, Moore and his wife of 63 years, Ruth, also raised a daughter, Holly Mathew. Bujanda-Moore said there will be a celebration of his father's life in coming weeks.

155 more

FROM PAGE 16

"We will record their statements to know how they took the sea route illegally. They will be asked to give details of the traffickers," the police official said.

He hoped that the victims would return to their homes today.

Around 2,000 Bangladeshis have been rescued in Malaysia, Indonesia, Thailand and Myanmar in the last two months after the issue of human trafficking through the Bay of Bengal got international media's attention.

Of them, more than 700 Bangladeshis returned home from those countries since June. Several thousand Bangladeshis, who had allegedly left home for jobs in Malaysia, still remain missing.

One of oldest 'Quran

FROM PAGE 16

the lifetime of the Prophet Mohammad (PBUH) or shortly afterwards," said David Thomas, professor of Christianity and Islam.

They were spotted by an Italian academic, Alba Fedeli, while conducting research for her PhD.

Fedeli said the leaves are from the same codex as a manuscript kept in the Bibliothèque Nationale de France in Paris, although that is currently dated a little later, to within 50 years of the death of the Prophet Mohammad.

Radiocarbon analysis of the Birmingham documents dates them to between 568 AD and 645 AD, with 95.4 percent accuracy.

Muhammad (PBUH) is widely believed to have lived between around 570 AD and 632 AD.

Muhammad Afzal, chairman of Birmingham Central Mosque, said he was "honoured" to read the text, adding: "All the Muslims of the world would love to see this manuscript."

The Quran manuscript will be placed on public display at the university between October 2 and October 25.