

# 31 survivors return

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The diplomat said they would try to arrange jobs for the victims there.  
The 43 Bangladeshis were among some 500 migrants from Asia, Africa and Middle East who were on board two vessels that capsized in the Mediterranean on Aug 24. They were heading towards Italy from Zuwara, a port city in northwestern Libya.  
At least 200 people died in the incidents, while many were rescued.  
Officials in Libya said the total number of Bangladeshis in the boats was 78. Of them, 24 had died.  
Later, 43 of the 54 survivors were taken to a detention centre in Tripoli while the rest -- belonging to four families having women and children -- were freed.  
Ashraf Islam said the authorities concerned were yet to allow them to see the bodies of the Bangladeshi victims.  
"We have given the Red Crescent photos of all the Bangladeshis killed in the incidents and sought information on them," he said.  
**15 BANGLADESHIS FLEE SHELTER IN INDONESIA**  
Meanwhile, 15 Bangladeshis, who were rescued in May from the sea, had recently escaped from a temporary

shelter in Lhokseumawe, Aceh province of Indonesia, reported The Jakarta Post.  
The incident happened when the immigration office was processing documents for their deportation.  
Quoting locals, the newspaper reported that the immigrants took a minivan from the shelter guarded by military, police and immigration office personnel and headed towards Medan.  
They are suspected of climbing the fence to avoid the guards, a local resident said.  
Zaini Usman, an officer on duty at the immigration office, said over the past few days, the immigrants had been requesting that they be returned to their home, saying they were bored and wanted to meet their relatives immediately.  
The 15 were among some 600 Bangladeshis who along with some 1,000 Rohingyas were rescued from the sea in May when Thailand began a crackdown following the discovery of mass graves in its southern region.  
They were given shelter in four different immigration centres in Indonesia and were gradually being repatriated on completion of their identification process.



Nur-un-Nesa, wife of Muhammad Ilias, wiping her tears at her home in Kuaish area of Chittagong's Hathazari. Ilias along with two other Bangladeshis, Farhad Hossain and Akter Hossain, were killed in a car crash in the UAE on Wednesday. PHOTO: ANURUP KANTI DAS

# From dreams

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reputation within a short span of time.  
She introduced the trend of milking cows in front of customers and handing it over to them right on the spot -- an example that has been followed by other local traders.  
Every day her cows produce about 50 litres of milk which is sold for Tk 70 per litre.  
Customers are very impressed with the service and they say such fresh milk is hard to come by in Dhaka city.  
"I take the milk for the children. Such fresh milk is hard to get. They are milking cows right in front of your eyes," said Humayun Kabir, a resident of Katasur.  
These customers come from the neighbouring areas to get farm-fresh milk. Shamsunnahar says she hardly has any left to serve more people at the end of the day.  
"I am happy now. I can run my family, bear majority of the expenses and educate my children properly," she told The Daily Star, smiling shyly.  
Now, more traders are getting involved in the business.  
Imran Hossain, owner of the biggest dairy firm in the area -- Sadeeq Agro, also follows Shamsunnahar's ways and sells about 1,800 litres of milk every day.  
A business graduate from International University of Bangladesh, Imran said it was his hobby at first but now the money is coming along "very nicely".

# For the love of vultures

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sentinels of the forest. The only sound came from our footsteps sloshing through the water of the recent downpour. Leeches devoured our blood.  
In front of me were four men carrying a dead cow tied upside down to bamboo poles, its head dangling side to side. The whole scene resembled that of a mystical, sacrificial ceremony to a powerful being. We turned a corner and came into a small opening inside the forest. There stood a platform, four feet tall with a bamboo top. And on that platform lay splinters of bone and skull of another dead cow.  
The feeling of being watched was all too real. Looking up, I saw massive figures with long necks peering down from top of garjan trees.  
The creatures were white-rumped vultures and the dead cow is part of a last ditch effort to save these magnificent animals from becoming extinct from Bangladesh and the rest of the world. All vulture species of the world are in trouble and rapidly disappearing.  
There are now less than 500 white-rumped vultures left in Bangladesh. The

White-rumped Vulture Conservation Project run by the International Union for Conservation of Nature, Bangladesh along with the Forest Department is trying desperately to save the last remaining vultures.  
The primary reason the vultures are disappearing is the use of anti-inflammatory drugs diclofenac and ketoprofen in cattle. Vultures are scavengers and when a vulture feeds on a cattle treated with diclofenac it dies of renal failure. The harmful drug diclofenac has already been banned by the government and a National Vulture Committee has been formed showing the government's commitment towards conservation of this species.  
The project also works with local communities and has established Vulture Safe Zones in Khulna and Sylhet where no harmful drugs are allowed ensuring safe food and protection of vulture habitat.  
The bamboo platform is a Vulture Feeding Station in the heart of the Vulture Safe Zone at Rema-Kalenga Wildlife Sanctuary. The primary objective of the station is to provide a help-

ing hand to the vultures and the hatchlings by providing them with food without any harmful drugs during the breeding season. The station is run by the community-based Vulture Conservation Team (VCT). Whenever a cow dies naturally in the Vulture Safe Zone, the VCT acquires the cow, which is then tested for harmful drugs and only after ensuring that the cow is safe, it is provided to the vultures.  
As we carefully hoisted the cow on to the feeding station, the forest was finally coming to life in a frenzy of activities; the giant Malayan squirrels searching for food and pig-tailed macaques leaping from one tree to another. The babblers and drongos started their rackets and the orioles and magpie-robins sang their songs. The vultures took off and soared high above the forest, leaving those dedicated for their survival with a warm feeling inside and a stronger pledge to save the last of our remaining vultures.  
International Vulture Awareness Day is on September 5.  
Sakib Ahmed is working in IUCN Bangladesh as Wildlife Researcher.

# Mockbul's acquittal scrapped

STAFF CORRESPONDENT  
August 16, 2007.  
Following an appeal filed by Mockbul, the HC on January 4, 2011, acquitted the AL leader and his wife from the corruption charges.  
Yesterday, the Appellate Division bench headed by Justice Nazmun Ara Sultana also asked the HC to rehear the appeal of Mockbul.  
The ACC lawyer, during yesterday's hearing, told the court that the HC verdict was not right as it had not properly examined the corruption allegation against Mockbul and his wife.  
The HC would now examine whether the lower court verdict that convicted and sentenced the accused were correct or not after rehearing his appeal, said ACC lawyer Syed Mamun Mahbub.

The Supreme Court yesterday scrapped a High Court verdict that acquitted former Awami League lawmaker Mockbul Hossain and his wife in a corruption case.  
A special judge's court in May 2008 sentenced Mockbul to 13 years' imprisonment for illegally amassing wealth worth Tk 5.33 crore and concealing information in the wealth statement submitted to the Anti-Corruption Commission.  
The special judge's court also fined Mockbul Tk 10 lakh and sentenced his wife Fatema Tahera Khanam to three years' in jail for abetting her husband's crime.  
The ACC filed the corruption case with Mohammadpur Police Station against Mockbul and his wife on

# Uphold press freedom

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Uphold press freedom, save bloggers shown a tremendous progress in terms of working conditions and it has increased minimum wage for the workers. "We should do something to increase prices," he said.  
Abdul Mannan, referring to the presence of 24 private television channels in the country, said the media is enjoying freedom in the country.  
Dorothee Ullrichs highlighted the

presence of DW globally and said they would be happy to go for partnership and co-production and encouraged independent journalists to contribute to the TV channel.  
Earlier, the DW, Germany's international broadcaster, announced its new presence in the country with a modern and interactive channel with 24 hours of programming in English with a focus on news and regional content for Asia.

# Social media

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also thought to be cutting the number of journeys.  
While people in 1995 made an average of 192 visits a year to catch up with friends, by last year that had fallen to only 136.  
The fall was almost entirely due to people stopping visiting their friends at home.  
Richard Cope, senior trends consultant at UK researchers Mintel, said the rapid rise of Facebook meant people had widened their social circles over that time, but met less face-to-face.  
He said: "If it's just a social call, people are going to do that digitally rather than face-to-face."  
"We have all got more social connections and friends than we did 20 years ago and we don't always see each other."  
"We don't even talk on the phone anymore, it's all about sharing images and so on."  
As people work longer hours and commute further, they also have less time to go round to friends, he said.



Participants of a roundtable on "Global Port, Global City: Prioritising Chittagong for Accelerating National Growth" held at The Daily Star Centre yesterday. The programme was jointly organised by daily Banik Barta, think-tank PPRC and research organisation Centre for Research and Information. PHOTO: STAR

# Single war tribunal

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The Awami League-led government formed the first war tribunal in March 2010 to keep the party's electoral pledge to try people who committed crimes against humanity during the Liberation War in 1971. The second tribunal was set up two years later to expedite the trial proceedings of war crimes suspects.  
Meanwhile, the ICT-2 transferred two cases to the ICT-1 yesterday for "expeditious disposal."  
The three-member tribunal led by Justice Obaidul Hassan passed the order on its own motion as per the International Crimes (Tribunals) Act-1973.

One case was filed against eight alleged Al-Badr men of Jamalpur while another against three alleged Razakars from Habiganj. Having been taken into cognizance, both the cases were awaiting the hearing on the charges.  
Of the alleged Al-Badr men Shamsul Haque, 75, and AKM Yusuf Ali, 83, are now behind bars while Ashraf Hossain, 64, Prof Sharif Ahammed, 71, Abdul Mannan, 66, Abdul Bari, 62, Harun, 58, and Abul Hashem, 65, on the run.  
All the three alleged Razakars from Habiganj -- Mubibur Rahman Boromian, 65, Mujibur Rahman Angur Mian, 60, and Abdur Razzak -- are languishing in jail.

# 2 top traffickers

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ransoms from their families before pushing them into Malaysia.  
Since May 1, Thailand had exhumed 36 bodies while Malaysia exhumed 130 bodies from jungle camps in their territories. The bodies were thought to be either of Bangladeshis and/or persecuted Rohingyas of Myanmar.  
The UNHCR says between January 2014 and June 2015, approximately 94,000 refugees and migrants departed from Bangladesh and/or Myanmar. Of those, 31,000 left in first six months of this year.  
Of them, the UN Refugee Agency estimates that over 1,100 people (Bangladeshis and/or Rohingyas) died in the sea between January 2014 and June 2015.  
Additionally, there were reports of drowning while disembarking, and many remained missing, the UNHCR said in a quarterly report of April to June.  
Following the regional migrant crisis, three suspected human traffickers were killed in "shootouts" with police in Cox's Bazar, while several others were arrested.

# Growth hinges on Ctg

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The country's second largest city Chittagong accounts for about a quarter of the gross domestic product, 25 percent of the national revenue and 40 percent of heavy industrial activities. The Chittagong port handles more than 80 percent of the total external trade, said Zillur.  
The city, however, has not lived up to its expectations, he noted.  
"Chittagong is also suffering from decline of branding as many business and administrative headquarters have been transferred from the city to the capital."  
The deep seaport is a distant reality, he said. "So, the existing Chittagong port has to bear the major burden of higher growth in the medium term. It has ample opportunities for expansion and improvement to the global standards."  
The port, said the former caretaker government adviser, has seen some technical improvements in recent years, but they are disjointed. "There are also severe governance setbacks in the form of compromised operational autonomy and increased corruption allegations."

The infrastructure of the port and the city are poorly aligned, and the port's contribution to the city's infrastructural development has been marginal, he mentioned. "If the port needs to be of the global standard, the city also has to be of the global standard."  
Mustafa Kamal said the government is seeing Chittagong as a hub and Bangladesh will reach its goal of becoming a middle-income country taking the port city along.  
The government has taken up the country's largest ever single project at Matarbari, said the minister while talking about the energy hub plan involving Tk 35,000 crore.  
As many as 139 projects will be implemented in Chittagong at a cost of Tk 158,000 crore in the next three years, he noted. "It's true that development of the city is taking time and we are sorry for that."  
Former governor of Bangladesh Bank Salehuddin Ahmed blamed centralisation of development and decision-making for increasingly turning Dhaka into Bangladesh, leaving other parts of the country underde-

veloped.  
"The whole country can be divided into several parts to drive development process. Chittagong will be preminent in that process," he said.  
Salehuddin Kasem Khan, managing director of AK Khan & Company, said there is a serious lack of coordination among the agencies running the city. He stressed the need for introduction of city governance.  
MM Nasiruddin, president of Chittagong Samity, said the infrastructure in Chittagong has not improved much since the British colonial rule. "Projects have been taken up, but their implementation has been slow. We might need a wider Dhaka-Chittagong highway by the time the four-lane road opens to traffic."  
The former energy secretary urged the government to take a time-bound step for setting up an LNG terminal to help the city ride out serious gas crisis.  
Muhammad Abdul Mazid, chairman of Chittagong Stock Exchange, said even the Chittagong-based businesses don't make any attempt to develop the city. Rather, many of them have shifted their head offices to Dhaka.

Nasir Uddin Chowdhury, a former senior vice president of Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association, said the turn-around time at the port has gone up to five days from two days. "The existing facilities at the port can't handle the increasing number of containers in a timely manner."  
He feared that many factories in the city would shut in the coming years if they are not provided with adequate infrastructural support.  
Sultan Hafeez Rahman, a former director general of the Asian Development Bank, said 32 government agencies are working to develop the city. There is overlapping of duties as well as a lack of coordination among the agencies, he added.  
According to the development economist, urban governance is at the heart of any successful city in Asia. Transparency and accountability have to be embedded in the city governance system, he noted.  
As an elected body, Chittagong City Corporation needs authority to implement decisions, said Sultan. "But it appears that the CDA [Chittagong

Development Authority] has become the main functionary now as regards to planning and implementation of projects. By far, the larger part of resources is channeled through the CDA."  
Md Abdul Karim, managing director of Palli Karma-Sahayak Foundation, a state-run agency funding microfinance organisations, suggested that the headquarters of the shipping and the cultural affairs ministries and Bangladesh Coast Guard should be shifted to Chittagong.  
Chris Pablo, an urban specialist of World Bank, said key institutions have to be involved in city development projects. "The plan to develop a city has to be manifested in national policies. Besides, a dialogue has to be held to identify who should do what."  
Planning Commission member Prof Shamsul Alam called for decentralisation of power so local governments can make and implement decisions efficiently.  
Abul Kasem Khan, a director of AK Khan & Company, said he wouldn't live in Dhaka if he could reach Chittagong in three hours.