

Bangladeshi rescued in South Africa

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A Bangladeshi, who was trafficked to South Africa around a month ago, was rescued and sent back home on Saturday night, said a Rab press release yesterday.

The victim is Mohit Mollah, 23, a mason of Faridpur.

In the release, Rab said Mohit's mother Anwara Begum recently complained to Rab-3, saying that her son was held hostage by criminals in South Africa and they were threatening her to kill Mohit unless a hefty ransom was given to them.

Rab officials on Wednesday arrested two alleged traffickers Sajib and Belayet from the capital who admitted that they had been involved in trafficking Bangladeshis into South Africa and Mozambique for long and Mohit was held by a gang of Pakistanis and Africans, it added.

Interrogating the two, Rab officials came to know the exact location of Mohit.

Rab then informed Bangladesh embassy officials in South Africa about this through the expatriates' welfare ministry, and the embassy officials rescued Mohit and sent him back home.

Talking to Rab yesterday, Mohit said Sajib had promised that he would send him to South Africa with a job of Tk 40,000 a month in exchange for Tk 7 lakh, the release said.

As Mohit agreed to the proposal, Sajib asked him to come to Dhaka. After a few days, Mohit was sent to Mozambique from where he was taken to several places by traffickers until he was taken to South Africa and kept there.

The traffickers tortured Mohit and forced him to call his parents and ask Tk 7 lakh from them as ransom.

Iraq forces free prisoners from underground IS jail: officials

AFP, Baghdad

Iraqi forces freed a large number of prisoners from an underground Islamic State group jail during a battle to retake a western town from the jihadists, officials said on Saturday.

Security forces have recaptured parts of Heet, which was one of the largest population centres in Anbar province still held by IS, but other areas remain under jihadist control.

"During their advance to liberate and clear the town of Heet from the (IS) organisation, security forces were able to discover a large prison," police Colonel Fadhel al-Nimrawi.

"The prison was underground" and held 1,500 people, who were freed by security forces, Nimrawi said.

Malallah al-Obeidi, a local official in Anbar, also put the number of freed prisoners at around 1,500, saying most of them were civilians.

Muhannad al-Dulaimi, the official responsible for the Heet area, also confirmed the discovery of a "large prison" in the town, but did not say how many people it held.

IS overrun large areas north and west of Baghdad in 2014, but security forces have since regained significant ground from the jihadists.

After the recapture of Anbar provincial capital Ramadi, Heet and the city of Fallujah were two of the largest population centres still held by jihadists in Anbar.

Two killed

FROM PAGE 16

Their identities could not be known immediately.

A CNG-run auto-rickshaw driver rented the building from its owner Mahabur Rahman, who lives in the capital, nearly five months ago. The driver went to his home in Naogaon a few days ago, said locals.

Hearing a loud bang of an explosion last night, the neighbours rushed to the scene and saw the two men lying on a pool of blood. Police were informed immediately.

Locals said they never saw the duo before. Saifuzzaman Faruki, additional superintendent of police in Bogra, said they had cordoned off the building, and a bomb disposal team would visit the spot.

SC lawyer

FROM PAGE 16

the militant outfit in Lotmoni hill area in Banshkhal upazila and recovered arms, ammunition and militant training equipment. During the drive, five militants were also arrested.

Another case was lodged with Banskhal Police Station in this connection under the Anti-Terrorism Act.

On March 20 this year, a charge sheet was submitted against 28 people, including Shakila and two other lawyers.

EU set for new row over asylum rules overhaul

AFP, Brussels

The EU will unveil plans to overhaul its asylum system this week following a controversial migrant deal with Turkey, but the proposals look set to trigger fresh rows in a bloc already deeply divided by the refugee crisis.

The current "Dublin rules" place a huge burden on the main migrant entry points like Greece as they say refugees must claim asylum from the first country they arrive in, and should be returned there if they move on somewhere else.

The system has been rendered effectively obsolete by the huge flow of humanity drawn to wealthy Germany by Chancellor Angela Merkel's open door policy for Syrian refugees.

But introducing a more centralised system for sharing out refugees around the European Union is likely to be tough, with many states too worried about immigration to show much solidarity with those on the front line.

Having pushed back the announcement from last month, the European Commission will on Wednesday lay out a series of "possible options" before setting out a formal proposition to reform the asylum system later in the year.

"Dublin was not designed as a solidarity instrument for ensuring an equitable responsibility sharing

among member states," EU migration commissioner Dimitris Avramopoulos said in December.

"This dimension must be added, as the current uneven distribution is clearly unsustainable."

The vast majority of the record 1.25 million asylum-seekers arriving in Europe last year entered Greece after taking the dangerous sea route from Turkey, the gateway for people fleeing wars in Syria, Iraq and Afghanistan.

More than 4,000 migrants have drowned since the start of last year.

Under an aid-for-cooperation deal clinched last month with the EU, Greece is due to start sending back to Turkey all migrants today, including Syrians who crossed the Aegean Sea illegally.

In return, EU countries will start resettling one Syrian refugee from Turkey for each one Ankara takes back from Greece, and European leaders hope it will ease the bloc's biggest refugee crisis since the end of World War II.

Amnesty International has accused Turkey of illegally forcing groups of Syrians to return to their war-torn country, denouncing "the fatal flaws" in the EU-Turkey deal. Ankara rejected the claims on Saturday, saying they "do not reflect reality in any way".

So far European countries have struggled to carry out even the most modest plans tackle the crisis.

Judges must sign verdicts

FROM PAGE 1

The SC recently released the full judgment in which it has made 39 other observations regarding the code of conduct of judges.

A four-member bench of the apex court headed by Chief Justice Surendra Kumar said in the judgment: "Syed Shahidur Rahman has violated some of the above Code of Conduct and thereby he has committed gross misconduct.

"A judge should not allow family, social, or other relationships to influence judicial conduct or judgment. A judge should not lend the prestige of the judicial office to advance the private interests of others; nor convey or permit others to convey the impression that they are in a special position to influence the judge."

A judge should not permit any member of his immediate family, such as spouse, son, daughter, son-in-law or daughter-in-law or any other close relative, if a member of the Bar, to appear before him or even be associated in any manner with a cause to be dealt with by him.

No member of his family, who is a member of the Bar, shall be permitted to use the residence in which the Judge actually resides or other facilities for professional work, it said.

"A judge should respect and comply with the constitution and law, and should act at all times in a manner that promotes public confidence in the judiciary.

"A judge should be faithful to and maintain professional competence in the law, and should not be swayed by partisan interests, public clamour, or fear of criticism," the verdict observed.

"A judge should avoid public comment on the merit of a pending or impending Court case.

"A judge shall disqualify himself or herself in a proceeding in which the judge's impartiality might reasonably

be questioned.

"A Judge shall disqualify to hear a matter/cause where he served as lawyer in the matter in controversy, or a lawyer with whom the Judge previously practised law served during such association as a lawyer concerning the matter, or the Judge or such lawyer has been a material witness."

According to the verdict, a judge must not enter into public debate or express his views in public on political matters or on matters that are pending or are likely to arise for judicial determination before him. A judge should not engage directly or indirectly in trade or business, either by himself or in association with any other person.

"A Judge must at all times be conscious that he is under the public gaze and there should be no act or omission by him which is unbecoming of his office and the public esteem in which that office is held.

"A Judge should not engage in any political activities, whatsoever in the country and abroad," it noted.

Also, a Judge shall disclose his assets and liabilities, if asked for, by the chief justice.

"Justice must not merely be done but it must also be seen to be done. The behaviour and conduct of a member of the higher judiciary must reaffirm the people's faith in the impartiality of the judiciary. Accordingly, any act of a judge, whether in official or personal capacity, which erodes the credibility of this perception, has to be avoided."

Advocate Khurshid Alam Khan, an SC lawyer and editor of Dhaka Law Reports, told The Daily Star that at present there was no time limit for the SC judges for signing judgments and orders.

Therefore, the SC observations about the judge's code of conduct should be incorporated in its rules, he added.

Tanners get 7 more days

FROM PAGE 16

It is best for tannery owners to move their factories from Hazaribagh to Savar Tannery Industrial Estate, he said.

Only one tannery has relocated from the capital's Hazaribagh to Savar despite the March 31 deadline. As the deadline expired, the government deployed police on April 1 preventing raw hide supply to the tanneries there.

Referring to recent media reports on inadequate infrastructure, including the central effluent treatment plant (CETP) at Savar, Hazrat Ali claimed that all infrastructural facilities were available in the industrial park. "The BSCIC will ensure all facilities after the tanneries are completely shifted to Savar," he said.

He said they talked with high officials of utility service providers and they had assured them of readying necessary connections upon requests from tannery owners.

Everyone is talking about utility connections, but no one has applied for gas connections. "How is it a problem when no one has sought gas connections?" he said.

He said not only the CETP, but also the sewage treatment plant, sludge power generation system and solid waste management system were ready for use. "Unless the tanneries move to the industrial estate, the central effluent treatment plant cannot be oper-

ated," he said.

He said Tk 60 crore has already been provided to the tannery owners from a Tk-250-crore compensation package of the government. "The rest will be provided upon compliance of certain conditions," he said.

Industries Minister Amir Hossain Amu at a programme yesterday morning once again said tannery owners must move their factories and that there was no alternative to tannery relocation.

"We can't allow the leather industries to be there [Hazaribagh] anymore, endangering the lives of crores of people. We can't allow crores of people to die because of them," he said, while addressing the opening session of a five-day fair on small and medium enterprises.

Criticising some media reports, he said several newspapers once were saying that the government was not taking steps to relocate the tanneries. "Now we have taken measures, but the newspapers are against us saying that we are not prepared for the relocation, and they're now highlighting that rawhides are rotting!" he said.

"I can challenge you that we are in a position to launch 40-60 tanneries right now at Savar. We are ready to provide gas and electricity connections to them as soon as they submit applications," he added.

Argentine jazz great 'Gato' Barbieri dies

AFP, New York

Argentine-born jazz saxophonist Leandro "Gato" Barbieri, who won a Grammy for music in the 1972 film "Last Tango in Paris," died on Saturday, New York's Blue Note Jazz Club said. He was 83.

"Today we've lost an icon, pioneer and dear friend," the legendary club said in a statement posted on Twitter. "Gato's significant contributions to music and the arts were an inspiration to us all."

Barbieri, born on November 28, 1932, recorded 50 albums during his long career. His last performance was on November 23, 2015, Blue Note said.

He began to play saxophone professionally as a teenager in clubs in Buenos Aires.

His nickname "Gato" -- cat in Spanish -- came early on and his long career "covered virtually the entire jazz landscape," according to his Blue Note biography.

Drik official

FROM PAGE 16

As he could also not be reached over his cell phone, the driver immediately informed his office about the incident.

Later, Rezaul along with other Drik officials went to the bank branch and saw Irfan coming out of it minutes before noon on CCTV footage.

Irfan had withdrawn Tk 3.08 lakh, according to bank officials.

Rezaul said as far as he knew, the victim had no enmity with anyone. Irfan's family members echoed him.

The GM suspected that Irfan was killed for the money.

However, driver Nasir did not notice anything unusual while waiting for Irfan in the car, he said.

Imdadul Islam, the victim's brother, said Irfan's wife and the only son, who just appeared in this year's SSC exams, were totally clueless about the motive behind the murder.

Irfan was buried in Banani graveyard last night after his namaj-e-janaza at Banani Jame Mosque.

Businessman Abu Bakar Siddique, husband of Bangladesh Environmental Lawyers Association (Bela) Executive Director Syeda Rezwana Hasan, was abducted from Dhaka-Narayanganj Link Road on April 17, 2014. He was rescued later.

A few days after the incident, seven people, including Narayanganj City Corporation councilor Nazrul Islam, and lawyer Chandan Sarker, were picked up from the same area. All of them were found dead afterwards.

SC to hear

FROM PAGE 16

Nizami mentioned 46 grounds in his 70-page petition.

On October 29, 2014, the International Crimes Tribunal-1 gave him the capital punishment on four charges of war crimes, including murdering intellectuals during the Liberation War in 1971.

The 71-year-old was also awarded life imprisonment on four other charges.

The SC on January 6 this year upheld his death sentence on three charges and life term imprisonment on two other charges.

On March 15, the apex court released the full verdict. The ICT issued death warrant for him hours after the SC had released its full verdict. The following day, the jail authorities read out the judgement before the convict.

Wig-maker

FROM PAGE 16

He didn't know anything about cancer or chemotherapy - and the hair loss that accompanies it - until he met a customer who was heartbroken after losing her hair because of the illness.

"My life changed from the moment when I saw the look on her face after I'd fitted the wig on her," he says.

From making wigs for television and movie stars, Kumar switched to only making wigs for cancer patients. He buys natural hair from the Hindu temple town of Tirupati - where it is considered auspicious for pilgrims to have their heads shaved.

He is helped in his work by his wife, Lalitha Marishetty, who cleans the hair by boiling it with detergents and drying it out in the sun. She then makes little bundles of five strands each by knotting them together.

The couple work out of a tiny hole-in-the-wall shop and together, they have made more than 20,000 wigs for people with cancer.

Kumar keeps his prices low as most of his customers are poor - a wig from his shop costs between 7,000 rupees (\$105; £73) and 25,000 rupees (\$377; £263), depending on the length of hair used.

"It doesn't pay much," he says, "but the satisfaction I get from this job is immense."

Thai authorities seize thousands of 'political' red bowls

AFP, Bangkok

Thai authorities have confiscated some 8,000 red bowls bearing a message from an ousted ex-premier, police said yesterday, in the junta's latest attempt to block the resurgence of the political party it toppled.

The raids followed the arrest last week of a woman seen posing with one of the bowls in photos on social media. She has been charged with sedition, a move slammed by a rights group as absurd.

The plastic scoops, used for pouring water in Buddhist ceremonies during Thailand's upcoming new year, bear a note signed by former prime minister Thaksin Shinawatra, whose political bloc has spent the past decade vying for power with a military-backed elite.

Thaksin was ousted in a 2006 coup and now lives in exile, while the government run by his sister Yingluck was toppled by the current junta in 2014.

The bowls -- cast in the Shinawatra's signature red colour -- were first distributed at a temple fair last week in the northern province of Chiang Mai.

The message printed on the side reads: "The situation may be hot, but brothers and sisters may gain coolness

from the water inside this bucket."

On Saturday police and soldiers raided homes and offices of three former MPs from the Shinawatras' Puea Thai Party in the northern province of Nan to seize the bowls.

"If we allow these bowls to be distributed, it could benefit some political parties or result in losses to others," said officer Prayoon Chamnankong, who led one of the raids.

In a social media post yesterday Thaksin urged the junta to focus on more important matters.

"I've done it (given out bowls) several times in the past and it never posed a problem to national security," he wrote, suggesting the junta spend its time tackling other issues such as an ongoing drought and a simmering Muslim insurgency in the far south.

The woman arrested last week could be jailed for up to seven years if convicted of sedition.

Human Rights Watch called the case evidence that the junta's "intolerance of dissent has reached the point of absolute absurdity".

"When military courts try people for sedition for posting photos with holiday gifts from deposed leaders, it's clear that the end of repression is

BNP likely to stay in race

FROM PAGE 16

The meeting discussed this, but senior leaders requested Khaleda to take more time to decide, according to the sources.

"We gave her [Khaleda] the responsibility to make a decision on staying or quitting," said a vice-chairman of the party.

The BNP on March 31 submitted a letter to Chief Election Commissioner Kazi Rakiuddin Ahmed, saying that they would have no alternative but to boycott the polls to the rest of the UPs if the EC did not cancel elections to 1,354 UPs that went to the polls on March 22 and March 31.

The BNP demanded fresh elections there.

At least 31 people were killed and several hundred others injured in the two phases of the elections.

The BNP-nominated candidates won around 109 chairman posts in the two phases against 991 secured by AL men.

The party has been alleging that the two phases were marred by widespread vote rigging, capturing of polling stations, and violence and use of muscle power by the ruling party men.

Man killed

FROM PAGE 16

The arrestees are Razib Sarkar, 25, of North Gandagram, and labour Rafiul Islam Roni, 22, of South Gandagram of Shajahanpur upazila.

Some youths coming from North Gandagram were pestering girls around 11:00pm on Saturday at a Hindu temple at Adikalibari in South Gandagram, said Ratan Biswas, brother-in-law of the dead.

Ratan came forward to protest. When four to five youths began beating him up, Sonaton came to his rescue.

Sonaton fell unconscious immediately after the stalkers stabbed him. The attackers then fled the scene.

Locals rushed him to Shaheed Ziaur Rahman Medical College and Hospital in Bogra, where doctors declared him dead.

No mask

FROM PAGE 16

day of Bangla calendar. People wear bright masks and carry models of animals and other items associated with Bangali heritage in the procession.

The government yesterday asked all to complete all programmes on the day by 5:00PM.

People will have to leave the Dhaka University campus by 6:00pm to avert any possible untoward incident.

The decisions were made yesterday at a meeting of law enforcement agencies on security measures ahead of Bangla New Year-1423 at the home ministry with the minister, Asaduzzaman Khan Kamal, in the chair.

A number of women were molested on the DU campus during the last year's celebration, which was followed by a series of protests by all quarters.

Police, who initially denied the incidents, at last identified eight youths involved in those.

A police team that probed the incidents recommended imposing restrictions on the mass entry to the TSC in DU and Suhrawardi Udyan, vacating the areas before evening, increasing entry and exit points for smooth passes, and installing CCTV cameras by the DU authorities along

with police on days like Pahela Baishakh.

Talking to reporters, Home Minister Kamal said all programmes of Pahela Baishakh must end by 5:00pm across the country.

Foolproof security measures have been taken at Ramna Batamul, TSC and Suhrawardi Udyan for ensuring smooth celebration of the day.

Besides, personnel of the Rapid Action Battalion and police in plain-clothes will be there at event venues, and close circuit cameras and watch towers be installed in and around the venues in the city, said the minister.

The government is committed to ensuring security of people on the day, he said, adding that the law enforcement agencies had been asked to remain alert.

Regarding the ban on Vuvuzela, Kamal said it creates an obnoxious sound and so it was banned.

The meeting also decided to take special security measures at public places, including bus and launch terminals, railway stations and diplomatic zone, sources at the meeting said.

Law enforcers will forbid traffic movement at Ramna, Bangla Academy, TSC, Shahbagh and Rabindra Sarobar in Dhanmondi on the day and provide