



CRISIS IN PARADISE

A former envoy writes on the situation in the Maldives

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FOR FLOOD VICTIMS

Joler Gaan Fan Club and Shilpakala Academy organise a special concert

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'ONE IN, ONE OUT'

Merkel calls for Turkey-style deals to stem refugee crisis

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Where are they now?

Confusion over fate of 7 victims of human trafficking by sea; police say they are in Myanmar jail; Yangon, Dhaka missions deny

MARTIN SWAPAN PANDEY

Panna Akter remembers only one date of her life.

She can't recall the date of her birth or marriage, and she isn't sure on which dates her two sons aged around five and six were born.

"These dates are written in a diary," she says, and springs from her seat to bring it.

It's not unusual that she doesn't remember any of these dates. It's common in a village setting where traditional Bangalee culture yet runs strong, and not many people mark these occasions. But more than that, the social and financial realities she was born and raised in, life is a burden rather than a celebration.

There is, however, one date that Panna, 30, can't forget: June 4, 2013. It's the day she "lost" her husband Monir Hawlader to people smugglers.

"I can't forget this date," she says despondently. "I can hardly think of anything else. Since then I've been counting days..."

It's been three difficult years since then for Panna, who grew up in Phote Jonghapur of Shariatpur's Naria upazila. First she waited for his call with news that he has reached Malaysia, where the local broker, Mobarak Khan, promised to send him.

Days became weeks and then months, but the call never

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Panna Akter with her two sons Siam and Raihan at her parents' home in Shariatpur. Inset, (from right) mothers of three trafficking victims -- Monir, Rubel and Harun -- and Harun's wife and two children. One of the two kids holds a group photo that has their father in it. The photos were taken in June. Victims' photos on page 2.

PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

RECURRING FLOODS Bihar CM blames Farakka

OUR CORRESPONDENT, New Delhi

Nitish Kumar, chief minister of eastern Indian state of Bihar, yesterday appeared to blame the Farakka barrage on the river Ganges for silt deposits and causing the current floods in his state as he met Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Due to silt, the Ganges could not retain the amount of water it used to, leading to flood-like condition despite not receiving proportionate amount of rain fall, he told the media after the meeting.

Kumar sought Modi's intervention for de-silting the river and said this was the only solution to avoid the almost annual occurrence of floods.

Modi assured Kumar of immediate and positive action, including formulating a national silt management policy, Kumar said.

"The very serious condition that we see today never occurred earlier. The only way to get rid of this is silt

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FERTILISER FACTORY BLAST

Gas disaster averted in Ctg

Toxic emission brought under control; reason still not known

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Emission of toxic ammonia at a Chittagong fertiliser factory was brought under control yesterday, around 11 hours after a gas tank exploded there, leaving nearly 250 people sick.

Sixteen fire-fighting units managed to stop the emission at the factory of DAP Fertiliser Company Ltd in Anwara upazila around 9:00am by

dissolving the toxic gas in water, said fire service officials.

"We are still applying water to dissolve the gas completely," Md Jashim Uddin, deputy additional director of fire service and civil defence in Chittagong, told this correspondent around 4:00pm.

The authorities were yet to ascertain the reason behind the explosion.

Visiting the plant yesterday morning, Bangladesh Chemical Industries

Corporation (BCIC) Chairman Mohammad Iqbal said, "It is just an accident."

An air quality test found the presence of ammonia in the air at 600ppm (parts per million) in a radius of 140 metres from the source of emission at 3:00am. However, it was 20ppm beyond a radius of 200 metres, he said.

According to Jashim, they found the level of ammonia below 25ppm in

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PHOTO: ANURUP KANTI DAS

The damaged gas tank and pipes of DAP Fertiliser Company Limited in Anwara upazila of Chittagong. An explosion at the factory on Monday night caused the damage. Inset, fishermen collecting dead fish from a pond, around 50 yards away from the factory, which died from the effect of the blast. The photos were taken yesterday.

Narail court issues arrest warrant for Khaleda

A CORRESPONDENT, Narail

A Narail court yesterday issued a warrant for the arrest of BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia in a case filed for her remarks on the number of martyrs of the 1971 Liberation War.

The court of Senior Judicial Magistrate Jahidul Azad issued the warrant as Khaleda did not appear

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GULSHAN ATTACK

IDs of five militants, chef confirmed thru' DNA tests

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Identities of the five Gulshan attackers and a Holey Artisan chef have been confirmed through DNA tests.

However, the handover of the bodies to the families might take time as it requires the government's nod, according to officials.

Mentioning that the July 1 Gulshan café attack was an unusual incident in the country, police said the investigation officers might need further tests.

In the tests at the CID forensic lab, DNA samples collected from the bodies matched

up with samples collected from parents, Masudur Rahman, deputy commissioner (media) of DMP, said yesterday.

Police received the results on Monday. The families, after the café siege ended on the morning of July 2, identified the six as their sons from photographs in the media.

Replying to a query, Masudur Rahman said no family member has yet applied to the police for the bodies.

Apart from the DNA tests, the counterterrorism unit of FDI sent hair and blood samples to the FBI to ascertain

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NATIONAL BROADCAST ACT Draft law to be placed in cabinet soon

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The draft of the National Broadcast Act-2016 would be placed before the cabinet for approval soon, Information Minister Hasanul Haq Inu said yesterday.

"The committee, led by Prof Golam Rahman, that worked on formulating the

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Biman gets 15 extra hajj flights

RASHIDUL HASAN and BELAL HOSSAIN BIPOB

Biman yesterday got permission from the Saudi Arabian authorities to operate 15 extra hajj flights, which should remove the uncertainty of at least 5,400 people performing their hajj.

"It's a very good news for our hajjis that Biman got permission from the Saudi Arabian civil aviation authority to operate 15 extra hajj flights, which apparently would remove the uncertainty of 5,485 people in making the pilgrimage in Makkah," Sanowar Hossain, general manager, flight operation (central control), Biman, told The Daily Star.

Since the national flag carrier launched this year's hajj

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John Kerry to arrive on August 29

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

US Secretary of State John Kerry arrives here on a brief visit on August 29, which many are considering a major development in the relationship between Dhaka and Washington.

A highly placed

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CREDIT RATING

Credit Rating	2015	2014
Long Term Rating	AA	AA ₃
Short Term Rating	ST-2	ST-2
Outlook	Stable	Stable

Credit Rating Information and Services Limited (CRISL) reaffirms rating of Standard Bank Limited to "AA" in the long term and "ST-2" in the short term. The rating has been honored on the basis of comprehensive analysis of the operational and financial performance of the bank. While assessing financial performance of the bank, CRISL used information presented in the financial statements for the year ending 31 December 2015.

Long Term Rating: The Bank rated "AA" (High Safety) in Credit rating is adjudged to be of high quality, offers higher safety and has high credit quality. This level of rating indicates a corporate entity with sound credit profile and without significant problems. Risks are modest and may vary slightly from time to time because of economic conditions.

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