

NEWS IN brief

Fugitive war crimes accused held

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Police yesterday arrested a fugitive war crimes accused in Atpara upazila of Netrakona, around eight months after the International Crimes Tribunal-1 issued a warrant against three persons including him for allegedly committing crimes during the 1971 Liberation War.

Enayet Ullah Manju, 70, was arrested from his Kulshree village home around 6:00pm, Faruque Ahmed, officer-in-charge of Atpara Police Station said.

The tribunal on February 8 issued a warrant against Enayet, his brother Hedayet Ullah Anju, 80, and Sohrab Fakir, 88, of the village. Of them, Sohrab is in jail and Anju on the run.

Sust admission tests November 26

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

Admission tests for honours courses at Shahjalal University of Science and Technology (Sust) for 2016-17 academic sessions will be held on November 26.

Two new departments, Marine Science, and Software Engineering with 30 seats each are opening from the 2016-17 sessions, declared the university authorities at a press meet yesterday.

This year, Sust allocated six quotas for Bangladesh Krira Shikkha Protishtan (BKSP) students, said Dr AHM Belayet Hossain, member secretary of the admission test committee.

Aspirants should apply online for the admission tests between October 16 and November 10. Details are available at www.sust.edu.

Asian Film Festival starts at DU today

DU CORRESPONDENT

The two-day Asian Film Festival 2016 starts in Teacher-Students Centre (TSC) auditorium of Dhaka University today.

Films of seven renowned Asian directors will be screened at the festival. DU MCJ (Mass Communication and Journalism Department) Film Club is organising the event.

DU Vice Chancellor Prof AAMS Arefin Siddique will inaugurate the festival at 11:00am.

The festival will continue from 11:00am till 9:45pm. Tickets will be available at TSC for Tk 20 each.

Prof Ahsanul Haque passes away

DU CORRESPONDENT

Ahsanul Haque, a former professor of English of Dhaka University, passed away due to old-age complications in his Segunbagicha residence in the capital yesterday. He was 84.

He left behind his wife and two sons, said a press release.

Prof Haque will be buried at Azimpur graveyard today following a namaz-e-janaza at DU central mosque after Asr prayers. He had served as the department chairperson as well as treasurer, dean and provost of DU.



Children cool off in the midday heat yesterday although the practice is prohibited on Crescent Lake in the capital.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

Poor inspection responsible

Say experts, rights activists; 10,000 vessels registered, double the number unregistered

PANKAG KARMAKAR

Taking advantage of the government's poor monitoring, hundreds of unregistered and unfit passenger vessels are plying different waterways across the country, posing a grave risk to public life.

The vessels often cause tragic accidents, leaving hundreds of people dead and causing a huge monetary loss to the state, said experts and water safety rights activists.

In many cases, these vessels have faults in body designing and engines. Moreover, these vessels often ply being overloaded. So, it is quite normal that these will cause frequent accidents, said Mir Tareque Ali, a professor of the Department of Naval Architecture and Marine Engineering at the Bangladesh University of Engineering Technology.

When asked, Commodore M Zakiur Rahman Bhuiyan, director general of the Department of Shipping, conceded that many unfit and unregistered vessels are plying thanks to the people's need.

The shipping department within the next couple of months will initiate a project to survey the unregistered vessels and register them after properly scrutinising their bodies and engines, said the official.

He, however, did not specifically answer why the department had not taken such initiatives earlier.

Currently, there are around 10,000 different types of registered vessels in the country. Of them, around 1,800 are registered passenger vessels, said Begum Parvin

Sultana, prosecuting and information officer of the shipping department.

There are no precise statistics available about how many unregistered vessels are plying the country's waterways. However, several shipping department officials informally told

The Daily Star that around 20,000 to 25,000 different types of unregistered vessels are plying the routes.

But Shipping Minister Shajahan Khan on September 28 in the House said no unfit passenger launch plies the waterways.

In last 15 years, on average 180 people died annually in waterway accidents, says the National Committee to Protect Shipping, Roads and Railways (NCPSRR),

which works for passengers' safety, while the government's statistics claim that the annual death toll is around 160.

As per the Inland Shipping Ordinance-1976, the shipping department is responsible for issuing registration and fitness certificates to vessels after scrutinising body fitness, engine quality, vessels design, passenger carrying capacity and other technical factors.

On the basis of these registration and fitness certificates, Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority (BIWTA) issues route permits and operational schedules.

Before a vessel sets sail, BIWTA inspectors are responsible for scrutinising all these documents including fitness certificates and route permits and for checking whether any vessel plies being overloaded.

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VESSEL ACCIDENTS

Newborn abandoned at rail station

AMANUR AMAN, Kushtia

It was around 12:00pm yesterday when Romecha Begum and Yaron Nesa of Jhahadanga village, both involved in trading of old clothes, were sitting at a tea stall on the north side of Chuadanga Railway Station.

Romecha was looking around the platform, abuzz with train passengers, when she heard the cry of a baby. She shared the matter with Yaron and both started to look for the source of the sound.

A white plastic bag which was tied with a piece of cloth, under a bench of the tea stall drew their attention as the bag was slightly moving.

As soon as the two saw a baby boy inside the bag, they opened the bag and started screaming drawing a crowd, said Sub-inspector of Chuadanga Railway Police Camp Abdullah Mamun, quoting Romecha.

SI Mamun said owner of the tea stall Kuddus told him



that two women and a man sat on the bench around an hour before the baby was found. They drank tea from his stall and left the place before boarding Dhaka-bound Chitra train which arrived around 11:55am.

On information, police rushed there and recovered the baby, born two or three days back. Later, they sent the baby to the safe home under the Social Welfare Department in Chuadanga, the SI said.

A doctor of Chuadanga Sadar Hospital who examined the baby said the baby was born healthy and weighed 6.8 pounds.

"The baby is doing well now and police are looking for its parents," said the SI.



Firefighters dousing a fire at Shameem Spinning Mill in Shafipur Bazar of Gazipur's Kaliakoir upazila early yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

Fire rips thru spinning mill in Gazipur

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Gazipur

A tin-shed building of a spinning mill collapsed after a fire broke out inside it in Kaliakoir upazila of Gazipur early yesterday.

The fire broke out at Shameem Spinning Mill, a concern of Jamuna Group, in Shafipur Bazar area around 5:00am, said Apurba Bol, station officer of Kaliakoir fire service.

On information, 14 firefighting units rushed to the spot and started working to douse the fire. There were no immediate casualty reports and the fire's origin could not be known immediately, he said, adding, "The fire was brought under control at 11:25am."

Two separate probe bodies have been formed to investigate the fire.

Bangladesh, India press councils to cooperate

OUR CORRESPONDENT, New Delhi

A memorandum of understanding (MoU) will be signed between the Press Council of Bangladesh, and Press Council of India in New Delhi on November 16 for cooperation in journalism.

The decision was taken at a meeting between the two councils during a visit of an Indian delegation to Dhaka last week.

The MoU will be inked when press councils of almost all of the Saarc countries, including Bangladesh, are in Delhi to attend India's National Press Day celebrations on November 16, said a member of the Press Council of India delegation.

The two press councils decided to closely interact with each other to promote freedom of press and improve standard of journalism, said a joint statement.

Zero tolerance towards terror impresses US

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Appreciating Bangladesh's policy of "zero tolerance" towards terrorism and violent extremism, the United States has lauded the government for not allowing its territory to be used for terrorist activities against other countries.

The US also applauded Bangladesh government's efforts to control terrorist activities after the July 1 Holey Artisan attack by involving all relevant agencies, and the launch of a specialised Counterterrorism and Transnational Crime (CTTC) Unit under Dhaka Metropolitan Police.

The appreciation came from a visiting US delegation which participated in the fifth round of Bangladesh-United States Security Dialogue held in the capital yesterday.

At the meet, Bangladesh sought enhanced United States training, equipment, and logistics support in counterterrorism and countering violent extremism, according to a joint press statement issued yesterday.

It said Bangladesh and the US recognised the shared threats they face and that countering violent extremist groups, such as ISIS / Da'esh, constitutes a global challenge.

Kamrul Ahsan, additional foreign secre-

tary (bilateral and consular) of the foreign ministry, led the Bangladesh delegation comprising representatives from different ministries and government organisations.

Deputy Assistant Secretary of State William Monahan led the US delegation that included representatives from the Departments of State and Defense. US Ambassador to Bangladesh Marcia Bernicat and embassy officials also attended the daylong dialogue.

The dialogue covered issues related to security partnership between the countries including strategic priorities and regional security issues, defense cooperation, civilian security cooperation and UN peace-keeping.

Bangladesh delegation appreciated US assistance in further improving its disaster preparedness and response capabilities through joint Disaster Response Exercise and Exchange (DREE), construction of 600 multipurpose cyclone shelters in coastal belts, and provision of fast-moving boats to Bangladesh Coast Guards which has minimised the response time to prevent armed robberies within its maritime boundary.

The sixth round of Security Dialogue will be held in Washington next year.

52 candidates to vie for each CU seat

CU CORRESPONDENT

Around 52 candidates will vie for each of the 4,791 seats during this year's admission tests at Chittagong University.

A total of 2,44,779 candidates have applied for the tests of 2016-17 session under 10 units, said Deputy Registrar SM Akbar Hossain.

Last year, around 2,11,952 candidates vied for 4,653 seats while 33,000 more applicants have applied this year.

The admission test will begin on October 23 and continue till October 31. Details of the tests can be found on www.cu.ac.bd.

CU Proctor Ali Asgar Chowdhury said, "We have started taking all kinds of necessary steps to hold the admission test peacefully".

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