



"At a time when reading habit is on decline worldwide, Bishwo Shahitto Kendro is fighting for creating the habit among students and others."
PROF. MUHAMMED ZAFAR IQBAL AT A PROGRAMME MARKING THE BSK'S 40TH FOUNDING ANNIVERSARY. (PAGE 3)



"No killing is acceptable to the government or the state. Those who are killing in the name of 'Hercules' are not doing right."
HOME MINISTER ASADUZZAMAN KHAN AT A PROGRAMME.



"The Dems and their committees are going 'nuts.'"
DONALD TRUMP ON DEMOCRATS' PROBES ON HIS TAX RECORDS, RUSSIA TIES (PAGE 8)

Meghna too not spared

Outrageous grabbing goes on in the river

TAWFIQUE ALI

Nothing seems to scare away the river grabbers.

Amid impassioned calls from the judiciary, environmentalists and the media to save the country's last surviving rivers, a private company is building two slipways in the Meghna river in Munshiganj.

The firm, Khan Brothers Slipway and Engineering Works, has neither the permission nor the environment clearance from the authorities for the project, government and company officials have confirmed.

Even so, the firm has put up a makeshift enclosure in the Meghna, well below its dry season low watermark, on its west bank at Char Betagi in Gazaria upazila to set up the two slipways, each 600 feet long and 15 feet wide.

On January 26, company workers were seen pumping out water from the enclosed area and preparing to build the concrete structures.

Over the last one year, the company filled a large expanse of the river foreshore for the dockyard. It then started building the slipways, but Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority (BIWTA), the custodian of rivers, did not stop it, locals said.

Char Betagi is a low-lying shoal near another shoal called Char Balaki, both surrounded by the Meghna at the confluence where Shitalakkhya and Dhaleshwari falls into the Meghna.

Tofayel Kabir Khan, managing director of Khan Brothers Group, first denied grabbing any river land, and claimed they bought 40 acres of shoal land at Char Betagi from locals.

But when pressed, he said they encroached on an area of 4,500 square feet, which is 150 feet into the river, with "verbal consent" from the BIWTA.

"We also obtained a licence from the BIWTA for using two more acres of the river foreshore," he claimed.

He, however, admitted they did not have the environmental clearance and the shipping department's permission to set up the slipways.

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A private firm has put up a makeshift enclosure to build two slipways after encroaching into the Meghna river in Gazaria of Munshiganj. Inset, water being pumped out from the enclosed area. The photos were taken a few days ago.

PHOTO: SK ENAMUL HAQ

Tamim explodes Dynamites

Comilla Victorians win second BPL title

SPORTS REPORTER

Dhaka Dynamites had everything a T20 team would want in their arsenal to win the final of the Bangladesh Premier League (BPL). Yesterday, however, Comilla Victorians had something better in the form of a single player. Opener Tamim Iqbal played perhaps the best innings of the sixth edition -- which contained hundreds from Ab de Villiers, Alex Hales and Evin Lewis -- and virtually single-handedly won the trophy for his side as Comilla beat Dhaka by 17 runs in a highly entertaining finale at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium last night.

It was a truly worthy final played on a belter of a wicket in front of a jam-packed Mirpur crowd, who were awestruck with Tamim's clean hitting during an unbeaten 61-ball 141, the second-highest individual score in the BPL after Rangpur Riders opener Chris Gayle's 146 in the final of the last edition against Dhaka.

Tamim was the dominant force in Comilla's 199 for three and, despite a start worthy of the name Dynamite, Dhaka ran out of steam and ended on 182 for nine after 20 overs. Rony Talukdar threatened to show up Tamim with a 38-ball 66 and built a 102-run second-wicket partnership with Uplul Tharanga in just 8.2 overs. But Tharanga's wicket in the last ball of the ninth over -- caught at long on off Thisara Perera for a 27 -- ball 48 -- changed the match. Tamim was fantastic on the field as well, running in from mid on towards cover to catch



Dhaka skipper Shakib Al Hasan off Wahab Riaz, and also taking the crucial catch of Kieron Pollard -- another running take from long on off the same bowler.

The fight was all but snuffed out of the Dynamites as Rony became the fourth to depart when he was caught short trying to go for a quick single by Comilla keeper Anamul Haque. That left the score on 121 for four in the 13th over, and when Dhaka's all-round duo of Andre Russell and Pollard followed suit, Comilla's second trophy was all but confirmed.

Earlier, after Dhaka won the toss, Tamim seemed to be batting on a different wicket than his teammates. While the 61 deliveries Tamim faced fetched 141 runs, the other batsmen -- Evin Lewis, Anamul Haque, Shamsur Rahman and skipper Imrul Kayes -- scored a combined 47 runs from 59 deliveries.

Tamim had never before hit a century in the BPL and he had never before played in the final of the tournament. He crossed both those achievements off his list in emphatic fashion, but before he could he had Dhaka keeper Nurul Hasan -- arguably the best gloveman in the country -- to thank as he grassed a tough chance when the left-hander was on 24 in the eighth over bowled by Qazi Onik. Tamim had another hairy moment on 33 in the ninth over when he danced down the track and miscued a hoick towards Andre Russell at long on, but replays showed the ball to have bounced just in front of the diving Jamaican's fingers.

That was about it for the rub of the green as Tamim

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Comilla Victorians opener Tamim Iqbal is given a hero's carriage after his 61-ball 141, studded with 10 fours and 11 sixes, set up a 17-run win over Dhaka Dynamites in the Bangladesh Premier League final at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur yesterday.

PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

Probe on to crack 'Hercules' mystery

Home boss says killing of rape accused unjust

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan yesterday said law enforcers were carrying out an investigation to unravel the mystery surrounding the murders of suspected rapists using the name of "Hercules".

"No killing is acceptable to the government or the state. I think those who are killing using the name of 'Hercules' are not doing right," he said.

The minister was talking to journalists after attending a reception to Liberation War heroes and annual sports day programme at Averroes International School in the capital's Lalmatia.

Rapists deserve strict punishment, but the killers should have handed them over to law enforcers, said Asaduzzaman.

The "Hercules" issue came to light after bodies of three rape accused were found in different areas of

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Soul of resilience

Even with blindness since birth and kidney problems, Marjia refuses to give up

SUZIT KUMAR DAS, Faridpur

After Marjia Rabbani Shashi finished her arguments in court on New Year's Day, her first day at court as a lawyer, the judge acquitted the man she was defending.

It was a special day for her, not because she won on her first day, but because the day was a culmination of the struggle she had to do to get there.

Shashi is blind since birth and her kidneys are on their last legs.

Her parents had left no stone unturned in trying to help her get her sight.

"We first suspected that she was visually-impaired six months after her birth. We took her to several doctors in Faridpur and Dhaka. We also went to India for treatment, but nothing helped," said her mother Afroza Rabbani.

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Marjia being accompanied by her father to a court in Faridpur recently.

PHOTO: STAR

30 Rohingyas rescued from 'traffickers'

BGB detains two

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Cox's Bazar

Border Guard Bangladesh yesterday rescued 30 Rohingyas, including women and children, from Teknaf upazila in Cox's Bazar while they were being trafficked to Malaysia.

BGB also detained two alleged human traffickers -- Mohib Ullah, 20, and Humayun, 18, of Teknaf -- in this connection.

Lt Col Md Asadud Zaman Chowdhury, captain of BGB-2, said the two human traffickers were

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To Promote and meet prospective students and their parents in Bangladesh Principal, Mr. I.S. Sekhon will be available @ Pan Pacific Sonargaon Dhaka on 15th & 16 of February from 9.30 am to 11.30 am & 4.00 pm to 6.00 pm

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