

# Italian political standoff keeps rescued migrants stranded at sea

REUTERS, Lampedusa

A charity rescue ship carrying 134 migrants, mostly Africans, waited off the coast of Italy yesterday as a battle between former political allies in Rome stopped it docking at the southern island of Lampedusa.

Interior Minister Matteo Salvini has ordered his officials to prevent the boat disembarking the migrants, who were rescued off Libya 16 days ago, in defiance of his own prime minister and despite six European Union nations agreeing to take them.

The migrants' plight underlines the breakdown of Italy's ruling coalition and how immigration has become central to Salvini's plan to take his right-wing League party out of government, drag the nation to elections and return to power as prime minister.

Five seriously traumatised people were moved off the Open Arms boat, run by the Spanish charity group of the same name, on Thursday, accompanied by four relatives. Three more three requiring urgent medical attention were taken ashore during the night along with one companion, Open Arms said on Twitter.

"They are self-harming and getting angry with other people in the group," Alessandro di Benedetto, a psychologist with Italian aid group Emergency, told RAI radio after examining the five people who were brought ashore on Thursday.

# Terminals still

FROM PAGE 1  
vacation yet," said Saddam Hossain of a tire shop at the terminal.

At Gabtali terminal, many abandoned tires and fuel containers with clear water were found yesterday.

"We had no idea that this water could breed Aedes," said Mohammad Shakil, owner of a small fuel shop at the terminal.

Piles of abandoned plastic bottles and plastic containers were found near platform-1 in Kamalapur Railway Station.

A recent study by the Directorate General of Health Services found 112 wet plastic containers, five of them containing Aedes larva, in Gabtali Bus Terminal.

The researchers found 292 such containers, of which 92 had the larva, in Mohakhali terminal. At Sayedabad terminal, five of 28 containers spotted had the larva.

At BRTC Bus Depot in Kamalapur, five out of 58 containers found had larva while at Kamlapur railway police outpost, one of nine containers found had larva.

In Mirpur-12 BRTC Bus Depot, three of 55 wet containers had larva.

The study was conducted from July 31 to August 4 at 14 places including

"Some of them are having suicidal thoughts, so they think it is better to die here than go back there," he added.

Salvini's tough anti-immigration stance has helped boost his popularity at the expense of coalition partners the 5-Star Movement, but his surprise bid to bring down the government and call an election is running into trouble.

Prime Minister Giuseppe Conte, who belongs to no political party but is close to 5-Star, accused Salvini on Thursday of exploiting the issue and said he had convinced six European states to take in the migrants.

Defence Minister Elisabetta Trenta, who is from the 5-Star, refused to countersign Salvini's emergency decree.

The Open Arms is anchored off the coast of Lampedusa, which was the scene of mass arrivals for years before Salvini closed Italy's ports to the charity ships who rescue people setting out from Africa in search of a better life in Europe.

Salvini has argued that Italy, which lies close to the Libyan coast, should no longer be the main gateway for migrants fleeing Africa for Europe. He accuses the charities of becoming "taxis" for people-smuggling gangs.

The Open Arms boat was allowed into Italian waters on Thursday after an administrative court in Rome overruled a ban on its entering that Salvini had previously imposed.

Dhaka Medical College Hospital, Mugda Medical College Hospital, Rajarbagh Police Lines, Shajahanpur Slum, Kalshi, ECB Chattar, Mirpur-12 Metro Rail project and Korail slum in Gulshan.

The two medical college hospitals were found to be an ideal breeding ground for Aedes.

Of the larva containing places, 78.17 percent were discarded tires, 4.93 percent plastic containers, 4.23 percent plastic buckets, 2.11 percent discarded or broken commodes, 0.70 percent plastic mugs and 2.82 percent other objects.

Dhaka South City Corporation mayor Sayeed Khokon said he had asked Khondaker Enayet Ullah, secretary general of Bangladesh Road Transport Owners' Association, to destroy all Aedes mosquito sources at the terminals.

After the DGHS survey, the city corporation officials informed the health minister about the risk of Aedes breeding at some hospitals.

Khondaker Enayet said they took different initiatives before Eid.

"We will take strict measures again to destroy the sources of Aedes at bus terminals," he said.

# JMB men

FROM PAGE 1  
still facing trial.

Contacted, Md Moniruzzaman, additional deputy inspector general of police of the Anti-Terrorism Unit (ATU), said the JMB had no organisational strength, but the outfit was still active and "It will do something if it gets a chance".

"Although chances of an organised attack are very slim, risk is still there," he said.

On the other hand, the capacity of law enforcers, including online surveillance, has increased, he said.

Moniruzzaman also said they keep record of the militants involved in the 2005 series bomb blasts, their modus operandi and types of explosives they used.

Moreover, the ATU analyses all bomb attack incidents and often suggests other police units about measures required to tackle militancy.

"We are concerned about activities of JMB, Ansar Al Islam and Hizb ut-Tahrir. The overall capacity of JMB is higher than that of others," he said.

Asked whether such militants are under police radar, Soheli Rana, assistant inspector general (media) at Police Headquarters on Thursday said, a process of bringing all militant

suspects under monitoring had begun across the country.

The ATU has prepared a division-wise database of all militants.

"It is challenging to some extent as many go into hiding after being released," he said, adding that it was hard to track when anyone goes into hiding.

He said they always try to know every update of the militants and their whereabouts through contacting their family members, relatives and friends.

Besides, they try to find out those on the run, he said.

Meanwhile, the CTTC is providing assistance to five ex-JMB militants who, on completion of their jail term, returned to their families and families of three others who are in jail.

The move has been taken recently so that JMB cannot reengage them in militant activities, Saiful Islam, deputy commissioner of the unit, told The Daily Star yesterday.

"We often see that militant outfits take financial responsibility of the families of their jailed members. We believe our initiative will keep them away from the path of militancy," he added.

# Parents, two siblings killed

FROM PAGE 1  
correspondent, Salma Begum, aunt of Nazmun, said the family was going to attend a wedding ceremony.

Meanwhile, in Tangail, two people were killed and three others were injured in two road accidents in the district's Bhuapur and Nagarpur upazilas yesterday morning.

The dead are Abdul Mannan, 62, from Jamalpur's Sarishabari upazila and Abdul Koddus Miah, 70, from Tangail's Nagarpur upazila.

In Patuakhali, two men, who were critically wounded in separate road accidents, succumbed to their injuries yesterday.

Abdur Rob Sikder, 65, was from

Patuakhali Sadar upazila and Monir Hossain was from the district's Bauphal upazila, police said.

In Rajbari, a boy was killed and four people were injured in a road crash on Rajbari-Kushitia regional highway in early yesterday.

Shamim Hossain, 15, was from Meherpur's Gangni upazila.

Earlier on Thursday, at least 20 people were killed and 82 others were injured in separate road accidents in eight districts.

Of the dead, seven were killed in Feni, four in Faridpur, three in Kishoreganj, two in Sirajganj, and one each in Gopalganj, Mymensingh, Barishal and Tangail.



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and senior Awami League leaders observe a minute's silence in memory of Bangabandhu and the other victims of the August 15 carnage at a programme at the city's Bangabandhu International Conference Centre yesterday. The event was organised marking the 44th death anniversary of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and the National Mourning Day.

PHOTO: PTD

# Trump proposes mental asylums, but silent on gun laws

AFP, Manchester

More mental hospitals are needed to take potential mass killers off the streets, President Donald Trump said Thursday in response to recent mass shootings, while staying quiet on a pledge to toughen gun laws.

Speaking to a crowd of supporters estimated at around 12,000 in Manchester, New Hampshire, Trump did not once mention his efforts to push for background checks on would-be gun purchasers.

Instead, he focused on the theory that the endless spate of mass killings carried out by men with easily obtained semi-automatic rifles is mostly down to lack of mental facilities.

Trump said he was giving "major consideration to building new facilities for those in need" and "taking mentally deranged and dangerous people off the streets."

"We don't have those institutions anymore," he said.

Trump has consistently put an accent on mental health problems, rather than

the ubiquitous firearms sold everywhere from shopping malls to gun fairs.

But after the deaths of 31 people in massacres in Texas and Ohio, within hours of each other earlier this month, Trump did come out strongly for increased background checks to verify the records of the person buying a gun.

Even this measure is vehemently opposed by hardline gun rights defenders who say the constitutionally protected right to owning weapons is under threat.

# Clashes in Kashmir amid lockdown

FROM PAGE 1  
India should respect its promises," a second protester told AFP.

"We will not sit back until we achieve complete independence from India," he said.

The protesters marched along the lanes of Srinagar, carrying black flags -- signifying grief -- and placards with slogans including "Go India, go back".

The clashes took place as a top official said that authorities would begin restoring phone lines in Kashmir yesterday evening, including in Srinagar.

Jammu and Kashmir chief secretary BVR Subrahmanyam did not make clear whether mobile phones and internet connections would also be reinstated.

He said the restoration would "(keep) in mind the constant threat posed by terrorist organisations in using mobile connectivity to organised terrorist actions".

Fearing an angry and potentially violent response to its move to end

Kashmir's autonomous status, India deployed 10,000 additional troops -- joining the half a million already there -- severely restricted movement and cut telecommunications.

Kashmiri politicians -- alongside university professors, business leaders and activists -- are among the more than 500 people that have since been taken into custody.

Celebrations for Eid, a major Muslim festival, were massively curtailed on Monday, with Srinagar's main mosque shut. The building remained off-limits yesterday.

Subrahmanyam said the government was aiming for the "earliest return to normalcy while ensuring that terrorist forces are given no opportunity to wreak havoc as in the past".

Despite the lockdown, last Friday residents said some 8,000 people took to the streets and that the military used pellet-firing shotguns.

The Indian government confirmed the clashes only after several days

had passed, blaming them on stone-throwing "miscreants" and saying its forces reacted with "restraint".

Kashmir has been divided between India and Pakistan since independence from Britain in 1947.

Tens of thousands of people, most of them civilians, have died in an uprising against Indian rule that has raged since 1989.

The territory has been the spark for two wars and countless clashes between the two nuclear-armed arch-rivals, most recently in February when they conducted tit-for-tat air strikes.

Officials in the part of Kashmir ruled by Pakistan said Thursday that three soldiers died in Indian shelling across the Line of Control, the de facto border, with two others killed in a separate incident.

The Pakistani military also said its return fire killed five Indian soldiers. But an Indian army spokesman told the Press Trust of India news agency late Thursday this was "fictitious".

# High growth, fewer jobs

FROM PAGE 1  
The services sector is the only sector that saw an increase in employment elasticity: from 0.27 in fiscal 2009-10 to 0.40 in fiscal 2017-18.

In case of agriculture, it sank to -0.09 between fiscal 2010-11 and 2017-18 from 0.71 between fiscal 2005-06 and 2009-10.

Employment elasticity decreased in the construction sector too -- from 2.22 in fiscal 2009-10 to 0.55 in fiscal 2017-18 -- at a time when the government is implementing a host of mega projects, and there is a construction boom in the country.

Government spending has increased in the construction sector but the expenditure is for big projects like Dhaka Metro Rail and Padma bridge, which are capital intensive in nature, mentioned the study.

"Therefore, the construction sector has failed to generate enough employment in spite of increased public spending," it added.

Also in the manufacturing sector, employment elasticity came down to 0.65 in fiscal 2017-18 from 0.87 in fiscal 2009-2010.

The study attributed the decline to two simultaneous phenomena: the structural transformation in the economy from agriculture to industrial sector, and industrial sector being more capital intensive.

The garment and textile industries account for a major chunk of the country's manufacturing sector, and both are becoming more capital intensive rather than labour intensive.

"The non-garment part of the manufacturing sector has remained static," the study mentioned.

Talking to The Daily Star, Zahid Hussain, former lead economist at the World Bank's Dhaka office, said, "Overall employment elasticity declined because the decrease in employment elasticity in agriculture and industry far outweighed the increase in employment elasticity in services."

Employment elasticity in

agriculture turned negative as the demand for farm labour dropped with rapidly growing mechanisation of agricultural production processes, he pointed out.

The other reasons include an increased use of high-yielding non-labour inputs and decreased preference for farm work, Zahid mentioned.

"The decline in overall employment elasticity from 0.55 during 2005-10 to 0.25 during 2010-18 reflects to a significant extent the movement of people from agriculture to services.

"Despite sustained expansion in agricultural activities, employment in agriculture declined from 26.2 million in 2010 to 25 million in 2018 while employment in services increased from 19.8 million to 23.8 million respectively. This is why employment elasticity in agriculture has declined from 0.71 to -0.09 while it increased from 0.27 to 0.4 in services.

"Employment in industry increased from 12.1 million in 2010 to 13.1 million in 2018 -- just by one million in eight years -- despite acceleration of industrial growth from 8 percent on average during 2005-10 to 9.6 percent during 2010-18.

"Despite rising growth in industrial output, growth of labour demand in industry was weak because of low investment growth, higher capital intensity of industrial production processes and the spread of automation.

In recent years, industrial growth came more from capital intensive manufacturing and construction sectors that are domestic market-oriented, rather than the labour intensive export-oriented sectors, he pointed out.

According to Zahid, a big setback in the growth process has been the loss of female participation in employment. By all metrics, their contribution to the economy was lower in 2018 than in 2010.

"Weak growth of labour demand affected females more than males.

Instead of continuing to actively seek employment, discouraged female labour appears to have opted out of the labour market ...," he noted.

The number of unemployed females increased to 1.2 million in 2018 from 1 million in 2010, while the number of females in employment dropped to 16 million last year from 16.2 million in 2010.

In rural areas, 12.6 million females were employed in 2010. The number fell to 11.6 million in 2018.

The study suggested a proper employment strategy for promoting female participation in the labour force.

"Opportunities need to be opened up and the barriers to female labour force participation need to be eliminated." Women are often subjected to violence, and laws regarding this need to be made more stringent, it noted.

Infrastructure such as childcare facilities at workplaces, increase in access to education and training, availability of maternity leave and growth of industries where large number of women are involved will help matters, it pointed out.

Better implementation of laws is necessary to provide an enabling working environment for women. "This will also ensure better wages and also the status of women at the workplace."

It also suggested conducive monetary and fiscal policies for improving employment elasticity and steps to help the sectors overcome the financing and unskilled labour problems.

Automation or advanced technology may displace some workers but this will be compensated by jobs created elsewhere in the economy.

"However, since further advancement of technology will require high-skilled labour, focusing on demand-driven skill development system should be the priority for Bangladesh," it added.

# Police rescue child who was sold after kidnapping

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Moulvibazar

Police on Thursday rescued a child -- who had been abducted and sold a day ago -- from Sunamganj's Jamalganj upazila and arrested two people in this connection.

Three-year-old Rafsan was handed over to his parents, said Mizanur Rahman, superintendent of police in the district, during a press brief at his office yesterday.

The arrestees are Jobeda Begum from Lakshampur village and Jasim Uddin from Sardarpur village.

Police said Jobeda kidnapped the child from Lakshampur on Wednesday and brought him to Sardarpur.

She claimed the child to be her son and expressed interest to the villagers in selling off the child saying that was unable to take care of it due to poverty, police said.

One Kabir Mia took the child in exchange for only Tk 7,000.

On information, police went to Sardarpur on Thursday night and rescued the child, police said, adding that they had arrested Kabir from the spot.

Later, police arrested Jobeda based on Kabir's information.

# Zimbabwe police break up protests after court ban

AFP, Harare

Riot police in Zimbabwe yesterday fired teargas and beat demonstrators during a crackdown on opposition supporters who have taken to Harare's streets despite a protest ban.

Scores of people gathered in the capital's Africa Unity Square to demonstrate against the country's worsening economy in defiance of the ban, which was upheld by a court today.

Supporters of Zimbabwe's opposition Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) sang songs condemning police brutality as officers fired teargas to disperse them.

# 65 Bangladeshi

FROM PAGE 1  
centre in the municipality of Acayucan, where their legal status will be defined.

After their nationalities are recognised, they will be given assistance to return to their countries.

The Mexican government reported on Wednesday that the country has intercepted 19,005 endangered migrants since the 7 June immigration agreement with the US. Many attempt crossing the border in overcrowded buses and cargo trucks.

# Bhola gangrape

FROM PAGE 1  
Thursday after doctors at multiple hospitals in Bhola and Barishal failed to stop the bleeding from her private parts. Doctors said she needed 22 stitches for wounds to her private parts and there were numerous cuts in her toes and back.

The girl of Bhola town was raped at her neighbour and aunt's house when she went there to have mehendi on her arms on the eve of Eid. As she was waiting at the veranda of the house for her aunt, Al Amin, 27, a tenant of the building, gagged her with a strip of cloth and forced her into his room, police said.

Amin and his associate Manjur Alam, 25, then tied her up and raped her, they added.

Another young man named Jamal Akand has been accused of assisting the duo in the crime, said Sagir Mia, officer-in-charge of Bhola Sadar Police Station.

Her father filed a case accusing the trio. Jamal was sent to jail.

Non-profit Coast Trust has been assisting the girl's family in bearing the treatment and legal costs.