

ILLEGAL MIGRATION BID

# 16 Rohingyas held in Teknaf

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Cox's Bazar

Members of the coast guard detained 16 Rohingyas from Habirchhara in Teknaf upazila when they were trying to go to Malaysia on a fishing trawler on Saturday night.

The detainees, including 10 women and two children, are residents of Rohingya camps in Cox's Bazar. They had reached Bangladesh from Myanmar around two years ago, said Bangladesh Coast Guard officials.

The detainees are: Taslima Akhter, 18, Sanwara Begum, 28, Shahela Parvin, 7, Shah Noor, 40, Samuda Bibi, 8, Sanjida Begum, 33, Nazir Ahmed, 28, Md Atiq, 23, Johura Begum, 18, Imran Hossain, 22, Noor Ayesha, 18, Parvin Akhter, 18, Jaheda Begum, 40, Umme Jamila, 16, Fatema

Begum, 18, and Noor Hossain, 37.

Around 8:00pm on Saturday, locals intercepted the Rohingyas when they noticed them trying to board a trawler.

On information, members of the coast guard went to the spot and detained them, said Lt Sohel Rana, station commander of Teknaf coast guard.

During primary interrogation, the detainees admitted that they were heading for Malaysia with the help of brokers. They also named some of the brokers. They were handed over to Teknaf Police Station yesterday, said the coast guard official.

Contacted, Pradip Kumar Das, officer-in-charge of Teknaf Police Station, said the detainees were sent back to the Rohingya camps. Police were trying to identify the brokers.

## Tour Boat Tragedy in India's Andhra Pradesh

12 killed, 25 missing

AFP, New Delhi

At least 12 people have drowned and dozens of others missing after a sightseeing boat capsized on a swollen river in southern India, police and local media reports said.

The Royal Vasishta vessel was carrying 61 people - 50 passengers and 11 crew members, all of them Indian nationals - when it capsized on the Godavari river yesterday, Andhra Pradesh state's home minister M Sucharita said.

A search operation was under way, with rescue teams including divers and a helicopter scouring the river to find the missing people, a senior police official said.

Twenty-four people have been rescued so far, while 25 others are missing, Sucharita said.

The accident occurred near Kachuluru village in East Godavari district, 380 kilometers (236 miles) east of the state's capital, Hyderabad. The boat was heading from Singanapalli to Papikondalu, a famous tourist spot.

Sucharita said tour boats had been barred from operating on the route following the recent flooding of the river and it was not clear how the boat that capsized had managed to take out the tourists.

## Ocean Viking set to return to Libya rescues

AFP, Rome

Charity rescue vessel Ocean Viking was yesterday preparing to return to rescuing shipwreck survivors off Libya after disembarking 82 migrants in Italy following a reversal of government policy in Rome.

Italian authorities identified and carried out medical checks on the sub-Saharan African migrants after they disembarked overnight on southern island Lampedusa after more than six days at sea.

Under an ad hoc European deal, Italy, France and Germany will take 24 migrants each. Portugal will take eight and Luxembourg two, Italian media reported.

"After disembarkation, the Ocean Viking should head back to her research and rescue mission in the Central Mediterranean, because people continue to die in these waters where no rescue ship is currently present in the area," Nicola Stalla, the vessel's search and rescue coordinator, said on Saturday.

European leaders are trying to thrash out an automatic mechanism that would see rescued migrants who are brought to Italy or Malta swiftly redistributed around Europe.

It is not yet clear how many countries will sign up to the scheme.

Italy's new government, sworn in last week, is forging its own migrant policy after 14 months of former interior minister Matteo Salvini's hardline stance against charity vessels and migrants.

Italy and Malta say that they bear disproportionate responsibility for migrants making the perilous Mediterranean crossing as they are the closest European Union states to Libya, from where they mainly depart.

Italian Prime Minister Giuseppe Conte is expected to discuss the plan with France's President Emmanuel Macron when the latter visits Rome on Wednesday.

It will then be studied in more detail at a meeting of interior ministers on September 23 in Malta, ahead of a European summit in October in Luxembourg.

Former Democratic Party prime minister Matteo Renzi has called for "a great Marshal plan for Africa. More cooperation, more investment," he tweeted.

"Stern action will be taken against the culprits," he told the Associated Press news agency.

Apart from tourists, residents in the area depend on boats and ferries to travel between villages on the banks of the Godavari.

The river had been flowing fast for a week, local media said, adding that the boat was run by the state government.

Overcrowding and poor safety checks often cause boat accidents in India, especially during the annual monsoon rains when rivers are swollen.

Last week, a dozen people died in Bhopal city in central India after two boats capsized during a ceremony to immerse an idol of Hindu god Ganesha into a river.

In May 2018, 30 people were killed when a similar boat carrying local people capsized not far from the scene of Sunday's accident.

A few months later, a boat carrying 80 tourists caught fire when a cooking gas cylinder exploded, but there were no casualties.

## 'Mogh Party' kidnaps 6 in Bandarban

SANJOY KUMAR BARUA, Bandarban

Members of "Mogh Party" kidnapped six people in Bandarban yesterday, said police.

Monghri Aung, 45, Uhla Mong, 35, Mong Gya, 32, Ching Thoai Mong, 32, Prusi Aung, 43, and Thoaihlha Ching, 57, of Sama Khal Para area were taken by the armed men of the party, they said.

Abul Kashem Chowdhury, officer-in-charge of Ruma Police Station, said, "They were kidnapped at gunpoint in remote Sama Khal Para area of the upazila."

Around 15 armed men of the party went to the neighbourhood in search of food, said Sadar union parishad chairman Shwemong Marma, adding, "The criminals also searched me as I had asked the villagers not to give them shelter."

"As the villagers refused to give them food and shelter, they abducted the six," he said.

Members of the army and police were trying to rescue them, said the OC.

## ASSAULTING COP BCL activist sent to jail

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Pirojpur

A Pirojpur court yesterday sent a man to jail on charges of assaulting a police officer in the district's Indurkani upazila.

The accused -- Toukir, 19, student of Indurkani Degree College -- is a local Chhatra League activist, said Habibur Rahman, officer-in-charge of Indurkani Police Station.

Sub-inspector Manmatho Halder of the police station filed a case against Toukir around 10:00pm on Saturday.

According to the case statement, Toukir and two of his friends were riding a motorbike on Saturday when police officers signaled them to stop at a checkpoint. Ignoring the signal, they tried to cross the checkpoint.

Police then forced them to stop. At this point, Toukir punched an on-duty assistant sub-inspector on his face, the case statement added.

Police then detained Toukir on the spot and later showed him arrested after the case was filed.

Israfil Khan Newaj, general secretary of Indurkani upazila unit Chhatra League, said Toukir was an activist of the party but obtained no post.



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina hands over a crest to a probationer assistant superintendent of police from the 36th BCS batch on the Police Academy Parade Ground in Rajshahi yesterday.

PHOTO: PMO

## Be friends of people

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to take it further forward. "We'll build the country as Golden Bangladesh as dreamed by the Father of the Nation. So, it's essential to ensure peace and security."

"The police are efficiently performing their duties and for that we've been able to eliminate militancy and contain terrorism. The drive against narcotics is going

on and it'll continue so that these 'dark issues' are removed from the country," she said.

She instructed the new ASPs to perform their duties with utmost honesty, sincerity and devotion, and uphold the glorious role of the members of Bangladesh Police played during the Liberation War and meet the expectations of the people.

She distributed medals among Mohammad Salahuddin, Mohammad Khairul Kabir, Saiful Islam Khan, and Mohammad Abdullah and for their outstanding performances in different fields of the course.

Hasina mentioned that the government introduced "999" emergency service and people were getting the help.

Probationary officer Sarmin Akter

Chumki conducted the parade as its commander.

Some 117 ASPs, including 17 female ones, took part in the training. The prime minister later planted sapling of a mango tree on the academy campus.

Ministers, parliament members, diplomats of different countries, high civil and military officials were present on the occasion.

## Faithfuls flip overnight

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Contacted, Prof Akhtaruzzaman said, "Ducus is a representative of the students and it has a constitution, so it will run as per its constitution."

But there are no clear instructions in the Ducsu constitution on the moral degradation of a member. The constitution says, "The president shall have power at any time in the best interest of union to dismiss any office bearer or member of Executive Committee or to dissolve the Executive Committee as a whole and call for fresh election."

NEW LEADERS WARN ACTION

AGAINST EXTORTIONIST

The new acting president Nahian yesterday warned of stern actions against those BCL men who would be found involved in extortion.

"If we get evidence of extortion or tender manipulation against any BCL man, the Chhatra League will take action against him or her," he said at a press briefing at the DU's Madhur Canteen yesterday.

Nahian also said he would lead the organisation as per the instructions of the prime minister.

Briefing reporters, newly BCL acting



Nahian and Lekhak

general secretary Lekhak Bhattacharjee said it would be a big challenge for the new president and general secretary to form different committees and arrange the next council of the Chhatra League within 10 months.

Shovon and Rabbani were removed from the posts of BCL president and general secretary for their controversial activities on Saturday night.

Chhatra League Senior Vice-President Al Nahian Khan Joy and Joint General Secretary Lekhak Bhattacharjee have been given the charges of acting president and general secretary.

## A dream lost and found in Mali

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With help of an interpreter, the imam listened to his story in the morning and told him that he could live in an orphanage near the mosque and look for work.

Within a week, Salahuddin became a labourer in the area, earning considerably less than what a day labourer earned in Bangladesh in those days.

"But I didn't want to go back to Bangladesh and face my parents."

As he learnt Bambara, the language spoken in the area, he got a security guard's job at a local market after a few months.

"I worked there for two years and managed to save some money, with which I attempted to go to Italy via Algeria. I contacted a local trafficker and gave him all the money I had."

He soon reached Algeria only to find out that he had been swindled by traffickers again.

He along with 20 other young men



Salahuddin and his family in their home.

PHOTO: STAR

from different countries were detained by law enforcers.

"I was in jail for four months before I was deported to Gao area in Mali. I was wandering aimlessly a few days later and I asked a young man whether he could help me go to Bamako."

"He asked me about myself. After I told him my story, he took me to his father who was the local commander of police."

The officer helped him go back to Bamako. I also got the number of his daughter Sajuchi, who was a university student in Bamako.

In Bamako, he got back his security guard job and started saving up again.

Within a year, he was able to open a cigarette shop on the side.

He then began meeting Sajuchi occasionally.

"I liked her when I saw her first and wanted to marry her. But she wouldn't hear any of that."

But after a few months, Salahuddin's wooing bore fruit and they got married.

Meanwhile, seven years had passed since he had left Bangladesh. He had settled in a country where he never wanted to go in the first place.

Eventually, the couple had two sons and two daughters.

"Years passed by, but I didn't

have any contact with my family in Bangladesh. I was still ashamed [of not being able to send the money to buy back the land] and didn't have the money to visit."

Bangladeshi peacekeepers started operation in Mali in 2013, Salahuddin remembers.

By sheer chance, he met a few Bangladeshi soldiers on the street one day and started talking to them.

He soon became friends with many Bangladeshi army men working there.

In 2015, the army officers made arrangements for Salahuddin and his wife and children to come back to Bangladesh for a visit. The officers arranged their visas, plane tickets, and even gave them some cash.

"I met my family back home and after I returned to Mali, our soldiers also helped me set up a clothing store here. I later opened another store. I can't thank Bangladeshi soldiers enough for helping me make a life here for myself."

## Jubo League rogues under scanner now

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Asked whether the two were given show-cause notices, he said summoning someone to the tribunal is considered as serving show-cause notices.

According to the Jubo League charter, a tribunal meeting is convened to resolve any problem of the organisation and take action against its leaders involved in criminal and unethical activities.

Jubo League sources said the two leaders are going to lose their posts as the AL chief is angry over their "misdeeds".

At Saturday's meeting, the AL chief gave her decision to remove BCL president and general secretary Rezwanul Haque Chowdhury Shovon and Golam Rabbani for their controversial activities.

According to the sources, she resented her party men's various criminal and unethical activities, and said she does not like "excesses".

Yesterday, this correspondent talked to three AL central leaders, and all of them said the removal of two top BCL leaders was a signal from the party president, and that she wants to purge her party and its associate bodies of errant elements.

"The removal of Chhatra League

president and general secretary is just the start," said one of them seeking anonymity.

At the beginning of Saturday's meeting, Hasina said she didn't want to celebrate her birthday on September 28 after seeing the agenda of the meeting. Celebrating her birthday topped the agenda.

A couple of party leaders then said they wanted to celebrate the day with festivity.

At one stage, AL Joint General Secretary Jahangir Kabir Nanak, also ex-chairman of Jubo League, informed her that Jubo League already took up month-long programmes, including doa mehil and discussions, to mark the day.

At this, Hasina angrily said she was very much aware of incidents of "extortion" by some Jubo League leaders, and the celebration of her birthday would be nothing but a veiled attempt to legalise extortion money, said meeting insiders.

"I don't want any doa mehil to be organised with extortion money," she was quoted as saying by an AL central leader.

Hasina further said she had warned a Jubo League leader to stop extortion but he didn't pay heed to her warning.

The AL president then showed her deputy Obaidul Quader a photo in her mobile phone in which a Jubo League leader was brandishing a gun.

She also showed it to her other party colleagues at the meeting, and said, "Not a single procession was brought out after Bangabandhu's assassination. But now these people are staging showdown with firearms."

One of the central leaders, who attended the meeting, identified the man carrying the firearm as Khalid Mahmud Bhuiyan.

"We have been in power for three consecutive terms. Many people have made fortunes, but the fate of ordinary activists of my party remains unchanged," the leader quoted the AL chief as saying.

The Daily Star yesterday tried to contact Samrat and Khalid over their mobile phones but couldn't reach them.

Saturday's meeting also fixed December 20-21 for the party's triennial council.

At the meeting, Hasina urged her party colleagues to find new leadership for the party.

"The time has come for me to retire. I have to go. You will have to find new leadership for the party," a central committee member quoted

her as saying.

She also expressed disappointment at the party high-ups' failure to hold councils of grassroots units, and said a party cannot run this way, mentioned meeting sources.

Yesterday, the AL in a press release said it decided to hold conferences of all expired grassroots units before the national council.

Quader already directed presidents and general secretaries of all district and city units in this regard, and asked them to hold councils of all expired committees by December 10.

## AL leader

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murder case with Savar Police Station against nine named and eight to nine unnamed people.

The accused are Mikail Mollah, 60, Anwar, 60, Morin Hossain, 45, Moktar Hossain, 40, Swapan, 38, Sujat, 38, Babu, 26, Munir, 20, and Ripon, 20, all neighbours of Mazid.

Police primarily suspected the murder happened over previous enmity, ASP Saidur added.

Inspector Saiful Islam, investigation officer of the case, said they arrested Moktar and were interrogating him.