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HUMAN TRAFFICKING

Victims still stranded in India

Police want to visit there to bring them back; some remain traceless

MUNTAKIM SAAD

Some of the girls trafficked to India and forced into prostitution by a transnational racket are still stranded in the neighbouring country, while a few, including a minor, are yet to be traced.

A police team now wants to visit India to rescue and bring back the Bangladeshi victims, and interrogate those arrested in connection with the trafficking.

At least 10 victims, mostly TikTok users, were trafficked by the racket recently, according to police.

The Daily Star learnt names of the six victims, including a minor, who are still stranded or untraceable in India.

Md Shohidullah, deputy commissioner of Tejgaon Division, wrote a letter to the inspector general of police, seeking permission to send a three-member investigation team to India.

Speaking to The Daily Star yesterday, the Tejgaon DC said the matter is still under process.

After a video clip of a 22-year-old woman being tortured and sexually assaulted went viral on social media, Indian police, in May, arrested Rifadul Islam Ridoy, 26, along with five other Bangladeshis from Bengaluru.

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Students of Viqarunnisa Noon School and College take a happy selfie on their first day back on the Shiddeswari campus after a break of more than a year due to the Covid-19 pandemic. They radiated excitement as they went back to school to submit their recent assignments yesterday.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

XULHAZ MURDER

Accused asks for death by firing squad

Court sets Aug 31 for verdict delivery

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

An accused in the Xulhaz-Tonoy murder case told a judge that he would prefer death by the firing squad in public, if the court was to give him the death penalty.

At the end of yesterday's closing arguments of the proceeding, Arafat Rahman Siam, member of militant outfit Ansar al Islam, said, "Sir, if I get the death penalty in the case as a militant, please order for my execution by the firing squad."

Siam was given the death penalty in another case in February.

He repeated the sentence twice before Judge Majibur Rahman of the Anti-Terrorism Special Tribunal set August 31 to deliver the verdict in the case.

Siam is one of the eight members of Ansar al Islam accused in the case.

He did not say why he

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3rd Covid wave imminent

Warns India's home ministry panel, seeks better medical preparedness for children

AGENCIES

A committee of experts constituted under the National Institute of Disaster Management (NIDM) of India's home ministry has warned of an imminent third wave of Covid that could peak around October.

It also sought better medical preparedness for children who might be at similar risk as adults.

The report of the committee has noted that "paediatric facilities — doctors, staff, equipment like ventilators, ambulances, etc are nowhere close to what may be required in case a large number of children become infected".

It has called for prioritising vaccination among children with co-morbidities and a special focus on those with disability. The report has been submitted to the PMO.

Even with "strict interventions", the peak of the third wave is expected to arrive by late October, the experts have concurred with earlier assessments of different institutions. Several studies have spoken of the likelihood of a third wave but these are estimates.

The vulnerability of kids as they haven't


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ROAD TO FREEDOM
THIS DAY IN BANGLADESH LIBERATION WAR HISTORY

Indira writes to Chou on Bangladesh

AUGUST 24, 1971

SHAMSUDDOZZA SAJEN



INDIRA'S LETTER TO CHOU
Indira Gandhi made yet another important breakthrough by writing directly to her counterpart in China, Premier Chou En-lai, on Bangladesh affairs. This is the first time an Indian prime minister had sent a communication to China since the Sino-Indian conflict of 1962. Indira Gandhi's communication was said to have been on the line of the one addressed to the heads of states or government of many countries in June and July, highlighting the humanitarian aspect of refugees from East Pakistan, the financial burden imposed on India because of 8 million refugees and the need for the creation of conditions for their return to home.

\$200M CHINESE LOAN FOR PAK PROJECTS
Pakistan had submitted to China a list of projects to be financed from the \$200 million loan offered in November, 1970. Pakistani President Yahya Khan's economic adviser MM Ahmed told the Associated Press of Pakistan today that China had sent a team to Pakistan for the study and investigation of these projects. Ahmed said 33 percent of the loan was in the form of commodity under which various items had been brought including three coasters which had already arrived in Chittagong. China would also supply one lakh tonnes of rice for East Pakistan, he added.

MUKTI BAHINI READY TO MEET FRESH OFFENSIVE
Five months after the Martial Law regime's crackdown in Bangladesh the Mukti Bahini emerged as a fiery force and fought the Pakistani army of occupation to a near standstill. A Mukti

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Woman claims SI stole Tk 2.5 lakh during raid

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A woman has alleged that a sub-inspector "took Tk 2.5 lakh" from her home in Dhaka's Rupnagar area during a drive on Thursday.

The woman, aged around 55, alleged that SI Masudur Rahman of Rupnagar Police Station took the money she earned by selling cattle and asked her to keep mum. If she does not, he threatened to implicate her in a narcotics case otherwise.

The SI, however, denied taking any money from her.

During the drive, police picked up the woman, who is also the owner of the property, along with two others and later showed them arrested under section 74 of the Dhaka Metropolitan Police Ordinance.

The next day, the women were freed upon paying a fine at the court.

On Saturday, the

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New Delhi opens first 'smog tower'

AFP, New Delhi



AFP, New Delhi

India's capital New Delhi opened its first "smog tower" yesterday aimed at reducing the air pollution blamed for thousands of premature deaths every year, but experts were sceptical.

Concentrations of tiny deadly particles in Delhi's air regularly exceed safe limits by up to 20 times, particularly in winter when its 20 million people are enveloped in a noxious grey blanket of smog.

Forty giant fans on the 25-metre (82-foot) tower will pump 1,000 cubic metres of air per second through filters that halve the amount of harmful particulates in a radius of one square kilometre (0.4 square miles), according to engineers.

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Lightning strikes kill 7 in Dinajpur

4 teens among dead

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

At least seven people, including four teenaged boys, were killed and two others injured as lightning struck in Dinajpur town and Chirirbandar upazila yesterday afternoon.

Mozaffar Hossain, officer-in-charge of Dinajpur Sadar Police Station, said some boys took shelter in a tin-roofed house in the town's Newtown area when rain began. The boys were playing games on their mobile phones.

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PRAYER TIMING AUGUST 24

Fajr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib	Esha
AZAN	4-30	12-45	4-45	6-33
JAMAAT	5-05	1-15	5-00	6-36
				8-30

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

Bodies of 398 migrants sent home from Jeddah

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

At least 398 bodies of Bangladeshi migrants were sent from Saudi Arabia's Jeddah region in the 2020-2021 fiscal year following efforts taken by the Bangladesh Consulate General in Jeddah.

Employers of 391 of the workers paid for the expenditure of sending the bodies, which saved almost Tk 9 crore, the consulate general said in a recent letter to the expatriates' welfare ministry.

The seven other bodies were flown home with the expenditures borne by the Bangladesh government.

Talking to this correspondent on a messaging app, Aminul Islam, labour counsellor at the Bangladesh Consulate General in Jeddah, yesterday said in the 2019-2020 fiscal year, 591 bodies of Bangladeshi expatriates arrived in the country.

As per the consulate general data, about

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Scores of people surround an official of Barishal General Hospital, who is handing out tokens for the first dose of the Sinopharm vaccine. As only a 100 tokens were being handed out, people rushed to the hospital to collect theirs as soon as possible. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: TITU DAS



Breathing exercises won't prevent Covid, BUT CAN CERTAINLY HELP

STAR HEALTH DESK

While Covid-19 presents mild symptoms in many, some cases become severe as respiratory symptoms start to appear. For protection, getting vaccinated is necessary. But if you still cannot get the vaccine, besides wearing masks and following other health guidelines, investing time in breathing exercises that strengthen your lung capacity can help.

Any form of exercise that may lead to you requiring more oxygen than your resting breathing

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HygineX
Instant hand sanitizer

