



MIGRANT BOAT CAPSIZE

8 Bangladeshis feared missing

Say families after the boat sank in Med last week; no official version available yet

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Narsingdi

At least eight Bangladeshis are feared to have gone missing after a boat carrying migrants to Italy from Libya capsized in the Mediterranean Sea, say family members.

However, there was no official confirmation from the foreign ministry or the Bangladesh embassy in Tripoli of the eight going missing as of filing this report last night.

According to media reports quoting survivors, the boat carrying at least 41 people capsized off Tunisia last week.

All the eight are from Narsingdi's Belabo upazila. They are Moklesur Rahman, 20, and Kamal Hossain, 34, of Kangalia village; Masud Rana, 22, of Bhatigram village; Monir Hossain, 22, Rabiul Islam, 33, and Raihan, 22, of Dulalkandi village; Swadhin Miah, 20, of Laxmipur village; and Emon, 20, of Dewanchar village.

Speaking to The Daily Star yesterday, family members said the eight left Bangladesh in phases about five to six months ago with the help of local manpower broker Zakir Hossain and his aunt Shahinur to migrate to Italy. Each of them paid Tk 10 lakh to 12 lakh to the broker, they claimed.

"I talked to my brother over the phone around 8:00pm on Thursday. He told me that they would start their boat journey within a few moments. I tried to reach him

SEE PAGE 6 COL 3



This passenger shed along Atish Dipankar Road is in such a bad shape that it can barely be used. The photo was taken in the capital's Kamalapur yesterday.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

BNP has no global support

Says Hasina, asks party leaders to bury differences



STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Awami League President Sheikh Hasina yesterday asked party leaders to leave internal feuds behind and work unitedly to get the party elected for the fourth time in a row in the upcoming national election.

Hasina said this at a meeting of the party's Central Working Committee, the highest decision-making body of AL, at the Gono Bhaban.

She also instructed the party leaders and activists to conduct election campaigns highlighting the government's achievements, and the differences between the AL and BNP

SEE PAGE 6 COL 5

AL spreading 'disinformation' to Indians

Fakhrul alleges ruling party labelling BNP as 'anti-Hindu'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir has said Awami League "spreads disinformation to Indians" that BNP is an anti-Hindu organisation.

"People of the country no longer believe in such propaganda," he said at the inaugural ceremony of the representatives' conference 2023 of Bangladesh Hindu-Buddha-Christian Welfare Front yesterday.

"Do the people of this country believe it? Have you ever seen it? We can firmly say that they [members of religious minority communities] live safely when BNP is in power," Fakhrul said.

He accused the AL government of portraying BNP as an anti-Hindu organisation.

The BNP leader said homes, shops, and businesses of the people from religious minority communities were mostly "grabbed by AL men".

He also claimed that members of religious minority communities do not feel secure when AL is in power.

Ukraine missiles shot down over Crimea bridge

Claims pro-Russia official; 20 Ukrainian drones downed near Crimea

AFP, Moscow

Russian air defence forces shot down three Ukrainian missiles over a bridge connecting Moscow-annexed Crimea to the Russian mainland, an official said yesterday.

"Air defence forces shot down two enemy missiles over the Kerch Strait. The Crimean bridge was not damaged," Sergei Aksyonov, the Russian-installed governor of the Crimean peninsula, said on social media.

In a later statement, he said that Russian air defence forces had shot down another Ukrainian missile targeting the bridge.

He urged locals to remain calm.

Pictures on social media showed columns of smoke rising in the vicinity of the bridge.

Separately, the Russian defence ministry said that the Kyiv regime attempted to strike the Crimean bridge with an S-200 anti-aircraft guided missile.

Later in the day, the defence ministry reported a new Kyiv attempt to target the bridge with an S-200 missile.

The missiles were detected and intercepted

by Russian air defence systems, the ministry said, adding that there were no victims or damage.

Earlier yesterday, Russia said that its forces shot down 20 unmanned Ukrainian drones near the Crimean peninsula where Kyiv has stepped up attacks.

Fourteen drones were downed by air defence systems and six more through electronic warfare, the defence ministry said.

Russian foreign ministry spokeswoman Maria Zakharova said Moscow condemned "these terror attacks".

"Such barbaric actions cannot be justified and will not go unanswered," she said in a statement.

Kyiv, which says it plans to take Crimea back, has been targeted by Russian President Vladimir Putin's pet projects.

Crimea, annexed by Russia in 2014, has been targeted by Kyiv throughout Moscow's Ukraine offensive but has come under more intense, increased attacks in recent weeks.

Meanwhile, Russian defence ministry

SEE PAGE 6 COL 7

Doctors voice worries over Khaleda's health

Says Fakhrul

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The medical board formed by the Evercare Hospital for the treatment of BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia has expressed serious concerns over her health condition, party Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir said yesterday.

"They (doctors) repeatedly said she needs to be sent to an advanced treatment centre abroad immediately," Fakhrul said after offering a munajat at the grave of BNP leader Arafat Rahman Koko, also the youngest son of Khaleda Zia, at Banani Graveyard.

Khaleda was admitted to Evercare Hospital for a health checkup on August 9.



Musk says cage fight with Zuckerberg will be in Italy



AFP, Washington

Elon Musk said Friday that his much-hyped cage fight with Mark Zuckerberg would take place in Italy, as authorities there confirmed talks about hosting a "great charity event."

While any showdown between the two tech titans has yet to be officially confirmed, Musk said on his X social media platform -- formerly known as Twitter -- that arrangements were advancing.

"I spoke to the PM of Italy and Minister of Culture," Musk wrote, referring to Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni. "They have agreed on an epic location."

Meta chief Zuckerberg responded on his Threads social network, posting a photo of himself shirtless and pinning down an opponent in his "backyard octagon."



In an aerial view, homes and businesses that were destroyed by a wildfire are seen in Lahaina, Hawaii, on Friday. The death toll from the Maui wildfires rose to 80 on Friday as search teams combed through the ruins of Lahaina. Story on page 2.

PHOTO: AFP

Baloch senator picked as Pak caretaker PM

REUTERS, Karachi

Pakistani Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and opposition leader Raja Riaz agreed yesterday to name Senator Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar as caretaker premier to oversee elections, the Prime Minister's Office said.

Kakar, a lesser known politician from the southwestern province of Balochistan, will name a cabinet and head a government to steer the nuclear-armed nation through an economic and political crises until a new government is elected.

"The prime minister (Sharif) and leader of opposition have jointly signed the advice which will be sent to the president for approval," the statement said.

Pakistan's Geo News said President Arif Alvi approved Kakar's appointment.

Under Pakistan's constitution, a neutral caretaker government oversees national elections, which must be held within 90 days of the dissolution of the parliament's lower house - which in this instance means early November.

The choice of caretaker prime minister has assumed heightened importance this time because the candidate will have extra powers to make policy decisions on economic matters, and amid fears the elections may be delayed by as much as six months.

The Election Commission has to draw new boundaries for hundreds of federal and provincial constituencies and, based on that, it will give an election date.



Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar