

DHAKA

173 return home from Myanmar prisons

STAFF CORRESPONDENT,
Cox's Bazar

A total of 173 Bangladeshi citizens, who have been held imprisoned in Sittwe (Akyab), the capital of Myanmar's Rakhine State, for one to three years, returned to Bangladesh yesterday.

They were picked up from a Myanmar ship "Chin Dwin" waiting in the deep sea and ferried to BIWTA jetty on Bankkhali river in Cox's Bazar at around 1:15am yesterday, said district administration officials.

They were later handed over to relatives, except one who has a criminal charge to his name, around 2:30pm after conducting their health check and immigration, said an official wishing anonymity.

Among the 173 Bangladeshis, there were 3 women who hailed from Bandarban Sadar upazila.

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A traffic cop serves his eight-hour shift amidst the scorching sun in the capital's Zero Point area. Around 1,800 traffic police personnel remain on the road in two shifts -- from 6:00am to 2:00pm and 2:00pm to 10:00pm. A heatwave has been sweeping the nation for over a week. The photos were taken recently.

PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN, PRABIR DAS

TRUE GRIT
Despite struggle, traffic cops carry out their duties amid heatwave

SIRAJUL ISLAM RUBEL

It was 11:00am on Tuesday.

Drops of sweat trickled down Mohammad Shamim's forehead, as he stood resolutely at the Shahbagh intersection since 6:00am.

The air was heavy with heat, and the constant movement of vehicles with blaring horns made it difficult for anyone to stay there for more than a few minutes.

Yet Shamim, a traffic constable, remained steadfast in his duty, navigating the traffic under the blazing sun, and would have to stand there in this heat for another three hours, till 2:00pm.

"There is no scope to leave my position. If I divert my attention for even a moment, it creates a jam on the road," he said.

An umbrella and a police cap were the lone items available to ease the effects of the heatwave during Shamim's eight-hour shift.

During his shift, he can only take shelter for a few short moments in the nearby police box if a colleague takes his place.

A heatwave has been sweeping the nation for over a week, with temperatures as high as 42.6 degrees Celsius being recorded. According to the Meteorological Office, relief from these heat waves might not be coming anytime soon.

Not only Shamim, but some 3,500 police personnel

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CERTIFICATE FORGERY

Detectives now looking for source of 'security papers'

At least 30 people under DB surveillance

MOHAMMAD JAMIL KHAN

Detectives are now searching for the source of the security papers that were used to provide forged BTEB certificates.

A syndicate has been involved in this since 2018.

Security papers are special papers used for issuing government educational certificates.

The syndicate has so far provided at least 5,000 certificates. It had access to the technical and computer sections of the BTEB, which sold out the forged certificates for between Tk 35,000 and Tk 50,000 to at least 30 institutes.

These institutes later sold these certificates again, for at least Tk 2 lakh.

"We are now investigating to know from where the huge number of security papers were collected, be it from Bangladesh Security Printing Press or anywhere else," Mashiur Rahman, deputy commissioner of the Lalbagh Division detective branch of police told The Daily Star.

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Sources in police said they have kept the movement of at least 30 people under watch, including former Bangladesh Technical Education Board chairman Ali Akbar Khan and examination controller Kepayet Ullah.

Detectives already interrogated Ali Akbar and Kepayet on Tuesday. Harun Or Rashid, chief of the Detective Branch of Police, said investigators gave the ex-chairman two days for a proper explanation.

If he cannot do so within the stipulated time and investigators find evidence of his involvement in certificate forgery, legal action will be taken against him, he added.

"Besides, the examination controller also signed the [fake] certificates for months," he said.

Detectives have already arrested six people in this connection, including Ali Akbar's wife Sehela Parvin.

The other arrestees are -- BTEB system analyst ATM Samsuzzaman;

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DEATH OF 2 CUET STUDENTS IN ROAD CRASH

Of expired licence and fitness certificate

Bus driver arrested, students continue demo



FM MIZANUR RAHAMAN

Police yesterday arrested the driver of the bus that rammed a motorcycle carrying three students of Chittagong University of Engineering and Technology on April 22, leaving two of them dead and the other critically injured.

The arrestee, Md Tajul Islam, 45, a driver of Shah Amanat Paribahan, was arrested from the port city's Kotwali area around 1:30pm yesterday, said police.

Confirming the matter, Chandan Kumar Chawkrabarty, officer-in-charge of Rangunia Police Station, said, "The driver went into hiding after the accident. Tipped off, we arrested him in the Kotwali area."

"We are looking for his driving licence to seize it," he added.

According to a copy of Tajul's driving licence, obtained by The Daily Star, it expired on March 7 this year. Sources in BRTA confirmed that Tajul is a heavy vehicle licence holder and has

permission to operate passenger buses.

The BRTA sources also said the 43-year-old bus was running under Shah Amanat Paribahan after renovating some parts, even though its tax token and fitness certificate expired in February this year.

The 52-seat bus was registered by Chattogram BRTA in 1980. As per data, its owner is Haradhan Nandy.

Meanwhile, students of Cuet have continued their demonstration for the third consecutive day, demanding justice. They sought compensation of Tk 2 crore each for family members of the two deceased Cuet students.

The agitating students blocked the Chattogram-Kaptai connecting road by placing barricades with wooden logs in front of the main gate of Cuet campus in Rangunia at around

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15-DAY EID RUSH

'74 students lost lives on road'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

At least 74 students were killed in road crashes during 15 days of the Eid rush this year, meaning more than four students died daily. They were among the 367 people killed across 358 road crashes in between April 4 and 18 this year, Road Safety Foundation said yesterday.

Students accounted for 20.16 percent of deaths during this time.

The organisation said a significant increase in road crashes and fatalities were reported during this year's Eid, compared to the previous year.

At least 285 people were killed in 240 road crashes in 14 days during the Eid rush last year. So, road crashes and subsequent deaths saw a 39.20 percent and 20.19 percent rise compared to last year.

RSF prepared the report after compiling media reports and their own findings.

Prof AI Mahbub Uddin Ahmed, chairman of RSF, said the country incurred losses amounting to Tk 1,330.5 crore caused by the crashes over 15 days. He said they made the estimate as per the International Road Assessment Program.

He said while media reports showed 493 people were injured in the 15 days, the actual number would be over 1,500. At least 454 injured people were admitted to National Institute of Traumatology & Orthopaedic Rehabilitation in just three days during Eid vacation.

Also, 156 people were killed in 183 bike-related road crashes, which is 42.50 percent and 51.11 percent of total deaths and crashes respectively.

The organisation mentioned 10 reasons -- including unfit vehicles, reckless driving, unskilled and unfit drivers, absence of any work schedule and weak traffic management behind the road crashes.

RSF gave 13 recommendations -- including uninterrupted execution of the Road Transport Act-2018 -- to reduce crashes.

Saidur Rahman, executive director of the foundation, was also present at the event.



Just opposite Sony Square market in Mirpur-1, a rickshaw coming from the wrong side caused this motorcyclist to hard-brake and fall over. After getting up, the biker threatened to hit the rickshaw puller. While he was at fault, violence should never be the answer. The photo was taken yesterday afternoon.

PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

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