



Indian Coast Guard detain 79 Bangladeshi fishermen

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Chattogram

The Indian Coast Guard reportedly apprehended two Bangladeshi fishing trawlers along with 79 crew members and fishermen.

The owning firms of the trawlers, FV Meghna 5 and FV Layla 2, claimed that their vessels were apprehended while fishing near the Sundarbans in Bangladeshi waters around 11:00am on Monday.

Commodore Maksud Alam, director general of the Department of Shipping (DoS), said that they are verifying whether the trawlers had crossed the maritime border mistakenly.

He added that the Bangladesh Coast Guard is in communication with their Indian counterparts regarding the matter.

Abid Hussain, office secretary of the Bangladesh Marine Fisheries Association, also claimed that the trawlers were fishing in Bangladeshi waters when they were apprehended by the Indian Coast Guard.

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On a boat, two people, who are barely visible due to thick fog, catch fish in the Halda river in Chattogram's Hathazari upazila. The photo was taken near Madhunaghat area on Monday.

PHOTO: RAJIB RAIHAN

Step up to build new Bangladesh

Yunus urges women

BSS, Dhaka

Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus yesterday urged the country's women to come forward to materialising the dream of building a new Bangladesh.

He made the call while speaking at a women's conference held at Osmani Memorial Auditorium in the capital.

The Ministry of Women and Children Affairs and the Ministry of Social Welfare jointly organised the conference, marking the Human Rights Day and the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women.

Prof Yunus said the new generation of women has the potential to create exemplary history before the world.

The girls of other countries cannot show the strength and courage that the girls of Bangladesh have shown in the July-August revolution, he said.

The chief adviser said all the girls in Bangladesh should take to the streets one day, and that could be December 10.

Chaired by Women and Children Affairs Adviser Sharmeen S Murshid, the conference was addressed, among others, by Women and Children Affairs Secretary Mantaz Ahmed and the girls who led the July-August uprising.



INDIAN FOREIGN SECY'S VISIT

Good start for mending ties

Say foreign policy analysts

PORIMOL PALMA

Indian Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri's visit to Dhaka and his meetings with top officials have created a new scope to rebuild the two countries' relations, which have seen strains since the political changeover on August 5, foreign policy analysts said.

The free, frank and candid discussions, in which both sides were able to speak their minds, were imperative to clear the smoke and start afresh, they said.

During his one day visit on Monday, Vikram Misri called on Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus and Foreign Adviser Touhid Hossain, and held the annual Foreign Office Consultation (FOC), which covers all aspects of bilateral relations.

It was the first high-level official talk after the ouster of Awami League regime and Sheikh Hasina taking shelter in India, which is known as strong supporter of the former Bangladesh prime minister for her secular policy and guaranteeing India's security concerns.

Alleged repression against minorities post-August 5 and Hindu priest Chinmoy Krishna Das Brahmachari's arrest in Bangladesh triggered demonstrations in various parts of India. Meanwhile, attacks on the Bangladesh mission in Agartala and the desecration of the Bangladesh flag in Kolkata sparked widespread demonstration in Bangladesh.

Additionally, Dhaka accused the Indian media spreading false propaganda against Bangladesh and the July uprising. Bangladesh foreign ministry also summoned Indian High Commissioner Pranay Verma last week in this regard.

"Amid all these, the FOC brought diplomacy back on track. This is a good start for building mutual trust," said Dr Imtiaz Ahmed, former professor of international relations at Dhaka University.

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Reduce VAT on newsprint, ensure press freedom

Noab urges Media Reform Commission

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Members of Newspaper Owners' Association of Bangladesh (Noab) yesterday met the Media Reform Commission and spoke for press freedom, independent journalism, and reduction of VAT on newsprint.

During a views-exchange meeting with the commission, they demanded the necessary reforms in the Bangladesh Press Council and Department of Films and Publications (DFP) and underscored the necessity of lessening politicisation in newspaper ownership.

Kamal Ahmed, chief of the commission, stressed that the media should be free from any political influence so that they can work for the interest of the people.

He underlined the need for media free from political influence given the grievance expressed over the failure and controversial role of many

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REGIONAL RESISTANCE

PART 7

During the 1971 Liberation War, a number of regional forces emerged across Bangladesh. Research suggests that dozens of such forces actively participated in the war. Just as the freedom fighters trained under the sub-sectors and the Bengal Regiment fought valiantly, these regional forces also displayed immense courage in battles against the Pakistani army. In this month of victory, we bring you the stories of some of these heroic forces.

Shibbari Youth Camp & George Bahini

AHMAD ISTIAK

One of the largest training camps for freedom fighters during the Liberation War was set up in Shibbari of Gangarampur in West Bengal by George JM Das, a retired Bangalee soldier of the East Pakistan Rifles (EPR).

Over 2,500 freedom fighters were trained at this camp during the early stages of the war. Additionally, he formed a separate force known as the George Bahini.

George, a legendary figure known as "George Bhai" across Dinajpur, was a trainer, an organiser in the early stages of the war, and later a freedom fighter.

In September of this year, The Daily Star visited several upazilas in Dinajpur and spoke to over 10 freedom fighters of George Bahini and learnt about the story of this unique force, which had been largely forgotten.

The heroic exploits of George and his force are documented in

several books. "Dinajpur George Bahinir Obodan O Mahanayak George Das" is a book dedicated to George and his force. Additionally, "Dinajpur Iitias Somogro" and "Muktijuddhe Brihottor Dinajpur Zila" also mention their contributions. George joined the EPR in 1959. In 1969, the Pakistani army sent him to forced retirement from the rank of lance corporal, citing a leg injury. During his military service, George received specialised training in field engineering, training, and explosives.

FORMATION

According to the book "Dinajpur George Bahinir Obodan O Mahanayak George Das", the day after Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's historic speech on March 7, a Sangram Parishad was formed in Dinajpur. At that time, George decided to begin training the local youths to prepare for the impending struggle.

Immediately following the March 25 massacre, George travelled from Birol to Dinajpur Sadar. The next night, with

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BFIU seeks account details of Sheikh Hasina, Rehana

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Bangladesh Financial Intelligence Unit (BFIU) has sought information on the bank accounts of deposed prime minister Sheikh Hasina and her sister Sheikh Rehana.

The anti-money laundering agency has also sought details of the accounts linked to the Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman Memorial Trust, according to a letter sent to banks last week.

Hasina serves as the chairperson of the trust while Rehana is a trustee.

Banks have been instructed to submit all the relevant information, including transaction records, account opening forms and other related information within five working days, the BFIU letter stated.

Additionally, banks have been asked to provide account details of Chowdhury Jafarullah Sarafat, a well-known television commentator, as well as his brother Chowdhury Habibullah Sarafat and sister Dalia Chowdhury.

The three are siblings of Chowdhury Nafeez Sarafat, chairman of the board of trustees of Canadian University of Bangladesh and a notable beneficiary of the Awami League regime.

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Illegal parking of three-wheelers and goods-laden pickups on the Feni-Noakhali-Laxmipur regional highway near Madonmohan High School causes traffic congestion on the road every day. The photo was taken at Chowmuhani Bazar in Noakhali's Begumganj upazila yesterday morning.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

Tigers under the cosh

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh were staring at a first ODI series defeat against the West Indies in 10 years after being bowled out cheaply in the second match at Warner Park in St Kitts yesterday.

Having lost the first match of the three-match series by five wickets at the same venue on Monday, the Tigers got bowled out for 227 runs in 45.5 overs after being asked to bat first.

Jayden Seales was the wrecker-in-chief with four wickets for 22 runs from nine overs while the rest of the West Indies bowlers got into wickets column as Bangladesh failed to get any momentum in their innings.

A fighting 62 off 92 balls from veteran Mahmudullah Riyad coupled with 46 from opener Tanzid Tamim 45 from Tanzim Sakib ensured that the Bangladesh bowlers had something to bowl at.

The West Indies openers, in reply, got off to a flying start, reaching 109 for no loss in 20 overs, with Brandon Kings (52 not out) and Evin Lewis (49 not out) in the chase.

Bangladesh had last lost an ODI series against this opposition back in 2014 before racking up four consecutive series victories.

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