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Sanctions imposed on Taliban Bring bin Laden to justice by Nov 14: UNSC

UNITED NATIONS, Oct 16: The Security Council has given Afghanistan's Taliban Islamic movement one more month to deliver Osama bin Laden for trial in the twin US embassy bombings in Africa or face limited sanctions, reports AP.

The council unanimously agreed Friday to freeze the Taliban's overseas assets and ban flights owned, leased or operated by the Taliban from taking off or landing internationally if the Saudi exile isn't turned over by Nov. 14.

"It is the earnest hope of the United States that the Taliban will cooperate with the international community in bringing bin Laden to justice within this period and that we will not need to implement these sanctions," Deputy US Ambassador Nancy Soderberg told the council after the vote.

The resolution demands the militia deliver bin Laden for trial in the United States or another country with jurisdiction on charges he masterminded the 1998 US embassy bombings in Nairobi, Kenya, and Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, which killed 224 people.

Taliban leaders have said they want proof of bin Laden's involvement in terrorism before turning him over, saying he is a guest of the Afghan people.



Osama bin Laden

The Taliban has been deeply distrustful of the US accusations following the Aug. 20, 1998, American air strikes on bin Laden's camps in Afghanistan, launched because of what Washington said was evidence he planned more attacks on Americans.

The militia's representative in New York, Abdul Hakeem Mujahid, denounced Friday's vote, saying it would add misery to the long-suffering people of Afghanistan while undermining efforts to resolve the bin Laden issue.

"We did want to solve the problem by talks and negotiations and still it is our policy," Mujahid said in an interview. "But putting pressure, it will have more negative effects than the positive ones, and it will make the problem more complicated than it was before."

Hard-line Muslim groups in Pakistan vowed today to protect bin Laden and warned that sanctions against Taliban would anger Muslims worldwide.

The resolution also allows for exemptions to the flight ban for humanitarian reasons or to allow Afghan citizens to perform the religious pilgrimage to Mecca.

President Clinton applauded the vote as a strong message that the world won't tolerate international terrorism. "The choice between cooperation and isolation lies with the Taliban," Clinton said in a statement.

The UN sanctions are slightly more modest than those imposed by the United States earlier this year, which include a ban on US trade and investment in Taliban-controlled parts of Afghanistan and prohibit Americans from using the national carrier Ariana Afghan Airlines.



The 20 million pound Millennium Wheel — known as the London Eye — pictured at an angle of 65 degrees in London Friday. The 1,500-tonne wheel will be lifted into upright position over the River Thames. —AFP photo

No move to clear Cabinet confusion

By Nazmul Ashraf

The government was yet to make clear the confusion over the two junior ministers, Dr Mohammad Alauddin and Hasibur Rahman Swapan, as five days passed yesterday after the Election Commission ruling stripping them of their parliamentary seats.

Senior ministers and officials appeared cautious, preferring not to make any comments about the matter. But they indicated yesterday that it all depended on the prime minister. Constitutional experts have suggested that no sooner had the two ministers lost their parliamentary seats than they ceased to be members of the cabinet.

Some influential ministers, approached by The Daily Star, agreed with the suggestion but declined to put their comments on the record.

The EC ruled on October 11 that the two, elected MPs as BNP nominees, lost their seats "with immediate effect" for joining the government 20 months ago against their party decision.

Since the EC verdict, newspapers have published a series of reports quoting the relevant articles of the Constitution and constitutional lawyers, which show that the two ministers do no longer qualify to retain their offices. These reports have also quoted several unnamed ministers sharing the view.

"It is absolutely an affair of the prime minister," said Law Minister Abdul Matin Khasru to The Daily Star and some other papers after the EC verdict. The minister was not available yesterday for fresh comments.

Contacted by phone last night, Cabinet Secretary Kazi Shamsul Alam told The Daily Star that he did not have the permission to talk to the press on the issue. He declined to say anything when asked if he had received any instructions from the prime minister or his office about the two "controversial ministers".

It could not be learnt if Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina

would settle the matter before her visit to Australia. She leaves Dhaka today for Australia on a four-day trip.

Meanwhile, 'deputy minister' Swapan returned to the capital yesterday from his home town Serajganj while 'State Minister' Alauddin was in the city.

The two could not be contacted until late last night.

An influential AL leader last night explained that the government did not do anything wrong with the Alauddin Swapan issue. "Neither have we claimed that the two are still ministers nor have we allowed them to perform any ministerial duties since the EC verdict."

Sources said the two have not attended offices since the ruling but continued to occupy their official residences.

About their stay in official residence, the AL leader pointed out that a former minister could stay on up to one month after losing cabinet job.

According to the AL leader, the government was awaiting publication of the gazette on the vacation of parliamentary seats of Alauddin and Swapan.

But the publication of the gazette is meaningless as far as the date of effectiveness of the EC verdict is concerned.

Meanwhile, it was not clear if the two "ministers" would eventually go to the Supreme Court to challenge the EC ruling. They had earlier asked their lawyers to prepare for writ petitions, reportedly advised by a section of the ruling party leaders.

"There was a preliminary decision to file the writ and I prepared a draft accordingly," M R Hasan, one of their lawyers, told The Daily Star last night. But, he said, he did not hear anything further from his clients "in the past few days".

Swapan had told the press earlier that he had accepted the EC verdict and would not go to the court. Alauddin had been avoiding the press since the EC decision.

BNP turns down EC's invitation

Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) once again turned down an Election Commission invitation for discussion on the forthcoming local body elections, reports UNB.

"There would be no discussion before reconstitution of the EC and resignation of the Chief Election Commissioner (CEC)," BNP Secretary General Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan said yesterday.

A BNP source said the EC in a letter dated October 13 to the BNP Secretary General had invited him to attend a discussion over the local body elections on October 18. The invitation letter, signed by an additional secretary of the Commission, reached the BNP office yesterday.

Mannan Bhuiyan in a statement said the government sent a farcical proposal for discussion through the EC, ignoring the long-standing demand of the opposition.

He urged the CEC to disassociate himself from the 'fascist and vote-thief government' and step down.

Bangladesh to mourn death of Nyerere today

Bangladesh will observe Mourning Day today to pay homage to the departed soul of Julius Nyerere, the former President of Tanzania, reports UNB.

National flag will fly at half mast atop all government, semi-government, autonomous buildings as well as Bangladesh missions abroad as a mark of respect to the late leader of Tanzania, said an official handout.

Transport workers' leader shot dead in city

By Staff Correspondent

A transport workers' leader was gunned down by a group of assailants near Mohammadpur Bus Stand last night, police and hospital sources said.

The dead was identified as Shabbir, 25, General Secretary of Mohammadpur-Sanik Akhra Route Paribahan Samikha Union, hospital sources said. The motive behind the murder could not be known immediately.

Hospital sources said the gunman shot Shabbir while he was sitting in the transport workers' office near Mohammadpur Bus Stand at about 8:45 pm.

Fatally injured Shabbir was rushed to Dhaka Medical College Hospital where the on-duty doctors declared him dead at about 9:30 pm.

When contacted, Mohammadpur police said late last night that they had heard about the incident and their officials were sent to the spot to investigate the incident.

One stabbed to death in city

By Staff Correspondent

A young man was stabbed to death by a gang of assailants near rail-line at Jurain under Shyampur thana in the city early yesterday.

The dead was identified as Moteab, 26, son of Alim Majhi, a resident of DIT plot in Gandaria, police and hospital sources said.

The motive behind the murder could not be known immediately. Hospital sources quoting relatives of the victim said, Din Islam and Uzzal, along with some others allegedly called Moteab out of his residence at about 12:30 am yesterday.

Later local people recovered Moteab from near the rail line with severe stab injuries and rushed him to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) where he died at about 2 am yesterday.

The body was sent to the DMCH morgue for autopsy. None, however, was arrested in this connection till filing of this report. Nurjahan Begum, mother of the dead, filed a murder case with Shyampur thana in this regard yesterday.

2 abducted boys rescued, 7 held in Mymensingh

MYMENSINGH, Oct 16: Police rescued two kidnapped children from Sadar and Muktagachha thanas and arrested seven people with arms in this connection, reports UNB.

Gangsters had kidnapped 9-year old Azizul Huq, son of Soharab Ali, on the night of October 8 from his house at village Tel under Fulbaria thana, and demanded a ransom of Tk 3 lakh.

Acting on a tip-off, police raided the house of Moslemuddin at village Kaziara under Muktagachha thana Friday morning and rescued Azizul and another 7-year old boy Fazlul Huq of Ghatail, Tangail. The kidnappers also demanded ransom from the parents of Fazlul Huq.

Moslemuddin was taken into custody. On his confessional statement, police raided the house of Abdur Rahim under Sadar thana and arrested Salam, Kamrul, Sharif, Tofazzal, Selim and Soharab and seized three pipeguns from their possession.

4 held from MV Ocean being interrogated

From Staff Correspondent

KHULNA, Oct 16: Four persons including a British lawyer are reportedly being questioned by police and customs personnel for their alleged unauthorized presence in the MV Ocean that ran aground in the Bay near Heron Point on October 8 due to leakage in its body.

The Panamanian ship carried 14,000 tonnes of Indonesian cement for A Hossain and Company. It earlier unloaded 10,000 tonnes of cement at Chittagong Port, an official of Mongla Port Authority said.

Names and identities of the four persons could not be known till this evening.

Mongla port and customs officials are investigating how and when the four persons boarded the ship and what links they had with the 23 crew including the captain who are already under police custody for interrogation.

Police said the crew were caught while leaving the ship in a mechanised watercraft

Thursday night, declaring the vessel abandoned.

The rummage team of the customs has seized passports of the crew and a general diary has been filed with Mongla thana in this connection.

Customs personnel also seized different contraband items including electronic goods from the vessel that was exclusively meant for carrying imported cement.

Till this evening, there was apparently no effective security measure to save the ship's property from being looted.

The Master of the ship has been asked to appear before the port authorities tomorrow to explain the reasons for having the ship without any formal declaration as per international maritime rules.

When asked Nazmul Hasan, Chairman of Mongla Port Authority said "It is our duty to take necessary steps to save the vessel and it is being done properly."

Prof Razzaque's condition critical

By Staff Correspondent

National Professor Abdul Razzaque has been put on a respirator as his condition deteriorated yesterday evening at BIRDEM, family sources said. The octogenarian professor who taught political science at the Dhaka University was admitted to the hospital on Monday after he developed breathing problems.

Bangladesh troops may join E Timor Peacekeeping Force

Bangladesh soldiers are likely to join the East Timor Peacekeeping Force led by Australia armed forces assigned to restore peace and stability in East Timor, official sources said here yesterday, reports UNB.

"Negotiations are on for Bangladesh's participation in the East Timor Peacekeeping Force (ETPF) after the Australian government made a formal request to the Armed Forces Division recently," said an official requesting anonymity.

"Bangladesh is considering the request positively," he said. The official said Bangladesh was requested for a light and infantry brigade comprising four battalions. Soldiers from medical core, engineering core and infantry division might be included in the brigade.

JP leader Azam Khan arrested

Police yesterday arrested Jatiya Party leader Azam Khan from a private guest house in the city on charges of anti-social activities, reports BSS.

Police said Khan was arrested along with a woman.

They have also seized one bottle of foreign made liquor from his room in the guest house.

Udichi incident Killers won't be spared, says Nasim

Jessore, Oct 16: Home Minister Mohammad Nasim today dismissed the oft-repeated threat of the opposition that the government would be dislodged through mass movement, reports UNB.

"None would be able to dislodge the Awami League government through movement as it is capable enough to deal with it," he told a public meeting at Jessore this afternoon.

The Home Minister said the Opposition is trying to protect the killers of 10 people at Udichi function. "The killers have been identified and none of them would be spared," he said at the same venue where the tragic incident took place seven months ago.

Nasim was critical of the opposition leader Begum Khaleda Zia for "extending support to the killers." "She should have expelled the killers from her party instead of supporting them," he said.

Without naming Ershad Shikdar, Nasim said a notorious criminal of Khulna had bought support of a former Speaker at Tk 20 lakh.

Hitting hard at BNP and JP chiefs, Nasim said, "Wait and see. How much money has been taken by your party leaders from the terrorists is being investigated."

'Security Week' at ZIA from today

By Special Correspondent
Civil Aviation Authority of Bangladesh will observe a security week from today at Zia International Airport.

The security system will be strengthened in the airport during the week by enforcing the regulations properly, a CAAB source said.

OIC Secy-Gen KSA to back Bangladesh's candidate

Saudi Arabia will lend its support to Bangladesh's candidate Humayun Rasheed Chowdhury for the post of OIC Secretary General, reports UNB.

Saudi Foreign Minister Prince Saud Al-Faisal said this when Bangladesh Foreign Minister Abdus Samad Azad met him in Riyadh on Friday, according to a message received in Dhaka yesterday.

Azad thanked the Saudi Minister for his country's support to Bangladesh's candidate for OIC Secretary General and also in the UN Security Council election.

Azad urged his counterpart to recruit more skilled and semi-skilled labourers from Bangladesh. He sought Saudi investment in Bangladesh.

Mystery shrouds death of teenage maid in city

By Staff Correspondent

Mystery shrouds the death of a teenage maid inside a flat at Babar Road in city's Mohammadpur area yesterday.

The dead was identified as Jharna, 13, who had been working as a maid at the third floor flat of Monwara Begum for about three years, police and hospital sources said.

Jharna was found hanging by the neck inside a room of the flat yesterday noon.

Hospital sources said that there was blood in the lower portion of Jharna's abdomen and on her private part.

Monwara Begum, while filing a case with Mohammadpur thana yesterday, told police that Jharna was her relative, but she failed to mention the name of Jharna's father and her permanent address.

Monwara Begum was living in the flat along with her child and Jharna. Her husband has been staying in Kuwait for the last few years, police said.

In the FIR, Monwara Begum said that she, along with her baby, went to visit one of her relatives at Ibrahimpur at about 11 am Friday, leaving Jharna alone in the flat.

On return at about noon yesterday, she found Jharna hanging by the neck with her scarf from a bar inside a room of her flat, she claimed.

But neighbours claimed that Monwara was seen in the flat till 2:30 pm Friday.

The OC of Mohammadpur thana told The Daily Star last night that police were waiting for the autopsy report. The body was sent to Dhaka Medical College Hospital morgue for autopsy.

Cyclone

From page 1

were heavy to moderate rains in the coast and some parts of the country including the capital.

PTI from Calcutta adds: A cyclonic storm is likely to hit coastal West Bengal early this morning bringing in its wake heavy to very heavy showers in four southern districts of the state.

Met department sources said the cyclone was centred over central Bay, 550 Km south east of Port Blair, moving in a north-westerly direction at a gale wind speed of 70 to 80 kilometres per hour, and may lash many parts of Midnapore, Howrah, Hooghly and North-24 Parganas districts with very heavy rains.

'Bomb' recovered from DU arts bldg

By DU Correspondent

Police recovered 'a bomb' from the Arts Faculty building of the Dhaka University Friday night, leaving the teachers and students in a state of panic, university authorities said.

A guard of the Arts Faculty building informed the authorities after he found the bomb wrapped in scotch tape inside a bathroom on the second floor of the building.

The Vice Chancellor called up the police control room at Shahbagh to take necessary steps soon after the 'bomb' was found at around 10 pm.

Following the call, a group of police personnel from the control room went to the spot and recovered the 'bomb' and took it to their control room at Shahbagh, sources added.

Security officer of DU, Mohammad Shafiq Azim, who was present during the recovery of the 'bomb' told The Daily Star yesterday night that the 'explosive might have been a petrol bomb'.

"Police told me that it was a bomb but they did not disclose what type of explosive it was," Shafiq Azim said quoting the police.

But both Ramna police and police control room said that they were not aware of any

bomb recovery on DU campus.

When contacted, they said 'No case or complaint was filed with the police in this regard'.

Talking to this correspondent yesterday, both VC and proctor of the university confirmed the bomb recovery incident. They, however, said that they were not sure whether there was an explosion.

I asked the police to look into the matter when I was informed that a bomb was found inside the Arts Building on Friday night," said Vice Chancellor Prof A K Azad Chowdhury.

The VC, however, refused to make any comment. Proctor Prof AKM Nurunnabi said that he heard the news of the recovery of a bomb from inside the Arts Faculty building.

Meanwhile, Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) at a rally on the campus yesterday condemned the bomb explosion incident inside the proctor's office and bomb plantation at the Arts Building.

They held Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) responsible for both the incidents and demanded immediate arrest and punishment to those responsible.

Transport workers staged a demonstration carrying coffin in front of the Jatiya Press Club yesterday. Annach suffered burn injuries while asleep in a staff bus, set afire by unidentified elements at Motijheel on October 10. He died at DMCH on Friday.

Strong quake shakes southern California

LOS ANGELES, Oct 16: A magnitude-7.0 earthquake centered in the Southern California desert shook buildings from downtown Los Angeles to Las Vegas early today and knocked an Amtrak train off its tracks, reports AP.

No serious injuries or major damage were immediately reported.

Amtrak said its Southwest Chief en route from Chicago to Los Angeles derailed in the Mojave Desert near Ludlow, 200 kilometers northeast of Los Angeles.

There were 155 passengers on the 25-car train and none were injured, said an Amtrak official at the Wilmington, Delaware operations centre. Passenger Sharon Kosinski said there was no panic on board.

"Most people were sound asleep," she told CNN. "It was rocking and rolling, back at the sleeper cars... That's the part of the train that's completely off the tracks."

She said one passenger dislocated her shoulder. Amtrak said it planned to take the passengers to Los Angeles by bus.

Karen Kahler, a seismologist at the California Institute of Technology, said the quake hit at 2:46 am and was centered 51 kilometers north of Joshua Tree, or 160 kilometers east of Los Angeles. There were multiple aftershocks.

The earthquake was felt across Southern California and at least as far away as Yuma, Arizona. Between 5,000 and 10,000 people lost power in Los Angeles and transformer explosions were reported.

Downed power lines started small brush fires near Palm Springs.

Three arrested with arms in city

By Staff Correspondent

Police arrested three people from the city's Khilgaon area on Friday night and recovered arms and ammunition from them.

The arrested were identified as Sarwar Morshed Chowdhury, 22, Mohammad Selim, 24 and Abdullah Yunus, 21, police said.

Acting on a tip-off, a team of Khilgaon police arrested the three in front of a laundry in Khilgaon area at 10:35 pm, police said.

The recovered arms and ammunition included a 22 bore revolver, 166 bullets, eight cartridges and a magazine of pistol.

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