

Ulfa chief not held

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northeastern Meghalaya state of the country.

"Rajkhowa and another Ulfa leader Raju Baruah surrendered, and then they were arrested. They are now in Guwahati. They will be produced before a court," Indian Home Secretary Gopal Krishna Pillai told reporters yesterday.

The announcement by Pillai came three days after the Indian media had reported that Rajkhowa had been in the Indian government custody, while an Indian television channel in Guwahati claimed yesterday that Rajkhowa spoke to it denying his arrest or surrender.

The Indian government's announcement also contradicts media reports that he had been arrested in Dhaka on Monday and that the Bangladesh authorities handed him over to India on Wednesday night, following which he was taken to Delhi on Thursday.

Meanwhile, displaying a photograph of Rajkhowa on the screen, another Indian TV channel NDTV aired an audio track yesterday claiming that the voice was of the Ulfa chief, which said he was not arrested and was speaking from a place in Bangladesh from where he had spoken earlier as well. The media speculations have been going on for four days.

In response to a query whether the Bangladesh government will officially respond to the recent related reports, Sahara Khatun yesterday said the media published whatever they thought had happened, and her government has nothing to say about it.

Talking to The Daily Star, Bangladesh Rifles Director General Maj Gen Mainul Islam said yesterday that he was not aware of handing over of any Ulfa leader to India by his government.

Asked if he knew whether Rajkhowa had been arrested in his country, the Bangladesh border security force chief said that is the job of the police, he would not know about it.

Asked whether he knew if Rajkhowa had crossed the

Youth beaten to death in Chittagong

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

border from Bangladesh, he replied, "Nothing of that sort happened at the border."

Palab Bhattacharya reported from New Delhi that the Indian government yesterday announced that BSF arrested Rajkhowa at Dawki of Meghalaya bordering Sylhet region of Bangladesh after being on the run from law for 17 years.

"They have just come. Everything will take place in due course. Wait for that," said Indian Home Secretary Gopal Krishna Pillai, adding that the Ulfa leaders, who surrendered, will have to face judicial process as several cases are filed against them. He also said talks with them will be held in due course.

53-year-old Rajkhowa, who has been out of India since 1992, faces several cases including on the charge of waging war against the nation, and his arrest would be a major setback to Ulfa which has been fighting for a separate nationhood for more than two decades.

According to Indian reports, Rajkhowa and his deputy commander-in-chief Raju Baruah, along with eight others including their family members, surrendered to the Indian government.

Among those who reportedly surrendered are Rajkhowa's wife Kaveri and two children, Baruah, his wife and one child, the wife of another senior Ulfa leader Sashadhar Choudhury, and their son.

The surrendered Ulfa leaders and their family members were then reportedly brought to Guwahati by a helicopter and were lodged at the 4th Assam Police Battalion headquarters in the city.

According to the Indian government's claim, last week, two other top Ulfa leaders Sashadhar Choudhury and Chirantan Hazarika, who had allegedly been in Dhaka, were arrested by BSF after they had been handed over by the Bangladesh authorities.

Another senior Ulfa leader Anup Chetiya has been confined in a Bangladesh jail since his arrest in 1998.

2010 WC

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Capello had reason to be happy as his men drew the United States, Algeria and Slovenia.

Ironically it was David Beckham, who plays for the Los Angeles Galaxy, who pulled out the ball, which paired up the Americans with England in the World Cup for the first time since 1950 when the United States pulled off a shock 1-0 win.

Host South Africa was given a tough assignment, getting 1998 winners France, Central America powerhouse Mexico and Uruguay.

Group B has Argentina, South Korea, Nigeria and Greece, with Germany, Australia, Ghana and Serbia making up Group D.

The Netherlands have Japan, Cameroon and Denmark in Group E, Italy has New Zealand, Paraguay and Slovakia in Group F while in the final Group H, European champions Spain go up against Honduras, Chile and Switzerland.

The draw, which saw the 32 qualified teams split into eight groups of four for the first round stage of the June 11-July 11 tournament, laid down the battle lines for what will be the first World Cup to be played on African soil.

With the eyes of the footballing world firmly focused on this historic city perched on the southern tip of the continent, it was an evening full of symbolic significance both for Africa and for South Africa coming as it did just 15 years after the end of the apartheid era.

After a show that featured both traditional and modern African music, the stage was handed over to South African-born Academy Award winning actress Charlize Theron who took on the duties of main presenter to be joined on stage later by other sporting celebrities including Beckham.

First, as pre-arranged, out of the seeded Pot 1 were hosts South Africa who will be playing in just their third World Cup and who, at 86th in the world, are the lowest-ranking team in the competition.

They were followed in turn by heavyweights Argentina, England, Germany, Netherlands, Italy, Brazil and Spain.

It was then a question of who would go up against them from the three remaining pots which had been carefully assembled to ensure that teams from the same continent would be kept apart as far as possible.

The four Asian qualifiers, three North and Central American teams and minnows New Zealand, representing Oceania, came out of Pot 2. First out was Mexico putting them into the opening match against South Africa in Johannesburg on June 11.

The five remaining African sides and three remaining South Americans were allocated from out of Pot 3 leaving the remaining eight European teams from the final Pot 4.

The latter contained the two most dangerous floaters in the draw - France and Portugal - and when Portugal were flung in with Brazil the atmosphere turned electric in the main auditorium of the Cape Town International Convention Centre.

The EU Ministerial Council, the decision making body of the organisation, will be meeting in Brussels on December 10-11 to finalise its position on the COP15.

Three women

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spot and another on way to hospital.

Eight of the injured were admitted to Rajshahi Medical College Hospital and the rest to Puthia health Complex and other local clinics.

District AL president and former MP Advocate Tajul Islam Mohammad Farook visited the hospital to see the injured and district BNP president and former MP Nadim Mostafa conveyed his sympathy to the bereaved family members.

Describing the adverse impacts of climate change on agriculture, economy, geography and bio-diversity of the least developed countries, Hasina demanded a separate fund for the affected countries to tackle the grim challenges of climate change.

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On the sidelines of the CHOGM events, Sheikh Hasina exchanged pleasantries with British Queen Elizabeth II and Prime Minister Gordon Brown, Australian Prime Minister Kevin Rudd and Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh.

On the sidelines of the

CHOGM, she also held bilateral talks with Trinidad and Tobago Prime Minister Patrick Manning, Malaysian Prime Minister Dato Sri Mohd Najib bin Tun Haji Abdul Razak,

and former MP Advocate Tajul Islam Mohammad Farook visited the hospital to see the injured and district BNP president and former MP Nadim Mostafa conveyed his sympathy to the bereaved family members.

He said international community must help vulnerable countries. Asked about a possible deal in Copenhagen, he said: "We have to... We can't fail."

Sources in the agriculture ministry say each card will cost about Tk. 300.

BNP Council

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Sources said a few party leaders plan to get a proposal placed by field-level councillors for creating the post of 'co-chairperson' or 'senior vice-president' for Tarique in the council. They are confident that the proposal will be accepted unanimously.

Hundreds of BNP leaders,

workers and supporters have

been gathering at the party's

central office in Nayapaltan and

the chairperson's Gulshan

office for the last few days.

Chairperson Khaleda Zia has

been holding a series of meetings at her office till midnight to review the progress of the council.

Party's Secretary General

Khandaker Delwar Hossain and

the conveners are monitoring

the activities of sub-committees

directly to make the council

successful.

Congratulating Khaleda,

Delwar said, "She [Khaleda] has

created history through her uncompromising leadership to uphold the country's independence and sovereignty."

Leaders and activists of the

party and its associated bodies

last night congratulated

Khaleda at her Gulshan office

on her getting re-elected.

Party insiders said eight new

leaders might be included in the

national standing committee as

six posts in it remains vacant

while two leaders might lose

their posts because of ill health.

Since the number of posts in

the central executive commit-

tee will be increased to 351, many former student leaders are trying to persuade the party high command to include them in the committee.

Khaleda Zia, RA Gani, Khandaker Delwar Hossain, Moudud Ahmed, Khandaker Mosharrif Hossain, Khandaker Mahabubuddin Ahmad, Abdul Matin Chowdhury, M Shamsul Islam and Lt Gen (retd) Mahabubuddin Ahmed are members of the standing committee.

Of them Khandaker Mahabubuddin and Matin

might be dropped from the

committee while leaders like TH

Khan, Nazrul Islam Khan, Brig

Gen (retd) Hannan Shah, MK

Anwar, Abdulla Al Norman and

Mirza Abbas might be made its

members.

Party insiders said a post in the standing committee might be kept vacant primarily for Tarique Rahman. If the post of 'co-chairperson' or 'senior vice-president' cannot be created for him, he will be made a standing committee member after his return from abroad.

A number of reformist leaders

will be ousted from party

committees. However, some

reformists like Lt Gen (retd)

Mahabubur Rahman and Maj

(retd) Hafizuddin Ahmed will

continue with their current

posts.

Mahabub is a standing com-

mittee member while Hafiz is

the vice-president of the central

executive committee.

Land commission

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the forest department planted

trees in their ancestral land

saying those were state-

owned properties.

Garo leaders said there are

many cases in which land

grabbers took their ancestral

land or bought it in exchange

for a small sum of money,

which was no less than chea-

ting, since the Garos did not

have documents of land.

"I assure you that we can

establish their right to land by

settling disputes so that they

can live a better life," the food

minister said calling for build-

ing a society where people of

all religions and ethnicity live

harmoniously.

"We are human beings and

that is our identity. No effort of

vested quarters who want to

use religion in politics will

work," Razzaque said, lauding

the Garos' tradition of

cheating to the Almighty.

The Garos believe fruits

and roots collected from the

jungles were their main food

thousands of years ago and

they did not have seeds to

grow any food. One day they

prayed to their god for seeds

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