

India yet

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"No date has been set for next talks," he said.

India has given Bangladesh data on water flow at the Gazoldoba barrage point while Bangladesh has provided India with data on water available at the Dhalia point during the lean period, said a government high-up wishing anonymity.

Earlier, Bangladesh sent letters to the Indian authorities in December for holding further talks and exchanging data on the Teesta.

"We do not have any idea when the deal could get through," Altaf Ali, secretary at Bangladesh's water resources ministry, told The Daily Star last month.

During Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's Bangladesh visit last September, the scheduled Teesta waters deal was put a brake to hours before signing because of opposition to it by Mamata Banerjee.

According to Indian media reports, she objected spiritedly to the quantity of Teesta water that the Indian central government had decided to give Bangladesh.

However, since the postponement, the Indian prime minister, foreign minister, security advisers and other government figures have assured Bangladesh several times of an inkling of the Teesta deal "shortly."

On October 22, Mamata Banerjee was quoted in the Indian media as saying, "Some people created confusion on (Teesta water issue)... we maintain the best relations with Bangladesh and I hope India and Bangladesh will work together."

The Paschimbanga government on November 15 formed a committee headed by river expert Kalyan Rudra to find an acceptable solution to the Teesta waters issue. The committee was scheduled to submit its report by December 2011. But it reportedly fell behind and sought more time.

"They [India] postponed it after finalising everything. Now they are conducting their own study. India may come up with a fresh offer at the next talks. Then we have to review it before making any decision," said a water resources ministry official, seeking anonymity.

In December, Bangladesh asked India for statistics on Teesta water available at the upper point of the Gazoldoba barrage to determine the quantity of water before it is diverted to Bihar through the Mahananda river.

India sought a similar form of statistics on the Teesta river at the Dhalia point in Bangladesh.

Now India is withdrawing 75 percent water of the Teesta river, which originates in Tibet and enters Bangladesh through Bhutan, Sikkim and Jalpaiguri.

The river's flow on the Bangladesh side falls drastically during the dry season because of the dams built in India.

Millions of people in northern Bangladesh depend on the Teesta for irrigation of about 632, 000 hectares of cropland in the dry season.

The much-talked-about Teesta deal has remained pending for more than two decades.

The two countries finally agreed to strike an interim deal on Teesta water sharing last year after many unsuccessful attempts to reach a consensus on the issue.

Two Indian officials visited Dhaka in January to discuss and monitor the flow of the Ganges river.

"The agenda for the meeting was a monitoring of the Ganges. The Teesta issue was not on the list," said JRC member Mir Sazzad.

Bangladesh and India now have a water-sharing treaty only on the Ganges, out of 54 international rivers flowing to Bangladesh through India.

The Indian authorities have allegedly blocked and diverted the waters of 43 of 54 international rivers, depriving millions of Bangladeshis of their rightful share of the waters.

Bangladesh is also holding talks with India on sharing the waters of some other rivers. Among the rivers are the Dudhkumar, Manu, Khawai, Gumti and Muhuri rivers to meet its future water demands.

Bomb attacks

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diplomatic plates and Israel's parliamentary television channel said the wife of Israel's Defence attaché and her driver were among four people hurt. The Tbilisi bomb was defused safely by Georgian police.

Israel had put its foreign missions on especially high alert ahead of the February 12 anniversary of the assassination, in 2008, of the military mastermind of Lebanon's Hezbollah guerrillas, Imad Moughniyeh.

Iranian-backed Hezbollah had vowed to avenge Moughniyeh's death in a Damascus car-bombing, blaming it on the Jewish state.

Israel is also believed to be locked in a wider covert war with Iran, whose nuclear program has been beset by sabotage, including the unclaimed killings of several scientists.

"Iran, which stands behind these attacks, is the largest exporter of terror in the world," Netanyahu told lawmakers from his Likud party in Jerusalem.

He linked the incidents to allegations of similar but foiled attacks in Thailand and Azerbaijan last month for which, he said, Iran and its "proxy" Hezbollah were responsible.

There was no immediate comment from Tehran or Beirut.

The New Delhi blast took place some 500 metres from the official residence of Indian

Staff killed

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suspects that Ujjal might have been strangled.

The body has been sent to Dhaka Medical College morgue for autopsies.

Quoting Abul Kalam Azad, owner of the jewellery shop, the OC said Azad left for home around midnight leaving Ujjal in the shop. Ujjal used to stay in the shop at night locking the shutters from inside, added the OC.

"The shutters of the shop were down but not locked when I got there around 10:30am. I found Ujjal's body inside," Azad said.

According to the owner, 37 tolas of gold ornaments were looted from the shop.

Ujjal, of Debidwar in Comilla, had been working at the shop for the last four years and got married last month.

Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, reports Reuters.

"I heard a bomb blast near the petrol pump. I went to see what happened and the next thing I saw was the car ablaze. There was a lady and a driver inside the car. The people pulled them out of the car," said Ravi Singh, a witness.

Georgian police prevented a similar incident, defusing a bomb found in a car of an Israeli embassy staff member.

Thailand said last month it had arrested a Lebanese man who had links with Hezbollah and a confiscated cache of explosives. Israel responded by urging its citizens to exercise caution while visiting Thailand.

Separately last month, authorities in Azerbaijan arrested two people suspected of plotting to attack Israel's ambassador and a local rabbi.

In a January 24 speech, Israel's military chief, Lieutenant-General Benny Gantz, accused Hezbollah of trying to carry out proxy attacks while avoiding direct confrontation. Israel and Hezbollah fought an inconclusive and costly war in 2006.

"During this period of time, when our enemies in the north avoid carrying out attacks, fearing a harsh response, we are witnesses to the ongoing attempts by Hezbollah and other hostile entities to execute vicious terror attacks at locations far away from the state of Israel," Gantz said.

"I suggest that no one test our resolve," INDIAN POLICE LAUNCH HUNT

Indian police said yesterday they were hunting for a man on a motorbike suspected of attaching a device to an Israeli diplomat's car shortly before it exploded in New Delhi, AFP adds.

"According to an eyewitness who was present... he saw a man on a motorbike sticking some kind of a device on the rear side of the car," police commissioner BK Gupta told reporters.

Boy hurt

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He complained that some local goons extort him and have been demanding more money recently.

Contacted, Gulshan police said they have detained two persons for interrogation in this connection.

Probe needs

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Khandker yesterday at a press briefing in police headquarters claimed about the "substantial progress" in the investigation but kept from disclosing anything for the sake of the probe.

Meanwhile, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday visited the mothers of the slain couple and assured them of bringing the killers to book as soon as possible.

Mehrun Runi, senior reporter of private television channel ATN Bangla, and her husband Sagar Sarowar, news editor of another private TV channel Maasranga, were killed in their flat early Saturday.

That afternoon, while visiting the crime scene, Home Minister Shahara Khatun said she had directed law enforcement agencies to arrest the killers within 48 hours, which expired yesterday.

On this the IGP yesterday told journalists, "It is not always possible to come out successful within a stipulated time."

Asked whether police have arrested anyone, he refused to share that too. "I cannot say anything at this moment for the sake of a successful investigation," said the IGP.

Assuring that police have given the utmost priority to the case, he said they would soon be able to give positive news since all units of police and Rapid Action Battalion are working sincerely.

Earlier, police detained two security guards, Palash Rudra Paul and Humayun Kabir, and caretaker Abu Taher of the slain journalists' building.

Talking to The Daily Star on Sunday, Monirul Islam, deputy commissioner of the Detective Branch of police, said they had talked with relatives and many friends and colleagues of the killed couple.

"We cannot disclose anything until we produce the killers before you [the media]," he said.

Meanwhile, families of Runi and Sagar will hold two doa-mehfils (prayer sessions) in the capital.

The first doa-mehfil will be held today at 4-4/f/6, West Rajabazar after Asr prayers while another tomorrow at 282, Raisaheb Bazar Boro Masjid on Nawabpur Road, also after Asr prayers, said a press release.

Friends, relatives, colleagues and well-wishers are requested to join the prayers for the salvation of the departed souls.

4 killed

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Meanwhile in Mohakhali, Syed Iqbal Zafar, 38, and Ruma Begum, 25, died on the spot and 10 others were injured when a human haulier going toward Mirpur from Gulshan overturned near Setu Bhaban around 8:45am. According to witnesses, the driver lost control over the steering.

The driver and his helper fled the scene after the accident.

An appeal

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are perhaps unthinkingly subjecting Mahir Sarowar Megh, the 5-year-old son of the murdered couple, to additional trauma and stress by constant exposure to the media questioning.

The boy has already suffered the greatest trauma that a child can possibly experience by being an eyewitness to the murder of both his parents.

We cannot know, or perhaps even imagine, what psychological and emotional impact the sight of his murdered parents might have had on him.

By questioning him to recall details of the incident, we are forcing him to suffer more, and hence running the risk of damaging his condition further.

We appeal to our media colleagues to leave the child alone and help him recover with the love, care and company of his relatives.

We will of course try to cover the story as intensely as we can. However, in doing so we must adhere to one fundamental ethical norm of our profession -- do not hurt or cause pain to the innocent, especially if the person happens to be a child.

-- Mahfuz Anam

Faridee no more

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host of relatives, well wishers and admirers to mourn his death.

The caretaker of Faridee's residence, Rubel, found Faridee lying on the floor of his bathroom in the morning, said relatives of Faridee. His personal assistant Shahin then called a doctor who confirmed the death.

A freedom fighter, Faridee had been suffering from some complications, including lung disease. He was admitted to a city hospital about eight or nine days ago and returned to his residence on Sunday, they added.

As soon as news of his demise went out, grief-stricken relatives, friends, cultural personalities, journalists, and acquaintances rushed to his house.

Faridee's first namaz-e-janaza was held in front of his residence around

Ataur Rahman

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diminished with each and every death on this planet, country and the society I live in. Then came the news of the death of a gifted thespian of our country, Humayun Faridee. In a split of a moment 'is' became 'was'. He was ten years younger than me. I immediately felt that a part of my being had departed with him, that I am further diminished.

I have started mumbling Shakespeare's Macbeth line, changing 'He' from 'She' --- 'He should have died hereafter; There would have been a time for such a word'. Alas death 'a necessary end, will come when it will come (Shakespeare's Julius Caesar).

Humayun Faridee was out and out an actor with every particle of his soul and body. I saw him on stage acting in the role of Keramat in 'Keramat Mongol', written by the famed playwright Selim-Al-Din and produced by Dhaka Theatre. Out of three Keramats, Faridee

Nasiruddin Yousuf

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What struck me about his acting were the pauses he used to take between dialogues it was perfect.

That was the first time I saw someone from this country use pause so beautifully and effectively in acting.

I was mesmerised by how he used the pause to hit the right chords of emotions, build up tension and pull his audience. I was mesmerised to see such execution of a complex instrument of acting from a 25-year-old youth in the open amphitheatre of Jahangirnagar University in 1977.

We decided to award him for the best play.

I still remember it as if it was yesterday: after the award ceremony, he came to me, gave salam and told me that he would like to work in theatres in Dhaka.

He was a very slender boy with long hair. He was not very tall. But that did not stop him from surpassing so many highs throughout his career.

It was in 1978 when he

12:45pm while the second took place at Bangladesh Television complex in Rampura around 2:00pm. His third namaz-e-janeza was held at Bangladesh Film Development Corporation (FDC) after Asr prayers.

His body, kept at Birdem mortuary, will be taken to the Central Shaheed Minar today to enable his well-wishers and fans from all walks of life to pay their last tribute to the thespian.

Faridee will be laid to eternal rest at Mirpur Intellectuals' Graveyard.

Born in Narinda in the old part of Dhaka on May 29, 1952, Faridee was a student of economics at Jahangirnagar University. His passion for acting began in his childhood. In the early 1980s, he joined Dhaka Theatre.

He was well-known for his extraordinary portrayal of roles in different plays,

which included Songsaptak, Pathar Shomoy, Dui Bhai, Sheeter Pakhi, Kothao Keu Nei, Shomudre Gangchil and Kachher Manush.

Midway in his stage career, Faridee joined films and won the hearts of millions through his work. Some of his prominent movies are Dohon, Hulia, Shontrash, Bachelor, JoyJatra Shamolchaya, Bohubrihi, Ekattorer Jishu, Mayer Morjada and Aha. He also directed a few TV plays.

Faridee had been living a lonely life since his divorce from eminent actress Suborna Mustafain 2008.

President Zillur Rahman and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina have expressed deep shock at the death of the veteran actor. They prayed for the eternal peace of the departed soul and conveyed their sincere sympathies to the bereaved family members.

drama group of the country, Dhaka Theatre. Unfortunately his ties with Dhaka Theatre slackened after he joined the film industry.

In an anti-role or in the role of a villain he was the first choice of the mainstream film makers. He reigned as a box office favourite for a long time. He was incomparable in television plays as well as in television films. In fact, his presence was a happening on stage and equally in movies and TV plays and telefilms. He was a powerful actor by any standard. His acting talent can be compared with that of any great actor of our time, nationally as well as internationally. With his death the country has lost a great actor of all time, for he had the power to assimilate the essence of all kinds of diverse characters in his performance with ease. He will be remembered by all media of acting for a long time to come.

He was a regular on the television scene even in his last days.

But he was not in that many theatre plays. His last theatre acting was in the mid 1990s somewhere in 1996 or 1997 in a play called "Bhut".

As a person, Humayun was very emotional. But he left his emotions behind when putting on the shoes of an actor. He was intelligent and logical as an actor.

In his 35 years as an actor, Humayun performed with a logic and intelligence that set him apart from other actors. He did not act with emotion. His acting was what I like to call intelligent acting.

He brought these qualities into all spheres of his acting be that on stage, television or on the big screen. He was the very definition of a modern actor.

Humayan Faridee was with Dhaka Theatre from 1977 to 2012. He was not very regular on the Dhaka theatre scene recently, but he always kept in touch with what was happening in the theatres.

One river

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region, 16 north-east region, seven south-east region, one in eastern hill basin and 19 were flowing over south-west region.

The water resources minister also told the House that Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina had approved in principle formation of a separate organisation styled "Bangladesh Dredging Authority" to look after dredging of rivers and canals across the country.

The premier on different occasions had lamented that the country's rivers were drying and losing navigability for lack of dredging and said around 30,000 km of waterways in the country were reduced to a mere 3,500 km.

She instructed the authorities several times to evict grabbers and take stern action against polluters of the rivers.

Despite the highest political commitment by the government, river grabbing and pollution continue unabated.

Robert Blake

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series of diplomatic, trade and educational events intended to expand bilateral relations.

On the first day of his visit, Blake will call on Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in the evening. He will meet Foreign Minister Dipu Moni tomorrow, sources at the US Embassy in Dhaka said.

Blake is scheduled to attend the Edward M Kennedy 40th Anniversary Commemoration at Dhaka University today.

This commemoration programme would bring together eminent members of Bangladeshi society along with State Department alumni and youth leaders to celebrate American-Bangladeshi friendship and the anniversary of Senator Kennedy's visit to Dhaka in 1972.

During his stay in Dhaka, the US envoy is set to meet some other senior government officials and representatives of the civil society.

Blake will also travel to Chittagong, where he will attend events at the Independent University Bangladesh and Asian University for Women, and participate in a Certificate of Completion Ceremony for madrasa students who have held English language scholarships.

He will also visit a Grameen Bank Borrower's Group site and attend a luncheon hosted by the American Chamber of Commerce as part of the US-Bangladesh Trade Show.

Blake was appointed assistant secretary for South and Central Asian Affairs in May 2009. Alongside Bangladesh, he oversees US relations with India, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Maldives, Bhutan, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan, and Tajikistan.

Sit-in

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for its "failure to run the country and obstructing opposition programmes", Khaleda said, "We want to cripple it."

The former prime minister reiterated her demand for restoration of the caretaker government system, saying nothing short of a non-party neutral government will be acceptable to them (BNP), and it does not matter whatever the title of that government.

"Elections cannot be free and fair under the Awami League government, and using EVM (electronic voting machine). They [govt] are frightened to see people's participation in our programmes. So, they want to hold elections staying in power. But I want to say that no election will be held in the country under this government."

Urging the people to make the March 12 rally a success, Khaleda asked the government to refrain from going for any counter programme and said, "You [govt] have to answer one day if any untoward situation arises due to your counter programme."

Khaleda accused the government of failing to implement its electoral pledges, and said it believes in terrorism, anarchy and politics of killings, not in democracy.

She went on, "At least 12,000 people were killed in the last three years (of this govt's tenure). Killing of a journalist couple proved that people are not safe even in their homes. It's a killer government."

The former premier also criticised the government for its "foreign policy of subservience" and urged the people to ask the foreign minister why the government could not protest the recent killings at the country's border.

"Ask your minister why the killings at border did not stop yet. Our Border guards should take tough action if such killings are not stopped," she said.

Foreign Minister Dipu Moni was elected lawmaker from the constituency where Khaleda was addressing the publically.

Others who addressed the rally included BNP's acting secretary general Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir, standing committee members Khandaker Mosharraf Hossain, MK Anwar, Abdul Moyeen Khan and Brig Gen (ret'd) ASM Hannan Shag and Vice-chairman Shamser Mobin Chowdhury.

Chaired by the party's district unit President Mominul Haque, the rally was conducted by the unit's General Secretary Sheikh Farid Uddin Manik.