

GUJARAT RIOTS PROBE Modi receives clean chit

ANI, Ahmedabad

The Special Investigation Team (SIT) yesterday gave clean chit to Gujarat Chief Minister Narendra Modi in connection with the 2002 Gujarat riots case.

The report said that there was no evidence to prosecute Modi and it ensured full closure report in the case.

The Gujarat court responded to Zakia Jafri's plea and ordered that she be given the Gujarat riots SIT report in 30 days.

Zakia Jafri is the wife of former Congress MP Ehsaan Jafri, who was among 69 people allegedly burnt alive by a rioting mob on February 28, 2002 at the Gulbarg Housing Society in Ahmedabad where the Jafris lived.

The riots killed 790 Muslims and 254 Hindus and 223 more people were reported missing.

Democracy isn't easy

Hillary tells Suu Kyi

AFP, Washington

US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton on Monday offered advice for Myanmar's democracy leader Aung San Suu Kyi as she enters parliament -- it isn't easy.

Hillary, a former first lady and senator who made a run for the US presidency in 2008, hailed Suu Kyi at the US premiere of "The Lady," a biopic on the Nobel peace laureate by French director Luc Besson.

"I did tell her in one of our recent telephone conversations -- she was moving from anicon to a politician. Having made sort of the same journey to some extent, I know that that's not easy," she said.

"Now you go to a parliament and you start compromising, which is what democracy is all about. It's not a dirty word," Hillary said at the screening at the headquarters of the Motion Picture Association of America.

Suu Kyi, who had spent most of the past two decades under house arrest, won her first seat in parliament in April 1 elections which were the most visible sign yet of reforms by reform-minded President Thein Sein.

Pakistani FM may be sacked

IANS, Islamabad

Hina Rabbani Khar, Pakistan's first woman foreign minister conspicuous by her absence from President Asif Ali Zardari's entourage in India, may be on her way out, a media report speculated yesterday.

The News International reported that speculation was doing the rounds in the Foreign Office that Khar may be given a new portfolio in an upcoming cabinet reshuffle and a new foreign minister would lead talks with New Delhi.

Khar, who was just 34 when she was sworn in as the foreign minister last year, was missing when Zardari and his delegation spent a day in India Sunday.

Pakistan's dailies speculated that Zardari considers Khar a lightweight politician.

5 former top cops

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from Dhaka Central Jail yesterday.

Abu Taleb, senior superintendent of Dhaka jail, told The Daily Star that the five former cops walked out of prison around 12:30pm. Three of them are former Inspectors General of Police (IGPs).

Earlier on Monday, the three ex-IGPs -- Ashraf Huda, Shahudul Haque and Khoda Baksh Chowdhury -- and assistant superintendents of CID police Munshi Atiqur Rahman and Abdur Rashid and special superintendent of CID Ruhul Amin obtained bail in the case.

Of them, Abdur Rashid was yet to be released, as he is accused in another case in connection with the attack, Abu Taleb added.

Twenty-four people, including Awami League leader Ivy Rahman, were killed and around 200 others

injured in the grisly attack on an AL rally at Bangabandhu Avenue on August 21, 2004. The then opposition leader Sheikh Hasina narrowly escaped the attack.

Ashraf Huda and Shahudul Haque were charged with assisting financially and administratively in the execution of the attack.

Ruhul Amin, Atiqur Rahman, Abdur Rashid and Khoda Baksh were charged with misleading the case and falsely implicating a petty criminal named Joj Mia to save the real culprits.

Ruhul Amin, Atiqur Rahman and Abdur Rashid were the officials who led the first investigation when Khoda Baksh was IGP.

On March 18, a Dhaka court discharged the six from a case filed under the Explosives Substance Act.

PM flies to Turkey

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network, said foreign ministry sources.

The premier visits the Eurasian country at the invitation of her counterpart Recep Tayyip Erdogan, reports our diplomatic correspondent.

Meanwhile, Foreign Minister Dipu Moni yesterday inaugurated the consulate general's office of Bangladesh in Istanbul.

Members of the Turkish business community and Bangladesh business and investment delegation currently visiting Turkey were present at the inauguration programme, reports UNB.

A special flight of Biman Bangladesh Airlines carrying Hasina and members of her entourage is scheduled to take off from Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport for Ankara at 2:00 pm today.

The premier is expected to reach Ankara Esenboga International Airport at 6:50 pm (local time).

The Turkish premier will receive Hasina at his office tomorrow. She will be given a guard of honour by the Turkish armed forces there, reports BSS.

Later, the two prime ministers would witness signing of agreements between the two countries and address a joint press briefing.

Hasina will pay a courtesy call on Turkish President Abdullah Gul and meet the Speaker of the Turkish Grand National Assembly.

She will also visit the mausoleum of founding father of modern Turkey Mustafa Kemal Ataturk.

Ambassador-at-large M Ziauddin, PM's Principal Secretary Sheikh Md Wahid Uz Zaman and Press Secretary Abul Kalam Azad and a 55-member business delegation led by FBCCI President AK Azad are other members of her entourage.

Hasina is scheduled to return home on Saturday.

19 living legends

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The Daily Star at the ceremony also recognised 56 persons posthumously for their footprints in the overall development of Chittagong from the colonial period to present-day independent Bangladesh. The paper dedicated the Odmmo Chattagram festival to them.

The 56 were recognised for their indelible contributions in such fields as research, literature, folk culture, politics, social service, women activism, entrepreneurship, language movement, education, sports, music and dance and fine arts.

The 19 living personalities awarded the Odmmo Chattagram award were anti-British revolutionary Binod Bihari Chowdhury, educationist Ferdous Khan, National Professor Nurul Islam, economist Nurul Islam, wife of Liberation War martyr and actress Moni Imam, publisher Syed Mohammad Shafi, writer and organiser of Swadhin Bangla Betar Kendra Belal Mohammad, historian and researcher Suniti Bhushan Kanungoe, physician Robiul Hossain, wife of Liberation War martyr and writer Mushtari Shafi, writer Fahmida Amin, scientist Jamal Nazrul Islam, educationist Anupam Sen, artist Sabih Ul Alam, rhymester Sukumar Barua, science writer Muhammad Ibrahim, Captain Azizul Islam, educationist Protiva Mutsuddi and sports organiser Shahed Asgar Chowdhury.

MM Isphani Ltd and AK Khan and Co Ltd were also given the same award for entrepreneurship and social welfare.

Activities of the 56 personalities, who were recognised posthumously, were displayed in brief in a slideshow.

The personalities are scholars Abdul Karim Shahityabisharad, Benimadhab Barua, Enamul Hoque, and Ahmed Sharif, poet Nabin Chandra Sen, litterateurs Mahbubul Alam, Abul Fazal and Shuchorit Chowdhury, collector Ashutosh Chowdhury, Kabial Ramesh Sheel, Kabial Phani Barua, politicians Kazem Ali Master, Maniruzzaman Islamabadi, Jatindra Mohan Sengupta, MA Aziz, Zahur Ahmad Chowdhury, Ashabuddin Ahmed and Sheikh Rafiuddin Ahmed Siddiqui, leading Marxist politician Chowdhury Harunur Rashid, social workers Abdul Huq Dovash, Naton Chandra Sinha, Badshah Meah Chowdhury, physician MA Hashem and Mohammad Omar, woman activist Umratul Fazal, entrepreneurs KK Sen, MA Isphani, AK Khan, Abdul Bari Chowdhury, M o h a m m a d Y u s u f Chowdhury, revolutionaries MasterDa Surya Sen, Pritilata Waddadar, adventurer and scholar Sarat Chandra Das, spiritual personality Gauzul Azam Majibhandari, language movement veterans Abul

Kashem and Mahbubul Alam Chowdhury, journalist Mahim Chandra Das, Abdul Khaleque Engineer, Nurul Islam, Mohammad Khaled, historian Abdul Karim and Abdul Hoque Chowdhury, educationist Nur Ahmed Chairman, Jogesh Chandra Sinha and Pranati Sen, sportmen Kalu Singh, Fazal Karim and Kamal A Khan, musicians Surendra Lal Das, Jagadananda Barua and Nirad Barua, dancer Bulbul Chowdhury, artist Somnath Hore, and singers Mohammad Nasir, Hari Pal and Shefali Ghosh.

With a view to showcasing the port city's rich history, traditions, culture and lifestyle, science and business opportunities and possibilities before Bangladesh and the world, The Daily Star initiated the festival on March 30 at MA Aziz Stadium amid a huge participation of the Chittagong dwellers.

Projecting Chittagong through multiple events at different venues in the port city, the 12-day Odmmo Chattagram festival enthralled the people of Chittagong and attempted to make them proud of their heritage and imbued them with a new belief, hope and dream.

The festival was also aimed at creating the hope that if multi-dimensional development of the port city is ensured, it would lead the country to a change the nation has been waiting for long.

For years Chittagong has remained uncared for due to Dhaka-centric policies.

The Daily Star Editor and Publisher Mahfuz Anam expressed gratitude to two individuals and two organisations--former curator of Chittagong University Museum Shamsul Hossain, Chittagong Women Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CWCCI) President Monowara Hakim Ali, Chittagong Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CCCCI), Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA)--for their outstanding cooperation in arranging the festival. He said the four would be awarded later on.

The Daily Star in association with the people and businesses of Chittagong arranged "Chitromoy Chattala", a photography exhibition; "Chhabir Hat", a painting exhibition; "Natyatv Utsav", a theatre festival; "Chirayat Chattagram", a history showcase; "Chattagram O Biggyan Charcha", a science fair; a film festival; a food festival; a sampan race; a children's festival; a youth festival; and a two-day economic conference over the 12 days.

The four-day "Brands Expo" at the gymnasium of MA Aziz Stadium ended yesterday. A prelude to the festival, a History Conference was held on March 16 and 17 at the

Theatre Institute Chittagong. Academicians and researchers from Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi and Calcutta University as well as from Bangladesh presented their studies on Chittagong. They stressed the need for preserving and promoting the glorious heritage of the port city.

A "Historical Journey" was held on March 25 and 27 with around 400 children of the city's 18 schools to help them rediscover places in the city that have been there for ages and to familiarise them with their architectural characteristics.

People taking part in the programmes hailed the initiative of The Daily Star.

They hoped that the newspaper would continue to organise similar programmes in different parts of the country to project their history, heritage and potentials.

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Bachchu Razakar to the country," she said after inaugurating a new police station at Banani in the afternoon.

On April 3, the International Crimes Tribunal-2 issued an arrest warrant against Azad for crimes against humanity during the Liberation War in 1971.

He left Dhaka on March 30 and stayed at hotel Capila, owned by his friend Abul Kashem Azad, at Hili Port, Dinajpur, the Rapid Action Battalion said on Monday.

Replying to a question, Shahara said an investigation would be launched to know how Bachchu Razakar had fled the country, UNB reports.

The minister also said members of Border Guard Bangladesh had been put on alert so that no more razakar (wartime collaborator) could flee the country.

Deal signed

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B a n g l a d e s h ' s Communications Minister Obaidul Quader signed the agreement in Kuala Lumpur on behalf of their respective sides.

The MoU came into force immediately and will remain effective for a period of nine months.

"The main objective of the MoU is to cooperate in the planning, development, finance, construction, management, administration and maintenance of infrastructure on the basis of equity and mutual benefit on mutually agreed terms and conditions," read the release.

Malaysian public or private sector firms with relevant expertise will mobilise and invest an estimated \$2.3 billion in the Padma bridge project.

The designated authorities of Malaysia will prepare and submit the technical and financial bid proposals of the project for negotiation. The bridge will be built on a BOOT (build-own-operate-transfer) basis.

Malaysian Prime Minister Dato' Sri Mohd Najib bin Tun Abdul Razak, who witnessed the signing ceremony, talked with Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina over phone for about five minutes.

They termed the event as historic and as a landmark, and expressed their commitment to work closely for further strengthening the bilateral ties between the two countries.

Negotiations on the conditions of the loan and other details will start very soon, Bangladesh officials said after the signing ceremony.

The Malaysian government will appoint a consortium of five contractors to complete the job, reported The Malaysian newspaper The Star.

"Construction is scheduled to commence this year and we hope to complete it

in 54 months," the report quoted Samy Vellu as saying.

Bangladesh's Economic Relations Division Secretary Iqbal Mahmood, Bridges Division Secretary Khandaker Anwarul Islam, Bangladesh High Commissioner to Malaysia AKM Atiqur Rahman, Director General of foreign ministry Golam Rahman and Project Director of Padma bridge Shafiqul Islam were present at the signing ceremony.

The construction of the 6.15-kilometre bridge at Mawa-Jajira point of the Padma is the largest and top-most priority project of the present government. It is also an electoral pledge of the ruling Awami League.

The government in April last year signed a \$1.2 billion loan agreement with the WB to construct the bridge. Besides, the Asian Development Bank was to provide \$615 million, Japan International Cooperation Agency \$400 million and Islamic Development Bank \$140 million more for the scheme.

But the project stalled in October that year when the lead financier WB alleged corruption in the bidding process.

Amid uncertainty over the implementation of the project, several countries including Malaysia showed interest in funding the scheme. Malaysia in January formally proposed financing the project.

In February, Finance Minister AMA Muhith told journalists at his Bangladesh Secretariat office that if the government decided to go ahead with a deal with Malaysia, it would have to withdraw from or cancel beforehand the agreements signed with the WB and three other financiers.

But the government yesterday struck the MoU with Malaysia without cancelling the previous deals.

Economists wary

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into why the government had failed to use such a huge amount.

The economists' apprehension comes just two days after some lawmakers at a pre-budget meeting with the Finance Minister AMA Muhith questioned the government's ability to utilise foreign aid.

At yesterday's discussion at his secretariat office, Muhith criticised such inability, saying, "As local resources have increased, various ministries have been reluctant to utilise foreign assistance."

He said the government had been taking steps to increase utilisation of donors' money in some big projects, but added he did not expect "big achievements" in the area in the remaining two years of the government.

Foreign assistance allocated for Bangladesh is deposited in foreign banks, said former finance secretary Siddiqui Rahman Chowdhury.

Citing his experience, he said the donor representatives had told him during his

service that they could not answer to their authorities about the matter.

Muhith also agreed that the space for the private sector in getting bank loans has indeed shrunk compared to situation for the public sector.

"It has to be examined carefully," he said.

Also present at the discussion was distinguished fellow of Centre for Police Dialogue Debapriya Bhattacharya, its Executive Director Mustafizur Rahman and former Bangladesh Bank governor Mohammad Farashuddin, among others.

Debapriya said there had been a big conflict between fiscal policy and monetary policy. In monetary policy the government has been given bigger space for getting credit than the private sector.

Achieving the 7 percent target growth is not possible by cutting credit flow in the private sector, he warned.

"It is undeniable that stability has to be maintained in the economy but it should not be done at the cost of growth."

He added that the next

budget should prioritise growth.

Farashuddin said bank borrowing by the government, especially from the central bank, is suicidal for the economy. He advised the government to stay away from it.

Mustafizur Rahman said inflation was increasing due to a rise in commodity prices on the international market and also due to domestic factors.

Depreciation of the taka against the US dollar has also been causing inflation, he added.

The adviser of a former caretaker government, Jamilur Reza Chowdhury, said there should be an accreditation council for the private universities. He said many of these universities had been giving certificates in return for money.

Banker Mamun Rashid said state-owned enterprises like Bangladesh Petroleum Corporation and Power Development Board had no transparency in their accounts.

The auditing system of these enterprises needs reform, he added.

tion on Sunday, claiming that law enforcers had held her brothers Faisal Azad and Jihad and maternal uncle Ehtesham from Dhaka early Friday.

The HC bench of Justice Abdul Awal and Justice Md Ashraf Kamal was scheduled to hear the petition yesterday.

Deputy Attorney General Rashed Jahangir yesterday informed the court that Rab personnel on Monday arrested Faisal, Jihad and Ehtesham on specific allegations and they were in custody.

Samania's lawyer Nasir Uddin Ahmed Ashim then prayed to the court for a return of the writ petition.

Ashim told The Daily Star that he had taken back the writ petition as his client became sure of the position of her brothers and maternal uncle.

Remove

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After May 2, the last date for withdrawing candidacy from the race, the aspirants can launch campaigns. But they will need to use ropes to hang their posters at that time.

For violation of the code, an offender may be sentenced to up to six months in jail or fined Tk 50,000 or both. The EC may also cancel the candidacy.

Talking to reporters yesterday at his office, Election Commissioner Mohammad Shahnewaz said stern actions would follow for violation of the electoral code.

Meanwhile, some leaders of the ruling Awami League-led grand alliance and several independent hopefuls have already begun their election campaigns. They have been spending money on printing posters and making digital banners and pasting posters on walls and hanging banners on the city streets.

In doing so, they have taken advantage of the loopholes in the electoral code of conduct which does not allow the EC to take action against them before the announcement of the polls schedule.

So, from Monday the EC is having sweeping authority to stop such campaigns. The electoral code also bans graffiti and posters on the walls of houses and establishments.

The EC Secretariat yesterday sent the circular to the returning officers appointed to supervise the polls. The news media were also provided with copies of the circular.

"If there is any instance of violation of the electoral code of conduct, returning officers will take legal action," the circular says. The EC also asked the returning officers to take assistance from the police administration if needed against unauthorised campaigns.

The EC last week decided that 31 mobile courts would be operated by an executive magistrate each in the DCC area from May 3 to ensure that the candidates were fully complying with the electoral code during their campaigns, an EC senior official said.

Ninety-two more executive magistrates will join in on May 22, each to run a mobile court to try electoral offences until May 25. Another 31 judicial magistrates will be working in the DCC areas from May 22, he added.

DECO

POWER IS YOURS

ঢাকা ইলেকট্রিক সাপ্লাই কোম্পানী লিমিটেড (ডেসকো)

“বিদ্যুৎ বন্ধের বিজ্ঞপ্তি”

ঢাকা ইলেকট্রিক সাপ্লাই কোম্পানী লিমিটেড এর সম্মানিত গ্রাহক বৃন্দের সদয় অবগতির জন্য জানানো যাচ্ছে যে, কল্যাণপুর ১৩২/৩৩/১১ কেভি গ্রীড উপকেন্দ্রের জরুরী রক্ষণাবেক্ষণ কাজের নিমিত্তে বর্ণিত তারিখ ও সময়ে সংশ্লিষ্ট এলাকা সমূহে বিদ্যুৎ সরবরাহ বন্ধ থাকবে।

তারিখ	সময়	উপকেন্দ্রের নাম	যে সকল এলাকায় বিদ্যুৎ সরবরাহ বন্ধ থাকবে
১২/০৪/১২ ইং	সকাল ৯:০০ হতে বিকাল ৫:০০ টা পর্যন্ত	কল্যাণপুর ১৩২/৩৩/১১ কেভি উপকেন্দ্র	টোলারবাগ এলাকা, ডেল্টা হসপিটাল, দিনাজপুর ভবন, কল্যাণপুর মেইন রোড এবং ১ হতে ১১ নং রোড, দঃ পাইকপাড়া, এসপি রোড, ছাপাখানা মোড়, হাবুনের পুকুরপাড়, জোনাকী রোড, মধ্যপাইকপাড়া, বৌবাজার, লালওয়ালা, পৈদারটেক এবং টেকনিক্যাল মোড় হতে কল্যাণপুর ওভারব্রীজ পর্যন্ত রাস্তার উভয়পাশে রাস্তা সংলগ্ন সকল এলাকা, এশিয়া সিনেমা হল ও বাংলা কলেজের আশপাশ এলাকা, দঃ পাইকপাড়া, পীরেরবাগ ঝিলপাড় ও নতুন বাজার এলাকা এবং গণভবন আরএমইউ, রিংরোড, আদাবর, বেড়িবাঁধ।
১৩/০৪/১২ ইং	সকাল ৯:০০ হতে বিকাল ৩:০০ টা পর্যন্ত	কল্যাণপুর ১৩২/৩৩/১১ কেভি উপকেন্দ্র	গাবতলী মাজার রোডের পূর্ব পাশ, দক্ষিণ বিশিল, সেলিনা হসপিটাল, বাতেন নগর, গাবতলী মাজার রোডের পশ্চিম পাশ ১ম, ২য় ও ৩য় কদোনী, লালকুঠি বাজার, জক্কার হাউজিং, বসুপাড়া, বাগবাড়ি এবং সোয়ারেজ, পিসিকালচার, মনসুরাবাদ।

বিদ্যুৎ বন্ধের কারণে সম্মানিত গ্রাহকবৃন্দের সাময়িক অসুবিধার জন্য আন্তরিকভাবে দুঃখিত।

ডেসকো কর্তৃপক্ষ