

Suu Kyi returns to Myanmar

AFP, Yangon

Myanmar opposition leader Aung San Suu Kyi returned to her homeland yesterday after testing the boundaries of the country's political reform with her first foreign trip in over two decades.

Suu Kyi said her visit to Thailand was "very satisfactory" as she strode through Yangon airport flanked by local journalists and photographers after being readmitted to Myanmar.

The democracy icon had previously refused to leave the country, even to visit her dying husband, because of fears the former junta would never allow her to return.

Her six-day Thai visit, the first time she had ventured abroad since she was thrust into the spotlight during protests against the generals in 1988, comes amid sweeping reforms by a new regime in Myanmar that include her election to parliament in April by-elections.

Foreigners plotting to destroy Syria

Says Assad, rejects role in massacre

AFP, Damascus

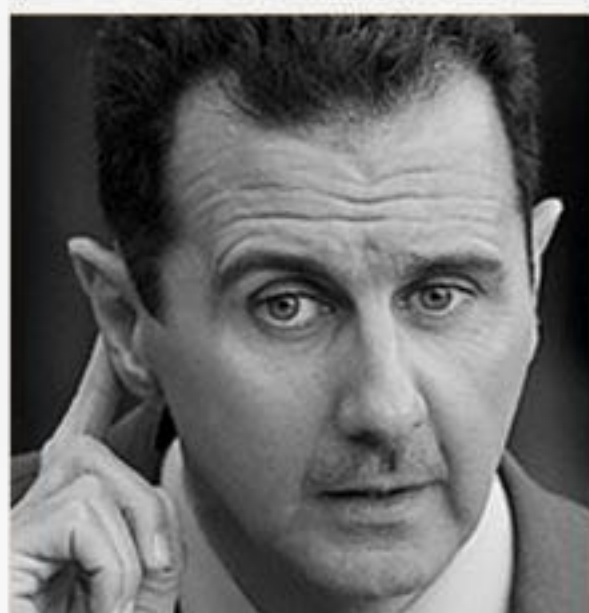
President Bashar al-Assad yesterday dismissed accusations his government had any role in the brutal Houla massacre, as he charged forces outside Syria of plotting to destroy the country.

In a rare televised address to parliament, Assad, dressed in a smart suit and tie, said even "monsters" were incapable of carrying out massacres such as last month's killings near the town of Houla in central Syria.

At least 108 people, including 49 children and 34 women, were slaughtered in the massacre which started on May 25 and spilled into the next day, triggering international outrage.

Assad's defiant speech came as Arab leaders called on the United Nations to act to stop bloodshed in Syria, and France raised the prospect of military action against Damascus under a UN mandate.

Assad also paid tribute to civilian and



Bashar al-Assad

military "martyrs" of the violence in Syria, saying their blood was not shed in vain.

"We are not facing a political problem but a project to destroy the country," Assad said, adding there would be "no dialogue" with opposition groups which "seek foreign intervention."

"Terrorism cannot be part of the political process," said Assad, who had last spoken in public in January.

On Saturday, violence in Syria killed 89 people, including 57 soldiers, the largest number of casualties the military has suffered in a single day since an uprising began in March 2011, a watchdog said.

Meanwhile, Saudi Foreign Minister Saud al-Faisal yesterday accused Assad of "manoeuvring" to gain time.

Washington and Moscow agreed on the need to work together on Syria, a US official said following a phone conversation between US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton and Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov.

Cyber strikes a 'civilised option': UK

AFP, Singapore

Pre-emptive cyber strikes against perceived national security threats are a "civilised option" to neutralise potential attacks, Britain's armed forces minister said yesterday.

Nick Harvey made the comment at a security summit in Singapore in relation to reports that the US had launched cyber attacks to cripple Iran's nuclear programme.

"What I would say is that if a government has arrived at the conclusion that it needs, out of its sense of national interest or security, to deliver an effect against an adversary... arguably this is quite a civilised option."

A Russian computer firm said last week it had discovered a new computer virus -- known as Flame -- with unprecedented destructive potential that chiefly targets Iran and could be used as a cyberweapon by the West and Israel.

Thunder will fall on Israel if it attacks

Warns Iran's supreme leader

AFP, Tehran

An attack by Israel on Iran will blow back on the Jewish state "like thunder," Iran's supreme leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, said yesterday.

Khamenei also said that the international community's suspicion that Iran was seeking nuclear weapons is based on a "lie" and he insisted that sanctions imposed on his country were ineffective and only strengthened its resolve.

His speech, broadcast on state television to mark the 1989 death of his predecessor and founder of the Islamic republic, Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, contained no sign Iran was prepared to make any concessions on its disputed nuclear programme.

Instead, it was infused with defiance and Khamenei's customary contempt for Iran's arch-foes Israel and the United States.

"If the Israelis 'make any misstep or wrong action, it will fall on their heads like thunder,'" Khamenei said.

The Jewish state, he added, was feeling "vulnerable" and "terrified" after losing deposed Egyptian president Hosni Mubarak as an ally.

Khamenei also said international circles and media are lying about Iran's nuclear ambitions. He said the propaganda is launched to divert public opinion from US and Europe's financial woes.



Ayatollah Ali Khamenei

Clashes mar West Bengal civic polls

IANS, Kolkata

Brisk polling marred by incidents of sporadic violence was reported yesterday during elections for six civic bodies in West Bengal -- being viewed as a barometer for Mamata Banerjee government's popularity.

The elections are also a test of the relative strengths of the union and state's ruling alliance partners Trinamool Congress and Congress which are fighting separately for the first time after last year's assembly polls.

The poll results would also be an indicator on whether the opposition Left Front has succeeded in regaining lost ground.

The Communist Party of India-Marxist (CPI-M) led Left Front, whose 34-year reign in the state came to an end last year, is contesting on almost all the 129 seats and hoping to cash in on the triangular fight.

WASHINGTON'S ASIA MOVE
US, China rivalry puts countries in dilemma

AFP, Singapore

Washington's planned strategic shift to Asia will challenge existing alliances as nations try to balance strong economic ties to China with defence links to Washington, a conference heard yesterday.

Many Asian countries have major business relations with China but are also defence allies of the United States.

"The political, economic and cultural ramifications of a newly-empowered Asia are bound to impact existing security and economic relationships," Singapore Defence Minister Ng Eng Hen said at the Shangri-La Dialogue, a conference on security issues.

He cited the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean), Australia, Japan and South Korea -- which all have China as their biggest trading partner but consider the US as the "dominant resident security power" in the region.

"This divergence of economic partnerships and defence relations will challenge existing alignments among nations," Ng told the conference, which ended Sunday. "No nation wants to be in a position to choose sides."

Addressing the conference Saturday, US Defence Secretary Leon Panetta said Washington will gradually shift its naval fleet so that by 2020 it will have 60 percent of its ships in the Pacific, up from the current 50 percent.

The decision to deploy more ships to the Pacific Ocean, along with expanding military partnerships in the region, was part of a "steady, deliberate" effort to bolster the

US role in an area deemed vital to its future, Panetta said.

The move reflects US concern over China's rising economic and military might but Panetta insisted the strategy was not a challenge to Beijing.

Australian Defence Minister Stephen Smith on Sunday welcomed the US plan and said it should not impact Canberra's relationship with China.

Australia will see 2,500 US Marines deployed to its north as part of the Asia strategy, a move that has rankled Beijing, but Smith said he would make clear in a visit to China this week that Canberra wanted to continue to deepen its relationship with the Asiatic giant.

New Zealand Defence Minister Jonathan Coleman also welcomed the US shift.

Malaysian Defence Minister Ahmad Zahid Hamidi said Malaysia will continue work with both China and the US.

"If the purpose is to stabilise the region... we would welcome the effort taken by the US," he told AFP in Singapore.

Meanwhile, reacting on the US move, France yesterday said Europe needed to rethink its defence strategy.

"In the coming 10 years, the US budget for defence is going to be diminished by about \$500 billion," said French Defence Minister Jean-Yves Le Drian.

"On the other hand, the United States have announced that they would give a priority to the Asia-Pacific region. Somewhere there will be a hole and it will be in Europe," he added.

NEWS ANALYSIS

Ahmad Zahid Hamidi said Malaysia will continue work with both China and the US.

"If the purpose is to stabilise the region... we would welcome the effort taken by the US," he told AFP in Singapore.

Meanwhile, reacting on the US move, France yesterday said Europe needed to rethink its defence strategy.

"In the coming 10 years, the US budget for defence is going to be diminished by about \$500 billion," said French Defence Minister Jean-Yves Le Drian.

"On the other hand, the United States have announced that they would give a priority to the Asia-Pacific region. Somewhere there will be a hole and it will be in Europe," he added.

2 OCs closed

FROM PAGE 1

Md Kamrul Hsan, superintendent of police in Jessore, said Ahsan Habib of Abhaynagar Police Station and Md Chhoybuddin of Monirampur Police Station were closed in connection with their inaction during the attack on Wahab at the spot, reports our Benapole correspondent.

Fish farmers and traders attacked the whip's motorcade at Kalishakul of Abhaynagar upazila on Saturday morning, leaving 40 people, including an upazila chairman and an assistant superintendent of police, injured.

Wahab, a ruling Awami League lawmaker from Jessore-6 constituency, was on his way to Beel Kapalia to inaugurate the Tidal River Management (TRM) project, which promises to end the waterlogging problem the southwest region has been plagued with.

The attackers, who apprehend that their businesses would be hampered if the project was imple-

mented, also torched three cars and four motorbikes.

A tense situation prevailed in the area yesterday as several hundred people took part in a demonstration against the project.

Bazlur Rahman, sub-divisional engineer of Jessore Water Development Board, said a case had been filed yesterday evening in connection with Saturday's incident.

Since the 1980's, the people of Bhabodaho area in Keshobpur, Monirampur and Abhaynagar upazilas of Jessore and Dumuria upazila of Khulna had been facing problems caused by water stagnation. Many had been marooned.

Former education minister ASHK Sadeque took an initiative to remove water stagnation in the areas. The problem was solved partially but it remained in the basin of the Sreehari river and in Bhabodaho of Jessore.

Sources said people defying the administration reintroduced the Tidal River Management, an indigenous water management system, on October 30, 1997. Later, Bangladesh Water Development Board recog-

nised the project.

The Water Development Board constructed an 11.9-kilometre cross dam on the Hari river in 2005. Some 850 hectares of land were included in the project over three years.

The government was supposed to pay Tk 12,835 per acre to farmers as compensation for their land. However, the project could not be completed in seven years.

When the question of introducing the TRM project in Beel Kapalia was raised, some people became angry. Farmers of the area were in favour of the project provided the government compensated them for their land but the owners of fish enclosures and a vested quarter of middle men spread panic among people, sources claimed.

An influential quarter, which owns large fish enclosures, had even organised farmers' meetings and processions against the project ahead of the whip's visit Saturday, sources said.

Abdul Wahab said the people of Bhabodaho area do not have any alternative to TRM. He said if the project was closed, the river would fill with deposits and lose navigability.



PHOTO: AFP

The Royal barge, 'Spirit of Chartwell', centre, carrying Britain's Queen Elizabeth II passes the Houses of Parliament in central London yesterday during the Queen's Thames Diamond Jubilee Pageant. Hundreds of rowing boats, barges and steamers filled the River Thames with a blaze of colour as Queen Elizabeth II sailed through London as part of her spectacular diamond jubilee pageant.

No plan

FROM PAGE 1

Bangladesh. I was here with Secretary Clinton, as you know. I was with her, I was at her side the whole time she was here," he told reporters after a certificate award ceremony in the capital.

"And in her [Clinton] meetings with the honourable prime minister, the honourable foreign minister, the honourable leader of the opposition, there was no discussion, no discussion, no discussion whatsoever about the Seventh Fleet. The word was never even mentioned... about any base or anything like that," the private satellite channel ATN Bangla quoted Mozena as saying.

On Thursday, Times Now, a Mumbai-based 24-hour English news channel, aired a news item that said the US wanted to have a naval base in Bangladesh in its strategic interests.

The Times of India website carried a written version of the TV report.

Dhaka and Washington have already termed the report baseless, unfounded and fabricated.

Speaking as chief guest at yesterday's programme, organised by News Network and American Center, Ambassador Mozena praised the role of the Bangladeshi media in establishing democracy and addressing problematic issues.

At the ceremony, certificates were awarded to 20 women journalists on their completion of a nine-month training programme.

"The best way to build a strong democracy is to strengthen the pillars of democracy, especially the media," the US diplomat observed.

"I believe a responsible media, with a powerful tradition of investigative reporting shining the light into the dark corners of corruption, ineptness, laziness and incompetence, is essential, absolutely essential, to building a strong democracy," he

25 pro-BNP

FROM PAGE 20

Mohammad Borhanuddin were submitted last Thursday while bail petitions for Kamal Hossain, Simki Imam and Shamima Akhter Shammi were filed yesterday.

On May 22, members of Jatityatabadi Ainjibi Forum, a platform of pro-BNP lawyers, boycotted all the judges' and magistrates' courts in the capital and vandalised the courts, protesting a court order sending BNP lawmaker Mahub Uddin Khokon to jail in an arson case.

Two days later, the lawyers got bail from the High Court until June 3.

Abdul Islam, a sub-inspector at Kotwali Police Station, also the investigation officer of the case, placed the charge sheet to the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court in Dhaka on Thursday.

The charge sheet submitted under the Speedy Trial Act would allow the judge 30 working days to complete the trial. However, if some of the accused abscond, then the trial may take up to 60 working days, according to the law.

THE 25 LAWYERS
Mohammad Borhanuddin, Sanaullah Miah, Mohsin Miah, Golam Mostafa Khan, Khorshed Alam, Iqbal Ahmed, Masud Ahmed Talukder, Helal Uddin, Omar Faruque, Abdul Nur Bhuiyan, Abdul Khaleque Milton, Jamal Ahmed Dulon, Mohammad Nuruzzaman, Masud Rana, Monir, Jibon, Jakob, Didar (1), Didar (2), Ershadul Haque, Fardin, Mahmudur Rahman Romel, Kamal Hossain, Simki Imam and Shamima Akhter Shammi.

INDEPENDENT UNIVERSITY, BANGLADESH

MBA & EMBA

Admission Autumn 2012

Master of Business Administration (MBA)

- Finance
- Marketing
- HRM
- Banking

Special Feature

- All faculties have Ph.D. Degrees
- Subscription to online library (Proquest, Emerald, Jstor, Blackwell, EBSCO)
- Degree from IUB is accepted globally for higher studies and job placement
- State-of-the-art IT facilities
- Separate labs for Graduate students
- Teaching Assistantship
- 15% discount on tuition for IUB Graduates
- 15% discount on tuition (based on academic achievement) available at the end of foundation module
- 50% discount for siblings or spouses
- Payment of fees in installments
- Classes are held in the evening & weekends (EMBA)

Eligibility

- 4-year Bachelor Degree or 3-year Bachelor Degree along with at least one year of work experience.
- A CGPA of at least 2.50 at undergraduate or graduate level.
- No admission test required if GMAT score is 500+.

Executive MBA (EMBA)

- Finance
- Marketing
- HRM
- Entrepreneurship Development & Management

Eligibility

- 4-year Bachelor Degree or 3-year Honour's Degree or a Master's Degree in any discipline.
- At least Second Class in all exams or a minimum CGPA of 2.5 on a 4 point scale.
- At least three years of continuous work experience as an executive.

Please Contact:

Graduate School of Business
Plot-16, Block-B, Bashundhara R/A, Dhaka-1229.
Room No- 2025. Tel: 8401645-53, 8402065-76
Ext- 254, Fax: 8401991 e-mail: info@iub.edu.bd

www.sb.iub.edu.bd

CONDOLENCE

We, all the members of the Rangs family, deeply mourn at the sad demise (Innah lillahe..... Rajiun) of our Honourable Vice-Chairman of Rangs Group of Companies, Mahabubul Gani (67).

May Almighty Allah grant him eternal peace and give the strength to the members of his family to bear the irreparable loss and grief due to his death.

On behalf of Rangs Group of Companies
Chairman, Vice Chairperson, Directors & all Employee

Rangs Electronics Ltd.	REL Motors Ltd.
White Products & Electronics Ltd.	MIKO Designs Ltd.
Hussain Trading Company Ltd.	REL Petro Chemicals Ltd.
Sharp Travels Ltd.	Tokyo Lighting Industries Ltd.
Sky Bangla Aviation Ltd.	H₂O Bangladesh Ltd.
Sky Bangla Airways Ltd.	Rian Motors Ltd.
Dion Industrial Company Ltd.	S & Y Company Ltd.
REL Plastic Recycling Ltd.	Pharmasia Ltd.