

# Bangladesh off

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regulations on issuing operation licence to airlines, surveillance on air operators, airworthiness and maintaining proper documentation, increasing manpower and logistics of both Caab and other airline operators, said Caab officials.

"We have received a letter from ICAO. It was sent on July 19 saying Bangladesh had been dropped from the list of countries with significant safety concern," said Wing Commander SM Nazmul Anam, Caab director of flight safety and regulation.

"We managed to satisfy ICAO with an all-out effort to comply with their instructions to ensure safety in flight operations," said Anam.

Quoting from the ICAO letter, he said "The collective actions of Caab in addressing and resolving the safety threats were found satisfactory."

Some European countries and Singapore restricted Caab-certified airlines from using most of their airports as Bangladesh was on the list of countries with significant safety concerns.

Those airlines could not increase flight frequency in the European countries for the last three years and had to use designated airports for aircraft landing and take-off. Moreover, GMG had been barred from using Singapore airport.

Caab officials said the

airlines would have faced further restrictions from European countries in the future if ICAO had not excluded Bangladesh from the list. Several European countries have already warned that they will impose restrictions on flights from blacklisted countries.

Bangladesh was included on the list in May 2009 when the country failed to come clean through an ICAO inspection.

The latest ICAO decision comes after two consecutive audits by the global aviation watchdog's experts to evaluate Bangladesh's initiatives toward ensuring safety in flight operations.

The audits were carried out between June 21 and June 27, and July 9 and July 11.

The team scrutinised Caab's performance and efforts in five areas -- air worthiness, personnel licensing, legislation, and operational and organisational activities.

Caab faced a tough inspection and a total of 304 protocol questions.

The audit team also monitored various aspects such as issuing operation licence to airlines, surveillance on air operators, airworthiness, documentation, manpower and logistics of both Caab and other air operators.

Caab Assistant Director Prashanta Kumar Chakraborty said, "Now, Caab's certification to local

airlines will be recognised as international compliance certification."

Imran Asif, chief executive officer of Regent Airways, said the decision would help bring in more business for local airlines, as they were likely to get permission to operate flights on new international routes.

"It's very hard to run an airline with only domestic operations. Now we hope to get permission to fly international routes and a chance to benefit more from the investments on workforce and infrastructure."

"This decision will also help boost the growth the aviation industry has achieved in recent years," he said.

## Youth dies

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hailed from Netrakona.

Sitakunda police said he fell from Dhaka-bound Turna Nishitha near Kothakoli School in Debar Pararea around 1:00am.

Dr Bibekananda Chakraborty, deputy assistant medical officer of Sitakunda Upzila Health Complex, said local people and police brought Ujjal with injuries to the heels around 1:30am. The victim also suffered internal bleeding, he added.

Ujjal was rushed to Chittagong Medical College Hospital around 2:10am where he was declared dead by the emergency unit's on-duty doctor, said Constable Mrinal Dey of CMCH police outpost.

## One missing as Philippines hit by floods

AFP, Manila

One person was missing in the Philippines as heavy rains inundated parts of Manila and nearby areas with knee-deep floodwaters yesterday, the authorities said.

The civil defence office told residents to prepare to evacuate as creeks and open sewers in the capital overflowed from overnight rains, swamping nearby slums as well as roads and causing traffic jams.

"Low-lying, flood-prone regions in (Manila and nearby provinces) are advised to take precaution. Usual high risk areas to flood are advised to evacuate residents," the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council said.

Local officials in the metropolis of 14 million declared a school holiday as floodwaters rose to knee-high in some areas, but no large-scale evacuations have been made so far.

The council said a man fell into a river and was carried off by strong currents in Lumban, a town near Manila, late Friday and remained missing.

Manila and nearby areas were pounded by torrential rainfall of more than 40 millimetres (1.6 inches) an hour early yesterday, said state weather forecaster GenerQuilong.

While a storm was passing off the country's north coast, the bad weather in the capital was mostly caused by a seasonal monsoon, he told AFP.

The Binga dam in the northern Philippines released water as a precaution against a possible overflow, but other dams were still well below critical level, state flood forecaster Jimmy Enriquez told AFP.

## Afghan Taliban lash men in public

AFP, Puli Alam

Taliban militants lashed two men in public yesterday, witnesses and officials said, just weeks after a video surfaced of a woman being executed for adultery before a crowd of cheering men.

The men received 40 lashes each with a leather whip in front of more than a hundred people in Shash Qala village of Charkh district in Logar province, some 70 kilometres south of the capital Kabul.

They were arrested by Taliban insurgents while trying to kidnap the son of a rich man three days earlier, Bashir, a villager, told AFP.

Charkh district chief Farooq Humayun said the local administration was aware of the incident and an investigation was under way.

A local Taliban commander in the area, who did not want to be named, told AFP that they had carried out the punishment to establish sharia law in the country.

Public punishments and executions were common when the Taliban regime was in power from 1996 until 2001, when they were ousted by a US-led invasion and launched an insurgency against the Western-backed government.

Earlier this month, a horrific video showing the public execution of a 22-year-old woman who was shot in the back in Parwan province just north of Kabul, allegedly by the Taliban, drew worldwide condemnation.

Afghan President Hamid Karzai this week admitted his administration was unable to deliver justice to the people, despite decade-long international efforts to rebuild the war-torn nation.

## 2 Bangladeshis

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however, managed to return to Bangladeshi territory and were admitted to different local hospitals.

Bazlur Rahman, company commander at Kariganj outpost of Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB), confirmed the incident.

# Shooter loner

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The biggest mystery surrounding the 24-year-old doctoral student was why he would have pulled on a gas mask and shot dozens of people early Friday in a suburban Denver movie theatre, as police allege.

In the age of widespread social media, no trace of Holmes could be found on Facebook, LinkedIn, MySpace, Twitter or anywhere on the Web. Either he never engaged or he scrubbed his trail.

A longtime neighbour in San Diego, where Holmes grew up, remembers only a "shy guy ... a loner" from a churchgoing family. In addition to playing soccer at Westview High School, he ran cross country.

The bookish demeanour concealed an unspooling life. Holmes struggled to find work after graduating with highest honours in spring 2010 with a neuroscience degree from the University of California, Riverside, said the neighbour, retired electrical engineer Tom Mai.

Holmes enrolled last year in a neuroscience PhD program at the University of Colorado-Denver but was in the process of withdrawing, said school officials, who didn't provide a reason. The school later said in a statement that he left the program in June 2012.

As part of the advanced programme in Denver, a James Holmes had been listed as making a presentation in May about Micro DNA Biomarkers in a class named "Biological Basis of Psychiatric and Neurological Disorders."

In academic achievement, "he was at the top of the top," recalled Riverside Chancellor Timothy P White.

Holmes concentrated his study on "how we all behave," White added. "It's ironic and sad."

From a distance, Holmes' life appears unblemished, a young man with unlimited potential. There are no indications he had problems with police.

Somehow, the acclaimed student and quiet neighbour reached a point where he painted his hair red, called himself "The Joker," the green-haired villain from the Batman movies, according

to New York City Police Commissioner Ray Kelly, who said he had been briefed on the matter.

Authorities say Holmes arrived at the theatre dressed in black, outfitted in a gas mask, ballistic helmet, vest and leggings, black tactical gloves and protectors on his throat and groin. He was armed with an assault-style rifle, a shotgun and Glock handgun.

Police said he started his attack by tossing two gas canisters into the theatre, where he had bought a ticket for the midnight showing of "The Dark Knight Rises," the new Batman movie.

A federal law enforcement official, speaking on condition of anonymity because of the ongoing probe into the rampage, said Holmes bought four guns from retailers in the past two months.

Holmes bought his first Glock pistol in Aurora on May 22. Six days later, he picked up a Remington shotgun in Denver. About two weeks later, he bought a .223 calibre Smith & Wesson rifle in Thornton and then a second Glock in Denver on July 6, the official said.

A high-volume drum magazine was attached to the rifle, an assault weapon, the official said. Aurora Police Chief Dan Oates said that a 100-round drum magazine for the rifle was recovered from the scene.

"I'm told by experts that with that drum magazine, he could have gotten off 50 to 60 rounds, even if it was semi-automatic, within one minute," Oates said at a news conference. "And as far as we know, it was a pretty rapid pace of fire in that theatre."

Julie Adams, whose son played junior varsity soccer with Holmes, said her son remembered little about the suspect, which was unusual for the tight-knit team.

"I don't think many of the kids (team-mates) knew him. He was kind of a loner," she said.

Jackie Mitchell, a furniture mover who lives several blocks from the suspect's apartment building in Colorado, said he had drinks with Holmes at a bar on Tuesday night, though he showed no sign of distress or

violence.

After Holmes approached him, "we just talked about football. He had a backpack and geeky glasses and seemed like a real intelligent guy, and I figured he was one of the college students," Mitchell said.

When Mitchell saw Holmes' photo after the shooting, "the hair stood up on my back," he said. "I know this guy."

Holmes is not talking to police and has asked for a lawyer, according to a law enforcement official briefed on the investigation. The official spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss the case. Police found jars of chemicals in Holmes' booby-trapped apartment with wires nearby, the law enforcement official said.

When he surrendered meekly in the movie house parking lot, Holmes told authorities what he'd done at his residence in the Denver suburb of Aurora, the third most populous city in Colorado.

"Our hearts go out to those who were involved in this tragedy and to the families and friends of those involved," Holmes' family said in a statement Friday. "We ask that the media respect our privacy during this difficult time."

San Diego Superior Court spokeswoman Karen Dalton said there were no records found under his name, not even for a traffic ticket.

Riverside County prosecutors also have no criminal record for him, said John Hall, a spokesman for the district attorney's office. The only mark on his record in Aurora was a speeding summons from October, Oates said.

On Friday morning, police escorted the suspect's father from the family's San Diego home. The mother stayed inside, receiving visitors who came to offer support.

San Diego police spokeswoman Lt Andra Brown spoke to reporters in the driveway of the Holmes' home, on behalf of the family.

"As you can understand, the Holmes family is very upset about all of this," she said. "It's a tragic event and it's taken everyone by sur-

## Nation awaits

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Education Minister Nurul Islam Nahid and some eminent personalities met her at Mirpur yesterday.

Tomorrow, people will pay last tributes to their favourite novelist at the Central Shaheed Minar from 11:00am to 2:00pm tomorrow.

His namaz-e-Janaza will be held at the National Eidgah at 2:30pm, said Nasiruddin Yousuff Bachchu, president of Sammilito Sangskritik Jote.

In New York on Friday, several thousand fans and admirers joined his first janaza after juma prayers at Jamaica Muslim Centre.

The body will be taken to Birdem Hospital mortuary around 3:30pm and kept there at night, Bachchu said.

"On Tuesday morning around 9:00am, we will start the journey with the body towards Nuhash Polli in Gazipur, where he will be buried after zohr prayers."

Meanwhile, Nuhash Polli Assistant Manager Nurul Haque said, "Sir earlier often wished to be buried at the litchi garden here because he loved the place as he loved his life."

"Nuhash Polli is my dream. If Nuhash Polli is destroyed or sold out, my dream will be destroyed or sold," Nurul quoted Humayun as saying.

But talking to reporters on May 12 at Nuhash Polli, Humayun Ahmed said if he was buried there, his favourite retreat would turn into a graveyard.

Humayun Ahmed, an illustrious litterateur and filmmaker, died at Manhattan's Bellevue Hospital in New York Thursday night after a nine-month struggle with colon cancer.

## 80pc farmers

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crops, the World Bank said. In a study, "Information and Communication for Development 2012: Maximising Mobile", the World Bank found that farmers arrange for sales through mobile phones.

The study referred to an unpublished report conducted in Bangladesh, China, India and Vietnam by International Food Policy Research Institute, Washington DC, highlighting the important role the device plays in linking markets and key stages of the value chain.

"Eighty percent of their mobile phone calls are to increase their income," said Mehboob Chowdhury, City Cell's chief executive and chairman of Association of Mobile Telecom Operators' of Bangladesh.

Not just for marketing purposes, the farmers use the device to acquire information on seed varieties, crop rotation and ways to improve the quantity and quality of their yields, he added.

"Mobile communications offer major opportunities to advance human and economic development from providing basic access to health information to making cash payments, spurring job creation, and stimulating citizen involvement in democratic processes," said Rachel Kyte, World Bank vice president for sustainable development.

The challenge now, she feels, is to leverage the full capabilities of mobile communications in developing countries, by way of mobile applications tailored to local needs.

In Bangladesh, 95 percent of the area and 99 percent of the population are covered by the mobile phone network, with a total subscription of around 9.37 crore.

The study calls for active support from developing countries' governments in the development of mobile applications, which would go on to create livelihoods and enhance the lifestyle.

"Government support is needed to develop sound business models, foster ICT skills and ensure that infrastructure is in place and affordable," said Tim Kelly, a lead ICT specialist at the World Bank.

# Buet teachers to go slow

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yesterday morning after a two day break as they had received no decision from the government on their demands.

Prof Mujibur Rahman, president of the association, told The Daily Star, "We postponed the programme to facilitate government steps to break the impasse."

Also, former VCs and alumni members had requested the association to reconsider the en masse resignation programme, saying the government was making headway in bringing a solution.

Ex-VCs Abdul Matin Patwari, MH Khan and Iqbal Mahmud, Buet Alumni Association President Prof Jamilur Reza Choudhury and some other former students made the request in a letter on Friday, Mujibur said.

"We have trust in the government that it will soon come to a decision regarding the removal of the VC and Pro-VC."

Asked whether the teachers were backtracking from the movement,

Prof Mujibur said, "The decision had to be postponed since the education minister had considered our programme as a barrier on the way to a solution."

"It's neither a political movement nor do we want to put the government in an embarrassing situation," he said. They would sit on July 30 to review the situation and hopefully, the government would take decision and remove the duo by the time.

However, Buet sources said the association had adopted the stance as some teachers raised questions about the legality of en masse resignation. The prime minister's resentment over their announcement of such an extreme programme was also a factor.

The Buet situation took a new turn as the teachers announced the action plan even though Education Minister Nurul Islam Nahid had urged them to call off the movement following his meeting with ex-VCs, senior teachers and alumni on Monday.

The anti-VC agitation

began on July 11 after the authorities shut the institution for 44 days in advance for Ramadan and Eid-ul-Fitr. It gained momentum when a large number of students joined them.

The same day, the heads of all faculties, institutes and departments of Buet announced resignation.

## Major water

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Cooperation" will focus on "cooperation" over "conflicts" that has long been causing sufferings to an estimated 100 crore people living in Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, China, and Nepal along the basins of the Ganges, Brahmaputra and Meghna rivers.

Bangladesh Poribesh Andolon (Bapa) and Bangladesh Environment Network (Ben) have jointly organised the conference.

Some 100 delegates from South and Southeast Asian countries as well as Europe, Canada, America, Australia, Singapore and Japan are likely to join the event while up to 300 participants from host Bangladesh.

of the Padma bridge, Fakhrul said the bridge should be constructed with World Bank funds. If the government tries to build the bridge with its own funds, it will create an extra burden on the people.

The WB recently cancelled its credit for the bridge, citing a corruption conspiracy in the project.

The government should "take stern actions against corrupt persons and talk to the World Bank to ensure loan for the bridge," Fakhrul said.

Former vice-chancellor of Dhaka University Prof Emajuddin Ahmed, Bangla daily Amar Desh editor Mahmudur Rahman and Shawkat Mahmud, general secretary of a faction of Bangladesh Federal Union of Journalists, among others, were present there.

Meanwhile, BNP standing committee member Moudud Ahmed renewed his allegation that the government was using the police and the Anti-Corruption Commission to subdue the opposition.

The ACC was being used only to give clean chits to the government, he said yesterday while addressing a

discussion organised by Jatiyatabadi Sangskritik Dal, a pro-BNP body, at the Jatiya Press Club in the capital.

The anti-graft body was formed to uproot corruption, but it was now working only to fulfill the government's agenda, the former law minister said.

## Mauritius swears in new president

AFP, Port Louis

Rajkeshwur Purryag became the fifth president of the Republic of Mauritius when he was sworn into the largely ceremonial post yesterday.

He was elected Friday during a special parliamentary session after his predecessor Anerood Jugnauth resigned in March following open conflict with Prime Minister Navin Chandra Ramgoolam.

Vice President Monique Ohsan Bellepeau filled in until Purryag, 64, the former president of the National Assembly, was sworn in yesterday in the presence of both Ramgoolam and Berenger.