

# Suu Kyi pays emotional visit to old college

AFP, New Delhi

Myanmar opposition leader Aung San Suu Kyi yesterday said she felt like she was "coming home" during an emotional visit to her old New Delhi college where she studied five decades ago.

Students and faculty at the prestigious Lady Shri Ram college rose to their feet and cheered Suu Kyi, who is on a six-day visit to India where she studied while her mother was Burma's ambassador to the country.

Lady Shri Ram principal Meenakshi Gopinath paid tribute to "Suu", as the Nobel laureate was known at the school from which she graduated with a political science degree in 1964.

"This is a deeply emotional moment for us," Gopinath said in the school auditorium where Suu Kyi had performed plays as a student. "We have prayed for your safety. We have felt your pain."

# Nafis indicted

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January on a student visa under the pretext of attending college at Southeast Missouri State University, prosecutors said.

It's not clear whether Nafis maintained al Qaeda ties, but authorities say he claimed that the plot was his own and was his sole motivation for the US trip.

A US District Court grand jury in New York charged Nafis with trying to use a bomb as a weapon of mass destruction and trying to provide explosives and communications equipment to al Qaeda terrorists, the indictment says.

In Bangladesh, Nafis graduated from high school in 2006 and took his higher secondary school certificate examinations in 2008 before he enrolled in the country's leading private university, North South University, in Dhaka, documents say.

Nafis travelled to the United States with "the purpose of conducting a terrorist attack" and actively sought out al-Qaeda contacts after his

arrival, authorities in New York allege.

He majored in cybersecurity at Southeast Missouri State University from January to May of this year, a university spokeswoman said. At the end of the spring semester, he was elected vice president of the Muslim Student Association, but his term was short-lived because he left the campus, the spokeswoman said.

His father, Quazi Mohammad Ahsanullah, has said that he can't believe the terrorist accusations and that his son is a timid person who's often scared to travel alone.

The father, a banker in Dhaka, said his son left college in Missouri after one semester because of the expense and went to New York, where he worked 10-hour days at a hotel.

In the sting operation, Nafis apparently contacted an FBI source and proposed multiple targets, including a high-ranking US official and the New York Stock Exchange, authorities said.

# Govt out

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Club yesterday, BNP standing committee member barrister Moudud Ahmed dropped a broad hint that the opposition MPs might return to parliament as part of the strategy of their movement.

"We are actively considering going back to parliament as part of our movement strategy. The issue is being discussed at the party level," he said.

Moudud, however, said the government must ensure a congenial atmosphere so that the opposition can return to the House.

Addressing the discussion, Mirza Fakhrul said the government has resorted to torture and harassment to subdue the opposition and hide its failures to deliver on the people's expectation.

BNP organised the programme at Jatiya Press Club, marking the 36th death anniversary of Maulana Abdul Hamid Khan Bhasani.

Fakhrul accused the ruling party men of loot-

ing thousands of crore of taka from the financial sector, saying the government has turned the country into a "graft monarchy".

"So, we must stand against the government's misrule and corruption imbued with the revolutionary spirit of legendary leader Maulana Abdul Hamid Khan Bhasani to protect the nation," he told his audience.

Reiterating his party's demand for restoring the caretaker government system to oversee the next general election, Fakhrul urged all to take part in the ongoing movement of the party.

BNP standing committee member Tariqul Islam said Bhasani had established the Awami League and helped Sheikh Mujibur Rahman to become a political leader. "But, unfortunately Awami League does not observe his death anniversary."

Bhasani in his whole life was vocal against unjust and unfair activities, he said adding "We need to follow the ideal of Bhasani to overcome the country's ongoing crisis."

BNP standing committee member Nazrul Islam Khan, former Dhaka City Corporation mayor Sadeque Hossain Khoka, and party Vice-chairman Abdullah Al Noman, among others, spoke at the discussion.

# Saudi company

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Sources said Summit is also receiving finances from the International Finance Corporation (IFC) and the Asian Development Bank (ADB) for the second Bibiyana 341 MW gas-fired power plant.

This means the government can expect that at least two major power plants producing cheap electricity would come into operation within the next couple of years and provide expenditure relief on the national exchequer for producing power.

Moreover, Summit is formally withdrawing from the Bibiyana phase-one 341 MW power project which was being delayed due to financing and land problems. As per the contract, the government and Summit are expected to form a six-member committee within a week, with equal representation from each side, to formally raise disputed issues and come to an agreeable solution.

The company won the deals for all the three projects through competitive tenders in late 2010 by offering very low price. The three projects needed around \$800 million for implementation and it became a challenge for Summit as the World Bank refrained from giving Partial Risk Guarantee (PRG) against these projects. The PRG provides a contractor confidence of other banks to give loans.

Back in June, Summit verbally agreed to pull out from the Bibiyana power project where it had

offered to sell power at a very low price of Tk 2.6 per kilowatt hour. In the present market, the price is considered unusually low, which other bidders decline to match.

Soon after Summit's consent to the matter, the power ministry toyed with several proposals to other companies to develop this troubled project.

In its latest move, the government signed a memorandum of understanding with Advance Energy of Saudi Arabia that has stakes of the Saudi Royal family. According to Power Division Secretary AK Azad, Advance Energy will submit a formal proposal by the next month.

"We shall formally deal with other interested companies for Bibiyana-1 after we resolve the legal matters with Summit," Azad added.

But as no other companies can match Summit's proposed tariff, the government has changed the configuration of this power plant. Instead of it being a 341 MW one, it would now be a 225 MW combined cycle plant. The Saudi company has given a primary offer of US 3.8 cents (Over Tk3) per kilowatt hour.

The Bibiyana-1 project has an extra catch. When it was awarded to Summit, the government imposed an extra job of setting up gas pipeline and power evacuation system, costing \$20 million. Combined with Summit's low price offer, no bidder was interested to carry out this task.

The Bibiyana-2 project does not have such obliga-

tion, while its price offer is almost the same.

Now the Power Division has taken initiative to ask the Gas Transmission Company Ltd (GTCL) to build 10 kilometres of pipeline between the Bibiyana gas field and the power project site, and the Power Grid Company of Bangladesh (PGCB) to set up the power evacuation system.

For Summit, setting up the phase-2 Bibiyana plant poses little hurdle now. "There is already a high voltage 232 kV line at the project site that can evacuate 460 MW power. We can launch Bibiyana-2 with that system even if a new power evacuation system is not established by October 2014," Aziz Khan said.

He also said the simple-cycle part of the plant is expected to come into operation by April 2014. Summit has signed engineering contract with a Chinese company to build the plant, while it received the project land last week.

He mentioned that Summit has submitted its financial closure application to the Board of Investment outlining that German financier DEG-FMO is providing \$120 m, Idcol \$30 m and Standard Chartered Bank \$40 m for the project, totalling \$190 m. Summit will be giving another \$85 m from its own funds.

The financing for Bibiyana-2 is still in process. Sources said the IFC and the ADB have agreed to provide \$70 m each for this project.

# Democracy, animal style

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personal decisions were counted, and out of the chaos a winner emerged.

Animals make collective decisions, too. While non-human species typically don't vote to choose their leaders, they do vote for other more routine decisions, like where to live or where to forage. But they don't have voting machines or ballots to determine the group's consensus, so how do they do it?

Some do it through the wisdom of crowds. Near the end of spring or the beginning of summer, honey bee colonies grow too large for their hives, so the group splits in two. The mother queen and half of the worker bees leave the hive to seek a new location, while the daughter queen and the remaining workers remain in place. Minutes later, the departed group identifies a temporary resting place on a nearby tree branch, and from there it surveys the local real estate. Several hundred scouts fan out in all

directions in search of a suitable location for a new hive. On their return, each scout communicates the location of the space they found by performing a waggle dance in front of their hive mates.

Over the course of several days, the scouts may spend as much as sixteen hours dancing, each advocating for a possible location. As the days pass, consensus begins to emerge. It isn't entirely clear what makes scouts stop campaigning for less popular sites; they don't get voted out as if they were participating in some insect version of Dancing with the Stars. Some simply stop dancing, while others switch their choreography to endorse one of the more popular options.

**MAJORITY VOTE**  
What is clear, however, is that the "hive mind" can make complex decisions only because the work is distributed across multiple individuals. Thomas Seeley and Susannah Buhrman, who have stud-

ied decision making in swarms of honey bees, write, "We have seen that there is no omniscient supervisory bee that compiles all the evaluations and selects the best site. Instead, it is the highly distributed process of friendly competition among the scout bees that identifies the best site. Hence the cognitive effort that each scout bee must make is evidently quite small relative to the information processing done by the entire swarm."

For honey bees, few individuals possess valuable information, which

the rest of the group relies on. However, social species throughout the animal kingdom often have to make decisions without the aid of expert knowledge. Such is the case for Tonkean macaques, a group of fruit-loving monkeys that live in the forests of Sulawesi, Indonesia. Fruit trees are distributed randomly throughout the forest, with some areas containing more fruit than others. So Tonkean macaques must decide which direction they will move in search of food, and they make those choices by majority vote.

## TERROR THREATS

# Pakistan blocks mobile service

AFP, Karachi

Pakistan shut down mobile phone networks yesterday in major cities and beefed up security across the country to prevent terror attacks at the start of the Muslim holy month of Muharram, officials said.

The networks were closed from 10:00am (0500 GMT) in Karachi and Quetta, gripped by political and sectarian violence between militants from the majority Sunni Muslims and minority Shia communities.

"We had intelligence reports about (the) possibility of a very big terrorist attack in Karachi and it was because of this reason that the mobile phone service was shut down," senior police official Javed Odho told AFP.

"It is a preventive measure taken to effectively counter terrorism threat," he said, adding that the service will remain suspended till evening.

Authorities feared that mobile telephones could be used to coordinate attacks or trigger a remote-controlled bomb.

## IRELAND ABORTION LAW ROW

# India pushes for probe into woman's death

AFP, New Delhi

New Delhi on Friday demanded a "transparent" probe into the death of an Indian woman in Ireland after doctors there allegedly refused to terminate her pregnancy even though she was miscarrying.

New Delhi cranked up the pressure on Dublin over the October 28 death of Savita Halappanavar from septicaemia after local politicians expressed their concern and urged the government to act.

Foreign ministry spokesman Syed Akbaruddin said India's ambassador to Ireland would meet local authorities later yesterday.

Savita, a 31-year-old dentist, repeatedly asked staff at University Hospital in Galway, west Ireland, to terminate her pregnancy because she was miscarrying, her family said.

Doctors allegedly refused her demand, telling her that "this is a Catholic country". Abortion is illegal in Roman Catholic-dominated Ireland except when it is necessary to save the life of the mother.

Irish Prime Minister Enda Kenny described her death as a "tragedy", while two separate investigations have been announced.

# Rejoinder, our reply

**FROM PAGE 1**  
UK airport, no cargo agent could hide a single kilogram of weight. In fact, sometimes the average weight of the passengers, carry-on baggage or checked-in baggage may vary to a little extent within the acceptable level.

The report further said the allegation that the agents are charging GBP 4.50 per kg from customer was not correct.

"We have checked and found that the personal effects business is a door-to-door service business. The cargo agents collect the shipments from different addresses of shippers in UK using their own/hired transports, put in proper package, forward them to Bangladesh, clear it from customs & en-reach to the destination in Bangladesh. The agents offer the total rate to the shippers which include all the above service charges Biman's freight charge. Therefore, it is not marking up of the freight charges but addition of some ser-

vice charges," the rejoinder said.

It also said the rate mentioned in the report of GBP 0.63 per kg, is but inaccurate and the actual rate is GBP 1.62 per kg.

The rejoinder also mentioned that as the whole check-in formalities was computerised, as soon as a passenger checked-in, his or her baggage weight is transferred automatically to load control section for final calculation, where the licence holder load controllers calculate and distribute the total weight (passenger, cargo and equipment weight) for balancing purpose as per regulation of manufacturer.

While doing this calculation they must consider that the maximum takeoff weight and maximum landing weight of the aircraft to be in unison.

Our reply: Although the issue of undisclosed hidden weight is a matter of serious safety concern, the Biman rejoinder took it very lightly. Biman is say-

ing that a pilot "guessed" that there might have been some hidden weight. Our report did not mention any guess work. It was based on an internal note of a pilot of a London-Dhaka flight that specifically mentions carrying an undisclosed weight of 5,000 kg, thus jeopardising flight safety.

While the rejoinder terms this as a "guess work", it did not explain how it came to such a conclusion when the report carried specific information. It did not say anything about the extra fuel the pilot had to use to carry this unpaid for cargo.


Biman said in the UK airport, no cargo agent can hide a single kilogram of weight, but the report did not talk about any cargo agent for this irregularity. The report clearly talked about how dishonest Biman staffs were involved in the scam in exchange for bribes. The rejoinder sidestepped this issue by talking about cargo agents.

Involvement of a section of officials in such


corruption is nothing new. Biman authorities withdrew its country manager from Bangkok station following media report on March 29 last year after a Biman investigation found the authenticity of a report on how so-called luggage party members (people whose business is to carry goods from foreign countries to Bangladesh) carried several thousand kilograms of undisclosed goods bribing the country manager.

The Daily Star report even quoted acting Biman managing director AM Mosaddique Ahmed who admitted that there had been a couple of such incidents of undisclosed cargo and luggage.

The rejoinder misquoted our report in saying that it mentioned GBP 0.63 per kg as charge for per kg cargo while it actually mentioned as GBP 1.09 each kg. We stand corrected that the actual tariff is GBP 1.62.



মিথুভাই এশীয় শিশুদের  
সচিত্র দিনপঞ্জি (এনিকি ফেস্টা)  
Mithubhai Asian  
Children's Enrichment Festa



বাংলাদেশ শিক্ষক একাডেমী  
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১.	জাপানে ২০১২-২০১৩ এর মিভুসুবিশি এশীয় শিশুদের সচিত্র দিনপঞ্জি (এনিকি ফেস্টা) চিত্রকলা প্রতিযোগিতা অনুষ্ঠিত হবে।
২.	এই উৎসবে প্রত্যেক অংশগ্রহণকারী দেশের একজন করে শিশুকে গ্র্যাণ্ড প্রাইজ প্রদান করা হবে। গ্র্যাণ্ড প্রাইজ পুরস্কারপ্রাপ্ত শিল্পী জাপান সফরের সুযোগ পাবে। এছাড়া প্রত্যেক দেশের আরো ৭জন শিল্পীকে এটি পুরস্কার প্রদান করা হবে।
৩.	৬ থেকে ১২ বৎসর বয়স পর্যন্ত শিশুরা এই প্রতিযোগিতায় অংশ নিতে পারবে।
৪.	একজন শিশু মোট ৫টি ছবি একে তার রোজকার ডায়েরি (চিত্র দিনপঞ্জি) লিপিবদ্ধ করতে হবে। ছবির বিষয় হবে 'এই আমার জীবন'।
৫.	অংশগ্রহণের নীতিমালা, এন্ট্রিফর্ম এবং ছবি আঁকার কাগজ (এক সেট) দেশের ৬৩টি জেলা শিক্ষক একাডেমীসমূহে ১ ডিসেম্বর ২০১২ এবং ঢাকায় বাংলাদেশ শিক্ষক একাডেমীর চারুকলা বিভাগ থেকে ২০/(বিশ) টাকা মূল্যে ৫ ডিসেম্বর ২০১২ এর ভেতর সংগ্রহ করা যাবে।
৬.	ঢাকায় ফেব্রুয়ারি ২০১৩ মাসের ৩য় সপ্তাহে বাংলাদেশ শিক্ষক একাডেমীতে বাংলাদেশের অংশগ্রহণকারী শিশুদের নির্বাচিত চিত্রকর্মের সপ্তাহব্যাপী বিশেষ প্রদর্শনী অনুষ্ঠিত হবে।
৭.	সকল যোগাযোগ পরিচালক, চারুকলা বিভাগ, বাংলাদেশ শিক্ষক একাডেমী, সেগুনবাগিচা, রমনা, ঢাকা-এর ঠিকানায় করতে হবে। টেলিফোন: ৯৫৫০৬০২, ০১৫৫২৩১২৫৪২

অঙ্কিত ছবি প্রত্যেক জেলা শহরের শিক্ষক একাডেমীসমূহে ১০ ডিসেম্বর ২০১২ এবং ঢাকায় বাংলাদেশ শিক্ষক একাডেমীর চারুকলা বিভাগে ১৫ ডিসেম্বর ২০১২ অফিস সময়সীমার মধ্যে পৌঁছাতে হবে।