

Earthquake hits off Japan's coast

AFP, Tokyo

A 6.1-magnitude earthquake struck off the south coast of Japan's main Honshu island yesterday, the United States Geological Survey said, but no tsunami warning was issued.

The quake hit at 12:22 pm, 644 kilometres south of Tokyo, at a depth of 424 kilometres, the USGS said.

Japan's Meteorological Agency said there was no risk of a tsunami.

Tokyo and its suburban Kanto region were rocked by minor tremors but there were no immediate reports of injuries or damage, the agency said.

"We have received no reports of damage to properties nor reports of injuries so far," a spokesman for the Tokyo Metropolitan Police Department said.

The area is prone to earthquakes.

Another, weaker 4.2-magnitude quake struck at 7:27 pm in Fukushima prefecture in the northeast at a shallow depth of 10 kilometres and was felt throughout the region, the Japan Meteorological Agency said.

It had no impact on the test run in Fukushima Daiichi plant, its operator Tokyo Electric Power Company said.

Shafiu, Ziaur

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return to Bangladesh as he injured his right knee while bowling in the nets during the fourth day's lunch break of the first Test in Harare on Saturday.

"Shahadat may be fit for the second Test, but seeing the workload of the pacers in the first Test, it was decided not to risk him because if he breaks down after bowling seven overs then the team will be one bowler short for the Test. Since he is not part of the ODI team, it was decided to send him back home," said Vibhav.

Rubel's niggle, according to the physio, is more a result of his throwing technique than a product of the long overs he bowled in the first Test. Rubel had recently had an operation on his right shoulder. "It is the same area that is causing problems. He complained of pain yesterday [Saturday], and it sometimes happens that a problem area flares up," said Vibhav. "He has been rested for the second Test so that he can be fully fit for the ODIs and T20Is."

The injury issues of the pacers in Zimbabwe have brought forward Shafiu and Ziaur's travel dates, as both players were expected to travel in time for the one-day matches next month.

Shafiu had recently injured himself while training and missed out on the tour of Sri Lanka. He has played six Test matches so far and has taken eight wickets. The last time the bowler featured in a Test match was against Zimbabwe in 2011. Ziaur, on the other hand, is yet to make his Test debut.

Meanwhile, the other more high-profile injury concern, Tamim Iqbal, faced bowling in the nets at the Harare Sports Club during the Tigers' practice session for the first time since fracturing his right thumb in Sri Lanka in late March.

An ultra-sonogram on Friday showed that there was still a thin fracture on the thumb, an expected result at this stage of recovery. While pain management is still the pivotal issue in whether he will be fit in time for the second Test, an encouraging sign is that there was no swelling yesterday.

"He complained of pain after receiving throwdowns on Saturday, but no complaints yesterday. There was also no swelling on either day, which is good. But I have to assess him tomorrow [Monday] to know the impact of today's practice," said Vibhav.

"He is in a good space mentally at the moment and although he has not batted for four weeks, he feels very much a part of the team process," the South African physio added.

The three-member tribunal led by Justice Obaidul Hassan with members Justice Md Mozibur Rahman Miah and Judge M Shahinur Islam recorded his cross-examination before adjourning the case proceeding until today, when Razzaque is set to face further cross-examination.

The Jamaat secretary general is facing seven

MOJAHEED'S TRIAL Last prosecution witness cross examined

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

An investigation officer of a war crimes case against Ali Ahsan Mohammadi Mojaheed yesterday said the East Pakistan Islami Chhatra Sangha had addressed Al-Badr men at their headquarters even two hours before the surrender of the Pakistan army on December 16, 1971.

Mojaheed was the Chhatra Sangha president from October till Victory Day in 1971, Abdur Razzaque Khan, the investigation officer, said while testifying at International Crimes Tribunal-2 on April 2.

The accused also directly took part in genocide and other crimes against humanity as the Al-Badr commander during the Liberation War, he told the tribunal on March 28.

Al-Badr, a notorious auxiliary force known especially for orchestrating the killings of intellectuals before liberation, was formed with the leaders and activists of Chhatra Sangha, the then student wing of the Jamaat-e-Islami, according to the prosecution documents.

The 17th and last prosecution witness in the case, Razzaque made the disclosures before Tribunal-2 during his cross-examination for the fourth day yesterday.

At one point in his four-hour cross-examination, Mojaheed's counsel Syed Mizanur Rahman asked Razzaque questions over "Al-Badr", written by Selim Mansur Khaled, which was a prosecution document.

"Was the writer of Al-Badr Bangalee?" asked Mizanur and Razzaque replied that he was a Pakistani national.

"Was he [the writer] in Bangladesh in 1971?" asked Mizanur. Razzaque replied, "I don't know."

Relying to another question, Razzaque said the book was originally published in Urdu and a Dhaka University teacher had translated it into Bangla.

"Is there anything specific in the book about the leaders of Al-Badr in different areas?" asked Mizanur.

The book mentioned the names of the commanders of three Al-Badr groups which were responsible for Dhaka, responded Razzaque.

"Is there any reference in the book that Ali Ahsan Mohammad Mojaheed was involved with Razakar [another auxiliary force of Pakistani army]?" asked Mizanur.

"He [Mojaheed] was not a Razakar. However, on pages 135-136 of the book, the condition of Al-Badr forces on December 16, 1971 was narrated. East Pakistan Islami Chhatra Sangha Nazem [president] addressed the Al-Badr men, which was also narrated there," said Razzaque.

He also read out the specific parts of the book before the court.

During his testimony on April 2, Razzaque said he had learned from witnesses' statements and documentary evidence that Mojaheed was the president of Islami Chhatra Sangha of Faridpur district in between 1968-1970.

He was the president of Chhatra Sangha's Dhaka city unit in January-July 1971 and became the general secretary of its East Pakistan unit in July 1971 and was the president from October to December 16, 1971.

Razzaque replied in the negative when Mizanur asked him whether the book mentioned any source about the address of the East Pakistan Chhatra Sangha president.

Mizanur Rahman also questioned him about some other prosecution documents.

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charges of crimes against humanity, including conspiracy to kill intellectuals during the war.

SQCHOWDHURY'S CASE

A physician yesterday testified that he had provided treatment to Salahuddin Quader Chowdhury in the last part of September 1971 when the latter was admitted to Chittagong Medical College Hospital with serious injuries.

AKM Sofiullah, who was an assistant registrar of CMCH in 1971, told the International Crimes Tribunal-1 that he had seen army and policemen when Salauddin was admitted to the hospital at night.

Earlier, two prosecution witnesses in Salahuddin's case testified that they had conducted an operation to kill Salauddin in September 1971. Salauddin survived with serious injuries and his driver was killed in the attack.

Sofiullah, the 27th prosecution witness from Chittagong, said after passing MBBS he had joined CMCH as an institution trainee on July 27, 1970 and after the training period joined the hospital as an assistant registrar.

In the last part of September 1971, around 10:00pm, Sofiullah got a "call message" from the hospital and after 30 minutes, when he reached the hospital, he found many people there, among whom were soldiers and policemen.

"I saw Salahuddin Quader Chowdhury bed-ridden in my room with serious injuries. As far as I can remember, he [Salauddin] had received injuries in his leg and I had given him necessary treatment," said Sofiullah.

After three to four days, he had heard that Salauddin had been taken to another place for better treatment, the witness added.

On August 28, 2012, two freedom fighters -- SM Mahbub-Ul-Alam and Qazi Mohammad Nurul Absar -- said they had conducted the operation to kill Salauddin together as he was "killing and torturing people" with the help of the Pakistani army and their collaborators.

They testified that they along with two other freedom fighters had launched an attack on Salauddin in September when the latter was coming out of a house in his car.

After Sofiullah's testimony, Salauddin's counsel Ahsanul Huq Hena completed his cross-examination before the tribunal led by Justice ATM Fazle Kabir adjourned the proceedings until today.

BNP lawmaker Salauddin Quader Chowdhury is facing 23 charges of crimes against humanity committed during the Liberation War.

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Acting president Abdul Hamid signs his nomination paper for the presidential election at the parliament office of the Speaker yesterday. Awami League chief Sheikh Hasina, whose party nominated Hamid, is seen sitting beside. Hamid is very likely to become president unopposed.

PHOTO: PID

President Hamid

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second Speaker to become head of state -- an elevation from the state's number three position to number one.

His predecessor Abdur Rahman Biswas was also elected president when he was the Speaker in the fifth parliament in 1991.

Presidents Biswas in 1996 and Iajuddin Ahmed at the end of 2006 had moved to resolve political crisis centring parliamentary polls by holding talks with political rivals.

Both failed in their attempts.

It was very much expected that he would be elected to the presidency. He is very familiar with the country's politics," Akbar Ali Khan, a former adviser to a caretaker government, told The Daily Star. "Time will say how much he can meet the

expectations," he said.

Another former adviser to a caretaker government M Hafizuddin Khan said, "We hope he will take necessary steps to overcome the political crisis."

Sources said Awami League senior MP Amir Hossain Amu, who at the Awami League Parliamentary Party meeting seconded the proposal for nominating Hamid, said, "He would be a good candidate considering the nation is at a critical juncture."

Political scientists Prof Dilara Chowdhury said she doubts whether Hamid would be able to resolve the political crisis.

Khandaker Mosharraf Hossain, a member of national standing committee of BNP, said his party would come up with a formal reaction to Hamid's nomination

for the presidency later.

Ruhul Amin Hawlader, secretary general of Jatiya Party, a component of Awami League-led alliance, wholeheartedly welcomed Hamid's nomination for the presidency.

After Hamid's election to the presidency, the office of Speaker would fall vacant and the House would need to elect a new Speaker in the current session.

The Awami League Parliamentary Party meeting, which picked Hamid as the lone candidate to file a nomination, would be declared elected uncontested after scrutiny of his nomination paper.

Hamid became the acting president on March 14 after late president Zillur Rahman fell sick and was flown to Singapore for treatment. Zillur passed away in Singapore on March 20.

Parliamentary Party meeting.

Emerging from the meeting, Hasina called on Speaker Hamid at his office in the parliament around 2:00pm and signed the nomination paper for Hamid.

Later, a delegation of the Awami League submitted the nomination paper to the Election Commission.

Talking to reporters, Chief Election Commissioner Rakibuddin said Hamid, the lone candidate to file a nomination, would be declared elected uncontested after scrutiny of his nomination paper.

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Mayhem

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murder.

Babu had been looking after a tin-shed house of a relative since its purchase in 2005, his father Hedayat Ullah said. The owner handed over the piece of land to a developer last year. But one of the previous owner's son Titu, who is known as a local goon, wanted to have the property back forcibly.

Two months ago, their relative gave Titu Tk 2 lakh to settle the issue, Hedayat said.

In March, Titu was beaten up by local people for extortion and handed over to police. Being released on bail, Titu threatened to kill Babu, accusing him of the incident, Hedayat added.

Kazi Wazed Ali, officer-in-charge of Kafrul Police Station, said victim's family and some people in the neighbourhoods blamed Titu and an unidentified accomplice for the killing. But they have no specific information.

"We raided Titu's residence at Savar and other places to arrest him but he went into hiding," he said.

Police, meanwhile, held garage owner Jahangir last night for interrogation, the OC said, adding Jahangir had called Babu to the garage an hour before the shooting.

Juror jailed

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was texting.

Marion County Circuit Judge Dennis Graves cleared the courtroom and excused all jurors except 26-year-old Benjamin Kohler.

According to a news release from the Marion County Sheriff's Office, Kohler had no explanation for his actions.

Jurors in Oregon are given explicit instructions at the outset of each trial not to use cellphones in court.

Graves held Kohler in contempt, and Kohler spent most of Tuesday and Wednesday in the county jail. He was released Wednesday night.

Neither the nature of the text message nor its recipient was disclosed.

Kohler did not immediately return a phone call seeking comment Thursday.

Cleared for release

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of al-Qaida. His legal team alleges that the US, Saudi Arabia - where Aamer was born - and the UK security services are trying to ensure that he never goes home.

Were he to return, he would almost certainly become a key witness in Scotland Yard's investigation into allegations of British complicity in torture in the post 9/11 era.

Despite Foreign Office pressure to bring Aamer back to his family in south London, it has been confirmed that he has only been officially cleared to be sent to Saudi Arabia, where officials have threatened him with imprisonment.

A letter dated 18 February 2013 from William Hague, the foreign secretary, to Aamer's lawyer, Clive Stafford Smith, states: "It is our understanding that Mr Aamer has only ever been cleared for transfer to Saudi Arabia."

Stafford Smith, director of the legal charity Reprieve, said, "It seems highly probable that the British security services are in bed with the

Americans on trying to keep Shaker from coming back to the UK, since Shaker is such an important witness against them for their complicity in torture. We can only hope that Hague will hold them to account.

Scotland Yard has got a lengthy statement from Aamer about his abuse and British comp