Tropical Storm Karen weakens

AFP, Miami

Tropical Storm Karen weakened early yesterday as it churned off the US Gulf Coast, though forecasters warned it would still bring heavy rain across several southeastern US states.

The slow-moving storm was parked south of the state of Louisiana, and was not expected to make landfall until late Saturday or early Sunday, the National Hurricane Center said.

At 0900 GMT Karen was located about 310 kilometers (195 miles) southwest of the mouth of the Mississippi river, packing sustained winds of 65 kilometers (40 miles) per hour and moving towards the northwest at 13 kilometers (eight miles) per hour.

Leak raises

FROM PAGE 16

was restricted by the authorities -- all raise questions over the security of the International Crimes Tribunal.

"We are suspecting that there might be some breach of security at the tribunal, said an official of the Detective Branch of police last night on condition of

anonymity. The DB was investigating

the matter, he added.

Last year, after the leak of Skype conversations between former ICT-1 chairman Justice Nizamul Huq Nasim and Belgium-based legal expert Ahmed Ziauddin, war crimes trial campaigners had demanded the authorities step up security at the tribunal. But little seems to have been done to that end.

Meanwhile, a Dhaka court yesterday placed two tribunal staff on remand for eight days each in a case over the draft verdict leak.

Nayon Ali, a cleaner at the tribunal, and Faruk Hossain, an office assistant at the tribunal registrar's office, were arrested on Friday.

Police were yet to arrest another accused, Mehedi Hasan, an assistant to Salauddin's lawyer Fakhrul

Detectives filed the case against the three and several other unnamed people with Shahbagh Police Station on Friday following an investigation prompted by filing of a general diary by the tribunal registrar.

At a press briefing on Friday, Joint Commissioner of Dhaka Metropolitan Police Monirul Islam said Nayon had confessed his involvement in the leak.

Faruk had asked Nayon to get "some documents" relating to Salauddin's trial from the tribunal's computers and give them to Mehedi Hasan, said the DMP official, adding that Nayon had handed over Hasan a soft copy of the 165page document in phases

using a pen drive. Initially, Nayon had refused to comply with their demand. But later on he did it as Mehedi and Farug threat-

ened to put him in trouble.

Although Nayon was employed as a cleaner, he used to work occasionally as a peon at the office of Justice ATM Fazle Kabir, chairman of ICT-1, tribunal sources said.

"Security men didn't suspect him as he occasionally entered the office even after monitoring his movement in closed circuit cameras," said Nasiruddin Mahmud, registrar and spokesperson of the tribunal.

On Thursday, seven to eight cleaners, including Nayan, who used to stay in the tribunal building at night, were shifted to some-

where else, he added. Except for a few designated persons, no one is

allowed to carry electronic devices, including pen drives, at the court, mentioned Nasiruddin. DB Inspector

Mohammad Shahjahan, also the investigation officer of the case, produced the arrestees before the Metropolitan Magistrate's Court seeking 10-day remand for each.

The detectives will quiz the duo to find out whether any other person was

involved in the leak. On Tuesday, the ICT-1 awarded death sentence to the BNP leader for committing crimes against humanity in Chittagong during the Liberation War in 1971.

Muhith still hopeful of ADB's return to Padma project

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Finance Minister AMA Muhith yesterday said he was hopeful that Asian Development Bank would return to the Padma bridge project in the future.

"I am still hopeful that the bank will come back to the project at some time in the future, as this is a transformational project," he said. He was addressing an

capital to mark ADB's 40 years in Bangladesh. Muhith said though the Manila-based bank had

event at Westin hotel in the

withdrawn from the Padma Bridge project, it did well in

supporting almost all of the sectors of Bangladesh econ-

A long-time development partner, ADB had committed to provide the country \$615 million for the \$2.9 billion Padma project. But it pulled out of the

project after the government in last February withdrew itself from talks with the World Bank, the main financier of the bridge project, as an investigation into the allegations of corruption conspiracy lingered.

M Teresa Kho, country director of ADB, did not make any comments on the issue during yesterday's

In an interview with The Daily Star on Wednesday, she said the two sides were not in any discussions over the bridge project now after the government had decided to construct the bridge on its own.

Although the ADB official did not delve into the debate over the corruption issue, she said the bridge project remained one of the key investments in the country's history, because it is supposed to connect the southwestern part of the country with the northern part and the capital, and can benefit 20 million people and increase trade and provide jobs.

Ticket staff killed

FROM PAGE 1

Station manager Khairul Bashir said Israfil was in charge of the cash room at night. "He joined for duty as a substitute cashier at the room at 10:00pm on Friday for the night shift, and discharged his duties until 11:30pm, when the counter was closed," mentioned Khairul. "Some of the staff stayed

him [Israfil] with the accounts. They vacated the room after the job was done, leaving Israfil alone at the Khairul added: As the morning shift staff entered the room around 5:00am,

open. Multiple layers of security at the cash room were found undamaged, prompting the police to suspect that the assailants were acquaintances of Israfil.

Though 16 closed circuit cameras were installed at various points of the station, none was set up at the cash room, noted the station manager.

The station authorities have suspended six security guards and four railway police personnel.

The deceased's body was sent to the Dhaka Medical College morgue for an

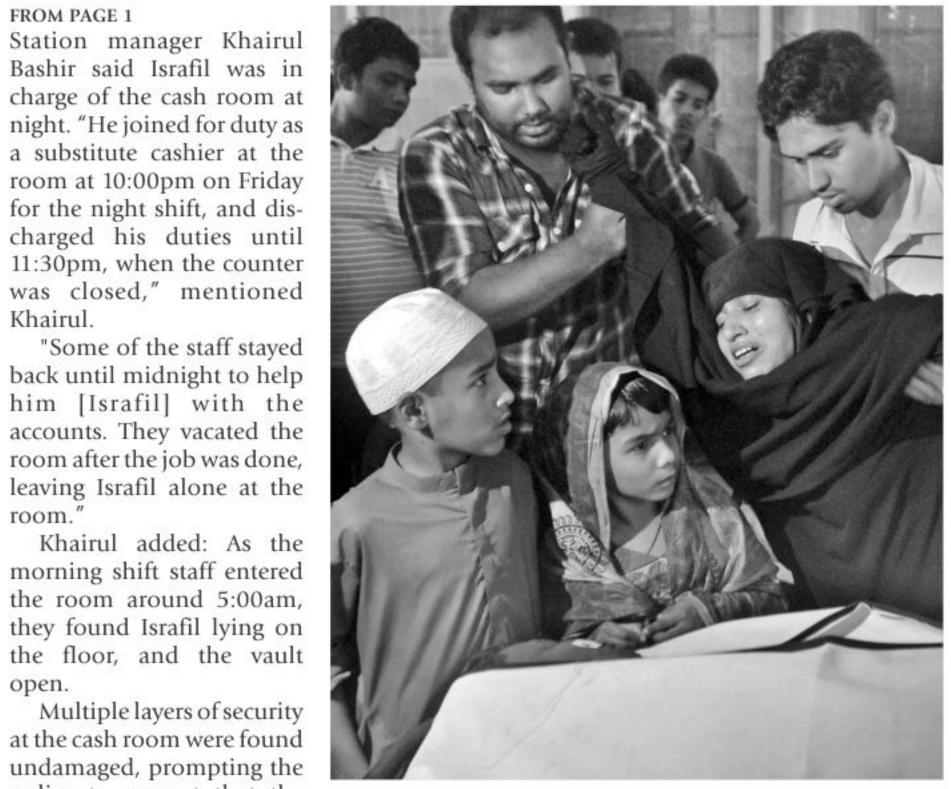


PHOTO: COURTESY Relatives of deceased Israfil Hossain wail over his death.

said the victim was strangled to death.

Dhaka Railway Police Station in connection with the murder. Railways Minister

Hossain filed a case with

Muzibul Haque, along with railway high-ups, visited the spot around 9:00am.

Meanwhile, railway staff stations.

autopsy. Morgue sources in Chittagong under the banner of Bangladesh Railway Sramik Station master Shakawat Karmachari Sangram Parishad brought out a procession and held a rally at Chittagong Railway Station yesterday morning.

They demanded immediate arrest of the killers of Israfil and enhanced security measures at all railway

UN should give up veto for mass

France on Friday renewed a call for the five main UN Security Council powers to suspend their right to veto any resolution when a "mass crime" is committed.

French Foreign Minister Laurent Fabius said he was renewing the campaign because of the council's two year deadlock over the Syria war -- during which Russia has vetoed three resolu-

tions. Fabius did not name Russia in a commentary published by the New York Times, Le Monde and other newspapers, but said "the council was powerless in the face of the Syrian tragedy."

"For all those who expect the United Nations to shoulder its responsibilities in order to protect populations, this situation is reprehensible," he added.

A resolution passed on September 27 ordering the destruction of Syria's chemical weapons was the council's first on the conflict, which the UN says has left

well over 100,000 dead. The minister said France proposes that "if the Security Council were

required to make a decision with regard to a mass crime, the permanent members would agree to suspend their right to veto." Britain, China, France,

Russia and the United States -- the permanent UN Security Council members since its creation in 1946 --

can each veto any resolution passed by the 15-member body.

Traditionally, each has used the veto when strategic interests are seen as at stake.

Since 2000, the United States has used the veto 11 times, mainly to stop resolutions attacking its ally Israel.

Russia has used it seven times -- three to block west ern resolutions increasing pressure on its ally Syria's President Bashar al-Assad.

China has vetoed five times, joining Russia for the three Syria resolutions.

France and Britain have not used their veto since 1989.

Fabius said the perma nent five should agree to "voluntarily regulate their right to exercise their veto" when a population faces a large-scale threat.

He said no change to the UN Charter would be neces-

France proposed that it 50 countries made a request, the UN secretary general would determine whether a "mass crime" had been committed and the voluntary accord could come into effect.

Fabius said the move would allow the council to preserve its "fundamental

credibility." But he added that "to be realistically applicable, this code would exclude cases where the vital national interests of a permanent member of the council were

at stake."

Inhuman Indian maid says she

was burnt, forced to drink urine

AFP, New Delhi

A teenage Indian maid rescued last week with horrific injuries has alleged her employer forced her to drink urine, kept her naked in the bathroom and burnt her with a frying pan, reports said yesterday.

The young woman was speaking to the media Friday after being rescued by police from a home in an upscale New Delhi neighbourhood following complaints by

neighbours. Police say the teenager had been tortured by her employer, a 50-year-old Indian woman working for a French multinational.

"(My employer) forced me to drink urine, kept me naked in the bathroom and would singe me with a frying pan and hit me with a broom," the maid told The Hindustan Times newspa-

"She would laugh after beating me," the girl alleged

The girl also alleged her nails were pulled out and a piece of paper on which she had written down the telephone numbers of her relatives had been torn up, The Indian Express reported.

After her rescue last week, social rights campaigners said she had been slashed with knives and mauled by dogs. The girl's account has

focused the spotlight on abuse of domestic servants, including children. The employees are sometimes trafficked from remote and poverty-stricken Indian states to urban cen-

tres and toil for long hours

in homes for little and or no

pay.

India's northeast region.

Referring to West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee-led Trinamool Congress's opposition to the land boundary deal, Aiyar hoped the bill seeking its ratification will be passed in the coming winter session of Indian parliament. Asked if Mamata would

support the bill, Aiyar said, "Inshallah, I hope she will." "It is not a question of

party politics but ensuring that we have the kind of relationship between India and Bangladesh that we used to have during the Liberation Struggle and thereafter," he added. He also said the most

impacted by an Indo-Bangla agreement are those who live in West Bengal. "Mamata will absolutely have an opinion about that." "What I think we made a

mistake is attempting to conciliate her at the level of the National Security Adviser (NSA), instead of sending a senior minister to her with the NSA acting as an adviser," Aiyar said. He ter of West Bengal, she [Mamata] will demonstrate the maturity to help promote the relationship between two neighbouring countries without being too partisan with respect to segments of West Bengal opinion." He said he firmly believes

that benefits will not flow to India's northeastern region unless Bangladesh becomes a natural country of transit that will connect the region with the rest of India.

Replying to a query about Bangladesh-India deal for setting up the coal-fired power plant at Rampal and environmentalists' concern about its impact on the Sundarbans, he said environmental issues have to be properly addressed in a constructive spirit.

About border killings, Aiyar said, "I think it is one of the failures of Indian foreign policy that we could not build the 'bhai-bhai' policy that existed in 1971."

Indian leader launches tast to protest

AFP, Kurnool

launched a hunger strike yesterday to protest against plans to carve out a new state in the country's south.

Y S Jaganmohan Reddy who broke away from Congress to start his own party, was greeted by thousands of supporters as he began the fast against the move to split his home state of Andhra Pradesh and create the new state of Telangana.

"We are opposing this unilateral move of the central government to split Andhra Pradesh," he told NDTV news network in Hyderabad, the state capital where many IT giants including Google and Microsoft have offices.

"We will be going to the Supreme Court to protest and challenge the decision of the cabinet. The central government does not want a united Andhra Pradesh."

Reddy, 40, is the son of the late Y S R Reddy, the hugely popular former chief minister of Andhra Pradesh, who died in a helicopter crash in 2009. The start of his fast came

as police fired teargas to disperse a mob that went on a rampage in one district, damaging vehicles, the Press Trust of India reported.

Chinese firm FROM PAGE 16

The project is scheduled to

be completed by June 2015. Officials say it has been undertaken as a part of the government's election pledge of building Digital Bangladesh by 2021. The work of the project

has been prepared in coordination with the Access to Information project under the Prime Minister's Office, the 3G project launched by state-run Teletalk and the video-conferencing project by the Cabinet Division.

Aiyar believes Tunisia deal brings an end to Islamist govt

AFP, Tunis

Tunisia's political rivals yesterday agreed on a timetable for the unpopular Islamist-led ruling coalition to quit and be replaced by a government of independents, aiming to end a festering political crisis. The Islamist Ennahda

party and opposition groups in the country that gave birth to the Arab Spring signed a roadmap aimed at creating a new government within three weeks. The deal, signed in the presence of politicians and

crisis sparked by the assassination in July of opposition MP Mohamed Brahmi. The document, drawn up by four mediators, foresees the nomination of an independent prime minister by the end of next week, who

It says that after the first hoped that "As chief minis- | day of national dialogue, "the government will resign with a delay not exceeding three weeks".

would then have two weeks

to form a cabinet.

One of the leaders of Ennahda, Abdelhamid

Jlassi, told AFP the national dialogue proper is not expected to start on Monday, however.

"First there will be preparatory meetings, and the date of the government's resignation will not be determined until the start of the real national dialogue," he said.

"Ennahda's signature today is a major concession made in the interests of the country," he added. Saturday's ceremony got

under way after a delay of several hours that underscored the mutual distrust between the rival camps. media, was brokered to end "I want to thank you for a simmering two-month joining this dialogue

because you are opening the

door of hope for Tunisians,"

said Houcine Abassi, whose

UGTT trade union confederation was the lead mediator behind the roadmap. Delegates at the Palais des Congres said the launch of the hard-won dialogue with a symbolic ceremony had earlier been jeopardised

The UGTT said Ennahda had initially refused to formally sign the text that underlines the timetable of

by a last-minute dispute.

the national dialogue. It was not immediately

clear how it was resolved, but Ennahda leader Rached Ghannouchi on Twitter blamed the almost four-hour delay on "last-minute blackmail" by the opposition.

Ennahda eventually signed the agreement, but its secular ally, the Congress for the Republic party of President Moncef Marzouki, refused to do so. By signing the roadmap,

the Ennahda-led coalition, which has been rocked by the murder of two political opponents, economic woes and prolonged political disputes, has agreed to step down two years after winning a general election.

Its victory at the polls on October 23, 2011, was the first free vote in Tunisian history, and followed the overthrow of long-ruling strongman Zine El Abidine Ben Ali in the first revolt of the Arab Spring.

The roadmap also foresees, within the next four weeks and after a national dialogue across the political spectrum, the adoption of a constitution and a timetable for elections.

Shutdown hits Iran sanctions: US terrorist organizations and Royce argued that the

AFP, Washington

The White House warned Friday that the office which enforces US sanctions on Iran could not function as most of its staff was furloughed by the government shutdown. The Treasury's Office of

Foreign Asset Control had seen its manpower cut from 175 full-time staff to 11, White House spokesman Jay Carney said. "The office is unable to

sustain its core functions," he said. The office issues new sanctions, and targets firms or individuals that violate US sanctions to punish

Iran's nuclear program. It also maintains US sanctions against Syria, proliferators of weapons of mass destruction. The White House and

rival Republicans have been highlighting the impact of furloughs and funding cuts to make political points as the shutdown goes into a fourth day.

consequences if the Republican shutdown continues to have on the government's missions and workers across the country," Carney said. The Republican chairman of the House Foreign Affairs committee, Ed Royce,

called on Treasury Secretary

Jacob Lew to declare the

work of the office essential,

a status which would allow

security and should therefore be legally permitted to remain at their desks during the shutdown. "The Iran sanctions regime has been developed "(This) illustrates the in response to a 'national emergency' as determined

by the President...I could

not agree more that Iran's

drive toward a nuclear

weapon is a grave threat to

workers at the office were

fulfilling an emergency

function critical to national

our country," he said to Lew in a letter. "I respectfully ask that you reconsider these illadvised staffing decisions that undermine support for vigorous Iran sanctions and other critical national secu-

staff to return to work. rity efforts." A powerful former ally of India's ruling Congress party He never let us read his books'

FROM PAGE 16 born in. "In the era he [Maududi] was born, there was communism, imperialism and he had made Islam also a system of ism, a sys-

tem of life," he noted. On religion-based politics, Farooq said, "Religion is for the people and people are not for religion. Religion makes a human being a good human being."

However, religious sentiment is so deeply rooted in this region that no one is ready to listen to the right thing, he observed.

About his upbringing, he said his father never let his children read his books or allowed them to involve in Jamaat or any other likeminded politics. "If he ever saw us in a rally or demonstration, he would later call us and ask what business we had standing there. He totally kept us away from all these.

"This is a tragedy of all our religious politics that we use people's children, but keep our own away from it as we all know about its negative impacts," he added. Asked why his father had

kept his children in the dark about his political views, he said, "The person who is at the helm knows about its inside well." Faroog also stated that Maulana Abul Kalam Azad,

a senior political leader of the Indian independence movement, had warned his father about creating a religion-based party, saying that religious-minded people would gather under its umbrella, bringing about no good.

"That is exactly what happened. When my father founded the party, religious fundamentalists gathered around him. He (Abul A'la

Maududi) used them for political purposes, knowing them how dangerous they could be," he added.

He said his father knew

that the Jamaat-e-Islami had deviated from his vision, but he decided not to do anything about it for his advanced age. Describing the Jamaat-e-Islami of Pakistan and

Bangladesh as equals, he

said Jamaat should not do

politics in Bangladesh whose birth it had opposed. Syed Abul A'la Maududi too had opposed the creation of Pakistan during the partition of the subcontinent in 1947 because, to him, Pakistan was a state for the Muslims, not an Islamic

"He [Abul A'la Maududi] said this is not Pakistan. He didn't accept Mr Jinnah's logic [of a nation state for the Muslims]. But ultimately he had migrated to Pakistan, where he floated the party saying that if you made Pakistan on the basis of Islam, we have all the right to make it an Islamic state," Farooq said quoting his father.

He elaborated on how Jinnah had changed his stance about religion and allowed the practice of religion by the non-Muslims, declaring that the state would not interfere in the matter. Asked if the Jamaat's

opposition to Pakistan and then his father's doing politics in the very country can be viewed as similar to the Bangladesh Jamaat-e-Islami's role here, he replied, "Though my father had opposed Pakistan, the circumstances were such that he had to migrate to Pakistan." Both Jinnah and

stances. Jinnah had shifted his ground from creating a Muslim state to a secular one and Maududi from opposing Pakistan to trying to establish religion-based politics. "As a consequence,

we are left in a state of chaos,

as you can see now," said Farooq. Working for a private airlines company, Farooq on several occasions had visited Bangladesh before 1971. He is a vocal critic of the protagonists of "Jihad'

in Kashmir and writes col-

umns in Urdu newspapers.

Mexico bus crash kills 14, injures 24

AFP, Naucalpan

A bus packed with morning commuters careened off a cliff outside Mexico City on Friday, leaving 14 people dead, including a child, and injuring 24 others, officials said.

The bus was lying upside down when ambulances arrived at the scene on a highway linking the Mexico state capital of Toluca to the Mexico City suburb of Naucalpan.

The Mexico state prosecutor's office said the dead included nine men, four women and a boy. The Naucalpan town government said the boy was wearing a junior high school uniform.

Twelve people died on the spot while one victim succumbed to injuries in an ambulance and another in a Mexico City hospital, the Red Cross and prosecutor's office said.

A Red Cross spokesman said 24 people were injured in the crash, which took place at around 6:38 am. Maududi had changed their

crimes: France AFP, United Nations