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## NUR HOSSAIN'S PHONE CALL

# Shamim admits but claims no ill-motive

Leaked conversation suggests he assured 7-murder accused of help in fleeing the country

**STAR REPORT**

Following the leak of his phone call with seven-murder accused Nur Hossain, Awami League lawmaker Shamim Osman yesterday admitted to making the conversation but claimed the media published it partially.

During a briefing at his Gulshan residence in the capital, Shamim said he had asked Hossain to surrender before the court if he had no complicity in the crime.

But in the leaked conversation, obtained by The Daily Star, after Hossain sought help in fleeing the country, the ruling party MP said, "It would not be a problem."

Shamim also asked, "Do you have any seal [visa]?"

Hossain replied, "Yes I have one but how can I go? There is alert everywhere." With assurance, Shamim said there was nothing like that. "You proceed."

Hossain then requested the MP to inquire further and said, "I will call tomorrow."

According to a Prothom Alo report published yesterday, the phone conversation took place on April 29, two days after the abduction of seven people, including Narayanganj panel mayor Nazrul Islam.

Hossain was around Dhanmondi-4 when the phone call was made, the report said.

Crying, he was saying, "I do not have much education, I have made many mistakes. You are like my father, I love you very much."

Shamim said, "Why do you worry this much? Give me some time. And if possible, meet Gaur Da."

The AL leader wanted to know whether Hossain got "the information" he had sent. He added somebody was trying to kill two birds with one shot.

On April 27, Nazrul, his four aides,

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## STILL BLACK

The pitch-black filthy water at Trimohoni of Dhaka as it has always been for over a decade. The government claims to have taken many initiatives to protect rivers but at Trimohoni, the confluence of Debdolai canal and the Balu and the Noral rivers, things have not changed. The photo was taken recently.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

## Thai army detains ex-PM Yingluck

Imposes travel ban on politicians; world urges junta to return power to democratic govt

**AGENCIES**

Thailand's military rulers detained former Prime Minister Yingluck Shinawatra yesterday, a senior officer said, after summoning her for talks a day after the army overthrew her caretaker government in a coup.

As the army moved to consolidate its grip on the country, its chief, General Prayuth Chan-ocha, set out his plans for the country, saying reforms were needed before an election. But some Thais defied martial law to protest against the takeover.

Prayuth launched his coup after rival factions refused to give ground in a struggle for power between the royalist establishment and Yingluck's populist government that had raised fears of serious violence and damaged the economy.

"We have detained Yingluck, her sister and brother-in-law," a senior military officer told Reuters. The two relatives have held top political posts.

"We will do so for not more than week, that would be too long. We just need to organise matters in the country first," said the officer who declined to be identified.

He declined to say where Yingluck was being held, but media said she was at an army base in Saraburi province, north of Bangkok. Soldiers detained politicians from both sides on Thursday after Prayuth announced the military takeover, which drew swift international condemnation.

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## Speaker to meet Modi on May 27

**OUR CORRESPONDENT, New Delhi**

In the first high-level interaction between Bangladesh and India following a change of government in New Delhi, Jatiya Sangsad Speaker Shirin Sharmin Chaudhury will have a one-to-one meeting with Narendra Modi on May 27, a day after he is sworn in as prime minister.

The meeting will take place at the palatial Hyderabad House in the heart of Delhi and is expected to last for about half an hour, officials said here yesterday.

There is no official word from Pakistan as yet if its Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif will attend the swearing in of Modi. A decision is likely today.

Shirin, who arrives here on May 25, will be among an array of top SAARC leaders who will be hosted to a banquet by Modi also at the Hyderabad House soon after his taking the oath at the forecourt of Rashtrapati Bhavan here on May 26 at 6:00pm.

Shirin is representing Bangladesh as Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina is away in Japan on a bilateral visit.

Hasina was among the first foreign

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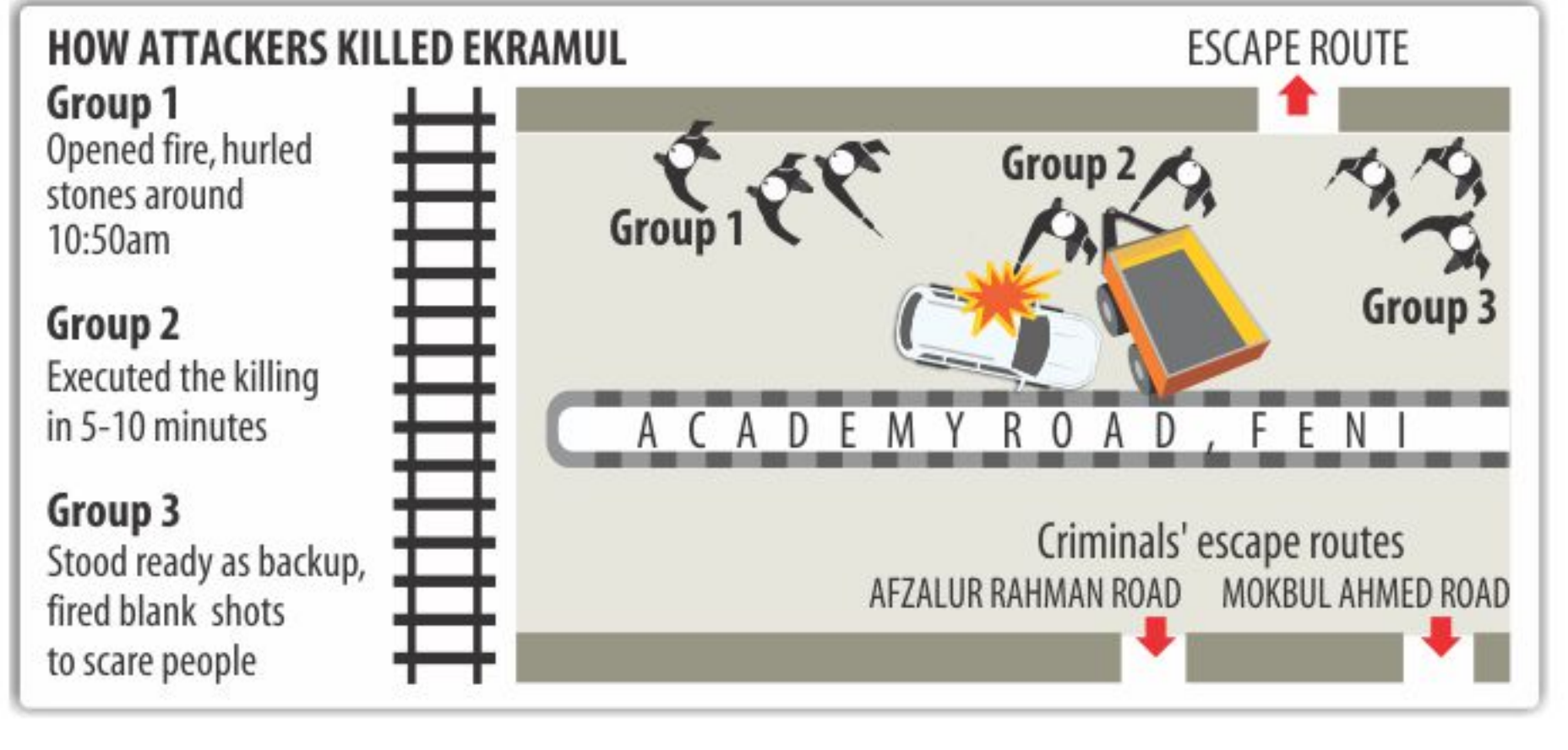
## Feni attackers came in three groups

Witnesses tell how they executed killing and fled; 2 suspects held

**RASHIDUL HASAN and PARTHA PRATIM BHATTACHARJEE, back from Feni**

Three groups, at least 10 in each, took position on the Academy Road in Feni sadar around 10:50am on Tuesday. Equipped with firearms, knives, machetes, stones and homemade bombs, they were on a mission kill.

Their informers had already told them



## Bender blow for Germany

**REUTERS, Berlin**

Germany midfielder Lars Bender yesterday was ruled out of next month's World Cup in Brazil with a thigh injury in another blow to coach Joachim Loew's plans.

Two days after Germany started their preparations in northern Italy, the Bayer Leverkusen player became the latest injury victim and pulled out of the 27-man provisional squad.

The 25-year-old, who has scored four times in 17 international appearances, picked up a "combined" muscle and tendon injury in his right thigh in training on Thursday evening and has already left the team camp.

"He left shortly before ten this morning after saying goodbye to the team," team spokesman Jens Gritter

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A rickshaw van carrying pitchers and cans full of water to Eskaton in the capital from a Wasa pump station in Ramna. Several areas of Dhaka are suffering from water supply problems.

## LNG TERMINAL AT MAHESHKHALI

# High priority project limping for 4 years

Unsolicited negotiations with US consortium resume this month

**SHARIER KHAN**

Due to flawed negotiations and a lack of model contract, the Petrobangla could not award the job of setting up a liquefied natural gas (LNG) terminal at Maheshkhali even in about four years.

If built, the terminal would be able meet the country's current gas shortfall of 500 mmcf.

But the Petrobangla has been limping with this "fast track" top priority project and trying to strike a deal with an American consortium of Astra and Excelebrate, which was found non-responsive in evaluation.

After the Awami League government took office in January, the Petrobangla aimed to sign an agreement with this consortium on the basis of unsolicited negotiations by March.

The consortium offered to build the LNG terminal for around \$300 million and operate it for 15 years before transferring it to the government.

But during negotiations it was found the consortium offer did not say anything about who would provide various services for the ships that would import the LNG.

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- Project delays as Petrobangla failed to strike contract
- Contractor to invest \$300m to build LNG terminal
- Terminal to be handed over to govt after 15 years
- LNG is more cost effective than fuel oil
- Per unit gas to cost more than \$14.5

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN