

## Priyanka wants

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her family's security check exemptions at airports, a request that comes in the wake of media reports that the government may take her husband Robert Vadra off the no-frisk protocol that he enjoys as part of the Gandhi family.

Priyanka wrote a letter to the chief of elite Special Protection Group (SPG), saying "since the government is now reportedly considering the removal of his (Vadra) name, I would like to inform you that I do not feel it will be correct for my children and me to avail of the facility of exemption of these checks while entering or exiting the airport when we are all travelling together."

Being a member of Gandhi family which is entitled to SPG, Robert Vadra is given some of the security covers. However, the privilege is only when he is travelling with the family and he has to undergo normal checks when he travels alone.

While stressing that the privilege to Vadra was imposed by police, Priyanka said it had become a source of constant embarrassment for her husband who had repeatedly asked her to get it withdrawn.

"I had verbally conveyed this to the previous Director and the AIG, SPG, in charge of my security detail on a number of occasions but no action was ever taken on it," she said.

She also requested the SPG chief that her security detail at airports be discreet and unobtrusive. "Request you to ensure that when we are entering or exiting boarding gates, there is no disturbance to passengers ... Request security detail to behave in a manner that is discreet and strictly unobtrusive," the letter said.

Priyanka wrote that she, her children and her husband be treated like ordinary travellers at the airport security clearance.

## Google offers

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The US-based Internet giant declined to estimate how long it might take for the links to disappear saying factors such as whether requests are clear-cut will affect how long it takes.

The ruling on the right to be forgotten comes amid growing concern in Europe about individuals' ability to protect their personal data and manage their reputations online.



**Supplies and ammo being sent to Border Guard Bangladesh troops from their Lemuchhari camp in Naikkhanchhari of Bandarban yesterday as tension was running high at the border with Myanmar following two gun battles in three days. Inset, BGB jawans alert at the border.**

PHOTO: ANURUP KANTI DAS



## Border still very tense

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When a BGB team went near the spot on Friday looking for Mizanur, the BGP opened fire on them that led to a gun battle.

A 10-member BGB team, led by Major Tarek, went across the border in response to a call from the BGP yesterday. The team identified the body of Mizanur, said BGB Director General Maj Gen Aziz Ahmed at a press briefing at the capital's BGB Pilkhana headquarters in the evening.

He said the team brought the body back around 5:45pm but Mizanur's light machine gun was not recovered. As the Myanmar side agreed to have a flag meeting on June 3, the issue of the fire-arm could be discussed then, he added.

The BGB team had demanded that the Myanmarese force probe and punish people responsible for Mizanur's death and guard against such incidents in future, Maj Gen Aziz said.

He said the situation at the border had not deteriorated but security had been tightened following reports of army deployment by Myanmar.

Rashid Ahmed, chairman of Dochari

Union Parishad, told our Bandarban correspondent that the situation there was still tense and has been like this since Wednesday. Women and children in the area are not spending nights at their homes.

Mong nu Marma, chief of local indigenous people, said about 200 families are in fear of the situation deteriorating.

Mizanur is the son of martyred freedom fighter Lance Corporal Abdul Hafiz. He left behind his wife and four daughters, reports a correspondent from Comilla.

His grieving mother Rabeya Akhter said, "I lost his father 43 years ago and never even saw his body. Now, after all these years, I have to sacrifice my son for the country .... I'm waiting to get my son's body back home."

Amidst escalating tension near the frontier since Wednesday, Bangladesh had mounted diplomatic pressure on its eastern neighbour, summoning the Myanmar envoy in Dhaka twice in



Maj Gen Aziz

three days.

The foreign office summoned Myanmar ambassador U Myo Myint Than to state guesthouse Padma around 10:30am yesterday to protest the unprovoked firing by BGP and Mizanur's killing. In a note verbale, Secretary Mustafa Kamal asked for return of Mizanur's body.

Bangladesh demanded a thorough investigation, says a foreign ministry press release, adding that Bangladesh urged Myanmar to immediately and completely withdraw all military troops from the border if they had been deployed.

The Myanmar envoy had assured them of getting the message conveyed to the authorities concerned in Myanmar.

At the lengthy meeting at Padma, the issue of militant group Rohingya Solidarity Organisation (RSO) came up. It was noted that the BGP had thought Mizanur to be a RSO man and shot him, causing his death, but they later realised he was a BGB personnel, sources said.

Bangladesh made it clear at the meeting that there was no RSO in its territory.

BGB chief Maj Gen Aziz also said at the press conference that there was no RSO in Bangladesh. He expressed frustration and disappointment over the BGP not cooperating and responding to issues raised by the BGB over the years.

Maj Gen Aziz said the June 9-14 summit-level meeting between BGB and BGP in Myanmar would be an opportunity to sort out issues between the two border forces.

About reports of a few more BGB men missing since Friday's gunfight, the BGB DG said four slightly injured jawans were initially reported to be missing but they had returned to base after a few hours.

BGB sources said that without any provocation Myanmar border guards had also opened fire on a BGB patrol team at Baishpari in Chundhoom of Naikkhanchhari on May 21.

In November 2008, tension ran high as Myanmar started oil and gas exploration in Bangladesh's territorial waters. Dhaka had deployed warships and sent a diplomatic team to Myanmar.

## Hasina highlights Japan outcome

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relations between Dhaka and Tokyo.

The government of Japan has pledged all-out cooperation and assistance for the socioeconomic development of Bangladesh, mentioned the PM.

Immediately after the independence, she said, Japan recognised the new sovereign Bangladesh and extended its unflinching support to rebuilding and economic development of the war-ravaged country.

At the official bilateral talks, the two premiers agreed to establish a "comprehensive partnership" for further deepening the bilateral ties, added Hasina.

The PM said the Japanese govern-

ment has agreed to be involved in some very important and big projects, including some big power plants in Bangladesh.

Japan will construct a 1300-MW ultra critical coal-fired new power plant at Matarbari of Moheshkhali in Cox's Bazar. A Japanese expert team will visit the site to this end.

Japan also reaffirmed its support to establish a peace-building centre in Bangladesh as a symbol of the two countries' cooperation in UN peace-keeping and peace-building efforts, noted the PM.

Both the leaders, she added, agreed to extend reciprocal visa exemption for the diplomatic and official passport holders of the two countries.

**RELATIONS WITH INDIA**

On Bangladesh's relations with the new Indian government, Hasina said previous Awami League governments had worked with five different governments of India from 1996-2001 and 2009-2014 by maintaining good ties and solving many problems.

"During that period, we have realised the fair share of the Ganges water and reached an understanding [with India] on the Tipaimukh issue," she mentioned.

The AL government, she said, has taken initiatives to solve land boundary problems with India. "Bangladesh has already ratified the Land Boundary Agreement, while India has placed the deal in its parliament. I have firm belief that we could solve the problems," she

added.

About the much-awaited Teesta deal, the PM said no other government except that of the AL took any initiative for discussions on the Teesta agreement with India.

"We were about to ink the Teesta agreement, but it was not done due to the veto of West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee at the last moment. Despite that, we took the deal far ahead," she noted.

The PM said she wants her Indian counterpart visit Bangladesh first as she has invited him first. "There must be exchange of visits. Problems will exist, but those could be solved through discussions. Our policy is friendship to all, malice to none."

## Sneijder back into shape

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would be on the plane to Brazil.

But the 29-year-old member of the team that reached the 2010 World Cup final is back in fighting shape and back in van Gaal's good books.

Sneijder, who plays for Galatasaray in Turkey, was depressed and out of shape when he turned to Saki to get back to World Cup fitness.

The 103 kilogramme (227 pound) Dutch-Turkish fighter imposed a near military training routine in between his fights on kickboxing's Glory World Series.

Saki dwarfs his illustrious pupil who was in the front row of at least one of the fighter's Istanbul bouts this year.

"Thanks to him, I got back to my optimal weight, like when I was 22-years-old," said former Ajax, Real Madrid and Inter Milan star Sneijder.

"In terms of footwork and agility, I am back to my old level."

The difference was noted at the Netherlands World Cup training camp in Portugal this week.

Now van Gaal calls Sneijder, Robin van Persie and Arjen Robben one of the world's best strike forces.

But the footballer also praises the coach for making him get back to work even though relations between the two have never been easy.

Van Gaal has been a frequent critic of

Sneijder.

When he returned for a second spell as national coach in 2012, van Gaal took away the captain's armband from Sneijder and handed it to van Persie and Robben.

Sneijder was outraged. Van Gaal said it was because the player had moved to Turkey, away from Western Europe's star leagues.

"I cannot understand why a player under 30 and of his calibre would make such a choice," van Gaal said at the time.

Sneijder's performances for Galatasaray were also unpredictable and in mid-2013, van Gaal dropped him from the national squad for a series of friendlies.

"Wesley is more present at the gala parties than in the opposition half," van Gaal said in a jibe at Sneijder's physical condition at the time.

Even one month ago, some Dutch media were questioning whether Sneijder -- who in 2010 was in the team that reached the World Cup final and won the Champions League with Inter Milan -- would make the World Cup squad.

But Sneijder had already started with Saki by then. "I had got back to work," he said recently.

"With hindsight I can see that Louis van Gaal was right. I was not working enough. My level had gone down."

## India to update citizens' register

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electoral rolls of 1966 and 1971 as well. The NRC is an exercise to maintain a record of state's residents and the degree of influx from Bangladesh.

Illegal immigration from Bangladesh has been a major polls issue for Bharatiya Janata Party and figured prominently in Prime Minister Narendra Modi's speeches during electioneering in Assam and West Bengal.

Assam government had earlier started a pilot project to update the NRC in Kamrup and Barpeta districts in 2010. But this was put on hold as the AAMSU activists staged violent protests in Barpeta district following the death of its four supporters in police firing.

The state government in 2011 constituted a cabinet sub-committee to look into the issue and give recommendations on the guidelines and procedure

to be followed for updating the NRC.

After this, the guidelines for updating the NRC were changed. However, the process of updating the NRC was delayed because the state government had not replied to some queries of the Registrar General of India (RGI).

The federal Indian government's present guidelines say the NRC will be updated to include names present in

the 1951 NRC and in the electoral rolls of 1966 and 1971.

However, of the 27 districts in the state, only six districts of Dhubri, Goalpara, Nagaon, Sonitpur, Karimganj and Hailakandi have the complete records of the 1951 NRC and electoral rolls of 1966 and 1971.

In many districts, the NRC is partly available, while in others, all the three documents are only partly available.

## Mission war hero elimination

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"Sir, we had enough. Now we must sort out these freedom fighters, so called freedom fighters. We were under pressure of the freedom fighters...we had nothing to say...they had controlled all. Now the situation has changed.

"Therefore, we have to take appropriate action now," Kabir asserted.

Brig Gen Khaleq had got the message. Kabir had been speaking of taking revenge on freedom fighter officers.

At the meeting, Khaleq was the lone freedom fighter officer, who as a young officer of the Eighth East Bengal Regiment had revolted under Zia's leadership in March 1971 and had fought along with him.

None of the officers present there had said anything opposing Kabir.

After some days, then army chief Gen HM Ershad called Khaleq over the telephone and said: "Khalequzzaman, I want your support."

"Sir, my support is always there. My brigade will always be there with you for this staff of discipline of the army," Khaleq replied.

"No, I want your absolute loyalty to the state," said Ershad.

"Nothing will happen, sir. You should not worry. If anything happens, it will happen over my dead body, troops will not go over my dead body," Khaleq assured.

Khaleq had initially thought the army chief might have thought that the freedom fighter officers in Tangail brigade might march towards Dhaka to do something which might create trouble for Ershad.

After a few days of his conversation with Ershad, Brig Gen Mahtab, the then military secretary at army headquarters, suddenly called Khaleq over the telephone at the end of June or early in July.

"Your resignation will be accepted if you resign," Brig Mahtab told Khaleq.

This surprised Khaleq, who could never imagine such a situation.

"Why? Why are you talking like this?" Khaleq asked instantly.

"No, we are asking if you are interested in resigning," Mahtab quipped.

Mahtab was a very powerful officer at the army headquarters at that time. He was very close to Gen Ershad. As the military secretary, his job was to make career plans and plans for postings and transfers of army officers.

Khaleq had understood that some

conspiracy was being hatched against him. So, he decided to talk to the army chief to this effect. He had tried to talk to Ershad over the phone, but failed.

Then he had rushed to Dhaka to meet Ershad and met him at the latter's residence. He informed Ershad what the military secretary had told him over the phone.

Hearing Khaleq, Ershad said: "I cannot keep you guys in service."

Khaleq tried to convince Ershad, but failed.

He returned to Tangail with a heart laden with sadness. He discussed the matter with one of the staff officers of his brigade, Major Tarek.

"Sir, it's not a good sign. They want you to leave the army willingly," Tarek told Khaleq.

He, however, had not discussed it with any of his relatives, not even with his wife. After some days, he readied his resignation letter on discussion with Tarek.

Before submitting his resignation letter, he made a phone call to Major General Moinul Hossain Chowdhury, the then adjutant general of Bangladesh Army, and told him his story. He was known to Gen Moin for a long time.

"It is difficult to work with them. They will eliminate us [freedom fighter officers] one by one," said Gen Moin, a veteran freedom fighter.

Moin described the situation he had been facing. He was not invited to the meeting to discuss matters that fall under his jurisdiction. His junior officers were invited to the meeting. No file was sent to him.

Getting no remedy, Khaleq had told his story to Major General Mir Shawkat Ali, who was holding a senior position in the Supreme Command Headquarters Division in the capital.

"What can I do for you Khalequzzaman? I am also in big trouble. I don't think I will be able to do anything for you," said Gen Shawkat, a veteran freedom fighter who had revolted with Gen Zia in Chittagong in March 1971.

Then he moved to another senior officer Aminul Haq, who was commander of 46th brigade and fought the Liberation War along with Khaleq. Aminul was also commanding officer of Khaleq for some days.

Khaleq told him his story. Aminul expressed his inability to do something for him.

He then understood that he would

not have any benefit of talking to anybody more.

He sent his resignation letter which was accepted a few days later. Thus his job in the army came to an end when he was only 36.

Khaleque was not the lone freedom fighter officer in the army who was made a victim after the assassination of Zia.

The then air force chief Air Vice Marshal Sadruddin, who was a freedom fighter, had to resign from the service centring on an altercation between the then acting president and him over transfer of senior air force officer.

Sadruddin had felt insulted and he had instantly announced his resignation and resigned without delay.

It was later revealed that someone had informed the acting president about Sadruddin's proposal before he had gone to Abdus Sattar. In consultation with Ershad, the acting president had accepted Sadruddin's resignation.

Gen Shawkat, who was in the Supreme Command's office, was promoted to the rank of Lt Gen and sent into retirement. He was then sent abroad as ambassador to Egypt.

After Shawkat, Gen Moin had to leave the country with a diplomatic posting.

The story does not end here.

In their effort to eliminate freedom fighter officers from the army, then army chief Ershad, who had also been repatriated from Pakistan after the Liberation war, and his close aides made another move.

They formed a screening board led by Major General Abdus Samad and sent 60 army officers into retirement, raising different allegations against them.

A few more freedom fighter officers later were forced to resign from the army.

Earlier, General Abdul Manzur, GOC of 24th Infantry Division and Area Commander of Chittagong, was murdered in Chittagong cantonment days after the Zia's assassination.

Two army officers were also murdered before Manzur's killing on their way to escape the Chittagong cantonment after Zia's assassination. Thirteen army officers were hanged through a controversial general court martial accusing them of Zia murder.

[The report is prepared on the basis of the books, "Memoir of Military Life" by Brig Gen Chowdhury Khalequzzaman and "Silent Witness of a General" by Maj Gen Moinul Hossain Chowdhury.]