

ACC lets

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Only the names of Golam Kibria, former social welfare official of the railway's east zone, and Sarwar Alam, the railway's record keeper, were mentioned in the charge sheets. The ACC team had found proof that Kibria doctored the exam papers of candidates appearing for goods assistant and record keeper posts, Mahmud said.

The charge sheets were submitted before the court of Chittagong Chief Metropolitan Magistrate Mashhur Rahman. The court fixed August 27 for hearing on the charge framing in two cases.

On February 10, 2013, ACC Assistant Director Sheikh Faiaz Alam filed a case against Mridha and Kibria with Kotwali Police Station in connection with recruitment irregularities in goods assistant posts.

The same year, ACC Assistant Director Mustafizur Rahman filed another case accusing the two and the railway's record keeper Sarwar Alam of recruitment irregularities in record keeper posts.

During the investigation, Mustafizur found no proof of Mridha's involvement in the recruitment process but he found evidence against Kibria and Alam.

Mridha, now in jail, is currently facing a total of 13 cases filed for corruption in recruitment to different posts in the railways. The ACC found his involvement in four cases which are now under trial at a Chittagong court.

Mridha was suspended on April 15, 2012, a week after he was caught with Tk 70 lakh inside the Pikhana Headquarters of the Border Guard Bangladesh. The money had allegedly been collected from railway job seekers.

The then railways minister Suranjit Sengupta had to resign following allegations that the money was being taken to his Jigatola residence in the capital.

Suranjit has all along refuted the claim.

The cash haul led to the exposure of widespread irregularities in recruitments to different tiers of the railway.

2 killed

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and five of the bullets fired from two guns were still lodged in the bodies.

Ramzan's wife Nusrat Jahan Jharna told The Daily Star at their Rayerbagh home that she suspected that her husband had been picked up the evening before and then murdered.

"My husband was missing since 7:30pm yesterday [Saturday]. He left home yesterday afternoon with a friend saying he needed to go to Sayedabad. I last talked to him around 7:00pm [over the phone]. From 7:30pm onwards, his phone was off. That's when I suspected that he might have been picked up because there were several cases against him and detectives had come to our home looking for him," said Jharna.

She said several individuals claiming to be detective police had come to their home on the night of June 24 looking for her husband.

The police claimed to have recovered two motorbikes, two mobile phones, and two pistols loaded with two bullets each from the spot.

Emocons fake!

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was over users' tended to post positive or negative comments according to the skew that was given to their newsfeed.

The research has provoked distress because of the manipulation involved.

Studies of real world networks show that what the researchers call 'emotional contagion' can be transferred through networks. But the study is evidence that the effect can happen without direct interaction or nonverbal clues.

Anyone who used the English version of Facebook automatically qualified for the experiment, the results of which were published earlier this month.

Researchers analysed the words used in posts to automatically decide whether they were likely to be positive or negative, and shifted them up or down according to which group users fell into.

It found that emotions spread across the network, and that friends tended to respond more to negative posts. Users who were exposed to less emotional posts of either type also tended to withdraw from posting themselves.

The research drew criticism from campaigners over the weekend, who said that the research could be used by Facebook to encourage users to post more and by other agencies such as governments to manipulate the feelings of users in certain countries.

Eye on defence deals, western powers rush to court Modi

REUTERS, New Delhi

Western governments are rushing to visit India's new Prime Minister Narendra Modi, drawn by the prospect of multi-billion-dollar deals as the government prepares to open the nascent defence industry to foreign investment.

Senior politicians from France, the United States and Britain arrive in quick succession over the next 10 days as Modi prepares to accelerate the modernisation of the country's mostly Soviet-era weaponry.

Modi intends to build up India's military capabilities and gradually turn the world's largest arms importer into a heavyweight manufacturer — a goal that has eluded every prime minister since independence in 1947.

On the table is a proposal circulated within the new government to raise caps on foreign investment — with one option to allow complete foreign ownership of some defence projects.

"All the countries are trying to make their case, especially as there is the sense that the Indian market will undergo a shift," said Harsh Pant, professor of international relations at King's College London.

"They get a sense from their dealings that something dramatic is going to happen and they want first-mover advantage," said Pant, who specialises in Indian defence.

First to arrive in New Delhi will be

Last day of Hong Kong democracy poll

AFP, Hong Kong

Hong Kong citizens voted in the final day of an unofficial referendum on democratic reform yesterday, days before a record number of people are expected at an annual pro-democracy protest.

The 10-day poll has seen voters choose how the southern Chinese city's leader should be elected, but it has enraged Beijing with state-run media describing the ballot as "an illegal farce".

More than 760,000 people have voted since the poll opened online earlier this month, as fears grow that Beijing will backtrack on its promise to allow Hong Kong universal suffrage.

Tensions are running high in the former British colony with upwards of 500,000 people expected to participate in a pro-democracy rally tomoroow, the anniversary of Hong Kong's hand-over to China.

Organisers expect this year's July 1 march to be the largest since Britain returned the Asian financial centre in 1997, with Beijing promising direct elections for the city's leader in 2017.

Hong Kong's leader is currently appointed by a 1,200-strong pro-

French Foreign Minister Laurent Fabius, whose top priority is to close a stalled deal to sell India 126 Rafale fighter jets, built by Dassault Aviation, for an estimated \$15 billion.

Fabius, who arrives today, will meet Modi as well as his most powerful minister, Arun Jaitley, who holds the twin portfolios of defence and finance - and can therefore decide both whether to sign the deal and when to release the money.

US Senator John McCain is also due in India next week. McCain, whose Arizona constituency includes weapons makers such as Boeing and Raytheon, told the Senate on Thursday that Washington should seek to bolster India's economic and military rise.

"This is an area where US defence capabilities, technologies, and cooperation — especially between our defence industries — can benefit India enormously," McCain said of India's drive to modernise the armed forces.

In the second week of July, Britain is likely to send in Foreign Secretary William Hague and finance minister George Osborne, a British government source said on Friday.

Britain has drawn some cheer from the slow progress of the negotiations for the Rafale deal. The Eurofighter Typhoon was shortlisted along with the Dassault fighter before India announced the French jet was the winner.

Italian port ups security for Syria chemical weapons transfer

AFP, Rome

The southern Italian port of Gioia Tauro stepped up security measures on Saturday ahead of the final transfer of Syria's chemical weapons arsenal next week.

The Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), charged with extracting and destroying Syria's chemical weapons stockpile, confirmed to AFP the final transfer of banned material from the Danish vessel Ark Futura to a US ship would take place in early July.

The Ark Futura will take chemicals to Gioia Tauro, where they will be transferred to the US ship Cape Ray on July 2 for destruction at sea. Some are also due to be destroyed in the US, Britain and Finland.

Final security measures were discussed in Italy on Saturday, with additional barriers and checkpoints to be installed and maritime surveillance to be increased around the port.

A control room housing local officials, firefighters, police and navy officers will begin operating on July 1 ahead of the Ark Futura's arrival.

A one kilometre (0.6 mile) no-fly zone will be put in place between July 1-3.

"The transfer will take a maximum of 48 hours and may be done within a day," said OPCW spokesman Michael Luhan."

"They have the equipment that they need, that is why we chose Gioia Tauro as it deals with this type of cargo all the time," he added.

Once transferred the chemicals will be transported aboard the Cape Ray into international waters and destroyed in a process the OPCW says will take "up to 60 days".

Powerful quake strikes near remote south Atlantic islands

AFP, Washington

A powerful 6.9 magnitude earthquake struck in the far south Atlantic ocean in the inhospitable South Sandwich Islands region, the US Geological Survey said yesterday.

The USGS which monitors quakes worldwide initially said the quake was of magnitude 7.1, but later revised its strength downward. It also slightly revised the epicenter's location.

The quake, which struck at 0752 GMT, had an epicenter 154 kilometers (96 miles) northwest of the uninhabited Visokoi Island, and 1,975 kilometers (1227 miles) east-southeast of Stanley, the main city on the Falkland Islands, the USGS reported.

The epicenter was at a depth of 16.5 kilometers.

The Hawaii-based Pacific Tsunami Warning Center issued a bulletin stating that, based on historical data, "a destructive widespread tsunami threat does not exist."

The quake occurred near the boundary between the Antarctic tectonic plate and the Scotia Sea plate, two plates that slide past one another horizontally.

Earthquakes in the Pacific Rim area are more likely to trigger tsunamis because they are usually subduction quakes, when one tectonic plate moves under another and triggers a vertical movement in the seafloor.

The South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands is a British overseas territory. There is no native population to the islands, but there are scientific research outposts. Argentina claims the archipelago as well as the Falkland Islands to the west.

Lawyers thwart

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The lawyers handed SI Shawkat over to court police while his aide Mahbubur was taken to Kotwali Police Station.

Meanwhile, Officer-in-Charge of Ashulia Police Station SM Badrul Alam told The Daily Star that the SI went there to arrest Iqbal in an assault case filed against him by one of Rashed's men.

However, when asked why Shawkat was in plainclothes, the OC said he did not know.

Superintendent of Police Habibur Rahman of Dhaka said if Shawkat is found to guilty, action would be taken against him.

Indian guru pushes peace in Pakistan

AFP, Washington

The Indian guru Sri Sri Ravi Shankar's efforts to encourage peace in Pakistan ended in an armed attack, but he still believes dialogue is the best path with the Taliban.

The globe-trotting yogi, known for his flowing hair and beard and perpetually sunny disposition, had brought his Art of Living Foundation to Pakistan in 2004 in hopes of encouraging stress relief through breathing exercises and non-denominational meditation.

Armed gunmen burned down the center in Islamabad in March after charges by some in Pakistan that yoga, rooted in the spiritual history of historic rival India, conflicted with Islamic values.

But Shankar said that he remained convinced that dialogue was the best way to handle the Taliban. He voiced concern over the Pakistani military's offensive in lawless North Waziristan where nearly 370 militants and 12 security personnel have died.

"Annihilation of them is not the way. Dialogue is the way," Shankar, clad as always in white robes, told AFP on a visit to Washington.

The military campaign "will only cause more bitterness. Violence can only bring more violence," he said.

Shankar declined to discuss future plans of the Art of Living Foundation in Pakistan, citing concerns for practitioners on the ground. But he encouraged more Pakistanis to speak up for non-violence.

"I cannot go and do anything in Pakistan. People in Pakistan should

Apologise, now

FROM PAGE 1

Narayanganj-4 said: "Journalists are dogs. In our childhood, affluent people used to keep pet dogs ... Later, people, who gained wealth, started to keep media. These [media] are Alsatian dogs..."

"Say, for example, Shah Alam of Bashundhara. He has four newspapers ... Kaler Kantho, Bangladesh Pratidin, an online newspaper and an English newspaper [the daily] Sun or something. Babul has a newspaper, and is getting one television [licence]. Mr Azad ... he has a newspaper, he will need one more. Hetook out the licence for a television channel. There is only one newspaper ... and it is [the daily] Ittefaq," Shamim Osman had told reporters at Narayanganj Club.

"Salman ... he is a thief ... a big thief. He stole Tk 23,000 crore. He has a newspaper, and now has a TV channel. Whenever I see him, I call him thief... thief... thief."

Nurul Islam Babul is the chairman of Jamuna Group and daily Jugantor and Jamuna TV are media houses of the group. AK Azad is the chairman of Ha-Meem Group that owns daily Samakal and Channel 24. Salman F Rahman is the vice-chairman of Beximco Group which owns English daily The Independent and Independent TV channel.

Shamim Osman said, "If your owner asks you to write for Shamim Osman, you will do it."

When a reporter pointed out that it was not right that all journalists do whatever they were asked to do by the owners, and that they could leave their jobs in such cases, Shamim had said, "Where will you go? Yes, you can leave the job, but if all the owners speak the same language, where do you go?"

He had said, "All of them write against me. I don't say anything. Let them write. I know where they come from. They have come to the higher stage from a very low level."

A statement issued by Bangladesh Federal Union of Journalists (BFUJ) said in recent times, leading political leaders in and outside the Jatiya

fight against, should stand up against terrorism," he said.

The guru -- who is not related to the late sitar legend Ravi Shankar -- has also taken his peace campaign to Iraq where in 2007 he met Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki and encouraged reconciliation among Shiites, Sunnis and Kurds. The Art of Living Foundation brought young Iraqis to India for training as "peace ambassadors."

Shankar voiced fear that Iraq has since lost the chance for peace. Sunni extremists in recent weeks have launched an offensive against Maliki's Shiite-led government that has killed nearly 1,100 people.

"It is very gloomy, very gloomy. We have lost a very good opportunity to unite after the war," he said.

"The divide and mistrust has gone, I think, beyond repair. But still I hope for some miracle."

Shankar, once ranked by Forbes magazine as India's fifth most powerful person, is close to new Prime Minister Narendra Modi whom he has joined in meditation.

While stopping short of explicitly endorsing him in the election, Shankar defended Modi against charges of responsibility for anti-Muslim riots as leader of the state of Gujarat in 2002. In Washington, Shankar said that the new prime minister in fact had a "soft heart."

Shankar, on a tour of the United States, came to Washington to speak at the conservative American Enterprise Institute, the home to hawkish figures from president George W. Bush's administration. The think tank recently has put a focus on spirituality, inviting the Dalai Lama in February.

Sangsad have made some appreciative comments about the Osman family, which unfortunately are not proved through what Shamim Osman has said.

"Rather, the words Shamim Osman pronounced, comments he made and his body language have brought his education, taste, politics and the family culture under question," said the BFUJ statement.

BFUJ President Manjurul Ahsan Bulbul, Secretary General Abdul Jalil Bhuyian, Dhaka Union of Journalists President Altaf Mahmud and General Secretary Quddus Afrad and other journalist leaders from Chittagong, Khulna, Rajshahi, Bogra, Dinajpur, Jessore, Narayanganj, Mymensingh and Cox's Bazar issued the statement in this regard.

They said they expected the Speaker of parliament would appreciate the fact and take effective initiatives to uphold the parliament's dignity.

While making the remarks, Shamim Osman said that the prime minister was his guardian. "This was embarrassing for us," the statement said.

The journalist leaders said the initiatives taken by the PM and her government for the welfare of the journalist community would now come under question due to the indecent remarks made by a member of the ruling party.

They called upon the PM to play her due role so that Shamim Osman apologised to the journalist community and withdrew his comments.

Asking Shamim Osman to learn from history, the journalist leaders said journalists play their professional role ignoring intimidation and they unmask evil forces and god-fathers. Things would not be different in the case of Narayanganj, they said.

They also advised Shamim Osman to maintain decency and good manners and urged all to ensure an environment where the

Turn in report

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On March 18, Wares Ali, assistant superintendent of police of the Rab and also the investigation officer of the case, took over the charge of investigation into the case and submitted a progress report to the court on March 20 as per directives of the High Court.

On March 10, the Rab submitted to the High Court a progress report on the investigation of the murder case.

Metropolitan Magistrate Anwar Sadat passed the order as Wares Ali failed to submit the probe report yesterday as per the court's May 25 order.

Police have so far arrested eight accused, including the guard of the victims' residence, who are now behind bars.

Sagar Sarowar, news editor of private TV station Maasranga, and his wife Meherun Runi, senior reporter of another channel ATN Bangla, had

been killed at their rented flat in the capital's West Rajabazar on February 11, 2012.

Their only son Mahir Sarowar Megh, then 5, was at home at that time.

The Detective Branch of police was first tasked with probing the twin murder. It detained four suspects and interrogated some 40 people.

Frustrated with the DB's performance, the High Court in April 2012 handed over the case to the Rab. The Rab interrogated as many as 100 people.

In October 2012, the then home minister announced a bounty of Tk 10 lakh for helping law enforcers nab Humayun Kabir, the guard at Sagar-Runi's residence who was on the run.

Humayun was arrested on February 9 last year, but there has been no progress in the case since then.