

# US, allies strike IS in Syria

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command centres and armed vehicles in the jihadist stronghold of Raqa and near the border with Iraq.

The raids marked a turning point in the war against IS, which has seized swathes of Syria and Iraq and declared an Islamic "caliphate".

The fact that the five Arab nations joining the strikes are Sunni-ruled will also be of crucial symbolic importance in the fight against the Sunni extremists of IS.

Obama said Washington had the support of "more than 40 nations" who have offered to help with the broader effort against IS, by strengthening Iraq forces and Syrian opposition fighters, cutting off the militant group's financing, and stemming the flow of foreign fighters into and out of the region.

At least 120 militants and eight civilians were killed in the US-led strikes, according to the British-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, which monitors military activity in Syria.

It said 70 of the killed militants were from Isis, while the other 50 it described as being aligned with the Nusra Front, the parent organisation of the Khorasan cell and al-Qaeda's preferred affiliate in Syria.

About 100 critically injured fighters were taken to Iraq for treatment, it added. The eight reported eight civilian casualties, included three children.

Reports about militants or civilians killed in the strikes could not be independently verified. Mayville said the Pentagon was "unaware of any civilian casualties", adding that any reports of civilian deaths would be investigated.

The switch in focus to IS strongholds in Syria marked a major turning point in Obama's foreign policy, reports The Guardian.

"You are seeing the beginning of a sustained campaign, and strike like this in the future can be expected," said Lt Gen William Mayville, the director of operations for the joints chiefs of staff, during a Pentagon briefing. Asked about the possible duration of the military offensive, he replied: "I would think of it in terms of years."

Mayville said the Pentagon was still assessing the affects of the strikes, which occurred in three waves, mostly carried out by the US, did not specifically target individual militant leaders. However they were considered "successful, with minimal collateral damage", he said.

Rear Admiral John Kirby, the Pentagon's chief spokesman, added: "While it is not our policy to discuss future operations, I can tell you that last night's strikes were only the beginning."

LETTER TO UN

In a letter to UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, US Ambassador to the United Nations Samantha Power wrote, "The Syrian regime has shown that it cannot and will not confront these safe havens effectively itself."

The strikes were needed to eliminate a threat to Iraq, the United States and its allies, she wrote, citing Article 51 of the UN Charter, which covers an individual or collective right to self-defence against armed attack.

"States must be able to defend themselves ... when, as is the case here, the

**AUGUST 18**  
Obama and allies urge Assad to quit. Western and Arab states impose sanctions on the regime.

**OCTOBER 4**  
Russia and China veto a draft UN resolution condemning Damascus for the crackdown.

**JULY 30**  
Creation of the Free Syrian Army, made up of civilians who have joined the rebellion, backed by army deserters.

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**2012 JULY 18**  
Damascus bombing kills four top security officials, including Assad's brother-in-law.

**JULY 20**  
Rebels launch a major assault on second city Aleppo.

**JULY 28**  
The military launches a counter-offensive.

**NOVEMBER 11**  
The opposition signs a unity deal in Doha to form the National Coalition.

**DECEMBER 10**  
Al-Nusra Front seizes a strategic army base in Aleppo, to the FSA's detriment.

**2013 JUNE 5**  
The army recaptures the key town of Qusayr after an assault led by fighters from Lebanon's Hezbollah.

**AUGUST 21**  
Troops launch an offensive in the Damascus suburbs. The opposition accuses the army of chemical weapons strikes around the capital, where hundreds are killed. The government denies responsibility and blames rebels.

**SEPTEMBER 14**  
Washington and Moscow agree on a plan to eliminate Syria's chemical weapons by the middle of 2014, putting off the threat of punitive strikes against the Assad regime by Washington and Paris.

**2014 JANUARY 22**  
In Geneva, the warring parties sit down for the first time to seek a political settlement. On February 15, a second round of talks ends without result.

**MAY 9**  
Syrian troops enter the Old City of Homs. Rebels withdraw.

**JUNE 3**  
Assad wins a new seven-year term in a poll, held only in government-held areas, branded "illegitimate" by the opposition and a "non-election" by Washington.

**JUNE 29**  
Jihadists from the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), declare a "caliphate". They rename themselves the Islamic State (IS).

**SEPTEMBER 23**  
The US and Arab allies launch strikes against IS militants

SOURCE: AFP

government of the state where the threat is located is unwilling or unable to prevent the use of its territory for such attacks," Power wrote in the letter obtained by Reuters.

"Accordingly, the United States has initiated necessary and proportionate military actions in Syria in order to eliminate the ongoing (Islamic State) threat to Iraq," she wrote, adding that action was taken also against al Qaeda elements in Syria known as Khorasan "to address terrorist threats that they pose to the United States and our partners and allies."

Ban circulated the letter to the UN Security Council, diplomats said. Under Article 51, the 15-member body must immediately be informed of any action that states take in self-defence against armed attack, reports Reuters.

**TURKEY TO JOIN COALITION**

Nato member Turkey, another Sunni nation and a neighbour of Syria, has so far remained on the sidelines, but US Secretary of State John Kerry said Ankara had pledged to join the coalition.

"Turkey is very much part of this coalition, and Turkey will be very engaged on the frontlines of this effort," Kerry said after meeting Turkish officials in New York.

Speaking on national television, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan said Ankara's contribution would consist of "all kinds of support including military and political".

**'HUGE IMPACT'**

An anti-regime activist in Raqa, Abu Yusef, said IS had redeployed its fighters in response.

"The impact of the strikes has been huge," and the jihadists "are focused on trying to save themselves now," he told AFP by Internet.

The raids prompted many civilians living near IS positions across Syria to flee, according to the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, a Britain-based monitoring group.

That follows the exodus in recent days of tens of thousands of residents into neighbouring Turkey in response to an IS assault on a strategic Kurdish town in northern Syria.

## Railway knocks

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at Shewra near Dhaka Cantonment and demolished the illegal structures including a market at Khilkhet till 3:30pm.

The market housed around 150 shops, many of which surrounded the Khilkhet thana Awami League office. The drive demolished all the shops but did not touch the ruling party office.

Asked, Nurunnabi Kabir, divisional estate officer of railway, said they did not demolish the party office as they were told it had leased the land from the Railway Welfare Trust.

"We will take necessary action after verifying their claim," he added.

Several traders alleged the authorities had not warned them earlier and all of their goods got damaged because of that.

The railway officials, however, declined the allegations and said they informed the persons concerned before any drive.

Around one hour after the drive, several owners of the demolished shops were seen running their business on the same spot again.

## Obama

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However, the president didn't commit himself to hold current rises in global temperatures to 2C, as demanded by experts.

Environment experts and campaigners say that 2C is the maximum temperature increase that the world can tolerate without causing environmental mayhem, and they insist that politicians attending the meeting, especially Barack Obama, must agree to that upper limit.

"If Obama and the others decide that 2C has to be the limit, then negotiators will subsequently find it so much easier to hammer out a framework for curtailing carbon dioxide emissions over the next year," said Nicholas Stern, the British economist and climate expert who will be attending the meeting.

"If they have a specific goal, a 2C limit, then that will make it so much easier to design carbon emission limits for different countries," he told the Observer.

Telling the United Nations that "there are interests that will be resistant to action," Obama insisted that developing nations must also fight climate change -- a key criticism of his political opponents who say that the US should not be put at an economic disadvantage.

"We can only succeed in combating climate change if we are joined in this effort by every nation, developed and developing alike. Nobody gets a pass," he noted.

## ACC approves

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The DCC authorities had made a deal with Nirman Trading to build a car park on receiving a plot of 27-katha in Dilkusha from Bangladesh Jute Mills Corporation (BJMC), the complainant said.

As per the agreement, the construction firm should own 70 percent of the project and the government the rest but the government's share was reduced to 25 percent without following the legal procedure, said ACC Deputy Director Mohammad Zahangir Alam who is investigating the case.

Meanwhile, Dhaka South City Corporation (DSCC) yesterday took control over five floors of the 27-storey building at Dilkusha.

DSCC owns the five floors, including two basements, where some offices, including a newspaper office, were set up illegally, said Mohammad Atul Mondol, executive magistrate of DSCC.

He said DSCC would set up its zone-2 office in the building today.

The building might have been constructed without the permission of the committee of the Roads and Highways Division, which looks after the security of key point installation across the country. An investigation is going on in this regard, the DSCC official added.

## Body soon

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The stakeholders would include broadcasters, editors, renowned journalists, government officials and rights activists, he told The Daily Star over the phone.

The minister said the committee would work on the commission's structure, function and jurisdictions, adding the number of the committee members would exceed 50.

"The commission would be formed and the act would be enacted on the committee's recommendations," he said.

Last month, the government formulated National Broadcast Policy 2014 despite widespread criticism from different media and rights organisations.

Many of those involved in the broadcast media said the government might misuse the policy in the name of maintaining standard of news, programmes and advertisements in the electronic media.

The government is formulating two more policies—one on the booming online media and the other on films, according to sources.

# Hasina-Modi

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He, however, did not specify the issues.

He noted that Hasina could not attend Modi's swearing in ceremony in May this year as she was on a tour of Japan at that time.

Akbaruddin said "we [India and Bangladesh] know each other's concerns and will exchange views on them during the meeting in New York".

Officials said besides the range of bilateral security and economic issues, Hasina and Modi will deliberate on upcoming SAARC summit to be held in Kathmandu in November this year.

The two leaders are also likely to discuss expanding India-Bangladesh cooperation in new areas like nuclear energy and outer space. India has offered to share its expertise in civil nuclear energy and

launch Bangladesh's satellite 'Bangabandhu 1'.

The Hasina-Modi meeting will take place on the margins of the UN General Assembly meeting in New York.

It is expected that a final decision on Bangladesh's request for a fresh line of credit from India will be taken at the Hasina-Modi meeting.

The issue of new line of credit was raised by Foreign Minister A H Mahmood Ali during his meeting with Indian leaders in New Delhi last week.

India had announced one billion dollar line of credit during Hasina's visit to Delhi in January, 2010, the highest foreign assistance by India to any country, for improving infrastructure in Bangladesh. Out of the total amount, 250 million dollars was converted into grant-in-aid.

# Formalin testing kit unfit

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offices of the Supreme Court and the attorney general yesterday for hand-over to the High Court.

Following a writ petition by the Fruit Importers' Association, the court asked the government on July 21 to have the machine checked by Bangladesh Standards and Testing Institution (BSTI), BCSIR and National Food Safety Laboratory (NFSL) and submit separate reports in four weeks.

The BSTI and NFSL are yet to submit the reports, the petitioner's counsel Manzill Murshid told reporters after receiving a copy of the BCSIR report yesterday.

The petition was filed in the wake of widespread protests from fruit traders against the destruction of tonnes of fruits, especially mangoes and litchis, by the Dhaka Metropolitan Police early June.

The DMP in its three-week-drive used the formaldehyde metre, originally imported by the Department of Fisheries (DoF) from the US manufacturer, Environmental Sensors Co, in early 2012.

It bought 80 devices at a cost of Tk 1 crore and distributed those in every division and district for mobile court drives.

Later, the Federation of Bangladesh

Chambers of Commerce and Industries, Dhaka City Corporation, DMP and the Directorate of Consumers Rights also purchased Formaldehyde Metre Z-300.

The Daily Star in a report on June 17 quoted a scientist at Bangladesh Agricultural Research Council as saying the kit was not fit for testing food items.

The report also focused on traders' suspicion about the formaldehyde metre.

In the presence of evaporable chemicals -- like acetone, formic acid, acetic acid and methanol -- alongside formaldehyde, the machine may indicate misleading information, the BCSIR report said.

However, various chemicals, including the above mentioned, may exist in fruits naturally.

The Institute of Food Science and Technology of BCSIR suggested the manufacturing company optimise the formaldehyde metre's capacity and provide buyers with instructional manual. At present, the kit is applicable to measuring formaldehyde vapour in environment or air.

Manzill Murshid said he would pray to the High Court to direct the government not to use this machine.

# Law within 3 months

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programme on reform of the judiciary and prevention of corruption at Bangabandhu International Conference Centre in the capital.

As the cabinet on August 18 approved a proposal for the constitutional amendment aimed at empowering parliament to impeach judges, the law minister said a law involving the matter might be formulated in three months.

After over a month, he again said yesterday it would take about three months to formulate such a law.

He, however, said he could not say exactly how much time would be needed for the purpose.

President Abdul Hamid on Monday gave his assent to the 16th amendment bill passed in parliament on September 17 amid widespread criticism.

With the president signing the bill, the chief justice-led Supreme Judicial Council system that was in

place for 35 years to impeach SC judges ceases to exist.

Anisul Huq told reporters if he announced that a bill on the law would be passed in the next parliament session, critics would say all arrangements had already been made for enacting the law and that he was holding discussions only to fool people.

"In fact, we [the government] are very open, and so I have taken three months' time. I will try to formulate the law within the period."

Earlier, the law minister at the programme said the number of policemen in the country was very less in proportion to the population. The issue will be brought to the prime minister's knowledge for necessary steps, he added.

Law Commission Chairman and former chief justice ABM Khairul Haque also spoke at the discussion organised by the law ministry.

# PM urges big nations

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Hasina said adequate and predictable financing is essential for adaptation planning and its implementation. Private climate finance can only be complementary for mitigation, she added.

Highlighting Bangladesh's constant endeavour to green economy, she said Bangladesh in recent years has undertaken significant steps in this regard.

The country now has 3.2 million Solar Home Systems (SHS), over 1.5 million Improved Cook Stoves (ICS), she said adding a 10-year Bangladesh Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan is under implementation. Under the action plan, Bangladesh has already developed varieties of stress-tolerant crops, noted the PM.

Though Bangladesh is a climate-vulnerable LDC, the country so far allocated \$385 million from own resources for adaptation and mitigation, she said.

Hasina added: "Yet, climate change continues to affect the lives and livelihood of millions in our unique and active delta."

She said climate change may threaten the production of Bangladesh's wheat and major rice crop (Boro). In addition, many people may have to move out, changing their traditional living and livelihood. Studies suggest that two to three percent of our GDP may be wiped out because of climate change,

mentioned the PM.

Presidents of Bolivia, Brazil, Turkey, Costa Rica, Venezuela, Croatia, Austria, and Uganda also spoke.

Earlier, the PM attended the inauguration of the Climate Conference-2014 in which UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon, chair of IPCC Rajendra K Pachauri and former US vice-president Al Gore also spoke.

Addressing the inaugural session of the summit, UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon called for raising ambition, mobilise resources, and generate action towards a universal climate deal.

"We are not here to talk, we are here to make history. The human, environmental and financial cost of climate change is fast becoming unbearable. We need a clear shared vision," he said.

"I am asking you to lead. We must cut emissions. Science says they must peak by 2020 and decline sharply thereafter. By the end of this century we must be carbon neutral," added Ban.

Rajendra Pachauri, chairperson of Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), said each of the last three decades has been successively warmer at the earth's surface than any other decade since 1850.

"How on Earth can we leave our children with a world like this?" he questioned. "I'm not sure I could stand before you if the threats of climate change had no solutions," added the IPCC chief.

# Tribunal rejects prosecution plea

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appealed to the court to keep them in jail so that they could not interrupt the investigation against them, which started in February.

Justice Hassan asked why the prosecution felt the duo could hinder the probe eight months into the investigation. "Why didn't you seek their arrest warrant in last eight months?" said Justice Hassan.

Sahidur could not respond with a direct answer but said they were appealing to keep them in jail so that they could not flee receiving bail in the criminal case.

"Was it the intension of the act [the International Crimes (Tribunals) Act-1973] that you will seek arrest warrant after one is arrested in another case," asked Justice Shahinur.

"Is the apprehension that they may go into hiding could be grounds as per the stipulate law?" asked Justice Mozibur.

"They are very much influential

people in their localities and can interrupt the investigation," said Sahidur.

"You can understand the fact after eight months?" said Justice Hassan.

When the court asked Sahidur whether he had any document on the case in which they were arrested, he replied in the negative.

"Police Superintendent [of Chapainawabganj] has just sent a fax informing about their arrest," Sahidur said. Sahidur even could not mention the incident for which they were charged.

"If they had committed crimes in 1971, they must be punished but if you can't show the grounds [for keeping them in jail] ... You have to satisfy the law," said Justice Hassan.

Mizanul Islam, on behalf of the duo, said their clients were arrested at their homes, which means they did not go into hiding and Chapainawabganj police, in their letter, had not mentioned that his clients were interrupting the probe.

The tribunal passed a short order

and said a detailed order would be given later.

Meanwhile, the same tribunal recalled its Monday's order where it closed the cross-examination of Matiur Rahman, one of the two investigation officers of the case against Jamaat-e-Islam leader Abdus Subhan, due to the absence of Subhan's lawyers.

Following a defence petition, the court yesterday recalled its earlier order and allowed the defence to cross-examine Matiur, also the 30th prosecution witness.

Later, the court adjourned the case proceeding until today after Subhan's counsel Mizanul Islam completed Matiur's cross-examination. Noor Hossain, the second investigation officer of the case is expected to testify today.

Subhan, a nayeb-e-ameer of Jamaat, faces nine charges including genocide committed in Pabna during the Liberation War. He pleads not guilty.

# Modi opts for new fashion

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by media for their crumpled traditional cotton shirt-and-pyjama attire, which serves as an austerity badge in a nation where simple living is prized as a political credo.

But fashion experts say Modi, 64, has taken Indian political dress to a new level with his fastidious style, favouring crisp, half-sleeved linen, khadi or silk kurtas -- shirts -- and churidar pyjamas he pairs with tailored Nehru jackets.

"He's selling aspirational India," said Nilanjan Mukhopadhyay, author of one the few biographies on the secretive leader, adding that Modi's affinity for traditional wear ties into his nationalist image.

Modi's use of colour makes him a fashion standout -- from canary yellow, to lime green to skyblue and an in-your-face saffron, one of his ruling Bharatiya Janata Party's colours, aside

from elegant cream.

The move to hire Troy Costa, who designs for Bollywood stars, has given rise to speculation Modi might adopt a more sober suit and tie for his US visit.

But Costa, who defines his label as "focusing on modern masculinity and flattering functionality", is keeping the garment bag firmly in place over what he will design for Modi's barrel-chested frame.

"I'd rather let my product speak than me personally," the 39-year-old told AFP.

Modi's White House welcome will be a remarkable transformation for a man once refused a US visa, after being accused of failing to stop 2002 riots by Hindu extremists against minority Muslims when he was chief minister of Gujarat state. Modi has always denied any wrong-doing.

But while India's premier looks set to dress snappily during the visit, there

will still be a clear nod to his strictly observant Hindu and teetotal vegetarian lifestyle.

The trip coincides with the Navratri festival during which Modi has always observed a nine-day fast. Despite the hectic schedule, he is expected to restrict himself to a liquid diet of lemonade and tea for much of the visit, eschewing the lavish meals that traditionally characterise such trips.

Commentators say Modi is acutely aware of the image he wants to portray -- a self-made man who hasn't forgotten his roots.

And most observers seem to be happy with a leader who looks good on the national and international stages.

"Seems like the era of unkempt, paan-chewing netas (leaders) with pot-bellies, crumpled dhotis and discoloured kurtas is a thing of the past," commented news magazine India Today.