

British aid worker killed in South Sudan

AFP, Juba

A British aid worker in war-torn South Sudan was shot dead late Tuesday in the capital Juba, the government said.

The Briton, who was working for the US aid organisation the Carter Center, was killed by a gunman who followed him into his compound in Juba, according to presidential spokesman Ateny Wek Ateny.

"It has been confirmed that a British staff member in the Carter Center was killed, a crime we condemn in the strongest terms possible," Ateny told AFP.

"He was driving in his car, and when he arrived at his gate he got out of the car, then while walking he was shot," he said, adding that "police have rounded up some people to get some clues."

In London, the Foreign Office confirmed that a British national had been killed.

'Shootouts'

FROM PAGE 16 opened fire on them, forcing cops to fire retaliatory shots. At one stage, Bazlu and Sayeed were caught in the line of fire and got injured, claimed the ASP.

Law enforcers later sent the two to Manirampur Hospital where doctors declared them dead.

Including the two, 31 people were known to have been killed in "shootout" or "gunfight" with law enforcers across the country since the BNP-led 20-party alliance declared an indefinite nationwide blockade on January 5. Of them, 20 died in such incidents with police and 11 with Rab.

Fourteen of the victims were BNP and Jamaat-Shibir men. Law enforcers made accusations against some of them that they were involved in arson attacks.

'GUNFIGHT' IN LAXMIPUR A Jubo Dal leader received bullets in a "gunfight" with Detective Branch of police in Palerhat of Laxmipur Sadar upazila early yesterday, reports our Noakhali correspondent.

Injured Nazrul Islam Jasim, 28, was the president of South Hamchhadi union unit Jubo Dal in the upazila.

A DB team launched a raid in Palerhat around 1:45am to arrest troublemakers on information that some followers of listed criminals Masum and Laden have gathered there to carry out subversive activities, said Zunayet Kawser, an ASP in Laxmipur.

Sensing presence of law enforcers, criminals opened fire on the DB men. The cops retaliated by firing shots. At one stage, the thugs fled the spot, leaving Jasim injured.

The Jubo Dal leader was receiving treatment at Laxmipur Sadar Hospital under custody.

Jasim said police picked him up at his house late on Tuesday night. Later they took him to Palerhat and shot in his right leg.

Foreign envoys

FROM PAGE 16 Wilcock's residence in Dhaka, the envoys discussed how they could help Bangladesh resolve the ongoing stalemate in a peaceful way, according to diplomatic sources.

US Ambassador in Dhaka Marcia Stephens Bloom Bernicat and diplomats from Canada, European Union, Japan, Norway, France and Turkey, among others, were present.

The envoys agreed on waiting for a few more days and observe the political situation before they would decide on any move.

However, they all favoured a UN-led initiative to encourage the political parties to resolve their differences peacefully.

Meanwhile, the EU Ambassador hosted a dinner for a visiting European Parliament delegation at his residence. Diplomats of many countries attended the event.

Law enforcers

From page 3 His comments came in the wake of recent international media reports that Hizb-ut-Tahrir may become a more dangerous terrorist group than the Islamic State.

On tackling violence during the ongoing blockade enforced by the BNP-led 20-party alliance, the police boss said the law enforcement agencies had been directed to show zero tolerance and work with full commitment against criminals.

He said a temporary ban on plying of vehicles on highways after 9:00pm was imposed after a meeting with transport owners and other bodies concerned, but the owners could resume overnight operation if they wanted.

Around 54,000 vehicles ran across the country in the last 24 hours, he said.

Asked why on-duty traffic police are wearing bullet-proof jackets nowadays, the IGP said police put on the necessary uniform whenever needed.

Violence worries EU delegation

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International Bangladesh Executive Director Iftekharuzzaman said the EU team wanted to know how the political crisis could be resolved.

Responding to a question from a newsman, he said, "I don't think the delegation would put any pressure on the government to hold dialogue. Rather, they are thinking of finding out a solution [to the crisis]..."

The EU team also discussed how to overcome the crisis and their probable role in it, added Iftekharuzzaman.

"I told the meeting that cent percent people want dialogue, but there is no atmosphere for dialogue. It is the responsibility of the two major political parties' chiefs to create an atmosphere for holding talks. If they are cordial, the problem would surely be solved," he mentioned.

Issues including deterioration in

the rule of law, impact of political confrontation on public safety, security and human rights, economics, trade and investment were discussed in the meeting.

The potential rise of militancy and extremism, taking advantage of the use of violence as a means of realising political demands on one hand and the excessive use of force to control it on the other hand also came up for discussion, Iftekharuzzaman told The Daily Star.

Adilur Rahman Khan, secretary of rights body Odhikar; and representatives of Unicef and UN Women were present, among others.

MEETING WITH SHAHRIAR

Earlier in the day, the EU team had a meeting with State Minister for Foreign Affairs Shahriar Alam at his ministry office.

After the meeting, the minister said the EU delegation did not express any concern about the human rights situation in Bangladesh.

The EU members were informed that the law enforcers have been put on alert to maintain law and order, Shahriar told reporters.

Prime Minister's Political Affairs Adviser HT Imam and newly appointed EU Ambassador to Bangladesh Pierre Mayaudon were present.

Shahriar said the EU members were mainly concerned about the progress in implementing government's promises to improve the working conditions in the RMG sector following the Rana Plaza tragedy.

The team also visited a garment factory in the city yesterday and expressed satisfaction over improved working conditions there, he added.

Tigers shrug off Afghan jitters

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from the front to dominate the Afghans and stamp the Tigers' supremacy against the Associates.

A nervous start was followed by solid batting by the middle order as Shakib Al Hasan (63) and Mushfiqur Rahim's (71) efficient efforts gave Bangladesh a competitive total of 267, despite the late surge being dented by a steady fall of wickets. Mashrafe, who bowled his heart out, bowled a fiery opening spell, while Rubel aided him to script the comfortable victory.

The game was all but over when Mashrafe claimed two wickets and Rubel one to bring the Afghans to 3 for 3 in 3. It would not have been a surprise had Mashrafe scooped the player-of-the-match award ahead of Mushfiqur, as his destructive spell shattered any hopes the Afghans had of winning the match.

Opener Tamim Iqbal and Anamul Haque cautiously started the innings with a 47-run stand, but their successive dismissals put the Tigers in a spot of bother. Young Soumya Sarker however showed lot of promise during his 25-ball 28 that steadied the ship, but once again, the wickets of Sarker and Mahmudullah Riyad put the Afghans on top.

Bangladesh were down four wickets at the end of the 30th over with a sluggish run-rate, but a 114-run partnership

They failed to recover from the early hiccups and were bundled out for 162 against a disciplined bowling attack.

The Afghans made a promising start after Mashrafe had won the toss and elected to bat on a placid track. Shapoor Zadran, whose first spell read 3-1-4-0, bowled some fine overs and set the tone for other to follow.

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Bangladesh's easy victory was no surprise in the end but Monimul Hauqe's batting at number nine position was a real surprise for many.

More arson

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Meanwhile, criminals set fire to six vehicles, while at least 61 BNP-Jamaat and Shibir activists were arrested from across the country in connection with arson attacks and subversive activities, police and fire service officials said.

Hartal supporters set ablaze a human haulier in front of Ranimahal Cinema Hall at Demra in the city around 6:00am, fire service officials said. None was reported hurt in the incident.

Masud Islam, 17, a college student, received bullet injuries when police shot him as he was reportedly trying to flee after blasting homemade bombs on Dhanmondi Road 6 around 4:00pm.

In Pallabi, a man named Chinu Biswas was injured in police shooting. Police said BNP-Jamaat activists hurled brick chunks at police from a demonstration on Kalshi Road in Mirpur around 1:30pm, prompting law enforcers to shoot, police said.

Chinu, however, said he was walking by the road and was not involved in the attack on police.

Three bombs were exploded from a Jamaat-Shibir rally at Malibagh around 1:00pm, and a mob beat up a youth named Mamun on suspicion of exploding the bombs. Later, they handed Mamun over to police.

All of them are receiving treatment at Dhaka Medical College Hospital.

In Comilla, a clash between law enforcers and locals left seven cops injured at Bhelanagar in Daudkandi around 8:00pm. Police went to the village to arrest Jasimuddin Mollah, an accused in an arson case.

The clash ensued after locals prevented the cops from taking Mollah away, said Abu Salam Mia, officer-in-charge of Daudkandi Police Station.

In Rajshahi, a local Jubo League

leader and two other ruling party men were injured as armed cadres of Islami Chhatra Shibir, pro-Jamaat student body, attacked them at Binodpur Bazar in the city Tuesday night.

Mehedi Hasan Yamin, president of ward 30 unit of Jubo League, was shot in the left leg while Ishtiaq Ahmed Isa and Iftekhar Hossain Saddam were hacked with sharp weapons during the assault. The victims were admitted to Rajshahi Medical College Hospital, said Iftekhah Alam, assistant commissioner of Rajshahi Metropolitan Police.

In Narayanganj, locals caught two criminals and handed them over to police as they hurled petrol bombs at the police box at Haziganj in the city around 6:00am. The duo were identified as Amin and Habib. None was injured in the incident, police said.

Alleged hartal supporters threw stones at an Army vehicle at Pachumor in Joypurhat around 10:30am yesterday, but there was no damage, police said.

In Feni, ruling party activists caught Shahadat Hossain, a BNP activist, along with 16 crude bombs at Mohammad Ali Bazar on the Dhaka-Chittagong highway and handed him over to police on Tuesday night.

In Dinajpur, police arrested Mohammad Sakib, a Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal activist, for exploding two bombs on Thana road on Tuesday night.

Meanwhile, police arrested 37 people, including three Jamaat-Shibir activists, in Sathkhira; a Jamaat leader in Cox's Bazar; 18 BNP-Jamaat and Shibir activists in Bogra, and two Jamaat leaders in Moulvibazar in connection with subversive activities.

Our correspondents from the districts concerned contributed to the report.

Facebook

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The social network's plan seems to be to allow its users to share films that can then be viewed in virtual reality, according to comments to Re/Code at a media conference.

"I mean, virtual reality is pretty cool. We're working on apps for VR," Chris Cox, Facebook's chief product officer, said.

"When you're in Facebook, you're just sending around these bits of experience — a photo, a video, a thought," he said. Virtual reality will allow people to be "sending a fuller picture".

He cited example films that allowed users to feel as if they were inside a fighter jet or a Mongolian yurt.

If users have a similar experience, they might be able to share everything that is going on around them in an immersive way, rather than just uploading one photo.

The company hopes to allow everyone to be able to make and send the films — including normal users as well as Beyoncé, he said.

At the moment, virtual reality films require big camera rigs and lots of editing to make. But those in the industry hope that the technology to create the films as well as watch them will eventually become cheaper and easier to use.

Facebook has been pushing to become a central hub for videos — with uploads growing at a record pace and helping the site's plan to eventually compete with YouTube.

Cox said the videos probably won't come "for a while". But he implied that the developments were being held back by the availability of the headsets, rather than Facebook's work.

Star will face action

FROM PAGE 1 by publishing its poster in the newspaper" recently.

"Publishing a poster of a banned organisation in a newspaper means helping publicise that banned outfit," the premier said in parliament, to the cheers of lawmakers from the ruling Awami League and the opposition Jatiya Party.

The Daily Star on February 11 published a snapshot of the poster under the headline "Fanatics raise their ugly heads again". The photo carried the caption: "Taking advantage of the current political crisis in the country accompanied by wanton violence, banned extremist Islamist organisation Hizb-ut-Tahrir published and pasted posters in the capital in an attempt to foment unrest within the armed forces. This poster was found pasted on a wall in an alleyway near Bangla Motor intersection in the capital yesterday."

He said a temporary ban on plying of vehicles on highways after 9:00pm was imposed after a meeting with transport owners and other bodies concerned, but the owners could resume overnight operation if they wanted.

Around 54,000 vehicles ran across

the country in the last 24 hours, he said.

He was responding to a query of IP lawmaker Pir Fazlur Rahman on the government's steps to contain Hizb-ut-Tahrir so that it could not emerge as a fearsome outfit like the Islamic State.

"Irrespective of whether [the paper] wrote it in a negative or a positive way, I think giving such a big coverage to the poster is tantamount to patronising Hizb-ut-Tahrir," he told the House.

The prime minister said newspapers should not publish anything that might harm the country. "But I don't understand why they [The Daily Star] did this. However, we are taking appropriate measures against this, and actions will be taken against those who are trying to patronise Hizb-ut-Tahrir by publishing its poster."

On February 15, a lawyer filed a case with the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court in Dhaka against The Daily Star Editor and Publisher

Mahfuz Anam, Chief News Editor Syed Ashfaqul Haque and Chief Photographer Sk Enamul Haq for publishing the photograph of the poster.

About containing Hizb-ut-Tahrir, Hasina said: "As we took appropriate measures against them, they could not resort to any subversive acts since 2009."

The outfit would not have been able to re-emerge "if Khaleda Zia had not started subversive activities, burning people to death and destroying vehicles and everything else in the IS style," he went on.

The PM alleged that Khaleda patronises Hizb-ut-Tahrir and there was no difference between the activities of Jamaat, BNP and Hizb-ut-Tahrir.

"We will take all necessary measures to save the country from their hands," he asserted.

The premier directed the MPs to mobilise people in their constituencies to form resistance against militancy.

AL, BNP to reply

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to Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia, urging them to engage in constructive dialogue to peacefully resolve the current political crisis.

The ruling party believes it would have to promise fresh elections if it had to sit for dialogue with the BNP. "Going for early elections would definitely be suicidal for the party and thus there is no way to sit for dialogue," Farhan said on Tuesday in New York.

A BNP insider claimed that Taranco had called Khaleda Zia over the phone last week.

BAN'S LETTER

Ban in his letter regretted the violence that erupted during the ongoing blockade and hartals and resulted in many deaths and injuries of innocent citizens.

He requested the two leaders to cooperate with Taranco who had been tasked to be in contact with the government and the opposition.

Diplomatic sources said the UN chief requested the prime minister to hold dialogue with the opposition leader now outside the parliament.

In his letter to Khaleda, Ban stressed the need for ending the violence and solving the problems peacefully through dialogue.

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