

## Envoys meet

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the meeting, Australian High Commissioner to Bangladesh Greg Wilcock said: "We encouraged confidence-building measures, including the de-escalation of Bangladesh's political conflict, in the interest of fostering safety, stability, growth, human rights and democracy in Bangladesh."

"We called for an end to the continuing violence in Bangladesh and our efforts to this end will continue."

The meeting with the BNP chief followed a similar meeting with the Bangladesh foreign minister on March 1, he added.

"Recalling our previous statements on recent events in Bangladesh, and those by the UN, we called for an end to Bangladesh's continuing violence," said the Australian envoy.

The diplomats entered Khaleda's office around 6:35pm.

There was no formal briefing from the BNP about the outcome of the two-hour meeting. Meeting sources told this newspaper that Khaleda informed the diplomats in detail about the reasons for the ongoing movement.

The diplomats inquired about the killing of innocent people in firebomb attacks during the movement. Khaleda blamed the ruling Awami League men for carrying out such attacks on common people. The BNP handed over newspaper clippings and video clips to the diplomats.

BNP standing committee member Nazrul Islam Khan and Khaleda's adviser Abdul Kaium, also a former inspector general of police, assisted the party chief in the meeting.

The BNP-led 20-party alliance has been enforcing countrywide indefinite blockade since January 6 demanding a midterm election under a non-partisan administration. The combine has also been enforcing nationwide hartals since February 1, except for weekends, to press home the demand.

## 42kg gold

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containing 87 kg of shisha (smoked through a hookah) from the cartons which came from Sharjah of the UAE by a flight that touched down around 1:30am.

On intelligence that a large consignment of gold was being smuggled into the country, customs officials conducted a drive at the cargo shed around 2:00pm, said Selim Reza, assistant commissioner (customs) at the airport.

The gold bars weighing over 23 kg were stashed in the battery chambers of 25 charger lights.

**19kg AT DHAKA AIRPORT**  
Customs officials at Shahjalal International Airport last night recovered around 19 kg of gold worth about Tk 9.5 crore from a Dhaka-bound flight of Regent Airways from Singapore.

Kazi Md Ziauddin, joint commissioner of customs, said they conducted a search at the flight which landed at the airport around 10:00pm. The officials found 160 gold bars wrapped in cloths, stashed in a commode.

None was arrested in this connection. More than 1,000 kg of gold worth around Tk 450 crore was seized at the airports across the country in the last one year by customs intelligence and other agencies.

## 6.4 quake hits western Indonesia

AFP, Jakarta

A powerful 6.4-magnitude undersea earthquake struck western Indonesia yesterday, the US Geological Survey said, but there was no tsunami alert and no immediate reports of casualties or damage.

The quake hit at a depth of 37 kilometres (23 miles) at 5:37 pm (1037 GMT) close to Pulau Siberut, part of the Mentawai Islands, off the west coast of vast Sumatra island, said the USGS.

An official from Indonesia's meteorological, geophysics and climatology agency Benny, who like many Indonesians goes by one name, said that there was no potential for a tsunami.

## Ex-ETV journo

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Karwan Bazar on January 6 and shown arrested in another case filed under the pornography control act.

On February 10, the High Court granted the ETV boss an interim bail in the case. But he cannot get out of jail as he is shown arrested in the sedition case.

## Rowdy protest

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The students also blocked a road adjacent to the university and the Planning Commission for around an hour from 12:45pm.

On information, police rushed to the spot and brought the situation under control.

## Chance to rectify

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Oval in Nelson, a crucial phase may be done and dusted by the time a majority of the nation wakes up.

Ideally yesterday's 9:30 am clash between South Africa and Ireland, which saw the former romp to a 201-run win, is what cricket fans in this part of the world prefer most.

However, whether you manage to keep up with your alarm or not, the one thing's that certain is that there will be sleepless nights amongst many. Granted; the Scots may be a lot more inexperienced than the Tigers, but they don't really have anything to lose.

For Mashrafe Bin Mortaza and co though this is a must-win encounter. For them to keep any hopes of a quarterfinal berth alive, they will need to be on their toes.

Having beaten the Afghans comfortably in the first game, Bangladesh's fielding produced a shocker in their third as they were thumped by Sri Lanka. However skipper Mashrafe believed that they would be able to rectify their mistakes.

"We made lots of mistakes in the last game and that's why this match is an opportunity for us to correct those mistakes and put everything right. It can help us get into good shape for the next two big matches," hoped Mashrafe.

And one of the first aspects that the Tigers will need to fix is their vulnerable batting order. The top order has failed to perform in the last two matches. Both the openers have been struggling due to their own respective problems. While Tamim Iqbal seemed unfit, Anamul Haque Bijoy can't seem to time his runs properly. Except for a

few good performances from Mushfiqur Rahim and Shakib Al Hasan, the batsmen have looked below-par.

The last time the two teams met, Scotland beat Bangladesh by 34 runs in a T20i. However, the Tigers are unbeaten in the ODIs. They lead the head-to-head stats 3-0. While the Tigers did plan and mark a few particular Scottish players to observe, Mashrafe admitted that their plans don't always work.

"Sometime your plan may not work. But you can't be scared. You have to try to execute it no matter what. A team always has a plan A and plan B. But we tend to become double-minded when our initial plan doesn't work.

"I believe this is the match where we can fix our problems and execute our plans properly," explained the 31-year-old.

A small venue with approximately 5,000 spectators; teams are expected to score runs here. Two matches have been played here during the World Cup and both of them have witnessed high-scoring games.

Ireland chased down West Indies's 304 while Zimbabwe came back from the brink to down the United Arab Emirates after the men from the Gulf posted 285. By the looks of the last few matches, a par-score here would be above 300.

The match against Scotland may also see Bangladesh introduce an extra spinner into the side in place of a batsman. Spinners did get wickets in the last two matches here. Scotland's inexperience against spin is another reason that may compel the team management to bring in a change.

## Driver burnt alive

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This was the 10th time that the exams had to be rescheduled due to the ongoing unrest stemming from a government-opposition standoff over a fresh election.

**BOMB ATTACKS**  
A driver was burnt alive and his assistant suffered serious burns after alleged hartal pickets firebombed their pick-up in Shibganj of Chapainawabganj around 5:00am yesterday.

The dead was Shipon Mia, 30, of Pokhia village in Bhola's Borhanuddin upazila. His helper Shakil Ahmed, 15, hails from Mirsarai of Chittagong.

Superintendent Bashir Ahmed of Chapainawabganj police said a group of 10-15 pro-hartal activists waylaid the vehicle from Narayanganj in Buspotti area on Chapainawabganj-Sonamasjid Land Port highway and hurled a petrol bomb at it.

Driver Shipon was burnt dead inside the cabin but Shakil managed to jump out, witnesses said.

Locals sent Shakil to Shibganj Upazila Health Complex initially. From there, he was shifted to Rajshahi Medical College and Hospital.

With 80 percent burns, he was in "an extremely critical condition", said the hospital doctors.

In another incident, a truck was firebombed at Shantir More of Chapainawabganj town around 11:00am. Driver Mohammad Salah, 28, was injured in the incident. Two more trucks were burnt in the same way in the town around 12:00pm, leaving the drivers Rajib, 25, and Akhtarul Islam, 45, injured.

Later around 11:30 at night, around 50-60 hartal supporters set fire to six trucks and vandalised three more at Sonamasjid Koylabari Truck Terminal, close to the land port and a camp of Border Guard Bangladesh.

In the capital, rickshaw-puller Mominul Haque was hurt in a crude bomb blast at Shantinagar. Two youths -- Sohag and Mainuddin -- were injured after hartal pickets exploded homemade bombs on the premises of Dhaka Medical College Hospital [DMCH]. One more person was injured in a similar blast in front of the National Museum at Shabbagh.

In Narayanganj, miscreants hurled crude and petrol bombs at a Modern

## Venezuela gives US 15 days on embassy staff cut

AFP, Caracas

Venezuela is giving the United States 15 days to present plans to slash the staff of the American embassy in Caracas, Foreign Minister Delcy Rodriguez said Monday.

The move came after Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro lashed out Saturday at US "conspiracies" against his socialist government and ordered his foreign ministry to reduce the number of officials at the American embassy from 100 to 17.

Rodriguez told journalists she had a "cordial" meeting with the top US diplomat in Caracas, Lee McClenny, to discuss the new measures.

## ACC to revive

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of abusing power while she was the prime minister to award a gas exploration and extraction deal to Canadian company Niko.

Following a writ petition filed by Khaleda, the HC on July 9, 2008 stayed the case and issued the rule upon the ACC and the government to explain why the initiation and proceedings of the case against her should not be declared illegal.

The HC on October 16, 2008 stayed the proceedings against her in Barapukuria coalmine corruption case and issued a rule upon the government and the ACC to show cause as to why the proceedings against her in the case should not be quashed.

The ACC filed the case on February 26 the same year accusing Khaleda and others of causing a loss of Tk 159 crore to the state exchequer by awarding a contract for operating Barapukuria coalmine to a Chinese company through abuse of power.

The anti-graft watchdog filed the Gato graft case against the BNP chief, her son Arafat Rahman Koko, Jamaat-e-Islami leader Matiur Rahman Nizami, and 21 others with Tejgaon Police Station in 2007 on charges of corruption in awarding Global Agro Trade (Pvt) Co Ltd (Gatco) a contract for container management at inland container depots in Dhaka and Chittagong.

The graft caused the state exchequer a loss of over Tk 1,000 crore.

On September 30, 2007, the HC granted Khaleda bail in the case and issued a rule upon the government and ACC to explain why bringing the charges under the Emergency Power Rules should not be declared illegal.

Following another petition, the court on July 15, 2008 stayed the proceedings of the case against her and issued another rule upon the government and anti-graft watchdog to explain why the proceedings should not be quashed.

**Foreign power**  
**FROM PAGE 1**  
president's New Year speech. The minister clearly said "a defeated international force is involved in the current violence". "They want to take revenge of their defeat in the country's Liberation War," said Matia, adding that they [the force] were out to prevent Bangladesh from attaining its desired development goal.

"They want to make Bangladesh a failed state and establish a reign of terror here," she said and alleged that an embassy and an airline [PIA] were financing the BNP-Jamaat's violence.

Termining BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia a "friend of Pakistan", Matia alleged that Khaleda along with Jamaat had been enforcing hartals and blockade in a bid to make the country a failed as well as a militant state.

That was why they had been "killing" people by hurling petrol bombs one after another, she further alleged.

Water Resources Minister Anisul Islam Mahmud said, "We have to protect democracy and the constitution at any cost. If the government and the constitution can be altered by petrol bombs, private property can also be grabbed similarly in future."

He urged the BNP chief to call off the blockade and hartal to create an environment for a dialogue.

"Then we will sit and talk, but not over the issue of caretaker government, as the court had declared it illegal," the minister said.

"A dialogue will definitely take place, but within the constitutional framework. Let's talk about empowerment of the Election Commission and reducing power of the poll-time government," added Mahmud, who is also a lawmaker of main opposition Jatiya Party.

"Regarding the reduction to 17 staff, he was given a period of 15 days to present a plan," said the foreign minister.

She also said the government would in the coming hours publish its new visa requirement for US visitors -- another measure announced by Maduro.

In a fiery speech Saturday that showed rising tensions between the two countries, Maduro said he was banning a list of US "terrorists" from Venezuela, including former president George W. Bush and his vice president Dick Cheney, as well as Hispanic American lawmakers Marco Rubio, Bob Menendez and Ileana Ros-Lehtinen.

## Hold talks, stop violence

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The diplomats reiterated their strong stance against any form of violence and urged her to immediately halt the violence that they believe is seriously affecting innocent citizens of Bangladesh.

Sources said the letters came in the wake of a series of unsuccessful diplomatic efforts to persuade the ruling Awami League and its archrival BNP to reach an agreement to end the stalemate.

The diplomats in Dhaka have been working informally to bring the two parties closer and forge a consensus to this end for the past few weeks, according to sources.

"We are very much concerned about the violence and the loss of life that's occurred in Bangladesh since the beginning of this year .... We continue

to deplore the loss of life," one of the signatory ambassadors told The Daily Star yesterday.

Asked about the letter, the envoy said their key message "is for a peaceful resolution to the ongoing crisis."

UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon has already tasked his deputy Oscar Fernández-Taranco to liaise with the Bangladesh government and the opposition, and written to the PM and the BNP chief urging them to engage constructively for a peaceful end to the crisis.

US Secretary of State John Kerry on February 20 called for government action to peacefully end the turmoil. He also condemned the targeting of civilians by political parties and stressed the need for opposition parties to cease such attacks immediately.

## Drones used

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can easily be quantified after analysing the UAV images," Ziauddin continued.

International NGO CIMMYT is implementing the project -- Spurring a Transformation for Agriculture through Remote Sensing (STARS) -- in association with Bangladesh Agricultural Research Institute and Bangladesh Agricultural Research Council with approval from the defence ministry.

Two drones have been bought from Germany under the 20-month project that began in November last year and are now being used to collect data from 23 acres of land in four villages of Patuakhali and Barisal. Maize, wheat and mung bean are being cultivated in the land.

The project's prime objective is to analyse farming conditions and improving them in the southern part of the country as per a master plan of the government.

## 70pc attendance

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from sitting for the public examinations in case of their failure to pass in all subjects to obtain cent percent success in such exams.

"The government hopes every student will complete school life successfully and take part in next step of education," the circular reads.

It also points out that some students will not be able to sit for the test exams due to illness, natural calamity, accidents and other causes. "It is not the government's desire to deprive these students of their opportunities to sit for the public exams," the circular adds.

Actions will be taken as per rules if the authorities concerned deviate from the order, it warns.

The government decision, however, has received mixed reaction from the teachers.

A number of teachers said the decision would put a negative impact on overall results in the public exams if weaker students, who fail in several subjects, were allowed to sit for the exams.

"It will make the test examination least important," said Shahan Ara Begum, principal of Ideal School and College in Motijheel.

There were no relations between examination and attendance, she said, adding, there was no alternative to education as it worked like filter and allowed

competitiveness. Another teacher of a renowned private school in the capital said new irregularities would creep in if students were allowed to sit for the exams on the basis of attendance.

"Influential people will force the teachers to alter the attendance records," said the teacher asking not to be identified.

However, a college teacher in Dhaka welcomed the decision, saying the new rule would put an end to ill practices exercised in several schools. "There are schools that exclude students even if they do bad in just one subject to show the government that they have cent percent pass rate," the teacher observed.

The circular said if examinees performed poorly in the pre-test examinations, the head teachers would analyse the matter and ask other teachers concerned to be more cautious. It also advised special care to be taken for weaker students.

The ministry instructed the institutions to evaluate teachers' performance within a month of publishing the results of the public exams and take steps to reward or rebuke them accordingly.

It also directed the education officers in upazilas and districts to report on teachers' performance to the education boards.

## Donations drying up

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of allowing donations to flow to Islamist extremists in Syria, but those countries have denied the allegations.

Vice President Joe Biden had to issue an apology to UAE, Turkey and Saudi Arabia last year after he suggested that their governments sent money and weapons to Sunni militants fighting the Syrian regime.

Clapper also said the ISIS group was adept at propaganda and that a "counter-narrative" was needed to defeat the jihadists.

The conflict would be decided ultimately by winning "hearts and minds" and "a counter-narrative starting with education," he said.

The US spy chief expressed concern


about ISIS militants recruiting fighters from among the huge numbers of refugees who have fled the conflict in Syria.

Millions of refugees have put a "huge strain" on neighboring Lebanon, Jordan and Turkey, and often are living in grim conditions, he said.

The pool of refugees creates an "environment for recruiting" volunteers for the IS, he said.

"That's a great concern that I have." His comments came after the United Nations last week warned Syria's refugee crisis was approaching a "dangerous turning point."

Close to 12 million people have been displaced by the four-year war in Syria, including 3.8 million who have fled to neighboring states.



# PUBALI BANK LIMITED

Registered Office: 26, Dilkusha Commercial Area, Dhaka-1000

## NOTICE

Hon'ble Shareholders/Members are requested to update the particulars of their Bank Account, change of address and BO ID with 12 Digits Taxpayer's Identification Number (e-TIN) through Depository Participants (DP) before the "Record Date" (10.03.2015). If the Members fail to update their e-TIN before the "Record Date" Income Tax as easily will be deducted from payable Dividend @ 15% (fifteen percent) instead of 10% (ten percent) as per amended Income Tax Ordinance 1984 under Section 54.

By order of the Board  
Sd/-  
**Md. Sayeed Sikder**  
General Manager &  
Company Secretary

Dated: Dhaka  
March 03, 2015