

Top criminal

FROM PAGE 16
Masud fled to India in 2001 as Dhaka Metropolitan Police put him on a list of 23 most-wanted criminals and announced bounty for his capture. He, however, sneaked back into the country on several occasions until 2004.

CID investigators in 2004 implicated him in the August 24 grenade blast based on a fabricated statement of a petty criminal named Joj Mia, police sources say.

Subrata Bain and another top criminal named Mukul were also made accused in the grenade attacks cases. Police investigation later found the accusations false.

Staying reportedly in Nadia district of West Bengal, Masud ran poultry and fishery business. He married an Indian girl sometime between 2005 and 2006 and many top criminals from Dhaka attended his wedding party, said sources.

Apart from Masud, a number of other most-wanted Bangladeshi criminals were hiding in India. Of them, Subrata Bain, Khandakar Tanveer Islam Joy and Haris Ahmed Haris have already been arrested by Indian police.

Sources say some fugitives, including Shahadat Hossain, are still running underworld criminal activities in Dhaka from India. They get huge sums collected through extortion by their accomplices here.

On March 15, 2010, then home minister Sahara Khatun in parliament placed a list of 42 top criminals living in the neighboring country.

10 hurt

FROM PAGE 16
barricade, police opened blank fire and started charging batons on them.

"We brought out a peaceful procession and were heading towards Karbari hill to hold a rally there. But law enforcers put a barricade, opened blank fire and charged batons on us," Samar Bikash Chakma, a member of the committee, told The Daily Star yesterday evening.

Police arrested 12 indigenous people in this connection in separate raids in the area as of filing this report yesterday evening. Additional police and army forces were also deployed in the area.

Protesting the incident, Dighinala Bhumii Rakhha Committee called a dawn-to-dusk blockade in the upazila for today.

At least one thousand aggrieved indigenous people joined the procession.

Superintendent of Police Skeikh Mohammad Mizanur Rahman, however, said a few hundred people under the banner of Dighinala Bhumii Rakhha Committee gathered at Babuchhara and attempted to attack BGB 51 battalion in the name of a procession.

They also hurled brickbats and stones at on-duty security personnel and attacked them with wooden sticks and lethal weapons that injured people from both sides, the SP said.

To disperse the protesters police opened more than 10 rounds of blank fire, he added.

The SP also said Dighinala UNO Fazlul Jahid Pavel and Executive Magistrate Mizanur Rahman were there on duty to make sure no untoward incident took place.

Target power

FROM PAGE 16
If the MoU is finalised, the Bimstec member states will sign the deal in the Energy Ministerial Meeting, likely to be held in Kathmandu in June.

Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Myanmar, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Thailand are the member states of the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (Bimstec).

The concept of trans-power exchange and grid interconnections for electricity among the member countries was first initiated in 2005 in India when Bimstec formed the taskforce.

"We are hopeful to finalise the draft of the deal in tomorrow's [Monday] meeting. The member countries have reached the final stages of negotiation, and signing of the agreement is only a matter of time to happen," said the official.

This deal will ensure energy security in the region and will enable Bimstec member countries to share surplus electricity with each other, he said, adding, "Bangladesh will be largely benefited if the power connectivity is implemented."

As the seven countries are geographically interconnected, setting up of the grid connectivity and power trading may be cost-effective.

According to an official of the Bimstec Wing at the ministry, the seven member states have potential to generate around 2,60,000-megawatt hydropower, including India 1,50,000-MW, Myanmar 40,000 MW, and Bhutan and Nepal 30,000-MW each.

The member countries have also taken up a plan of energy cooperation to generate electricity from renewable sources, small hydro project, rice husk co-generation, solar energy etc.

Pakistan, Windies

FROM PAGE 16
Pakistan dismissed Ireland for just 237 despite a century from Irish captain William Porterfield, who won the toss.

The opener's 107 followed Ed Joyce's 112 against Zimbabwe as the second Ireland hundred of this tournament.

Ireland, who had already beaten two Test nations at this tournament in the West Indies and Zimbabwe, found runs hard to come by with Pakistan's bowling at the 'death' especially impressive.

Porterfield apart, only Gary Wilson (29) got past 20 as left-arm pacesman Wahab Riaz took three for 54.

"We were a few runs light," said Porterfield. "The confidence has been high throughout. I hope we get more games, and progress from there."

Opener and wicketkeeper Safraz, who marked his tournament debut with 49 against South Africa, was again in fine form with the bat.

His hundred, his first in 38 ODIs, came off 120 balls including six fours.

It was the seventh century by a wicketkeeper at this World Cup and the first by a Pakistan gloveman at any edition of the tournament.

However, there were farcical scenes towards the end of the match when, with Pakistan a handful of runs away from victory, Umar Akmal blocked ball after ball to allow Sarfraz to get to his century.

"I'm very happy," said Safraz. "Even before the match, Waqar [Paki-

stan coach Waqar Younis] said we haven't scored a hundred so we must try and get the hundred."

Earlier, the West Indies knew they had to win and then hope the Ireland-Pakistan didn't end in a tie or a no result -- outcomes that would have knocked them out.

The West Indies did their job in making 176 for four after dismissing the amateurs of the UAE for 175.

Amjad Javed (56) and Nasir Aziz (60) put on 107 after the UAE were struggling at 46 for six.

The West Indies, without opener Chris Gayle because of a back injury, were indebted to skipper Jason Holder, who took four for 27, and Jerome Taylor (three for 63).

Johnson Charles (55) and Jonathan Carter (50 not out) were the key contributors to the West Indies' run chase.

"I'm extremely pleased with the way the guys came out and played," said pacesman Holder.

"We needed to win by a certain margin. We knew we had to finish the game inside 36 overs and we did it."

The UAE's World Cup comeback, 19 years after their one and only previous appearance, saw them lose all six of their pool matches but they pushed Ireland close in a tense two-wicket defeat.

"It was a satisfactory performance from us, but we know we could have done better," UAE captain Mohammad Tauqir said.

Riots as Taliban attack

FROM PAGE 16
attacks, while two people were beaten to death by protesters who took to the streets after the blasts.

"Policemen on duty at both the entrances tried to stop them but the bombers blew themselves up," she told AFP.

"The angry mob protesting after the blast beat to death two people whom they suspected of being associates of the attackers."

An AFP photographer saw the bodies of the two suspected militants on fire after the beatings. It was not clear whether they were still alive at the time.

The Pakistani Taliban's Jamaat-ul-Ahrar faction described the blasts as suicide attacks and vowed to continue their campaign for the enforcement of Sharia Islamic law, in a statement emailed to the media.

Christians make up around two percent of Pakistan's mainly Muslim population of 180 million. They have been targeted in attacks and riots in recent years, often over allegations of profanity regarding the Koran or the Prophet Mohammed.

Yesterday's attacks were the worst on the community since a devastating double suicide-bombing in the north-western city of Peshawar in September 2013 killed 82 people.

That came months after more than 3,000 Muslim protesters torched some 100 houses as they rampaged through Joseph Colony, another Christian neighbourhood of Lahore, following blasphemy allegations against a Christian man.

The thousands of Christian protesters who clashed with police on Sunday

attacked their cars with stones and sticks, as women wept and beat their heads and chests.

The protesters, some wearing crosses round their necks, later turned on the city's bus rapid transit system -- a signature project of the ruling PML-N party of Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif.

Sharif in a statement condemned the church bombings and "directed provincial governments to ensure the security of (the) public and their properties".

Zaem Qadri, a spokesman for the provincial government, said efforts were being made to talk to the protesters to stop the rioting but "emotions are very high because their churches have been attacked".

Christians also took to the streets in other cities, including Pakistan's largest city Karachi, where around 200 protesters blocked a main road and burnt tyres. There were also demonstrations in Peshawar in the northwest, in the central city of Multan and in Quetta in the southwest.

Yesterday's attack was the first by the Taliban since three of their major factions said on Thursday they had reunited.

Pakistan's military has stepped up its fight against militants since Taliban gunmen massacred more than 150 people, most of them children, at a school in Peshawar in December.

A moratorium on executions in terror cases was lifted and the constitution amended to set up military courts for the speedy trial of terrorism cases. Later, the death penalty was reinstated for all capital cases.

'Google Kid'

FROM PAGE 16
from other kids, on stage.

His ability to absorb information and his photographic memory have earned him the nickname "Google".

One of his finest moments was when he got to be a part of the TV show Kaun Banega Crorepati (India's version of Who Wants to be a Millionaire) in 2013. "That genius kid Kautilya Pandit, just above five years and answers questions that many scientists and knowledgeable (sic) persons could never (answer)," the show's host, Amitabh Bachchan, had posted on Twitter.

Admirably, Kautilya prefers to share the credit of his brilliance with his guardians. "I guess the best thing is that I was lucky enough to have parents and teachers who realised I had a gift and who have helped me develop," he said.

"I don't have friends in my class ... My grandfather is my best friend. I

don't know why I am different but I know I am curious about everything, and keep asking questions, but in my case the answers just remain there."

Needless to say, his parents are quite proud of his achievements.

"Kautilya is God's best gift to us," said his father Satish Sharma. "We noticed Kautilya's unusual talent that was way beyond his years, but could never imagine that he is an ocean of knowledge. It all began in his summer vacation when he would spend a lot of time studying the atlas and other books. And then began the questions. All our answers were met with a fresh question! He understands things and that helps him retain them."

For his extraordinary brilliance, Kautilya is just as confused about his future plans as any other kid. "I want to be an IAS officer... no, a scientist ... an astronaut..." he said, before finally declaring, "I will first study and then decide."

Syrian agent delivered money to ISIS

AFP, Ankara
An agent who helped three British schoolgirls cross into Syria to join the Islamic State group was also working as a courier to transfer money to jihadists, a Turkish newspaper reported yesterday.

Turkey announced Thursday that it had arrested an intelligence agent working as a spy for an unidentified country in the US-led coalition and

said he was a Syrian national.

Media reports in Turkey have said he was working for Canadian intelligence -- a claim rejected by Ottawa.

The Milliyet newspaper reported that the man, a dentist using the name "Doctor Mehmed Resid", told Turkish police during questioning that he received the money sent from abroad before it was delivered to ISIS militants.

Fire at Savar factory

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Savar
A fire broke out last night at a bag-making factory at Anandapur in Savar on the outskirts of the capital. The factory, Oporajeo Shopner Karkhana, is operated by Rana Plaza victims.

Fire service officials rushed to the factory housed in the Shakik Properties building and brought the fire under control after an hour-long effort at 11:00pm, said Abu Zafar, warehouse inspector of Fire Service and Civil Defense office in Savar.

The amount of damage and the reason behind the fire could not be known immediately, he said, adding that none was injured.

Monir Hosen Rinku, one of the initiators of the factory, said the fire damaged prepared bags for different buyers and also damaged some machinery.

Strong currents hamper search for Myanmar ferry victims

AFP, Yangon
Strong currents yesterday hampered efforts to retrieve the bodies of victims of a ferry accident which killed at least 34 people off western Myanmar, as hopes dimmed for the missing.

The "Aung Takon 3" sank late Friday after leaving the town of Kyaukphyu on its way to Sittwe in western Rakhine state.

Updating the toll, police said 34 people died in the sinking, with a dozen more listed as missing.

The ship was officially carrying 214 passengers and crew.

But locals have said they fear many more unregistered ticket holders may have been on board, a common practice on the impoverished nation's often overcrowded ferry network.

"We have hundreds of people helping with the rescue, but there's a strong current, it's hard to carry out rescue work," Thein Naing, deputy police chief of Kyaukphyu police station, told AFP.

"We have 34 dead people so far... we will continue the search until we have found everyone."

But expectations of finding survivors have diminished nearly two days after the boat went down.

Vatican backs force to stop ISIS 'genocide'

AFP, Washington
The Vatican's ambassador to the United Nations has endorsed military action against the Islamic State group in Iraq and Syria -- an unusual move because the Vatican traditionally has opposed force in the region.

In an interview with the US Catholic website Crux, Archbishop Silvano Tomasi said ISIS fighters were committing atrocities on a huge scale and the world needed to intervene.

"We have to stop this kind of genocide," the Italian archbishop told Crux. "Otherwise we'll be crying out in the future about why we didn't do something, why we allowed such a terrible tragedy to happen."

Tomasi said a coordinated and "well-thought-out coalition" was needed to do everything possible to achieve a political settlement without violence.

"But if that's not possible, then the use of force will be necessary," he added.

Pope Francis has denounced the "intolerable brutality" being inflicted on Christians and other minorities in Iraq and Syria by ISIS group militants.

Last month, ISIS kidnapped 220 Assyrians in the Tal Tamr area of Syria where the extremist Islamist group has seized control of 10 Christian villages, according to the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights.

And the pope expressed his dismay after the group's Libyan branch released a video showing the gruesome beheading of 21 mostly Egyptian Coptic Christians.

Tk 5 lakh

FROM PAGE 16
Detectives, investigating the Avijit Roy murder case, suspect that Rana, a BBA student of North South University in the capital, is also involved in the killing of the writer-blogger on the Dhaka University campus recently, said sources.

Detectives had earlier said some NSU students, including Rana, allegedly killed Rajib on February 15, 2013, as per sermons by Mufti Jasimuddin Rahmani, a so-called spiritual leader of Ansarullah Bangla Team.

Security Fears: US shuts its Saudi embassy

AFP, Riyadh
The US embassy in Saudi Arabia said it had suspended consular services in the kingdom for two days due to "heightened security concerns", after warning of threats against Western oil workers.

All services in Riyadh and at the consulates in Jeddah and Dhahran were cancelled for yesterday and today, it said in a statement posted on its website Saturday.

The embassy warned US citizens to take extra precautions and keep a low profile if they were out in public.

"All US citizens are encouraged to be aware of their surroundings, and take extra precautions when travelling throughout the country," it said.

"The Department of State urges US citizens to carefully consider the risks of travelling to Saudi Arabia and limit non-essential travel within the country."

The embassy on Friday had warned that Western oil workers risked being attacked or kidnapped by "terrorist" groups.

It did not identify the source of the threats and said no details were available on the planned attacks.

Saudi Arabia is taking part in US-led air strikes that began in September against the Islamic State jihadist group in Syria, raising concerns about possible retaliation.

Westerners in Saudi Arabia have

come under attack four times since October.

The latest was last month when US defence contractor Vinnell Arabia said two of its American employees were shot at in Eastern Province, where most of the kingdom's oil wealth is concentrated.

Saudi police said that one of them was wounded but results of the investigation that followed have not yet been revealed.

In October, another Vinnell employee was shot dead and another wounded at a petrol station in Riyadh in what Saudi authorities have said was not a "terrorist-related" incident.

A Dane was wounded in November as he was driving away from his workplace when he was fired upon from another car.

Authorities said the three Saudis arrested on suspicion of involvement in that attack had acted "in support of" the Islamic State group.

A week after the Dane's shooting, a Canadian was stabbed and wounded while he shopped at a mall on Saudi Arabia's Gulf coast.

Shia-populated Eastern province is also the scene of unrest sparked by members of the minority who occasionally clash with police.

Several Westerners in Saudi Arabia were killed in a wave of deadly al-Qaeda attacks between 2003 and 2006.

'Raihan' stayed

FROM PAGE 1
couple had left four days before to the incident, leaving "Raihan" in their home. The duo also told the guards that more guests would come to stay.

The security guards made the statement on Wednesday before Officer-in-Charge Md Rafiqul Islam of Uttara West Police Station, with which police filed a general diary regarding Salauddin going missing.

In the report OC Rafiqul said neither Hasnat nor Sumona could be reached over the phone.

The police headquarters placed Rafiqul's report before the HC yesterday through the attorney general's office.

The HC adjourned hearing on this issue until 3:00pm today.

The report said the other residents of flats in the building stated that law enforcers had not picked up anybody from there.

Yesterday, Attorney General Mahbubey Alam also placed four other reports before the HC during the hearing of a petition seeking HC order on the government to find Salauddin and produce him before it.

Offices of director general of Rapid Action Battalion, Criminal Investigation Department, Special

Branch of Police, and the commissioner of Dhaka Metropolitan Police sent the reports to the attorney general's office for submission before the HC.

The reports said Salauddin was not in their custody and none of them had detained him and that they were trying to locate him.

The HC on March 12 had asked the authorities concerned to explain as to why they should not be directed to find and bring BNP leader Salahuddin Ahmed before it at 10:30am yesterday.

The HC bench of Justice Quamrul Islam Siddique and Justice Gobinda Chandra Tagore came up with the rule following a petition filed by Hasina Ahmed, wife of BNP spokesperson Salauddin.

During the hearing yesterday, petitioner's counsel Moudud Ahmed told the court that the documents were not legally acceptable, as they were not submitted through affidavits and their copies were not served to the petitioner's counsels.

The court then asked the attorney general's office to submit the reports to the court through affidavits and to supply their copies to the petitioner's counsels before 3:00pm today.

Hartal, blockade

FROM PAGE 16
some problems at present... this is unfortunate, arson attacks, burning and killing people are taking place, these are causing problems to all," the PM told her audience.

Hasina further said these destructive activities would not continue for a long time. "We'll be able to overcome these problems," she added.

The PM vowed afresh to establish digital Bangladesh by 2021, saying that the country had already achieved a lot of progress to this end.

She hoped that her government would launch the country's own satellite in the space within the stipulated time.

Hasina also said specific work plans were being undertaken to build digital Bangladesh overcoming deadlocks created by BNP-Jamaat.

State Minister for Information and Communication Technology Division Junaid Ahmed Polok was present.

PM ON MARCH 7 SPEECH
At a seminar on Bangabandhu's historic March 7 Speech, Hasina yesterday said it was high time to resist those who wanted to snatch the rights of the country's people and wanted to play with their fate.

"Our struggle is yet to be over... still, militant activities are there and people are being killed and oppressed in the country. Despite that we'll have to move ahead," she said.

Hasina said the historic speech by Bangabandhu on March 7, 1971, would also be a guideline for the young generation who would lead the nation in future.

First day's hartal

FROM PAGE 16
election under a non-party administration.

At least 86 people have been killed and over a thousand others injured so far in the ongoing political turmoil.

However, a few stray incidents took place during the hartal hours yesterday.

One crude bomb exploded inside Bindubasini Government Girls' High School in Tangail town, while another near the school's main gate in front of a police patrol team around 9:30am, said Mostafizur Rahman, officer-in-charge of Tangail Model Police Station.

Panic-stricken students left the school premises immediately after the blasts. No one was hurt, reports our Tangail correspondent, quoting the police official.

Nobody was arrested.

In Meherpur, police yesterday recovered two homemade bombs

from a primary school in Munda village of Gangni upazila, reports our correspondent from Kushtia.

Amirul Islam, headmaster of Munda Government Primary School, said the students found the bombs from a window of the school around 9:30am and informed him about the matter.

He then informed police of the incident.

Amirul alleged that a few days ago some unknown people threatened him over the phone not to keep the school open during hartals.

The teacher filed a general diary with Gangni Police Station in connection with yesterday's incident.

Akram Hossain, officer-in-charge of the police station, said they were trying to track the phone callers.

In Chittagong, police detained 10 BNP and Jamaat-Shibir men from different places from Saturday evening to early yesterday.