

Japan set to return to nuclear power after 2-year hiatus

AFP, Tokyo

Japan will today begin restarting its nuclear power programme, officials said, after a two-year shutdown sparked by public fears following the Fukushima crisis.

The restart comes more than four years after a quake-sparked tsunami triggered meltdowns at the Fukushima plant, prompting the shutdown of Japan's stable of reactors in the world's worst atomic crisis in a generation.

Resource-poor Japan, which once relied on nuclear power for a quarter of its electricity, restarted two reactors temporarily to feed its needs. But they both went offline by September 2013, making it completely nuclear-free for about two years.

Japan has ushered in tougher safety rules to avoid a repeat of Fukushima, including more backup prevention measures and higher tsunami-blocking walls in areas most susceptible to them.

80km the max

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discussion on how it would be implemented and by whom.

Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP) Commissioner Asaduzzaman Mia and two officials of Highway Police strongly supported the idea placed in the meeting by President of Bangladesh Bus-Truck Owners Association Sohel Talukder.

Sohel, also owner of Sohag Paribahan Ltd, said speed governing devices were installed in all the buses of his company which considerably reduced the number of accidents of his buses.

Road Transport and Bridges Minister Obaidul Quader, who chaired the meeting, said the decision on speed governors was taken to reduce road accidents.

He did not say when they would be installed, how and by whom.

Officials of the ministry later told The Daily Star that a gazette notification would be issued regarding the decision.

One of them observed, "There should be detailed discussions before making such decisions."

An official said the condition of the highways, on which vehicles could hardly run at 80kmph, the national speed limit, should be taken into consideration.

In the developed world, speed limiters are used on heavy vehicles like

Bangladesh to conduct Rohingya census

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

In an effort to resolve the longstanding Rohingya refugee problem in Bangladesh, the government plans to carry out a comprehensive census on the undocumented Rohingya population to determine their exact number.

Foreign Secretary Md Shahidul Haque communicated it to the foreign diplomats and UN agencies in Dhaka at a meeting at state guest-house Padma yesterday afternoon, said meeting sources.

The Planning Commission has already approved a project "Census on Undocumented Myanmar Nationals Staying in Bangladesh" and allocated Tk 21.75 crore for it.

According to an unofficial estimate, three to five lakh undocumented Rohingyas live in different parts of Bangladesh.

Besides, around 32,000 Rohingyas are staying in two refugee camps.

Under the project, the government will prepare a complete data with their photographs, current locations, original addresses in Myanmar before they entered Bangladesh, root cause of the illegal migration and their socio-economic condition.

Foreign ministry officials said the survey would be conducted mainly in Cox's Bazar, Chittagong, Bandarban, Rangamati, Khagrachhari and Patuakhali where most of the undocumented Rohingyas live.

At yesterday's meeting, the foreign secretary urged the international community not to pressurise Bangladesh on the Rohingya issue, as the influx of Rohingyas to Bangladesh put huge pressure on its economy.

He said the international community needed to exert more pressure on Myanmar to resolve the Rohingya issue, as it was Myanmar's responsibility to take back its nationals.

Robber killed in 'gunfight' with cops

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kushtia

The ringleader of a "gang of robbers" was killed in a "gunfight" with police in Pangsha upazila of Rajbari yesterday.

The deceased was identified as Abdur Rob, 28, a resident of Pholimara village in the upazila.

Pangsha Police Station Officer-in-Charge Abu Shama Md Iqbal Hayat said police arrested Rob from his house on Sunday afternoon. He was accused in four robbery cases.

Following Rob's confessional statement, police took him along on a raid to recover firearms at Gopalpur village in Kalimohor union, the OC said.

When the police team reached the village around 1:30am, associates of Rob opened fire on police, prompting the law enforcers to fire back, triggering a gunfight.

Rob was caught in the line of fire and injured critically while his associates managed to flee the scene, OC Iqbal claimed.

He was taken to Faridpur Medical College Hospital where he died two hours later.

Three policemen, including sub-inspectors Abu Sayam and Hafizur Rahman and constable Rafiqul Islam, were injured during the "shootout", he said.

Police recovered one locally-made

Nepal issues first transgender passport

AFP, Kathmandu

Nepal issued its first transgender passport yesterday in a move which rights groups hailed as a breakthrough.

Rights activist Monica Shahi became the first recipient of a passport that read 'O' for other instead of 'male' or 'female'.

"I cannot describe my happiness today. My country has recognised and respected my identity," the 37-year-old said.

Bring back

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The thirteen-year-old was beaten to death by a group of brutes in Kumargaon Bus Stand area under Sylhet Sadar upazila on July 8. Kamrul fled the country soon after the killing.

In the memorandum, Azizur also demanded the government ensure immediate punishment of the killers, launch a departmental probe into the alleged negligence of duty by policemen and ensure security of his family.

A foreign ministry source said the Bangladesh government wrote letters to the Saudi government, requesting it to send Kamrul home. The government was awaiting a response from the Saudi Arabia in this regard.

The Interpol on July 21 issued a red notice for Kamrul's arrest. The authorities had to request the international police organisation to issue the notice as Bangladesh has no extradition treaty with Saudi Arabia, said an official at the police headquarters.

One of the perpetrators of the killing filmed the beating of Rajon and uploaded it on Facebook. The video sparked widespread outrage at home and abroad.

Some expatriate Bangladeshis spotted Kamrul in Jeddah, caught him and handed him over to the Bangladesh mission there. Later, Jeddah police took him under custody.

Police filed a murder case with Jalalabad Police Station in this connection. Twelve people have been arrested so far in the case. All of them are now behind bars.

159 victims return

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With the 159, a total of 501 Bangladeshi trafficking victims have so far been repatriated from Myanmar in four phases since last June 8.

Of the 159 victims, 80 are from Narsingdi, 18 from Chittagong, 17 from Habiganj, 13 from Kishoreganj, 12 from Narayanganj, 12 from Faridpur, three from Shariatpur, two from Naogaon and one each from Natore and Barisal. There are 16 children among the rescued Bangladeshis.

The victims were handed over to Cox's Bazar police. In order to verify their nationalities for the second time, police had sent them to a temporary camp at the Cox's Bazar Cultural Centre, Mohammad Ali Hossen, deputy commissioner of Cox's Bazar, told The Daily Star.

The victims were supposed to be brought back to Bangladesh on July 30 and August 5, but the programmes were postponed due to bad weather caused by cyclone Komen and other reasons.

The Myanmar Navy on May 21 and 29 rescued 208 and 727 fortune seekers from their territorial waters and claimed that all of them were from Bangladesh.

The Bangladesh government, after verifying their nationalities, brought back a total of 342 Bangladeshi trafficking victims in three phases on June 8,

Residents must relocate

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residents who want to relocate to India.

A survey team from India will work in four districts of Bangladesh on August 17 to interview the 51 new applicants, said Deputy Commissioner Habibur Rahman of Lalmonirhat. He led the 16-member Bangladesh delegation at the meeting.

The two sides handed over 62 cadastral survey (CS) documents out of the total 162 between themselves. The delegations of the two countries said they have lost the rest of the documents, reports our Kolkata correspondent.

The Bangladesh delegation handed over the CS documents of its 19 former enclaves out of 51 located inside India,

while the Indian team provided the Bangladesh authorities with the CS documents of its 43 former enclaves out of 111 inside Bangladesh.

Talking to newsmen after the meeting, chief of the Indian delegation P Ulaganathan and Lalmonirhat DC Habibur Rahman said though they didn't have all the CS documents, it won't be a big problem in resolving land disputes.

There is around 24,270 acres of land in the erstwhile 162 enclaves, of which Bangladesh has got 111 and India the rest.

The two countries exchanged the enclaves on July 31 as per the Land Boundary Agreement (LBA) and its protocol.

Khaleda goes to London

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Tarique, senior vice-chairman of BNP, had left home for London in 2008 for treatment. He along with his wife Zubaida Khan Rahman and daughter Zaima Zarnaz Rahman have been staying there even since. Khaleda met Tarique in May 2011 in London.

The former prime minister's London trip might help her avoid the controversy of celebrating her birthday on August 15 -- the day Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and most of his family members were assassinated in 1975, according to sources in BNP.

Khaleda is likely to spend the day (August 15) with her family members in London. Widow of Khaleda's younger son Arafat Rahman Koko, Sharmila Rahman and her two daughters Zafira and Zahia might also fly to London

from Malaysia to join her, said a relative of the BNP chief.

Koko died of cardiac arrest in Malaysian capital Kuala Lumpur in January.

The BNP chief is deeply disappointed and aggrieved by the party's retreat from the anti-government movement in April and its poor organisational structure, said party sources.

Khaleda didn't join any political programme since April 5 when she returned to her Gulshan residence from her political office after staying there for 92 days during the anti-government movement that started on January 6.

Tarique has been facing trial in at least 16 cases, including the August 21 grenade attack case and Zia Orphanage Trust graft case.

Verdict today in Bagerhat

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against Siraj alone in connection with the killing of more than 600 people, two against the duo and Latif in connection with the killing of 47 people, and one against Akram and Latif for "killing" a person.

Wrapping up their closing arguments, the prosecution sought



Siraj



Akram

capital punishment for the accused, claiming they proved all seven charges.

The defence, however, claimed the prosecution "simply failed to prove" the charges and sought acquittal for their clients. A defence counsel also accused the investigation officer of the

case of adopting a "pick-and-choose" policy to implicate his clients.

Sirajul Haque, son of Harejuddin Sheikh of Gotapara under Bagerhat Sadar upazila, was the deputy commander of Razakar Bahini in Bagerhat sub-division in 1971, according to the prosecution.

Akram, son of Joynal Abedin Khan of Daibaggahati under Morelganj upazila of Bagerhat, joined the Razakar force in 1971. They "committed" crimes against humanity and genocide during the war, the prosecution said.

Police arrested them in June and July last year following a warrant issued by the tribunal to that end.

The prosecution submitted charges against the accused on September 14 last year and the tribunal framed seven charges against them on November 5.

The prosecution produced 32 witnesses including the investigation officer of the case, while five witnesses defended only Akram and Latif.

Real test ahead

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However, there will be a hard battle to enrol at public universities and medical colleges, especially Dhaka University and Buet, they said.

In contrast, many colleges affiliated with the National University, especially those in the remote areas, will not get enough students because of poor quality education and outdated curriculums.

As for the private universities, they have around 1.5 lakh spots. Many of these universities might raise the number of vacancies to take in more students.

Like the previous years, the students will have to go through hassles as the government could not introduce a "cluster system" at public universities even this year in the face of opposition from a number of public universities.

Under the system, the universities of similar characteristics will be brought under a cluster with a single admission test for each of them.

The government had considered introducing the system to ease admission hassles and help students get out of the grip of coaching centres.

Turkey hit by series attacks

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A soldier was also killed when Kurdish fighters opened fire on a military helicopter in a separate attack in Sirnak, the military said in a statement.

Since last month, Turkey's forces have been conducting air strikes against the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) positions in Syria and the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) targets in Iraq.

Ankara also agreed to let the US-led coalition use its bases for its fight against ISIL.

The move came after a suicide bombing blamed on ISIL, which killed 32 people, and an increase in PKK attacks in the country.

"The group [DHKP/C] who claimed responsibility for the attack on the US consulate is the same group who attacked the US embassy in Ankara in 2013," Lale Sariirahmoglu, a military analyst, told Al Jazeera from the capital Ankara.

"The group is known for its anti-American and anti-US stance."

A Turkish security guard was killed in the 2013 attack.

Napoleon's hair sold

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"Obtained by Admiral George Brine when in command of HMS Mosquito guarding Napoleon at St Helena; given by him to my mother; at her death in 1867 given by us to my brother Captain George Brine RN after whose death in 1889 it passed to his widow and at her death in 1890 it came to me."

The item was put up for sale at auction with a guide price of 1,500 but due to the level of interest in it - ramped up by the bi-centenary year of Waterloo - it sold for a hammer price of 7,500.

With all the fees added on, the anonymous buyer paid 9,000 for the lock of hair and locket, which was found at a house in Camberley, Surrey of England.

Chris Ewbank, of Surrey auctioneers Ewbanks, said: "It was a remarkable find."

"We have no idea how the locket came to be in a terraced house in the Camberley area and because of the death of the occupant, we have no way of finding out, but we have no reason to doubt the authenticity of the piece. It has cast iron provenance."

"It was a very good price and a very lucky find."

Napoleon was exiled to St Helena, a British colony in the Atlantic following his defeat at Waterloo. He died in 1821, from stomach cancer.

Brine would have come into contact with Napoleon during the three years he spent guarding the island during the time

ACC, police to share job

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doing the job.

Following the amendment, the ACC received hundreds of cases. While it created a backlog of cases, the commission was struggling to investigate those with its limited resources.

Both the ACC and the law enforcement bodies were unhappy with the 2013 decision, but yesterday's cabinet decision made them happy again.

In his reaction, ACC Chairman Md Badiuzzaman said, "We do not get time and cannot pay attention to investigate many important cases as our officers remain busy with private citizens' cases. For this reason, we wanted the job of probing private cheating and forgery cases be given to police."

Biplob Kumar Sarkar, deputy commissioner of Dhaka Metropolitan Police (Tejgaon zone), said their powers to investigate such cases were suddenly taken away and given to the ACC in 2013.

"We wanted this power back.... The cabinet approval to this end will help people get justice," he said.

TIB Executive Director Iftekharuzzaman termed the decision positive and said, "I welcome it."

He added the previous decision created a backlog of cases in the ACC and also some "discontent" in both the

commission and the police.

According to former ACC boss Ghulam Rahman, there are logics both in favour of and against the amendment proposal. When private citizens are affected by corruption of influential quarters like real estate and manpower sectors, they expect the ACC and the government to do something. This way, they don't feel helpless against the powerful groups.

"Seen from this angle, it is logical to keep the provision [that empowers the ACC to probe such cases]," he said.

Changing this provision would encourage the powerful quarters to indulge in corruption. But nevertheless it will help ease the backlog of cases in the ACC, he added.

Asked about Ghulam's concern that private citizens might not get state assistance if the amendment is passed, DC Biplob Kumar said, "There are public prosecutors and assistant public prosecutors to fight for them in court."

BRIEFING

Briefing reporters after the meeting at the secretariat, Cabinet Secretary M Musharraf Hossain Bhuiyan said following the 2013 amendment to the ACC law, the number of forgery cases by general public increased enormously, making the investigation and trial difficult. So, the commission

proposed exclusion of these sections from the law.

All cheating and forgery cases filed by private citizens would be tried in judicial judge courts following the changes. This will ease ACC's workload while the trial and investigation of other important ACC cases would see quick progress, he added.

However, the trial of cheating and forgery cases against government officials and state-run bank employees related to their official duties as well as those over cheating and forgery over government property would be held under the ACC Act, he said.

New Zealanders get first look at new flag options

AFP, Wellington

New Zealanders were presented with 40 flag options yesterday as the country moved a step closer towards voting on whether it wanted to change its national standard.

The government-appointed panel overseeing the project released its longlist of designs, chosen from more than 10,000 public submissions.

Ansarullah Bangla Team chief Mufti Jasimuddin Rahmani, were arrested in connection with the 2013 murder of blogger Ahmed Rajib Haider and a charge sheet was submitted in the case in January last year against eight accused, one of whom is on the run.

Detectives have identified seven suspects in Avijit killing case but have not yet made any arrest. Sylhet police have arrested one suspect in Ananta murder case.

Replying to another question, the DMP official urged bloggers not to write anything demeaning religions, which may hurt anyone's religious sentiment.

Both the groups who write derogatory remarks about any religion and who kill people because of such writings are considered extremists, he said.

more evidences from the crime scene, said Zia Md Mostafiz Bhuiyan, officer-in-charge of Khilgaon Police Station.

The Federal Bureau of Investigation offered assistance and inquired whether there was any link between Avijit's killing and the latest one, said Monirul, joint commissioner (DB) of the DMP.

As Avijit was a US citizen, the FBI is interested in his case, he said, adding that it wanted to know whether sorting Niloy case would help identify Avijit's killers.

The FBI wants to help in Niloy case as well, Monirul said.

The police have so far arrested three suspects in Oyasiqur killing case. One of them gave confessional statements before a Dhaka court, he added.

Seven suspects, including

Apart from the shirt and the gamcha, investigators collected nine