

Saudi won't allow war

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government-run state news agency, sabanew.net.

The official foreign ministry source cited on sabanew.net said responsibility for the protection of diplomatic missions in Sanaa lay with the Houthi militia, who are in control of Sanaa, and their allies, forces loyal to former president Ali Abdullah Saleh.

A growing diplomatic dispute between Riyadh and Tehran, triggered by Saudi Arabia's execution of a prominent Shia cleric, has damaged the outlook for any resolution to the

conflict in Yemen, where a coalition led by Saudi Arabia has been fighting the Shia, Iran-allied Houthi movement.

Anti-Saudi protests were held in Iran yesterday against Riyadh's execution of the Shia cleric and after Tehran accused its regional rival of bombing its Yemen embassy.

Around 1,000 protesters marched through Tehran chanting "death to Al-Saud" -- Riyadh's ruling family, according to an AFP photographer. Others shouted "death to America" and "death to Israel", frequent rallying

cries at demonstrations in Iran.

The Arab News daily yesterday reported that four Iranians including an alleged spy will stand trial in Saudi Arabia. It said the three were alleged "terrorists", but gave no details of the accusations and the Iranians were not identified.

The Saudi Gazette said they were arrested in 2013 and 2014. A fifth Iranian is already serving a 13-year jail term following his conviction for recruiting young Saudis to fight in neighbouring countries, the newspaper said.

Everything OK

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those on their merits, he said.

"As a result, thousands of litigations have been filed, and the government has to remain busy with those."

The commission looked for alternatives, and suggested annual increment on compounded basis. Even if a public employee does not get promoted, his salary will double after 15 years, said Farashuddin, also former Bangladesh Bank governor.

He, however, said the government could raise the compound annual increment to six percent from five percent.

The commission is just an advisory body. Only the government can implement the recommendations, said the commission chief.

Farashuddin said he was happy that the government has approved more than 90 percent of the commission's recommendations and is implementing it.

Public servants have to be paid well so they don't need to worry about their financial problems every day, he said.

On public university teachers' resentment at the cancellation of the time scale and selection grade, he said the seventh pay scale had placed professors in Grade-III but the eighth suggests they should get Grade-II and there should be a well defined policy and available posts for them to get Grade-I.

He, however, said the existing system for their promotion from lecturers to professors should be structured well.

About the debate over the entry of cadres and non-cadres into service, he said the commission recommended 15 or 16 scales instead of 20 for simplicity.

According to the new pay scale, BCS cadres will enter public service at grade-VIII while non-cadre class-I officers will do so at grade-IX.

Referring to the central bank employees' demand, Farashuddin said he tried to help get them a separate pay scale when he was BB governor.

Central bank employees have sepa-

rate pay scale in almost all countries, he added.

The commission recommended that salaries and facilities for employees of all government institutions must be within a unified structure. The only exception will be those institutions that are self-financed, and Bangladesh Bank is one such example, he said.

"However, central bank employees should look at their salary structure. If they come under the national pay scale, most of them will be big losers. A lot of posts have been created at the bank and the salaries for those are a lot higher than those under the national pay scale."

He also recommended a separate arrangement for sections of professionals such as scientists and agriculturalists who make significant contributions.

Farashuddin, however, said it was not the commission's responsibility to say who should belong to what grades. Its job was limited to making recommendations on salaries only.

Tongi abuzz with Muslim devotees

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cations on Thursday, said Harun-Ur-Rashid, superintendent of Gazipur police.

The dead are Nurul Islam, 72, of Kurigram, Joyal Abedin, 72, of Gopalganj, and Farid Uddin, 75, of Natore. Their namaz-e-janaza was held at Ijtima ground after Fajr prayers.

Maulana Quari Zobayer, imam of the capital's Kakrail Mosque, led the Friday's Juma prayers at the Ijtima venue with lines of worshippers pouring onto the 160-acre ground, around 20km off the capital.

Vehicular movement on Dhaka-Mymensingh highway came to a halt for a few hours during the prayers, creating a long queue of vehicles. Many people offered their Juma prayers on the roof of vehicles, while a number of devotees were seen offering their prayers from rooftops of nearby buildings.

People from 33 districts are taking

part in the first two phases this year, while those from the remaining 32 districts will take part in two more phases next year.

People from 17 districts of the country and devotees from around 50 foreign countries, including Pakistan, India, Saudi Arabia and Myanmar, are participating in the first phase, Tablighi Jamaat sources said.

Devotees from the rest 16 districts will attend the second phase of Ijtima.

The three-day congregation includes delivery of sermons on fundamental issues of Tablighi Jamaat, prayer for spiritual adulation, exaltation and welfare of the Muslim Ummah and recitation from the Quran and Hadith.

The dowry free marriage ceremony will be held today.

Around 12,000 uniformed and plainclothes members of police, Rab

and intelligence agencies were in place at the Ijtima ground to ward off any trouble.

About 54 free medical camps were set up at the Ijtima ground to provide immediate medical assistance to the ailing devotees.

Md Rayhanul Islam, additional district magistrate of Gazipur, said 20 mobile courts are working to keep roads and footpaths free from blocking, ensure quality food and hygienic atmosphere of different restaurants and shops in the area.

Bangladesh Railway authorities have decided to run 28 special trains in two phases from January 8-10 and from January 15-17, said a high official of railway.

Bangladesh Road Transport Corporation (BRTC) operates special bus services from January 6 to 19 for ferrying devotees.

No time to rest

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He was shovelling stone chips off a truck in Magura when these correspondents approached him in an afternoon a few weeks ago.

"My hands and back itches whenever I work under the sun," he said, showing his calloused hands, roughened by decades of manual labour.

"I cannot work for much long at a stretch. My health ... It doesn't allow me to work every day."

Ilias along with some other labourers were returning from Arpara to Magura town after offloading sand when their truck came under a grisly petrol bomb attack during the violent anti-government blockade by the BNP-led coalition last year.

The attack left five dead, four of whom were from Malikgram, Ilias' village.

With around 50 percent burns on his back and lower part of the body, Ilias took treatment for over a month and a half at Dhaka Medical College

Hospital.

While he was groaning in excruciating pain all over his body, a bigger worry engulfed his mind: How would he now run the family?

His wife Dolena Begum has a dysfunctional leg and their sons, aged 13 and 11, are school-goers.

"After getting released from the hospital, we tried to make a living by catching fish. Even my minor sons joined me in this. But it was not enough," Ilias went on.

To keep their heads above water, his physically-challenged wife too tried to work as a domestic aide.

"But it is really hard for her, you know. She cannot move around as easily as others."

"It's hard to survive this way," he says with a deep sigh.

A year into the attack, the family has moved into a two-room house built by the government for the arson attack victims.

Though the families of the dead

received Tk 10 lakh each in compensation, there was no financial aid for Ilias.

His nephew Arab Ali, 23, was with him on the truck when a Molotov cocktail was thrown on to it.

Arab sustained 27 percent burns and now can barely move his right hand.

He used to work as a day labourer, but now he does not get any job.

"I do most of my work with my left hand. Who will hire me now?" he says.

"Besides, I have a sister to marry off ... I'm now a burden for my father."

His father too is a day labourer.

There is another concern that often grips Arab.

"Knowing all these about me, who will want to marry their daughter off to me?"

His question hung in the air, unanswered, as the sun was setting on Malikgram village.

Irresponsibility of cops blamed

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deadline," Aslam Khan told this correspondent yesterday.

The police boss will submit the report to the High Court as per an HC bench order, he added.

Following a writ petition filed by Executive Director of Bangladesh National Women Lawyers' Association (BNWLA) Salma Ali, the court issued a rule upon the government to explain in four weeks as to whether the police had followed legal provisions while firing on the agitating people at Kalihati.

Salma Ali filed the petition on behalf of the organisation on September 21, also seeking directive from the HC on the authorities concerned to pay compensation to the family members of the victims.

A member of the investigation team said they recommended taking actions against 11 police members -- the then OCs of Kalihati and Ghatail police stations, acting SP and additional SP of Tangail, and three other cops.

The investigation report said sub-inspectors and police members shot the agitating people from their pistols, shotguns and rifles, leaving four people dead and others injured.

Kalihati OC Shahidul Islam failed to report to his superior how many rounds were fired and how many people were killed or injured although the incident took place at Kalihati bus stop.

About Ghatail OC Mokhlesur Rahman, the investigation report said despite sensitive nature of the protest, he failed to address it.

Two correspondents of The Daily Star visited the spot and talked several eyewitness and villagers after the incident. They learnt that the protest was peaceful at first and there was no instigation from any quarter.

This newspaper could not know the details about the "political instigation" as mentioned in the probe report.

It was locals, mostly youths, who

took part in the protest, to draw the administration attention to the assault of the mother and son.

Locals say Rafiqul Islam Roma of Saturia village in Ghatail upazila was harbouring a grudge against a teenage boy of Atharodana village of the same upazila for having an affair with his wife.

Roma's family had asked the mother and son to come to his house, saying he just want to talk things out.

The two came to Roma's house on September 15 -- but only to face serious physical abuse and humiliation. They were beaten up by Roma, his brother-in-law Hafiz Uddin and neighbour Kazi.

At one stage, the mother and son were stripped and confined to a room.

On information from villagers, police rescued the victims and arrested Roma. Hafiz was arrested following a case filed by the woman with Kalihati Police Station the next day.

Celebratory gunfire kills Afghan teen after cricket win

AFP, Kabul

Celebratory gunfire has killed a teenage boy in southern Afghanistan following the national cricket team's victory against Zimbabwe, a hospital official told AFP.

Thousands of jubilant fans danced in the streets and fired into the air in cities and towns across the country as Afghanistan defeated Zimbabwe to take the series 3-2 on Wednesday, pushing the team into the top 10 for one-day international rankings.

A hospital official in Helmand's provincial capital Lashkar Gah said Thursday that a teenager "believed to be around 17 or 18 was killed in the celebratory gunfire".

Kabul police spokesman Abdul Basir Mujahid told AFP yesterday that at least three people had been wounded and that officials had arrested 35 people in connection with celebratory gunfire across the capital since the win.

2 stabbed

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commissioner of Sylhet Metropolitan Police (South Division), said a group of miscreants had an altercation with Russell outside the factory around 7:00pm. When Raju and Pappu joined him, the criminals hacked them indiscriminately and fled.

The two died on their way to the hospital.

The police official said they were trying to find out the motive behind the incident and arrest the killers.

Banoful has sweetmeat shops across the country.

New device

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cash register. Original electronic devices are rarely designed inside Bangladesh although the country has several local electronics brands.

Abetree will hit the markets in Dhaka in February with a price tag of less than Tk 15,000. According to Amjad, the product has been copyrighted in the USA where it was being shipped now.

The device may look like a typical android tablet from a distance, but it is actually a highly customised machine.

Its motherboard was developed by Commlink. It was entirely designed in Dhaka and it had been assembled in China, Amjad said. "I went for China because it's very cost effective," he added.

He has also designed and developed the smartcard reader and a fingerprint scanner that are hard-wired into the surface of the tab. It also features Near Field Communication (NFC) capabilities and a camera.

"It took us 10 months to develop the software in Android," Amjad Khan said, adding, "The main designing took us three months."

In industrial term, this is called a Point of Sale (POS) device, which has diversified use to retailers, banks and similar organisations.

'Mein Kampf'

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For 70 years, it refused to allow the inflammatory tract to be republished out of respect for victims of the Nazis and to prevent incitement of hatred. But "Mein Kampf" -- which means "My Struggle" -- fell into the public domain on January 1.

Copies of an annotated version running to 2,000 pages prepared by German researchers went on sale yesterday, with the authors arguing that their version would serve to demystify the notorious rant, which in any case can be found easily on the Internet.

The version by the Institute of Contemporary History of Munich (IFZ) has been in the works since 2009 and aims to "deconstruct and put into context Hitler's writing".

Retailing at 59 euros (\$65), the book looks at key historical questions, the institute said, including: "How were his theses conceived? What objectives did he have? And most important: which counterarguments do we have, given our knowledge today of the countless claims, lies and assertions of Hitler?"

Christian Hartmann, who led the editorial team for the annotated version said the version could show a wider public how "aggressive the hate sermon" was.

Education Minister Johanna Wanka has argued that the annotated text should be introduced to all classrooms across Germany, saying it would serve to ensure that "Hitler's comments do not remain unchallenged".

But some among the Jewish community questioned whether it was necessary to propagate the incendiary text again.

1 killed in AL-JP clash in Bogra

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bogra

A Jubo League leader was killed and 10 others injured as the activists of Awami League and its associate bodies clashed with Jatiya party men at Shantahar municipality in Bogra yesterday.

Locals said the incident happened over establishing supremacy in the area. The dead, Shafiqul Islam, 36, of Adamdighi upazila, was the secretary of Shantahar union Jubo League and also a brother of Rashedul Islam Raja, AL-backed mayoral aspirant in the recent municipal polls.

Of the injured, Badsha, the deceased's brother, suffered critical injuries. He was undergoing treatment at Rajshahi Medical College and Hospital. The rest were admitted to Adamdighi and Naogaon Sadar Hospital.

Witnesses and locals said the clash followed a brawl between two groups of AL and JP over a trivial matter in the municipality after yesterday's Juma prayers.

At one point of the brawl, the JP men left the scene, came back with others and attacked the AL men with sticks and sharp weapons, critically injuring

Shafiqul, Badsha and around nine others. The attackers fled immediately.

Shafiqul died afterwards. In retaliation, activists of the AL and its front organisations attacked and vandalised the houses, offices and other establishments of local JP men, said the witnesses.

Police fired tear shells and rubber bullets to disperse them. One JP supporter, Latif Mia, 32, was arrested earlier. Police and locals said there has been a dispute between local battery-run auto-rickshaw drivers and conductors, backed by the AL, and the ones of CNC run auto-rickshaws, supported by the JP over establishing supremacy in the area.

On the other, there was a tension between the two groups as AL-backed Rashedul Islam Raja blames the local JP for his defeat in the municipal polls, saying he did not get their support properly.

Contacted, Gaziur Rahman, Senior ASP (B Circle and Media) of Bogra, said the situation had been brought under control.

Quoting locals, he cited similar reasons for yesterday's clash.

Additional members of law enforcement agencies were deployed in the area.

Muslim Brotherhood

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perfect Islamic society.

Qutb's views and thinking were explicitly endorsed by many senior Muslim Brotherhood figures, leading to a resurgence of takfiri ideology and inspiring many terrorist organisations, including al-Qaeda and its offshoots, as well as the assassins of former Egyptian president Anwar Sadat.

The Brotherhood, founded in Egypt in 1928, grew into an international organisation with chapters across the Muslim world.

The review, revealed on December 17 last year, said organisations associated with the Brotherhood were established in the UK more than 50 years ago and worked very closely with like-minded counterparts from South Asia to promote the work of Maududi and represent Jamaat-e-Islami.

Organisations which were originally associated with Maududi and the Jamaat continue to operate in this country. The UK Islamic Mission (UKIM) runs some 50 mosques. The Islamic Forum for Europe (IFE) is politically active, in particular in the local authorities of Tower Hamlets, and has supported the political party. Trustees of the large East London mosque and associated London Muslim Centre are also IFE members.

Former British ambassador to Saudi Arabia Sir John Jenkins and Charles Farr, the director general of the office for security and counter-terrorism in the Home Office, conducted the review focusing on Brotherhood in the Arab World, the UK and parts of Western Europe.

Jenkins found Brotherhood developed an international network, within and beyond the Islamic world. Europe became an important base for the growing Muslim Brotherhood global network.

"From its foundation the Muslim Brotherhood organised itself into a secretive 'cell' structure, with an elaborate induction and education programme for new members. It relied heavily on group solidarity and peer pressure to maintain discipline. This clandestine, centralised and hierarchical structure persists to this day."

He says Muslim Brotherhood officially disowned violence; however, at all levels, it repeatedly defended Hamas attacks against Israel, including the use of suicide bombers and the killing of civilians.

"For some years the Muslim

Brotherhood shaped the [then] new Islamic Society of Britain, dominated the Muslim Association of Britain and played an important role in establishing and then running the Muslim Council of Britain."

Describing how members of Brotherhood and its affiliated organisations gradually engaged in UK's social and political arena, Charles Farr says: "Many Brotherhood groups have raised fund in the UK Whilst some of these seem to be raising funds only for the Brotherhood in the UK, others have been linked to Hamas."

He also mentioned groups and people in the UK, linked to the Muslim Brotherhood and to the wider Muslim Brotherhood movement, had in the past held out the prospect and ambition of an Islamic state in this country as elsewhere.

The review makes it clear the government accepts that the "Muslim Brotherhood has not been linked to terrorist-related activity in and against the UK" and has often condemned terrorist-related activity in the UK associated with al-Qaeda.

However, it raises concerns over the "sometimes secretive, if not clandestine" way the Brotherhood operated in the recent past and noted it sought to shape -- by stealth -- Muslim thinking through three UK mainstream organisations: the Muslim Association of Britain, the Muslim Council of Britain and the Islamic Society of Britain, which has now disowned its roots.

While engagement with the government has at times been facilitated by what appeared to be a common agenda against al-Qaeda and militant Salafism: But this engagement did not take account of Muslim Brotherhood support for a proscribed terrorist group and its views about terrorism which, in reality, were quite different from our own.

The review concludes that aspects of Brotherhood ideology and tactics, in this country and overseas, are contrary to our values and have been contrary to our national interests and our national security.

Disclosing the review findings on December 17, UK Prime Minister David Cameron told the parliament that the government would keep a close watch on the views promoted by Brotherhood associates in Britain in Arabic and English, as well as their activities.

Khaleda

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The PM made comments while distributing laptops and multimedia equipment among educational institutions of Tungipara in Gopalganj.

Hasina said Khaleda left no stone unturned to save war criminals responsible for crimes against humanity in 1971.

"Khaleda Zia committed the same offence against the people of Bangladesh in 2015," she said, referring to the BNP's "destructive" movement to topple the government.

The PM claimed the BNP recently realised its mistake in politics and joined the municipal polls. "But the people of the country did not cast their votes in favour of the party as they were enraged by arson, and destructive politics of it," she said.

Recalling the misuse of autocratic governments in the past, Hasina said they destroyed country's democracy and economy after the assassination of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman in 1975.

"Democracy has been reestablished in Bangladesh after a long struggle, and the continuation of democracy has helped country's economic advancement," she said.

She said Bangladesh is a country of huge possibilities. "We have to exploit the potentials."

Paying tributes to her father

Bangabandhu at his mausoleum, the PM also said he was assassinated as he had undertaken measures for rebuilding the war-ravaged nation. "The present government is making relentless efforts to accomplish the unfinished tasks of Bangabandhu," she said.

Heads of five educational institutions received laptops and multimedia equipment from the prime minister while other institutions would be given those through the upazila administration.

Newly elected mayor of Tungipara Gazi Golam Mostafa also spoke on the occasion arranged at the Library Bhaban of the mausoleum.

The PM, who along with her sister Sheikh Rehana, arrived in Tungipara yesterday morning, also inaugurated the newly-constructed Sheikh Russell Shishu Park there.

The two sisters offered prayers at the mausoleum, seeking eternal peace for the departed souls of Bangabandhu, their mother Begum Fazilatunnesa Mujib and other martyrs of August 15, 1975 massacre.

Later, the PM from her residence joined a doa and *milad mehfil* arranged at the mosque of the mausoleum.

Local Awami League leaders, newly elected mayors and councilors and their family members joined the programme.