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2 Brac officials abducted in Afghanistan

STAR REPORT

Unidentified criminals abducted two Bangladeshi Brac officials in Kunduz of war-torn Afghanistan on Thursday. They are engineer Shawkat Ali, 50, and accountant Sirajul Islam Sumon, 37, of Pabna.

Some gunmen kidnapped three Brac officials, including an Afghan national, while they were going to Baghlan from Kunduz around 4:00pm local time, reports UNB, quoting Brac Senior Media Manager Mahbubul Alam Kabir as saying.

He said the criminals released the Afghan citizen later.

No militant group has yet to claim responsibility for the abduction.

The families of the two Bangladeshis were passing anxious moments and called upon the Bangladesh government to take steps for the quick release of the two abductees, adds our Pabna correspondent.

Lota Khatun, wife of Sirajul who hails from Dubulia village in Pabna Sadar upazila, said her husband and Shawkat Ali, of Hangragari in Faridpur upazila, were picked up when they were on their



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina addressing a discussion at Bangabandhu International Conference Centre in the city yesterday. The Awami League organised the programme marking the 97th birthday of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

Conspirators still active

Trying to malign govt, says PM

BSS, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday urged the Awami League leaders and activists to go ahead with honesty and sincerity for materialising the dreams of Bangabandhu.

Bangabandhu had pursued a very honest life and suffered in his whole life as he struggled with an objective of achieving freedom for the Bangali nation and bringing smile on their faces, she told a discussion at Bangabandhu International Conference Centre in the city.

The AL organised the programme marking the 97th birthday of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

The PM, also the AL president, said it is the government's duty to bring smile on people's faces as Bangabandhu could not do it because of the conspiracy of the anti-liberation forces at home and abroad.

Conspirators are still active and they are trying to malign the government, she mentioned, adding that her government could overcome an international conspiracy

Mission mother's safety

Anjali earns trust of Lalmonirhat villagers for her help in safe delivery

S DILIP ROY, Lalmonirhat

Although she is not a doctor by profession, villagers of Gotmari in Lalmonirhat lovingly call her "Dakter Apa".

Anjali Rani, a community skilled birth attendant, has been supporting pregnant women during their pregnancies, deliveries and postnatal period for over eight years.

"My baby is alive only because of doctor apa [sister]," said Rabeya Begum of Gotmari village in

Lalmonirhat.

She was saying how grateful she was to Anjali for being there by her side whenever she needed during her third pregnancy, delivery and postnatal period.

Rabeya had given birth to two stillborn babies earlier. So, she was worried and afraid this time. "What if the same happens again!" the 35-year-old said.

Everything went smoothly this time during the normal delivery at home in Hatibandha upazila last year,

Rabeya said, adding that the midwife, Anjali, had taken care of it well.

Like Rabeya, many women in Gotmari and seven other villages of the upazila have had childbirths under the care of Anjali. They all appreciate her role in ensuring safe delivery and healthy baby.

Anjali passed Secondary School Certificate exams in 2002. Her poor family married her off to Bijoy Chandra Barman, a rickshaw-puller, of Gotmari two years later.



Anjali Rani, a community skilled birth attendant in Hatibandha upazila of Lalmonirhat, advising a pregnant woman about health care. The photo was taken at Gotmari village in the upazila recently.

'Typical of children aged eleven and under'

Study on speeches of US presidential candidates says about Trump's use of grammar

INDEPENDENT.CO.UK

The grammar used by Donald Trump in his speeches as he campaigns to become the Republican presidential candidate corresponds to that used by students aged 11 and under.

The 69-year-old businessman's language tailed his counterparts. Ted Cruz and Marco Rubio -- both used grammar corresponding to children aged between 11 and 14 -- students between grades six and eight in the US.

But their vocabulary was more advanced and matched students aged between 13 and 16.

In the study, "A Readability Analysis of Campaign Speeches from the 2016 US Presidential Campaign", researchers



from Carnegie Mellon University's Language Technologies Institute (LTI) wanted to establish the reading level of the candidates' speeches. They analysed a number of transcripts for each candidate, including campaign trail speeches, victory speeches and defeat speeches.

They found that the Democratic presidential candidates also used grammar typical of students aged between 11 and 14.

But the vocabulary used by Bernie Sanders was more advanced than that used by Hillary Clinton. The 74-year-old Vermont senator uses words similar to those used by students aged between 15 and 18.

The researchers also compared the speeches of the current presidential candidates to past leaders. The historical review showed the language used by Abraham Lincoln, the US president from 1861 to 1865, and Ronald Reagan, who led from 1981 to 1989, was more advanced.

UK assures Bangladesh of lifting ban

British FM calls Mahmood

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

The United Kingdom has assured Bangladesh of considering the withdrawal of its ban imposed on cargo on Dhaka-London direct flights.

The assurance came during a telephonic conversation between Foreign Minister AH Mahmood Ali and his British counterpart Philip Hammond last night.

The British foreign minister also hoped that the direct passenger flight operation between Dhaka and London would remain uninterrupted considering the steps taken for airport security improvement and historical relations between the two countries.

Minister Mahmood Ali received the call from

AIRPORT SECURITY

Redline may get 2-year contract

SHARIFUL ISLAM

Redline Assured Security is expected to get the contract today for ensuring security screening at Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport for two years at a cost of Tk 75 crore.

Under the project, the British company would also have to arrange training for Aviation Security (Avsec) screeners, to be appointed by the civil aviation ministry.

"We are not considering Restrata, the other UK company, as it has finally said it would not be able to deploy manpower [at the airport]," a top ministry official told The Daily Star yesterday.

A high-profile steering committee formed recently to oversee the government measures to ensure foolproof security at the airport would sit today at the Civil Aviation Authority, Bangladesh (Caab) office to choose a company for the job.

Redline which had earlier proposed Tk 58 crore for ensuring overall security management at the airport for six months has submitted a fresh proposal for two years as

Caab high-ups continued negotiation with it, said the official, wishing not to be named.

"Redline will deploy around 31 of its staff for screening machines at passenger terminals and cargo complex. It will also train our staff to do the screening [themselves]."

For the job, Redline and Restrata have primarily been selected from a list of four foreign security companies suggested by British High Commissioner Alison Blake during a meeting with Bangladesh government high-ups at the Prime Minister's Office on March 13.

The two other companies are G4S and Westminster Security Services.

The official said since the project would involve more than Tk 10 crore, it required a PPR (Public Procurement Resolution) and approval of the Executive Committee of the National Economic Council (Ecne) and the cabinet committee on purchase.

But another official of the civil aviation ministry said, "The high-profile steering committee might get the project rolling

FBI warns on car hacking risks

BBC ONLINE

The FBI and the US National Highway Traffic Safety Administration have added their voices to growing concerns about the risk of cars being hacked.

In an advisory note it warns the public to be aware of "cybersecurity threats" related to connected vehicles.

Last year Fiat Chrysler recalled 1.4 million US vehicles after security researchers remotely controlled a Jeep.

People who suspect their car has been

hacked were told to get in contact with the FBI.

The public service announcement laid out the issues and dangers of car hacking.

"Modern motor vehicles often include new connected vehicle technologies that aim to provide benefits such as added safety features, improved fuel economy and greater overall convenience," it read.

"With this increased connectivity, it is important that consumers and manufacturers maintain awareness of potential cybersecurity threats."



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Fazr Zohr Asr Maghrib Esha
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JAMAAT 5-35 1-15 4-45 6-18 8-15
SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION



BNP leaders and activists through the Institution of Engineers, Bangladesh in the city yesterday ahead of the party's sixth national council today.