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**LIBYAN GROUPS' GUNFIGHT
3 Bangladeshi workers killed**

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Four people, including three Bangladeshi workers, were killed in a gunfight between two rival groups in Benghazi of war-torn Libya yesterday.

"Three Bangladeshis and another person were killed when they were crossing a front line," Ashrafur Islam, labour counselor at the Bangladesh embassy in Tripoli, said in an email.

The Bangladeshis are Mohammad Hasan of Jessore, Abdur Rahim of Rajbari, and Humayun Kabir, believed to be of Jhenaidah, he said. "The other victim is not a Bangladeshi."

The bodies were kept at Benghazi Medical Centre, he added.

Contacted, Bangladesh Ambassador in Libya Maj Gen Shahidul Haque said they were still not sure whether the fourth victim was a Bangladeshi.

He also said the embassy would decide on sending the bodies back to Bangladesh on completion of the official procedures.

In a press release yesterday, Bangladesh foreign ministry said the bodies were recovered with the aid of the Red Cross.

A Hotline (+218944642154) has been opened to monitor the situation on a 24/7 basis and coordinate the repatriation

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Logs at Gangamati reserve forest near Kuakata of Patuakhali. A few gangs are plundering trees, some of which are over 50 years old, from the forest to sell them in local markets. Inset, a tree stump. The photos were taken in February.

PHOTO: SOHRAB HOSSAIN

**GANGAMATI RESERVE FOREST
Criminals busy making it barren**

SOHRAB HOSSAIN, Patuakhali

A few gangs are plundering trees from the reserve forest at Gangamati near Kuakata of Patuakhali.

The forest department built the green belt in the area over the years planting different species of trees to protect the region from cyclones, storms, floods, tidal waves and other natural disasters.

The forest is located only four kilometers east off the Kuakata Zero Point.

The criminals are cutting down trees, some of which are over 50 years old. They do this in the dark of the night in the deep forest areas to avoid being caught.

Local sources also said more than one gang is involved in the crime. The stolen trees are taken by trawlers to different local markets and sold.

Gangamati reserve forest has several hundred species of trees, including Chaila, Kawra, Gewa -- all mangrove plants. During disasters like floods, cyclone, tidal waves, storms, many fishermen take shelter under them.

There is also a large lake inside the forest and Kalapara upazila administration has built a bridge over it, making the area a tourist attraction.

The forest spreads over 13,000 acres of land and Gangamati forest office covers about 12,128 acres of it, local forest office sources said.

Abdus Salam, a fisherman in Kuakata area, said over 100 trees aged over 50 years had already been stolen by the gangs.

The criminals use motorised blades for the theft.

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**UP ELECTION
EC won't take responsibility for violence**

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Election Commission would not take responsibility for the violence over union parishad polls, an EC commissioner said yesterday.

"In the local government elections, two groups are locked in clashes. They live in adjacent houses and localities. So, I do not see any reason for Election Commission shouldering responsibility for the clashes," said EC Commissioner Shah Nawaz while talking to reporters at his EC secretariat office.

It is a strange thing that many people say that the responsibility goes to the EC, if violence takes place in any area. The commission is not present everywhere while voting is going on, Shah Nawaz said.

Asked who is responsible for the violence, the commissioner said, "If you [reporters] look into it, you will find who is responsible [for it]."

On March 22, elections to 712 UPs were held across the country in the first phase. Polls to the lowest tier of local government were largely marred

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Voice for justice gets louder

STAR REPORT

With no visible progress in the investigation, protests continued across the country yesterday, demanding justice for Sohagi Jahan Tonu who was killed inside Comilla Cantonment area on March 20.

Students of Comilla Victoria College, where Tonu used to study, blocked the Dhaka-Chittagong highway at Nandanpur area from 11:00am to 2:00pm.

They also brought out a procession participated by members of different local socio-political organisations.

A faction of Gonojagoron Mancha, led by its spokesperson Imran H Sarkar, marched to Comilla from the capital in the morning and joined the locals in a rally there.

At the rally, the Mancha demanded an "unequivocal statement" from the Prime Minister, condemning the incident.

A second-year student of history and a theatre activist at Victoria College, 19-year-old Tonu was found dead about 400 yards away from their house inside Comilla Cantonment on the night of March 20, according to her family members.

Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan Kamal yesterday said law enforcers through investigation would unearth "the truth".

"It is not appropriate to talk [over the issue] before the investigation ends. After investigation, we hopefully



will be able to tell you what really had happened there," he told a private television channel.

Superintendent Shah Abid Hossain of Comilla police yesterday said they were yet to arrest anyone in connection with the killing.

The army authority that earlier announced full co-operation into the investigation has handed over some "vital pieces of evidence" to the investigators, he said.

Police also visited the crime scene, the SP added.

Meanwhile, Officer-in-Charge AKM Manjur Alam of the Detective Branch (DB) of Police in Comilla told BBC

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**TENANT INFO COLLECTION
HC questions DMP provision**

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday questioned the legality of a provision under which the Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP) has been collecting information about residents of the metropolitan area.

The court issued a rule upon the government to explain by a week as to why the provision of the Dhaka Metropolitan Police Rules and Regulations 2006 should not be declared unconstitutional and illegal.

The HC bench of Justice Syed Muhammad Dastagir Husain and Justice AKM Shahidul Huq came up with the rule following a writ petition filed by three Supreme Court lawyers,

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Syria army retakes Palmyra from IS

Assad, Putin hail capture; regime forces vow to take jihadists' strongholds of Raqa, Deir Ezzor

AFP, Palmyra

Syrian troops recaptured the ancient city of Palmyra from the Islamic State group yesterday and pledged to build on the win with an advance against other jihadist strongholds.

President Bashar al-Assad hailed the victory as an "important achievement and fresh proof of the efficiency of the Syrian army and its allies in fighting terrorism."

Russian President Vladimir Putin yesterday spoke by phone with Assad, congratulating him on his forces retaking Palmyra.

"In a conversation with the Syrian president, Vladimir Putin congratulated his colleague on Syrian forces liberating the city of Palmyra from terrorists, noting the importance of preserving this unique historic city for world culture," Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said, quoted by RIA Novosti state news agency.

The Syrian army said pro-government forces had cleared IS fighters from the Unesco world heritage site, where the

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Wife calls man 'mota haathi'

Delhi HC says it's enough for divorce

HINDUSTAN TIMES ONLINE

Calling your overweight husband "mota haathi" (fat elephant) is grounds for divorce as it is "destructive of the matrimonial bond", the Delhi High Court has ruled.

The court on March 22 upheld a divorce granted by a family court in 2012 to a man who said he was subjected to cruelty by his wife for being overweight and his alleged failure to satiate her sexual desires. The woman challenged the order in the High Court.

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PRAYER TIMING MARCH 28

Fazr Zohr Asr Maghrib Esha

AZAN	4-45	12-45	4-45	6-20	7-45
JAMAAT	5-20	1-15	5-00	6-25	8-15

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