

# 'BNP-Jamaat out to oust govt'

They now join hands with Israel for this, alleges PM

UNB, London

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has alleged that the BNP-Jamaat nexus has joined hands with Israel to oust her government as the two parties are working against the country and Islam.

"The truth can never be suppressed...the BNP-Jamaat clique has joined hands with those who are frequently killing children and women in Palestine," she told a discussion at St James Court-Taj Hotel in London on Tuesday.

The UK chapter of the Awami League hosted the discussion on the occasion of the Homecoming Day of Sheikh Hasina.

Urging people to keep a watch on the conspirators, the PM said these plotters and killers were conspiring against the country and Islam. "They don't want Bangladesh. They don't understand anything other than their personal interests."

Hasina, also the AL president, said the BNP-Jamaat nexus "killed numerous people and committed unbridled corruption and plundering" when they were in power.

Referring to the killings and vio-

lence unleashed by the BNP-Jamaat clique to foil the January 5 elections in 2014 and during the first three months of last year, she said they wanted to go to power "by keeping their feet on the charred bodies of people".

About the recent killings in the country, the premier said now "the BNP-Jamaat alliance" is murdering imams, priests of temples and fathers of churches and university teachers selectively.

"They've recently killed [former] USAID staff Xulhaz Mannan who was a cousin of our former foreign minister Dipu Moni. They did it to create panic."

About the trial of war criminals, the PM said those who had unleashed atrocities and committed genocide during the Liberation War were convicted as war criminals and the court judgements are being implemented.

Those who handed over our national flag to war criminals and the defeated forces would be tried as they are equally guilty, added Hasina.

Chaired by UK AL President Sultan Mahmud Sharif, the meeting was addressed, among others, by its General Secretary Sajedur Rahman Khan.

## Scientists create

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Materials scientist Liangbing Hu and his team at the University of Maryland, removed the molecule in wood lignin that makes it rigid and dark in colour.

They left behind the colourless cellulose cell structures, filled them with epoxy, and came up with a version of the wood that is mostly see-thru. They published their results in the journal *Advanced Materials* on Tuesday.

The resulting three-inch block of wood had both high transparency -- the quality of being see-thru -- and high haze -- the quality of scattering light. This would be useful, said Hu, in making devices comfortable to look at.

It would also help solar cells trap light; light could easily enter through the transparent function, but the high haze would keep the light bouncing around near where it would be absorbed by the solar panel.

They compared how the materials performed and how light worked its way through the wood when they sliced it two ways: one with the grain of the wood, so that the channels passed through the longest dimension of the block.

And they also tried slicing it against the grain, so that the channels passed through the shortest dimension of the block. The short channel wood proved slightly stronger and a little less brittle.

But though the natural component making the wood strong had been removed, the addition of the epoxy made the wood four to six times tougher than the untreated version. Then they investigated how the different directions of the wood affected the way the light passed through it.

When laid down on top of a grid, both kinds of wood showed the lines clearly. When lifted just a touch above the grid, the long-channel wood still showed the grid, just a little bit more blurry.

But the short channel wood, when lifted those same few millimetres, made the grid completely invisible.

Earlier this year researchers from KTH Royal Institute of Technology in Stockholm showed off a similar transparent wood material that could change the way we construct buildings and solar panels.

The new material is suitable for mass production, the researchers say, and is a low-cost renewable resource.



Struck, a rickshaw puller falls off his vehicle on a city road recently.

PHOTO: SK ENAMUL HAQ

## Rollercoaster ride by rickshaw

ISRAT JAHAN

Thought rickshaw rides are always fun? Not quite, for office-goers at least.

First off, you suddenly find yourself in a race with your never-before-seen "foes" who want to get hold of one of these three-wheelers before you do. It's rush hour you know. But while running (which is good for your health), be mindful of all the pushing and shoving that come your way as a bonus.

By the time you come near a rickshaw before the other contestants do, you are heavily panting and you wish you had some water with you. But you still feel lucky to have come out first.

And that's when the next shock comes. Your good friend rickshaw puller demands double the fare, or even more. You try to work out quickly in your head, which is tired from a short sleep during the night or overwork throughout the day, if you have enough in your purse. You remember you have, and hop on.

But that's not the end of the test of your patience; you have a long way to go. During all the racing, pushing, shoving, panting and counting your

money, you forgot you lived in Dhaka. O! It's perennial traffic, the illegal parking here and there and everywhere, the road-digging throughout the year and the foul smell from garbage cans! You wish you never came out.

In the meantime, your boss is



calling you every five minutes because you are half an hour late already and he cannot find an important file with which you have nothing to do. If it's in the evening, you get a call from home every two minutes: "Mummy/daddy/honey, are you coming home?"

It pains you, and you hope...

But your imagination is cut short. You suddenly hear heated verbal exchanges between two rickshaw pullers because one of them blocked the way of the other. And your "foe," whom you defeated in the sprint a little ago, gives you a stern look that says you are the one to blame for it all as his rickshaw speeds past yours.

Even so, you hear your rickshaw puller shout at his fellow and say certain things he wants to do to his mother and sister and all of his kith and kin that ever lived under and above the sun. The other rickshaw puller fires back, challenging, and expresses his desire to smash the face of your good friend rickshaw puller.

This sometimes amuses you and you may call it fun. But then you are hit from behind or right or left by another rickshaw and it's only sheer luck that you did not take to the air and land on the road face down, your legs skyward.

Despite everything, most of the time you reach your destination in one piece. Still think rickshaw rides are always fun?

A lot goes on around us. In this new news project, we run feature contents based on personal experience related to governance issues -- both successes and failures. We also invite our readers to send similar write-ups for publishing, subject to editing and verification. Please send your pieces and also comments and feedback to [reporting@thedailystar.net](mailto:reporting@thedailystar.net).



Jahid Anwar, assistant director (public relations) of the Wage Earners' Welfare Board of the expatriates' welfare ministry, hands over a cheque of Tk 1 lakh to Miraj Munshi, a Bangladeshi worker who was injured in his workplace in Malaysia in March. The initiative to ensure proper treatment of Miraj came following a report published by The Daily Star on May 9.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

## DB moves to file sedition case

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documents were being collected.

He has not yet "divulged" any information about any conspiracy but admitted meeting Safadi, added the sources.

Known to be a trusted lieutenant of BNP Senior Vice-chairman Tarique Rahman, Chittagong-based businessman Aslam came under severe criticism both in and outside the party after several photographs, where he was seen with Safadi, went viral on social media.

Safadi is a leader of Israel's Likud Party and chief of International Diplomacy and Public Relations.

Recently, a Bangla daily ran a series of reports where it was alleged that the BNP was involved in hatching a plot to topple the Awami League government by joining forces with Mossad, Israel's

secret service agency.

On Monday, Safadi said he met Aslam in India but had no "secret meeting" with the BNP leader.

"Everybody knows about the situation in Bangladesh and the condition of minorities there. We have talked about those issues at a public programme.

"Nothing could be funnier than the claims that we were conspiring to stage a military coup in Bangladesh or hatching a plot against the government," Safadi told BBC Bangla Service over phone from Israel.

Meanwhile, the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) yesterday assigned one of its officers to investigate an allegation against Aslam that he amassed a huge amount of illegal wealth.

The anti-graft watchdog took the step

after one Mobarak Hossain filed an application with it on behalf of citizen platform Sachetan Nagorik Samaj, said ACC Public Relation Officer Pranab Kumar Bhattacharya.

According to Mobarak, Aslam owns several business organisations and CNG filling stations in Chittagong's Sitakunda and different areas of the country. He also has a salt factory in Chittagong's Boalkhali and several hundred Bighas of land in Cox's Bazar.

Again, the BNP leader is the proprietor of Inani Resort in Chakaria, claimed the complainant who also said an ACC investigation would be able to find out a "huge amount of Aslam's illegal wealth".

ACC Director Iqbal Hossain would coordinate the investigation, added Pranab.

## Islamist group comes to MP's defence

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allegation of demeaning religion.

Now admitted to a local hospital, Shyamal yesterday once again told reporters that he did not say anything defaming religion and that he was attacked in a planned way.

Just before his humiliation, locals on Friday were herded by an announcement through a mosque's loudspeaker that the headmaster while meting out punishment to a class-X student had made derogatory comments against Islam.

Yesterday, Tehrik-e-Khatme Nabuwat held a human chain and demonstration on Chasara Shaheed Minar premises in Narayanganj city.

With Syed Mufti Enayetullah Abbasi in the chair, students of different madrasas addressed the demonstration.

One of the placards participants were carrying read: "Salim Bhai Egiye Cholo, Iman Rakhkar Sokol Kaje Musalman Achhe Tomar Sath [Go ahead Selim Bhai; Muslims are with you in efforts to protect faith]."

The group also demanded execution of the "associates and supporters" of Shyamal and threatened to drive them out from Narayanganj if they don't stop "spreading propaganda".

Tehrik-e-Khatme Nabuwat had come to the forefront after holding a rally against Ahmadiyyas, a Muslim minority community, in January 2013.

Well-informed sources then told The Daily Star that Jamaat-e-Islami was patronising the group to create unrest in the country in the name of anti-Ahmadiyya movement and keep the administration busy with this. Jamaat was passing through a difficult time because of war crimes trial of its top leaders.

In another development yesterday, businessmen representing eight national and 35 district-level trade bodies held a press conference at Narayanganj Club Limited Community Centre to protest the "ongoing propaganda" against Salim Osman.

They slammed a section of the media for "partial" news about the incident.

A good number of students from different madrasas also joined the press conference, held at the initiative of Narayanganj Chamber of Commerce and Industries (NCCI).

Salim Osman is president of the NCCI and Bangladesh Knitwear Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BKMEA).

Talking to The Daily Star yesterday, the lawmaker said if he had not acted that way on Friday, there would have been a "communal riot" in Narayanganj.

"Nobody seems to get how I save him [headmaster]," he also said.

The public humiliation of the teacher, his suspension, and the role of the lawmaker sparked huge outcry in the country. From ministers to rights activists to general people demanded trial of those responsible.

Social media users continued campaigning on Facebook and Twitter under hashtags such as #sorrysir, #IamSORRY, #weRSORRYsir and #shyamalkantibhakt.

A High Court bench, on its own, issued a rule yesterday asking the government to explain in two weeks why it should not be directed to take necessary legal action against Salim Osman and others involved in humiliating the teacher.

The HC also directed the superintendent of police of Narayanganj to submit a report before it in three days on the steps taken against the perpetrators.

The HC bench of Justice Moeenul Islam Chowdhury and Justice Md Iqbal Kabir Lytton came up with the order and the rule following media reports.

Supreme Court lawyers MK Rahman and Mohsen Rashid placed before the HC judges the newspaper reports on the incident.

The home secretary, law secretary, deputy commissioner and superintendent of police of Narayanganj, upazila nirbahi officer concerned and officer-in-charge of Bandar Police Station have been made respondents to the rule, Deputy Attorney General Motaheb Hossain Sazu told The Daily Star.

## More support for improving skills of law enforces

US team assures Dhaka

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

The visiting US delegation has praised the measures taken by the Bangladesh government for ensuring foreign diplomats' security in Dhaka.

The delegation, led by US Assistant Secretary of State for Diplomatic Security (DS) Gregory B Starr, also assured the government of giving more support for improving the skills of Bangladeshi law enforcers.

The US team had separate meetings yesterday with State Minister for Foreign Affairs Shahriar Alam and Inspector General of Police (IGP) AKM Shahidul Hoque on safe and secure environment for the American diplomats in Bangladesh.

Starr arrived in Dhaka on Tuesday following the visit of Nisha Desai Biswal, assistant secretary of state for South and Central Asian affairs.

Biswal was in Bangladesh on May 4-5 following some recent murders, including the brutal killings of former USAID staff Xulhaz Mannan and his friend Mahbub Tonoy in the capital's Kalabagan.

During the 90-minute meeting between the US delegation and Shahriar Alam at state guesthouse Padma, the foreign ministry displayed three presentations on the progress of trials of some recent killings, security measures taken in the diplomatic zone and government steps to counter extremism and terrorism.

In response to the US side's call for foolproof security for its diplomats, Shahriar Alam informed the delegation about a newly-established monitoring centre at Baridhara.

The centre would have sophisticated technology and 1,500 CCTV cameras around the diplomatic missions, residences of the diplomats and clubs frequented by them.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina is expected to inaugurate the centre on May 25.

"This was a routine meeting and a part of a series of meetings with the US side regarding security. The US side is happy with the security measures taken for foreign diplomats," Shahriar Alam told The Daily Star.

The 5-member delegation included US Ambassador to Bangladesh Marcia Stephens Bloom Bernicat and Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for South and Central Asian Affairs William E'Todd.

Later, the US team met IGP AKM Shahidul Hoque and agreed to work together with Bangladesh Police in the fight against extremism and terrorism.

During the meeting, the IGP expressed gratitude to the US for its

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## Chinese man

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cards around 6:30am when the security guard of the booth, Dulal suspected fraudulence and locked the Chinese in, Rab officials said.

Maj Ataur Rahman, a company commander of Rab-2, who detained Jianhui, said the cards used by him had not been issued in his name.

The Rab questioned him through an interpreter, as Jianhui claimed that he did not speak English, he said. The suspect had failed to explain why he possessed the cards issued in other's names and seemed to be trying to hide something.

"He has been giving contradictory statements," Ataur said, adding that the information extracted from him was to be verified.

The security guard suspected him since he was using one card after another and was taking a long time inside the booth, said the bank's Public Relations Director Moniruzzaman. Jianhui took out Tk 66,000 in five transactions against three accounts with foreign banks.

Locked inside, he made gestures trying to offer Dulal the cash he took out from the machine in exchange for letting him go and that confirmed his suspicion. Dulal then informed the bank's authorities, Moniruzzaman said.

The bank's officials rushed to the spot informing the Rab about the matter, he added.