

Indian High Commission gets Sonu's custody

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Patuakhali

A Barguna court yesterday handed over Indian boy Sonu to the Indian High Commission for reuniting him with his parents in New Delhi.

Abu Taher, Barguna additional district judge, gave Sonu's custody to the high commission after First Secretary Rama Kanti Gupta filed a prayer on Monday, said Sonjib Kumer Das, a lawyer who submitted the plea.

Later, Gupta and Sonu left for Dhaka completing other legal procedures, said court sources.

Indian External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj yesterday said the boy would be flown to India tomorrow.

She said Sonu was being sent back to India as his DNA has matched with that of his mother.

"Indian High Commission in Dhaka has obtained Sonu's custody. He will reach Delhi on June 30," Swaraj said in a tweet.

In another post, the Indian minister said, "I thank all those who looked after our young citizen in Bangladesh."

On Monday, the same Barguna court issued a directive that the Indian High Commission could have Sonu's custody after signing a security bond of Tk 1 lakh, said Das.

Yesterday, the commission filed another plea to take Sonu without the bond, and the court granted it on "humanitarian grounds", he added.

Jamal Ibne Musa, a Bangladeshi man who rescued Sonu from "abductors" and also tried to reunite him with his parents in New Delhi, said, "I am

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Indian boy Sonu, 12, being handed over to the Indian High Commission authorities outside a Barguna court yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

Lot more to do for forex earners

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Many of the migrant workers have to work long hours to recover the money they have spent in going there.

"A World Bank research found that it takes nine months for a Bangladeshi migrant in Kuwait to recoup the money he had spent to go there," said Prof CR Abrar of Dhaka University's international relations department, referring to the higher cost of migration.

Governance in recruitment as well as post migration management in the destination countries are something that need to be urgently addressed, he told this correspondent yesterday.

The Migration Governance Index (MGI) analysed governance indicators of Bahrain, Bangladesh, Canada, Costa Rica, Germany, Ghana, Italy, Mexico, Moldova, Morocco, the Philippines, South Africa, South Korea, Sweden and Turkey.

It considered countries that provide

a broad representation of economic development, type of migration profile, including sending and receiving countries, and geographic scope.

Alongside Bangladesh, only two other countries -- Bahrain and Morocco -- got the grade of "emerging" in three domains.

The best performing countries are Canada, Germany, Moldova, the Philippines, South Africa, South Korea and Sweden.

Noting that over 244 million international migrants are there worldwide, the study observed that well-governed migration brings profound benefits to both receiving and sending countries, but poorly managed migration can lead to harm, danger and insecurity.

"It [poorly managed migration] can encourage migrant smuggling and human trafficking, as well as social unrest, xenophobia and discrimination -- as observed amid

Europe's ongoing 'migration crisis'," it said.

The MGI graded Bangladesh as "mature" in regional and international cooperation, as it signed the International Convention on the Protection of All Migrant Workers-1998 and the Convention of the Rights of Child 1990. The country is also a member of the Budapest Process, the Bali Process and the Colombo Process and Abu Dhabi Dialogue that deal with migrants' rights.

Bangladesh has several bilateral labour agreements in place and is hosting the Global Forum on Migration and Development later this year.

Professor CR Abrar said Bangladesh has framed laws and policies but their implementation is quite poor. There are almost no measures for reintegration of the returnee migrants in Bangladesh.

"We have a long way to go," he added.

Illegal, yet expanding

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"We have just come to know about this incident. It is not us but our clients who are developing the site," he said, adding that the work, however, has stopped following intervention of the local administration.

He claimed they sold the lake in 2006.

Contacted on June 5, Kamrul Hasan Mollah, upazila nirbahi officer of Savar, said he saw the lake and lowland being filled up while on his way to the capital a few days ago.

He asked Modhumoti people if they had the required permission, and wanted to see relevant papers. But they failed to show any.

"So, I asked them not to continue the work. Now I am waiting for a copy of the court order on Modhumoti project. Once I get it, I'll take legal action against them for illegally filling up the wetland and low-lying areas," he said.

The High Court on July 27, 2005, declared Modhumoti Model Town, a project at Bilamalia and Baliarpur near Aminbazar of Savar unauthorised and against public interest as it was on a flood-flow zone demarcated in the Dhaka City Master Plan.

The court also asked the authorities to restore the wetlands in the project

area.

In 2012, the Supreme Court upheld the HC verdict after the Modhumoti authorities had appealed.

The HC judgment came after Bangladesh Environment Lawyers Association (Bela) in August 2004 filed a writ petition as public interest litigation challenging the legality of the project for violating the Environment Conservation Act, Town Improvement Act and Rajuk rules.

Following the court order, nobody is supposed to fill or expand the site, or build any structures there, Bela's chief executive told The Daily Star.

The Rajdhani Unnayan Kartripakkha (Rajuk) and local administration were supposed to monitor the matter.

Contacted, Kamrul Hasan, deputy town planner of Rajuk, said they did not know that Modhumoti was filling the lowland again, violating the court order.

"We are going to take action against it," he told this newspaper.

The Modhumoti Model Town, a project of Metro Makers and Developers Ltd, was set up on 550 acres of land in 1990 in Aminbazar beside Dhaka-Savar road, on the outskirts of the capital.

The sale of Modhumoti plots began in 2001, says its website.



Two arrestees in custody of the Detective Branch of Chittagong Metropolitan Police at the DB office yesterday. The two were nabbed in connection with the murder of Mahmuda Khanam Mitu, wife of a police superintendent. Inset, arms and bullets seized by cops.

PHOTO: CHITTAGONG DB

No special treatment

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But European powers are loath to give Britain an easy ride, insisting that negotiations on the future relationship cannot begin until it starts the divorce proceedings.

German Chancellor Angela Merkel warned Cameron could not "cherry-pick" in the exit negotiations -- and there would be a price for Britain to pay.

"It is important that we will negotiate only if the UK declares Article 50. There will be no informal or formal negotiations before," she said as she arrived in Brussels.

French President Francois Hollande warned that "the whole world has its eyes on Europe" as he pushed Britain to react to the union could move forward.

In a stern warning, European Commission chief Jean-Claude Juncker said that he had banned Commission officials from having any "secret" talks with Britain before Article 50 was triggered.

And European Parliament President Martin Schulz said Cameron was "taking the destiny of our entire continent hostage purely for internal political reasons".

Dutch Prime Minister Mark Rutte however showed some sympathy for Britain's predicament

"England right now is in the midst of a political, monetary, constitutional and economic crisis so it's not reasonable at the present time for them to trigger Article 50," Rutte said.

Britain's decision has also put the remaining 27 members of the EU under pressure to come up with an adequate response to prevent other countries following suit.

Germany, France and Italy have urged steps among the rest of the EU jointly to boost cooperation on security as well as programmes to boost economic growth and youth employment.

The 27 will meet without Cameron today and EU President Donald Tusk proposed holding another summit in September.

The referendum result has caused an earthquake in British politics, claiming not only Cameron's scalp but also leaving opposition Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn fighting for his political life.

On Tuesday, Corbyn lost a no-confidence vote among Labour MPs by 172 to 40, but remained defiant despite around 20 members of his shadow cabinet resigning.

"I was democratically elected leader

of our party for a new kind of politics by 60 percent of Labour members and supporters, and I will not betray them by resigning," Corbyn said in a statement.

Jockeying has also begun within the Conservatives to replace Cameron, with key Brexit proponent Boris Johnson and interior minister Theresa May considered front-runners.

The winner may call a general election later this year.

Stock markets and the pound recovered on Tuesday from heavy losses, but investors remain spooked by the prospect of one of the EU's biggest economies leaving the bloc.

"None of the chaos induced by last Friday is anywhere near going away," Spreadex analyst Connor Campbell told AFP.

British entrepreneur Richard Branson yesterday said his Virgin Group had pulled out of a deal involving 3,000 jobs after Britain voted to leave the EU.

"When Brexiteers told the public that people were exaggerating that there would be a financial meltdown I think that it's been proven that they were not exaggerating," Branson said.

But European Central Bank chief Mario Draghi told the EU summit that the growth in the eurozone economy would only take a mild hit of around 0.3 to 0.5 percent over three years.

Late Monday, Standard & Poor's and Fitch both cut their credit ratings for Britain as a result of the referendum.

Both cited a possible second referendum on Scottish independence as a significant risk. Britain as a whole voted by 52 percent to leave the EU but 62 percent of Scots voted to stay.

Scottish First Minister Nicola Sturgeon said she would travel to Brussels for talks on today, saying she was "utterly determined to preserve Scotland's relationship and place within the EU".

One happy man though was Nigel Farage, head of the UK Independence Party, telling a jeering European Parliament -- after a hug with old sparring partner Juncker -- that he has had the last laugh.

"When I came here 17 years ago and I said I wanted to lead a campaign to get Britain to leave the EU, you all laughed at me," he said. "But you are not laughing now."

"The United Kingdom will not be the last member state to leave the European Union!"

City Buddhist temple chief gets death threat

Fake name used for threatening Ramkrishna Mission chief is used again

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The chief of Dharmarajika Buddhist Monastery at Kamalapur in the city has received a threat to his life.

A man handed over a letter to the monastery around 11:45am, said an employee there.

The letter did not name anyone but mentioned the chief principal as the recipient.

A part of the letter reads, "You preach wearing saffron dresses. You are the enemy of Islam. We are around you. Stop preaching your religion. Change, otherwise you will be stabbed and shot to death within a month."

The monastery employee said the letter mentioned one AB Siddique as the sender.

Earlier in this month, the head Hindu priest of Ramakrishna Math and Ramakrishna Mission in the capital received a similar threat in a letter.

The letter also mentioned AB Siddique as the sender. However, police later found that the name and his address were fake.

Abdul Quddus Fakir, officer-in-charge of Sabujbagh Police Station, said a general diary was filed with his police station in connection with the threat issued to the monastery in Kamalapur.

Security was beefed in and around the monastery, he said, adding that they were investigating the matter.

Ershad lashes out at govt

Calls for national dialogue

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Jatiya Party Chairman HM Ershad yesterday urged the prime minister to hold a national dialogue in parliament with all political parties who do not believe in the "politics of arson".

He made the call while participating in a discussion in the House on the proposed budget for the 2016-17 fiscal year.

Ershad, also special envoy to the PM, said the dialogue was needed to save the country from a "severe crisis".

He also criticised the government for its "misrule" and said, "Good governance has not only been called into question but also has been shot."

He said, "No one is safe in the country today. Thirteen people have become victims of secret killings since March. Is this a sign of good governance?"

"Development is impossible without good governance".

The JP chief also lambasted Finance Minister AMA Muhith for some recent incidents of irregularities in the banking sector.

Ershad said Muhith was also a finance minister during his tenure but "the difference is that banks were not looted then."

"If he [Muhith] can show us that banks were looted during my tenure, I will quit politics today," he added.

He demanded a white paper on various incidents of "looting" and financial scams in the sector in recent years.

The former president also asked

Air cargo ban

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cargo flights from Bangladesh bound for Germany must be rescreened at a third-country airport.

Following the ban, Lufthansa, Germany's national airline, left Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport on Sunday without checking in scheduled \$80 tonnes of goods. Almost all of them were garment items, exporters said.

The ban comes only three months after the UK imposed a similar ban, and earlier in December last year, Australia did the same.

"I cannot comment on the issue of ban. The decision was taken by the German Federal Aviation Authority and was purely on security ground," Prinz said after a meeting with Finance Minister AMA Muhith at the latter's secretariat office in Dhaka.

Lufthansa operates one flight a week from Bangladesh and carries garment items. No other airline has direct flights to Germany from Bangladesh.

A German delegation arrived in Dhaka yesterday to look into the matter and find a solution to the conundrum, Prinz said.

Meanwhile, he assured Bangladesh that its trade with the EU will not be affected due to Britain's decision to leave the economic union.

"We have contracts between the EU and Bangladesh and they will not be affected when one member leaves the European Union."

"May be at the later point, when the UK is out of the EU, you will have to negotiate with them on how to access their markets. But at the moment this will not affect Bangladesh."

Babul's link has not come up yet

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In another development, Chittagong Metropolitan Police (CMP) arrested two people in connection with the murder and seized two firearms and six bullets upon their confession.

Of the arrestees, Ehteshamul Haque, alias Hamidul Haque, alias Bhola, 41, is from Rajakhali under Bakalia Police Station. Munir Hossain, 28, is from Muradnagar in Comilla and he resides at Rajakhali.

On June 5, three assailants stabbed and shot dead Mitu after she left her OR Nizam Road house on foot around 6:35am to put her son on a school bus at GEC Intersection in the port city.

Police said seven to eight persons took part in the murder. Of them, three attacked Mitu and others were backup team members.

The home minister yesterday also said investigators interrogated Babul only to learn who might have killed Mitu and what could be the motive. Besides, the police official was made to stand face to face with some suspects.

Asked whether militants or any other vested quarters are linked to the killing, he said they will be able to say about it once they get "intelligence reports".

On question whether Babul is under police surveillance, the minister replied in the negative. "No. We never

said he is under our surveillance."

Mosharrif Hossain, father-in-law of Babul, said 11 uniformed policemen, deployed at his Khilgaon house, left around 12:15pm on Monday without saying anything.

But one or two persons with walky-talkies in hands were apparently watching the house later and they looked like plainclothes officers, said Mosharrif, himself a former police official.

Babul and his two children are staying in this house.

'BHOLA SUPPLIED ARMS' After the arrest of Bhola and Munir and recovery of arms, Assistant Commissioner Md Kamruzzaman of DB lodged an arms case with the Bakalia Police Station yesterday.

Police earlier claimed that it was Bhola who supplied arms for the shooting of Mitu.

Two other suspects arrested earlier, Wasim and Anwar, in their confessional statement under section 164 before a Chittagong court said they received the arms used in the murder from Bhola and returned those to him after the killing, CMP Additional Commissioner (crime & operation) Devdas Bhattacharya said.

Bhola was arrested in Rajkhali area around 10:30pm on Monday. During primary interrogation, he told police that he kept the guns with Munir, said

Devdas.

Police then conducted a drive in the same area and arrested Munir around 4:45am yesterday. They recovered two guns -- a .32 bored revolver and another was a foreign pistol -- and six bullets from his house.

Police would now examine if any of these firearms was used in the murder.

Later in the day, Bhola and Munir were sent to jail after they were produced before a Chittagong court. 'CHARACTER ASSASSINATION' "My daughter was killed brutally. Now some media outlets have indulged in her character assassination," said her father.

"It is deeply upsetting for a father," said Mosharrif, adding her daughter was a pious woman and tried to follow the rituals of Islam.

Babul has earned fame in his profession as Mitu always stood by him, he told this correspondent at his house yesterday.

"Just a day before the killing, Mitu told her mother to take care of Babul in Ramadan, keeping him in their house, as there was none to look after him in the officer's mess."

Replying to a query on a news report that Babul has been given two options, "jail or quitting job", Mosharrif said, "I asked Babul about it. He just said the truth will be come out one day and he is waiting for the day."