



A wounded Syrian child cries as he receives treatment at a make-shift hospital following reported government shelling on the rebel-held town of Douma, east of the Syrian capital Damascus, yesterday. Syria's conflict has killed more than 300,000 people and forced millions to flee from homes since it erupted in March 2011. PHOTO: AFP

Indian envoy meets foreign secretary

UNB, Dhaka

Indian High Commissioner in Dhaka Harsh Vardhan Shringla yesterday met Foreign Secretary Md Shahidul Haque and discussed issues of mutual interest.

Officials from Dhaka and Delhi are in discussions over Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's forthcoming bilateral visit to New Delhi in the first week of December.

The issue also came up for discussion during the meeting between Shahidul and Vardhan, said a diplomatic source.

The foreign secretary is likely to visit New Delhi in the second week of November ahead of the prime minister's visit.

Man held

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home Chintamani in Osmani Nagar upazila after he took them out for fishing.

Mohammad Moniruzzaman, superintendent of police in Sylhet, at a press briefing yesterday said Satir has admitted to have committed the murders. Police arrested him earlier in the morning from Kali Mandir in the village.

Satir told the police that he had a longstanding tumultuous relationship with his wife, Nurbi Begum, and he had decided to kill her as well as the two sons they had together, said the SP.

As part of his plan, Satir took his sons out on a fishing trip on Monday afternoon and used sharp weapons to kill them one by one beside a ditch adjoining Chonditor haor (wetland), Moniruzzaman said, adding that there were four gashes in Momin's body and six in Rujel's.

The arrestee will be produced before the court today after filing of the case, said police.

On Monday evening, family members of the children -- both students of Chintamani Government Primary School in the upazila -- started looking for them as their father did not return home with them after the sunset. They informed the police after finding the dead children, with stab wounds and bruises all over their bodies, beside the ditch.

Accused found

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allegation, Ripon alleged. Arafat's mother Masuma Akter said her son went to his aunt's house after he heard that a case was filed against him.

She also added that Arafat developed an affair with Munni.

MAIN ACCUSED HELD

Our Jhenidah correspondent adds: police yesterday arrested the prime accused in a case filed for stabbing a schoolgirl at Upshaharpara in Jhenidah town as she rejected his proposal to have an affair.

Arrestee Litu Hossain, 22, was hit by a bullet during a drive as police had to open fire when he hurled two handmade bombs at police, said Ajbahar Ali Sheikh, additional superintendent of police in Jhenidah.

On information that Litu had taken shelter at an abandoned building at Niringho village in Jhenidah Sadar upazila, a team of police cordoned off the area around 3:00am, the police official said.

Police managed to arrest Litu with bullet injuries, he added.

Victim's mother said the youth had been stalking her daughter, Puja Biswas, for long.

As the girl rejected his proposal, Litu stabbed her in the face and right hand indiscriminately, the mother added.

Puja is now undergoing treatment at Jhenidah Sadar Hospital. The victim's father filed a case, accusing five people, including Litu. With Litu, police have arrested three of them.

Two notches up but still

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relative to some of the peers in the regions.

"Reform inertia relative to peers, rather than slippage, is the main reason for Bangladesh's poor ranking as well as the low marks on the absolute level of regularity quality," he said.

Every year the WB's Doing Business report sheds light on how easy or difficult it is for a local entrepreneur to open and run a small to medium-size business when complying with relevant regulations.

The report tracks changes in regulations affecting 10 areas in the life cycle of a business: starting a business, dealing with construction permits, getting electricity, registering property, getting credit, protecting minority investors, paying taxes, trading across borders, enforcing contracts and resolving insolvency.

Bangladesh's grade slightly advanced on two indicators -- moving up by one spot, 185, on registering property and two places, 151, on resolving insolvency -- relative to the revised ranking of 2016.

Even though the country's DTF score improved on starting a business, 0.02 percentage points, the ranking dropped by seven places to 122.

The DTF score improved on getting electricity, 0.95 percentage points, and dealing with construction permits, 0.35 percentage points, but the ranking remained unchanged to 187 and 138 respectively.

Bangladesh's ranking and DTF score remained unchanged in: trading across borders, 173, and enforcing contracts, 189.

Bangladesh made the worst performance in the parameter of paying taxes, as the country's DTF score declined by 0.51 percentage points and the rank by three places, 151.

"Bangladesh made paying taxes more complicated for companies by increasing the time it takes to prepare VAT and corporate income tax returns," according to the doing business report.

The changes made it more difficult to do business in the country, it said.

The country also lost its position by five places to 157 in getting credit and one place to 70 in protecting minority investors.

Somalia, which secured the last place, has been added this year.

New Zealand topped the chart. The countries behind Bangladesh and their DTF scores:

- 177 Congo, Rep (40.58)
- 178 Equatorial Guinea (39.83)
- 179 Yemen, Rep (39.57)
- 180 Chad (39.07)
- 181 Haiti (38.66)
- 182 Angola (38.41)
- 183 Afghanistan (38.10)
- 184 Congo, Dem Rep (37.57)

BANGLADESH IN EASE OF DOING BUSINESS

RANKINGS	2016 REPORT	2017 REPORT
Overall	178	176
Registering property	186	185
Resolving insolvency	153	151
Starting a business	115	122
Paying taxes	148	151
Getting credit	152	157
Protecting minority investors	69	70

*Survey done on 190 economies

- 185 Central African Republic (36.25)
- 186 South Sudan (33.48)
- 187 Venezuela, RB (33.37)
- 188 Libya (33.19)
- 189 Eritrea (28.05)
- 190 Somalia (20.29)

War crimes

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leader who in 1971 formed the Peace Committee and Razakar Bahini in Shariatpur. Edris was a leader of Islami Chhatra Sangha, then student wing of Jamaat-e-Islami, and joined Razakars, according to the prosecution. Edris is now on the run.

Meanwhile, the tribunal granted a prosecution's petition to interrogate five war crimes accused from Mymensingh -- Abdur Rahim, Jalal Uddin, Abdus Salam, Suruj Ali Fakir and Joynuddin Faruki -- at tribunal's investigation agency's safe home for one day between November 6 and 10.

The decision came following a petition moved by Prosecutor Abul Kalam.

Another accused Shamsheer Fakir of the same district is on the run.

Brisk business

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A DB official said the gang had already circulated a good amount of fake notes.

They used to circulate face notes mainly in the fish market and places at upazila level where such notes change hands often undetected, he said.

In another drive at Badda in the capital, detectives arrested three fake dollar sellers and seized \$3,500 from their possession.

They are Babul Hossain, 30, Al Amin, 41, and Alkas Sheikh, 32.

Baten told reporters that the arrestees used to show genuine dollar to the buyers but provide fake dollars during exchange.

Bangladeshi on UK's 'most wanted' list arrested

AFP, Madrid

Spanish police said Tuesday they had detained one of Britain's most wanted fugitives, who fled the country in 2008 after allegedly raping a woman and was found working in Tenerife.

Mohammed Jahangir Alam, a Bangladeshi who had been living in Britain on a temporary visa, was convicted in absentia in 2010 for the alleged sexual assault, and sentenced to 14 years in jail.

"The fugitive was tracked down at his work place, a restaurant where he was eventually detained," Spanish police said in a statement.

They added he had a fake ID on his arrest in Santa Cruz on the island of Tenerife, part of Spain's Canary Islands off the coast of Africa. It was unclear exactly when he was detained.

A Spanish police spokeswoman told AFP he had fled Britain in 2008.

Alam, believed to be 32, was arrested as part of Operation Captura, a joint campaign by Spanish and British police to detain people in Spain who are suspected of committing crimes in Britain.

Mohammed Jahangir Alam was figured on Operation Captura's top ten list of most wanted fugitives in Spain.

Others on the list are accused of crimes ranging from murder, violent assault to drug trafficking and money laundering.

India should

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might damage directly or indirectly the cultural and natural heritage...situated on the territory of other States Parties to this convention."

India's deliberate measures to finance and operate the plant would, as the Unesco/IUCN experts concluded, damage the Sundarbans. For this reason, India should immediately cancel its plan to participate in the financing, construction, operation or management of the project, the NCSS said in the statement.

An expert group from the Unesco's World Heritage Centre and the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) thoroughly examined the proposal of the plant and how it would affect the Sundarbans.

Their findings released on October 18 included that the mechanisms proposed to collect and contain ash and to prevent its contact with water are poor and seem highly theoretical.

Regarding mercury contamination, experts said the control mechanism and technologies proposed for the plant are insufficient to prevent such contamination and don't conform to the international standards.

"The government of Bangladesh should immediately cancel all plans and approvals for the Rampal plant," the NCSS said in the briefing.

The possible threats that the power plant poses to the world heritage site are not addressed adequately in the Environment Impact Assessment, and the plant will not be using the best available technology or the highest international standards for preventing damage, given that it will be located in the near vicinity of a globally unique world heritage property, according to the statement.

In the statement, experts recommended that the Rampal plant be cancelled and relocated to a more suitable location where it would not have negative impact on the Sundarbans.

Police contradict

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recent spate of terror attacks, including the Dhaka siege, in the country.

But such conflicting claims by the chiefs of two units over the identity of the chief of the militant group will erode people's trust in law enforcers and their anti-terror drives, some law enforcers said.

The news of Hanif's death gave people some confidence. But the new claim means the so-called Neo JMB chief is still alive and would surely try to strike, they said, adding that a lack of coordination between police and Rab surfaced again through the contradictory claims.

"Such conflicting claims by the two law enforcement agencies would only draw criticisms," said Nur Khan, executive director (acting) of rights organisation Ain o Salish Kendra.

Nur, who researches militancy, added that it was already evident on social media that the general public was skeptical about law enforcers' accounts of anti-militancy operations. The latest claim and counter-claim would fuel that skepticism further.

"We have information that Abdur Rahman's [Sarwar] position was below the deputies of Tamim Ahmed Chowdhury," Monirul told reporters at the DMP Media Centre.

According to Rab, Sarwar jumped to death while trying to flee from a building during a raid in Ashulia on October 8.

Police initially suspected Tamim to be the "Neo-JMB" leader Abu Ibrahim Al-Hanif and the mastermind of Gulshan attack, in which 20 hostages, 17 of them foreigners, were killed.

After the August 27 raid in Narayanganj, they came to know that Tamim was the military commander who was also known in the organisation as Abu Dujanah. Tamim and two others were killed in the raid and police seized some "important documents" from there.

Replying to a query about Rab's claim that Sarwar was the chief of "Neo JMB," Monirul said they had no such information.

"We will consider it if any information is obtained through a DNA test," he added.

On whether Tamim and Sarwar spoke on the phone during the Narayanganj raid as Rab claimed, Monirul said as the leader of "Neo JMB" Tamim used to communicate with immediate lower-tier leaders.

"Tamim possibly had little direct contact with a leader like Rahman [Sarwar]," he said, adding the two might have met during gatherings.

On Friday's briefing, the Rab chief showed reporters a "correspondence" between Tamim and Sarwar that took place from 2:23am to 3:39am on August 27. Through the text messages Tamim informed Sarwar after police seized their den in Narayanganj and sought his guidelines about their next course of action.

Monirul yesterday said officials of the CTTC unit cordoned off the Narayanganj den around 6:00am.

"There was no siege before that. The CTTC did not lay any siege [before that], some other agency or unit might have encircled the area."

"So he [Tamim] did not get any chance to communicate for a long time. We have evidence that he communicated with Tanvir Kadri [who "killed" himself during Azimpur raid on September 10] and Major Jahid [who was killed in a raid on September 2] at the time."

TAVELLA MURDER CASE

During Friday's briefing, the Rab chief

SC stays

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The HC acquitted Sabbir from the case and directed the Chief Judicial Magistrate of Tangail to launch a judicial enquiry based on Sabbir's statement before it on September 27.

In his statement, Sabbir alleged that MP Anupam, UNO Rafiqul and OC Maksudul had tortured him.

also claimed documents recovered from several "Neo JMB" dens show that that Italian aid worker Cesare Tavella was shot dead by the militant group.

But Monirul claimed that investigators filed the charge sheet based on evidence.

"The investigation was done with an utmost importance by an investigating official who was assisted by a team of professionals," he said.

The charge sheet named only those whose involvement was found during investigation, he added.

"We investigate criminal cases on the basis of evidence. There is no scope of creative writing in probe reports," he added.

Meanwhile, a Dhaka court yesterday framed charges against seven people, including BNP leader MA Quayum and his brother Abdul Matin in the Tavella murder case.

Matin and four others, who are now in jail, pleaded not guilty and demanded justice after Judge Kamrul Hossain Mollah of the Metropolitan Sessions Judge's Court read out the charges against them.

Tavella, 50, was killed in Dhaka's Gulshan Diplomatic Zone on September 28 last year. He was the project manager of Profitable Opportunities for Food Security, a project of Netherlands-based organisation ICCO Cooperation.

Advocate Khurshid Alam Khan, a Supreme Court lawyer and editor of Dhaka Law Reports, told The Daily Star that although Rab's claim about Tavella murder had no judicial value, it might spark a debate over the trial proceedings.

The court will hold trial on the basis of the report submitted by the investigating officer, he said.

Now the investigating officer may conduct further probe with the court's permission to avoid it, Khurshid said, adding that the court can also direct the IO to probe the case further.

Bhabadah

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the early 60s. But people started to experience waterlogging problem in the early 80s and things went worse in 2005 after shutting down of the sluice gate for several days in 2004, he said.

The government implemented the TRM project in Beel Khukhshia in 2006 and people then got a temporary relief until the project ended in 2013. Baikuntha said. After the suspension of TRM, he said, they started facing the problem, which turned acute this year after the heavy rain. "Things were so bad that there was no place to bury or cremate the dead."

The TRM is a natural water management process that local people initiated in the 80s, where beels (water bodies) are connected to the river so that large volumes of water can flow into them during tidal upsurge and retreats leaving sediment in the beels, thus keeping the river alive.

Iqbal Kabir Jahid, chief adviser of the committee, said the Bhabadah sluice gate was "a duck that laid golden eggs" and the leaders of the political parties whichever remained in power, some contractors and a section of officials were the beneficiaries of the eggs.

He demanded removing of the sluice gate in Bhabadah and connect Teka-Mukteshwari river with upstream Mathabhanga-Bhairab river.

Workers Party of Bangladesh General Secretary Fazle Hossain Badsha, MP, said the saddest part was when the waterlogged people tried to raise their voice, they faced torture from police. "If they need to come to Dhaka to press their demand, we have to understand that there is no administration in Jessore," he said.

Ranjit Bawali, convener of the committee, also spoke.

After the human chain, the committee submitted a memorandum to the Prime Minister's Office.

Famed Afghan girl

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two-year investigation in the northwestern city of Peshawar, the capital of restive Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province bordering Afghanistan.

"FIA arrested Sharbat Gula, an Afghan woman, for obtaining a fake ID card," Shahid Ilyas, an official of the National Database Registration Authority (NADRA), told AFP.

Ilyas said the authorities were also seeking three NADRA officials found responsible for issuing Pakistan's national identity card to Gula, who have been at large since the fraud was detected.

He said that Gula faces seven to 14 years in prison and a fine of \$3,000-\$5,000 if convicted.

Officials say Gula applied for a Pakistani identity card in Peshawar in April 2014, using the name Sharbat Bibi.

She was one of thousands of Afghan refugees who managed to dodge Pakistan's computerised

system to get an identity card.

The original image of Gula was taken in 1984 in a refugee camp in northwest Pakistan during the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan.

McCurry later tracked her down, after a 17-year search, to a remote Afghan village in 2002 where she was married to a baker and the mother of three daughters.

UNCERTAIN FUTURE
Pakistan has for decades provided safe haven for millions of Afghans who fled their country after the Soviet invasion of 1979.

The country hosts 1.4 million registered Afghan refugees, according to UNHCR, making it the third-largest refugee hosting nation in the world.

The agency also estimates a further one million unregistered refugees are in the country.

Since 2009, Islamabad has repeatedly pushed back a deadline for them to return, but fears are growing that the latest cut-off date in March 2017 will be final.

Meanwhile refugees are increasingly worried about their future in Pakistan as the country cracks down on those who have obtained fake ID cards.

Officials say NADRA has so far reverified 91 million ID cards and detected 60,675 fraudulent cards.

A NADRA official told AFP that 2,473 foreigners, mostly Afghans, had voluntarily surrendered their ID cards which were obtained fraudulently.

Some 18 NADRA officials were under investigation for issuing ID cards to foreigners and eight were arrested, the official said.

More than 350,000 Afghan refugees have returned home from Pakistan this year, UN data shows, with the torrent of people crossing the border expected to continue.

They face an uncertain future in an Afghanistan still at war and already overwhelmed by so many internally displaced people fleeing fighting that officials warn of a humanitarian crisis.



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