



Kazi Reazul Hoque, chairman of National Human Rights Commission, addresses a press conference at the Jatiya Press Club yesterday. Shaheen Anam, executive director of Manusher Jonno Foundation (MJF), right, and Abdullah Al Mamun, its programme coordinator, left, at the MJF event where a report titled Bangladesh Child Rights Situation-2016 was presented.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

## All forms of crime up

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to accept the marriage, one was killed by parents, one was killed by the in-laws for failure to pay dowry and the reason for the other's death could not be known.

"The girls were forced to marry men nearly double their ages," said Abdullah Al Mamun, programme coordinator of MJF, while presenting the survey report at the Jatiya Press Club yesterday.

The survey report "Bangladesh Child Rights Situation 2016" was prepared on the basis of reports published in six major national newspapers. He said the report does not show the actual situation of children in the country, but reflects on the trend.

National Human Rights Commission Chairman Kazi Reazul Hoque expressed his sheer frustration over the passage of Child Marriage Restraint Bill 2017 that allows, under a special provision, a boy or a girl to get married before reaching the minimum age.

The "special circumstances" provision of the law passed on February 27 would permit parents or a boy or a girl's guardians to get a court order and marry their wards off "for their best interests" even before they reach the minimum marriageable age. No age limit was specified there.

## Bangabandhu

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the nation was born in Tungipara of Gopalganj.

Through his dynamic leadership, Bangabandhu had organised the Bangalee nation to fight against exploitation and repression by the Pakistani rulers. The movement culminated in independent Bangladesh through the nine-month Liberation War in 1971.

On August 15, 1975, the great leader along with most of his family members was assassinated by a group of army men.

Different socio-political organisations, including Awami League and its associate bodies, have drawn up various programmes to observe the day.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina will place wreaths at the portrait of Bangabandhu at Bangabandhu Bhawan in the city's Dhanmondi at 7:00am.

President Abdul Hamid and the PM will pay homage to Bangabandhu by placing wreaths at his grave in Tungipara at 10:00am.

Hasina will also join a cultural programme, a children's gathering and a discussion in Tungipara.

The AL will organise a discussion at Bangabandhu International Conference Centre at 3:00pm. The PM is expected to chair the programme.

Besides, a 3D video, "Pita", on Bangabandhu will be screened at Star Cineplex of Bashundhara City from 10:00am-1:00pm.

A Qurankhani and a milad mahfil will be held at the national mosque, Baitul Mukarram.

Meanwhile, the president and the PM yesterday issued separate messages on the occasion.

In his message, the president said, "We'll have to build our young generation with the spirit of noble qualities so that they can materialise Bangabandhu's dream of transforming the country into Sonar Bangla [Golden Bengal]. We have to put in our sincere efforts to flourish the intrinsic values of our children from their very childhood."

He urged all to make united efforts for building a happy and prosperous Bangladesh and ensuring a bright future for children.

Hasina in her statement said, "The charismatic leadership and personality of Bangabandhu had brought the whole nation under one umbrella. As a result, we got the independence and sovereign Bangladesh and the Bangalee nationalism flourished."

## Even divorce

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Arifa was firm in her decision, which infuriated Robin, said the victim's elder brother Bulbul and friends at the hospital.

She had been threatened by her ex-husband on several occasions. Concerned over safety of herself, Arifa lodged a general diary with Kalabagan Police Station.

Her childhood friend Tanzina Afrin said Robin approached her on the street about two weeks ago and said brandishing a knife that she should keep it, otherwise he might kill her with it.

The relationship between Arifa and Robin didn't get this worse overnight. They grew up in the same neighbourhood in Jamalpur when they got close to each other.

Four years ago they got married and went to Robin's house in Jamalpur. Arifa, who was then a 2nd year student in Eden College, came back to Dhaka a couple of months later and started living with her mother due to torture by the husband and in-laws, Tanzina said.

Since the divorce, Robin had been pestering Arifa to get back together. But

The CCTV footage collected by police shows that Robin entered the compound with Arifa but left alone, said Inspector Samir of Kalabagan Police Station.

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He was produced before a Mymensingh court, which kept a 10-day remand prayer waiting for hearing and sent him to jail, said Officer-in-Charge Md Kamrul Islam.

Tajul's name surfaced in a confessional statement of one Zahir Mia, arrested in his locality in Jaggannathpur village of Kayempur union on February 24, he said.

Tajul reportedly instigated Zahir into murdering a herbal medicine practitioner, Farid Mia, on February 17 claiming that the latter raped women luring them with assurances of cures and killing him "would ensure a place in heaven", said the OC.

Tajul was allegedly trying to organise the militant group in the region and police conducted the raid in Kuti area around 1:30am on information that he and his group had gathered there to conduct subversive activities, he said.

The gang hurled at least 14 crude bombs and police fired back, leading to Tajul being hit and dying on the spot, said the OC, adding that the body was sent to Brahmanbaria Sadar Hospital for an autopsy.

The arrestee Abul Farah Romman, 37, is the son of late Mir Kashim of Golconda village in Mymensingh sadar upazila. On information, a police team raided Abul's house and arrested him around 4:30am, said Kotwali Police Station Sub-Inspector Md Mushfiqur Rahman.

Abul is accused in two cases filed with Raozan Police Station in Chittagong in 2010 under the explosives and anti-terrorism acts, he informed.

## 'Huji militant'

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Police also recovered 35 homemade bombs, one improvised firearm, nine bullets and five machetes from the scene, said Kasba Police Station Officer-in-Charge (OC) Md Mohiuddin.

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## Relief

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in April and May, and a general election in September in Germany.

After flirting for some months with putting anti-Islam MP Geert Wilders at the helm of the country of 17 million people, in the end Dutch voters, who turned out in droves, opted for stability in one of the eurozone's biggest economies.

With 100 percent of votes counted, Rutte's Liberal VVD was seen as emerging as the largest party in the 150-seat parliament with 33 seats, public broadcaster NOS said according to its own tally.

That is about 21 percent of the vote and eight seats less than in the last election in 2012.

But officials acknowledged that as the largest group in the parliament the VVD had won the right to take the lead in seeking to form the next coalition.

Instead of knocking out Rutte, Wilders and his Freedom Party (PVV) came second with 20 seats, or roughly just 13 percent of the vote, NOS said.

Wilders however had reason to crow.

"We were the 3rd largest party of the Netherlands. Now we are the 2nd largest party. Next time we will be nr. 1!" he tweeted.

The leader of France's far-right National Front, Marine Le Pen, who called Wilders "a patriot" for his anti-immigration stand, is also seen as doing well enough in her country's presidential poll to reach the second round.

But analyst Hajo Funke, from Berlin's Free University, said the Dutch result showed "the fascination for the rise of right-wing populism in Europe is over".

People had seen right-wing populism "can destroy countries' economies and trigger a chain-reaction of destruction in Europe".

Rutte is unlikely to ask Wilders to join him in the new coalition, having been stabbed in the back in 2012 when the MP withdrew his support for the government over austerity talks, forcing a snap election.

"I think it will be difficult for them to negotiate about lot of issues. But I think within a couple of months we will see a centre-right government being formed with these results," Leiden University analyst Geerten Waling told AFP.

All top party leaders gathered for the first time since the vote at the centuries-old Dutch parliament yesterday as outgoing health minister Edith Schippers was appointed to start the process of trying to see which parties could work together.

Rutte said the coalition-building could be "a complex formation" taking several weeks, as the programmes of different parties have to be married.

Wilders adopted a conciliatory tone, saying he was willing "to talk to everybody including Mr Rutte," and willing "to help govern".

"It's prudent to talk to us, because brushing us aside, as the second-largest party would not be a very good idea."

Rutte has however already ruled out working with Wilders again, and is more likely to turn to natural coalition partners the Christian Democratic Appeal (CDA) and Democracy party D66 which came joint third with 19 seats each.

Rutte plus the CDA and D66 would have 71 of the 76 seats needed for a parliamentary majority.

That means they would have to woo a fourth party for a centre-right coalition. Two contenders could be the Christian Union with five seats or the more orthodox Calvinist Reformed Political Party (SGP) which took three.

One of the biggest winners in the election was Jesse Klaver who has turned around the fortunes of his ecologist, left-wing party GroenLinks.

The charismatic leader appears to have drawn huge support among young voters, and boosted his party from just four seats to 14. But it remains unclear if he would agree to work in a coalition dominated by centre-right parties.

## Man forcibly

FROM PAGE 2

state minister.

Bappy went to different classes and got angry as some boys had long hair, added Pranab. He brought in a pair of scissors and cut the hair of five students, which angered teachers and students, the UNO said.

"I talked to Bappy over the phone and he admitted that his identity was fake," said Pranab, adding, "In his locality the man is known to have mental problems."

Mohammad Haider Hossain, headmaster of the school, said Bappy had visited the school three or four times before introducing himself as the APS of the state minister for expatriate welfare.

"We did not know that there was no such portfolio," he said, adding, "We drove him out of the school and asked him not to come again after students protested the cutting of their hair."

Officer-in-Charge Syed Abdullah of Banga Police Station said he had heard about the incident but nobody filed a complaint with the police station.

A few locals, however, claimed that over 200 students of the school had their hair cut by Bappy.

The Daily Star could neither reach Bappy nor Abdur Rahim for comments.

UNO Pranab said his office has instructed educational institutions of the upazila not to allow unknown people to enter their institutions.

"Besides, I have also said that it is the school authorities who will monitor whether students abide by school rules. No one from outside will interfere in this regard," added the UNO.

## City

## Facilitate return of Rohingyas

*Annan commission tells Myanmar about refugees in Bangladesh*

UNB, Dhaka

The Annan commission on Rakhine State yesterday recommended facilitating voluntary return of refugees from Bangladesh to Myanmar through joint verification, complying with international standards.

In its interim report released yesterday, the Advisory Commission on Rakhine State said, "When refugees from northern Rakhine State return from Bangladesh, the government of Myanmar should help create a secure environment and, where necessary, assist with shelter construction for those whose homes have been destroyed."

It suggested the Myanmar government and the Rakhine State government should allow full and unimpeded humanitarian access to all areas affected by recent violence.

Headed by former UN chief Kofi Annan, the commission also recommended that the government, assisted by international partners, should ensure adequate assistance to all communities affected by the violence.

It said Myanmar authorities should

## US Senate Intel committee

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Intelligence Committee have said they have yet to see any evidence of wiretapping, but have yet to flatly rule out all surveillance. House Intelligence Chairman Devin Nunes said on Wednesday that it was possible that Trump aides were surveilled via "incidental" collection.

Ranking Democrat of the House committee Adam Schiff told CNN that he expects FBI Director James Comey to also say that he's seen no evidence of Trump's claim when the director testifies before his committee on Monday.

"Because there's no evidence of this at all," Schiff told CNN. "But again you can see the President trying to say, 'Well I didn't mean what I said or what I said could mean various different things' -- he was very specific in what he said. So we'll ask the director to address that very specific allegation."

Their statement came hours after

## 2 workers killed

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'SYNDICATE OF TRADERS ACTIVE'

The committee formed by the Sylhet district administration to probe the January 23 landslide at a Companiganj quarry found evidence of cutting hillocks in the upazila.

It filed the probe report to the Sylhet deputy commissioner on February 3.

Abu Shafayat Md Shahedul Islam, additional district magistrate of Sylhet and also the only member of the probe body, said at least 47 stone traders formed a syndicate in Companiganj to extract and sell stone in connivance with some local police and administration officials, elected public representatives and journalists.

He said the Companiganj UNO and OC of the local police station took more than four hours to reach the landslide scene on January 23. Five workers were killed on that day.

Police could not arrest Anju Miah, the prime accused in the case filed in connection with the landslide, although he was staying at a Sylhet hotel that day, added Shahedul.