

BCL activists now eye DU women's hall

Try to oust 5 allottees from room to accommodate their activists

DU CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) leaders at Dhaka University's Ruqayyah Hall on Thursday night tried to force resident students to accommodate their activists who had been living in other rooms.

Protesting the incident, the residents along with other students held demonstrations at the dormitory later in the night. They also locked its main gate yesterday afternoon.

Soon, a scuffle ensued between the students and the BCL leaders and activists led by their president BM Lipi Akter. One of the students, Moushumi Biswas, hurt herself in the incident, said witnesses.

Alleging that the BCL activists have already occupied several rooms at the hall, the agitating students yesterday gave the hall authorities a two-day ultimatum to fulfil their three-point demand, including that for freeing the rooms immediately.

SEE PAGE 11 COL 2



President Abdul Hamid and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina stand in solemn silence after placing wreaths at the mausoleum of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman in Tungipara, Gopalganj, yesterday, the 97th birth anniversary of the Father of the Nation. The day is celebrated as the National Children's Day.

PHOTO: PID

PM's India trip to facilitate more energy trade

Says state minister for power

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The upcoming visit of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina to India would facilitate the sharing of more power and energy between the two neighbouring countries, Nasrul Hamid, state minister for power and energy, said yesterday.

There is a high possibility of mutual power and energy trading between Bangladesh and India after the PM's visit, he said.

"We have already imported 600 megawatts power from India. Now, we are hoping to get another 2,000MW," Hamid added.

Hasina will be visiting India from April 7 to 10 at the invitation of Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Bangladesh wants to buy power from the open markets in India, he said while speaking as the chief guest at a discussion in the National Renewable Energy and Green Expo-2017. The

SEE PAGE 11 COL 3

ROHINGYA ABUSE

EU calls for UN probe

REUTERS, Geneva

The European Union called on Thursday for the United Nations to send an international fact-finding mission urgently to Myanmar to investigate allegations of torture, rapes and executions by the military against the Rohingya Muslim minority.

A UN report last month, based on interviews with survivors in Bangladesh, said the Myanmar army and police had committed mass killings and gang rapes of Rohingyas in a campaign that may amount to crimes against humanity and ethnic cleansing.

The EU draft resolution, submitted to the UN Human Rights Council, strengthens language in an earlier draft circulating that stopped short of demanding an international probe into alleged atrocities.

The 47-member forum, currently holding a four-week session, is to vote on resolutions from March 23-24.

If adopted, the Council would "dispatch urgently an independent international fact-finding mission" to Myanmar to investigate violations "with a view to ensure full accountability for perpetrators and justice for victims".

Some 75,000 people have fled Rakhine state to Bangladesh since Myanmar's military began a security operation last October in response to

what it says was an attack by Rohingya insurgents on border posts in which nine police officers were killed.

The UN Security Council was scheduled to be briefed behind closed doors yesterday on the situation in Rakhine state, at the request of Britain, diplomats said in New York.

The EU resolution calls on the government of Aung San Suu Kyi to "fully cooperate with the fact-finding mission, including by making available the findings of the domestic investigations".

Activists say that national efforts have not been credible and have called for an international inquiry.

Myanmar has denied almost all allegations of human rights abuses in northern Rakhine and says a lawful counterinsurgency campaign is under way.

Yanghee Lee, UN special rapporteur on Myanmar, told the rights council on Monday that the government may be using bureaucratic means to get rid of the Rohingyas. She cited dismantling of homes and use of a household survey whereby those absent may be struck off the list that could be the only legal proof of their status.

A panel led by former UN chief Kofi Annan said earlier on Thursday that Myanmar should immediately start allowing Rohingyas to return home and ultimately close rundown camps for

SEE PAGE 11 COL 2

Not only Ctg

FROM PAGE 1

the terror group in Chittagong.

Omi along with another suspected militant Mahmud Hasan was arrested on March 7 after they attacked policemen at a checkpoint in Comilla.

'MILITANT COUSINS'

Chittagong police say two of the four militants killed during the operation "Assault-16" at a house named Chhayaneer in Sitakunda upazila's Premtala area on Thursday were cousins who had been missing since leaving their houses in the capital's Mirpur, reports our staff correspondent from the district.

Officials suspect that the other two -- a man and a woman -- are sister and brother-in-law of suspected militant Jasim alias Jahirul Islam, who was arrested with his wife Arjina from another militant den, in Amirabad area of the same upazila, on Wednesday.

When the couple were shown photos of the two cousins, they said the duo looked like the youths who went out of the Amirabad house with a laptop just before police came on Wednesday, said a CITC official.

Asked why his sister Jobaida and brother-in-law Kamal attempted to "blow themselves up", Jasim told the official that they have instruction that if law enforcers raid their home, "they will have to turn it into a graveyard".

Meanwhile, the family, which caught Jasim and his wife on Wednesday with the help of friends and contacted police, has raised secu-

urity concern. Police said if the family members ask for security, they will arrange it.

The Daily Star earlier had learnt that the two cousins had been missing since they left unannounced their Purbo Monipur houses in Mirpur on August 9 last year. Talking to this newspaper at that time, the family members and relatives feared the two might have been brainwashed into taking the path of militancy.

Two general diaries were filed over their going missing.

Ahmed Rafid al Hasan, 20, and Aiad Hasan, 21, grew up in the same neighbourhood and were very close, another cousin said.

Rafid lived on the fourth-floor apartment of a six-storey building and Aiad in another flat about 200 yards away.

Rafid, son of Taufiq Hasan and Nilufar Yasmin, and Aiad, son of late Ali Hasan and Munmun Ahmed, completed A-level from reputed English medium schools in the capital.

Both are well-off families. Yesterday, during a media briefing at the district police headquarters, Chittagong SP Noor E Alam Mina said, "We have got primary identities of the [four] militants. But we cannot confirm it before DNA tests and other examinations."

The SP assumed that the militant woman killed in the operation was the mother of the child who was found dead at Chhayaneer.

During Thursday's raid, when the SWAT members were on the roof of the Chhayaneer house, three militants moved towards them using the staircase with grenades in their hands. A fourth militant, a woman wearing a "suicide vest", was right behind the three.

The SWAT members from behind their shields opened fire. Shouting "Allahu Akbar", the three suspects tried to hurl the grenades at the SWAT personnel but those exploded near them and tore their bodies apart.

The explosions also left two SWAT personnel injured.

The woman died after being shot. She fell to the ground before she could blow herself up.

The bodies were sent to Chittagong Medical College Hospital (CMCH) for autopsy.

Earlier on March 7, a huge cache of explosives was recovered in a drive at Mirsarai upazila in Chittagong.

"There are many industries in Sitakunda and Mirsarai areas of Chittagong. This is why militants might have chosen the places as their targets," the SP said.

Meanwhile, four cases were filed over the Sitakunda raid. Two militants Jasim and Arjina were named in the cases. Many unnamed persons were also made accused, said police sources.

A Chittagong court last night granted a 12-day remand each for Jasim and Arjina in two cases filed under arms and anti-terrorism acts.

CONSTRUCTION SITE

Two die in landslide

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Comilla

Two construction workers died and another was injured after part of a hillock collapsed on them while working at a construction site in Comilla early yesterday.

A huge chunk of the hillock collapsed on the three workers at a site at Tipra Bazar adjoining Comilla Cantonment.

The dead bodies were recovered around 12:30am yesterday.

The deceased were identified as Tamim Hossain, son of Arun Mia of Comilla, and Ashraf Islam of Rangpur.

Abu Salam Mia, officer-in-charge of Comilla Kotwali Model Police Station, said, "A man named Kamal Hossain was constructing a wall on the north side of Jehan Restaurant at Tipra bazar when the incident occurred."

"Three men were trapped under the debris. Two of them died on the spot while the third was rescued," he said.

The reason behind the incident appeared to be inadequate precautions and safety measures taken during the construction, the OC said.

Rescue operation was conducted by joint efforts of the police, fire brigade and the army.

Bodies of the deceased were sent to Comilla Medical College Hospital for autopsies.

Indian farmer wins

FROM PAGE 16

On Friday Singh's lawyer said a court in the state had awarded him an express train in lieu of the 10 million rupees (\$150,000) he was owed.

"We were tired of pleading with the railways to clear the pending dues. The court asked us to identify properties for recovering our money," Rakesh Gandhi told AFP.

Judge Jaspal Verma also granted Singh ownership of the station master's office in Ludhiana, a city in Punjab that the train passes through.

After the hearing on Wednesday Singh and his lawyer took the court order to Ludhiana station where they waited for the train to arrive before handing the document to the driver.

Singh said he allowed the driver to carry on to its destination as stopping it "would have caused inconvenience to thousands of passengers".

Railway officials later secured an interim court order giving them control of the train until the case is heard again today.

'Robber' killed

FROM PAGE 16

three for mugging and two for abduction, law enforcers said.

Sabbirul Alam, officer-in-charge of Detective Branch (DB) of Kushtia police, said a joint team of DB and Daulatpur police conducted a raid around 3:00am at Shialia field after being tipped off that Selim and his seven to eight accomplices were holding a secret meeting there to commit a robbery.

Sensing the presence of the law enforcers, the criminals opened fire. The "gunfight" ensued when police retaliated with fire, the OC said.

With bullet injuries, Selim was taken to Daulatpur Upazila Health Complex where doctors declared him dead, he said.

The body was sent to Kushtia General Hospital for an autopsy.

Police claimed to have recovered two firearms, four bullets and sharp weapons from the spot.

"If they fail to pay the money by Saturday then the court can sanction an auction," Gandhi said of the 20-coach express train, which runs daily between New Delhi and the Sikh holy city of Amritsar in Punjab.

Several Indian courts in the past have unsuccessfully awarded trains to aggrieved farmers over unpaid dues.

Last year, an express train was confiscated on court orders after a 62-year-old farmer in southern Karnataka state won a compensation case over land taken in 2006.

The intercity express was halted at Harihar station for two hours before officials convinced him to release it.

And in 2015, railway officials handed over 3 million rupees to two farmers at a station in the northern state of Himachal Pradesh to secure the release of an express train.

Conflict

FROM PAGE 16

Hossain, 65, and Ihsaq, a resident of Pathardubi village in Kurigram's Bhurungamari upazila. Once a follower of Ihsaq, Farhad later claimed himself a "pir" and founded the shrine in his village in 2010.

Saidur along with seven others "directly" took part in the murders masterminded by Ihsaq, claimed the police official after the interrogation of the duo.

The SP declined to disclose the names of the other suspects for the "sake of the investigation".

"We are trying to arrest them," he said.

Saidur along with the other killers went inside the shrine and strangled Farhad. They also shot him, leaving him dead on the spot. Rupali Begum, 19, was killed as she was an eyewitness to the murder, he said. She was working at the kitchen that time.

Ihsaq arranged the arms and supplied the killers for the murders, said Hamidul.

Two days after the murder on Monday, Farhad's daughter Sultana Farhana Emi filed a murder case with Bochaganj Police Station, accusing unidentified criminals.

Shakib puts Tigers on top

FROM PAGE 1

Mosaddek Hossain carried Bangladesh to 467, a first-innings lead of 129, before Mosaddek's wild heave missed the mark and he was stumped to become Sri Lanka skipper Rangana Herath's 1,001st first-class wicket in the 135th over. Herath earlier became the 12th bowler from the subcontinent to reach the 1,000 first-class wicket landmark by getting Mustafizur Rahman leg-before in the 129th over.

In the morning, Shakib batted the way he should have on the previous evening and skipper Mushfiqur Rahim was his usual responsible self as the pair put on 92 runs for the sixth wicket, taking Bangladesh to 290 for five.

Mushfiqur played some attractive shots once he settled in, with some eye-catching off drives off Suranga Lakmal that would have made it to the fence if

not for an outfield made sluggish by rain on the previous three evenings. But there was no stopping the ball when, in the 70th over, Mushfiqur timed a cover drive to perfection to hit his first boundary off the 38th ball he faced. In the same over he whipped a reverse swinging delivery to the midwicket fence.

But it was conventional swing from Sri Lanka's solitary pacer that did for Mushfiqur when a pitched up inswinger with the new ball took a slight deflection of the inside edge and cannoned into the stumps in the 82nd over to be out for 52 off 81 balls.

Shakib got his second life -- having been dropped on eight by Tharanga the previous evening -- when a wayward throw by Dinesh Chandimal allowed the left-hander to dive home after a mix-up with Mushfiqur in the 77th over. He was on 40 at that point.

With debutant Mosaddek, who showed his readiness for the task at hand with a beautiful lofted six off Herath over long off in the 87th over, Shakib took Bangladesh to lunch 22 runs short of Sri Lanka's first innings on 316 for six after 88 overs.

After lunch Mosaddek played a delectable cover drive off Lakmal in the 92nd over and the partnership began to blossom, with Shakib nudging the ball around and Mosaddek looking comfortable. Two overs later, a Mosaddek jab past midwicket for four off Lakmal took Bangladesh into the lead, and it was immediately followed by a thick edge that ran away to the third man boundary.

Shakib was looking to up the rate by then, chancing his arm when given width by the spinners, and was fortunate to get a third reprieve when he bottom-edged a

Herath delivery in the 96th over and keeper Niroshan Dickwella dropped a difficult, low chance.

He reached his century with a swept four -- a feature of his innings along with the slashed cut -- off his 147th ball in the 112th over off Sandakan, and that brought the Bangladesh dressing room to its feet. The team was in some turmoil with selection decisions behind the scenes, and Shakib's innings proved the tonic that was needed. No smile was as broad as skipper Mushfiqur Rahim as all were united in applauding the effort from the boundary.

Having ended the third day on a good note, Bangladesh will hope that they do not succumb to the tendency of alternating between good and bad days. If they can do that, a special result worthy of their 100th Test match awaits.

Military action an 'option'

FROM PAGE 16

"Certainly we do not want to, for things to get to military conflict," he said. "If they elevate the threat of their weapons programme to a level that we believe require action, then, that option's on the table."

But Russia's deputy foreign minister called for an end to a "vicious circle" of tough US reactions to nuclear tests by Pyongyang, which in turn further escalate tensions on the peninsula.

"We suggest looking at the situation in a multi-dimensional way in order to break the vicious circle of tensions," Igor Morgulov told Japan's Jiji Press in an interview posted on the foreign ministry's site yesterday.

North Korea has a long-standing ambition to be recognised as a nuclear power, saying it needs to be able to defend itself, and conducted its first underground atomic test in 2006, in the teeth of global opposition.

Four more test blasts have followed, two of them last year.

Tillerson's remarks came a day after

he said in Tokyo that 20 years of efforts to denuclearise the North had "failed" and promised a new approach, without giving specifics.

The United Nations has imposed multiple sets of sanctions on the North over its nuclear and missile programmes, but Pyongyang's main diplomatic protector and trade partner China is accused of not fully enforcing them.

Tillerson will head to Beijing today to press it to do more.

Beijing shares US concerns over Pyongyang's attempts to build an arsenal of nuclear devices, but has also blamed Washington for escalating tensions.

The issue is also made more complicated by the deployment of the US Terminal High Altitude Area Defense (Thaad) anti-missile system to South Korea.

Washington and Seoul say it is for purely defensive purposes, but Beijing fears it could undermine its own nuclear deterrent and has reacted with fury, imposing a series of measures seen as

economic retaliation in the South.

Its reaction was "unnecessary" and "troubling", Tillerson said.

Earlier, Tillerson toured the Panmunjom joint security area in the Demilitarized Zone, guarded by both North Korea and the US-led United Nations Command since the Korean War ended with an armistice in 1953.

North Korea soldiers watched from their side of the demarcation line -- marked by cement blocks -- and at one point were only a few feet from Tillerson, with one pointing a camera towards him.

US officials have been spooked by North Korea's accelerating progress towards building an intercontinental ballistic missile that could threaten US mainland cities.

Analysts said that Tillerson's comments could signal a sweeping change in Washington's stance.

"It could be rhetoric to pressure both North Korea and China but considering the current atmosphere in

Washington, it doesn't seem like it will end as 'just words'," said Choi Kang of the Seoul-based Asan Institute for Policy Studies.

"We will have to see how far they will be willing to go with the military option," he added. "But what he is trying to show is that Washington is not interested in engaging in dialogue with North Korea."

Daniel Pinkston, a lecturer at Seoul-based Troy University, warned that while the North had antiquated equipment, and could not sustain a conventional conflict for a long period, "they would fight to defend their country if it were under attack."

US President Donald Trump stirred concern in the region during his White House campaign by suggesting allies like Japan and South Korea need to do more to defend themselves.

But Tillerson has sought to reassure Tokyo and Seoul of Washington's backing in the event of an attack by the North.