



Armed policemen behind sandbags at a checkpoint set up at the Kalshi intersection in the capital yesterday. The city was on high alert after a man carrying bombs died in a blast near Airport intersection on Friday. PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

Trump approves Keystone XL pipeline, hails 'great day'

AFP, Washington

True to his pledge, President Donald Trump gave final approval on Friday for TransCanada to build the controversial Keystone XL oil pipeline, overriding environmental concerns in favor of boosting jobs and energy supply.

"It's a great day for American jobs and a historic moment for North America and energy independence," Trump said at the White House.

He also promised to call the governor of Nebraska to help the company secure the necessary construction permits.

But the project continues to face stiff opposition from environmental groups.

Barack Obama blocked the project, first proposed in 2008, due to environmental concerns, but Trump says the pipeline will create thousands of jobs and provide affordable energy.

During the US presidential campaign, Trump repeatedly promised to approve the pipeline, and one of his first acts after taking office in January

was to give a conditional go-ahead, as well as approving the controversial Dakota Access pipeline that was subject to months of mass protests.

The projects are all part of his plan to boost the economy, improve infrastructure, slash regulations and reduce government interference he says is hindering business.

But the jobs promise is subject to dispute. The State Department estimated that the US portion of the pipeline would create 42,000 temporary jobs over a two-year construction period, but opponents note that less than 50 permanent jobs would be created for pipeline maintenance.

Keystone XL is an expansion of TransCanada's existing system to funnel bitumen from Alberta's oil sands to refineries on the US Gulf Coast.

The portion Trump approved was a \$5.3 billion proposal to build a 1,180-mile (1,900 kilometer) pipeline to Nebraska, which would carry 830,000 barrels of oil per day.

After a new US review of the project, Under Secretary of State Thomas Shannon issued the presidential per-

mit, concluding that it would "serve the national interest," the State Department said Friday.

TransCanada thanked the US administration for reviewing and approving the delayed project.

"This is a significant milestone for the Keystone XL project," TransCanada president and chief executive officer Russ Girling, who was with Trump at the White House, said in a statement.

The company has a total of \$15 billion in investment in oil and natural gas "that will create thousands of well-paying jobs and generate substantial economic benefits across the US."

But TransCanada still must work with authorities and residents to obtain the necessary permits and approvals for construction in Nebraska, Montana and South Dakota, the company said.

Protestors supporting the Standing Rock Sioux Native American tribe for many months blocked completion of a section of the Dakota Access pipeline in North Dakota, until the Trump administration overrode their concerns and approved the construction.

Nation observes

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Rashed Khan Menon said the politics of mass murder during the Liberation War was based on religious fanaticism. "This religious fanaticism is trying to rise again."

Liberation War Affairs Minister AKM Mozammel Huq, Communist Party of Bangladesh (CPB) President Mujahidul Islam Selim, Prof Ajoy Roy and lawmaker Shirin Akter, among others, also spoke.

Later, the Nirmul committee brought out a candlelight procession from Shaheed Minar to Jagannath Hall of Dhaka University.

The nation yesterday observed Genocide Day for the first time with the demand for recognising the day internationally. On this day in 1971, the Pakistan army launched atrocities on the unarmed Bangalees.

To mark the day, government, different political parties, cultural and social organisations organised programmes including discussions, seminars and photography exhibitions in the capital and elsewhere.

On March 11, parliament unanimously adopted a resolution to observe March 25 as Genocide Day. The cabinet division issued a gazette notification on March 21 in this regard.

At a separate event organised by Bangla Academy in the capital, historian Prof Muntasir Mamun said, "They [Pakistani army] did not commit genocide on this day only, they did it every day throughout the nine-months."

The Ministry of Liberation War Affairs and Sector Commanders' Forum organised separate photography exhibitions at the Suhrawardy Udyan in the city.

BANGLADESH MISSIONS ABROAD OBSERVE GENOCIDE DAY

Bangladesh missions in New Delhi and Islamabad observed Genocide Day in a befitting manner, underlining the need for putting on trial the Pakistani military commanders who had made the blueprint and executed the world history's worst massacre, reports UNB.

President Abdul Hamid and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina issued separate messages on the occasion.

In his message, the president said the genocide of 1971 is a black chapter in the history of mankind, reports BSS. "None can forget the horrors of the genocide."

In her message, the PM said the incidents of killing of such a large number of people in the short span of time are rare in the world, BSS adds.

Electric short

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tomorrow, he said.

A fire broke out on the floor around 9:30pm on Thursday night. Twelve firefighting units managed to douse the flames in an hour.

No one was hurt in the incident. However, some furniture and computers were damaged.

Two separate probe committees -- one from the fire service department and the other from the BB -- were formed the same night.

The BB committee, led by its Executive Director Ahmed Jamal, is likely to submit its report on March 28.

Samarendra-led committee has been asked to submit its findings within five working days.

Tigers roar with team effort

FROM PAGE 1

over when pacer Taskin Ahmed rushed Sri Lanka skipper Upul Tharanga into mistiming a pull to mid on to leave the hosts at 31 for three. That seemed to be the decisive derailment of a chase that got off to a bad start when Bangladesh skipper Mashrafe Bin Mortaza trapped opener Danushka Gunathilaka in front with the second ball of the innings and it got worse when Kusal Perera holed out to long on off debutant off-spinner Mehedi Hasan Miraz, who opened the bowling with Mashrafe, in the sixth over.

There was a 56-run stand between Dinesh Chandimal and Asela Gunaratne, but Bangladesh's tight and incisive bowling in the first 10 overs meant that Sri Lanka were always playing catch-up and having to manufacture runs when not many were on offer from a Bangladesh unit on song. Gunaratne departed trying to do just that against Shakib Al Hasan, trying to reverse sweep a boundary but only managing to hit it in the air to backward point to be out for 24 in the 24th over.

Chandimal was Sri Lanka's last real hope at that point and he was beginning to hit his stride, hitting Shakib for a boundary in his next over before unfurling a classy cover drive off Miraz to reach his fifty in the 27th over. A reverse sweep for four followed in Miraz's next over, but the sweep proved to be Chandimal's undoing later in the same over, when he top edged to short fine leg to be out for 59 and leave his team at 121 for five and little to no hope of an unlikely victory.

Mustafizur Rahman then got among the wickets when Milinda Siriwardana hit him to deep square leg where Shuvagata Hom, substituting for centurion Tamim Iqbal, took a fine catch diving forward. When Mashrafe had Sachith Pathirana caught off a skier at midwicket to bring the score to 171 for seven, a huge win was on the cards, but Thisara Perera laid into the bowlers for a 35-ball 55 to bring the margin down in the company of the last three wickets.

Earlier, after Sri Lanka asked Bangladesh to bat first Tamim hit his eighth ODI ton and second in Sri Lanka as a team performance drove them to their highest score against Sri Lanka. Tamim paced his innings to perfection as he first played second fiddle during a 90-run second-wicket stand with Sabbir Rahman, who hit 54 off 56, then regrouped with Shakib following the twin dismissals of Sabbir and Mushfiqur.

It was then, with two quick wickets having fallen and Bangladesh at 120 for three in the 23rd over, that the game could have swung Sri Lanka's way. But Tamim kept his cool as Sri Lanka's spinners tried to put the squeeze on him. He played through the tough times and in the company of Shakib, who as always expertly picked the gaps to keep the score ticking, reached his half-century in the 26th over with a whipped single to midwicket off his 76th delivery.

The left-handed duo then took the score past 200, setting their stall to attack in the last 10 overs, and attack they did. Tamim went to 98 with a pulled four off Sandakan in the 42nd over and reached

his ton with a nudge to the leg side in the next over, off his 127th ball.

Bangladesh then added 90 runs in the last seven overs, with Shakib reaching his 33rd ODI half-century off his 61st ball. Having only scored one boundary till then, he went on to hit three more, adding a six to score 22 runs off his next nine balls before being caught off Suranga Lakmal at short fine leg for a 71-ball 72, ending a 144-run fourth-wicket partnership.

Tamim scored 27 runs off 15 deliveries after reaching his century, hitting two fours and a six, which was parried over the midwicket rope by Gunathilaka off Kumara. Off the very next ball, in the 48th over, Tamim was out for a 142-ball 127 trying to clear long on. He hit 15 fours and a six.

From 289 for five, Mosaddek Hossain (24 off nine) and Mahmudullah Riyaz (13 off seven) managed to take the score to 324 for five.

Suspect

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Briefing reporters, Dr Sohel Mahmud, head of the forensic medicine department at DMC, said one end of a cable was attached to his back with scotch tape while the other cable was fitted to one of his hands with a wrist band.

"As the bomb was strapped to his body and a regulatory electrical cable was found fitted to one of his hands, it appears that the incident was suicidal," he told reporters.

However, Dhaka Metropolitan Police Commissioner Asaduzzaman Mia on Friday said it seemed the man with a trolley bag was taking the bomb somewhere. But seeing policemen, he became too cautious and ended up causing an explosion.

"What exactly happened could be known once a full-fledged investigation is done," he told journalists at the blast scene.

Police collected the man's fingerprints to get those matched on the national database to identify him. The process could not be completed yesterday as it was a holiday, said Noor-e-Azam Mia, officer-in-charge of Bimanbandar Police Station.

A case was filed with the police station yesterday in connection with the blast under the Anti-Terrorism Act, said police.

Dr Sohel said splinters removed from the man's body looked similar to those found in the body of the suicide attacker who was killed inside the Rab barrack in the city's Ashkona on March 17.

Doctors collected hair and teeth, urine and blood samples from the body for identifying him and conducting chemical tests to ascertain whether he was drugged beforehand.

Fatal curiosity

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in the pond for about half an hour.

Police said they with the help of some local fishermen and Coast Guard staff recovered the victim's body from the pond around 4:00pm.

The body was sent to Barguna Sadar Hospital for an autopsy.

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Inside Atia Mahal

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Shahidul Islam, another resident, was seen trembling and crying in the evening. He said he did not know what was happening until late in the afternoon on Friday. "I began to go downstairs without a clue when a law enforcer asked me to go back. I thought I would never make it outside alive," was all he could say.

Nasir Uddin and Kanta have another colleague, Piyali Chowdhury, living on the third floor of the building.

"Pray for me and my family," said Piyali when she called Nasir early yesterday. "How will we survive? We do not even have food for all five of us."

Piyali lives with her child, husband, mother-in-law and sister-in-law at the rented apartment.

Nazrul Islam, a first-floor resident, told his cousin Azmal Hossain that he was trapped there with his wife and children. As the law enforcers had locked the gate of the building from outside before the day broke on Friday, he said he was barred from getting regular grocery supplies and the family had almost starved the whole day.

The owner of the building, Ustar Mia, urged law enforcers yesterday morning to rescue his tenants first. "Please secure a safe passage for them first. Damage the building, if need be."

He said he was glad to know that all of them were safely rescued.



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