

# Govt to install tools for constant watch

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A monitoring centre would be set up at the telecommunication directorate in Tejgaon under Posts and Telecommunications Division. The directorate would control the system and act on behalf of the government, said officials concerned.

All international internet gateways would be connected to this network and a team would monitor online traffic round-the-clock.

The system would also identify users of virtual private networks (VPN), project documents show.

After the Ecne meeting at the National Economic Council auditorium chaired by the prime minister, Planning Minister AHM Mustafa Kamal told reporters that modern equipment would be purchased under the project and manpower would be trained.

Kamal said cyber crime was a problem not only for Bangladesh, but also for countries across the global.

According to the planning ministry project documents, in many countries,

militants and terrorists have been carrying out destructive activities abusing internet technology. Pornography and other objectionable contents were being shown and youths were being pushed towards destruction.

The project proposal said implementation of the project was urgent to control access to harmful websites.

The equipment would prevent users from browsing any website unauthorised or prohibited in the country, and also block contents that were not “suitable” for Bangladesh or take such contents down within minutes, the documents read.

“It will also help law enforcement agencies monitor internet activities of identified criminals and thus prevent crimes,” said an official of the telecommunication directorate.

However, Mostafa Jabbar, president of Bangladesh Association of Software and Information Services, said the project would intrude into people's private lives and create opportunities for abuse.

“In this digital life, we need digital security. But at the same time people's freedom of speech and freedom of expression need to be upheld,” he said.

Jabbar, also a member of the Digital Bangladesh Taskforce headed by the prime minister, said the government needs to ensure people's privacy as well as their security.

According to Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission data, around 12.50 crore people use mobile phones in the country and six crore use the internet. Very soon the number of internet users would be similar to the number of mobile phone users due to steps taken by various government agencies.

The project proposal had been placed before the Ecne last year but it was sent back for revisions. The revised proposal was placed before the Ecne yesterday.

The Ecne yesterday approved 12 new and revised projects, involving Tk 10,148 crore. Of the amount, Tk 3,600 crore would be from donors.

# They were expert bomb makers

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In the past, militants used to smuggle the detonators into the country, but now they have learnt to make those at home, said an official, referring to the expertise and training of the militants who holed up inside Atia Mahal.

Police first encircled the five-storey building at Shibbari around 1:30am on Friday on information that some militants assembled a large cache of explosive there.

Army commandos then launched an operation codenamed “Operation Twilight” on Saturday morning that came to an end yesterday afternoon, when the army handed the crime scene over to the police.

Announcing the conclusion of the 110-hour standoff, one of the longest anti-terror offensives, Military Intelligence Director Brig Gen Fakhru Ahsan said the militants there were highly equipped and trained. They even fitted bombs on a refrigerator and a motorcycle and placed those at the entrance of the building, making it difficult for the commandos to enter the den.

“The entire building has become highly risky as they placed explosives in the staircase and different other places,” he told reporters at Sylhet's Jalalabad Cantonment in the evening.

The army disposed of about 10 IEDs from the first, second and third floors yesterday, he said, adding that a more meticulous search would be needed as there were more explosives there.

Four militants, including a woman, were killed during the commando assault.

Four civilians and two police officers also died in a twin bomb attack on Saturday night near Atia Mahal. Terror group Islamic State claimed responsibility for the bombing.

**WAS MUSA THERE?**

Talking to this newspaper, investigators said they primarily thought one of

the four was Maynul Islam Musa, a key leader of the militant outfit “Neo JMB”.

However, there is no official confirmation yet.

According to police, Musa was trying to reorganise the outfit and carry out targeted attacks.

Police claim “Neo JMB” is an offshoot of the banned militant outfit Jama'atul Mujahedeen Bangladesh (JMB), which carried out several large-scale attacks in 2001-2005.

Musa has become a key leader of “Neo JMB” following the killing of its top leaders, including Tamim Chowdhury, Maj (ret'd) Jahid and Tanvir Kaderi, in separate operations in Dhaka and Narayanganj, CTC unit chief Monirul Islam, said on January 7.

Autopsies on the bodies of two militants sent to Osmani Medical College morgue were done yesterday and police collected visceral, DNA and finger prints, said Soheli Ahmed, officer-in-charge of Kotwali Police Station in Sylhet.

Morgue sources said there was no trace of food in the bodies and the body of the woman was completely charred except the toes.

Meanwhile, police in their inquest report said the two died during Sunday's assault.

The male militant died after detonating his suicide vest while the female militant killed herself by setting fire to her body, Khairul Fazal, officer-in-charge of Moglabazar Police Station, said citing the inquest report.

The two are aged between 25 and 32, the report said.

**MOVING TO HINDU AREAS?**

Of late, key “Neo JMB” leaders have been renting houses in Hindu neighbourhoods in bordering areas to avoid suspicion, said CTC officials.

As part of their new strategy, the terrorists have also decided that they would destroy their dens with explosives when detected by law enforcers,

they added.

The group has been constantly shifting and relocating in different regions in the wake of frequent raids in the capital and elsewhere in recent months.

**INSIDE ATIA MAHAL**

The militants rented a four-room flat on the ground floor in January identifying themselves as Kawsar and Marzina. The man said he was an auditor at a private company.

On impacts of the explosions for the past few days, some walls between the rooms have collapsed. Plasters are all falling from the ceiling and walls while all furniture burned. The entire flat is riddled with bullets, shells and blood, law enforcers said.

After all the four militants were killed by Monday, bomb disposal experts started disposing of bombs from yesterday morning. Four explosions were heard around 10:30am.

The operation actually ended on Monday, but the army took yesterday to keep searching for explosives.

Members of other law enforcement agencies and as many as 70 firefighters also took part in the operation.

**NORMALCY RETURNING**

Meanwhile, life in Shibbari and adjacent areas is slowly returning to normal as residents started coming back to their homes yesterday.

Kunjo Lota, 60, of Bandarghat near Shibbari, was seen returning home with her two grandchildren and a baggage around 4:30pm. She along with other family members left their house on Sunday and took shelter in the house of a distant kin around one kilometer away.

Vagiroti Paul, 40, of Pattiya Para village, left home with her husband and son after one of their neighbours was hit by a stray bullet during the exchange of fire between the militants and the commandos on Saturday. She returned home yesterday.

# 35 senior bureaucrats reshuffled

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government yesterday reshuffled 35 senior bureaucrats, including Mohammad Iqbal, chairman of Bangladesh Chemical Industries Cooperation, in the civil administration.

Additional Secretary Iqbal was made managing director of Bangladesh Climate Change Trust under the Ministry of Environment and Forests.

Twenty seven other additional secretaries have been reshuffled.

The health and family welfare ministry was split into two sections with two secretaries. Existing secretary Md Sirazul Islam has been given the task of the health, education and family planning division while Serajul Huq Khan, secretary of science and technology ministry, has been made secretary to health care division.

Five joint secretaries have been transferred.

The Ministry of Public Administration issued gazette notifications to these effects.

Meanwhile, the home ministry yesterday reshuffled three DIGs of Bangladesh Police in Dhaka, Chittagong and Khulna.

Chittagong range DIG Shafiqul Islam has been made DIG Dhaka, Khulna range DIG SM Monir-uz-Zaman has replaced Islam in Chittagong and Additional Police Commissioner of DMP Didar Ahmed has been made DIG Khulna range, according to a home ministry notification. Earlier on Monday, the ministry brought changes in four DIG positions.

The team, in its report, also recommended not using electronic items like water heater in the office to avoid similar accidents in future, added the sources.

Around 9:30pm on March 23, a fire broke out on the 13th floor of the BB headquarters in the city's Motijheel, but was doused after an hour's efforts.

The floor housed the foreign exchange policy department, which is responsible for formulating and implementing policies related to foreign exchange.

No one was hurt in the flame.

On information, 12 firefighting units rushed to the spot and doused the flames.

BB and Fire Service and Civil Defence formed two separate committees immediately after the incident.

The fire service formed a five-member team to find out the cause of the fire. It was asked to submit its report in five working days.

Talking to The Daily Star yesterday, Samarendra Nath Biswas, head of the committee, said the fire may have originated from an electric short circuit.

“We are conducting the probe. We suspect that the fire originated from electric short circuit,” he told The Daily Star over phone.

The probe body members visited the floor of the building and quizzed some bank officials yesterday, said Samarendra, a deputy director of the fire service.

Asked whether they have found negligence behind maintenance of electric lines, he said they were investigating into it.

## No major

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“Use of banned

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shrimp but when fishers discard the other species that fall foul of their nets.

Dr Dilip Kumar Datta, an environmental science professor from Khulna University estimates that to collect a single juvenile shrimp involves destroying on average around 200 fish fry and over 1,000 other, often microscopic, life forms upon which fish rely for food. “Whole species are at risk of entirely disappearing from the local environment through unplanned fishing,” he says.

According to one police officer of Chalna police station who did not wish to be identified, the tidal zones of canals, channels and shoals across the Shela, Pashur and Balasher Rivers of the eastern Sundarbans as well as the Shibsha River to the west are regularly littered with hundreds of thousands of nets as people of all ages engage in illegal fishing for juvenile shrimp.

Local NGO Rupantar reports about six lakh people, mostly women and children, partake in the activity. The zonal commander of the Coast Guard's west zone, Mehadi Masud, meanwhile, says fishers and fish traders hide their motor boats in narrow channels and inlets, making them difficult to find. But, he says, around 80 crore taka worth of current nets have been seized in the course of the coast guard's daily drive against illegal fishing.

“There are so many people involved in this activity,” says Khulna district's fisheries officer, Profullah Kumar Sarker. “It's tough to stop them. But we are working towards increasing community awareness of the problem.”

# Court orders

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compound of the official residence of Justice Khairul on Hare Road around 8:30pm on November 18, 2010.

The following day, Jafar Ali, a sub-inspector of Ramna Police Station, filed the case.

He said he had conducted raids in the neighbourhood of the CJ's residence and appointed an undercover agent to arrest the offenders.

He learnt from the agent that Alal, Paban, Soheli, Asim and Tuku were seen in Ramna Park, Bailey Road, Shahbagh, Nayapalton and Kakrail areas in the evening of November 18, the complaint read.

The suspects along with their party men might have hatched a conspiracy to explode crude bombs and mount pressure on judges ahead of the hearing of the case regarding Khaleda Zia's cantonment residence scheduled for November 29, 2010, according to the complaint.

SI MA Jalil of the police station was appointed as the investigation officer of the case. Later, the case was transferred to the Detective Branch of police, and SI Ashrafur Islam of DB (south division) was appointed as the IO of the case on December 18, 2010.

The IO was changed again in July 2012. Mumin Khan, an SI working in the bomb disposal unit of Counter Terrorism and Transnational Crime Unit of Dhaka Metropolitan Police, was given the charge.

In his final report submitted to the court on June 18, 2016, Mumin said accused Nasir Uddin Asim was abroad on the day of the incident and he did

not find any evidence to support that the other accused were involved in the attack.

“It was not possible to find out the real culprits even after appointing another undercover agent. The case will be revived following a court directive if the real culprits were traced or arrested in future,” he said.

The IO, however, observed that the BNP and its allies had taken up a plan to create anarchy in the country and put pressure on judges ahead of Khaleda's case hearing.

Contacted, Masud Ahmed Talukder, a lawyer of the accused, told The Daily Star yesterday that his clients were accused on suspicion only, and the investigators did not find any evidence of their involvement.

## Comilla city

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upgraded to a city corporation in July 2011. The maiden polls to the corporation were held the following year with Monirul being elected as mayor and Sima a ward councillor.

Awami League's intra-party conflicts turned to a blessing for Monirul in that election, locals said. The feud between party members has not been resolved yet, but the gap between them minimised to some extent.

Election Commission, meanwhile, promised to ensure a level-playing field for the two major political parties.

“Two parties [AL and BNP] met the CEC over various issues. The commission's message is clear – election should be fair,” Mohammad Abdullah, EC secretary, told journalists.

“Two parties want a level-playing field. We will create a level-playing field for all.”

As many as 3,836 law enforcers have been deployed in the city. Apart from that 36 executive magistrates and nine judicial magistrates will be watching the election.

All the preparations have been completed, said Returning Officer Rakib Uddin Mondol. He sought voters' cooperation.

During the last-day campaign, Sima said she would surely win the contest if voters cast their votes freely.

Her archrival Monirul also said free and fair election would go in his favour. Apart from the mayoral race, 154 will be contesting 36 seats for ward councillors.

## Bangladesh, UK

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At the dialogue, the delegations shared the two nations' commitment to achieving the 2030 agenda for sustainable development.

As the UK prepares to leave the EU, UK's relationship with Bangladesh will matter even more, McDonald said.

“The UK and Bangladesh have a close relationship and annual Strategic Dialogues will allow us to deepen our cooperation across security, prosperity and economic development.”

Shahidul Haque said Bangladesh attaches great importance to its relations with the UK and that two countries enjoy long-standing historic ties based on shared values and common aspirations for peace and prosperity.

# An accused

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Earlier on October 1, 2015, the tribunal issued an arrest warrant against Sattar and seven others following a petition submitted by the prosecution. Police arrested five of them including Jatiya Party lawmaker MA Hannan and his son the same day.

Since then the other three accused were on the run.

On February 16, the tribunal directed its registrar's office to publish an advertisement in two national dailies asking the three fugitives to appear before it within two weeks.

Sattar's lawyer Mozammel Haque Bhuiyan claimed as soon as his client had learned about the case filed against him, he decided to surrender before the court.

The defence counsel in his bail petition said his client “was not involved in any offences stated in the formal charges submitted by the prosecution” and if he got bail, he would not misuse it.

But Prosecutor Sultan Mahmud Simon vehemently opposed the bail prayer saying they had already pressed charges against the eight accused.

transportation from the deputy commissioner's office to the exam centres or from the centres to the sub-centres, he said.

The nine, including four teachers and four students, were held from Sat Rasta intersection of Tejgaon Industrial area in the capital on Monday.

Of the arrestees, four teachers are Mozaffar Hossain, principal of Gazirchat AM High School in Ashulia, Atikul Islam, mathematics teacher of the school, Jahangir Alam, mathematics teacher of Srishti Central School and College in Gazipur's Tongi, and Hamidur Rahman Tuhin, teacher of Konia Coaching Centre in Tongi.

The arrested students are Arif Hossain Akash, Saidur Rahman, Rakib Hossain and Tanvir Hossain. The other arrestee is Abdul Majid, an office assistant of Gazirchat AM High School.

Leader of the group, Mozaffar, whose school had an examination centre, took snaps of the questions with his mobile phone, while Atikul solved those and uploaded the answers on their secret Facebook group via the admin, one GM Shagor, police said.

They used to take Tk 500 to Tk 5,000 from each person who took their answers. The group received the money through mobile money transfer service.

Police also recovered question paper screenshots of SSC, HSC and JSC exams which were held in 2016 and 2017 and seized nine mobile phones from their possession.

On February 14, detectives arrested six polytechnic and diploma students, while eight more, including a school-teacher, of a similar group were arrested in connection with leaking question papers on March 2.

According to detectives, question papers may be leaked in three phases -- during preparation, during printing in the press, and during distribution before the exams.

## Headmaster

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They then took him to the bazar where Uttam was attacked along with the two women who had come to his aid from their nearby residence, said the male victims.

All of them were taken to Jhalakathi Sadar Police Station on the vehicle from where police sent them to the sadar hospital.

Latifur and Uttam claimed that they had wanted the election to be held yesterday instead of giving in to the chairman's demand of appointing an unelected president of his liking.

Locals at the bazar said Latifur and Uttam had got a parent of a student into competing for the president post.

The chairman, Sultan Hossen Khan, however claimed that locals at the bazar beat up the four upon a rumour that they had killed him.

He also claimed to have a recording of Latifur and Uttam announcing at the bazar of their intent to kill him.

The police station's Officer-in-Charge Mahe Alam repeated Sultan's claim, saying legal steps would be taken once a complaint was filed.

## Anti-terror

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The UNB obtained a copy of the findings, officially termed concluding observations, from Geneva.

The committee expressed concern that the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) may not have a broad enough mandate to investigate all alleged human rights violations, including those involving law enforcers.

It also said the NHRC lacked sufficient financial and human resources to fulfill its mandate.

“The State party should broaden the mandate of the NHRC and allow it to investigate all alleged human rights violations,” the document reads.

It should also provide the NHRC with sufficient financial and human resources to allow it to impartially and independently fulfill its mandate.

On early marriage, the UN committee said the State party should amend the Child Marriage Restraint Act to maintain the legal minimum age of marriage for girls at 18 years, in accordance with international norms, without any exceptions.

It recommended that Bangladesh should adopt domestic legislation enabling the implementation of all rights under the Covenant.

The committee called upon the State party to raise awareness about the rights in the Covenant and domestic law giving effect to these rights among judges, lawyers and prosecutors to ensure that rights guaranteed in the Covenant were upheld by courts.

It welcomed the following legislative and institutional measures taken by the State party since the entry into force of the Covenant in 2000.

These are adoption of the Domestic Violence Prevention and Protection Act, 2010, the National Women Development Policy 2011, especially the framework for efforts to promote women's participation in decision-making positions, the Prevention and Suppression of Human Trafficking Act, 2012, the Persons with Disabilities Rights and Protection Act, 2013 and the Torture and Custodial Death Prevention Act, 2013.

# Biggest dinosaur

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“It is extremely significant, forming the primary record of non-avian dinosaurs in the western half of the continent and providing the only glimpse of Australia's dinosaur fauna during the first half of the Early Cretaceous Period,” he said.

“Among the tracks is the only confirmed evidence for stegosaurs in Australia. There are also some of the largest dinosaur tracks ever recorded.”

The tracks were almost lost forever when in 2008 the area, known as the Dampier Peninsula, was selected as the preferred site for a massive liquid natural gas plant.

Alarmed by the move, the region's traditional Aboriginal custodians - the Goolarabooloo people - contacted Dr Salisbury and his team to officially research what they knew was there.

They spent more than 400 hours

investigating and documenting dinosaur tracks in the area.

The team measured and analysed each set of tracks and cast the important finds in silicon to preserve them.

The area was eventually awarded National Heritage status in 2011 and the gas project subsequently collapsed.

“There are thousands of tracks around Walmadany. Of these, 150 can confidently be assigned to 21 specific track types, representing four main groups of dinosaurs,” Dr Salisbury said.

“There were five different types of predatory dinosaur tracks, at least six types of tracks from long-necked herbivorous sauropods, four types of tracks from two-legged herbivorous ornithomorphs, and six types of tracks from armoured dinosaurs.”

Most of Australia's dinosaur fossils have previously come from the eastern side of the country.

# Tanners seek

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most of the Savar factories was yet to be completed.

Following another petition filed by the Bangladesh Environmental Lawyers Association (Bela), the same HC bench on March 6 directed the director general of the Department of Environment (DoE) to immediately shut the tanneries in Hazaribagh.

The court also ordered the DoE DG to snap utility service connections, including gas, power and water, to the tanneries as they were damaging the environment violating its earlier directives.

The ministries of home, environment, industries, inspector general of police and the commissioner of Dhaka Metropolitan Police were asked to assist the DG in complying with the order.

The HC asked the DG to submit a report after complying with its directives by April 6 and fixed April 10 for holding further hearing on the issue.

On March 12, the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court upheld the HC directive and dismissed a petition filed by the chairman of Footwear Exporters Association seeking a stay on the HC order until June.

Barrister Sheikh Fazle Noor Taposh argued for tanners, while Barrister Fida M Kamal and advocate Syeda Rizwana Hasan were present for Bela yesterday.

## Five more

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State Minister for Water Resources Ministry Muhammad Nazrul Islam addressed the seminar as the chief guest.

Among others, Mohammad Mahmudur Rahman, director of Bangladesh Joint River Commission, Anwar Hossain, executive director of IWM and Sharif Jamil, joint secretary of Bangladesh Paribesh Andolon, also spoke.