



Police secure the Champs Elysees Avenue after one policeman was killed and another wounded in a shooting incident in Paris, France, last night.

PHOTO: REUTERS

One cop shot

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of the city, which is usually teeming with tourists and Parisians, was blocked by armed police and metro stations in the area were closed. Dozens of vehicles from the emergency services were sent to the area.

The shooting comes just two days after police arrested two men in southern Marseille with weapons and explosives who were suspected of preparing an attack to disrupt the first-round of the presidential election on Sunday.

France is in a state of emergency and at its highest possible level of alert since a string of terror attacks that began in 2015, which have killed over 230 people.

Thousands of troops and armed police have been deployed to guard tourist hotspots such as the Champs Elysees or other potential targets like government buildings and religious sites.

Up until now, polls showed voters more concerned about unemployment and their spending power than terrorism or security, though analysts warned this would change in the event of further bloodshed.

For weeks, centrist former banker Macron and National Front (FN) leader Marine Le Pen have been out in front but opinion polls now show there is a chance that any of the four leading candidates could reach the second-round runoff on May 7.

Scandal-plagued conservative Francois Fillon and far-left firebrand Jean-Luc Melenchon have closed the gap substantially in the last two weeks.

Inhuman

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SI Manosh said Jibon Ara and her husband had been arrested at their residence at Arif Market along with two others during a police drive on March 2 for possessing 6,000 pieces of yaba tablets.

The allegation of possessing yaba pills was, however, rejected by Jibon Ara.

She said police had staged a drama after receiving illegal benefits from others.

SI Manosh said he had taken Jobon Ara, the number one accused in the yaba tablet recovery case, on remand for a day with permission from court. She was grilled on the case.

The SI denied torturing Jibon Ara and demanding bribe from her.

The woman, now on bail, said at a press conference on Monday that she had been tortured physically by SI Manosh.

"As I refused to give bribe to the sub-inspector, he became angry and then he gave me electric shocks. I passed out at the time."

Jibon Ara added that the Cox's Bazar District and Sessions Judge's Court granted her bail on March 23 following submission of a report by Judicial Magistrate Tamanna on the torture by SI Manosh.

Later, she received treatment in Cox's Bazar Sadar Hospital.

She was shifted from there to Chittagong Medical College Hospital's One-Stop Crisis Centre where she was found to have injuries to her chest and genital due to electric shocks, according to a medical report.

On Wednesday, Jibon Ara filed two cases with the Cox's Bazar District and Sessions Judge's Court -- one for torturing her and seeking bribe and another under the Women and Children Repression Prevention Act. Judge Mir Shafiqul Alam yesterday ordered the Anti-Corruption Commission to submit a probe report on the bribery issue.

The hearing on charges brought under the repression prevention act was not held, Jibon Ara's counsel said.

BCL men stop exam

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On October 17 last year, the CU authorities suspended three BCL activists, including Abdullah Al Kaiser, for two years for hacking Mahbub Shaharier Shakil, deputy sports secretary of the Chhatra League unit, on October 4.

Just before the exam was to begin yesterday morning, the BCL men, led by Kaiser, stopped the examinees from going inside.

University sources said Kaiser, a fourth year student of the journalism department, had tried several times to convince the authorities to let him sit for the test.

The examinees were also stopped at different points on campus, said witnesses.

On information, police from the CU outpost went to the scene and requested the Chhatra League activists to leave. As they refused, the law enforcers charged truncheons around 11:30am.

In the last few years, several public universities, medical and government colleges saw unrest as Chhatra league men engaged in clashes over establishing supremacy on the campus.

They clashed with their rivals in their own organisation and other student bodies, harming academic activities.

On September 9, 2014, academic activities of Government Titumir College in the capital came to a halt as some Chhatra League activists, who did not get any posts in the organisa-

tion's newly formed college unit committee, staged demonstrations and the authorities were compelled to suspend the academic activities.

In Sylhet Agricultural University, Chhatra League men laid siege to the residence of the vice-chancellor over the suspension of three of their men for allegedly attacking a lecturer on December 20, 2013.

Chhatra League men in Brahmanbaria locked in a clash with the law enforcers while protesting the arrest of a former president of their district unit on November 14, 2011.

When some Chhatra League men were suspended on allegation of sexual harassment, their fellow activists went berserk, resulting in the suspension of academic activities in Comilla University in 2011.

Demanding jobs, leaders and activists of Chhatra League Rajshahi University unit padlocked the main entrance to the university a couple of months ago.

Contacted, Awami League Organising Secretary AKM Enamul Haque Shamim told The Daily Star that his party as well as Chhatra League deal with wrongdoers with a firm hand.

"Our [AL] General Secretary Obaidul Quader has already called top leaders of Chhatra League over phone and asked them to take stern action against wrongdoers.

(Our CU Correspondent contributed to this report)

Mystery over arrest

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microbus, he said.

Military police stopped the microbus at a checkpoint at Kachukhet in Dhaka Cantonment area around 8:00pm. They detained the 11 team members of the DB Police East, who were taking away the four men, according to witnesses.

Several locals said the club on the third floor of a six-storey building is known for gambling. The club president, however, refuted the allegation.

Talking to this newspaper on Wednesday night, Abdul Baten, joint commissioner of Detective Branch of Dhaka Metropolitan Police, said the DB team raided the club on information that contraband drug yaba was kept there.

The team was returning after arresting several people and seizing yaba tablets. "When they were stopped by the army, they said they are detectives returning after a raid," he said.

According to the general dairy (no 1,106) filed by police with Kafrul Police Station on Tuesday night, Senior Assistant Commissioner of the DB Ruhul Amin Sarkar, who led the DB team, identified himself to the military police as Major Mosaddek of Rab-4 after the microbus was intercepted at the checkpoint.

Eight of the 11 DB men were suspended on Wednesday. They are Sub-inspector Zahidul Islam, Assistant Sub-inspector (ASI) Lutfar Rahman, ASI Mahbubur Rahman, ASI Tofazzal Hossain, Constable Abdul Latif, Azizul Haque, Jahangir Alam Khan and Tawhidul Islam, said police sources.

However, Senior AC Ruhul Amin, Inspector Mohammad Gias Uddin and Constable Zillur Rahman were not suspended.

Police officials said Ruhul and Gias are class-I officers. Since the home ministry is their appointing authority, it's up to the ministry to take action against them.

Joint Commissioner (Crime) Krishna Pada Roy and Deputy Commissioner of Mirpur Division Masud Ahmed.

Contacted, Masud said they were examining the March 16 CCTV footage, among other things.

Despite repeated attempts, the DMP commissioner couldn't be reached for comments.

This correspondent also called Sikder Shamim Hossain, officer-in-charge of Kafrul Police Station, on his mobile phone several times, but he didn't pick it up.

Club President Shafiqul said seven to eight men on March 16 stormed the club, and asked the people there to put all their money and mobile phones on the ground. They even threatened to open fire.

"After taking the money and mobile phones, they took away two persons from the club by a microbus. They forced the two to withdraw Tk 50,000 from an ATM booth, took the money, and then released them."

The same group of men came to the club on Tuesday evening, snatched money and mobile phones from the people at the club and then took away four persons from there by a microbus, he claimed.

Car driver Sheikh Masum, who was near the club on Tuesday evening, said he saw some 25 to 30 people chase the microbus. They were shouting, "Catch", "Catch", "They are taking away money."

The microbus was moving slowly because of heavy traffic on the road at that time. And the crowd caught up with it at the checkpoint.

A security guard, who also joined the chase, said several people got down from the vehicle and identified themselves as law enforcers to the military police at the checkpoint.

The DB men were detained by military police after the four persons from inside the vehicle shouted that they had been robbed and then picked up.

MINISTER IN B'BARIA

Local AL to enforce hartal in Bijoy Nagar on Sunday

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Brahmanbaria

Bijoy Nagar upazila Awami League yesterday called a daylong hartal in the upazila for Sunday to prevent Fisheries and Livestock Minister Sayedul Hoque from joining a programme.

Upazila AL President Zahurul Islam Bhuiyan announced the strike decision at a press conference at Bijoy Nagar Upazila Parishad.

The minister, also an AL lawmaker from Brahmanbaria-1, arrived in Ashuganj yesterday on a four-day visit to his district. He spoke at a meeting of local AL.

Sayedul is scheduled to inaugurate the Animal Resources Office building in Bijoy Nagar at 10:00am on Sunday.

Speaking at the press conference, Bijoy Nagar upazila AL leaders said they would boycott the minister's programme.

The leaders alleged that the minister was going to officially open the building without informing them.

The district AL leaders have been at loggerheads with the minister over union parishad elections.

Killing of three white men in US racially motivated

REUTERS

A black man accused of shooting three people to death in Fresno, California, wanted to kill as many white men as possible because he expected to be arrested for another shooting, police said on Wednesday, calling the incident a hate crime.

Kori Ali Muhammad, 39, fatally shot the three white men in downtown Fresno on Tuesday after realizing he was wanted for the killing of a white security guard last week, Fresno Police Chief Jerry Dyer said.

"Kori Muhammad is not a terrorist, but he is a racist, and he is filled with hate, and he set out this week to kill as many people as he could," Dyer told a news conference on Wednesday.

Muhammad, who is being held without bail, has not been formally charged with the deaths of Zackary Randalls, Mark Gasset and David Jackson on Tuesday or Carl Williams last week. It was unclear whether he had obtained an attorney.

The FBI is examining Tuesday's killings as a possible hate crime or act of terrorism but has not yet made an official determination.

Dyer said Muhammad, who went by the nickname Black Jesus, began the series of shootings in the central California city last Thursday when he had a confrontation with a security guard at a motel.

He had been asked to leave the motel and opened fire because he felt disrespected, the police chief said.

CID to exhume

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and the ceiling fan from Raudha's room in the women's dormitory of Islami Bank Medical College in Rajshahi where the 21-year old had been studying in the second year of MBBS.

CID Special Superintendent Nazmul Karim Khan said the hard disk would be sent to IT forensic laboratory for finding out why the camera was out of order on the day of Raudha's death and if it contained any evidence substantiating the claim of murder.

The ceiling fan, from which the college authorities claimed to have seen Raudha hanging, will be examined to check whether there was any impact on it from bearing 55kg weight of Raudha, he added.

Meanwhile, Associate Prof Amirul Chowdhury of the forensic department of Shaheed M Monsur Ali Medical College in Sirajganj is heading the three-member medical board. Other members are Associate Prof Mahbub Hafiz, of the forensic department of North Bengal Medical College in Sirajganj, and Hafizur Rahman, of radiology and imaging department of Rajshahi Medical College.

On Tuesday, a Rajshahi court granted CID permission to exhume the body in presence of an executive magistrate.

Raudha's father Mohamed Athif along with a CID team visited the medical college and her dormitory room yesterday.

He said Raudha had threat to her life since one of her friends had mixed sedatives with her juice once.

While visiting the crime scene, Mohamed Athif and police saw remnants of the dinner Raudha cooked and tea prepared before her death.

"Why would a person who prepared her dinner commit suicide?" he asked.

Watchdog to vote on Moscow bid for new Syria attack probe

AFF, The Hague

The governing body of the global chemical arms watchdog will Thursday vote on a controversial Russian-Iranian move to set up a new team to probe a suspected chemical attack in Syria, sources told AFP.

The draft decision, seen by AFP, calls for an investigation by the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) "to establish whether chemical weapons were used in Khan Sheikhun and how they were delivered to the site of the reported incident" -- even though an official probe is already underway.

It also calls for investigators to visit the Shayrat airbase -- bombed by the United States after the April 4 attack -- to "verify allegations concerning the storage of chemical weapons" there.

The move comes as OPCW head Ahmet Uzumcu said Wednesday that "incontrovertible" test results by the OPCW team already probing the incident had shown sarin gas or a similar substance were used in the attack.

Samples from three people killed in the attack and seven survivors analysed at four OPCW-designated laboratories "indicate exposure to sarin or a sarin-like substance," said Uzumcu.

Western nations have accused the Syrian regime of carrying out the suspected air strike on the rebel-held town in Idlib province which killed at least 87 people, including many children. But Moscow, the closest ally of

Syrian President Bashar al-Assad, is leading efforts to sideline the OPCW's existing fact-finding mission by calling for a new "full-scale and thorough investigation".

The move has raised hackles at the OPCW executive council meeting this week in The Hague, where nations have lined up to voice support for the existing fact-finding team (FFM).

"We don't see the need to put in place a new structure."

And the British delegation to the OPCW said in a tweet that Wednesday's talks showed "once again clear support for the ongoing FFM investigation into the attack."

The draft decision, due to be voted on by the council later Thursday, also calls for member states to "provide national experts for participation in the investigation."

Mayor's move

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said he expected all other embassies to follow suit.

On February 28, the DNCC asked foreign missions, including the Russian embassy, to remove obstructions they had placed on footpaths next to their missions. Later, DNCC officials met Russian embassy officials and sought their cooperation, and they agreed to help.

Sharif to face probe

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presenting the 540-page written judgement which opens with the epigraph that launches Mario Puzo's 1969 novel "The Godfather": "Behind every great fortune there is a crime".

Two of the five judges went further than the ruling, branding Sharif "dishonest" and saying he should be disqualified, but they were outnumbered.

The court has disqualified leaders before, holding former prime minister Yousuf Raza Gilani in contempt in 2012 for refusing to re-open corruption investigations into then president Asif Ali Zardari, resulting in his disqualification.

Government supporters could be seen celebrating the judgement with sweets outside the court in Islamabad, where around 1,500 police commandos and riot forces had been deployed ahead of the highly anticipated decision.

"We will cooperate fully with the investigation, and seek to clear whatever doubts are left," defence minister Khawaja Asif told AFP.

Pakistani cricketer-turned-politician Imran Khan, whose Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf (PTI) party has spearheaded the push against Sharif, called on the prime minister to resign until the investigation is completed.

"Whatever explanations they gave inside the Supreme Court about their source of income have been exposed as lies," Khan told reporters in the wake of the judgement yesterday.

The continuing controversy could trouble Sharif's governing party ahead of general elections that must be held by the end of next year, and as security and the economy improve in the militancy-plagued country.

PM WEAKENED? It erupted with the publication of 11.5 million secret documents from Panamanian law firm Mossack Fonseca last year which documented the offshore dealings of many of the world's rich and powerful.

Among the global elite implicated were three of Sharif's four children -- his daughter and presumptive political heir Maryam, and his sons Hasan and Hussein.

Struggling to survive

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the lake, the nearly-five-feet-long black animal with yellow spots all over its body started searching for food in a bush. And it found one in a jiffy with its long forked tongue.

Though water monitors can still be seen roaming in the area, their numbers are fast dwindling.

Sonargaon, once known for being the administrative and commercial hub in the then Bengal, was a safe habitat for a good number of water monitors.

"A number of *gui shaps* with yellow spots on its body can be found in our area. But their number is decreasing," said Hafiz Uddin, 51, a local of Sonargaon.

He is a fish trader and has a good knowledge about the species.

Contacted, M Farid Ahsan, professor of the department of zoology at Chittagong University, said although different species of water monitors are seen all over the country, their number is on the slide day by day.

Widespread development work,

with no concern for the preservation of biodiversity, was one of the main reasons behind the destruction of water monitors' habitat, which ultimately resulted in a decrease in its numbers, said the wildlife expert.

Besides, he said, hunting for consumption by the locals in hill districts and poaching for skin trading further reduced its population.

"To stop the process of extinction of the species, we have to ensure safe habitat for them. Moreover, hunting for meat consumption must be stopped," Farid suggested.

In the IUCN Red List of Bangladesh, water monitor is categorised as vulnerable.

This type of monitor, scientifically called Varanus Salvator, is also known as Ring Lizard, Common Water Monitor, Asian Water Monitor, etc.

In Bangladesh, three species of water monitors are available. The other two are Bengal Monitor and Yellow Monitor. But all the species are now at risk of extinction, the professor noted.