

# Stay calm, security would be ensured

14-party leaders tell indigenous families affected by arson attacks in Rangamati

MUNIHA UDDIN AND ANVIL CHAKMA, Longuda, Rangamati

A team from the 14-party alliance, led by Health Minister Mohammed Nasim, visited Rangamati's Longuda yesterday and assured that the government would repair and reconstruct the homes that were attacked on Friday.

"Relief is being given. Please take them and tell all to stay calm... the police and the army would ensure everyone's security," he said, calling upon the indigenous people, who fled to jungles and nearby villages after the incident, to return to their homes.

A few days after the attack, the district administration took relief materials to the villages but the indigenous people refused to take them, saying they need justice not help.

Nasim said those who killed Nurul Islam Nayan, a local Jibto League leader, would be brought to book. He promised the authorities would ensure that his family was compensated and rehabilitated.

He threatened to take action even if anyone in the administration was at fault.

On Friday morning, Bangalee settlers unleashed a series of arson attacks on the indigenous community in three villages -- Tintila,

Manikjorchora and Baitapara -- of Longuda over the death of Nayan. Over 200 homes and shops were vandalised and burned after they were looted. Later almost all the indigenous families fled to nearby villages and villages.

Local high officials fled, taking

against 15 named and 300-400 unarmed accused with Longuda Police Station. At this, all the men from the Bangalee families fled the villages fearing arrest.

Yesterday morning, the minister and his team, including Workers' Party leader Fazle Hossain Badsha, visited the affected homes. They also went to Nayan's family and provided it with some financial assistance.

After the leaders arrived in Baitapara, which has the most number of Bangalee families, the Bangalee men, all of a sudden, returned to the village and met the minister.

Later, only a handful of the men from the indigenous families appeared there. Talking to Nasim, they demanded that the culprits be arrested immediately.

Later in a meeting with the members of both the Bangalee and indigenous communities at the Upazila Council auditorium, Nasim said,

SEE PAGE 10 COL 6



An indigenous man, who lost his home and livelihood in Friday's arson, breaks down in tears seeing Health Minister Mohammed Nasim. Inset, a health camp organised by the Rangamati deputy commissioner in Tintila, Longuda, has no visitor from the indigenous community yesterday.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

## Man killed in 'gunfight' with police

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Brahmanbaria

A man was killed in what police claim was a "gunfight" between them and his cohorts in Brahmanbaria's Chandbari area around midnight on Tuesday.

Police also claim that Ibrahim Mia, 35, son of late Shomizur Mia of Latuamova village, died after his associates mistakenly shot him.

Three bullets and three sharp weapons were recovered from the scene and police afterwards arrested 15 people at the village.

Officer-in-Charge (OC)

SEE PAGE 10 COL 1

## Export growth dips

FROM PAGE 1

Four major factors affected the country's export growth this year, said Avijit Chowdhury, acting chief executive of the EPB.

They are Brexit and its impacts on exchange rate; political changes and the ongoing recession in the US; price fall of petroleum products in the Middle Eastern countries; and appreciation of Bangladesh currency against the greenback.

In addition, exporters pointed out two other reasons -- declining consumption of apparel items in the US; rise of spending for electronic gadgets and unhealthy price competition practised by both buyers and local manufacturers -- for the fall

in export growth.

Garment exports to the US, Bangladesh's single largest export destination, fell by 6.8 percent in July-April period while to the UK, the third largest market, fell by 5.91 percent due to Brexit.

Apparel exporters said silent exports was going on in their main export destinations in Europe in the run up to the general elections in four major economies there.

France and the Netherlands have already had their elections while the UK goes to polls today and Germany on September 24. During this period, retailers and consumers wait for the new government's policy

decisions, exporters said.

Exports also declined for the imposition of a ban on direct cargo flight from Bangladesh to the UK and Germany last year, Avijit said.

Bangladeshi takers appreciated over 8 percent against US dollar for which exporters are getting less against exports, he said. "We might not achieve the target this fiscal year, but maybe we will be closer."

Garment shipping, which contributes over 82 percent to the national export, declined further during July-May period and reached only 2.16 percent to \$25.62 billion.

In July-May period, export of knitwear rose 4.91 percent to \$12.50

billion and woven export growth declined by 0.33 percent year-on-year to \$13.11 billion.

The declining trend in apparel export has broken the last 10 years' growth record, said Mahmud Hasan Khan Babu, vice-president of Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA).

Babu said, although garment export volume rose by nearly 9 percent in July-May period, the price did not. "That means prices of Bangladeshi apparel items declined further worldwide," Babu said.

Moreover, consumption of apparel items declined nearly 7 percent in 2016 and nearly 8 percent in 2015 as western consumers are more

interested to spend money for electronic gadgets rather than apparel items, he said.

Babu also blamed the unhealthy price competition by both buyers and local manufacturers. "If such a down trend of prices continues, export growth will fall further in near future."

He said many small and medium factories had been shut down over the last few years as they failed to comply with the inspections by the Accord and Alliance.

Apart from apparels, frozen and live fish export declined by 1.89 percent to \$472.85 million and terry towel by 8.6 percent to \$40.41 million.

## 120 on board

FROM PAGE 1

"Some were on their way for medical checkups and to attend school," the colonel in Naypyidaw told AFP, refusing to confirm what rescuers had found and adding the search was ongoing.

There was conflicting information about the number of people on board.

Giving an updated figure, the commander in chief's office said those on board included 106 soldiers and their family members and 14 crew.

Several ships and air force planes were sent searching for the aircraft, which was flying at an altitude of more than 18,000 feet (5,486 metres).

It is monsoon season in Myanmar but there were no reports of bad weather at the time the plane went missing.

**MILITARY AIR WOES**

The plane was a B787-200 four-engine turboprop, a Chinese-made model still commonly used by Myanmar's military for transporting cargo.

The former military junta bought many of the aircraft from Myanmar's neighbouring countries in their 50 years of rule, when they were sequestered in Western nations.

"Myanmar air force has (a) very bad safety performance," he said, adding to remain nameless.

However the army said the missing plane was delivered in March last year and had logged 809 flying hours.

Soldiers guarding the military base



at Yangon airport refused to speak to AFP journalists.

Myanmar's military fleet has a checkered recent history of plane crashes.

A strong crew died when an air force plane burst into flames soon after taking off from the capital Naypyidaw in February last year.

Three army officers were also killed in June when their Mi-2 helicopter crashed into a hillside and burst into flames in south-central Bago.

A surge in demand for air travel as Myanmar opens up has stretched the impoverished country's aviation infrastructure, in particular in remote airports.

Commercial jets have also suffered frequent incidents.

The worst in recent years was in 2012 when an Air Bagan jet crashed-landed in thick fog and burst into flames short of the runway at Heho airport, killing one passenger and a motorcyclist on the ground.

## 'First IS attack' in Iran kills 12

FROM PAGE 1

The raids took place at a particularly charged time after Iran's main regional rival Saudi Arabia and other Sunni powers cut ties with Qatar on Sunday, accusing it of backing Tehran and militant groups.

It released a video of the attackers from inside the building via its Amq propaganda agency -- a rare claim of responsibility while an attack was still going on.

The Sunni jihadists are considered IS fighters to be apostates, and Tehran is deeply involved in fighting the group in both Syria and Iraq.

The assaults began mid-morning when four gunmen burst into the parliament complex in the centre of Tehran, killing a security guard and one other person, according to the ISNA news agency.

An interior ministry official said they were dressed as women and entered through the visitors' entrance. One eventually exploded a suicide vest while the others were killed by security forces.

At roughly the same time, two assailants entered the grounds of the Khomeini mausoleum and entered through the visitors' entrance. One eventually exploded a suicide vest while the others were killed by security forces.

At roughly the same time, two assailants entered the grounds of the Khomeini mausoleum and entered through the visitors' entrance. One eventually exploded a suicide vest while the others were killed by security forces.

It was not clear whether the shrine attackers were women, as earlier reported, or just wearing female clothing.

Iran's emergency services said a total of 12 people were killed in the two attacks and 13 wounded.

Iran's leaders sought to play down the attack, with neither President Hassan Rouhani nor supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei making a statement by early evening.

Parliament was in session as the violence unfolded and members were keen to show they were untroubled, posting self-shots showing themselves as calm and continuing with regular business.

Meanwhile, gunshots continued in the neighbouring office buildings, with police helping staff to escape from windows and snipers taking position from rooftops.

Speaker Ali Larijani dismissed the attacks, saying they were a "trivial matter" and that security forces were dealing with them.

The intelligence ministry said there had been a third "terrorist" team that was neutralised before the attacks started.

Tehran was on lockdown, with streets blocked and parts of the metro closed. Journalists and onlookers were kept away from the sites by police.

The Fars news agency, which is close to the Guards, blamed Iran's arch foes -- the United States and Saudi Arabia -- for the attacks. It noted that they took place two weeks after US President Donald Trump visited Riyadh and vowed to isolate Iran, reported Reuters.

## TERROR ATTACKS THIS RAMADAN

MAY 30 22 killed in 2 bomb attacks in Baghdad

MAY 31 Over 100 killed in blast in Kabul diplomatic area

JUNE 3 8 killed in London Bridge attack

JUNE 3 7 killed in blasts in Kabul

JUNE 5 1 killed in Melbourne hostage standoff

JUNE 6 Man attacks police officer in Paris

helping to battle IS in Iraq, which also sent its condolences.

This has made Iran, the predominant Shia power, a priority target for IS, which published a rare video in Persian in March warning that it "will conquer Iran and restore it to the Sunni Muslim nation as it was before."

Jihadist groups have clashed frequently with Iranian security forces along the borders with Iraq and Afghanistan, but the country has largely escaped attacks within its urban centres.

The intelligence ministry said in June 2016 that it had foiled all plots to carry out multiple bomb attacks in Tehran and across the country.

IS is under increasing pressure, having lost significant territory in the face of offensives now targeting its last two major urban bastions, Raqa in Syria and Mosul in Iraq.

Militant groups are also known to operate in Iran's southeastern Sistan-Baluchestan province, which borders Pakistan and has a large Sunni community.

Jaish-e-Adl (Army of Justice), which Tehran accuses of links with al-Qaeda, has carried out several armed attacks on Iranian soil in recent years.

Khameini said on Sunday that attack by IS in Europe and elsewhere should not affect Iran's policies in the Middle East have backed.

"This is a fire that (Western powers) themselves ignited and now has backfired on them," he told a gathering of senior officials in Tehran.

## UK decides in key polls

FROM PAGE 1

England, Scotland and Wales, stretching from Glasgow to London, in a gruelling last-day campaign marathon.

The prime minister had stumped Britain's towns, where she announced a plan to extend the franchise to transform a massive opinion-poll lead into an equally strong win in the House of Commons where she holds a slim 17-seat advantage in the 650-member legislature.

But the political ground began to shift under her feet, moving from EU membership -- May's strongest card -- to domestic policy and her own record on security, both of them favouring Corbyn.

Opinion polls -- hampered by a poor reputation for reliability -- predict a May win. But, depending on

polling methodology, victory could range from around 50 seats, to a loss of seats and even no majority at all.

May is fighting to revive her message that she is a "strong and stable" leader compared with Corbyn, able to fight Britain's former in Brexit, where the former Brexit talks are due to start on June 1.

"Get those negotiations wrong and the consequences will be dire," May said yesterday.

Corbyn, a veteran socialist, made an eve-of-voting pitch on the National Health Service (NHS), a beloved institution.

The Conservative have spent the last few days running down our NHS, our proudest national institution. Our NHS cannot afford five more years of underfunding, which are far stronger than Labour in voters'

and privatisation," he said.

Despite being seen as an unlikely leader -- one who has faced off a rebellion by his own MPs -- Corbyn has gained momentum during the election campaign and regularly attracts big crowds to his rallies.

Last night a bordering the May 24 release of the Conservative manifesto, outlining elderly care costs which the tabloids dubbed the "democratic deficit" against him.

The pledge hit the party's core supporters and May was forced to backtrack on capping the costs, prompting further criticism that she was unreliable.

The Conservatives have spent the last few days running down our NHS, our proudest national institution. Our NHS cannot afford five more years of underfunding, which are far stronger than Labour in voters'

and privatisation," he said.

A string of terror attacks have occurred since May became prime minister last July, and she was interior minister for six years before she rose to the top job.

Corbyn attacked her for slashing police numbers during her ministerial tenure and for his now notorious tactic of employing neighbourhood patrols, a tactic that he said would provide a grassroots shield against jihadism.

"The expectations of the opinion polls are extremely divergent," said John Curtice, a professor of politics at Strathclyde University in Scotland.

He said the outcome could hinge on the turnout among young voters, believed to be overwhelmingly Labour.

Kaufmann agreed, but noted that traditionally turnout among young people in British elections was low.

"There's no obvious reason why that would rebound," he said. "I'm sort of with the general polls which suggest that the Tories will increase their majority by around 25 seats... a good majority, as far as we're concerned, as it looks like it could have been at the time, but I think it's pretty solid."

That would bring May's majority up to around 40.

Questions are also being raised about the vaunted image of Britain's security services. Three terror attacks have taken place since March, killing 34 and leaving 200 injured, and all involved assailants who were known to the authorities.

In the most recent attack, eight

people were killed on Saturday when three men aboard a van ploughed into pedestrians on London Bridge and went on a stabbing spree before being shot by police.

The rampage followed a similar attack next to the British parliament in March, in which assailant Khalid Masood was shot after killing five people.

Police forces around Britain have reviewed security arrangements for election day. London's Metropolitan Police said there would be a "specialist and highly flexible operation in place that can deploy and respond as needed".