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SHAH CEMENT

'Trump admin lied about me, the FBI'

Says Comey in testimony before Senate on alleged Russian interference in US polls; Trump's lawyer disputes him

AGENCIES

Fired FBI Director James Comey yesterday levelled a series of damaging accusations against the US President, testifying that Donald Trump pressured him to close a probe into a top former aide, fired him in an attempt to change the course of the larger Russia probe, and then launched a campaign of "lies to discredit him".

In bombshell testimony to the Senate Intelligence Committee that could reverberate in Washington for months, Comey refused to say whether he believed the president himself colluded with Russian officials to meddle in the 2016 election, offering to speak about it privately with lawmakers, reports Politico.

And he provided some statements that could help the White House, including that Trump himself was not under investigation as of May 9, when Comey was fired, and that Comey was never explicitly asked by Trump or his aides "to stop" the FBI investigation into Russian meddling in the 2016 election.

But Comey also delivered damning statements. He said that he believed Trump gave him a "direction" in a private Oval Office meeting in February to "get rid of" the investigation into former national security adviser Michael Flynn, and that Trump fired him because he wanted to change the course of the Russia probe.

"My judgment" was fired because of the Russia investigation," Comey said. "I was fired in some way to change" — or the endeavor was to change the way the Russia investigation is being conducted. That is a very big deal."



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A Wasa official operates a water dispenser installed at Fakirapool Water Pump Station in the capital yesterday. Around 3,000 people collect water from the dispenser at 40 paisa per litre using their pre-paid cards every day. Consumers say they are happy with the service as it is largely free of hassle.

PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

JS caucus links arson in hills to 'third party'

STAR REPORT

The parliamentary caucus on indigenous affairs yesterday cited "a third force" as having instigated the recent arson attacks on indigenous people's houses and looting in Longadu upazila of Rangamati.

"A conspiracy is going on so that the Chittagong Hill Tracts treaty is not implemented. The attack on indigenous people at Longadu is part of that conspiracy," said lawmaker Fazle Hossain Badsha, who is the chief of the parliamentary body, at a press briefing at the Jatiya Sangsad Media Centre.

The Workers Party MP at the time shared his experience from his day-long visit on Wednesday to Longadu along with the 14-party alliance.

On behalf of the parliamentary body, Badsha at the briefing demanded that the government reconstruct the damaged houses of indigenous people, compensate the Adivasis, ensure their

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SEHRI, IFAR TIMINGS				
Ramadan	June	Sehri	Ifar	
13	9	6:45		
14	10	3:30	6:45	
15	11	3:30	6:50	



PRAYER TIMING JUNE 9

SEHRI 3:44 12:30 5:00 6:40 8:15

IFAR 3:44 12:30 5:00 6:40 8:15

JANUARY 3:54 1:15 5:15 6:50 8:45

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

'FIRST IS STRIKE' IN IRAN Khamenei shrugs off 'fire-cracker' attacks

Tehran hits back after Trump says the Shia nation is reaping what it sowed

AFP, Tehran

Iran's supreme leader shrugged off attacks by gunmen and suicide bombers in Tehran on Wednesday that killed 17 people as US president Donald Trump warned the nation was reaping what it sowed.

The assault was the first claimed by the Islamic State group in Iran, and was the worst terror strike to hit the nation in years.

"These fire-crackers that happened today will not have the slightest effect on the will of the people," Ayatollah Ali Khamenei said after the twin attacks, which also left dozens injured.

The 5 attackers struck at Iran's most potent symbols: its parliament complex in central Tehran and the mausoleum of Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini who led the 1979 Islamic revolution.

While Trump expressed sympathy for the victims he levelled a barbed warning at Iran, after the US leader took a hard line on the nation during a recent Middle East visit.

"We underscore that states that sponsor terrorism risk falling victim to the evil they promote," he said in a short statement.

That was condemned by Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif, who tweeted: "Repugnant WH (White House) statement... as Iranians counter terror backed by US clients."

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2 'outlaws' killed in 'gunfights' with police, Rab

Cops shoot dead 2 'robbers'

STAR REPORT

Two alleged members of outlawed Purbo Banglar Communist Party (PBCP) were killed in "gunfights" with law enforcers in Chuadanga and Rajbari early yesterday, while police shot dead two suspected robbers in Naogaon.

Local leader of PBCP Oltu Mondol, 40, was killed in a "gunfight" with law enforcers in Chuadanga's Alamdanga, reports our Kushiya correspondent.

Some criminals opened fire on a Rab patrol team when it was passing Khashikara Bazar area around 3:30am. The team then returned fire, triggering the "gunfight", said Major Munir Ahmed, commander of Rab-6 in Jhenidah.

Rab also claimed to have recovered a homemade gun and five bullets from the spot.

Torikul Islam, additional superintendent of Chuadanga police, said Oltu, of

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Heartbroken dog waits 3 years for deceased owner



ODDDYCENTRAL.COM

A small dog's loyalty recently melted the hearts of millions of Koreans, after the media reported that it had been waiting for his owner to return home for three years, not knowing that she never would.

A few years ago, an old lady from Busan, South Korea, adopted a cute little stray dog that she named Fu Shi. The two lived happily for a while, but tragedy struck three years ago, when the old lady suffered brain hemorrhage which eventually led to dementia. She had to be taken to a nursing

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Indian finance minister may visit Dhaka next month

REJAU KARIM BYRON AND PALLAB BHATTACHARYA

Indian Finance Minister Arun Jaitley is likely to have a three day tour of Bangladesh in the first week of July.

This will be his first visit to Bangladesh after Modi government came to power.

During his visit various issues including the quick implementation of \$5 billion new loan for development projects and defence procurement is expected to be discussed. A finance ministry official said the Indian finance minister is likely to come to Bangladesh on July 2 at the

SEE PAGE 17 COL 1

Qatar defiant

Says won't 'surrender' in row with fellow Gulf Arabs as US, Kuwait probe for a solution

REUTERS, Doha

Qatar yesterday said fellow Arab states' move to isolate it in a row over alleged ties to terrorism is endangering stability in the oil-rich Gulf region but it was not ready to change its foreign policy to settle the dispute and would never compromise.

Foreign Minister Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman al-Thani spoke as would-be mediators ranging from US President Donald Trump to Kuwait's ruling emir struggled to ease a crisis that Qataris say has led to a blockade of their nation.

"We have been isolated because we are successful and progressive. We are a platform for peace not terrorism ... This dispute is threatening the stability of the entire region," Sheikh Mohammed told reporters in Doha.

"We are not ready to surrender, and will never be ready to surrender, the independence of our foreign policy."

Sheikh Mohammed said Qatar had not yet been presented with a list of demands by countries that cut off diplomatic and transport links with it, but insisted the matter be solved peacefully. "There cannot ever be a military solution to this problem."

Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and Egypt severed relations with Doha on Monday, accusing it of supporting Islamist militants and their arch-adversary Iran - charges Qatar calls baseless. Several other countries later followed suit.

Sheikh Mohammed said Iran had told Doha it was ready to help with securing food supplies in the emirate, an investment powerhouse and supplier of natural gas to world markets but tiny and reliant on imports.

Normally guarded about politics, Qataris expressed

SEE PAGE 17 COL 2



Three great egrets forage for food -- fish or snail -- on the bank of the Kachalong river in Baghaichhari upazila of Rangamati. Not too many of the birds are seen in the hilly district nowadays, thanks to mindless poaching and growing human settlements. However, one or two flocks of them can be sighted by any one crossing the river by boat.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS