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Qatar still defiant

Says Arab demands 'made to be rejected' as deadline to resolve Gulf rift nears

AFP, Doha

A deadline was approaching yesterday for Qatar to accept a series of demands made by several Arab states to lift a de facto blockade, with no indications Doha was ready to comply.

Qatar's Foreign Minister Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman Al-Thani said Saturday that the 13 demands from Saudi Arabia and several of its allies were designed to be spurned.

"The list of demands is made to be rejected," Sheikh Mohammed said.

"Everyone is aware that these demands are meant to infringe the sovereignty of the state of Qatar," he said at a news conference in Rome after meeting his Italian counterpart.

"The state of Qatar... is rejecting it as a principle," he said, adding: "We are willing to engage in providing the proper conditions for further dialogue."

Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain and Egypt announced on June 5 they were severing ties with their Gulf neighbour, sparking the worst diplomatic crisis to hit the region in decades.

They accused Doha of supporting extremism and of being too close to regional arch-rival Iran, which Qatar has strongly denied.

The crisis has raised concerns of growing instability in the region, home to some of the world's largest energy producers and several key Western allies hosting US military facilities.

On June 22 the Arab states presented a list of demands

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PHOTO: ISPR

LOOKING BACK ... Para-commandoes in action during "Operation Thunderbolt" at Holey Artisan in Gulshan on the morning of July 2 last year.

Recounting 'Operation Thunderbolt'

HASAN JAHID TUSER

When the terror attack was unfolding at the Holey Artisan Bakery in Dhaka on the night of July 1 last year, Lt Col MM Imrul Hasan, a commando, was watching a movie with his family at a resort in Habiganj, some 180km from the capital.

Around 9:30pm, he got a phone call and everything changed. On the other side was his colleague, who informed him of the hostage situation.

A little later, Imrul, who was the commanding officer of the para-commando battalion of Bangladesh Army that led "Operation Thunderbolt" at the Gulshan restaurant, got another call. This time, his superior officer ordered him to fly to Dhaka.

He rushed to Osmani International Airport in Sylhet, 82km away from the resort he was staying at, so he could get to Dhaka fast.

His heart was pounding. On the way to the airport, the SUV he was in reentered a truck. All others in the

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GRAFT SUSPECTS 26 appeals still await disposal

ASHUTOSH SARKAR

The High Court has disposed of only one of the 27 appeals filed by graft suspects against their convictions during the past caretaker government although the Appellate Division had ordered the HC around two years ago to expeditiously settle the pleas through rehearing.

The Appellate Division of the Supreme Court came up with the orders after scrapping the verdicts delivered by the HC acquitting the accused of graft charges.

The HC cleared around 35 people, including Disaster Management and Relief Minister Mofazzal Hossain Chowdhury Maya and former BNP minister Nazmul Huda, in 27 cases.

SEE PAGE 11 COL 1

18 killed as blast hits Syria capital

Cornered suicide bomber blows himself up after car chase, two more bids foiled; no claim of responsibility so far

AFP, Damascus

A suicide car bomber pursued by security forces blew himself up in eastern Damascus yesterday, with a monitor reporting 18 killed in the deadliest attack to hit the Syrian capital in months.

Syrian state media and the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights monitoring group said security forces intercepted three car bombers on their way into the city early in the morning.

State television said two of the vehicles were blown up on the outskirts of the city.

A third managed to reach the eastern Tahrir Square district, where the driver was surrounded but able to detonate a bomb.

There was no immediate claim of responsibility, but previous deadly attacks in Damascus have been claimed by the Islamic State group and rival jihadist factions.

The Britain-based Observatory said 18 people were killed in the bombing, including at least seven members of pro-regime security forces and two

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MIGRANT WORKERS Malaysia detains 515 Bangladeshis

THESTAR.COM.MY

The first day of the crack-down against illegal immigrants in Malaysia saw 1,035 foreigners, including 515 Bangladeshis and 16 employers, being detained.

Immigration director-general Datuk Seri Mustafar Ali said as at 1:00pm yesterday, enforcement officers inspected 155 premises around the country, screening 3,393 people.

Of those rounded up, he said the majority were from Bangladesh.

Among the other detained nationals are 135 Indonesian, 102 Myanmar, 50 Philippines, five Thais and two Vietnamese.

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JUDGES' REMOVAL SC verdict today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

All eyes are set on the Supreme Court scheduled to deliver a verdict today on the appeal against a High Court judgment that scrapped the 16th constitutional amendment empowering the parliament to remove SC judges for incapacity or misbehavior.

Earlier on June 1, a seven-member bench of the Appellate Division headed by Chief Justice Surendra Kumar Sinha concluded the hearing on the matter and declared that a judgment on the appeal would be delivered anytime.

Following a writ petition filed by nine SC lawyers, the HC in May last year declared the 16th

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Nasa plans to deflect asteroid



CNN ONLINE

Humanity could face one less doomsday scenario if Nasa has its way.

On Friday, the space agency announced plans to redirect the course of a small asteroid approaching Earth, as part of the Double Asteroid Redirection Test (DART), according to a Nasa press release.

The release notes that asteroids hit Earth nearly every day, but most are small enough to burn up in the atmosphere.

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Man murders 10-year-old after failing to rape her

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Mymensingh

A youth hacked a schoolgirl to death in Bogadubi village of Kishoreganj Sadar upazila yesterday after failing to rape her, police said.

The victim is Fahima Akter, 10, daughter of rickshaw puller Nazrul Islam of the village. She was a class-IV student at Bogadubi Government Primary School.

Quoting the victim's family and neighbours, Murshed Zaman, officer-in-charge (investigation) of Kishoreganj Sadar Police Station, said Bazlu Mia, 22,

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Syrian security members stand next to charred vehicles as they inspect the damage at the site of a suicide bomb attack in the capital's eastern Tahrir Square district yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP



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Lightning kills 5

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kushtia

Five people were killed and three others injured by a lightning strike in Atigram-Dhalsha village of Kushtia's Mirpur upazila yesterday.

The dead are Mosharraf Hossain, 55, of Poyari village, Abul Kashem, 43, and Shaheen, 42, of Atigram village, and Abdus Sattar, 40, and Yaar Ali, 12, of Kushabaria village.

Rakibul Islam, officer-in-charge of Mirpur Police Station, said the thunderbolt struck them when they were working

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PRAYER TIMING JULY 3
Fazr Zohr Asr Maghrib Esha

AZAN 4-10 12-45 5-00 6-55 8-17

JAMAAT 4-45 1-15 5-15 7-00 8-45

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

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সহ-সভাপতি
(এস. আলম ব্রিকফিল্ড সুপার ইন্ডা: লি:)



এ.এম. মাসুদ চৌধুরী
সহ-সভাপতি
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এম.এ. মালেক
সহ-সভাপতি
(দৈনিক আজাদী)



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(মীর পান্না এন্ড শোপার ইন্ডা: লি:)



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কোষাধ্যক্ষ
(এমইবি শোপার এন্ড বোর্ড মিলস লি:)

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