



North Korean leader Kim Jong Un inspected the Command of the Strategic Force of the Korean People's Army (KPA) in an unknown location in North Korea in this undated photo released by North Korea's Korean Central News Agency (KCNA) yesterday.

### N Korea crisis

FROM PAGE 16 prevent the dangerous military conflict on the Korean peninsula, it is necessary for the US to make a proper option first," he added. His remarks prompted joy in Guam, where officials described themselves as "almost ecstatic that Kim Jong-Un has backed off." China yesterday said that the North Korean nuclear crisis had reached a "turning point" and it was time to enter peace talks. Beijing, which is Pyongyang's main diplomatic ally, has repeatedly called on the United States and North Korea to tone down their rhetoric in recent days. "We now hope that all the concerned parties, in what they say and what they do, can contribute to extinguishing the fire, rather than adding fuel to the fire," foreign ministry spokeswoman Hua Chunying said. Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi spoke to his Russian counterpart Sergei Lavrov yesterday in a telephone conversation focused on "ways to get out of the confrontational spiral on the Korean peninsula," according to the Russian foreign ministry. A ministry statement said both

countries had "stressed the lack of any alternative to a political and diplomatic resolution" and called for "all the sides involved -- with the support of the global community -- to move towards setting up dialogue". US Secretary of State Rex Tillerson said Washington was "interested in finding ways to get to dialogue" but stressed the ball was in Kim's court. The US has long maintained that the North must show some tangible commitment to denuclearisation before official talks can begin -- a precondition rejected by Pyongyang. Kim's remarks about future US conduct were seen as a clear reference to large-scale military exercises held every year by South Korea and the United States that are expected to kick off later this month. The North has always denounced the drills as provocative rehearsals for invasion and has in the past offered a moratorium on further nuclear and missile testing in exchange for their cancellation -- a trade-off promoted by Beijing, but repeatedly rejected by Washington and Seoul. Some analysts said Kim was seeking a similar quid-pro-quo this time around, using the Guam missile threat

as leverage. "This is a direct invitation to talk regarding constraints on exercises and missile launches," said Adam Mount, senior fellow at the Center for American Progress. John Delury of Yonsei University in Seoul said Kim was "de-escalating, putting Guam plan on ice" -- at least for now. The United States and South Korea insist their annual joint exercises are purely defensive and cannot be linked to the North's missile programme, which violates a host of UN resolutions. Tensions have been mounting since the North tested two intercontinental ballistic missiles last month, which appeared to bring much of the US within range. Responding to the tests, President Trump warned Pyongyang of "fire and fury like the world has never seen", while the North responded with the Guam threat. South Korean President Moon Jae-In weighed in yesterday, saying Seoul would avoid a second Korean War at all costs and stressing that "no one may decide to take military action without the consent of the Republic of Korea".

### In tears, in prayers

FROM PAGE 1 tributes before the portrait of the Father of the Nation as the country observed his 42nd death anniversary yesterday. In the morning, President Abdul Hamid and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina led the nation to pay deep tributes to the great leader. Hamid and Hasina placed floral wreaths separately and stood in silence for some time. During that time, a smartly turned out contingent of Bangladesh Armed Forces gave state salute and a bugle played the tune of grief. Speaker Shirin Sharmin Chaudhury, Chief Justice Surendra Kumar Sinha, ministers, Bangabandhu's youngest daughter Sheikh Rehana, senior leaders of Awami League and 14-party and senior government officials were present. Hasina, also the president of AL, flanked by her party leaders then placed wreaths at the portrait of Bangabandhu on behalf of the party. Later, the PM along with her sister Sheikh Rehana visited the historic residence, which has now been turned Bangabandhu Memorial Museum. The two sisters survived the day in 1975 as they had been in the then West Germany.

After they left, the area in Dhamondi was opened to the public. Later, different political, social and cultural organisations paid tributes to Bangabandhu. Those who went to the area included Mohammed Shakil, a Jubo Samik League activist, who along with his family lives in the city's Moghbazar. He brought his two-year-old son Yasin Sami with him. He [Sami] has come here for the first time. I want him to know about Bangabandhu who did so much for our nation," Shakil said. From Dhanmondi-32, the prime minister went to the Baniani graveyard where her mother Bangamata Fazilatunnesa Mujib, brothers Sheikh Kamal, Sheikh Jamal, Sheikh Russell and other martyrs of August 15 were laid to eternal rest. Hasina prayed for the departed souls, and placed floral wreaths and sprinkled petals on their graves. Later in the day, the prime minister went to Gopalinj and paid tributes to Bangabandhu by placing wreaths at his grave in Tungipara. A smartly turned out contingent drawn from the three defence services gave a state salute on the occasion, while

the bugle played the last post. Chiefs of the three services were present. Accompanied by Sheikh Rehana, the premier then offered manajat at the mausoleum of the departed souls of August 15, 1975 massacre. Prayers were also offered seeking continued peace, progress and prosperity of the nation. Besides, special dua mehfil were organised and destitute people were fed as a mark of respect for Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, whose unparalleled leadership earned Bangladesh its freedom from Pakistani subjugation after a nine-month bloody war in 1971. [The report has inputs from UNB and BSS] FROM PAGE 2 Mozammel, who went to Saiful's home after receiving the news of his death from a friend. Nizamu Hoque Mollah, superintendent of Khulna police, said they detained Saiful's father Abdul Khayer and two of his son's friends yesterday for interrogation. Later, they freed Khayer and asked him not to move to other places without informing police.

### 2 hacked to death in two dists

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dhendia Two persons, including a ruling Awami League activist, were hacked to death in Jhenaidah and Magura on Monday night. The man who was killed in Jhenaidah was Abdul Aziz, 60, of Paka village in Sadar upazila. Imdadul Haq Sheikh, officer-in-charge of Jhenaidah Sadar Police Station, said Aziz was locked into an altercation with one Motiar Rahman over a trivial matter. At one stage, Aziz slapped Motiar on the face. Following this, Motiar and his brothers called Aziz out of his home around 9:00pm and stabbed him indiscriminately. Aziz was taken to Jhenaidah Sadar Hospital where on-duty doctors declared him dead. In another incident, farmer Abdul Rahman, 45, of Sablat village under Shalikhia upazila in Magura, was stabbed to death. -- OC Robul Islam of Shalikhia Police Station said Abdul Rahman was attacked on his way home from Chaitrabi Bazaar around 8:00pm. When he reached Sablat village, some unidentified criminals attacked him and hacked him. He was rushed to Magura Sadar Hospital. As his condition was deteriorating, doctors referred him to Dhaka Medical College Hospital. He died there yesterday morning, said the police official.

### Car ramming east of Paris kills girl, terrorism ruled out

AFP, Paris A car smashed into a pizza restaurant east of Paris late Monday, killing a girl, but investigators said the young driver had tried to commit suicide and the incident was not terror-related. The episode came just five days after a terror-linked car attack on soldiers, the latest assault in France since early 2015. Investigators have "ruled out the terrorist hypothesis" behind the latest incident, which took place in the town of Sept-Sorts, 55 kilometres (34 miles) east of Paris, a source close to the inquiry said.

### EC, journals sit today

FROM PAGE 1 He said as Eid-ul-Azha would be celebrated early next month, the commission would pause and hold talks again from September 10. The EC acting secretary also said the commission was inviting political parties according to the list of registered political parties. The EC was calling in parties in reverse order of the list. The EC will sit with two political parties each day -- the first one from 11:30am to 1:00pm and the second one from 3:00pm to 5:00pm. Till now, the number of representatives of each political party is 10, but it might increase for larger political parties," he said. Earlier, the commission announced its electoral roadmap. As part of the roadmap, civil society members were the first to hold talks with the commission last month. During the dialogue, most civil society members spoke for restoring "no vote" system and ensuring a level-playing field for all political parties to hold the next election in a free, fair and participatory manner.

They also suggested army be deployed against regular law enforcers during the polls, due in January 2019, to remove fear among voters, candidates and election officials. The civil society personalities urged the EC to work for bringing back people's confidence in it and suggested that the latus Sangsad be dissolved ahead of the election. The list of political parties registered with the EC shows that Bangladesh Nationalist Front and Bangladesh Sangskritik Muktijoto are at the bottom, and they have been invited to the commission on the first day. In the list, the BNP is at the seventh position, while the ruling Awami League is at the sixth. So, according to the list, the BNP will be invited before the AL. "If any political party writes to citing any problem on their scheduled day, the commission might consider the matter," said the EC acting secretary.

### Iran chief of staff in Turkey for talks on Syria, Iraq

AFP, Ankara Iran's chief of staff arrived in Ankara yesterday for "unprecedented" talks with Turkey's leadership reportedly aimed at narrowing differences on the Syria crisis and coordinating policy on Iraq. General Mohammad Hossein Bagheri is due to meet Defence Minister Nurettin Canikli and President Recep Tayyip Erdogan during his three-day visit. He kicked off the visit by meeting his Turkish counterpart Hulusi Akar, the state-run Anadolu news agency said. Pro-government Turkish Daily Sabah quoted diplomatic sources as saying the visit was a "milestone" and would not have been possible unless both sides were willing to make deals on both Syria and Iraq.

### 4-yr-old dies falling into cooking pot

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Tangail A four-year-old boy was burnt to death and his seven-year-old brother was seriously injured after they both fell into a large cooking pot being used to cook khichuri for mass feeding on the occasion of National Mourning Day at Ghatail upazila yesterday. The deceased Mainul and his injured elder brother Nazmul are sons of Hasnat Ali, a day labourer, of Jughati village under Anchola union. No. 7 ward unit of Awami League in the union organised a mass feeding programme at Jughati Battala area on Tuesday on the occasion of National Mourning Day, informed Talukder Mohammad Shajahan, chairman of Anchola union parishad and also president of the union unit of AL. Around 3:00pm, Nazmul, carrying his younger brother Mainul on his shoulder, was peeing into the pot after taking it off the furnace. Suddenly, Nazmul lost his balance and fell into the pot, along with Mainul, leaving both of them seriously burnt, he said. Locals immediately rushed them to the nearby Bhupur Upazila Health Complex. They were later taken to Tangail General Hospital where Mainul succumbed to his injuries in the evening, said Mosharaf Hossain, officer-in-charge of Ghatail Police Station. As Nazmul's condition deteriorated, he was later referred to the burn unit of Dhaka Medical College Hospital, he added.

### 800 flood-hit

FROM PAGE 16 Accordingly, the BGB allowed them in. "Some 800 Indian people took shelter in Bangladesh after being affected by massive floods," said Moshad.

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