



Police swoop on a meeting organised by leftist parties observing hartal at Rail Crossing Point in Gaibandha town yesterday. Twelve people were injured in the incident.

PHOTO: STAR

Stand by Bangladesh

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But as in Myanmar, he refrained from using the word "Rohingya", instead referring to "refugees from Rakhine state".

Pope Francis had been urged not to use the name in Myanmar to avoid provoking hardline Buddhists and making the country's Catholics a target.

At a private talk with the pontiff later in the evening, President Abdul Hamid sought his help in sending back the displaced Rohingya to their homeland and keeping up the pressure on Myanmar to resolve the protracted crisis, reports UNB.

"During the meeting, the president categorically sought Pope's active role so that different countries and the international community put pressure on the Myanmar government to settle the issue," President's Press Secretary Joyal Abedin later told journalists.

Francis -- the first pope to visit Bangladesh in 31 years -- will spend three days in the mainly-Muslim country, which is grappling with a rise in Islamist extremism that has seen Catholics attacked for their faith, AFP added.

In Dhaka, he will meet some of the Rohingya refugees, whom he has described as his "brothers and sisters", and lead a mass for Bangladesh's tiny Catholic minority.

Myanmar's government denies the Rohingya are an ethnic group, insisting they are "Bengali" migrants who are not entitled to full citizenship.

The Vatican has rejected suggestions that the pope's reticence to tackle the Rohingya crisis head-on represented a failure of moral leadership.

"He seemed to comprehend the dilemma he faced," David Mathieson, a Yangon-based analyst, told AFP, applauding the Catholic leader's diplomatic dexterity in a country

It can lead

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the internet. And it found that it appeared to be doing damage to the way their brain works, causing chemical unbalances that could cause severe anxiety and tiredness.

People who described themselves as being addicted to their phone were put through a test known as an MRS, which looks at the chemical makeup of people's brains. They measured levels of gamma aminobutyric acid (GABA), a chemical that slows down signals in the brain.

It found that the ratio of GABA to another important neurotransmitter was off in people who had been diagnosed with internet and smartphone addiction. That could be having deep effects on the way their brain works, the researchers said.

Previous studies have linked GABA to vision and motor control and the regulation of various brain functions, including anxiety. The changes in the brain could also be linked to problems with processing information and emotions, according to Hyung Suk Seo, the Korea University professor who carried out the research.

The study looked at 19 young people, all of whom had been diagnosed with internet or smartphone addiction. They were paired with a set of people who hadn't but were of the same age and gender.

The participants were scored on how intense their smartphone or internet addiction was. That was done by putting them through a questionnaire -- looking at how much their phone ruins their productivity or sleeping patterns, for instance -- that gave them a score that could then be used to calculate how severe their addiction is.

It found that the ratios of GABA to creatine and glutamate, two other important acids, were correlated to the score of how addicted people were to the internet and their phones, and to depression and anxiety.

where the army retains great power.

"He is the pope, not a pugilist... he was here to help the country work through this horrific humanitarian crisis and listen to both the civilian and military leadership."

The pontiff was warmly embraced by Myanmar's Catholics, who make up just over one percent of the population.

Today he will lead a mass at Suhrawardy Udyan in the capital that is expected to be attended by around 100,000 people.

Bangladesh's Catholics make up less than 0.5 percent of the population of 160 million and have for centuries lived in relative harmony with their Muslim neighbours.

But there has been a rise in Islamist attacks in recent years targeting religious minorities, foreigners and secular figures.

The papal visit comes days after the disappearance of a Catholic priest in the same village where suspected Islamist extremists hacked a Catholic grocer to death last year.

Walter William Rosario, 40, had been making arrangements for some 300 Catholics to travel to Dhaka for the pope's mass.

Since 2015 at least three Christians, including two converts from Islam, have been hacked to death in attacks blamed on militant groups.

Tens of thousands of Catholics have travelled to the capital hoping to catch a glimpse of Pope Francis, who is to travel to the park for Friday's mass on a traditional cycle rickshaw.

The 80-year-old Argentine pontiff has established a reputation for his down-to-earth manner, vowing to stamp out extravagance among the clergy and bring the Catholic Church closer to the poor.

Arrest order

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hike in power prices.

The judges said the hartal had no impact on the road as there was huge traffic.

On October 12, the same court issued another arrest warrant against Khaleda as she had been skipping hearings in the cases since July 15. The order was passed when she was in London for treatment.

On October 19, the makeshift court in Bakshibazar granted Khaleda the ad-interim bail after she surrendered before it and sought bail.

The court yesterday also closed recording the BNP chief's self-defense statement in the Zia Orphanage Trust graft case and fixed December 5 for placing arguments.

It also fixed the same date for placing her self-defense statements in the Zia Charitable Trust graft case.

Earlier, it recorded statements of 32 prosecution witnesses in both the cases. Talking to The Daily Star yesterday, Khaleda's lawyer Masud Ahmed Talukder said the BNP chief would face the cases legally.

On August 8, 2011, the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) filed the Zia Charitable Trust graft case with Tejjan Police Station, against four, including Khaleda, accusing them of raising funds for the trust from unknown sources through abuse of power.

BNP DEMONSTRATIONS
The BNP yesterday announced that it would stage demonstration across the country on Sunday protesting the arrest warrant against Khaleda.

BNP Senior Joint Secretary General Rizvi Ahmed announced the programme at a press conference at the party's Nayapalton headquarters.

"It's politically motivated and part of the blueprint of the government," Rizvi said, condemning the warrant.

As part of the programme, the party and its associate bodies would stage protests in all the districts and upazilas, he added.

'Criminal'

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Acting on information that a group of armed criminals, led by Mohin, gathered at Rajganj, a Rab team from Chandgaon camp went to the spot to arrest them.

Sensing the presence of Rab members, the criminals opened fire on law enforcers. As the Rab team fired retaliatory shots, the thugs fled the area, leaving bullet-hit Mohin behind.

Law enforcers later recovered Mohin's body from the spot. They also recovered an AK-22 rifle, two pistols, two magazines and 27 bullets from there.

The body of the deceased was sent to Chittagong Medical College morgue for an autopsy.

The Rab official said Mohin was accused in 18 cases filed with different police stations in the city over murder, robbery and extortion.

PM to visit

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The nine MoUs will facilitate formation of a joint trade council, boosting coordination for implementing Sustainable Development Goals by 2030, labour and vocational training, information and communication technology, development of tourism, preservation of war history and memorabilia, development of fisheries and aquaculture and expansion of investment.

Bangladesh Institute of International Strategic Studies and Royal Academy of Cambodia will sign an MoU to ensure collaboration at the academic level.

The PM's entourage will include foreign and civil aviation ministers, state minister for ICT and senior officials from the ministries concerned. Besides, a delegation of Buddhist monks and a business team will accompany the premier.

It will be Hasina's second visit to Cambodia after her first official trip to the country in January 2001.

The Cambodian foreign ministry in a statement yesterday said the Bangladesh PM's upcoming visit reflects strengthening of the bonds of friendship and further deepening of the bilateral cooperation between the two countries.

The Bangladesh PM will hold a bilateral meeting with her Cambodian counterpart Samdech Techo Hun Sen at the Peace Palace. Later, the two leaders will witness the signing ceremony of the agreements and hold a joint press conference.

"From a political point of view, the prime minister's visit will play a special role in mobilising Cambodia's support for Bangladesh becoming a Sectoral Dialogue Partner of ASEAN and joining Mekong Ganga Cooperation," Mahmood said.

The minister said the visit would significantly help both the countries taking a decision on holding a foreign minister-level Joint Commission Meeting next year.

The PM would be visiting Cambodia at the invitation of her counterpart Hun Sen who had visited Bangladesh on June 16-18, 2014.

Mahmood said Bangladesh has agreed to rename a prominent street in its capital after the founding father of Cambodia.

The Park Road in the capital's Baridhara Diplomatic Zone will be renamed after late Cambodian king Norodom Sihanouk. Similarly, Cambodia will rename an important street in Phnom Penh after Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

Asked if the Rohingya issue would be discussed with Cambodia, the foreign minister said, "Let's go there first and then we will see."

He said Pope Francis, now in Dhaka, sided with Bangladesh on the Rohingya issue even before visiting Myanmar.

Businessmen held

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receiving money did not arise, adding that a thorough investigation was underway.

A team of DB men picked up Moghbazar-based CNG-run auto-rickshaw trader Billal Hossain from his home in the capital's Mohammadpur on November 19 and demanded a huge sum for his release, said a police source.

As Billal did not agree to give them money, they began to intimidate him.

At one stage, Billal's wife communicated with a DB assistant commissioner's cousin named Amin, who contacted the DB team and took Tk 8 lakh from the family. Billal was freed soon afterwards.

After his release, Billal came to know that some other auto-rickshaw traders were picked up by the DB men who took money for their release.

Angered by the harassment, the businessmen met Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan Kamal and informed him about the matter.

The home boss then instructed the DMP high-ups to investigate the matter and take action against the policemen

responsible.

"Ramna Zonal team of DB picked me up like they picked others and took money," Billal told The Daily Star last night.

Including this incident, at least eight stories of police involvement in similar crimes were reported in the media in the last two months.

On November 23, a probe by the Police Headquarters found that 11 officials of Criminal Investigation Department (CID) took Tk 45 lakh from a businessman in Fakirapool.

Two policemen of Brahmanbaria Sadar Model Police Station and a woman were arrested on November 21 for their alleged involvement in the kidnapping of a man and taking ransom for his release.

On October 26, seven DB officials in Cox's Bazar were arrested with Tk 17 lakh they took from the family of a blanket trader they had kidnapped.

Islamic

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Rohingya refugee crisis stemming from atrocities by Myanmar security forces against the ethnic minority group.

Struggling to manage some 636,000 Rohingyas, Bangladesh has been globally lauded for its humanitarian stance on sheltering the refugees who crossed the border since late August.

Mazharul said a panel of 11 Islamic scholars prepared the anti-terror edicts in light of the Quran and Hadith and it was submitted to the UN secretary-general and the Organisation of Islamic Conference.

"We want to tell the Pope that we are against religious extremism, killing and attacking people in the name of religion."

The khatib said they have been working for the last two years to create awareness among the people against extremist and militant activities through holding protest rallies and meetings.

Besides, they were asking the imams of mosques not to use any words in their sermons that can provoke hatred against other religions, he added.

"No religion speaks against humanity, or supports killings and attacks," said Mazharul.

He said the Pope's visit was a significant event for the Bangladeshis as he promotes peace and harmony among people from different religions, cultures and ethnicities.

He also appreciated that the Pope was raising his voice against the persecution of Rohingyas, and was supporting Bangladesh in this regard.

Egypt presidential hopeful says UAE bars him from leaving

AFP, Cairo

Egyptian ex-premier Ahmed Shafiq said Wednesday the United Arab Emirates had barred him from leaving the country, which the UAE denied, only hours after an announcement he would run for president in his homeland next year.

"I was surprised that I was banned from leaving the brotherly nation of the United Arab Emirates, for reasons I do not understand," Shafiq said in a video message sent to AFP.

Govt to buy

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production cost has forced the government to raise procurement price.

The chances of the price of coarse rice falling below Tk 42-43 in next few months are slight, the official added.

The government has been desperately trying to replenish its depleted stock through imports after production was hit by flash floods and fungal attacks.

Despite deals with several rice exporting countries, including Vietnam, India, Thailand and Myanmar, Bangladesh is still battling to increase its reserves.

The import of rice at both government and private levels have picked up lately. From July 1 to November 28, a total of 18.96 lakh tonnes of rice was imported. Of the quantity, 4.05 lakh tonnes was brought in by the government.

The cabinet committee has so far approved proposals for import of around 14 lakh tonnes of rice through state-to-state arrangement and international bidder via open tender.

As the rice production was hampered by the floods and fungal attack, prices skyrocketed and went beyond Tk 50 per kg for coarse rice. The prices, however, have fallen slightly in recent times.

As per a food ministry report, coarse rice was sold at Tk 40 to Tk 43 per kg last week. It was below Tk 35 one year back.

The government food stock at one stage came below 3 lakh tonnes but now it is increasing gradually.

Minister's son

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correspondent of DBC News, lodged the case with Ishwardi Police Station yesterday, accusing 30 people, including Tomal and Ishwardi upazila unit Jubo League Secretary Rajib Sardar.

The victims -- Saikat Afroz, Pabna correspondent of Somoy TV, Rizvi Joy, ATN News correspondent of the district, Partho Hasan and ATN News cameraman Milon Hossain -- came under the attack at Natunhat intersection in Ishwardi upazila town.

In the case statement, the complainant said a group of 25 to 30 people carrying sticks and iron rods attacked them on Tomal's instructions. The journalists were capturing footage of damaging banners and posters welcoming the PM to Ishwardi hung by Tomal's rival groups.

Azim Uddin, officer-in-charge of Ishwardi Police Station, said the attackers went into hiding after the incident. Police were trying to detain them, he said.

Protesting the attack, journalists brought out a procession in Pabna town and held a protest rally at Traffic intersection on Wednesday evening. At the rally, they gave a 24-hour ultimatum to the local administration for arresting the attackers.

"If the criminals are not arrested, we will go for a tougher movement," said Akhiner Islam Remon, secretary of Pabna Press Club.

Cities not safe for women

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The study, which evaluated the safety of women in urban areas, was launched at a programme titled "Whose City" at the Centre on Integrated Rural Development for Asia and the Pacific (CIRDAP) in the capital.

The methodology included collecting the relevant data of 2015 and 2012 from UNFPA and BBS. Besides in 2015, it conducted a survey on 1200 Bangladeshi women living in the seven divisional cities of the country.

This year, the data of 10 countries was analysed and then they were ranked according to the findings by ActionAid. Bangladesh positioned sixth while Nepal came first. The other countries in the study were Brazil, Jordan, Liberia, Nepal, Nigeria, Senegal, South Africa and Zimbabwe.

Moreover, the study found that 57 percent women alleged that their complaints are not taken seriously by law enforcers and 65 percent women think that law enforcers are more prone to blaming the victims instead of the accused.

The study also showed that 49%

women feel unsafe in public transport and 48% claim to feel the same while availing public services including health services.

Countries were marked out of 100 and Bangladesh secured 39.32 marks with a C grade in the range of A to E while Nepal secured 72.65 marks, acquiring a B grade.

The countries surpassing Bangladesh in women safety and empowerment issues are Nepal, Nigeria, Jordan, Brazil and Zimbabwe.

"The study shows that Bangladesh is not in a satisfactory condition regarding women's safety," ActionAid Bangladesh Country Director Farah Kabir said while revealing the findings.

She urged the government to make the city more women-friendly.

While talking about legal aid for women in the country, Shahnaz Huda, a professor of the law department of Dhaka University, said laws in the country should be women-friendly as there is "no specific law to stop sexual harassment".

Maleka Banu, general secretary of Bangladesh Mahila Parishad, said that different places of the city should be adequately lighted and CCTV camera should be used for surveillance, helping women feel secure.

Dr Akter Mahmud, professor of urban and regional planning in Jahangirnagar University, said that a smart city is a city where everyone, including women, is safe.

However, women in urban areas are afraid to go to the park or in open places as they do not feel safe lest they be harassed by a man, said Mahmud.

Criticising the public transportation in Dhaka, he said, "Harassment would be reduced if the public transportation was women-friendly."

Meher Afroz Chumki, state minister for the women and children affairs ministry, Shoko Ishikawa, country representative UN Women (Bangladesh), and Mohammad Mufti Khan from Rapid Action Battalion of Bangladesh, were also present.



Bangladesh Jute Mills Corporation

INTERNATIONAL RE-TENDER NOTICE

General Manager, Bangladesh Jute Mills Ltd. Ghorashal, Palash, Narsingdi. Bangladesh Invited Quotation from the Manufacturer/Indentors/Commission Agent/Representative of Foreign both on FOB, C & F (C), Dhaka-Hazrat Shajalal Air Port or Benapole Port basis for import of nos. 1) Balling hoops

Tender may be dropped either BJMC's planning Division, Adamjee Court, Motijheel C/A, Dhaka-1000 or at the office of Bangladesh Jute Mills Ltd, Ghorashal, Palash, Narsingdi, Bangladesh up to 12.00 noon on 01/01/2018 and will be opened in public at 12-30 Pm. on the same day in presence if any at above mentioned office, Tender Documents with full details of requirements, Specifications, Terms & Conditions will be available on all working day (Except opening date) Earnest money will be despoiled Tk. 3000/- (Refundable) Must accompany the Tender in the form of payorder/D.D. infavour of mill 1) General Manager (A&F), BJMC, Adamjee Court, Motijheel C/A, Dhaka-1000 2) General Manager, BJMC Chittagang Zone, Sattar chamber, 99, Agrabad C/A, Chittagong. 3) General Manager, BJMC Khulna Zone, Town Khalishpur, Khulna Bangladesh on payment of Tk. 750/- Per Set (Non Returnable) the Management of Bangladesh Jute Mills Ltd, reserves the right to accept or reject any or Tender without assigning any reason. What Soover (It seems to be BJMC web site (www.bjmc.gov.bd)). Attach for Trade Lisence, Tin Chirtificat, Bank Solvancy, I.R.C including . BJMC No. 160, Date : 30/11/2017 (5x3)