



Ayat Ullah, a 7-month-old Rohingya refugee suffering from severe malnutrition, is examined at the Action Against Hunger centre at Kutupalong camp near Cox's Bazar yesterday.

PHOTO: REUTERS

Rakhine

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going forward on the Rohingya repatriation deal, she added. "The trust building often is helped if there is a third party involved. So, in many locations the agreement is tripartite. I don't know if this will be the case here. But we will certainly offer our support and assistance to both the governments."

She said the UN refugee agency was encouraged by the agreement but stressed that the return of the Rohingyas needs to comply with international standards of safety, dignity and voluntariness that would require an international presence and monitoring in areas of return.

'GRAVE SECURITY RISK'
Prolonged displacement of Rohingya refugees in squalid Bangladeshi camps poses a "grave security risk", conflict analysts ICG warned yesterday, raising the spectre of militants recruiting among the displaced and launching cross-border attacks on Myanmar.

Arsa "appears determined to regroup and remain relevant" and may draw on desperate Rohingya refugees languishing in camps for future operations, the International Crisis Group (ICG) said in the report.

The group may "shift to cross-border attacks" using Bangladesh as a base for recruitment and training, the study said, cautioning the risk of an ever-deepening cycle of violence is all too real, writes AFP.

"Such attacks would have profoundly negative consequences," straining Myanmar-Bangladesh relations and worsening contempt for the Rohingya "that would further diminish prospects of an eventual refugee return".

In another serious looming risk, ICG warned that Rohingya's plight has become a "cause celebre of the Muslim world" with al-Qaeda, Islamic State and other global jihadi groups calling for attacks on Myanmar.

RU to punish

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In addition, a five-year delay is to be slapped on M Zillur's next promotion.

The decision was made at the 474th syndicate meeting, said Mamun Abdul Kaoum, a syndicate member.

The meeting also made a primary decision to remove Prof Mustafizur as the dean, he said.

On October 28, RU formed a four-member committee to investigate the matter. The committee was asked to submit its report in 15 days.

Pro-Vice-Chancellor Prof Anand Kumar Saha leads the committee with Prof M Shahidullah of English department, Abu Bakar M Ismail of applied physics and electronic engineering department and Prof Nazrul Islam of chemistry department as its members.

The freshmen aspirants on October 25 were asked to answer the multiple-choice question: "What is the name of the greatest book in the world?"

The options were: A) The Holy Quran, B) The Holy Bible, C) The Holy Injil and D) Gita. This left the admission seekers baffled.

Another question was: "When did the Myanmar army and the Buddhists launch an armed attack on the Rohingyas Muslims?"

There was outrage on campus and criticism in social media with many blasting the university authorities for coming up with the "extremely communal" questions.

BCL expels 4 leaders

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The city unit also dissolved the institute's BCL committee in an emergency meeting on Wednesday night. It asked the central committee to expel the four from the organisation.

The central committee expelled the four verbally at that night and posted an official notice on its Facebook page yesterday, said Rocky.

Students of the institute said the BCL committee was formed for a year around four and a half years ago.

The institute was closed for an indefinite period on Wednesday after the BCL leaders assaulted five female students on campus. All the students were also asked to leave their dorms by 3:00pm that day.

The female students were attacked allegedly by a group of BCL men, led by Jahidul, when they were going to their dorms accompanied by the principal.

The assault followed incidents over the last three days in which BCL men threatened the women with gang rape in broad daylight on campus.

Students said the BCL men had started intimidating women in the dormitory after they opposed BCL's proposal to form a human chain on campus on Sunday. The women wanted to hold the programme in the city's Zero Point area.

Demanding security on campus, about 100 women staged a sit-in on Wednesday morning. They also submitted a complaint before the principal against several BCL leaders.

Some female students alleged that the BCL men often entered their dormitory and collected illegal tolls from them. They often threatened with harassment when they refused to pay the toll, the students alleged.

Contacted, Institute of Health Technology Principal Sirajul Islam said he did not get any complaints against

Laxmipur ADC

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to jail for three months by a mobile court over a scuffle with the ADC.

Salahuddin said they resolved the misunderstanding between them through discussions so that the administration could run properly and public service is not hampered.

Murshidul said they have come to know each other after the situation had gone out of their control. He said the incident happened as they could not know each other.

Deputy Commissioner of Laxmipur Homaira Begum, Superintendent of Police ASM Mahtab Uddin, Sadar Upazila Nirbahi Officer Md Nuruzzaman and Civil Surgeon Mostafa Khaled Ahmed, among others, were present at the meeting.

On Wednesday, Salahuddin, who was given three months' jail sentence by a mobile court on Monday, was acquitted of his charge.

M Iqbal Hossain, the additional district magistrate of Laxmipur, passed the order after hearing a petition by Salahuddin seeking acquittal.

On Monday, Salahuddin and Murshidul had a scuffle at the entrance of Shishu Angan, a primary school near the deputy commissioner's residence.

The mobile court was conducted by Executive Magistrate Nuruzzaman.

On Tuesday, Salahuddin was granted bail by a Laxmipur court following media reports and widespread criticism from different quarters.

On the same day, the High Court ordered ADC Murshidul and Executive Magistrate Nuruzzaman to appear before it on December 13 over the sentencing of Sharif.

Meanwhile, ADC Murshidul has been made an officer on special duty following the incident.

the BCL men before Wednesday's incident. "We will look into the allegation."

Expelled BCL president Jahidul dismissed the allegation.

Meanwhile, rights body Ain o Salish Kendra in a press release yesterday condemned the assault on female students by BCL leaders.

Rivals kill

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Locals rushed the two to Moulvibazar Sadar Hospital, where doctors pronounced them dead.

Moulvibazar district BCL claimed that the dead were not its activists.

Ashaduzzaman Rony, president of Moulvibazar district BCL, said there was a rivalry between BCL factions, led by district Jubo League General Secretary Rezaul Karim Sumon and another Jubo League leader Sheikh Rumel.

An altercation broke out between supporters of the two factions yesterday which led to the killings, he added.

Interestingly, both the BCL factions are blessed by Moulvibazar Municipality Mayor Md Fozlur Rahman, also former president of district Jubo League, said Chhatra League sources.

Sohel Ahmed, officer-in-charge of Moulvibazar Police Station, said the bodies were sent to Moulvibazar Sadar Hospital morgue for autopsies.

He said police were carrying out drives to arrest the culprits.

Despite repeated attempts for comment, the Moulvibazar municipality mayor didn't pick up the call.

Bacchu asked

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a copy of his passport," an ACC investigator told The Daily Star.

ACC Director General (special investigation and enquiry) Md Asaduzzaman said the commission usually sends copies of a notice to different immigration ports to prevent a graft suspect from fleeing the country. But such an action is taken only after filing of a case against the suspect, he added.

Meanwhile, the ACC has fixed third week of December for further interrogating Bacchu in the scam cases.

"We asked him to appear before us next week. But he sought time saying he was not in good health," said Asaduzzaman, adding that they would fix a date later.

The anti-graft watchdog has been interrogating him on a case-by-case basis.

The ACC on November 24 summoned Bacchu and 10 ex-directors of the bank for interrogation over the loan scams involving about Tk 4,500 crore. The scams took place between 2010 and 2013 when Bacchu chaired the bank's board.

The former BASIC Bank chairman was first grilled by ACC investigators on December 4.

ACC sources said Bacchu on Wednesday shifted the blame on the bank's then managing committee for the embezzlement.

Asked whether he took any action against the managing director or other bankers over the scam, he kept mum, said one of the investigators.

Bacchu during the quizzing complained of feeling unwell. His interrogation resumed after an ACC medical officer had attended him.

Twelve ACC officials have been investigating the 57 cases. The graft watchdog is yet to implicate Bacchu, believed to be at the centre of the scam, in any of the cases.

Yemen govt retakes Red Sea town from rebels

AFP, Aden

Yemen's government has retaken a Red Sea town from Huthi insurgents, officials said yesterday, days after President Abedrabbo Mansour Hadi's administration ordered troops to advance on the rebel-held capital.

The war-torn Arabian Peninsula country has been plunged deeper into turmoil by the killing on Monday of ex-president Ali Abdullah Saleh by the Huthis after his alliance with the Iran-backed insurgents collapsed.

Government troops backed by a Saudi-led military coalition launched an operation overnight and drove the Huthis out of Khokha, which fell to the rebels in January, an army captain and officials in the town said, requesting anonymity.

The news could not be independently confirmed.

Nepal's restive

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the election ... and will move ahead solidly on the path of economic and social prosperity," President Bidhya Devi Bhandari said in a statement.

Nepal has seen 10 government changes in as many years. Instability has given rise to corruption, retarded growth and slowed recovery from a 2015 earthquake that killed 9,000 people, reported Reuters.

"I voted in hopes for a stable government that can concentrate on development and create jobs so our children don't have to go abroad to work," Binita Karki, 57, said after casting her ballots in a Kathmandu suburb, where armed soldiers stood nearby. Her son works on a construction site in Qatar.

The election pits the centrist Nepali Congress party of Prime Minister Sher Bahadur Deuba, who heads a loose alliance that includes the Madhesi parties from Nepal's southern plains and former royalists, against a tight-knit alliance of former Maoists and the moderate Communist UML party.

The Nepali Congress party is considered a pro-India group, while the opposition alliance is seen as closer to China.

The national election comes as China is expanding its influence across Asia, including by ramping up investments in Nepal — a development that analysts say has rattled India, long the dominant Asian power in the country, reported The Washington Post.

India's influence in Nepal was unrivalled for decades. The countries share an open border, thriving trade links and common religions and customs. But in the past several years, China has redoubled investments in Nepal, building up infrastructure that could increase trade between the two countries, and making plans to expand Nepal's vast untapped hydropower infrastructure, which could yield large returns — and displace India's dominance here.

Nepal emerged from a civil war in 2006 and abolished its 239-year-old Hindu monarchy two years later.

No army

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The CEC also told reporters that contestants would face tough actions if they attempt to buy voters with money or muscle power.

Along with the Ansar men, there will be 23 armed members of BGB, Rab and police at each polling centre, he said.

"The election will be free, fair and credible."

The CEC also added that 22 mobile courts were conducting drives in the RCC area to prevent any violation of the electoral code of conduct. From today, a mobile court would be deployed at each of the 33 wards to monitor law and order.

"Army deploy is not necessary." He stressed that nobody violating the electoral code of conduct and deteriorating the law and order situation would be spared.

Asked about allegations that law enforcers were harassing BNP leaders and activists, he said, "They are not harassing anybody."

The Election Commission has ensured equal rights of all, he said, adding that mayor candidates can setup six election camps in the RCC areas.

Besides, each mayor candidate can use a loud speaker in each of the 33 wards.

The Election commission is thinking about using EVM (Electronic Voting Machine) at one polling centre.

Mayor and councillor candidates, in their meeting with the CEC, demanded that ballot counts be finalised at the polling centres. They also demanded suspending of mobile banking services to prevent transactions of black money.

Memories of a massacre

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"I saw my father being taken. He was tied with a rope along with other victims in front of Kalibari," said Dipak Kumar, son of Anil Chandra.

"My father was killed along with the others. I survived as I had hidden myself in a pond in the village, Dipak said.

Five members of his family were not lucky as he was. They were all taken by the Pakistan army men and killed at Kalibari.

The massacre scared the Hindus of Laxmipur. Over 100 Hindu families lived there during the war but now only 10 to 15 remain.

It has been almost 46 years since Bangladesh had been liberated. And with every passing year, the number of eyewitnesses to the massacre become smaller.

Yet, the mass grave is not officially recognised. There is no memorial there.

"When villagers go past the grave, it hurts. They are disappointed by the sheer negligence of the authorities concerned," Nani Gopal Das, 70, of the village told The Daily Star.

"It is just an abandoned piece of land now," said the retired teacher.

"After the massacre, we did not dare to hold Puja in Kalibari for many years. The temple was later moved to another place leaving the mass grave abandoned," said Nani Gopal.

Eyewitness Babar Karim, a senior citizen of the village, said, "I along with a few other villagers collected the names and the details of the martyrs. We don't know if the names of the martyrs had been included in any government list."

Another witness Rejaul Karim said the villagers want a memorial there.

Athgoria upazila Muktijoddha Sangsad commander Johurul Haque said they had submitted a proposal to establish a memorial at Kalibari to the Ministry of Liberation War Affairs a few years ago but the ministry was yet to

Stay alert

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the opportunity to get away. We will have to keep the government's image intact."

Rizvi was addressing an award-giving ceremony on investigative journalism organised by Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB) at its Dhanmondi office.

The government officials, who create obstacles for journalists working on investigative reports, do it for their own interest. There are many ministries, departments, divisions and directorates of the government. Corruption at any ministry or any department does not mean that the government is responsible for it, Rizvi said.

"In many cases, owners of the media houses do not pay taxes. On the other hand, they spread propaganda against ministers," he said, adding that owners of many media houses are big industrialists who often use their media houses to put pressure on the government for their business purposes.

ATM Shamsul Huda, former chief election commissioner and a member of TIB's board of trustees, said, "It is really very tough for the media in the country to do investigative journalism. You [media] will have to find out the methods for your survival."

While sharing their experiences in doing investigative reports, three journalists -- Mustafiz Shafi, Sharmin Rinvi and Iftekhar Mahmud -- talked about various obstacles and challenges they faced at different levels of the administration.

Nine journalists from the daily Prothom Alo, Khulna-based daily Purbanchal, Maasranga TV, Independent TV, and Jamuna TV were awarded for their reports on investigating journalism.

'Go home' drone seeks

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a Scottish tune typically used in Japan to announce that a store is closing.

"You can't really work when you think 'it's coming over any time now' and hear 'Auld Lang Syne' along with the buzz," said Norihiro Kato, a director at Taisei, an office security and cleaning firm that co-developed the system.

The drone is equipped with a camera, which stores footage on an SD card. Office scenes can also be monitored almost in real time from a remote location.

The machine recognises its location on a building floor without GPS.

It takes off from its port, makes a surveillance flight on a pre-set path and then returns autonomously.

Taisei plans to start the T-Frend service in April in collaboration with drone system developer Blue Innovation and telecoms operator NTT East.

The fee for the service is yet to be officially set but "the target price" is around 500,000 yen (\$4,500) a month, said Kato.

T-Frend's developers are also studying the possibility of giving the drone facial recognition technology to tell who is in the office after hours or whether there is an intruder.

take any steps.

He said they gave details of the martyrs and detailed account of the massacre.

Asked why there was not even a signboard at the mass grave, Johurul claimed that men of ant-liberation forces dominate the area and the locals do not dare to do anything about the mass grave.

PM to leave

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Bangladesh remains among the countries most affected by climate change in the last two decades.

In the latest Global Climate Risk Index-2018, Bangladesh was sixth among countries most affected during the period, 1997-2016. In 2016 alone Bangladesh stood 13th among other countries in the world.

Over 50 heads of state and government are expected to take part in the One Planet Summit.

Police clear

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submitted the report before the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court of Dhaka yesterday afternoon.

In the report, he said the charges brought against the 11 were not proved and they should be relieved.

The 11 Biman staffers are: SM Rokonuzzaman, Samiul Haque, Lutfor Rahman, Milon Chandra Biswas, Zakir Hossain and Siddiqur Rahman of Biman's engineering and technical department, Debesh Chowdhury, chief engineer (production), SA Siddique, chief engineer (quality assurance), Billal Hossain, principal engineer, Shah Alam, engineer (technician) and Najmul Haq, engineer (officer).

The VVIP flight carrying Hasina made an emergency landing on November 27 last year at Ashgabat International Airport in Turkmenistan after a loose nut caused engine oil leakage, and oil pressure loss in engine no-1 of the Boeing 777-300ER aircraft.

On December 21, Wing Commander (ret'd) MM Asaduzzaman, director of engineering and material management of Biman, filed the case against nine employees under the Special Powers Act with Airport Police Station. Two more Biman officials were arrested later.

China, accused of abuses, hosts human rights forum

AFP, Beijing

China touted its political and development model as it hosted an inaugural global human rights forum yesterday, even as activists slammed the country's own abuses.

President Xi Jinping has overseen a sweeping crackdown on civil society since taking power in 2012, targeting everyone from human rights lawyers to celebrity gossip bloggers.

Hundreds of activists have been detained in the past five years while internet censorship has intensified.

And China became the first country since Nazi Germany to allow a Nobel Peace Prize laureate to die in state custody when democracy activist Liu Xiaobo succumbed to liver cancer under heavy police guard in July.

But some 300 participants gathered in Beijing's Great Hall of the People to hear about the country's "human rights development path with Chinese characteristics" at the South-South Human Rights Forum.

Administrative officials at many companies push overtime out of the door but this has ironically resulted in these officials working overtime themselves, to say nothing of "causing friction between employees", the companies said in a statement.

Firms have therefore turned to security companies for this task, but they have struggled to provide enough staff given a nationwide labour shortage in Japan.

T-Frend therefore serves the twin function of reducing overtime and making up for this labour shortage, the firms claimed.

Japan's government has been trying to change a culture in which working long hours is perceived as proof of loyalty and dedication.

Every year in Japan, long working hours are blamed for dozens of deaths due to strokes, heart attacks and suicides.

In February, the country launched the "Premium Friday" programme, urging employees to knock off early on the last Friday of the month with the aim of both reducing work hours and invigorating spending.

But the plan fell flat with many claiming the last Friday of the month is one of their busiest days.