



A hospital staffer tends to a wounded a policeman who had been injured in a clash between law enforcers and activists of Bangladesh Chhatra League over a trifling matter in Bandarban Friday night. The photo was taken at Bandarban Sadar Hospital yesterday.

PHOTO: SANJOY KUMAR BARUA

JERUSALEM PLAN Mahathir calls Trump a 'villain'

REUTERS, Kuala Lumpur

Muslim-majority Malaysia's former prime minister Mahathir Mohamad on Friday called U.S. President Donald Trump an "international bully" and a "villain" for his move to recognise Jerusalem as Israel's capital. Trump last week reversed decades of U.S. policy by recognising Jerusalem as the capital of Israel, and said the United States would move its embassy to Jerusalem from Tel Aviv in the coming years.

The status of Jerusalem is one of the thorniest barriers to a lasting Israeli-Palestinian peace. Israel considers Jerusalem its eternal and indivisible capital and wants all embassies based there.

Palestinians want the capital of an independent state of theirs to be in the city's eastern sector, which Israel captured in the 1967 Middle East war and annexed in a move never recognized internationally.

Sayedul Hoque

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Sayedul is survived by his wife and son.

His first namaz-e-janaza will be held at the South Plaza of the Jatiya Sangsad at 9:00am today, said a press release.

His body will be taken to his hometown Nasirnagar, Brahmanbaria, for a second janaza at Ashutosh Pilot High School at 11:00am, said Shah Alam, public relations officer of the fisheries ministry.

He will be buried at his family graveyard in Purbobhagh village after Zohr prayers.

Sayedul was born on March 4, 1942, in Purbobhagh village.

Over the course of a career that began when he was in college in the mid 60s, Sayedul was elected MP five times, 1973, 1996, 2001, 2008 and 2014.

Known for his clean image and popularity in his constituency, Sayedul became the fisheries minister when the Awami League formed the government in 2014.

He was the vice-president of Brahmanbaria College Students' Union in 1965 and he actively took part in the movements leading to the Liberation War.

He did his MA in Economics and LLB at Dhaka University in 1970.

President Abdul Hamid, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, Jatiya Sangsad Speaker Shirin Sharmin Chaudhury, Agriculture Minister Matia Chowdhury, Finance Minister AMA Muhith, and many others expressed shock at Sayedul's death.

In their messages, they recalled Sayedul's contributions to the country's independence, saying he played an important role in the six-point movement and took part in the Liberation War.

The country lost a dedicated and honest leader, they said.

They also prayed for his departed soul and conveyed condolences to the grieving family.

President Abdul Hamid said, "His death left a vacuum in the political arena. His contribution to the welfare of the country and its people, and to flourish the spirit of Liberation War will always be remembered."

Residents of Nasirnagar said Sayedul always stood by them through thick and thin.

"We lost a generous politician, social worker and an experienced MP. This loss is irreparable," Morad Mridha, a journalist of Nasirnagar, said.

Bangladeshis

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"I was shocked because Bangladeshis are not like that, we do not support the attacker," he stated.

A young Bangladeshi-American student attending the City College of New York, said she was horrified when details of the attack surfaced.

"I was lucky enough to not have been on the trains during the time of the explosion," she said. "My friend called me asking me if I was okay and told me the bomber was Bangladeshi."

"I felt my heart sink. I immediately thought about my mother who works in the city and whether she was going to be safe or not. She wears a hijab and I didn't want her to get caught in any altercations with anyone. I just thought that I shouldn't speak Bangla in the open or go around wearing kameez, it won't be safe," she said.

Many Bangladeshis feel the community needs to start taking action to protect themselves. A teacher, who often commutes to work by train in the city, felt this was a lesson for the community to be extra vigilant.

She said, "We need to keep an eye on our family and neighbours. If we want to keep our reputation, we need to act now and be alert and watchful."

Chowdhury echoed her thoughts. "We should be united. We have to prove that the attacker is not a reflection of us, that we are not bad people."

Meanwhile, after the attack, President Trump has called for serious immigration reforms, blaming chain migration for the terror incidents Americans have seen in the last few

months.

Some Bangladeshis are also apprehensive about possible travel sanctions, hoping they do not face harsh reaction from the government.

"It will be sad if the government starts targeting us," a 50-year-old Bangladeshi woman said. "It is going to be a little harder for us to come into the country. This is the first time a Bangladeshi has ever done something like this."

The Bangladesh embassy reported that no restrictions on traveling from Bangladesh are known as of yet and did not comment on the issue any further. The embassy reassures that Bangladesh has good relations with the United States government and will cooperate while dealing with the aftermath of the Port Authority incident.

The explosion on December 11 happened in an underground passage-way under 42nd Street between 7th and 8th Avenues. The 7:30am blast caused smoke to fill the passageway, which was crowded with throngs of Monday morning commuters. Four persons were injured in the incident.

The attacker was identified as Akayed Ullah, a 27-year-old Bangladeshi man from Brooklyn. Authorities have reported Ullah carried out the attack for the Islamic State and cited the conflict in Gaza as another motive.

Back in October, in another terror attack, Sayfullo Saipov, a man from Uzbekistan, plowed a pickup truck into a crowd down a street in Manhattan, killing eight people and injuring 11.

Rahul takes helm

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an increase in inter-faith violence, including attacks by vigilantes largely targeting Muslims for allegedly consuming beef or killing cows which are sacred to Hindus.

Gandhi was elected unopposed to take over from his mother Sonia who has been at the helm since 1998 following the assassination of her husband Rajiv. She helped the Congress win the general elections in 2004 and 2009.

But the party was swept out of office by the BJP in 2014 and is now in a fight to win back support before a general election which must be held by 2019.

Gandhi became Congress vice-president in 2013 and led the campaign for the 2014 election, in which the party recorded its worst-ever showing as it lost power to Modi's BJP.

Since then, the party has lost polls in many key states to the BJP, exposing Gandhi to further criticism.

"Personal attacks on my son have made him fearless. I am sure he will lead the party with exemplary courage," Sonia said to loud applause from party supporters who arrived in busloads for the ceremony.

Slogans of "long live Rahul" were shouted as hundreds of supporters danced and burst firecrackers.

Gandhi will confront his first test as Congress leader this week when election results emerge from Gujarat, Modi's home state, which the BJP has ruled for over two decades.

He has led the Congress campaign for the election, winning the backing of some influential caste groups who say they have been left behind by an economic boom in the prosperous western state.

However, surveys Thursday showed the BJP will sweep Gujarat as well as elections in the northern state of Himachal Pradesh.

Results of the elections in both states will be out tomorrow.

Gandhi entered public life 13 years ago when he stood and won in his family seat of Amethi in north India.

The fifth-generation scion looked

out of place and came across as a reluctant politician until this year when he appeared more confident during his public appearances.

Gurpreet Mahajan, a political studies professor at Delhi's Jawaharlal Nehru University, said Gandhi faces a tough task.

"It will be important how he manages to bring changes in the party functioning, like bringing young leaders to the fore and overcoming opposition criticism about his leadership," she told AFP.

"If he is able to bring changes at the grassroots level that can give a new direction to the party that has been struggling in face of a resurgent BJP."

Outrageous!

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administration organised the doa mahfil at the Muktiyoddha Sangsad office to mark the Victory Day. People were supposed to place wreaths at the mural of Bangabandhu at the office after prayers.

Police and witnesses said Faijul while conducting the doa said, "May Allah grant heaven for those who were hanged for killing Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman in 1975."

"The principal repeated the sentence twice ... surprising everyone present," Officer-in-Charge Hasan Al Mamun of Gopalpur Police Station told The Daily Star.

Gopalpur Upazila Nirbahi Officer Dilruba Sharmin, Upazila Parishad Chairman Younus Islam Talukder, Municipality Mayor Rokibul Haque Chhana and local freedom fighters and leaders and activists of Awami League and its associate organisations were present.

The OC said there was commotion but the political leaders took the situation under control and police detained Faijul on the spot.

"Faijul was being quizzed by law enforcers at Gopalpur Police Station. Necessary legal steps will be taken against him after investigation," the OC added.

Noble effort

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In 2001, Sekandar began making the changes. He first planted a Kamini (Murraya paniculata) tree at the entrance of the morgue. Over the years, he planted around 25 trees, thinking that soon the place would be bestowed with shadow and the many fragrances of nature, he told The Daily Star.

After a new building of the morgue situated at the premise began in 2008-09, Sekandar dove into his gardening with a fervour.

Now the small garden includes a palm tree, four patabahar trees, three neem trees, one kadam tree, three mango trees, one jackfruit tree, one boroi tree, one custard apple tree, one pomegranate tree, one china-rose and three rose plants.

Sekandar said he bought the plants from High Court and Bakshi Bazar. When the flowers bloom, their many fragrances momentarily help people forget where they are. The trees have beautified the environment of the morgue.

Sekandar, with his other assistants, take care of the trees regularly. Earlier, they used to water the plants twice a day, but now they do it in the evening every day, adding that they also cut branches if they grow bigger.

Sohel Mahmud, head of forensic medicine department at the DMC, said people with heavy hearts gather in the morgue premise while these trees give them a little relief even after their grave loss.

"We are trying to expand the gardening," Sohel added.

While Sekandar used to dissect many bodies before, now he only coordinates the procedure while his younger brother Ramu Das dissects bodies. Sekandar, with his film star looks can focus on his gardening, one tree at a time.

UPDF man

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A former UIP member, also a UPDF member, was shot dead in Naniarchar upazila of Rangamati on December 5. The UPDF had also blamed the United Peoples Democratic Front (Democratic) for that killing.

It's evident

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University and Manarat International University.

The study -- Bangladesh: Facing Challenges of Radicalisation and Violent Extremism -- sought to understand the root causes of violent extremism, its challenges and the way out.

The analysis has been done at the levels of symptoms, through examining the shifts and changes in language, dress codes, observations about festivals, sculptures, culture, education, religion and secularism, politics and so on.

Presenting their findings, Prof Amena Mohsin said influence of radicalisation on university students were very much visible in their clothing, manner of conversation, and celebration of different national days.

The youth have grievances about the way the state machinery operates. They think no rules or systems are working in the country at present, she added.

"The youth cannot believe they will get jobs on completion of their formal education if they follow the path of honesty. Such a state of confusion is pushing them towards extremism," she noted.

The research found that students now use Arabic words while greeting and bidding farewell and also during other everyday activities.

The use of head scarves such as hijab and niqab by female students and the trend of wearing trousers above the ankles by the male students -- both in line with Wahhabism dress code -- are on the rise.

The study also found many students have dissenting views on celebrating various national days.

"Some of them even consider 'Mongol Shova Jatra' [the Bangla new year procession] as Hindu culture."

The study found social media has cocooned the youth into a shell and has become an important tool for radicalisation.

RECOMMENDATIONS
The study made several recommendations, including creating spaces and institutions -- cultural, economic, political -- which would integrate human rights and be gender sensitive.

It said continuous interaction between the civil and the political circles is extremely critical. Besides, psychosocial support for the radicalised and their rehabilitation and reintegration in society is important.

It also recommends continuous research and profiling of the extremists as well the creation of database of incidents of violence and violent extremism, which is important to understand and face the challenges of violent extremism.

For them, Facebook

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to be explored, according to a study by social media research organisations We Are Social and Hootsuite. In April of this year, Dhaka alone boasted 2.2 crore Facebook users, second among the top cities worldwide.

Capitalising on this, a group of Bangladeshis led by Afeef Zaman launched an app -- ShopUp -- more than a year ago to make the management of Facebook shops user-friendly and simple.

At the four day long Digital World 2017 fair this month, the ShopUp team introduced a module added to the platform, which it developed in partnership with Facebook. The new features will ease delivery of products and help run promotion of products on Facebook through bKash payment.

Afeef said two-thirds of daily online orders, nearly 15,000-20,000, are placed in small Facebook businesses.

He said his team is now working with at least 5,000 Facebook entrepreneurs who have average monthly sales of Tk 70,000-Tk 1 lakh.

Clients are more concentrated in the capital though the businesses deliver products across the country, said Rajib Ahmed, president of e-Commerce Association of Bangladesh (e-CAB).

INCOME GENERATION
Ease of operation, not requiring trade licence and tax identification number, less dependency on capital, low risk, and above all no overhead costs, are the factors encouraging young, educated entrepreneurs to enter the online business, he added.

To draw the attention of the Facebook crowd, even businesses who have brick-and-mortar shops like Aarong or e-commerce websites like Chaldal.com and Rokomari.com, are signing up to the social media platform.

Facebook business can be seen as a means for earning income for the youth especially in light of the worrying picture painted by a British Council sponsored report on graduate unemployment in South Asia in 2015. The report estimated graduate unemployment to be at 47 percent, almost 10 times the national average.

Talking about job opportunities in the capital, Rajib said the city offers few job opportunities for graduates and they can instead easily get into Facebook business with small capital.

WOMEN WORKING FROM HOME
According to Rajib, a majority of online entrepreneurs are women who find it convenient working from home.

One such entrepreneur is Borsa Islam, a mother of two children.

A lawyer, Borsa increasingly became homebound, taking the sole responsibility for rearing her children. Looking for a way to engage herself in income generation, she started a boutique business a year ago using her personal Facebook page and eventually joined a group -- F-Commerce Bangladesh -- and created another page -- Excelente Collections by Borsa Islam -- to promote her clothing line.

Her success is quite visible with a rapidly expanding client base and 7,800 plus followers of her business page in a short period of time. Borsa has now hired two tailors to meet the growing demand for her clothes.

She says she loves the freedom she enjoys. "It's like a part-time job," she says, adding that she can decide a convenient time to work.

"It [the Facebook business] is good for newcomers [to business]," says Sara Altaf, another individual who sells designer clothes to clients through Facebook.

It has been her hobby to design

clothes for women, she says, which was why she started her own business more than a decade ago on a very small scale at home. She used to sell items to only people in her circle at the beginning.

With Facebook becoming popular, she turned to the site in 2004-05 for continuing and expanding the business. "I was a housewife and could earn my pocket money from the business."

The business has grown steadily encouraging her to get a trade licence, though not required, and hiring four dedicated tailors.

Around a year ago, she rented a showroom but then shut it down quickly as she found out it was hard to attain sustainability with limited investment.

"There are many hidden costs of a physical business outlet," Sara says, adding that those aren't a matter of concern for online businesses.

Thirty-four-year-old Ezazur, also working for a non-profit organisation, echoed Sara's opinion.

He, however, feels his Click'n Shop business has reached its limit. He has warehouses in the USA, UK, Malaysia and India to stockpile products before he gets them imported by a third party.

For showcasing his increasing inventory, offering online payment and tracking facilities, he is now thinking of creating a website. But before doing so, he needs to make the calculations first -- the startup cost and the investment required to keep the website operational.

According to Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission 80 percent of internet users are active on the social networking site, demonstrating the immense business potential of the medium.

It is only a matter of gaining customers' confidence in the quality of products they purchase online, for which entrepreneurs can get trade licences and tax identification numbers, says Rajib, of e-CAB.

With licences and tax IDs, they can get registered with different business associations like his and get support from members.

Teenage girl

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daughter to Dhaka to avoid something like this but the fate did not spare my family," the father lamented at the hospital, where the girl is being treated for critical injuries.

He filed a case with Ishwarganj Police Station Friday night accusing Shohag and an unidentified young man, Badrul Alam Khan, officer-in-charge of the police station, said.

Police could not arrest any of the suspects.

The landless peasant father also said his chances of getting justice were slight as the accused were influential people.

After passing her SSC exams this year, the girl went to Dhaka and started working at a garment factory to escape the Shohag's harassment.

She went home on Thursday.

In the wee hours of Friday, as she left her home to go to the toilet, Shohag and his accomplice forcibly took the girl to a secluded place nearby, raped her and cut her genitals, the father alleged.

Hearing her screams, family members and neighbours took her to a hospital.

"Before she moved to Dhaka, Shohag used to ask her to marry him and often made indecent proposals on her way to school. Rejected, he told her that he would teach her a good lesson," the grieving father said.

"I also informed the stalker's parents but they did nothing."

Her condition is improving and she could be released from the hospital in a day or two, the OC said, quoting doctors.

Shohag could not be reached on his phone for comments.

'Youthquake'

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September around New Zealand's general election.

However, the word was first coined in 1965 by the then Vogue magazine editor Diana Vreeland to describe how youth culture was changing fashion and music.

It beat eight other words on the shortlist.

These included "milkshake duck", a "person or thing that initially inspires delight on social media but is soon revealed to have a distasteful or repugnant past" and "white fragility", defined as "discomfort and defensiveness on the part of a white person when confronted by information about racial inequality and injustice".

Also shortlisted was "broflake", a man who is readily upset or offended by progressive attitudes that conflict with his more conventional or conservative views, and "newsjacking", defined as taking advantage of current events to promote a brand.

Casper Grathwohl, president of Oxford Dictionaries, said Youthquake was a word everyone could rally behind.

"Youthquake may not seem like the

most obvious choice for Word of the Year, and it's true that it's yet to land firmly on American soil, but strong evidence in the UK calls it out as a word on the move," he said.

"We chose youthquake based on its evidence and linguistic interest. But most importantly for me, at a time when our language is reflecting our deepening unrest and exhausted nerves, it is a rare political word that sounds a hopeful note."

"We turn to language to help us mark where we have been, how far we have come, and where we are heading," Oxford Dictionaries said.

Youthquake best reflected not only the ethos, mood and preoccupations of the past year, but had "lasting potential as a word of cultural significance".

The other shortlisted words are antifa, gorpcore, kompromat and unicorn, something dyed with rainbow colours or decorated with glitter.

Previous words of the year include "post-truth" (2016), the "face with tears of joy" emoji (2015), "vape" (2014), "selfie" (2013), "omnishambles" in Britain and "GIF" in the United States (2012) and "squeezed middle" (2011).