

## Double blow

FROM PAGE 16  
Talking to The Daily Star, Chandana Das, wife of Krishnapada, 38, was shaking her head in disbelief.

"He [Krishnapada] didn't tell me that he was going to collect food at the qulkhwani. I would have never let him go had he told me," she said, adding that the sudden death of her husband has made the future of their 14-month-old daughter and four-year-old son uncertain.

Nirapada said they got Tk 5,000 in compensation from the local councillor and were waiting for more as promised.

Families of other victims were as shocked.

"Once we get all the details, we will hand over the compensation," Abul Kalam Azad, district relief and rehabilitation officer, said.

The district administration had promised to give Tk 25,000 to each family of the deceased while Mohiuddin's son Mohibul Hasan Chowdhury Nowfel, had earlier said ABM Fazle Karim Chowdhury, Awami League lawmaker from Raozan, would provide a compensation of Tk 1 lakh to each of the family of the deceased along with other financial aid their children.

Chittagong Metropolitan Police yesterday formed a three-member committee, led by Deputy Commissioner (south) of CMP SM Mostain Hossain, to probe the stampede and submit its report within three working days.

The district administration suspended all the activities of the community centre where the stampede happened.

## Longest wedding

FROM PAGE 16  
surveyor Christophe Dumont of French surveying firm Cabinet Caron-Briffaut and Guinness World Records adjudicator Rob Molloy, who presented a certificate to the company. Afterwards, the wedding dress train was cut into segments and sold, and all the money was donated to charities.

The record had grown significantly since 2006 with the most recent mark being 4,680 metres (15,354 ft 4 in) for a dress made in China earlier this year.

The Guinness World Records title for the Longest line of pie slices was also achieved during the fundraiser. Official adjudicator Anna Orford measured a mouth-watering 421.60 metre display of desserts, baked by Carrefour.

This bettered the previous record of 318.5 metre (1,044.95 ft), achieved by Polish company, Malopolska Organizacja Turystyczna, in 2016.

## Missing journo

FROM PAGE 1  
he said, "I will not talk about it now .... I'm just waiting to go home."

Earlier around 12:10am, he called his mother Bimola Rani Das through his own Banglalink number, which remained switched off since he disappeared over two months ago.

"I am now in Bholta, and I am coming home," he told his mother. His father Chittaranjan Das said, "We are eagerly waiting for him."

On information from journalists, police took him in their custody when he was looking for transport at Rugganj to return to his Raypura home in Narsingdi.

At the time of filing this report around 2:30am, his parents were on their way to Narayanganj to take him home, police said.

Utpal, a senior reporter of purboposhchimbd.news, went missing on October 10. His phone was found switched off since he talked to his mother the same day.

The incident sparked a huge outcry among journalists, rights activists and social media users.

Utpal's family and Khugesta Nur E Naharin, editor of the portal, filed two general diaries with Motijheel Police Station in this regard.

In the general diaries they said Utpal called her mother on October 10 noon and informed her that he was at his office.

## Pope puts Polish Cold War Cardinal Wyszynski on path to sainthood

REUTERS, Vatican City

Pope Francis has put the late Polish Cardinal Stefan Wyszynski, a towering figure of Polish religious freedom who was persecuted by communist authorities during the Cold War, on track for sainthood.

A Vatican statement yesterday said Francis has approved a degree recognising the "heroic virtues" of Wyszynski, who died in 1981. It is the one of the first steps in the process that can lead to sainthood.

When he was named cardinal by Pope Pius XII in 1952 communist authorities did not allow Wyszynski to travel to Rome for the formal investiture until 1957.

## EU urges Myanmar to free Reuters journalists

REUTERS, Brussels

The European Union urged Myanmar on Monday to release "as quickly as possible" two Reuters reporters arrested last week.

"The recent arrest in Yangon of two journalists working for Reuters News Agency is a cause of real concern," a spokeswoman for the EU's foreign affairs chief, Federica Mogherini, said.

Journalists Wa Lone, 31, and Kyaw Soe Oo, 27, were arrested last Tuesday evening after they were invited to dine with police officers on the outskirts of Yangon, Myanmar's largest city.

Little is known of the allegations against the two journalists, other than that police said they were "arrested for possessing important and secret government documents related to Rakhine State and security forces."

"We expect the Myanmar authorities to ensure the full protection of their rights and to release the journalists as quickly as possible," Mogherini's spokeswoman said.

"Freedom of the press and media is the foundation and a cornerstone of any democracy."

The President of the European

Parliament, Antonio Tajani, had expressed similar concerns on Friday at an EU summit in Brussels.

Earlier on Monday, Myanmar's civilian President Htin Kyaw authorised police to proceed with a case against the two detained reporters accused of violating the country's colonial-era Official Secrets Act.

Mogherini's spokeswoman said the EU was aware that the arrests may be connected to the journalists' reporting on the crackdown in Rakhine on the Rohingya Muslim minority. The two had reported on the issue in the past.

"The EU reiterates its call on the Myanmar government to ensure transparency and to make serious efforts in order to hold accountable all those involved in serious human rights abuses in the context of the ongoing crisis in Rakhine State," the spokeswoman added.

The EU has sanctions in place against Myanmar barring the sale of arms and equipment that can be used for repression. In response to the Rohingya crisis, in October it also suspended invitations to Myanmar military officers.

## Powerful Afghan regional leader ousted as political picture clouds

REUTERS, Kabul

One of Afghanistan's most powerful regional politicians was ousted as governor of the northern province of Balkh on Monday, setting up a confrontation that adds to the uncertainty around President Ashraf Ghani's Western-backed government.

Atta Mohammad Noor is one of the leading figures in Jamiat-e-Islami, a party which mainly represents Afghanistan's Tajik ethnic group, and has used his position in Balkh, on the northern border of the country, as a powerbase to push for a major role on the national stage.

His removal, at a time when tensions between Tajiks and Pashtuns, Afghanistan's two biggest ethnic groups, have been rising, injects extra uncertainty to the already fractured political landscape ahead of presidential elections in 2019.

"My dismissal has no legal or legitimate basis," Noor said on Afghan national television. "For now we are only resorting to civil action but if this atrocity continues, there are many other options."

Atta Noor is one of a clutch of powerful regional and ethnic leaders whom Ghani has struggled to control since he came to office after the disputed election of 2014. Ghani, a

Pashtun, has tried previously to remove him but also discussed a possible role in the government for him.

He submitted his resignation several months ago but the move never took effect until Ghani approved it on Monday, announcing at the same time that Mohammad Daoud, also from Jamiat, would become the next governor of Balkh province.

"The Afghan president has accepted Atta Mohammad Noor's resignation and announced Engineer Mohammad Daoud as the new governor," Shah Hussain Murtazawi a spokesman for Ghani said.

In his remarks on Monday, Atta Noor, who has demanded a number of senior positions in the government for some of his allies, said the resignation had been offered with conditions attached and said these had not been respected.

"Since they didn't meet their responsibilities, I don't accept it," he said.

Ghani's national unity government, formed after the 2014 election forced him into an uneasy power-sharing arrangement with his former rival Abdullah Abdullah from Jamiat, retains the support of the international community and the United States.

## Fog disrupts ferry service

FROM PAGE 16

Ferry transportation on Paturia-Daulatdia route remained halted for four hours since 8:30pm on Monday, when about 16 ferries were stuck on both sides of the route and in the middle of the river Padma, our Manikganj correspondent reported.

More than 600 vehicles were stuck on both sides of Paturia and Daulatdia ferry terminals.

Nasir Mohammad Chowdhury, manager of Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Corporation (BIWTC) for the route, said the fog has increased since Monday evening.

"The waterway in this route was enveloped with thick fog after 8:30pm on Monday. We decided to stop the ferry service to avoid accidents," he said, adding that the ferry transport resumed normal services in the early hours yesterday.

Mobarak Hossain, public relation officer of Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority (BIWTA), told The Daily Star that most launches took

between two and four hours to complete each trip due to the dense fog.

"The launches are running but the waterways transportation was interrupted because of the halt in ferry services," he said.

Meanwhile, two flights - one of Biman Bangladesh Airlines and another of Regent Airways - was delayed for nearly 30 minutes due to dense fog, officials of Civil Aviation Authority of Bangladesh (Caab) said.

AKM Rezaul Karim, public relations officer of Caab, told this newspaper that the inbound flight of Regent Airways from Muscat was scheduled to land at Shah Amanat International Airport in Chittagong, but forced to land at Shahjalal Airport in Dhaka due to the fog.

The flight to Shah Amanat Airport resumed later when weather conditions improved, he added.

Abdur Rahman, a meteorologist of Bangladesh Meteorological Department, said "The intensity of the fog is likely to reduce in two days."

## Prosecution seeks

FROM PAGE 16

Tarique Rahman, a fugitive, and four others were proven. He appealed to the court to give them the highest punishment, said Ziauddin Zia, one of Khaleda's lawyers.

The four other accused are former BNP lawmaker Saleemul Haq Kamal, businessman Sharfuddin Ahmed, late president Ziaur Rahman's nephew Mominur Rahman and former principal secretary Kamal Uddin Siddiqui.

Of them, Sharfuddin and Saleemul are in jail while Mominur and Kamal are on the run.

During the argument, Kajol cited different points from the statements of 32 prosecution witnesses, including complainant and investigation officer of the case. He also mentioned important points from the first information report and the charge sheet of the case which helped prove the charges.

On completion of the argument,

Judge Md Akhtaruzzaman of the Special Judge Court-5 set up at a makeshift court in Bakshi Bazar fixed today for placing the defence arguments.

The court also extended bail term of Khaleda till today after her lawyers submitted two separate petitions.

Earlier in the day, Khaleda appeared before the same court and sought time for placing her self-defence statement in the Zia Charitable Trust graft case.

In July 2008, the ACC filed the Zia Orphanage Trust graft case with Ramna Police Station accusing Khaleda, her son Tarique and four others of misappropriating over Tk 2.10 crore that had come as grants for orphans from a foreign bank.

Three years later, the anti-graft body lodged the Zia Charitable Trust graft case with Tejgaon Police Station, accusing four people, including Khaleda, of abusing power to raise funds for the trust from unknown sources.

## Philippine storm toll rises to 43 as hopes fade for missing

AFP, Manila

The death toll from a tropical storm that pummeled the central Philippines rose to 43 with hopes fading for dozens of others still missing after massive landslides, authorities said yesterday.

Slow-moving Kai-Tak finally swept out to the South China Sea on Monday after inducing days of heavy rain that led to deadly floods and landslides as it sliced across the central islands last weekend.

The government's disaster monitoring agency listed 43 dead in an updated tally and said 45 other people were still missing, many of them feared buried by mud avalanches that struck the small island of Biliran.

## Where is

FROM PAGE 2

hospital also say that the child was male. When the hospital staffers gave the parents a girl child, they protested, said sources.

Hospital officials spoke to the mother and the hospital staffers at the spot. The staffers denied any wrongdoing.

Mustafizur Rahman, administrative officer of the hospital, lodged a missing person's case on Monday morning with Mymensingh Kotwali Police Station accusing unidentified people of abducting the male child.

The deputy director of the hospital said the hospital authorities have contacted the ministry concerned about the matter seeking advice.

"Proper investigation is needed to find the facts. Whether it is a job of an organised gang or merely a mistake," said Laxmi Narayan.

Prof Anwar Hossain, head of the Neonatal Ward, said that in his 30-year-long career, he had never faced an incident such as this.

"We are seriously concerned ... we either made a grave mistake in identifying the sex of the baby or while writing the information down. The female child is still in the ICU, and will need a DNA test to prove the claim of the parents," said the doctor.

## Politics now

FROM PAGE 1

in the city yesterday. He said weaknesses in democratic institutions were damaging the organisational discipline of the political parties. Besides, there were no signs of leadership from the new generation.

Politics has now become a game of the rich as money and muscle power have intruded into political parties, added Sobhan, also the chairman of the Centre for Policy Dialogue, an independent thinktank.

A tendency of committing crimes has developed due to weak rule as well as for amassing wealth illegally, he told the programme.

"The defaulters of Motijheel [loan defaulters] receive support from political leaders which help them patronise criminals. These criminals help them take part in polls and even grab state properties," said the former adviser to a caretaker government.

Harun ur Rashid, chairperson of Nurjahan Murshid and Prof Khan Sarwar Murshid Trust Fund, presided over the programme at the auditorium of Asiatic Society of Bangladesh.

## Turkey seeks

FROM PAGE 2

end," Fakhru told reporters while briefing them about the meeting.

He said the Binali came here to visit Rohingyas and talk to the Bangladesh government over how the displaced people can be sent back to their own country with dignity.

He also added that Binali told them that their government and people are very sympathetic towards Rohingyas and that they had been working in this regard from the very beginning of the crisis.

Apart from the Rohingya influx, other issues relating to Bangladesh's current political situation and the country's upcoming general election were discussed in the 45-minute meeting.

"We've also discussed what will be our and the government's role in the next general election. We've also discussed different activities of the government," Fakhru added.

Turkey, the current chair of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), took a firm stance against the persecution of Rohingyas from the beginning of the Rohingya crisis.

Last September, Turkish First Lady Emine Erdogan and Turkish Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu visited Rohingya camps in Cox's Bazar.

Fakhru, BNP standing committee members Dr Abdul Moyeen Khan, Amir Khasru Mahmud Chowdhury, chairperson's advisory council member Sabihuddin Ahmed and Enamul Haque Chowdhury were present at the meeting.

## Turkey to help Rohingyas

FROM PAGE 1

economic and trade relations," he said, terming Bangladesh a dynamic nation with nearly 7 percent GDP growth over the past few years.

After a bilateral meeting with his Bangladesh counterpart Sheikh Hasina, the Turkish PM highly appreciated Hasina's diplomacy over the Rohingya issue and Bangladesh's support to the displaced people.

He said the bilateral document signed between Bangladesh and Myanmar on November 23 will make Rohingyas' return to their home possible soon.

The Turkish premier urged the international community to enhance their support for Rohingyas in Bangladesh and find a political solution to the crisis, looking at it as a humanitarian crisis instead of seeing it as an issue of Bangladesh.

He arrived in Dhaka on Monday night on a two-day official visit.

On Tuesday, Bangladesh and Myanmar formed a joint working group (JWG) to take the next step for the Rohingya repatriation and inked the terms of reference (TOR).

The agreed TOR mandates the JWG to undertake all the necessary measures to start the safe and voluntary return, resettlement and reintegration process of the displaced Myanmar residents as envisaged in the "Arrangement on Return of Displaced Persons from Rakhine State".

An estimated 655,000 Rohingyas have crossed into Bangladesh fleeing violence in Myanmar's Rakhine State since August 25, raising the total Rohingya population in Cox's Bazar to 867,000, said the UN migration agency.

Prime Minister Hasina said she had a very fruitful discussion with her Turkish counterpart on bilateral and international issues of common interests.

"We've reiterated our commitment to work closely and support each other on bilateral and international issues of mutual concern, including the issue of forcibly displaced Rohingya people from Myanmar."

They talked about consolidating cooperation in key areas such as trade and investment, defence, education, tourism and connectivity.

Hasina requested her Turkish counterpart to withdraw 17 percent and 19 percent additional duty imposed on Bangladeshi RMG and ceramic products.

The Turkish PM assured Bangladesh of looking into it, Foreign Secretary Shahidul Haque told reporters at the

Prime Minister's Office.

Bangladesh sought Turkish investment in special economic zones and if necessary, can offer a dedicated zone for the Turkish investors, said the foreign secretary.

Hasina also sought an initiative to quickly finalise the negotiations on Free Trade Agreement between the two countries.

The foreign secretary said the bilateral relation between Bangladesh and Turkey took another step forward following the Turkish PM's visit.

On many international issues like Jerusalem, Syria, and the Middle East, both Bangladesh and Turkey hold similar positions which have made the Dhaka and Ankara relations more consolidated, he said.

Referring to Turkish role at the UN on the Rohingya issue in last September, the foreign secretary said Turkey, along with Saudi Arabia, played a very strong leading role in mobilising international support at that time.

Shahidul said Binali Yildirim wanted to know about the Rohingya situation as they fled to Bangladesh following the crackdown by Myanmar military in August last.

**2 MOUS SIGNED**

Bangladesh and Turkey signed two bilateral documents to enhance cooperation in the areas of small and medium enterprises and maintain the standards of products.

The documents are Memorandum of Understanding between the Small and Medium Enterprise Foundation of Bangladesh and the Small and Medium Enterprises Development Organisation of Turkey, and the other MoU between Bangladesh Standards and Testing Institution and Turkish Standards Institution.

The instruments cover areas such as small and medium enterprises, industrial production, standardisation, capacity building, knowledge sharing and skill development.

The signing ceremony was held after official talks between Hasina and her Turkish counterpart at the PMO.

**TURKISH PM TO VISIT ROHINGYAS**  
The Turkish PM visits Cox's Bazar to meet Rohingyas today, said Foreign Secretary Shahidul.

He will visit Kutupalong camp and assess what kind of supports Rohingyas now need as the country wants to continue its support to Rohingyas.

He will leave Cox's Bazar for home at 2:00pm. Foreign Minister AH Mahmood Ali will see him off at Cox's Bazar airport.

## Bacchu must face quizzing

FROM PAGE 1

"We've contacted the hospital. On the basis of their information we've decided to summon him for the interrogation," the ACC official said, adding that they were yet to fix a date for his quizzing.

"If he does not appear before the commission willingly, steps would be taken as per 19 (3) of Anti-Corruption Commission Act 2004," he said.

According to 19 (3) of the act, if anyone skips interrogation, he or she could be handed up to three years' imprisonment or fine or both.

The ACC interrogated Bacchu on December 4 and 6, around four years after one of the biggest loan scams in the country's banking sector came to the fore.

During interrogation on December 6, Bacchu "became sick". An ACC doctor saw him and the interrogation continued.

According to Bangladesh Bank findings, around Tk 4,500 crore had been siphoned out of BASIC Bank between September 2009 and 2012 when Bacchu led the bank's board of directors.

On July 14, 2014, the BB gave the

ACC a report detailing how the money was embezzled through shell companies and dubious accounts.

The report said Bacchu illegally influenced all activities of the state-owned lender, leaving the once-sound bank crumbling.

The BB also narrated how the former chairman abused his power to play an active role in loan scams. He approved many loans ignoring recommendations of branches.

He also allegedly approved loans on forged documents.

However, Bacchu has not been made an accused in any of the cases.

Meanwhile, the ACC has begun its enquiry into alleged irregularities in disbursing Tk 20 crore loan to the accounts of two firms owned by Bacchu's younger brother.

Shell companies allegedly took out loans from BASIC Bank, when Bacchu was its chairman, and the money was transferred to the firms.

Bangladesh Financial Intelligence Unit (BFIU), the anti-money laundering unit of the central bank, in 2014, discovered this in a probe.

Recently, ACC appointed an officer to enquiry the matter, sources said.

## Trump discloses

FROM PAGE 16

deemed "the most significant existential threat to the United States."

Trump's presidential campaign is being investigated for possible collusion with Russia in the run-up to his shock 2016 election win -- allegations the 45th president has dubbed "fake news."

The strategy accuses China of seeking "to displace the United States" in Asia, listing a litany of US grievances, from deficits, to data theft to spreading "features of its authoritarian system."

"Contrary to our hopes, China expanded its power at the expense of the sovereignty of others," it says.

**CHINA, RUSSIA SLAM US**  
China and Russia yesterday decried President Donald Trump's first National Security Strategy -- which pilloried both nations as challengers to US power -- as a "Cold War mentality" with an "imperialist character".

"We urge the United States to stop intentionally distorting China's strategic intentions and to abandon outdated notions such as the Cold War mentality and zero-sum game, otherwise it will only harm itself or others," Chinese foreign ministry spokeswoman Hua Chunying said.

Moscow issued its own denunciation moments later.

"The imperialist character of this document is obvious, as is the refusal to renounce a unipolar world, an insis-

tent refusal," Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov told reporters.

The report's tough tone contrasts sharply with Trump's friendlier face-to-face encounters with Chinese President Xi Jinping and Russian leader Vladimir Putin.

**TWO ADMINISTRATIONS**

The national security document -- 11 months in the making -- is required by law and is designed to form a framework for how America approaches the world.

Previous national security strategies have been released without much fanfare and served as guideposts, rather than doctrinal commandments.

But in this unorthodox administration, the document had taken on extra significance.

Foreign officials in Washington often complain that there are effectively "two administrations" -- one that they hear from day-to-day in contacts with the State Department and Pentagon and another coming from Trump, often via Twitter in 280 characters or fewer.

Trump and his advisors often publicly differ starkly on fundamental security issues from the Middle East to talks with North Korea.

But allies looking for clarity about the intentions of the world's pre-eminent economic and military power are likely to be confused by Trump's mixed messages.