



Firefighters trying to douse the flames in Asiana Garments Industry Ltd on the fifth floor of a 12-storey building in the capital's Rampura yesterday. They succeeded in two and a half hours. Fortunately, the fire broke out during the lunch break at the factory and there were no casualties. PHOTO: COLLECTED

PM returns home from Australia

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina returned home in the early hours of today, wrapping up her three-day official visit to Australia.

A Thai Airways plane carrying the prime minister and her entourage, which departed from Sydney International Airport around 4:00pm (local time), landed here at about 12:50am.

The prime minister went to Australia on April 26 at the invitation of her Australian counterpart Malcolm Turnbull.

During her visit, she received the Global Women's Leadership Award at the 2018 Global Summit of Women and had a bilateral meeting with Australian Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull.

She also held meetings with Australian Foreign Minister Julie Bishop and Vietnam Vice President Dang Thi Ngoc Thinh.

The prime minister visited Western Sydney University and paid homage to Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman placing a wreath at the Bust of Bangabandhu on the university campus.

She also attended a community reception at Sofitel Hotel.

Ctg worker dies after falling into oil tank

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A worker died of suffocation after falling inside a tank used for storing motor oil in Fakirhat area under Sitakunda upazila early yesterday.

The deceased was identified as Md Masum, 30, son of late Anwar Hossain hailing from Morrelganj of Comilla, Assistant Sub-Inspector (ASI) Alauddin Talukdar of Chittagong Medical College Hospital (CMCH)'s Police Outpost said.

The incident took place in front of the local electricity office of Fakirhat area while he was cleaning the tank around 12:30am. He was standing on top of the tank from where he fell into it, ASI Alauddin said.

He said Masum was rescued in an unconscious state and taken to Chittagong Medical College Hospital (CMCH) where the on-duty doctors declared him dead.

His body has been at CMCH morgue for autopsy.

Cox's Bazar

FROM PAGE 16 economic and arms sanctions on Myanmar.

The UNSC should do everything to ensure citizenship of the Rohingya in Myanmar and their sustainable repatriation to their places of origin, not to the camps, it said.

Falling prey to grabbers

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Ranjit Kumar Roy, joint director at Bangladesh Bank in Dhaka and son of late Romakanto, said Lal Mia was trying to grab six acres of their land by forging signatures on documents.

"The last time I visited was on March 23. I saw the tin-built home and asked Lal Mia to explain what was going on. He said he had the documents to build a home there."

That was the first time that Ranjit was given photocopied sheets of a 'power of attorney' deed.

"Lal Mia threatened me and said that he would kill me if I went back to our home," he added.

"I couldn't even pay my land tax to the AC-land office for the last two years as the grabber has submitted false deeds there. Lal Mia also mocked me later, repeatedly saying that we would not be able to pay land tax anymore as the local land office is under his control," said Ranjit.

"I submitted a written petition with the Moulvibazar DC office on April 2. From there, I went to the office of the superintendent of Moulvibazar. The SP was very positive, assuring me that there was no way to take power of attorney on a debutter property."

He was referred to the Barlekha Police Station. Ranjit filed a petition with Barlekha police requesting the station to take it as a first information report (FIR), but police officers refused to record it that way.

"This is our home, where we grew up and hold cherished memories. We all gather two to four times a year to celebrate our religious festivals or on holidays, but now there is no peace. My paternal uncle and his family are living there, but always in fear," said Ranjit.

Rajib Purakayastha, a US citizen, who is currently in Dhaka to take care of his ill father Radhakanto, said, "I have also received threats over the phone."

Lal Mia is harassing them to take complete possession of the land on the basis of fake documents, he added. "I filed a GD with Ramna Police Station recently, fearing for my safety."

Denying the allegations, Lal Mia, son of late Mokhlis Ali in Muchegul village in the same upazila, said Radhakanto gave him power of attorney over the land on January 12, 2016. "Since then, I have been looking after all aspects of the land."

Digging

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recover it as soon as possible.

Shahadat Hossain, of Santoshpur village under Rangpur's Mithapukur upazila, who witnessed the incident 47 years ago, visited the spot on Saturday. Shahadat said he saw the tank after it got stuck in 1971. "Indian soldiers tried to pull the tank out of the quicksand by chains, but they could not."

Talking to this correspondent yesterday, Ataur Rahman, chairman of Tukuria union parishad in Pirganj upazila, confirmed that a tank had been found.

Locals said the tank is in knee-deep water.

Rezaul Karim, officer-in-charge of Pirganj Police Station, said police were guarding the spot round the clock.

After visiting the spot, Enamul Habib, deputy commissioner of Rangpur, said steps would be taken to recover the tank as soon as possible.

Ranjit of Bangladesh Bank said Lal Mia forged the signature of Radhakanta, who has been suffering from dementia and has been bedridden for at least the last two years.

"Technically speaking, this is a debutter property that cannot be transferred or sold. In that case, how the property can be registered in the Barlekha sub registrar's office under his name should also be investigated by higher authorities," he added.

"He notarised a number of false documents from Topkhana Road in Dhaka, which is evidently fake, in bids to grab the Zaminder Bari, the temple on it, family crematorium, pond, paddy fields, and other infrastructure."

Referring to recent attacks on the Hindu communities, Faruq Mahmud Chowdhury, president of Shushashoner Jonno Nagorik, Sylhet chapter, said fundamentalist groups continue to attack the Hindus, as the government did not take punitive action against the unscrupulous locals.

He demanded effective measures from the government to prevent the illegal grabbing of debutter properties and ensure security of members of the minority community.

Debdulal Dhar, officer-in-charge (investigation) of Barlekha Police Station, said he received complaints from Ranjit on the matter of land grabbing. "I am preparing an investigation report that will be submitted to the OC soon."

"We are ready to help the minority families," he added.

Tofayel Islam, deputy commissioner of Moulvibazar, also told The Daily Star that the matter was under investigation.

Man killed

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Patkelghata police arrested fugitive Nabab Ali from Patkelghata yesterday noon. He was handed over to Satkhira thana as he is accused in several cases with them.

During interrogation Nabab Ali confessed the possession of arms. A police team took Ali along to Abaderhat area around 4:00am. About 200 yards from the spot, members of Ali's gang started shooting at the police team from an abandoned house triggering a gunfight.

The criminals managed to flee the scene after exchange of fire for about 15 minutes. Nabab Ali and three police members were injured in the gunshots fired by the miscreants.

The injured were taken to Satkhira Sadar Hospital where doctors at emergency department declared Nabab Ali dead.

Injured police members Constables Ashiquzzaman, Tuhin Akhter and sub-inspector (SI) Ibrahim Khalil were given first aid.

Dr Iqbal Mahmud of the emergency department of Satkhira Sadar Hospital said, Nabab Ali was brought dead to the Hospital around 6:00 am yesterday. There were two bullet wounds on the right and left sides of his chest. No one from Nabab Ali's family could be contacted despite several attempts.

Satkhira Sadar thana OC Maruf Ahmed said, a pistol, a bullet, two machetes and two knives were recovered from the spot. He said, two cases would be filed for attack on police and possession of arms.

Abductors still

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Manti Chakma, central general secretary of HWF, and Doya Sona Chakma, general secretary of Rangamati unit HWF, were abducted on March 18 and released on April 19.

The HWF is an associate organisation of United Peoples Democratic Front (UPDF).

At the press conference, held jointly by 19 rights organisations, they placed an eight-point demand, including punishment of abductors and safety and security for their families.

Before their release, the abductors forced them to say before a camera that the UPDF (Mukhosh Bahini) and JSS-MN Larma have no involvement in their abduction, Manti said. "We were indescribably tortured mentally, we were not sure if we could come back alive."

On 18 March, the abductors took them to Hadamola Ghat in Naniachar upazila. Two days later, they shifted them to Mahalchhari upazila in Khagrachhari. From there, they were taken to Dighinala upazila and Madhupur area of Khagrachhari, she said.

"We had been in the forest under the open sky and also in a hut."

"We were taken from Merung via Dighinala to Khagrachhari on a vehicle. There were a number of camps and checkpoints of law enforcers. But no one stopped us," she said.

THE KIDNAP

Armed criminals, wearing masks, launched an attack in a residential area of Kudukchhari area of Rangamati around 9:30am on March 18, when pro-UPDF leaders and activists had gathered there. The assailants opened indiscriminate fire.

Dharma Singh Chakma, president of Democratic Youth Forum's Rangamati unit, suffered bullet injuries during the incident.

Manti and Doya took shelter in a nearby house and, according to media reports, the abductors first beat them up before kidnapping them.

The miscreants torched a mess, which was meant for students of remote areas, while leaving the area.

On, march 19 they were handed over to their guardians and local representatives under conditions. Since then they were under surveillance, claimed Manti.

Doya's father filed a case against 19 members of the UPDF (Mukhosh Bahini) and JSS-MN Larma, said HWF President Nirupa Chakma.

Rotten durian

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generated from rotting durian, an extremely pungent fruit which had been left rotting in a cupboard," the Metropolitan Fire Brigade said.

The smell had permeated the building's air-conditioning system, it added. Following the discovery, firefighters gave the all-clear and reopened the building by 6:00pm.

The city's Environment Protection Authority will oversee the removal and storage of the waste, the statement said.

Durian is a tropical fruit known for its strong smell. It is commonly banned from hotel rooms and public transport across Southeast Asia.

The Smithsonian magazine described it as akin to "turpentine and onions, garnished with a gym sock".

Suspected jihadists kill more than 30 Tuaregs in Mali

AFP, Bamako

Suspected jihadists killed more than 30 Tuaregs, including women and children, on Mali's northeastern border with Niger.

The former Tuareg rebel group MSA and tribal leaders said the massacre occurred Friday, a day after another attack by gunmen on motorbikes had left 12 people dead outside the town of Anderamboukane, which is also in the same area.

"There have been 43 deaths in two days, all civilians, from the same community," tribal leader Sidigui Ag Hamadi told AFP from the regional capital Menaka.

"Our fighters are destroying their bases and wiping them out. They are targeting innocent civilians," he added, saying he viewed the bloodletting as a reprisal for attacks on jihadists by armed Tuareg groups.

The MSA also put the death toll from the two attacks in the villages of Aklaz and Awakassa at 43, saying all the victims were from the Idaksahak pastoralist Berber group.

The group urged the governments of Mali and Niger to take steps to ensure that "an immediate end is put

to these abominable crimes" and added that it would "not give in to any intimidation."

Menaka governor Daouda Maiga urged caution regarding the death toll until official observers had arrived on the scene.

"There are various versions, but I know there are women and children among the victims, as well as elderly," Maiga told AFP, while adding he would await the observers' return to Bamako.

Local people had been fearful of reprisals by jihadists who suffered major losses in recent attacks in the region over recent weeks, Menaka official Attaye Ag Ossadki told AFP.

"But nobody imagined that they would kill civilians in this way," he said.

Two weeks ago, the UN's MINUSMA peacekeeping operation said they had received "very serious" information that "summary executions of at least 95 people" had occurred during anti-jihadist operations in the northeastern Menaka region carried out by "a coalition of armed groups" including MSA and Gatia.

Lightning, rain

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trafic for months.

"We thought that we would not suffer from waterlogging this monsoon because of the newly built underground drainage pipelines, but nothing has changed. The road was flooded by rain caused by a normal nor'wester with this year's monsoon yet to set in," said Mojibor Rahman, a resident of east Tejturibazar.

Commuters and rickshaw-pullers were seen wading through knee-deep water on different city streets in the afternoon.

The rain after two days of stifling summer heat, however, brought a sign of relief with the mercury level down and dust-free air for the city dwellers. Dark clouds kept the sun out for most of the morning and cast a night-like ambience over the capital.

Tenth-grader Emran Hossain Akas, a shooter of Pirojpur Rifle Club, who came to the capital to take part in a national shooting competition, said during the rain at Hatirjheel, "Any amount of rain in our region gets accumulated in rivers, canals and lowland. But in Dhaka, every single drop of rain gets clogged on the streets."

The Met office said heavy to moderate rain accompanied by thunders and lightning swept across the country except Barisal and Khulna divisions.

A rainfall of 45 to 88 millimetres during 24 hours is considered heavy, said Ruhul Kuddus, a meteorologist at Dhaka Met office.

Five people including a father and a son and two college students died in different upazilas of Sirajganj, a school student in Noakhali, a farmer in Lalmonirhat, a woman in Rangamati, a day labourer in Brahmanbaria and two persons in Gazipur, our correspondents report.

News agency UNB adds that three people were killed by thunderbolt in Magura in separate places of the district while a farmer died in Sunamganj.

A man died and another woman was injured after coming in contact with a downed power cable during the heavy rain and storm in the capital's Wari area yesterday morning.

Jinnah Choukidar, 48, a bicycle mechanic, was electrocuted when he touched the shutter of a shop in Bongram area around 9:00am. He was declared dead at Dhaka Medical College Hospital, police and family members said.

The shutter was carrying electricity when water submerged the area during the rain, said Rafiqul Islam, officer-in-charge of Wari police.

The woman, whose name could not be known immediately, got electrocuted in the same shutter but was out of danger, the OC added.

Jinnah's brother Solaiman said his brother was on way to Bongshal in the city from his house in Narayanganj. The accident took place when he was waddling through the clogged water hold-

Police detain

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secretary general Habibur Rashid Habib, Vice-Chairman Md Yunus Mridha, Joint Secretary General Golam Hossain, and Organising Secretary Saiful Islam Patu are among the detainees, the BNP said.

In a press statement, the party leaders condemned the detention and demanded their immediate release.

BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhru Islam Alamgir in the statement said the ruling party had the leaders detained to clear its path in the upcoming national elections and to establish a one-party rule.

ing the shutters of the roadside shops after getting down from a bus nearby.

Inclement weather halted inland passenger water vessels services at Sadarghat Launch Terminal for several hours.

The Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority (BIWTA) yesterday suspended all types of water vessel services from Sadarghat thrice following suggestion of the metrological department, BIWTA Joint Director Alamgir Kabir told The Daily Star last night.

The services remained halted from 9:30am to 11:00am, 12:00noon to 1:30pm and 3:00pm to 6:00pm, he informed.

The Met office weather update says a trough of westerly low was lying over West Bengal and adjoining areas with a seasonal low over south Bay.

In its forecast till 9:00am today, it says rain or thunder showers accompanied by temporary gusty wind and lightning flashes are likely to occur in most places over Rangpur, Rajshahi, Dhaka, Mymensingh, Khulna and Sylhet divisions and in many places over Barisal and Chittagong divisions with heavy to very heavy rainfalls in some places and hails at some places across the country.

Four held

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Of the arrestees, Rakibul stands accused in five cases filed with different police stations in Barisal and Laxmipur, he told The Daily Star.

A team of DB police of DMP (South) arrested the four in the capital's Chankharpur area around 1:00pm yesterday, he said.

Police then produced them before a Dhaka court with a seven-day remand prayer. The court granted a four-day remand for Rakibul, a three-day for Ali, a two-day each for Masud and Sayed, said police.

On April 9 night, a group of unidentified people wearing masks carried out the vandalism at the residence of DU Vice-Chancellor Prof Md Akhtaruzzaman during the demonstration for reforms in the quota system of government jobs.

On the next day, the DU authorities formed a five-member committee to probe the incident. On that day, a DU security official filed a case with Shahbagh Police Station against many unknown people over carrying out the mayhem at the house of DU vice-chancellor.

Another lost

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had been working as a domestic help in Banani for nine years to support her seven-member family.

Her father Rosul Mia, who cannot work due to frequent illness, said Rozina was the only wage earner in the family.

"Who will look after my family now?" asked Rosul, demanding punishment of the perpetrators and due compensation.

Rozina lost her right leg as a BRTC bus ran over her when she was reportedly jaywalking in Banani around 8:30am.

She was taken to the National Institute of Traumatology and Orthopaedic Rehabilitation (Nitor) and later shifted to DMCH on April 25 after doctors found her suffering from respiratory problems.

The accident happened just three days after college student Rajib Hossain succumbed to his injuries. He had lost a hand after it got stuck between two racing buses in the city's Bangla Motor on April 3.