Merkel to host Putin for talks on Syria, Ukraine, energy

AFP, Berlin

Russian President Vladimir Putin will visit German Chancellor Angela Merkel on Saturday to discuss the Syrian and Ukraine conflicts, energy issues and other foreign policy issues Berlin announced.

Merkel will host Putin from 1600 GMT at the government retreat Meseberg castle north of Berlin, where they will only give media statements but not hold a joint press conference, said her spokesman Steffen Seibert.

The low-key meeting will focus on "the Syrian conflict, which has gone on far too long, the situation in eastern Ukraine and energy issues", said Seibert at a press conference yesterday.

Relations have been tense between Russia and Western powers, including Germany, over a range of issues, from the Ukraine and Syria conflicts to charges of Russian cyber-attacks and election meddling in several Nato member countries.

Putin and Merkel last met in May in the Russian Black Sea resort of Sochi, but the German leader stayed away from Russia during the football World Cup.

Merkel and her Foreign Minister

Heiko Maas on July 24 held an unusual meeting in Berlin with Russia's army chief of staff Valery Gerasimov and Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov, to discuss Syria and Ukraine.

French President Emmanuel Macron at the time also received Gerasimov, who is usually subject to an EU travel ban, and Lavrov.

Berlin has also hosted ministerial meetings on reviving the stalled Ukraine peace process and on resolving Russian-Ukrainian disputes on gas shipments as Moscow and Berlin plan a controversial new Baltic Sea pipeline project, Nordstream 2.

Iran unveils next generation missile

AFP, Tehran

Iran yesterday unveiled a next generation short-range ballistic missile and vowed to further boost its capabilities, Iranian media said, at a time of rising tensions with the United States.

State broadcaster IRIB said the new Fateh Mobin missile had "successfully passed its tests" and could strike targets on land and sea.

"As promised to our dear people, we will not spare any effort to increase the missile capabilities of the country and we will certainly increase our missile power every day," Defence Minister Amir Hatami said, quoted by conservative news agency Tasnim.

The new missile's range was not given, but previous versions had a range of around 200 to 300 kilometres, according to the US-based Center for Strategic and International Studies.

US officials told Fox News last week that a "Fateh-110 missile" was test-fired by Iran during naval exercises in the Strait of Hormoz last week.

A US general described the exercises as designed to send a message, following threats from Iran that it could shut down the vital, oilshipping waterway in retaliation for renewed sanctions.

"Nothing can stop this missile because of its high degree of flexibility," said Hatami, adding that the new version of the Fateh Mobin was " 100-percent domestically made... agile, stealth, tactical (and) precision-

guided". First space

The new work, is a reflective, inflatable sculpture affixed to a small satellite that will orbit the earth for severa weeks before disintegrating upon reentry into Earth's atmosphere.

Paglen said it is "extremely

"It'll look like one of the stars in the Big Dipper but slowly moving across the sky," Paglen told The Telegraph. "It will be in what's called a sun-

synchronous orbit, and will slowly fall to earth from there, eventually burning up harmlessly as it gets close to earth.'

It will be launched by SpaceX from the Vandenberg Air Force Base in

California at the end of October. Back on Earth, people wanting to see it will be able to put their location into

a "star map" on the website to find out when Orbital Reflector will fly over.

Paglen said he wanted to high-

light how many satellites are circling the Earth. It isn't the first time he has sent a

work of art into space. Previously he launched "The Last Pictures" a collection of 100 images intended to represent human history onto a geostationary satellite in 2012.

Orbital Reflector is co-produced and presented by the Nevada Museum

of Art. An early prototype of the art-

work currently hangs in the museum.

Golam Sarwar

FROM PAGE 1 Saleha Sarwar, two sons, a daughter, and a host of relatives, admirers, wellwishers and fellow journalists to mourn his death.

Sarwar suffered a heart attack on July 29 and was admitted to LabAid Hospital in Dhaka. He was taken to Singapore on August 3. Apart from cardiac complications, he was also suffering from pneumonia. His wife Saleha Sarwar, sons Golam

Shahriar Ranjan and Golam Sabbir Anjan, son-in-law Mia Naim Habib and Samakal special correspondent Shariful Islam went to Singapore with him. Sarwar's condition deteriorated at

the hospital's coronary care unit around midday yesterday and doctors told his relatives that he was in critical condition. President Abdul Hamid and Prime

Minister Sheikh Hasina expressed condolence. In a condolence message, Hasina

recalled with profound respect the outstanding contributions of Golam Sarwar to journalism. "His death is an irreparable loss to this field," she said. Hasina said Golam Sarwar joined all progressive movements in the country

and was always vocal when it came to upholding the Liberation War spirit. "He was also involved in all movements of journalists for realising their

legitimate rights and demands," she added. eternal peace of the departed soul and

conveyed sympathy to his bereaved family.

Industries Minister Amir Hossain Amu; Law Minister Anisul Huq; Roads, Transport and Bridges Minister Obaidul Quader; Attorney General Mahbubey Alam; BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakrul Islam Alamgir; Anti-Corruption Commission Chairman Iqbal Mahmud, and the Jatiya Press Club president and general secretary, Bangladesh Federal Union of Journalists and Dhaka Union of Journalists among others expressed condolence. They prayed to the almighty for the

Finance Minister AMA Muhith;

departed soul. Born on April 1, 1943, in Banaripara

of Barisal, Sarwar graduated and obtained master's degree in Bangla from Dhaka University. He began his journalism career in 1962 as the university correspondent of daily Azadi, published from Chittagong.

He served journalism for more than five decades with accomplishments and professionalism.

Sarwar served as news editor of daily Ittefaq for 27 years. He was the founding editor of

Jugantor which began its journey in 1999 and Samakal which launched in 2005. A book of rhymes written by him,

titled Rongin Belun, and published

from Shishu Academy is an example of

his creative work. Sampadoker Jabanbondi, Aumio Gorol, Amar Joto Kotha, and Swapna The prime minister prayed for the Beche Thak are among the notable

> books he authored. He was awarded the Ekushey Padak in

2014 for his contribution to journalism.

Police didn't ask

FROM PAGE 16

Mourning Day and Eid-ul-Azha. According to media reports, youths

believed to be ruling Awami League men attacked students, journalists and even pedestrians, especially during protests in the capital's Dhanmondi on August 4 and 5 when chase and counter chase took place between students and the youths.

Many of the youths were captured by cameras in action, but none of them was yet to be brought to book. Another reporter asked the IGP why

his force was failing to arrest those youths who brutally beat up on-duty journalists in board daylight and that too at a time when police were picking up people through cyber patrolling over spreading rumours. Javed said there was no instance in

many places in the world that police could do everything in a day. "Some incidents may take one hour [to investigate and resolve] and some others may take several days."

The IGP said he has already instructed the Dhaka Metropolitan Police to this end and a DB team, led by an additional commissioner, was working to scrutinise footage and other information to identify the responsible people.

mere onlookers when journalists came under attack, he said the DB team would look into whether any policeman neglected his duties.

In this regard, the police chief said some law enforcers and police establishments were also attacked during the protest.

There were logical reasons behind the student movement that began following the death of two college students on July 29 and the police assisted them, he added.

But the movement was "hijacked" later and a "third party" infiltrated into it. They spread rumours using social media, circulated photographs of old incidents, mentioning those were of "murdered and raped students", Javed said.

Those who were not students and had political motives were in the "third

A 15-member high-profile

Bangladesh delegation, led by Foreign

Minister AH Mahmood Ali, visited

Rakhine on Saturday to see the accom-

modation facilities, particularly the

pre-fabricated houses, for the return-

The foreign secretary and other

party", he said.

The police chief warned that law enforcers would not spare those who spread rumours. Several hundred people have been identified and 21 cases have been filed in this regard, he mentioned. He urged the people to spread truth

and asked them not to make chaos in the peaceful country.

Javed said they would take legal actions against Bangladeshi expatriates for spreading propaganda on social media.

LNG supply

FROM PAGE 16

On August 8, Hamid said the imported LNG could not be supplied to the transmission line due to adverse weather and some technical problems. "At the end of the year, we hope to give uninterrupted gas supply."

He also said the first consignment was brought as a test batch and the delay in unloading the LNG would not cause any financial loss to the government.

The LNG terminal in Matarbari will initially gasify the liquid and pump it into the undersea pipeline linked to the grid in Anwara. The pipeline has already been set up by Asked why the policemen were Gas Transmission Company.

KGDCL Managing Director Khaiz Ahmed Mozumder told The Daily Star that there was a demand for 500 million cubic feet (cft) of gas in Chittagong every day, but 220 cft to 240 cft was available from the national grid.

In the first phase, 100 million cft of the imported LNG will be supplied to the city through the pipeline. From next month, 280 million cft will be supplied and the amount will keep increasing every month gradually, he added.

The import of LNG is a part of the government's efforts to eliminate gas shortages and power outages and unlock the potential of the economy. Initially, the gas would be supplied to the users in Chittagong.

About 500 million cubic feet of gas per day can be supplied from the LNG terminal.

Hopeful, but not too soon Shahidul said he had made it clear a year ago that the repatriation would not take place overnight. "It can never be done hurriedly as the issues of livelihood and building of houses are

related. There is also the matter of

building confidence among the

He said the Bangladesh delegation had a very cordial discussion with the Myanmar side on Friday. The following day, they were taken to Rakhine, especially to the nearby areas of Maungdaw Township and

willing to take back the Rohingyas."

FROM PAGE 16

in Kurigram Sadar and presidium

member of JP, Tajul became MP seven times. He was the chairman of the parliamentary standing committee on the commerce ministry, Rasel said.

His Namaz-e -janaza would be

Heavy vehicles

dredgers, to overcome the navigabil-

ity crisis, BIWTA Executive Engineer (dredging) ASM Arefin said. Earlier, ferries Comilla, Kakoli and

Kishori were stuck at the mouth of the alternative channel at 4:00am yesterday and the import river-route had become unusable. The ferries were then asked to return to Shimulia ferry terminal. Later at around 11:30am, ferry

Comilla started operation again carrying smaller vehicles from Shimulia terminal. After successfully crossing the natural channel, the other ferries started using the route but with lesser loads and smaller vehicles. Since 5:30pm on Saturday, the ferry service on Louhajang channel

hours, the service resumed at 10:00pm on the same day, but at a smaller scale. vehicles, including buses and trucks, remained suspended on the channel The passengers of the route have been

had been facing poor navigability.

After being halted for almost five

remained closed. BIWTA Additional General Manager (AGM) Khandker Shah Khaled Newaz said the ferry drivers were facing hurdles time and again due to the low water level. Even after dredging with seven dredgers, the depth of water in the alternative

He said the navigability crisis has been created as silt was deposited in the channel, which was being used since June 12.

heavy vehicles were asked to use the Daulatdia-Paturia ferry terminals. Owing to publicity for the last two days, fewer vehicles have been coming to the Shimulia-Kathalbari termi nals, he claimed.

least 3,000 vehicles is carried across the river every day. But now, more than 500 heavy vehicles are waiting to be ferried. Khaled Newaz said two more days

have been taken to make the channel fit for ferry movement.

said dredgers were removing silt from the channel but the work was being hampered due to strong currents.

Former

FROM PAGE 2

was the Speaker of the Lok Sabha from 2004 to 2009.

The veteran leader was expelled from the CPM in 2008 for refusing to resign as the Speaker after his party withdrew support to the UPA-I government.

President Ram Nath Kovind said that Chatterjee's death is a loss for public life in Bengal and India.

a tweet, mourned the loss of Chatterjee and said that the Indian leader was a stalwart of Indian politics who was a "strong voice for the well-being of the poor and vulnera-

too mourned the loss of Chatterjee institution".

Pakistan

national anthem. This was followed by the recitation of the Holy Quran.

The speaker then read out the procedure for the election of the new speaker and deputy speaker.

The MNAs-elect then stood up as Sadiq administered the oath of office to them. The MNAs were then asked to proceed to the speaker's desk to sign the roll of members. Being first in the alphabetical order, PPP cochairman Asif Zardari was the first to be called to sign the roll.

After completion of the swearingin ceremony, the speaker prorogued the NA session until 10:00am on August 15, when the new speaker and deputy speaker of the assembly will be elected. The nomination papers for the same will be submitted by noon today. Strict security measures were taken

to avoid any untoward incident during the proceedings and irrelevant persons had been barred from entering the house. Sessions were also held in the

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and mony for MPAs-elect of Punjab Assembly will take place on August The PTI has already nominated

would face Syed Khursheed Shah of the PPP, a joint candidate of the 11party alliance, Pakistan Alliance for Free and Fair Elections.

Similarly, PTI Chairman Imran Khan will be contesting against PML N President Shahbaz Sharif for the

Death toll in Syria arms depot blast rises to 69: monitor

AFP, Beirut

The death toll of an explosion at a weapons depot in northwestern Syria has risen to 69, mostly civilians including 17 children, a monitor said yesterday as search operations continued. Sunday's blast of unknown origin in

the town of Sarmada in Idlib province took the lives of 52 civilians, the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights said. The explosion also killed 17 members of Hayat Tahrir al-Sham, a jihadist-led alliance, according to the

a network of sources inside Syria. "Rescue operations are still ongoing," Observatory head Rami Abdel Rahman told AFP, more than 24 hours after the blast at the depot inside a residential building.

Britain-based monitor, which relies on

family members of HTS fighters displaced to the area from the central province of Homs, he said. HTS controls more than half of

Most of the civilians killed were

Idlib province and is led by jihadists

Most of the rest is held by rebels,

from Syria's former Al-Qaeda affiliate.

while the regime also holds a slither of the province's southeast. The Islamic State jihadist group also

has sleeper cells in the area.

In recent months, a series of explosions and assassinations -- mainly targeting rebel officials and fighters -have rocked the province. While some attacks have been

claimed by IS, most are the result of infighting since last year between other Regime forces have in the past week

ramped up their deadly bombardment of southern Idlib and sent reinforcements to nearby areas they control.

President Bashar al-Assad has warned that government forces intend to retake control of Idlib, after his Russia-backed regime regained chunks of territory from rebels and jihadists in other parts of Syria.

Around 2.5 million people live in the province, half of them displaced by fighting in other regions of the country.

5 Patuakhali men

FROM PAGE 16

"The accused persons not only simply accompanied the gang but they actively participated, by act of assistance, substantial contribution and facilitation forming part of systematic attack to the commission of devastating activities, abducting numerous women and killing a large number of civilians," the judgement reads. Zead Al Malum, conducting prose-

over the verdict saying, "We have got iustice." Bangladesh Chhatra League brought out a procession in Patuakhali welcoming the verdict and held a rally attended by several ruling Awami

cutor of the case, expressed satisfaction

League leaders. Defence counsels Abdus Sattar Palwan and Abdus Salam Khan said their clients would appeal to the Supreme Court.

According to the International Crimes (Tribunals) Act, 1973, a war crimes convict can file an appeal with the SC within 30 days from the date of the verdict's pronouncement. With the latest verdict, the war

crimes tribunals have so far delivered 34 judgements against 78 people. Fifty-two of them have been sentenced to death.

CHARGES, PUNISHMENT

According to the first charge, the five along with a group of Pakistan army personnel attacked Itbaria village on May 4, 1971 and looted some 15 houses, tortured about 20-25 people, injured about 10-15 others and killed 17 civilians. "It has been found proved that the

gang formed of the Pakistani occupation army and Razakars including the accused persons deliberately and in a planned way conducted the killing of numerous civilians of village Itbaria on discriminatory ground," the tribunal said. "The attack continued for hours

together and in presence of relatives of victims," the tribunal said and handed down death penalties for the offence.

According to the second charge, the accused along with the Pakistan army

men abducted 15 women from the village the same day and took them to a joint camp of Razakars and the Pakistan army set up at Patuakhali Circuit House. The accused, their accomplice

and raped them in turn for 10 days and released them when they became sick. The tribunal said the accused, despite being Bangalees, consciously opted to

Razakars and the army men tortured

facilitate the victims' confinement. "They [accused] by their act consciously participated in perpetrating the gravely shocking crimes upon the defenceless women at the army camp

which was in fact a rape camp," it

added. The victims of recurrent rape in captivity have been carrying the trauma they sustained like "a bullet for the rest of their lives" and the stigma of such grave sexual invasion destroyed their families, the tribunal

observed. "The perpetrators used the act of rape as a weapon which was more powerful than a bullet. Rape is thus a living death," the special court said.

The tribunal clearly affirms that crimes committed towards the women "are more serious even than the offence of mass killing" and are "exceptionally shocking to the human

conscience". It handed down death penalty for this offence too. However, the sentence for two charges would naturally be merged, the tribunal added.

WAR HEROINES The tribunal said these women, including the six who testified, are a few of hundreds of thousands of women who had sacrificed their supreme honour for the cause of inde-

pendence. "The rest of their lives must be allowed to go on with utmost honour. In fact, they fought by laying their highest self-worth, for the cause of our independence. It is time to unlock the collective voice to recognise and honour our great mothers and sisters, the

Free Shahidul immediately

FROM PAGE 16

investigated promptly, effectively and impartially. We also urge them to ensure a safe and enabling environment for media workers."

The statement added he was

arrested at his flat on August 5, hours

after a news outlet released an inter-

view with him on the student demonstrations. A Dhaka court on August 6 placed him on a seven-day remand in a case filed under the controversial Section 57 of the Information and Communications Technology (ICT)

the government. He told the court that he was tortured in custody. Police refuted the

Act accusing him of spreading propa-

ganda and false information against

protection of the right to freedom of opinion and expression and Seong-Phil Hong, chair-rapporteur of the working group on arbitrary detention. In yesterday's Supreme Court hear-

ing, a four-member bench of the Appellate Division headed by Chief Justice Syed Mahmud Hossain passed the order as the High Court directive had already been implemented. On August 7, following a writ peti-

him before a court. Shahidul told her that he was taken to jail around 6:00pm on Sunday. around six minutes.

Rahnuma said they talked to him

He also told her that medical examinations were conducted as per the HC

to any country is a very "complex and held at the south plaza of the parliation, the HC directed the authorities to difficult" issue which cannot be done ment building after today's Asr send the noted photographer to prayers, Rasel added. office of the prime minister. overnight. BSMMU for treatment. The court also order.

FROM PAGE 16

since August 25 last year.

Bangladesh.

FROM PAGE 16

unlikely that it will collide with anything else" in the sky.

as there were things to be done before the start of the process. "We are hopeful of repatriating the Rohingyas. It will not be wise to get

things done hurriedly." The secretary said certain things needed to be in place so that Rohingyas feel confident to go back to

their homes in Myanmar. He also mentioned that repatriation

Over 720,000 Rohingyas have fled Myanmar's Rakhine State in the face of a brutal military crackdown on them

Rohingya people.'

Tajul Islam

Since then, movement of all heavy facing difficulties as ferry movement

channel is four to five feet, whereas the depth needs to be at least seven and half feet for ferries to operate.

Trucks carrying goods and other

On this route, an average of at

BIWTA Deputy Director Azgar Ali

Prime Minister Narendra Modi, in

Congress President Rahul Gandhi and said that the leader "was an

FROM PAGE 2 MNAs-elect standing up for the

provincial assemblies of Sindh,

former speaker of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Assembly Asad Qaiser for the office of NA speaker and he

medical report to the HC.

war heroines," it observed.

The government submitted a petition to the SC seeking a stay on the HC order the following day. Law enforcers sent him to BSMMU

asked BSMMU authorities to examine

his health condition and submit a

the same day. During yesterday's hearing, Attorney General Mahbubey Alam told the SC that the government has already sent him to BSMMU. The writ petitioner's lawyer Sara

Hossain told the apex court that the

for treatment and medical check-up

The HC on August 9 directed the home secretary to make arrangements for examining whether the photographer was tortured in custody and to submit a report to this effect before the lower court concerned, but the HC directive was not complied with. The SC told her that she could place the matter before the HC.

Quoting him, his wife Prof Rahnuma Ahmed told The Daily Star that police on Sunday took him to the court premises, but did not produce

members of the Joint Working Group allegation. accompanied the minister to Sittwe. A Dhaka court on Sunday sent him The Myanmar side, in all discus-Rakhine. to jail, said police. Talking to reporters after attending a sions, expressed willingness to take The experts who signed the UN seminar at Dhaka University, Shahidul back their nationals, the secretary told statement include Michel Forst, special FAMILY MEETS SHAHIDUL IN JAIL Balochistan, where MPAs-elect took rapporteur on the situation of human said they were optimistic about the journalists. oath of office. The oath-taking cere-His wife, elder sister and two officials repatriation of Rohingyas. rights defenders; David Kaye, special "We found both the Myanmar of Drik Gallery met him at Dhaka's He, however, said no deadline could rapporteur on the promotion and government and the local people are Keraniganj Central Jail yesterday afterbe fixed right now for the repatriation