



Indian school students pose for a photograph as they sit in the shape of a ribbon as part of an awareness event on the eve of World AIDS Day in Amritsar yesterday. World AIDS Day has been observed on December 1 since 1988 to raise awareness of the AIDS pandemic. PHOTO: AFP

Beijing lashes out at US for South China Sea sail-by

AFP, Beijing

China yesterday scolded the United States for sending naval vessels close to disputed islands in the South China Sea where Beijing has built military installations.

The US and its allies have in recent times sent planes and warships to the area for "freedom of navigation" operations, intended as a signal to Beijing of their right under international law to pass through the waters claimed by China.

The USS Chancellorsville guided missile destroyer on Monday entered waters off the Paracel Islands, known as Xisha in Chinese, said People's Liberation Army Southern Theatre spokesman Li Huamin in a statement.

Aircraft and warships were scrambled, sending out warnings for the American vessel to leave the area. "We urge the US to strengthen the management of its vessels and aircraft that pass by Chinese territory to prevent unexpected events," Li said.

China has also lodged a diplomatic complaint with the US, foreign ministry spokesman Geng Shuang said during a regular press briefing, calling on the US to "immediately stop such provocative actions that violate China's sovereignty".

3 arrested

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Faruq and Sabuj over a piece of land, said Md Borhan Uddin Khan, officer-in-charge of Netrakona Model Police Station, quoting the victim's family members.

Nayan, the key suspect in the murder and son of Sabuj and Selina, was on the run, said the OC.

Mohammad Fokrujjaman Jewel, additional superintendent of police in Netrakona, said a group of miscreants allegedly led by Nayan hacked Faruq with sharp weapons in Razur Bazar area, killing him on the spot around 6:30pm.

Agitated locals torched two houses of the alleged killers at Bahir Chapra soon after the incident, said the ASP, adding that Fire Service and Civil Defense personnel rushed to the spot and brought the fire under control.

Police were preparing to file a case in connection with the murder.

Govt to appeal

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the Code of Criminal Procedure (CrPC) to stay a conviction while an appeal against it is pending, he said.

On Monday, the HC bench of Justice M Enayetur Rahim and Justice Md Mostafizur Rahman observed that there was no provision in the CrPC for suspending a conviction.

The next day, the HC bench of Justice Md Nazrul Islam Talukder and Justice KM Hafizul Alam also observed that there was no provision in the CrPC for suspending convictions.

Moreover, a convict sentenced to more than two years in jail cannot contest the election in five years after he or she has served the sentence, even if an appeal against the conviction is pending, the bench observed.

On Wednesday, the Appellate Division refrained from interfering with the HC observations, the attorney general said.

But, the HC bench of Justice Md Rais Uddin stayed the conviction and sentence of Sabira Sultana after she sought a stay on her conviction and six-year jail sentence in a corruption case, he added.

Bodi escapes gun attack

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Bazar AL, he added.

Bahadur said he along with the lawmaker's wife, Shahin Akhter Chowdhury, also the AL nominee for Cox's Bazar-4, was travelling in another vehicle behind the jeep.

All of a sudden, Bahadur heard a bang and thought that a tyre of the MP's jeep was punctured.

After reaching the spot, he found that there were bullet marks in the vehicle and its back window glass was broken.

Protesting the attack on the MP, local AL men brought out a procession in Hoakkka Kanjorpara area around 9:15pm.

Prodip Kumar Das, officer-in-charge of Teknaf Police Station, said they were investigating the incident.

MINISTER'S SON-IN-LAW SHOT
In Khulna, unidentified criminals shot a senior Bangladesh Bank official at his house in the city's Bikshipara area last night.

Victim Pravash Kumar Dutta, deputy general manager of BB, is the son-in-law of Fisheries and Livestock Minister Narayan Chandra Chanda.

He was shot in the abdomen and was hospitalised in critical condition.

A gang of about five criminals forcibly entered the house around 10:30pm and shot him, said the victim's family members.

Sonali Sen, additional deputy police commissioner of Khulna Metropolitan Police, said she heard about the incident and sent law enforcers to the spot.

Pravash was admitted to Khulna

Medical College Hospital.

Our correspondents in Cox's Bazar and Khulna contributed to this report.

China AIDS group 'really regrets' role in gene-editing

AFP, Beijing

The head of a Chinese AIDS support group yesterday expressed deep regret for helping a scientist recruit participants for a controversial experiment claiming to have created the world's first genetically-edited babies.

The medical trial, which was led by Chinese scientist He Jiankui, purports to have successfully altered the DNA of twin girls, whose father is HIV-positive, to prevent them from contracting the virus.

The founder of the Baihualin (BHL) China League, who calls himself "Bai Hua", reportedly introduced 50 families to He's team for clinical trials.

The AIDS support group operates various online chat groups, including some dedicated to married couples affected by the disease -- the perfect source for He's experiment.

"I admit that I really regret this incident, and am also very worried about these families and their children," Bai wrote in statement on BHL's blog yesterday.

"I really want to say that I was tricked, but I don't want to push away responsibility either," Bai added.

Playing field

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as "Research Briefing".

There are long-standing concerns about the independence of the Election Commission, said the lower chamber of the British parliament. Besides, electronic voting machines are being used for the first time in national elections. The BNP is opposing it, the report said.

At the end of October, BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia's original five-year prison sentence was doubled following a court appeal by the Anti-Corruption Commission. A few days earlier, she had been convicted in another corruption case and given a seven-year sentence, it added.

After Khaleda was allowed out of prison in October to receive hospital treatment in observance of a court order, the House of Commons said, there were hopes that that might be a prelude to her release. But those hopes were dashed when she was returned to prison last month.

"All hope seems finally to have been extinguished by a 28 November Supreme Court ruling upholding the verdict of a lower court that nobody sentenced to more than two years in jail or awaiting appeal can run for election," said the report. Dozens of other criminal charges hang over her and other BNP leaders.

The BNP claims that many hundreds more of its activists have been arrested during November and the AL has accused BNP supporters of attacking the police during recent protests.

Always high, the political temperature in Bangladesh rose further ahead of election, the report said, adding, critics have continued to be concerned

about abuse of human rights, including the misuse of criminal charges, unlawful killings and "disappearance". While lower that it has been in recent years, the militant jihadist threat is far from extinguished.

It has also been argued that the EU's decision not to send a full-blown observer mission illustrates international scepticism about the elections. The EU is sending a two-person "expert mission". The Commonwealth has not yet said whether it will be sending an observer mission, the report said.

On election prospects, the House of Commons said the BNP has sought to burnish its secular credentials by forming the Jatiya Oikyafront, headed by Dr Kamal Hossain. Its closest political ally in the past, Jamaat-e-Islami, has been "banned" and cannot participate in the elections, although the AL claims that it is doing so surreptitiously by backing other Islamist and independent candidates.

The AL heads a 14-party alliance. In something of a role-reversal, this strongly secular party has established ties with some conservative Islamist groups in recent years -- most notably, Hefajat-e-Islam, the report added.

In the report, UK-based academic Mushtaq Khan has warned that, given the political climate since 2008, another AL victory could mean the entrenchment of single-party rule and a further slide towards political authoritarianism.

He argued this could undermine the economic and social achievements of recent decades, which have been made possible by a political settlement in Bangladesh.

We're going back

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manned lunar base within a decade.

The first new lunar missions could blast off as early next year.

"We're building the next chapter of American exploration, returning to the moon - to stay," the space agency announced.

"I think that it is possible we can have a presence on the moon with humans within a decade," said Bridenstine.

"We're going to utilise the resources of the moon, and take this all the way to Mars."

Bridenstine, a former US Navy fighter pilot and Oklahoma congressman tapped by President Donald Trump in April as Nasa chief, said the plan was part of Trump's Space Directive-1 policy.

He said future bases would be international, and that he hoped the US would lead the plans.

Nasa plans to create a commercial marketplace called the Commercial Lunar Payload Services Program (CLIPS) to develop technology that will eventually establish a continuous Moon presence.

A maximum of \$2.6b is earmarked for the project, and Nasa will also buy space on commercial robotic landers, along with other customers, to deliver payloads to the lunar surface.

500m guests

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access some encrypted credit card information.

After reaching the deal with Marriott, Starwood disclosed in November 2015 that it suffered a hack on some hotels in North America, later determining that malware affected restaurants and gift shops but that there was no evidence the infiltration netted key consumer data, such as social security numbers or debit card codes.

Marriott's statement did not mention the earlier Starwood disclosure.

Marriott said it would reach out to victims of the hack and was offering support to those affected including free, one-year enrollment in WebWatcher, a service which monitors internet sites where personal data is shared.

Marriott also is working with law enforcement and security experts to tighten security on its system.

It is the latest case of massive breaches that have compromised personal data and can cause years of headaches for victims, who often face serious legal and financial repercussions.

Marriott said it was "premature" to estimate the financial hit from the breach and that it carried cyber insurance that could take care of some of the costs.

"The company does not believe this incident will impact its long-term financial health," Marriott said in a securities filing. "As a manager and franchisor of leading lodging brands, the company generates meaningful cash flow each year with only modest capital investment needed to grow the business."

Shares of Marriott slumped five percent to \$115.81 in mid-morning trading.

Jamaat, Shibir

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attacked Buddhists, Christians, and Ahmadi Muslims and the extremist group Hefajat-e-Islam is organising a movement to fundamentally transform Bangladesh from a secular democracy into a totalitarian theocracy, it said.

It said Jamaat-e-Islami, Hefajat-e-Islam, and other theocratic extremist groups pose an immediate and ongoing threat to Bangladesh's stability and secular democracy, and religious minorities remain at grave risk of continuing violence.

Tigers stay calm to edge

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more advancement today as the pair put on 69 runs for the sixth wicket.

The experienced duo played out the last 22.3 overs of the day, displaying great patience. Shakib hit just one boundary in his 113-ball knock and Mahmudullah faced 59 deliveries for his 31 with the help of one four.

Prior to the start of the second Test, skipper Shakib stated that Bangladesh would go in with an attacking mindset, but it came as a surprise that the Tigers' playing eleven was devoid of a specialist pacer for the first time in their Test history as they swapped out Mustafizur Rahman for an eight batsman in the line-up in the form of wicketkeeper-batsman Liton Das.

Bangladesh took their spin-heavy strategy to the next level, opting for just the four spinners to take 20 West Indian wickets. Liton was included as a wicketkeeper after Mushfiqur Rahim suffered a thumb injury ahead of the Test, but they also had the option of dropping Mohammad Mithun instead of Mustafizur.

It was a good toss to win as Bangladesh opted to bat on a pitch that had already started to turn a fair bit by the end of the day, but it was Shadman who showed a lot of promise in his maiden Test match.

Apart from his solid defence and watching confidently left deliveries till it reached the keeper's gloves, Shadman also played his drives and pulls with great authority.

Known for his sound technique and temperament in the domestic circuit, Shadman scored his first international runs with a good-looking drive through mid-off against Kemar Roach -- taking care not to hit the ball too hard.

The 23-year-old continued to display his ability with the bat but there were also some loose shots at the other end -- a feature of the Bangladesh batting for the first two sessions yesterday.

After negotiating the first hour safely the hosts lost their first wicket on 42 where Soumya Sarkar went for a loose drive to a flighted Roston Chase off break and only managed to edged it to slip after scoring 19.

Shadman then paired with Mominul Haque and just when they looked set, the latter played a careless pull shot to Roach at the stroke of lunch to get caught at mid-off after scoring 29.

Mohammad Mithun also followed the same path but this time he did manage to add the first fifty-run stand of the innings with Shadman before misjudging a googly from Devendra Bishoo to be bowled for 29.

Shadman then reached his maiden fifty with a sweep for a boundary off Jomel Warrican off his 147th delivery to become the first Bangladesh opener to score a half century after 12 innings.

Looking set for a big one, Shadman's vigil eventually came to an end when he was trapped leg-before by Bishoo for 76 off 199 balls, which included six fours.

The experienced Mushfiqur Rahim, who started his innings eight runs shy of becoming the second Bangladesh batsman to score 4,000 Test runs after Tamim Iqbal, reached the feat with a single off Bishoo.

But he too fell cheaply, bowled in a pretty similar fashion to his previous dismissal, over-balancing against an incoming Sherman Lewis delivery and leaving a gap between his bat and pad to be bowled for 14.

EC warns

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playing field for the national election.

The list included the commissioner of Dhaka Metropolitan Police, director general of Rab and secretaries of the EC and the ministries of home and public administration.

The AL-led alliance on November 22 urged the commission not to meet the Jatiya Oikyafront's demand.

The alliance also demanded action against the Oikyafront, saying that BNP acting chairman Tarique Rahman, who is a fugitive convict, took part in BNP's nomination process, violating the electoral code of conduct and laws.

The AL-led alliance also said Oikyafront violated the electoral rules by holding a daylong rally of lawyers on the Supreme Court premises on November 17.

EC SEEKS FINAL NOMINATION

The 39 registered political parties were asked to inform the EC about their final nominations, EC Deputy Secretary Abdul Halim Khan told The Daily Star.

The commission has sent letters to each of the parties in this regard, he added.

Parties that primarily nominated multiple aspirants for a constituency must make their final pick by December 9, the deadline for withdrawing candidacy, he added.

According to EC data, 696 BNP leaders submitted nomination papers in 295 constituencies. There are multiple BNP candidates in 261 of the constituencies.

In the other camp, 281 AL leaders filed nomination papers for 264 seats. The party nominated multiple aspirants in 17 of the constituencies.

Govt to bring them

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Rabbani, also director (road safety) of BRTA.

"Electricity-run vehicles are environmentally friendly. So we want to expand the use of such vehicles. On the other hand, we want to control the use of easy-bikes which are of low quality."

He said they sent the draft, titled "Electric Vehicle Registration and Operation Guidelines-2018", to the road transport and bridges ministry on November 25. The ministry will hold an inter-ministerial meeting before its approval.

Although a very few electric cars have been operating in the country now, around 10 lakh battery-run easy-bikes are plying the streets, said people involved in the transport sector.

The Road Transport and Highways Division had taken the initiative to formulate the guidelines after receiving applications from some individuals for registration of electric cars, an official of the division said, wishing anonymity.

On April 30, the division wrote to the BRTA to take necessary measures for preparing the guidelines to allow registration of such vehicles, he added.

Following the directives, the BRTA formed a committee, comprising of its officials and experts from Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (Buet), to formulate the guidelines. The committee finalised the draft after holding several meetings.

GUIDELINES NEEDED
Kazi Md Shifun Newaz, assistant professor of Buet's Accident Research Institute and also a member of the committee, said regulations or guidelines were required to keep the operation of electric vehicles under control.

The guidelines were required to ensure road safety as risk of accidents would increase if the number of easy-bikes went up, he told The Daily Star on Thursday.

Prof Md Ehsan of the Buet's mechanical engineering department said only 1 percent of the total vehicles in the world are electric vehicles and the number of such vehicles is very low in Bangladesh.

In 2030, around 10 percent of total vehicles in the world would be electric vehicles, he added. "So, formulation of such guidelines is a good initiative."

He said although the battery-run easy-bikes do not fall under the definition of electric vehicle, the committee decided to bring easy-bikes under the purview of the guidelines considering the huge number of such vehicles in the country.

DRAFT GUIDELINES

As per the guidelines, an electric motorcycle's life will be 10 years, easy-bike's nine years and car's 20 years. Such vehicles will be granted registra-

tion under "E" or "EV" category.

Owners of the vehicles would have to follow a specific procedure to dump used batteries to avoid environmental pollution, it said.

The vehicles have to be assembled in such a way so that they remain safe in all seasons.

The guidelines say imported vehicles must be new. However, the condition can be relaxed in future by amending the guidelines.

Local manufacturers of such vehicles must have registration with the government agencies concerned.

The guidelines will remain in force for five years. However, the tenure can be extended after analysing the technical developments of electric vehicles, the draft reads.

Rab rescues

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a boat around 8:30am, said Maj Mahedi Hasan, commanding officer of Rab-7.

The detained "human trafficker", Abdur Rahman, is a resident of Sabrang union in the upazila.

Paris city

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minority," the spokeswoman told AFP.

The move, which follows similar decisions by Glasgow, Edinburgh and Oxford, would make Myanmar's de facto leader the first person to lose the freedom of the French capital, a purely symbolic award.

The move will be finalised by the city council at a meeting in mid-December, the spokeswoman said.

Nobel peace laureate Suu Kyi, once feted as a democracy icon in the mould of Nelson Mandela for leading opposition to Myanmar's military junta, has fallen out of favour in the West over her inaction in the face of the crackdown on the mostly Muslim Rohingya.

More than 700,000 Rohingya fled violence in the Buddhist-majority country last year, mostly to neighbouring Bangladesh.

A UN rights team found evidence of widespread murder, rape, torture and arson and called for top generals to be prosecuted for genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity.

Hidalgo's office said the mayor wrote to Suu Kyi late last year to "express her concern and call for respect for the rights of the Rohingya minority", but that the letter went unanswered.

Suu Kyi's supporters argue that she has no powers to rein in the army.

She has already been stripped of her honorary Canadian citizenship and her Amnesty International's "Ambassador of Conscience Award".