Kenyan, 4 foreigners killed in plane crash

A Kenyan pilot and four foreigners have died after a small plane carrying them from Kenya's Maasai Mara nature reserve crashed in the west of the country, police said yesterday.

"There were five occupants in the plane and they did not survive," said Edward Mwamburi, police chief for the Rift Valley region.

He said the Cessna plane was heading from the famed Maasai Mara to Lodwar, near Lake Turkana, which is also popular with tourists.

"There was a Kenyan pilot on board and four foreign nationals," said James Mugera, commander with

the Kericho police. Emergency services have been sent

to the scene.

In June last year, a plane belonging to the FlySAX airline crashed on the edge of the Aberdares mountain range, leaving 10 people dead. Kenya has a vibrant airline indus-

try, with national airline Kenya

Airways operating internationally and locally alongside successful low-cost airlines and charter companies. According to the International Air Transport Association (IATA) in 2014

some 130,000 planes land and take off from Kenya each year, and the country has 35 operating airlines. The IATA said Kenya's air transport

infrastructure quality ranks 6th out of 37 countries surveyed in Africa. In October 2017 five passengers were killed when a helicopter crashed

into Lake Nakuru, while in 2012 a helicopter carrying internal security minister George Saitoti crashed, killing all six passengers on board. Kenya's worst crash in recent years

took place in 2007, when a Kenya Airways flight from Abidjan to Nairobi via Douala crashed into a swamp after take-off, killing all 114 passengers. In 2000 another Kenya Airways

flight from Abidjan to Nairobi crashed into the Atlantic Ocean minutes after take-off, killing 169 people while 10 survived.

40 injured

FROM PAGE 16

additional deputy commissioner of the district.

They then marched to Ahmednagar village and attacked their houses.

Asked, Sammilito Khatme Nabuwat Shangrakkhan Parishad Member Secretary Mohammad Abdullah said the district administration had cancelled the three-day conference on Tuesday evening. But the situation went out of control, he claimed

Taher Jugol, president of the Ahmadnagar Muslim Jamaat, said at least 20 people of their village were injured as the vandals attacked and torched some of their houses. Panchagarh Deputy Commissioner

Sabina Yasmin visited the injured people at the hospital and said, "The perpetrators will be punished following investigation."

Police have filed three cases, including one under the Special Powers Act, said Officer-in-Charge Abu Akkas of Panchagarh Sadar Police Station.

Additional police and Border Guard Bangladesh members have been deployed in the town and Ahmednagar village.

A welcome

FROM PAGE 16

The JCD leaders also tried to bring out a procession the following year, marking the one-year anniversary of the attack but could not as police barred them to do so.

During their visit at the Madhur Canteen yesterday, the Chhatra Dal leaders were surrounded by several hundred BCL activists, who also chanted slogans, including "Campus is not a place for non-students Ochhatrader Astana, Campus Hobe Na]", "Why do you roam the campus at the age of 45 [Boyosh Jader 45, Campus Ey keno Ghuris?]", address-

ing the JCD men. Some JCD men also tried to counter the slogans, but their leaders objected and instructed them to have their tea silently.

The JCD leaders then held a press conference there, in which Razib Ahsan reiterated their seven-point demands, including deferring the Ducsu polls by three months to create a congenial atmosphere and setting up polling centres outside the

dormitories. JCD central general secretary Akramul Hasan said that a positive and democratic political atmosphere had been initiated centering the Ducsu polls and yesterday was the

beginning of that. The previous Ducsu and hall union elections were held in 1990, while the last Ducsu body was dis-

Rahman announced the polls schedule.

solved in 1998. Earlier on February 11, Chief Returning Officer Professor Mahfuzur

The polls will be held on March 11.

National strike brings Belgium to standstill

AFP, Brussels

Belgium slowed to a standstill yesterday as a national strike closed airports, shuttered businesses and caused major disruption to railways.

The strike, called by three unions, severely disrupted the country's public transport, particularly in Brussels, where a meeting of Nato ministers was set to take place.

The strike affected post offices, schools, hospitals, waste collection, but also companies and shopping centres.

In the Dutch-speaking city of Ghent, two protestors were slightly injured when a vehicle forced a picket line, local police told AFP. The driver was arrested.

"The movement is well followed everywhere and in all sectors," said CSC union general secretary Marie-Helene Ska on Bel-RTL radio.

The national railway company expected half the trains nation-wide would be cancelled because of the movement, but high speed train traffic to London and Paris should be mostly spared.

Weary Tigers fall There were also enough positives in

much scope to be too critical of the Tigers' performance as New Zealand conditions tests the best teams and it perhaps would have been expecting too much for Bangladesh to notch their first win against the hosts in New Zealand. There were enough positives, like Mohammad Mithun's 62 and his 84-run eighthwicket partnership with Mohammad Saifuddin after Bangladesh were reduced to 94 for six, following some questionable shot selection from the top order.

the bowling as Bangladesh, without the injured Shakib Al Hasan, kept the Kiwis quiet for a while but there were not enough runs to put pressure on the opposition. Opener Martin Guptill hit an unbeaten 116-ball 117 to take the side home with 5.3 overs to spare. With two more matches remaining

on February 16 and 20, Mashrafe and Co will know that they need just a bit more adjustment to conditions as well as shrewder shot selection.

Car bombing kills 27 FROM PAGE 16

happened on the Khash-Zahedan road."

A picture released by the semiofficial Fars news agency showed a hulk of twisted metal lying by the side of a road, unrecognisable as a bus. The attack happened when "a car

filled with explosives blew up besides a bus," the Guards said. "Mercenaries of intelligence agencies of world arrogance and domina-

tion," carried out the attack to counteract "the victory of the 40th anniversary of the Islamic revolution," they added. Iran has been celebrating the 40th

anniversary of the return to Tehran of Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini in 1979 after more than 14 years in exile and the overthrow of the pro-Western shah. His arrival triggered the start of the Islamic Revolution and led to the creation of the Islamic Republic.

Yesterday's attack took place in the

volatile southeastern province of Sistan-Baluchistan which has a large, mainly Sunni Muslim ethnic Baluchi community straddling the border with Pakistan.

The SITE Intelligence Group reported that the attack was claimed by Jaish al-Adl, a jihadist group formed in 2012 as a successor to the Sunni extremist group Jundallah (Soldiers of God), which waged a deadly insurgency against Iranian targets over the past decade.

The Jaish al-Adl -- blacklisted as a "terrorist group" in Iran -- "announced its responsibility in a brief Persian message on February 13, 2019," SITE reported.

The attack came on the same day as the United States gathered some 60 countries in Poland for a conference on the Middle East and Iran which they hoped would increase pressure on Tehran.

Address threats

FROM PAGE 1

"We are gravely concerned by the negative trajectory of democracy in Bangladesh and request an outline on how the Department intends to respond to this trend, particularly in light of the serious allegations that the outcome of the December 2018 elections lacked credibility," the US lawmakers said in the letter.

Asserting that supporting democracy, rule of law, and human rights in the Indo-Pacific region is critical to advancing US interests, the Congressmen said the reports of widespread irregularities in Bangladesh's recent elections seriously threaten those important interests.

In another development, a top Pentagon commander also expressed concern over the December 30 polls, saying that Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina "is trying to achieve a de-facto

one-party rule". US Navy Commander and Indo-Pacific Command chief Admiral Philip S Davidson expressed the concerns in his deposition to the Senate's Armed Services Committee during a Congressional hearing on Tuesday.

"Bangladesh's December 30 elections point to concerning trend of consolidation of power by the ruling Awami League and raise fears that PM Hasina is aiming to achieve a de facto one-party state," he told the Senate's Armed Services Committee in his prepared remarks.

"Bangladesh is an important security partner with strong potential to enhance regional stability and advance US interests in South Asia on counterterrorism, Muslim outreach, countering violent extremism, supporting humanitarian assistance and disaster relief, and supporting United Nations Peacekeeping Operations," he said.

The top US commander also said the humanitarian crisis caused by the presence of more than 700,000 Rohingya refugees from Burma (Myanmar) in Bangladesh has strained the Government of Bangladesh.

"Military-to-military engagement in the letter.

with Bangladesh fits into a broader strategy and commitment to uphold an international, rules-based order in the vital Indo-Pacific region and contributes to building a regional security framework," he added.

THE LETTER

Philip Davidson's deposition was followed hours later by the bipartisan group of the six Congressmen, led by Eliot Engel, who chairs the powerful Foreign Affairs Committee of the House, writing to Mike Pompeo seeking "a timely response" to protect

democracy in Bangladesh. Observing that Bangladesh has a strong and proud democratic tradition, the lawmakers said they are particularly dismayed that the campaign leading up to the election was marred by violence, mass arrests, and a crack-

down on free speech. "The Awami League claimed 96 percent of the seats contested -- more than the party and its allies won in 2014, when a key opposition party boycotted the general election and the Awami League ran unopposed in more than half of the seats contested," the letter read.

According to press accounts, when polls across the country officially opened, reporters found that some ballot boxes looked suspiciously full. There are reports that AL activists barred some people from voting, claiming that the polling stations were closed for lunch or had run out of ballots, it said.

"Some voters were even told their votes had already been cast. To make matters worse, the Government of Bangladesh failed to grant credentials and issue visas to most international election monitors, including those funded by the United States."

There will be a series of elections taking place this year in Asia, including in Afghanistan, Indonesia, the Philippines, and Thailand. It is crucial that the US demonstrate its continued commitment to and respect for democratic institutions, beginning with Bangladesh, the Congressmen added

Dec 30 polls FROM PAGE 16

lawyer for the petitioners, told The Daily Star that they would appeal to the

HC for declaring the December 30 polls illegal as it was a "farcical" one. Even dead people were shown casting

votes, which is nothing but a clear evidence of a "farcical" election, he added. More BNP leaders may file similar petitions before the HC today, BNP

The BNP and the Jatiya Oikyafront, an alliance of BNP and some other parties, rejected the polls results, alleging huge irregularities in the election.

insiders said.

The Awami League-led grand alliance secured 289 seats, while the Oikyafront got only eight seats.

The Oikyafront MP's-elect are yet to take oath in parliament.

Rare black

FROM PAGE 16

Tuesday night. "Within a few months, we were rewarded with multiple observations on our cameras."

The female leopard's coat color is pitch black as a result of melanism, a gene mutation that results in an over production of pigment, Pilfold said. It's the opposite of albinism -- and although the leopard's coat appears black during the day, its rosette patterns are visible in nighttime infrared imagery. While there have been reports of

sightings of black leopards -- also known as black panthers -- the last confirmed observation with photographic evidence was in Ethiopia more than a century ago, he said. "It is likely that black leopards have been living in Kenya all along, it is only that high quality imagery to

now," Pilfold said. Kenya's Daily Nation newspaper said Tuesday that its photographer, Phoebe Okall, shot an image of a black leopard in 2013 in the same region. It's unclear whether that

confirm it has been missing until

image was publicized at the time. The footage shot by Pilfold's team includes a slew of photos and video footage of the agile animal moving in darkness, its eyes glittering in the night like two shiny marbles.

While there may be reported sightings in Kenya, black leopards are still considered rare in the continent, Pilfold said.

"Melanism occurs in about 11% of leopards globally, but most of these leopards live in South East Asia," Pilfold said. "Black leopards in Africa are extremely rare, and prior to the observations in our published paper, the last confirmed observation was 1909 in Ethiopia."

The black leopard's sighting was published in the African Journal of Ecology.

'Robber'

FROM PAGE 16

They found Babar's body but the criminals fled the scene sensing presence of the law enforcers, the OC added.

Police claimed to have recovered a gun, two rounds of bullets and some sharp weapons from the spot.

The body was handed over to the family members following an autopsy at Jessore General Hospital.

HC asks

FROM PAGE 16

the chairmen of the National Board of Revenue and the Anti-Corruption Commission, petitioner's lawyer Manzill Murshid told The Daily Star. The court ordered the respondents

to explain why they should not be

directed to stop the irregularities and corruption in sanctioning of loans and waiver of interest as well as recover the loan amount from the defaulters. It also asked the authorities concerned to show causes why they should

not be directed to form a commission to look into the irregularities and corruption in giving out loans and waiving interest in the last two decades. During the hearing, Murshid told

the court that depositors had lost huge amounts of money due to some irregularities, illegalities and corruption in the sanctioning of loans and interest waiver.

Call for justice

FROM PAGE 1

among others, spoke during the demonstrations.

Three people were killed and at least 16 others suffered bullet wounds when members of a BGB patrol team opened fire on locals in Baharampur village following a clash over seizure of smuggled cattle.

Deputy Commissioner KM Kamruzzaman Selim told journalists that the district administration gave Tk 20,000 to each of the victims' families as burial cost.

An inquiry committee has been formed and asked to submit a report quickly, he said, assuring that compensation would be given to the families of the deceased and for the medical expenses of the injured.

Haripur police said the bodies were handed over to the relatives after autopsy. If anyone files a complaint then legal action will be taken after a proper investigation, they added.

3 killed

two people dead on the spot. Another

died on the way to a local hospital. Two sons of freedom fighter

Sobhan -- Nurun Nabi Chowdhury and Nur Ahmmed Munshi -- were also killed in a road accident on December 14 last year, reported UNB adding that Saika was daughter of Nurun Nabi. The injured persons were undergo-

ing treatment at different local hospitals. Of them, three sustained serious injuries and were sent to Chittagong Medical College Hospital. The three bodies were kept at Feni

Sadar Hospital for autopsy, said Abu Taher, resident medical officer of the hospital.

House help 'raped'

FROM PAGE 16

rescued her and took her to the hospital, the relatives added.

Dr Bilkis Begum, coordinator of the One-Stop Crisis Centre at Dhaka Medical College Hospital, said the girl was admitted to the hospital yesterday evening and would undergo forensic tests today. Abu Bakar Siddique, officer-in-

charge of Gulshan Police Station, said he sent policemen to DMCH after receiving allegation of the rape. A dyeing factory worker was sent to

jail yesterday on charges of raping a 12-year-old girl in Narayanganj. Lal Chan, a resident of

Enayetnagar, was arrested after the

girl's mother filed a case accusing him with Siddirganj Police Station.

The 35-year-old man called the girl

on Tuesday evening when she was walking past his rented flat. Since Lal Chan and the girl knew

each other, she went inside and allegedly got raped, said Shaheen Pervez, officer-in-charge of the police station. Lal Chan also threatened the girl not to tell anyone what happened, the

OC said, quoting the case statement. After the girl's mother came home at night and learnt about the incident, she along with some neighbours

caught the suspect and beat him up

before handing him to police, he said. He was placed before a Narayanganj court and sent to jail yesterday.

The girl was sent to a hospital, he added.

Top court judges

FROM PAGE 2 judges in the country.

The HC bench of Justice Obaidul Hassan and Justice SM Kuddus Zaman came up with the verdict after hearing a suo moto contempt of court rule issued by another HC bench in 2003.

This is the first time that the HC delivered a verdict over SC judges' protocol, court sources said.

Justice Amirul reached Feni by train

at 2:00pm on October 22 in 2003 for a him. He was supposed to leave Feni on October 24. But left the district on October 23, as none of the Feni judgeship received or communicated him or

gave him protocol although judge Firoz had been officially informed about his visit, the judgment mentioned Justice Amirul faced many difficulties staying in the district and arranging return train ticket and felt insulted at the "arrogant behaviour" on the part

of judge Firoz and his office, the HC

verdict said. As per the warrant of precedence of the republic, the district and sessions judge, deputy commissioner and superintendent of police are supposed to provide protocol to a judge of the Appellate Division or the HC Division of the SC when they go outside Dhaka, Deputy Attorney General Rafi Ahmed told The Daily Star.

A few days after the incident, the HC issued a suo moto contempt of court rule against judge Firoz, now retired, Yar Ahmed, then Nazir of District and Sessions Judge's Court in Feni, and Altaf Hossain, the then Nayeb Nazir of the same court. Yesterday, the HC directed that

when an SC judge would visit any district headquarters on holidays, at least one judicial officer holding the status of a district and sessions judge or additional district and sessions judge would receive the judge at the circuit house or any other place of the visiting judge's staying in a district town.

If the district judge is present in district headquarters, he must pay a courtesy call on the SC judge, it said.

If the SC judge's visit happens during office time or during weekdays, the judge in charge, Nejarat, will receive the visiting SC judge. But after court

hours, the district judge or in the absence of his or her at least one judicial officer having the status of district judge or additional district judge will pay a courtesy call on the visiting SC

staff of the judgeship shall receive At the time of departure of the SC

judge from the visiting place, district the HC said.

The HC exonerated Yar Ahmed and Altaf Hossain from the contempt of

HC OBSERVATIONS

responsible for providing protocol to the VIPs -- particularly the district and sessions judge, deputy commissioner and superintendent of police of the respective district -- should keep in mind that the SC judges are highranking VIPs of the country.

"As per the Warrant of Precedence, 1986, the judges of the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court of Bangladesh rank in serial No.8 i.e. equivalent to the state ministers and

the judges of the Supreme Court (both divisions)."

The HC said nobody should forget that a SC judge is not a mere individual. "He is the judge of the highest judiciary of the country. He carries a constitutional entity and grace of the

members of the United Nations. Asked about the UNHCR appeal to Bangladesh to open its borders to more people fleeing Myanmar amid fresh crackdown, the minister said Bangladesh had sheltered over a million Myanmar's nationals despite its own huge population and suggested

Momen said a solution to the Rohingya crisis was being worked on and efforts were underway to raise the issue in all international forums and discussions.

He said issues related to the Rohingya crisis and regional security would be discussed at the security conference during the slots kept for Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and other heads of government.

expected to hold a bilateral meeting with German Chancellor Angela Merkel and take part in important side events and meetings with CEOs of big companies in Germany, including Siemens AG, Veridos and Jigsaw, to get more economic engagements for Bangladesh.

arrive in Abu Dhabi on Sunday morning to attend the opening ceremony of the International Defence Exhibition (IDEX-2019) at Abu Dhabi National Exhibition Center. Elaborating on the PM's visit to UAE, the foreign minister said expand-

Hasina is also likely to a hold a

the late Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan, the founder and Inaugural President of the UAE and Ruler of Abu Dhabi, at Al Bahar Palace. The PM will also join a community event to be held at St Regis Abu Dhabi

Hotel, where she will be staying during the visit. According to the programme schedule, the PM will leave Dhaka for

her at the airport.

The HC observed that everyone

the judges of the High Court Division of the Supreme Court of Bangladesh are in serial No.9, they enjoy the status of the state ministers. "Thus, it is expected from all con-

highest judicial forum" "Showing deliberate disregard to any of SC judges by act, conduct or omission thus indisputably is a conscious blow to it which impacts

PM flies to Germany

said, pointing out that there were 193 countries in the world which were

that the UN refugee agency now convinces other countries to help out.

Apart from joining in the main conference, Momen said the PM was

After the three-day visit, Hasina will leave Munich on Saturday night and

ing the existing trade and investment relations between Bangladesh and the

UAE was the main purpose of the visit. During the visit, the two countries are expected to sign two Memorandum of Understanding (MoUs) related to

and Bangladesh Power Development Board, for undertaking projects on the development of liquefied natural gas terminals, power plants and other

of land in Matarbari. future will be strengthened as it seeks investment from various countries instead of getting it from a single one.

other leaders. The PM will also meet Sheikha

Munich at 8:10am this morning by a VVIP flight of Biman Bangladesh Airlines and reach Munich International Airport at 1:15pm (local time). Bangladesh Ambassador in Germany Imtiaz Ahmed will receive

the morning of February 20.

Judge at the place of his staying within the district town. If the visiting SC judge stays at an upazila town or in any village, the judge in charge, Nejarat, or a senior

and sessions judge or additional district and sessions judge must be present along with deputy commissioner or his representative and police superintendent or his representative of the respective district,

court rule.

cerned that the protocol provided to the state ministers must be provided to

adversely on public perception," the HC added.

signed between the Private Office of Sheikh Ahmed Dalmook Al Maktoum

Development Authority for setting up a Special Economic Zone on 300 acres Momen laid emphasis on diversifying investments, saying Bangladesh's

meeting with the Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed bin Sultan Al-Nahyan and bilateral talks with Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, vice president and prime minister of the UAE and the Ruler of the Emirate of Dubai, among

Fatima bint Mubarak Al Ketbi, wife of

Hasina will return to Bangladesh on

investment. One of the MOUs will be

projects of mutual interest. Another MOU will be inked between the Private Office of HH Sheikh Ahmed Dalmook Al Maktoum and Bangladesh Investment