

China tracking 2.6m Xinjiang residents

AFP, Beijing

A Chinese technology firm has compiled a range of personal information on 2.6 million people in Xinjiang -- from their ethnicity to locations -- according to a data leak highlighting the wide extent of surveillance in the restive region. Xinjiang is home to most of China's Uighur ethnic minority lives and has been under heavy police surveillance in recent years after violent inter-ethnic tensions. Nearly one million Uighurs and other Turkic language-speaking minorities in Xinjiang are reportedly held in re-education camps, according to a UN panel of experts. The leak was discovered last week by security researcher Victor Gevers, who found that Chinese tech company SenseNets had stored the records of individuals in an open database "fully accessible to anyone". The records included information such as their Chinese ID number, birthday, address, ethnicity, and employer.

The exposed data also linked individuals to GPS coordinates -- labelled with descriptions such as "mosque" -- captured by tracking devices around the region.

Within a 24-hour period, more than six million locations were saved by SenseNets' tracking devices, according to Gevers, who works at Dutch online security non-profit GDI Foundation and posted his findings on Twitter.

"You can clearly see they have absolutely no clue about network security," he told AFP, describing SenseNets' IT skills as belonging "to the early 90s".

Rohingya

FROM PAGE 2 The UK minister, who visited Myanmar this week prior to her arrival in Bangladesh, said the government and the people of Bangladesh have shown great generosity and humanity in hosting the Rohingya. "But we recognise that Bangladesh can't shoulder this responsibility alone and I'm proud of the UK's leading."

After the meeting with Mordant yesterday afternoon, State Minister Shahriar told reporters that the government had worked out some new strategies after reviewing the overall situation to deal with the Rohingya repatriation issue.

"We have worked out some new strategies after reviewing things and you will soon see implementation of those strategies," he said.

Referring to the government's involvement in multilateral discussions, Shahriar said the government was in talks with other countries on the Rohingya issue to find a lasting solution to it.

The UK minister left Dhaka yesterday.

TOKYO ASSURES SUPPORT

Japan yesterday said it would continue supporting Bangladesh in its bilateral efforts to repatriate Rohingyas to Myanmar.

The assurance came during official talks between Japanese State Minister for Foreign Affairs Toshiko Abe and her Bangladeshi counterpart Shahriar Alam in Dhaka yesterday, said a Bangladesh foreign ministry press release.

She also reiterated her country's commitment for providing humanitarian assistance for temporarily sheltering Rohingyas in Bangladesh and continued support for safe and voluntary repatriation of Rohingyas to Myanmar and their resettlement.

Shahriar underscored the need of practical steps from Myanmar authorities so that Rohingyas feel safe to return to their homeland.

He requested the Japanese state minister to include Bangladesh as a source country for recruitment of workers under Japan's new immigration law.

The Japanese state minister is paying a two-day visit to Bangladesh.

Thousands

FROM PAGE 16 Around 10,000 people had been living in the slum for around 20 years, he said.

An NHA official said in 1970 the government acquired the land and since then it had been grabbed and used illegally by locals. He added that although several notices have been given the slum dweller, they still did not vacate the area.

The housing authority and police asked the slum dwellers many times, including the night before the drive, to vacate but they did not pay any attention, he said.

Many of the dwellers could not save their valuables as they were out of their houses for work, Javed said.

Euro-sceptic forces to gain in EU elections: poll

AFP, Brussels

Euro-sceptic populists are projected to make gains in European Parliamentary elections in May but mainstream political groups ought to retain their majority, albeit with increasing signs of fragmentation, according to opinion polls.

The 705 new members of parliament elected in the May 23-26 election will help formulate new EU laws over the next five years and choose the successor to Jean-Claude Juncker, head of the European Commission, the bloc's executive arm.

The event is "one of the biggest democratic exercises anywhere in the world," with 373 million citizens from 27 EU countries having a chance to vote, parliament spokesman Jaume Duch Guillot told reporters.

Voters from Britain, which is due to leave the union on March 29, will not be participating.

Forces loyal to Italy's hardline Interior Minister Matteo Salvini and far-right French politician Marine Le Pen will make gains, according to an analysis of national opinion polls put together by the parliament.

The European People's Party -- usually described as a centre-right

conservative group but also including MEPs from populist Hungarian premier Victor Orban's party -- is on course to remain the biggest voting bloc.

And, with the Socialists and Democrats as the second force, the traditional parties of the centre will remain the largest in the new parliament.

The survey forecast that the EPP will lose 34 seats and the Socialists 51 seats but retain 183 seats and 135 seats respectively.

The new parliament will have 705 seats, down from the current 751 because of Britain's scheduled exit from the 28-nation bloc.

The liberal group ALDE will move from fourth to third place with a projected 75 seats, compared to 68 today.

ALDE will displace the European Conservatives and Reformist (ECR) Group, which will see its share decline from 75 to 51 seats, with the departure of Britain's pro-Brexit Conservatives. Poland's eurosceptic Law and Justice (PiS) Party also belongs to the ECR.

The liberal group could even -- according to the survey -- increase its representation to 93 seats if it is joined, whether formally or in an alliance, by French President Emmanuel Macron's Republic on the Move (LREM) party.

2 UAE businesses

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Yusuff highlighted some of the projects implemented by his group in different countries.

The PM said Bangladesh was ready to welcome foreign investment for its development. She assured the Lulu Group of land allocation and urged them to visit Bangladesh to have first-hand experience for implementing their business plans.

Hasina called upon the Lulu Group chief to set up food processing industries and invest in the special economic zones in Bangladesh.

She said Bangladesh offers attractive packages and facilities, including duty-free regime, for foreign investors.

BR Shetty showed interest in expanding its humanitarian activities and healthcare services in Bangladesh based on the company's policy -- "free treatment, quality, affordability and ethical practice".

The PM welcomed the interest of the NMC Group and urged them to come up with a proposal for construction of hospitals for treatment of cancer and cardiac problems.

The NMC chairman said they would visit Bangladesh to talk to the officials for executing the plans.

Foreign Minister AK Abdul Momen, State Minister for Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment Imran Ahmad and Principal Secretary to the PM Md Nojibur Rahman were present. EXPATRIATES MEET PM Speaking at a views-exchange meeting

at St Regis hotel in Abu Dhabi, Hasina yesterday said the Awami League government would surely fulfill people expectations for which they voted it to power for the third consecutive term.

She was addressing a group of Bangladeshi expatriates living in the United Arab Emirates. The Bangladesh embassy in the UAE organised the programme.

The PM said the people of the country, especially youths and women, spontaneously cast votes for the AL. "People put their trust and faith in us as they witnessed tremendous development in the country in the last 10 years."

Hasina reiterated her firm stance against terrorism, militancy, drugs and corruption. "The government will do whatever is needed to eliminate these social menaces."

She urged the expatriate Bangladeshis to abide by the laws of the respective countries they were living in.

She said the expatriates should remain careful so the country's image does not get tarnished in any way because of their activities.

The expatriates contributed a lot to the country's economic development, the PM added. She also requested them to invest in Bangladesh.

Stare Minister for Expatriate Welfare and Overseas Employment Imran Ahmed, among others, also spoke on the occasion.

Quader riled over quality

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"My first and prime directive to you today is -- ensure the quality road construction so that they don't get damaged within a couple of months," Quader said.

The minister also urged RHD officials to make sure that there is no corruption or irregularities in constructing roads and said it would be "painful" if such news surface in the media.

"I don't take any percentage...I am not involved with any corruption. So why would I take responsibility of others' corruption," he said, adding that the whole department should not shoulder the blame of corruption for some corrupt officials.

He said the work of upgrading Dhaka-Chattogram Highway to four lanes was not good, resulting crack on the road within a year.

Although the work of Dhaka-Bhanga Highway was relatively costly, but of a better quality, he said adding, "Ensure the quality of the road even if it requires more money."

At a point of this conversation, when an official spoke about the delay with getting foreign fund for an ongoing project, Quader said, "We will not require foreign fund anymore. If we can build Padma Bridge on our own, then why will we require foreign fund."

Ebne Alam Hasan, chief engineer of RHD, said his office was facing difficulties with a huge number of projects due to manpower shortage.

"We are fighting with the inadequate manpower," he said, adding that they sent a proposal for additional manpower which was still pending with the public administration Ministry.

OTHER ISSUES

Obaidul Quader said although the number of roads in poor condition has decreased, problems still lie in some district highways.

He directed officials to make those roads useable before the upcoming rainy season.

Quader said construction of the three new bridges on Dhaka-Chattogram Highway would be completed before Eid-ul-Fitr.

Besides, two railway overpasses and four underpasses on Joydebpur-Chandra-Tangail-Elenga Highway will be opened for public before Eid.

So, he said, holidaymakers would have relatively smooth journeys this year.

The minister also asked officials to speed up the works of several projects, including the upgrading of Dhaka-Sylhet Highway and Chattogram-Cox's Bazar Highway to four lanes and widening of country's first marine drive.

Quader also asked officials to keep the existing road useable where development works are going on. He also asked them to enhance drive to reclaim RHD lands from illegal occupation.

ROADS AND HIGHWAYS

There are some 21,302km highways under the department. It includes 3,812km national highways, 4,246km regional highways and 13,242km district highways, according to the RHD's 2017-18 annual report.

Besides, RHD has 4,404 bridges, 14,814 culverts and 41 ferry terminals under its jurisdiction, the report said.

In 2017-18 fiscal year, total Tk 2334.39 crore was allocated for repair and maintenance of the roads and bridges. Moreover, RDH spent 14,128.74 crore in 140 development projects in last fiscal year, the report said.

According to the latest report of the HDM (Highway Development and Management), in 2017, more than 26 percent roads were in poor to very bad condition.

RHD conducted the survey over 17976.30km roads from November 2017 to January 2018. Another survey

2 'robbers'

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there around 4:30am.

"Sensing the presence of police, the robbers opened fire on them," the OC said, adding that the gunfight ensued when police returned fire.

At one stage, the alleged robbers fled the scene and the police found two bodies on the spot.

Law enforcers also claimed to have recovered two firearms, four bullets and two sharp weapons from the scene.

According to the OC, Mofazzel was accused in seven robbery cases and Mahabub in six, all filed with Daulatpur police.

In Pabna, police claimed to have arrested a drug peddler with bullet wounds after a gunfight with law enforcers at Chatmohar upazila early yesterday.

Abdullah alias Jahid, 30, is receiving treatment at Pabna General Hospital for the wound in his left leg. OC of Chatmohar police Nasir Uddin said they first arrested Jahid in Ankutia Taherer Mor area on Monday evening. Later, they took him to Mathurapur area around 3:00am yesterday to arrest his associates.

Sensing the presence of police, the criminals opened fire on the law enforcers, who retaliated in self-defence. Jahid received bullet wounds during the "gunfight", while his accomplices fled the scene, the OC claimed, adding that two policemen also suffered injuries.

Police claimed to have recovered a firearm, two bullets and 20 bottles of phensedyl from the spot.

Jahid is accused in at least 12 cases mostly for drug peddling, police said.

The real Jaws

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DNA, like this shark possesses, and its large body size should promote a high incidence of genome instability, with much more DNA and many more cells seemingly vulnerable as targets for damage through an accumulation of routine mutations.

Just the opposite seems to be the case for this shark, thanks to adaptations in genes involved in preserving genome integrity.

"This knowledge, in addition to providing understanding into how sharks work at their most fundamental level -- their genes -- may also be useful in downstream applications to human medicine to combat cancers and age-related diseases that result from genome instability," said Mahmood Shivji, director of the Save Our Seas Foundation Shark Research Center and Guy Harvey Research Institute at Nova Southeastern University in Florida.

This species, star of the 1975 Hollywood blockbuster "Jaws" and its multiple sequels, roams the world's oceans, primarily in cool coastal waters.

Gray with a white underbelly and torpedo-shaped body, it can reach 20 feet (6 meters) long, weigh 7,000 pounds (3.18 tonnes) and dive to nearly 4,000 feet (1,200 meters) deep. It uses its mouthful of large, serrated teeth to rip into prey including fish, seals and dolphins, swallowing mouth-sized chunks of flesh while.

Sharks are an evolutionary success story, thriving for more than 400 million years. Our species appeared roughly 300,000 years ago.

The great white shark also displayed genetic adaptations in several genes that play fundamental roles in wound healing. For example, a key gene involved in producing a major component of blood clots was found to have undergone adaptations.

"These adaptations and enrichments of essential wound-healing genes may underlie the ability of sharks to heal from wounds so efficiently," said Cornell University's Michael Stanhope, co-leader of the research published in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences.

No bail

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godfathers and dealers surrendered to police at Teknaf in presence of Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan and Inspector General of Police Mohammad Javed Patwary.

Later in the afternoon, all 102 were taken to the Teknaf Senior Judicial magistrate court after they were shown arrested in two cases -- one under the arms act and another under the narcotics act. The court later sent them to Cox's Bazar district jail.

The formal surrender came after a massive anti-narcotics crackdown since May last year left nearly 300 people, including 40 from Teknaf, dead and some 25,000 arrested.

Those who surrendered were accused in three to 16 cases each. Of them, 16 are family members of Bodi, 24 are top godfathers listed by the home ministry and 10 others are local elected representatives.

The former MP from Cox's Bazar-4 Abdur Rahman Bodi was named as a yaba godfather in reports by the Department of Narcotics Control (DNC) alongside several intelligence and law enforcement agencies.

A DNC report mentioned him as a patron of the yaba trade in Ukhia-Teknaf, the gateway of smuggling the crazy drug from Myanmar, according to media reports.

7 injured

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completely destroyed in the blast, she added.

Mohi Ranjan Chakma, a shopkeeper who was hurt in the blast, said usually workers did not stay in the warehouse at night. But he heard somebody working in the warehouse on Monday night.

Around 4:45am, a warehouse wall



suddenly fell on his shop where he and his wife were sleeping, leaving them wounded, Mohi said while talking to this correspondent at Khagrachhari Sadar Hospital.

Injured Newton Chakma, a warehouse worker, said he was asleep when the incident took place.

"I did not know how the explosion happened as I was sleeping. I woke up when I felt flames on my body," said Newton, who suffered burn injuries to his face and hands.

Abdul Kader, station officer at Khagrachhari fire service, said the reason behind the blast could not be known immediately.

Sanwar Hossain, sub-inspector of Khagrachhari Sadar Police Station, said they were investigating the incident.

Warehouse owner Canton Chakma has been called for interrogation, said Shahadat Hossain Tito, officer-in-charge of the police station.

Pak will retaliate

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weapons in 1998, they have fought countless skirmishes along their de facto border in the mountains of Kashmir.

Khan reiterated that Pakistan had nothing to do with the bomb attack and said it was ready to take action against anyone found to be behind it.

"If you have any actionable intelligence that Pakistanis are involved, give that to us, I guarantee you that we will take action," Khan said.

India's Foreign Ministry spurned the offer, saying Islamabad had failed to act on proof given to it about previous attacks.

"The prime minister of Pakistan has offered to investigate the matter if India provides proof. This is a lame excuse," said the ministry statement.

"We demand Pakistan to stop misleading the international community and take credible and visible action against the perpetrators of Pulwama terrorist attack," it added.

Pakistan's military has a long record of nurturing militants as proxies in pursuit of foreign-policy objectives, and India has for years accused it of supporting separatist militants fighting a nearly 30-year revolt in its only Muslim-majority state.

Muslim Pakistan has long said it only provides moral and diplomatic support to the Kashmiri people in their struggle for self-determination, though that has never dispelled India's conviction of Pakistani support for militants.

Khan said his country had changed. "I am telling you clearly that this is new Pakistan. This is a new mind set, this is new thinking," Khan said. "We want stability," he added.

'SURRENDER OR BE KILLED'

Indian security forces intensified a crackdown in response to the deadliest attack on security forces in three decades of insurgency in the Muslim-majority region.

Lieutenant-General KJS Dhillon, India's top military commander in Kashmir, accused Pakistan's main Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) spy agency of "controlling" those behind the Thursday bombing and warned of retribution.

"I would request all the mothers in Kashmir to please request their sons who have joined terrorism to surrender and get back to the mainstream," Dhillon told reporters in Srinagar.

"Otherwise anyone who has picked

up the gun will be killed."

The bomb attack was carried out by a 20-year-old man from a village in Indian Kashmir. His parents said had joined a militant group after being beaten by Indian troops three years ago.

The bomb attack has sparked outrage in India with calls for revenge circulating on social media, and rising animosity towards Kashmiri Muslims in other parts of the Hindu-majority country, to the alarm of rights groups.

Pakistan was also accused by Iran last week of sheltering the perpetrators of an attack which killed 27 Revolutionary Guards, while Kabul and Washington have long claimed that Islamabad offers safe haven to the Afghan Taliban.

'SENSE OF URGENCY'

Earlier yesterday, Pakistan appealed to the United Nations to intervene, in light of deteriorating security.

"Attributing it to Pakistan even before investigations is absurd," Pakistan's Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi said in a letter to the UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres seeking UN involvement to lower tension.

"It is with a sense of urgency that I draw your attention to the deteriorating security situation in our region resulting from the threat of use of force against Pakistan by India," he said.

The United States had told India it supported its right to defend itself against cross-border attacks, India said.

Pakistan's close ally China urged it and India to ease tension through talks.

"China hopes that Pakistan and India can exercise restraint and hold dialogue, to achieve a 'soft landing' as soon as possible," said China's foreign ministry spokesman.

Jammu and Kashmir, a former princely state on the border between India and Pakistan, has been in dispute since the partition of India in 1947. Control is split between the two countries but each claims the region in full.

CID probe

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prevent the recurrence of such incidents.

Mustafa added that an investigation committee, headed by Farashuddin, was formed as part of the measures. Besides, the CID was assigned to probe the incident further.

Mentioning that the cyber heist is an international crime, Kamal said several overseas organisations were involved in it.

Under this consideration, the US Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Philippines government started investigating the incident following Bangladesh government's request, he added.

He mentioned that the FBI had already filed a case with a US court against the hackers and a case was filed in the Philippines against those involved in anti-money laundering activities.

Getting sufficient evidence from the FBI and Philippines, Bangladesh appointed a US law firm in June last year to file case with a US court in connection with the cyber heist, the minister added.

In March 2016, the BB lodged a case with Motijheel Police Station in this connection. The case was later referred to the CID.

Silent extortion

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Moreover, Tk 70 to Tk 80 was collected from each boat or truck carrying the timber, he added.

"Refusal to pay would lead to abduction or even death," he said.

He added that he used to collect Tk 10 lakh to Tk 12 lakh every month and deposited the money with the finance division of the PCJSS. He was paid between Tk 8,000 and Tk 10,000 a month.

"Whatever business you do, you will have to pay the toll," he said, adding that there were 10 to 12 men like him in Rangamati who collected the money.

A timber trader in Rangamati, requesting anonymity, said he alone paid around Tk 2 lakh a year and added that there were about 150 traders like him in the district.

"We cannot complain to the police, administration or any other forces in fear of severe consequences," the trader said.

Sudhakar Tripura, information and publicity affairs secretary of PCJSS (MN-Larma), said allegations of extortions in the hills were true, but his party was not involved.

"Money is needed to run a political party but we never force anyone to pay." He said his party often receives a small percentage of development funds and businessmen sometimes give them a small portion of their profit as contribution to the party.

UPDF spokesperson Mikel Chakma said the allegations were not true. "We do not know who are extorting from whom."

Alamgir Kabir, superintendent of police in Rangamati, said law and order has improved a lot in the district and police do not get complaints of extortion.