

CHAWKBAZAR FIRE UN chief condoles loss of lives

UNB, Dhaka

The United Nations Secretary General Antonio Guterres has expressed his condolences to the president, the government and the people Bangladesh for the loss of lives and destructions in the Chawkbazar inferno.

"I wish to assure you that the United Nations stands in solidarity and support at this critical time," the UN chief said in a message sent to President Abdul Hamid on Friday.

In the message, the UN chief lauded the national emergency services' efforts to assist those in need, responding to the fire.

Guterres wished speedy recovery to the injured.

A total of 67 people were burnt alive in Old Dhaka's Chawkbazar area as a fire broke out around 10:40pm on Wednesday.

The Chawkbazar fire that sparked from a chemical warehouse is the second deadliest chemical-fuelled fire in the country after the 2010 Nimitoli fire incident.



The wreckage of burnt vehicles in front of Haji Wahed Mansion in the city's Chawkbazar. From top right, a woman wails near the morgue of Dhaka Medical College as her brother has been missing since Wednesday's blaze. Locals stage a demo in Chawkbazar demanding relocation of chemical warehouses from the old town. Workers carry an electricity pole to install in the area. The photos were taken yesterday.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN, PALASH KHAN



Two students arrested for 'hacking over 20 websites'

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bogura

The cyber unit of Bogura police has arrested two students from Chandpur and Gopalganj since Thursday on charges of hacking more than 20 websites.

The arrestees are Bashir Ullah Sarder, 21, a 3rd-year student of a polytechnic institute in Gopalganj, and Azhar Uddin Abir, 19, a 2nd-year HSC student at a government college in Chandpur.

Police arrested Bashir from Gopalganj on Thursday and Abir from Chandpur on Friday, the law enforcers said, adding that the two used codenames -- FabiHaxor and 4zuc0d3r -- respectively and used to work for a hackers' group named Black Web.

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'Very dangerous'

Trump voices alarm over Indo-Pak standoff as tensions spiral; dozens of Kashmir separatists detained

AFP, Washington

US President Donald Trump voiced alarm at the "very dangerous situation" between India and Pakistan, warning that New Delhi was considering "very strong" action after an attack in Kashmir.

"It's very dangerous situation between the two countries. We would like to see it stop," Trump said, adding that the United States was seeking talks with Pakistan.

"Right now there is a lot of problems between India and Pakistan because of what happened," he told reporters as he met a senior Chinese official in the Oval Office.

Tensions have soared between the nuclear-armed rivals since a suicide attack last week killed 40 soldiers on the Indian side of divided Kashmir, the deadliest attack in years.

"India is looking at something very strong. India just lost almost 50 people with an attack. So I can understand that also," Trump said.

The region has been on edge since the February 14 attack claimed by Pakistan-based Islamist group Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM).

India has accused Pakistan of supporting the attack -- a claim rejected by the Islamabad government -- and there have been widespread calls for Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi to order a reprisal strike.

Meanwhile, Indian authorities arrested dozens of Muslim leaders in raids across Kashmir and sent thousands of reinforcements to the troubled territory yesterday.



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Rohingya man shot dead by 'rival gang'

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Cox's Bazar

A Rohingya man was shot dead and another suffered bullet injuries when a gang of criminals opened fire in two separate incidents at Teknaf's Nayapara Shalban and Mochoni Nayapara Rohingya camps on Friday night.

The dead was Mohammad Hamid, 45, of Shalban camp. The injured is Hasan Ali, 32, of Mochoni Nayapara camp.

Abdus Salam, inspector of Nayapara Refugee Camp Police, confirmed the incidents and said that additional law enforcers were deployed to avoid further violence in the areas.

Hamid worked as a local health aide at his camp, while Hasan runs a grocery shop in his.

Other refugees in the camps suspect the incidents may have occurred following factional feuds between the Rohingyas.

Witnesses said a gang of 15-20 armed goons abducted Hamid from Shalban camp around 9:00pm on Friday and took him to a nearby hill. A few moments later, around six to seven gunshots were heard.

The bullet-hit body of Hamid was later

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Earth's atmosphere bigger than thought



INDEPENDENT.CO.UK

The Earth's atmosphere is far bigger than we had realised, scientists have announced.

The outermost part of our atmosphere reaches nearly twice as far as the Moon and is about 50 times as big as our own planet, new research has shown.

"The Moon flies through Earth's atmosphere," says Igor Baliukin of Russia's Space Research Institute, lead author of the paper presenting the results. "We were not aware of it until we dusted off observations made over two decades ago by the SOHO spacecraft."

At the boundary of own atmosphere and outer space, there is a cloud of hydrogen atoms that scientists refer to as the geocorona. One of the instruments on the SOHO spacecraft found the signature of that border, allowing it to detect exactly where it is.

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2 workers killed in landslides

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Moulvibazar

Two workers were killed and seven others injured in two separate incidents of landslide in Habiganj and Moulvibazar in the last two days.

The dead Joni Mia, 25, was a resident of Richi village in Habiganj Sadar upazila and Harunur Rashid, 28, was a resident of Balishkuna village in Moulvibazar's Barlekha upazila.

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PRAYER TIMING FEBRUARY 24
Fazr Zohr Asr Maghrib Esha
AZAN 5-20 12-45 4-30 6-03 7-30
JAMAAT 5-55 1-15 4-45 6-07 8-00
SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

Two killed in gunfight over land

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Cox's Bazar

At least two persons were shot dead and 10 others bullet-hit in a clash over land dispute in Bilahachura area under Pekua upazila yesterday.

The deceased were identified as Nazem Uddin, 40, and Azizul Haque Rakhel, 25.

Locals and police said longstanding rivalry between Momtazul Islam and Mohammad Alamgir over around 100 acres of land of late Shawkat Ali Chowdhury Waqf Estate led to the clash.

Both the groups took position to occupy the land around 11:00am yesterday. When they came face to face, they locked in a clash and opened fire on each other. Around 100 rounds of bullets were exchanged during the clash, witnesses said.

The injured include Shawkat, 28, Tofail, 28, Rezaul, 30, Julfikar, 40, and Mahamudul Karim, 38.

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Clothes being washed and dried on the bank of the Buriganga in the capital's Kamrangirchar area recently. Most of the laundry owners in the area use the murky water for washing clothes, exposing those who would wear them to skin diseases.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

Karnaphuli tunnel work begins today

PM also to open construction of 16km expressway in port city

MOSTAFA YOUSUF, Ctg

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina will launch the boring for Karnaphuli tunnel and construction of the country's longest elevated expressway in the port city's Potenga today.

The 16.5-km expressway would cost an estimated Tk 3,225 crore and the tunnel Tk 9,880 crore.

China Communication and Construction Company has been constructing the 9.3-km tunnel, about 3.4 km of which would be under the river, officials said.

Construction work for the country's first tunnel began in December in 2017. It is likely to be completed by 2022, Project Director Harunur Rashid Chowdhury told The Daily Star, adding that about one third of the work has been done already.

Meanwhile, Chattogram Development Authority will begin the construction work for the elevated expressway from Lalkhan Bazar.

Six phases of this project is also expected to be completed by 2022.

The expressway will connect Lalkhan Bazar to Shah Amanat International Airport to ease congestion.

It will reduce gridlocks near the export processing zones and facilitate investment, officials said.

There will be 24 ramps of the four-lane expressway.

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