



Protesters including teenage Swedish climate activist Greta Thunberg and German climate activist Luisa Marie Neubauer march during a "Fridays for Future" demonstration for a better climate policy in Berlin, yesterday. Thousands of German youths went on strike from school yesterday, joining Thunberg who has taken her protest against climate change to Berlin.

PHOTO: AFP

Pakistan army

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come forward and help the Bangladeshis.

At night, the Pakistan Air Force bombarded the radio station based in Chattogram's Kalurghat. The entire port city was encircled by the Pakistani occupation forces from all sides.

In the evening, freedom fighters took hold of the Kustia Police line under the command of Matin Patwari. Major Zia explains and hands over command of Kalurghat to Captain Ali.

At Dhaka University's Ruqayyah Hall, six undressed female bodies were found dangling from ceiling fans. Apparently, the girls were raped and shot before being hung.

The military also burned down a number of houses in Old Dhaka. Most of the houses belong to Hindu families. A large number of prisoners were taken to the East Pakistan Rifles base.

Jyotirmoy Guhathakurta, a Bangalee educator and humanist, who got shot on March 25, succumbed to his wounds at the Dhaka Medical College and Hospital on this very day in 1971.

Archer Blood reported an American's observation of the atrocities committed at Dhaka University. The observer indicated that the students had been "shot down in rooms or mowed down when they came out of buildings in groups." In one instance, the martial law administration set a girls dormitory on fire and then the girls were "machine-gunned as they fled the building."

The month that ignited the fire of freedom was about to end, but the war had only begun.

[Source: Liberation War Museum, The Daily Star archive, and Bangladesh Genocide Archive.]

'Pray for me'

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phone, he also asked them to try to do something so that he would be rescued.

But the family members felt utterly helpless and had little to do but pray for him.

A graduate of hotel management, Tushar was the second among three brothers, his father Ihsak Ali said.

He was a senior officer at a agency, housed on the 10th floor of FR Tower.

He was known in his village as a good cricketer.

He and his wife lived in Dhaka. As his body reached his village in Mirzapur around 3:00am yesterday, the family members and relatives broke down in tears.

Over a hundred residents of the area gathered to offer condolences as the day broke.

He was buried after a namaz-e-ijanaza around 10:00am.

Huge rivers

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atmosphere and drying out during this time.

Dr Edwin Kite, from the University of Chicago, said: "It's already hard to explain rivers or lakes based on the information we have. This makes a difficult problem even more difficult."

The amount of water gushing through the river channels was estimated at between three and 20 kilograms per square metre per day.

The team studied more than 200 ancient Martian river beds criss-crossing the planet.

The width and steepness of the channels and size of rounded pebbles they contained provided clues about the volume and force of water that once flowed through them.

Oddly, the rivers appeared to have been flowing until the "last geological minute" before the planet became a desert, said the researchers writing in the journal Science Advances.

"You would expect them to wane gradually over time, but that's not what we see," said Dr Kite. "The rivers get shorter - hundreds of kilometres rather than thousands - but discharge is still strong."

"The wettest day of the year is still very wet."

One possibility is that the Martian climate had an "on/off" switch that tripped back and forth between dry and wet cycles, he added.

Justice obstructed

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police announced discovery of 139 graves and 28 suspected human-trafficking camps in Wang Kelian.

The report documented how perpetrators brutally murdered or tortured the victims and then dumped their bodies in mass graves. In some cases, they forced captives to bury bodies, said the report based on more than 270 interviews with witnesses, survivors, human traffickers, government officials and others from 2012 to 2019.

It says there were gaps in the investigation and possible obstruction of justice in Malaysia's discovery of mass graves in 2015.

Details of official complicity in the human trafficking were documented in the report. It says Malaysian police in 2013 and 2014 arrested around 750 "undocumented foreign migrants" at the Kaki Bukit Police Station in Perlis State for illegal entry into Wang Kelian. These cases were investigated for immigration offenses and not as human-trafficking cases.

Villagers of Wang Kelian often encountered or at least saw the movement of South Asian-looking foreigners who were skinny and some of them had burned marks as if they were splashed with hot water. They notified police of "foreigners" in their village and that law enforcers often apprehended the foreigners but failed to conduct further investigations, which raises questions regarding the authorities' response, the report said.

"The authorities could have detected suspicious activities and discovered the human trafficking camp in Wang Kelian earlier if the information above and available data about 'undocumented foreign migrants' had been well distributed and coordinated among the relevant agencies," the report observed.

Malaysia has convicted only four foreigners in connection with the Wang Kelian tragedy, while Thailand convicted 62 people, including nine Thai officials, of trafficking crimes in the human trafficking case.

Yet, testimonies of survivors and eyewitness indicate broader involvement or complicity by the Thai authorities in the trafficking case.

The report said at least some Thai authorities were aware of mass graves well before their May 1, 2015 announcement about the existence of

No-deal

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likelihood of an abrupt 'no-deal' Brexit is receding, fell half a percent after May lost, to as low as \$1.2977.

THIRD FAILURE

It was a third failure for May, who had offered on Wednesday to resign if the deal passed, in a bid to win over eurosceptic rebels in her Conservative Party who support a more decisive break with the EU than the divorce her deal offers.

It leaves May's Brexit strategy in tatters. With no majority in parliament for any Brexit option so far, it is unclear what May will now do. Options include asking the EU for a long delay, parliament forcing an election, or a "no-deal" exit.

French President Emmanuel Macron, speaking as parliament voted, said the EU needed to accelerate no-deal planning.

Dutch Prime Minister Mark Rutte told reporters: "One of the two routes to an orderly Brexit seems now to be closed. This leaves only the other route, which is for the British to make clear what they want before April 12."

"The risk of a no-deal Brexit is very real," he said.

May's deal had twice been rejected by huge margins this year and, although she was able to win over many Conservative rebels, a hard core of eurosceptics and the Northern Irish Democratic Unionist Party, which props up her minority government, refused to back it.

Next Monday, lawmakers who have tried to grab control of the process will attempt to agree on an alternative Brexit plan that could command majority cross-party support in parliament, something largely unheard-of in Britain's political system.

NEXT DEADLINE LOOMS

a mass gravesite. For example, a low-level Rohingya human trafficker, 42, who also worked closely with the Thai authorities to combat trafficking, told Fortify Rights that he discovered graves alongside Thai authorities in 2013.

Testimony of the report reveals a widespread and systematic pattern of the Thai authorities transferring Rohingya refugees from the immigration detention centres and government-run shelters to a transnational criminal syndicate involved in human trafficking. The practice of selling Rohingya refugees to traffickers en masse took place for several consecutive years.

For example, survivor "Mohammed T" told Fortify Rights about his experience in a Thai immigration detention centre in Ranong after Thai authorities arrested him, then aged 18, and others from a human-trafficking camp on a mountain island in January 2013.

He said some local Muslims provided some food in detention, but later that stopped and they suffered a lot. In one room, there were 70 to 100 people. He was there for 11 months. Afterwards, the Thai authorities handed him and others over to human traffickers.

The survivor said the Thai authorities had weapons, but were not in uniforms when they handed the survivors over to traffickers. He spent several months in a human-trafficking camp on the Malaysia-Thailand border and witnessed multiple deaths, buried victims in mass graves as per directives of his captors. He eventually escaped and recovered in a mosque in southern Thailand.

In April 2015, Fortify Rights privately shared information about mass graves with senior Thai foreign ministry officials. On April 22, the rights body testified before US Congress on human trafficking in Thailand, Malaysia, and other countries.

The report said despite some measures of justice served through Thailand's mass human-trafficking trial, many of those involved in trafficking remain free or at large in the region.

Suhakam and Fortify Rights termed the crimes by the human trafficking syndicate as crimes against humanity and demanded further investigation and bringing to book all those involved in the heinous crimes.

According to BBC, an estimated 5,000 Rohingyas were living in Thailand and another 1.5 lakh in Malaysia in October 2017.

The defeat means Britain now has under two weeks to convince the 27 capitals of the EU that it has an alternative path out of the impasse, or see itself cast out of the bloc from that date with no deal on post-Brexit ties with its largest trading ally.

Many eurosceptics see this as their preferred option but businesses say it would cause huge damage not only to the world's fifth-biggest economy, but also to that of neighbouring Ireland.

However, any further extension would not only require Britain to take part in European Parliament elections in May, but also bring months of fresh uncertainty.

A second referendum could then be in play, although many lawmakers believe the most likely outcome and only way to solve the crisis will be a snap election.

The 2016 referendum vote to leave the EU revealed a United Kingdom divided over many more issues, and has provoked impassioned debate about everything from secession and immigration to capitalism, empire and what it means to be British.

Meanwhile the uncertainty around Brexit, the United Kingdom's most significant political and economic move since World War Two, has left allies and investors agast.

Opponents fear Brexit will make Britain poorer and divide the West as it grapples with both the unconventional US presidency of Donald Trump and growing assertiveness from Russia and China.

Supporters say that, while the divorce might bring some short-term instability, in the longer term it will allow the United Kingdom to thrive if cut free from what they cast as a doomed attempt to forge European unity.

EC suspends polls in two upazilas for violence

STAR REPORT

The Election Commission has suspended election in Pirojpur's Mathbaria upazila and Noakhali's Kabirhat upazila over polls related violence between the ruling party men and its rebel candidates.

The fourth phase of the upazila polls was scheduled to be held on March 31.

In Mathbaria, a union-level Swetchhashebak League leader was hacked to death on Monday and over a hundred people were injured during a clash between the supporters of the ruling Awami League nominated candidate Hossain Mosarraf Saku and AL rebel candidate Riaz Uddin Ahmed.

After the incident, Mohammad Salam Kabir, superintendent of Pirojpur police, and Sawkat Anwar Islam, officer-in-charge of Mathbaria Police Station, were closed as they "failed to stop election related violence".

EC Deputy Secretary Atiar Rahman, in a signed notice, said the condition of Mathbaria upazila was not favourable for holding the polls on March 31.

The election will remain suspended until further order, he added.

Elsewhere in Noakhali's Kabirhat upazila, at least 10 people were injured as the supporters of AL candidate Kamrun Nahar Sheuli and AL rebel candidate Ala Bux Titu locked into a clash.

Several rounds of bullets were fired during the clash and four people were admitted to Noakhali General Hospital with bullet injuries.

The EC suspended the polls as it suspected a free and fair election would not be possible in such a violent situation, read a letter signed by EC Deputy Secretary Atiar Rahman.

Tomas Barua, officer-in-charge of Kabirhat Police Station, said the violence occurred as supporters of both the chairman aspirants went on separate processions at the same time without any permission.

"The situation is now under control," he added.

Our Noakhali and Pirojpur correspondents contributed to this report.

Strictly

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students of educational institutions for their courageous roles in tackling Thursday's Banani fire incident.

The AL chief expressed deep shock at the loss of lives in the fire incident and prayed for salvation of the departed souls, said a party press release.

She also strongly condemned the recent attacks on Christchurch mosques in New Zealand and expressed deep shock.

Hasina extended her sympathy to New Zealand Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern in this regard.

The AL presidium meeting decided to form eight teams to celebrate the birth centenary of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and strengthening the party's organisational activities ahead of its council.

The AL will observe programmes throughout the year and publish books in this regard.

The meeting issued directives to all concerned to prepare a report and take actions against ministers, lawmakers and party leaders who were not working for the party candidates contesting different local government elections.

AL presidium members Matia Chowdhury, Sheikh Fazlul Karim Selim, Mohammed Nasim, Kazi Zafarullah, Sahara Khatun, Pijush Kanti Bhattacharya, Nurul Islam Nahid, Abdur Razzaque, Faruk Khan, Ramesh Chandra Sen, Abdul Mannan Khan, Office Secretary Abdus Sobhan Golap and Deputy Office Secretary Biplab Barua were present at the meeting.

Ensure safety

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condolences for the loss of lives from the fire at FR Tower on Kamal Ataturk Avenue at Banani, Dhaka. Our thoughts and prayers are with the families which lost their dear ones."

The delegation also wishes early recovery for those who have sustained injuries from the fire, the statement said.

After the Rana Plaza collapsed in 2013, the European Parliament adopted a resolution and an accord on fire and building safety in Bangladesh to ensure all safety measures for preventing the recurrence of such tragedy in the apparel sector.

Meanwhile, different diplomatic missions stationed in Dhaka and their heads expressed sympathy to the families of the Banani fire victims.

US Ambassador to Bangladesh Earl R Miller tweeted, "Our prayers are with the families and loved ones of those injured and lost, and to all who mourn in Dhaka and across Bangladesh."

In a Facebook post, the Swedish Embassy in Dhaka expressed profound shock at the casualties in Banani fire incident and expressed sympathy to the family members of those killed, injured and affected.

In a statement, Canadian High Commission in Dhaka, said, "We offer our deepest condolences to the families and friends of those who died in the horrible fire in Banani. We wish a speedy recovery to those injured, and offer thanks to the local authorities who responded to this tragedy."

Enact laws to curb terror financing

UNSC resolution asks nations

AFP, United Nations

The UN Security Council ordered countries worldwide to step up the fight against terrorism financing Thursday by ensuring they have laws that make it a serious crime to fund terrorist acts.

The council unanimously adopted a French-drafted resolution that was the first stand-alone measure dedicated specifically to countering the financing of terrorism.

The resolution calls on all states to "ensure that their domestic laws and regulations establish serious criminal offenses" to prosecute those who collect funds or provide economic resources to terror organizations or individual terrorists.

The binding resolution was drafted under chapter 7 of the UN Charter, which means it can be enforced with sanctions.

UN counterterror chief Vladimir Voronkov told the council that the measure "comes at a critical time" as recent attacks have shown that terror groups have access to financial flows through legal and illegal means.

The resolution urged countries to establish financial intelligence units to strengthen efforts to track terrorism financing and to share information on their investigations.

Marshall Billingslea, president of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) which combats money-laundering and terror financing, said less than a fifth of countries were applying laws that prosecute suspected terror financiers as criminals.

The resolution will help the FATF ratchet pressure on more than 50 countries to pass new legislation on countering terror financing.

Groups like Colombia's FARC rebels, Hezbollah and Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) tap into a variety of schemes to raise funds from drug trafficking to used car sales to finance attacks, according to the FATF.

Billingslea said the resolution would also contribute to halting ransom payments for kidnappings by terror groups, which have become a major source of funding.

"States must not allow hostage-takers or terrorists to benefit from ransom payments," Billingslea told the council.

"This is crucial, in particular as kidnapping for ransom has become the major funding source used by the remnants of Daesh around the world,"

Trump, Moon to meet in Washington in April: Seoul

AFP, Seoul

US President Donald Trump will host his South Korean counterpart Moon Jae-in next month, Seoul said yesterday, after the latest summit between Washington and Pyongyang ended in deadlock.

Moon has long backed a policy of engagement with nuclear-armed, sanctions-hit Pyongyang and was instrumental in brokering talks between Trump and North Korean leader Kim Jong Un.

But the failure of Kim and Trump to reach an agreement in Hanoi on curtailing Pyongyang's nuclear programme in exchange for relaxation of sanctions has raised questions over the future of the process.

I choose peace

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"Racism exists, but it is not welcome here," she said, adding that she wanted New Zealand to set an example that would stop the cycle of extremism breeding extremism.

"We are not immune to the viruses of hate, of fear, of other -- we never have been," she said.

"But we can be the nation that discovers the cure."

The hastily organised event was held amid tight security, with Police Commissioner Mike Bush confirming armed police from Australia were on site to assist their New Zealand counterparts.

The service heard a Muslim invocation, or du'a, and Cat Stevens -- the British singer who shunned stardom in the 1970s and became a Muslim, taking the name Yusuf Islam -- gave a powerful rendition of his hit song "Peace Train".

But the most moving moment came with the softly-spoken words of Ahmed, whose wife Husna was killed as she rushed back into a mosque trying to rescue her disabled husband.

"LIGHT IN STORMY WATERS"

Looking frail in his wheelchair as he sat on stage wearing sunglasses and a headscarf, Ahmed said he bore no hatred toward the accused gunman, Australian Brenton Tarrant.

"People ask me, 'why do you forgive someone who has killed your beloved wife?'" he said.

"I can give so many answers... Allah says if we forgive one another he loves us."

Ahmed said people from different cultures were like flowers and "to-

gether we are a beautiful garden".

"I don't want a heavy heart boiling like a volcano with anger, fury and rage -- it burns itself and burns its surroundings," he said.

"I want a heart full of love, care and mercy. This heart does not want any more lives to be lost, any other human to go through the pain I've gone through."

"That's why I am choosing peace and I have forgiven."

Ahmed moved to New Zealand in 1988. He has been in a wheelchair since 2013 because of a traffic accident.

Amid the tears and grief, there was optimism among the crowd that the outpouring of compassion that followed the attacks would become the lasting legacy of its victims.

"I'm very positive about this continuing," said Manan Bohra, who runs a Muslim community centre in Auckland. "When we're walking down the street people are coming up and expressing their peace and love."

"It was a very tragic event, but it's been a life-changing event for the nation itself."

Christchurch mayor Lianne Dalziel said the atrocity was "an attack on us all".

"Those actions were designed to divide us and tear us apart," she said.

"They have instead united us."

There were other smaller services around New Zealand, including one at Auckland's Eden Park attended by All Blacks rugby star and Muslim convert Sonny Bill Williams.

"Let's keep leading the way," he said. "Let's keep being that light in stormy waters for the rest of the world to see how it's done."

Anti-narcotics

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yesterday afternoon. They demanded that Hamida should not defend drug peddlers and addicts in the court, the official said.

Later, locals and Hamida were locked into an altercation. At one stage, two supporters of Hamida beat up Arzu mercilessly, leaving her critically injured.

She was rushed to Narayanganj General Hospital where doctors declared her dead, the police official added.

Police detained six people, including Hamida, in this connection.

A couple's dream

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they spoke to the two by phones shortly after the fire broke out.

The relatives were talking to The Daily Star at Dhaka Medical College Hospital on Thursday night.

Talking to this newspaper yesterday, Imtiaz Ahmed, cousin of Maksud, 32, said he identified Maksud's body at United Hospital in the afternoon. He came to learn from doctors that Maksud died after falling from the 10th floor.

Imtiaz said they identified Rumki, who died of suffocation, at the burn unit of DMCH around 8:00pm.

"They had a dream for a flat. All the dreams of the couple have gone now," he told The Daily Star.

Dilara Hossain, sister-in-law of Maksud, a resident of Gendaria, said he had been working as an executive at Heritage Air Express since 2010 after completing his graduation from a private university in Dhaka.

Rumki, 30, daughter of Sayed Ashraf Ali of Nilphamari's Jaldhaka, did her honours in Islamic History from Carmichael College in Rangpur and was admitted to Government Titumir College in Dhaka in 2014 for doing her master's, said Mukta Begum, cousin of Rumki.

Rumki, who was also an executive at the same travel agency, started the job when she was a student.

Mukta said the happily married couple visited Nilphamari only a week ago.

Ashraf Ali said his wife died only four months ago and Rumki had been his great source of mental support since then. "How shall I now endure the pain of my daughter's death?"