



A protester kicks back a tear gas canister during clashes with police at a demonstration as part of a 20th consecutive Saturday of protests called by the "yellow vests" (gilets jaunes) movement yesterday, in Avignon, southeastern France.

PHOTO: AFP

## Police arrest

FROM PAGE 1

in connection with a case filed with Banani Police Station over Thursday's fire disaster at the tower that killed 26 people and left some 70 injured, police said.

Milton Dutt, a sub-inspector and also the in-charge of Banani Police outpost, filed the case against land owner Faruque, Liakat Ali Khan alias Mukul, 57, chairman of Rupayan Group, the builder company, and Tasvir, 62, and others who were part of the building management committee and some unknown persons, according to DMP's official news portal.

Shahjahan Saju, ADC of DB (North) of Dhaka Metropolitan Police, said Tasvir claimed that he was the owner of the top three floors of the 22-storey building.

The FR Tower had no permission for its top four floors and there was no fire-protected staircase in the 22-storey building that housed dozens of offices, Rajuk and fire service officials confirmed.

In 1996, its owner took permission to construct an 18-storey building, Abdur Rahman, chairman of Rajdhani Unnayan Kartirakkap (Rajuk), told The Daily Star on Thursday.

"But on February 23, 2005, they submitted a photocopy of the building's design showing 22 floors. But there was no document to support it," he said.

## 107 upazilas

FROM PAGE 16

March 10, March 18 and March 24 respectively, in 78, 116 and 117 upazilas.

In this year's upazila polls, the political parties nominated aspirants for the first time.

According to EC Assistant Secretary (election management) Ashfaqur Rahman, two platoons of BGB would be deployed in all the 107 upazilas during the fourth phase of the election. Besides, two to three additional platoons would be deployed in 48 upazilas.

SM Asaduzzaman, EC joint secretary and director (public relations), yesterday said they had taken preparation for a free and fair election.

The EC has deployed 111 platoons of additional Border Guard Bangladesh members in 48 upazilas ahead of today's election and kept 48 platoons as reserve force.

The deployment of additional forces has been done keeping the upazilas' law and order situation in mind, he said, adding the BGB men would act as mobile striking forces.

According to the EC officials, Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs) would be used in six upazilas -- Patuakhali Sadar, Cox's Bazar Sadar, Begherhat Sadar, Mymensingh Sadar, Munshiganj Sadar and Feni Sadar -- during the fourth phase of the election.

Meanwhile, the EC ordered three MPs -- Anwarul Abedin Khan of Mymensingh-9, Ranajit Kumar Roy of Jashore-4 and Mohammed Ekramul Karim Chowdhury of Noakhali-4 -- to leave the election areas following allegations that they breached rules by influencing the local government polls.

During the first three phases, the EC ordered at least 20 MPs to leave their areas because of the same allegation.

## Facebook to tighten live

FROM PAGE 16

The social network is also investing in improving software to quickly identify edited versions of violent video or images to prevent them from being shared or re-posted.

"While the original New Zealand attack video was shared Live, we know that this video spread mainly through people re-sharing it and re-editing it to make it harder for our systems to block it," Sandberg said.

"People with bad intentions will always try to get around our security measures."

Facebook identified more than 900 different videos showing portions of the streamed violence.

The social network is using artificial intelligence tools to identify and remove hate groups in Australia and New Zealand, according to Sandberg.

Those groups will be banned from Facebook services, she said.

Facebook this week announced it would ban praise or support for white nationalism and white separatism as part of a stepped-up crackdown on hate speech.

The ban will be enforced starting next week on the leading online social network and its image-centric messaging service Instagram.

"It's clear that these concepts are deeply linked to organized hate groups and have no place on our services," the social network said in a

statement.

Facebook policies already banned posts endorsing white supremacy as part of its prohibition against spewing hate at people based on characteristics such as race, ethnicity or religion.

The ban had not applied to some postings because it was reasoned they were expressions of broader concepts of nationalism or political independence, according to the social network.

Facebook said that conversations with academics and "members of civil society" in recent months led it to view white nationalism and separatism as linked to organized hate groups.

People who enter search terms associated with white supremacy will get results referring them to resources such as Life After Hate, which focus on helping people turn their backs on such groups, according to Facebook.

Amid pressure from governments around the world, Facebook has ramped up machine learning and artificial intelligence tools for finding and removing hateful content.

"We are deeply committed to strengthening our policies, improving our technology and working with experts to keep Facebook safe," Sandberg said.

"We must all stand united against hate and work together to fight it wherever and whenever it occurs."

## An office numb

FROM PAGE 1

A freight forwarding company on the same floor, Scanwell Logistics Bangladesh Ltd, too lost five employees in the fire.

The deceased employees of Heritage Air Express are Senior sales Officers Ataur Rahman, 62, Monir Hossain Sardar, 52, and Nahidul Islam, 35; Accounts Manager Abdullah Al Mamun, 47; Visa-coordinator Mizanur Rahman, 30; Senior Tour Operator Maksudur Rahman Jemi, 32; Accounts Officer Rumki Akter, 30; Tour Operator Tanjela Moule, 25; Visa-coordinator Jebunesa, 30; and Hajj and Umrah officer Abu Hena Mostafa Kamal, 60.

Nine of them, including three women, died on Thursday while critically burnt Mostafa Kamal lost the battle for his life at the Combined Military Hospital (CMH) yesterday morning. With his demise, death toll from the fire rose to 26.

Anjan said it took him nearly 10 minutes to reach the roof and there he found only four of his colleagues, including Managing Director Faizul Islam Hiru.

"I asked them about the others and they said they were also coming. We somehow jumped to the roof of adjacent the Ahmed Tower," he said, adding that once going to the other side, they helped at least 60 to 70 people cross the roof but did not find anyone else from Heritage Air Express.

Anjan said as he got down, he saw a few policemen on the road. The fire fighters had not reached yet.

"As I looked up, I saw fire raging through floors and smoke engulfing others," he said.

"Right before my eyes, three of our colleagues -- Monir, Maksud and Mamun -- fell to their death while trying to slide down cables," Anjan

said and broke down in tears.

He said there were around 30 employees in his office when the fire broke out.

In the 22-storey building, most of the floors were used as offices of companies like Aamra Networks Limited, EUR Service Ltd, Dird Group, Dentotal, and FR Properties Ltd (land owners office). Some other floors housed restaurants and cafes.

"Everything in our office has been razed to ashes," said another official of Heritage Air Express.

Heavy smoke and ash created black layers on the furniture, computers and documents of the 10th and several other uppers floors, which remained outside the reach of flames, said firemen.

### 'EXIT TOO NARROW'

Tarun Kanti Sikder, a member of the committee formed by the home ministry to probe the fire incident, said the width of the highrise's fire exit was only 24 inches.

After inspecting the eight to 12th floors, members of two probe bodies by the home and the disaster management and relief ministry briefed the media in front of the building yesterday morning.

They said the fire mainly damaged the 8th, 9th and 10th floors. The other two floors had smoke in it, they said.

Faizur Rahman, additional secretary of the Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief, said they found some firefighting equipment on the affected floors but they were unused.

They would talk to those who worked at the eight to the 10th floor today to know the cause of the fire, he added.

Asked about the owner of the tower, Faizur said the developer company and the owner of FR Tower have been asked to appear at his ministry.

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## NEWS

# Alaska bakes under heat wave

AFP, Los Angeles

Alaska residents accustomed to subzero temperatures are experiencing a heat wave of sorts that is shattering records, with the thermometer jumping to more than 30 degrees Fahrenheit (16.7 Celsius) above normal in some regions.

"Both February and March have been exceptionally warm," Rick Thoman, a climate specialist with the Alaska Center for Climate Assessment and Policy, told AFP. "Many places are on their way to their warmest March on record."

He said that cities and towns in the northern half of the state, including Wainwright, Nuiqsut, Kaktovik and Barrow (also known as Utqiagvik), could see temperatures soar 25 to 40 degrees Fahrenheit (14 to 22 Celsius) above normal this weekend as the warm trend continues.

"At Barrow, through yesterday, they've had daily record high temperatures five separate days this month ... and that's quite an achievement," Thoman said.

"This is following on the heels of the very warm, and in some places record warm February," he added. "We now have April or May weather in March."

In Barrow, for example, the temperature jumped to 30 degrees Fahrenheit (-1 Celsius) on Thursday when the normal high is minus three Fahrenheit.

"Deadhorse, AK, is set to finish March about 23°F (12.7 Celsius) above normal for the month," Brian Brettschneider, a climatologist based in Alaska tweeted on Thursday.

## A man with an unusual

FROM PAGE 16

Pakistan Observer, the Awami Jamhoori, The Telegraph and The Moscow Times.

Some of the newspapers in his collection have coverage of the 1956 speech of Huseyn Shaheed Suhrawardy in Pakistan parliament, Indo-Pak War of 1965, the return of US astronauts to the Earth in 1969, and the historic March 7 speech of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman in 1971.

His passion for reading different publications and collecting those started in his boyhood, around 1956, and has grown ever since.

Stricken by poverty since childhood, Musleh managed to complete his graduation from Gauripur Government College in 1993. He was born in a local farmer's family.

"After that [completing graduation], I was appointed by different educational institutions at different times but none of them was a permanent job. In some cases, I was not even paid the salary mentioned in my contract," said Musleh, a man who earns his livelihood by teaching part-time at different local schools.

"But I have no complaint against anyone. I have always enjoyed teaching English and reading newspapers," a smiling Musleh told The Daily Star.

During a recent visit to Musleh's one-room house, our correspondent found newspapers piled up on one of his two beds. Some of those were partially eaten by insects. He also had a good collection of Bangla calendars.

Musleh fears his collection, which includes some important historical documents, might be lost if not preserved properly.

"I don't even have a shelf to keep these publications. Sometimes I put them under sunlight to avoid insects," he said.

"I am too old. My days are numbered but I want my collection to be preserved," the man insisted.

Musleh lost strength in his left leg

## The 70-year-old

FROM PAGE 16

about architecture and the arrangement of objects to ensure good fortune.

The Taiwanese grandfather, fondly called "Uncle Pokemon", was introduced to the game by his grandson. Soon he became so famous that it is hard for someone on the island not to recognise him. His entry into the Pokemon world was relatively late, at 66.

"It all began when my son gifted me a mobile on my birthday, and my grandson taught me how to play Pokemon Go. It was a discovery," Chen said.

From one smartphone, Chen kept growing his "arsenal" and had 11 of them a year ago. He has now raised the challenge and is equipped with 24 smartphones. Twenty-two are fastened to the handlebar of his bicycle and two in his pockets.

Chen said he began using several mobiles because more devices mean more captures and needed them to go up on the levels of the game.

During the day, Chen works as fortune teller and Feng Shui expert in Taiwan. In the evening, he rides on his

bicycle and moves across the streets of Greater Taipei, especially towards the parks, in search of Pokemon characters.

"Before keeping the mobiles on his bike, he could be seen in the parks with several mobiles on a tray. He had a great idea of taking the bike, because now he can move wherever the Pokemons appear," said Wang, one of Chen's neighbours.

He has such an expertise that he can use nine mobiles simultaneously to catch Pokemons. "Because we have only 10 fingers," Chen said.

He spends around 1,000 on telephone bills every month to play the game. But nothing deters him. Not even the physical strain or staying awake late into the night.

In February, Chen was named as the ambassador of Taiwanese brand ASUS. He not only participated in the presentation event of Zenfone Max Pro M2, but now carries more than 20 of those on his bicycle.

"In Taiwan now, it (Pokemon Go) is no longer a game for kids, but for people of all ages, and sometimes one could find groups of hundreds of people," said one of Chen's admirers.