



Protestors of the Algerian community in France take part in a demonstration in Marseille yesterday to call for a change to Algeria's whole political system. Ailing Algerian president Abdelaziz Bouteflika announced on April 2, 2019, that he was stepping down after two decades in power. PHOTO: AFP

BGB deployed

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commanding officer of Teknaf BGB-2, said a border outpost has been set up on the island.
"The BGB members will carry out patrols, protect the country's border and prevent smuggling."
The development comes at a time when an 11-member BGB delegation, led by its Director General Maj Gen Md Shafeenul Islam, is visiting Myanmar to attend a high-level conference with the Myanmar Police Force.
The five-day conference, which began in Myanmar's capital Naypyidaw on Saturday, will discuss issues such as stopping inflow of yaba and other narcotics into Bangladesh, and curbing terrorism and trespass.
BGB sources in Dhaka said the personnel of the paramilitary force, alongside members of the law enforcement agencies including the Coast Guard, started patrolling the island yesterday morning.
In recent times, official websites of Myanmar showed Saint Martin's island as part of its territory.
Bangladesh foreign ministry summoned the Myanmar envoy in Dhaka twice -- in October last year and February this year -- and lodged strong protests against Myanmar's claim.
In "strongly worded" protest notes to Myanmar, the ministry also demanded immediate corrective measures and urged Naypyidaw to act responsibly and refrain from making such false claims.
"This is absolutely unacceptable," the ministry had said in its note.
On February 14, Delwar Hossain, director general of the South East Asia Wing of the foreign ministry, told reporters that Myanmar official websites, which showed Saint Martin's island as their territory, remained inaccessible for a few months after Bangladesh protested in October last year.
But the false claim was made again on Myanmar's official websites the same month.
Bangladesh first lodged a formal protest on the issue on October 6 last year.
In reply, Myanmar affirmed through a note verbale on October 21 that "...the organisation has also removed all links which falsely mentioned about Saint Martin's Island."
But, with great concern, Bangladesh officials noticed that the advanced interactive map on the website of the Department of Population under the Ministry of Labour, Immigration and Population of Myanmar (www.dop.gov.mm), continues to show similar data gradients such as

population and land type for the Saint Martin's Island as those of Myanmar.
HC issues
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district education officer of Barguna, the Taltali upazila education officer and the president of the governing body of Chhotobaghi PK Government Primary School have been made respondents.
The HC bench of Justice FRM Nazmul Ahasan and Justice KM Kamrul Kader came up with the rule after hearing a writ petition filed by Md Istiak Ahmed, a Supreme Court lawyer.
Barrister M Mainul Islam appeared for the petitioner, while Deputy Attorney General Abdullah A Mahmud Bashar represented the state.
Two other SC lawyers -- Hasan Tarek Polish and Md Kawsar -- have also submitted another writ petition to the HC, seeking its directive upon the government to pay Tk 1 crore to the family of Mansura and Tk 10 lakh to each of the families of the 10 injured students.
The petitioners yesterday requested the court to order the authorities to take steps for proper treatment of the injured.
In the petition, they urged the court to issue a rule, asking the authorities to explain why they should not be directed to conduct a survey to identify the vulnerable structures of government and non-government schools across the country.
The HC may hear the petition today.
In another development, Local Government and Rural Development Minister Md Tajul Islam yesterday directed its officials to identify risky primary school buildings and ensure stern punishment of those responsible for irregularities during construction of Chhotobaghi PK Government Primary School.
The school building will be reconstructed, the minister said while talking to reporters at the secretariat.
He added that officials of the Local Government Engineering Department had been assigned to identify the responsible people and bring them to book.
Meanwhile, the primary and mass education ministry has formed a two-member committee to probe the incident, says a ministry press release.
The probe committee members -- Directorate of Primary Education Director Saber Hossain and Deputy Secretary Mahbubur Rashid -- have been asked to submit the report within three working days.

SUBARNACHAR GANG RAPE

Another accused surrenders, lands in jail

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Noakhali

Another accused in the case over the gang rape of a mother of six in Noakhali's Subarnachar upazila landed in jail yesterday after he surrendered before a court.

Fazlu from Bagya village, the third accused in the case, sought bail after turning himself in to the Noakhali District Cognisance Court-2. But the judge rejected his bail prayer and sent him to jail.

The same court also placed four other accused in the case on remand.

Of the four, Abul Kalam Bechu and Rubel were remanded for two days each, and Raihan and Arman for a day each.

On March 31 evening, the victim, a 48-year-old woman, was allegedly gang-raped as she "campaigning" for a vice-chairman candidate in the upazila polls.

The following day, the victim's husband filed a case with Char Jabbar Police Station against 12, including four unnamed people.

So far seven accused in the case are behind bars.

The incident happened barely three months after a mother of four was gang-raped by 10 to 12 people in the same area allegedly for voting for "sheaf of paddy", the electoral symbol of the BNP, in the December 30 parliamentary election.

9 hurt

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The activists of the pro-ruling Awami League student body began their demonstrations in the morning by halting a shuttle train, the main means of transport between the port city and the campus. It caused suspension of classes and most of the scheduled examinations.

"We requested them [BCL activists] to free the road for students. But instead of that, they attacked policemen and left five of our colleagues injured," said Masiuddoula Reza, additional superintendent of police of Chattogram (north).

"We were forced to charge truncheons, use water cannon, and lob teargas canisters to disperse them," he said, adding that two BCL men were detained from the spot.
Additional police forces were deployed on the campus to avoid any untoward incidents, he added.

Rezaul Haque Rubel, former vice-president of BCL CU unit, said police attacked them without any provocation and dispersed them.
A tense situation was prevailing on the campus. The shuttle train service remained suspended till filing of this report around 8:30pm.

The BCL activists also held the shuttle train driver captive for some time and sent him home later, said Mustafizur Rahman, officer-in-charge of Chattogram Railway Police Station.
Teachers' buses could not leave the campus as the demonstrators punctured tyres of the buses in the morning, said Proctor Ali Astar.
Two other demands of the BCL activists are: withdrawal of all "political" cases filed against BCL leaders and activists between 2015 and 2018, and the release of the six BCL leaders, who were arrested in a "false" arms case a few days ago.

614 outlaws

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Mostafa Kamal Uddin and Inspector General of Police Mohammad Javed Pathway were present as special guests while Police Staff College Rector Rowshan Ara Begum chaired the event.

These 614 outlaws have realised their faults and decided to surrender, the minister said in response to a journalist's question.

Regarding the fate of these outlaws, the home minister said they would take action as per the existing laws.

Police said the surrender programme would take place tomorrow in Pabna's Shaheed Aminuddin Stadium.

Regarding the surrender, an MP of Pabna-2 Advocate Samsul Haque Tuku said the government had "given the criminals an opportunity to lead a normal life" for the sake of peace and happiness in the country.

"As we are heading towards development, the government has decided to help all the people lead normal lives. Responding to the call, pirates of the Sundarbans and drug dealers of Cox's Bazar have already surrendered and now the outlaws are going to follow suit," Tuku said.

Addressing a press conference at Pabna Press Club yesterday, Tuku, also the president of parliamentary standing committee of the home ministry, said the outlaws would remain under surveillance after their surrender so that they do not return to outlawry.

US ALERT
Home Minister Asaduzzaman said issuing alerts has become "a practice of the United States".

"We don't have any information on any risk...Then, why has the United States issued alerts," the minister asked.

Relax security

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FOR VIPs at the airports and the government's high-ups could decide on the matter, sources at the meeting told The Daily Star.

Still, the committee chief requested the ministry to look into the matter.
A lawmaker in the meeting said strict checking at all airports must be ensured but the VIPs should not need to take off their shoes, belts, and coats during security checks.

He suggested VIPs have separate queues.
Others member of the committee supported the lawmaker's proposal, the meeting sources said.

The civil aviation ministry recently issued a notification to all airports to ensure foolproof security following the February 24 hijack bid of flight BG 147 in Chattogram.

Later, there were several incidents in Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport in which at least four passengers were detained for carrying firearms and bullets without declaration.

Apart from those, film star Ilias Kanchan on March 6 forgot he was carrying his licensed firearm and remembered it just before boarding a plane. He then handed it over to the authorities to have it back at his destination airport.

Asked, a top official of airport security at Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport claimed that VIPs, with the exception of heads of states and governments, do not get special treatment at security checks in airports across the globe.
"Security checking should be applied equally for all," he added.
The parliamentary committee yesterday also asked Biman to probe the alleged irregularities and corruption in selling of its tickets after a lawmaker raised the issue.

Earlier on Wednesday, the US embassy in Dhaka issued a fresh alert for US citizens following the March 15 terrorist attack in two mosques in New Zealand.

"...We encourage U.S. citizens to exercise heightened awareness of the ongoing threat posed by transnational terrorist organizations such as ISIS and al-Qa'ida," read the alert on the Bangladeshi US embassy website.
"Despite the wonderful atmosphere here, I do not understand why the USA is not satisfied," Asaduzzaman said.

"If they have any information regarding threats, they should provide us with the information and its related intelligence and we will take action," he added.
ON BNP CHIEF KHALEDA ZIA'S RELEASE

The minister said they have not yet received any application requesting the government to release BNP chief Khaleda Zia from jail on parole.

But if an application is sent in this regard, then it will be scrutinised under the existing law and then a decision will be taken, he said in reply to a journalist's query.

All properties

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during registration of the trustee board, told The Daily Star.

The former military dictator has left out his wife Raushan Ershad and brothers from the trustee board.

The 90-year-old JP chairman has been suffering from various ailments for the last several months.

Due to his health condition, Ershad could not take part in campaign for the 11th parliamentary election, even for a single day.

In the maiden session of the new parliament, Ershad joined only one sitting out of total 26.

Ershad in his 2018 wealth statement, submitted to the Election Commission before the latest national election, mentioned that his yearly income was Tk 1.08 crore.

According to the wealth statement, his main sources of income are shares of various companies, unspecified businesses, salaries from various companies, and honorariums.

Ershad's latest acquisitions are two flats in Gulshan and Banani, worth Tk 6.2 crore and Tk 4.9 crore respectively.

He took out Tk 56 lakh in loans from Union Bank Ltd of which he is a director and draws a yearly salary of Tk 74 lakh.

Man sent

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"They dragged me out of the CNG and started beating me. At one point, they tied me to an electric pole and asked to call my father over phone for money," Amzad said while on the hospital bed.

He added that, after the phone call, his father and elder brother rushed to the spot to save him but they too were attacked.

"They first beat me with an iron rod and at one point they drilled holes into my legs... They also beat my father and brother with iron rods, leaving them injured," Amzad said.

The victim was undergoing treatment at the casualty ward of Chattogram Medical College Hospital.

However, police sources said Amzad, a worker of Chowdhury Engineering Workshop in the city, and Jalal are accused in several cases filed with Chandgaon Police Station.
Jalal stands accused in four cases while Amzad accused in three, the sources added.

Locals confine policemen for 'vandalism'

OUR CORRESPONDENT, B'baria

Locals confined five policemen, including a sub-inspector, to a house when the policemen were "ransacking" the house at Dakkhin Poirtola in Brahmanbaria town yesterday evening while trying to arrest a murder accused.

On information, a team from Brahmanbaria Sadar Police Station rushed to the spot and rescued them.
Local ward councillor Minara Begum said the mother of Salek Miah of Poirtola died Saturday night and yesterday evening all the men of that house were busy with her burial at a graveyard. A team from Nabinagar Police Station, led by SI Rubel Farzai, raided the house to arrest a Salek's relative, an accused in Saidul Islam murder case.

As the policemen did not find the accused, they started "ransacking" the house. When then women of the house protested, the SI fired shots in the air and beat them up with bamboo sticks, the councillor claimed.

At that time, the men returned from the graveyard and confined the policemen to the house.

Locals also blocked Kalibari-Gukorna road, protesting the incident.
They withdrew the blockade after Selim Uddin, officer-in-charge of Brahmanbaria Sadar Police Station, assured them of taking action against those responsible for the incident.

OC Selim said they would look into as to why the police team from Nabinagar raided the house without taking permission from his police station that has jurisdiction over the area.

Saidul, 36, was killed in post-polls violence at Kurighar village under Nabinagar upazila on April 1, a day after the Nabinagar upazila election.

Trump says has not read Mueller report

REUTERS, Washington

US President Donald Trump said on Saturday he had not read Special Counsel Robert Mueller's report investigating contacts between his 2016 campaign and Russia that his Democratic opponents say should be released in full.

"I have not read the Mueller Report yet, even though I have every right to do so," Trump wrote on Twitter. "Only know the conclusions, and on the big one, No Collusion."

US Attorney General William Barr has said he plans to make public a redacted copy of the nearly 400-page investigative report into Russian interference in the 2016 election by the middle of this month, if not sooner.

On March 22, Mueller completed his 22-month probe and Barr sent a four-page letter to Congress two days later outlining the main findings. Barr told lawmakers the investigation did not establish that members of Trump's election campaign conspired with Russia, but also did not exonerate the president on obstruction of justice.

Israel PM vows

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Trump administration's support," he said on Twitter.
In an interview broadcast Friday, Netanyahu said he told US President Donald Trump he would not remove settlements or people as part of a future American peace plan.

"I said there shouldn't be the removal of even one settlement" from the West Bank, Netanyahu told Israel's Channel 13 television.

More than 400,000 Israelis live in West Bank settlements as part of Israel's military occupation of the territory, where more than 2.5 million Palestinians live.

A further 200,000 Israelis live in settlements in occupied east Jerusalem, over which Israel has already implemented full sovereignty.

The Palestinians hope to establish a state of their own in the West Bank, east Jerusalem and the Gaza Strip.
'CLOSE RACE'

Washington is expected to unveil proposals for Israeli-Palestinian peace sometime after Tuesday's Israeli election in which Netanyahu is seeking a fifth term.

The Israeli prime minister was asked by Channel 13 if he was familiar with the details of the US plan, replying he knew "what should be in it."

Along with settlements, "our ongoing control of all the territory west of the Jordan" River was a further condition set by the Israeli premier for any US-led peace initiative.

He was referring to Israel maintaining security control over the entire West Bank -- a demand he has repeatedly made.

Netanyahu, who is running for reelection while facing the possibility of indictment on corruption charges, said he informed Trump not "even one person" would be evicted from a settlement.

The US president on Saturday was cautious about the outcome of Israel's upcoming election.

"Well, it's going to be close -- I think it's going to be close. Two good people," he said, referring to Netanyahu and his rival Benny Gantz.

The latest polls place Netanyahu and ex-military chief Gantz neck and neck, but give the former the advantage in his ability to form a coalition government.

Gantz had no comment on Netanyahu's remarks on the settlers

Turkey yesterday accused Netanyahu of raising annexation as a means of improving his standings in the elections.

"West Bank is Palestinian territory occupied by Israel in violation of int'l law," Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu said on Twitter.

"Prime Minister Netanyahu's irresponsible statement to seek votes just before the Israeli general elections cannot and will not change this fact."

While Netanyahu has a close relationship with Trump, Palestinian president Mahmud Abbas cut off relations with Washington after the US president declared the disputed city of Jerusalem Israel's capital in December 2017.

The Palestinians say the US government's pro-Israel bias meant it could no longer lead peace negotiations between them and Israel, while US officials argue their plan will be fair.

Israeli-Palestinian peace efforts have been at a standstill since 2014, when a drive for a deal by Barack Obama's administration collapsed.

Fresh demo

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On Saturday, daylong negotiations between the representatives of agitating jute mill workers and BJMC officials bore no fruit.

Over 50 thousand permanent jute mill workers are not being paid their wages for the last nine weeks, said BJMC Secretary AKM Tareque.

BJMC officials say workers' wages are usually paid from the profit BJMC makes from export.

But the biggest jute products importer Sudan has recently postponed an order worth Tk 500 crore, Tareque said.

"Hopefully we will receive the money by exporting to Sudan soon," he told The Daily Star.

The BJMC needs around Tk 13 crore every week to pay the workers, said workers' leader Chhunu.

It needs an additional Tk 424 crore to pay the gratuity and other dues.

Khondaker Golam Moazzam, research director at the Centre for Policy Dialogue, said BJMC often lent money from the government and its debt had reached Tk 3,206 crore in June 2018.

"The government should give funds to pay the arrears of the workers as a temporary solution," he said.