

Mandela prison

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by Bonhams, which put its value at \$60,000 to \$90,000.

The wax pastel crayon drawing shows a few bars of the cell door and a key in the lock, sketched in purple.

The work is one of the few that Mandela -- who was jailed for 27 years in total and inspired the struggle against apartheid -- kept until his death in 2013.

Mandela's daughter Pumla Makaziwe Mandela previously had the work in her possession.

South Africa's first black president did a total of 20 to 25 drawings, according to Giles Peppiatt, the auction house's director of modern African art. Some were reproduced as lithographs to raise money for the Nelson Mandela Foundation.

Mandela was jailed from 1962 to 1990. He was held at Robben Island off Cape Town from 1964 to 1982.

Mandela served as South African president from 1994 to 1999.

Mandela's drawing was one of six works that surpassed \$100,000 at the sale of African art on Thursday.

Another South African artist, Irma Stern (1894-1966), earned the highest price of the auction -- \$312,575 -- for "Malay Girl," a portrait from 1946.

3 of a family

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they touched the clothes hanging on a metal wire, the police official said, adding that Tajmahal was also electrocuted when she went upstairs hearing their screams and tried to save them.

Later, the locals rescued the victims with the help of fire service and rushed them to Rangpur Medical College Hospital where doctors pronounced them dead.

Police were suspecting that the wire might have electrified by a live cable put in a corner of the roof.

The cable was pulled from a source downstairs to provide electricity connection on the rooftop during a family programme of Syed Ali, the owner of the building, on Tuesday, Zamir claimed.

Police handed over the bodies to their family members in the afternoon.

Police detained Syed following the incident, Zamir added.

SSC results

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Sheikh Hasina. But this year no such ceremony will take place as Hasina is visiting London, said an education ministry official.

Like before, the results will be made available at schools and on education board websites. Students will also be able to receive the results through SMSs.

This year, 2,135,333 students from 28,682 institutions took the written exams from February 2 to 26. The practical tests were held from February 27 to March 14.

Of the examinees, 1,700,102 sat for the SSC exams under eight general education boards, 310,172 for Dakhil exams under the madrasa board, and 125,059 for vocational exams under the technical education board.

2 critically

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Kornopara area of Savar on Thursday noon.

Nur-e-Alom, husband of Nasima, claimed that her wife set herself on fire over family feud.

"My wife set herself afire after pouring kerosene on her body in a room on the first floor of my house. I, along with my mother, was on the ground floor during the incident," Nur, who lost his ability to move due to paralysis, told The Daily Star.

The room was locked from inside, Nur said, adding that locals and other family members later broke into the room and rescued her.

However, Nasima's father Abdul Jalil, also a union parishad chairman in Manikganj, accused the in-laws' family of killing her daughter.

In 2017, Jalil filed a case under Women and Children Repression Prevention Act with Manikganj court against Nasima's in-laws, including her husband, following a torture incident, according to Nasima's paternal family members.

Later, the case was mutually dismissed upon assurance of no further torture, they claimed.

Zakaria Hossen, inspector (investigation) of Savar Model Police Station, said the family members of Nur, including his mother, went into hiding following the incident.

"We are investigating the incident. We will also interrogate the victim's husband," the police official said, adding that the body was sent to Shaheed Suhrawardy Medical College Hospital for an autopsy.

Meanwhile, another housewife, who was allegedly torched by her in-laws on Tuesday, yesterday died at the burn unit of Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH).

Deepika Acharjee, who suffered burns over 92% of her body, breathed her last around 6:30pm, said Partha Sankar Paul, resident surgeon at the DMCH burn unit.

Police arrested three people in this connection. They are victim's husband Bipul Acharjee, her brother-in-law Sajal Acharjee and mother-in-law Sandha Rani Acharjee.

Earlier, victim's brother Arbinda Acharjee filed a case with Haziganj Police Station in this connection.

Our Savar and Chandpur correspondents contributed to this report.



A woman carries pitchers next to uprooted trees and a fallen signboard after Cyclone Fani hit Khordha district in the eastern state of Odisha, India yesterday.

Stand-off drags on in Venezuela

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opposition leader in 2014 when he was imprisoned after calling for protests against Maduro. He was transferred to house arrest in 2017.

And in Washington, US President Donald Trump offered prayers at a White House service for "the people of Venezuela in their righteous struggle for freedom."

"The brutal repression of the Venezuelan people must end, and it must end soon," he said.

The president also warned in an interview with Fox News that Washington has "lots of options and some of them are very tough options."

"There's always a tipping point" for military intervention, he said,

while adding: "I'd rather not do that."

Opposition lawmakers and family members announced Thursday that two teenage protesters -- one in Caracas and the other in the northern town of La Victoria -- had died of injuries sustained in the anti-government protests after the Tuesday uprising, raising the death toll to four.

Human rights organisations and health services have reported that dozens of people were hurt on both Tuesday and Wednesday, and the government said more than 150 people were arrested on Tuesday.

So far, 25 rebel soldiers have sought asylum at the Brazilian embassy after the failed push against Maduro.

US-RUSSIA MEETING

Tensions in Venezuela have soared since Guaido, who heads the national legislature, invoked the constitution to declare himself acting president on January 23, claiming Maduro's re-election last year was illegitimate.

The country has suffered five years of recession marked by shortages of basic necessities as well as failing public services, including water, electricity and transport.

UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres has warned Venezuela's authorities not to use deadly force against demonstrators, while the US and Russia accused each other of making the crisis worse, evoking their Cold War-era confrontations.

US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo and Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov are to discuss Venezuela when they meet in Finland next week, a US official said.

"We're going to remain in the streets until we achieve freedom for the Venezuelan people," Guaido told his supporters in Caracas on Wednesday.

Pro-Maduro groups also marched through the capital on May Day.

The International Contact Group of 13 countries -- including Britain, France, Germany and Maduro's ally Bolivia -- announced a meeting in Costa Rica on Monday and Tuesday to discuss the latest flare-up in Venezuela's simmering crisis.

Govt to bring Bangladeshi citizens home

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The offensive has exacerbated chaos in Libya since the toppling of Muammar Gaddafi in 2011, threatens to disrupt oil supplies, boost migration across the Mediterranean to Europe and scupper UN plans for an election to end rivalries between rival administrations in east and west, reports Reuters.

Talking to this newspaper, Ashrafur said, "Sometimes, there are bombings inside Tripoli. Thus, vulnerabilities for us have gone up."

Most foreign embassies in Tripoli have been closed, he said, adding that the Filipino embassy there issued alert level-4, the highest level of warning for their citizens in Tripoli.

With instructions from the foreign and expatriates' welfare ministries

in Dhaka, the Bangladesh embassy in Tripoli has been asking the Bangladeshis in and around Tripoli to contact them and let it know if they want to return home due to increasing fighting.

The embassy has a helpline number -- (+218-21-4911198-99) and is ready to rescue those seeking help, the labour counsellor said.

"We are ready to arrange voluntary repatriation," Ashrafur said, but added that the workers were not very much willing to return home possibly because they spent a good amount of money to reach Libya through brokers.

He said they had estimated that some 500 Bangladeshis were living in the suburbs of Tripoli where the Libyan National Army was fighting with the UN-backed government to

take control of Tripoli.

Ashrafur said in the initial days, around 300 were relocated from those areas, but the others did not communicate with the embassy officials. "We think they took shelter in safe places," he said and urging all Bangladeshis to contact the embassy officials if they were in any trouble.

He said the Bangladesh embassy had not yet received any reports of casualties of any Bangladeshis.

According to the Bangladesh embassy in Tripoli, about 20,000 Bangladeshis live in Libya and around 5,000 of them live in Tripoli and its suburbs.

Bangladesh stopped sending workers to Libya since 2014 because of the consequences of the civil war in the country since 2011.

Some 36,000 Bangladeshis were repatriated from the North African country after the Libyan crisis begun in 2011. Almost similar number of Bangladeshis chose to stay there. Many faced kidnapping by the local gangs and had to pay ransom for release. Some of them crossed the Mediterranean to reach Europe, according to the embassy officials.

Ashrafur said, "It seems that the trend of crossing the sea to go to Europe stopped now because of Italy's strong surveillance."

The embassy, with support from the Red Cross, is providing assistance to the Bangladeshis in Tripoli.

"Our main objective is now to ensure safety of the Bangladeshis in Tripoli and repatriate those who want to," he added.

Cold case cracked

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year, the Detective Branch (DB) of police took over the probe.

In a raid in Mirpur area yesterday, a DB team arrested three suspects of Kulsum murder.

Suspect Enamul Haque, 25, a professional driver, had been arrested in the case before, but he was out on bail. His alleged cohorts were fish traders Kalu and Kashem who were detained.

Detectives said when they arrested Enamul earlier, he did not confess

even though police had evidence that he had a relationship with the victim and the victim's phone was on at his home the last time before being switched off.

Now he has confessed that Kulsum went to his place close to the slum in the morning of March 22, 2017, DB officials claimed.

The detectives quoting Enamul said the suspect took Tk 20,000 from Kalu and Kashem to help them rape Kulsum at his home. When they tried to violate her, she attempted

to scream and the trio gagged her with a traditional towel and Enamul asphyxiated her.

The three then severed her head and dumped it and the sharp weapons they used in the sewer at Pallabi Bus Stand. They put the body in a bag and left it near the airport.

"The strong water flow washed the head away. We could not recover it," said investigation officer of the case Inspector Jahidul Islam.

Moharam Ali Masud, additional deputy commissioner of DB, said,

"We have given our best and have been successful in cracking such an old clueless murder case."

Deputy Commissioner (North) of DB Mashiur Rahman said they could unravel it due to officers' relentless effort. He urged people to be careful about whom they trust on social media and befriend in real life.

Kulsum's mother told The Daily Star that she wants the highest punishment of her daughter's killers.

2 'drug dealers' shot dead

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BGB Battalion-10, claimed.

Sensing BGB presence, criminals opened fire, forcing them to retaliate. During the "gunfight", Abdullah sustained bullet injuries. He was rushed to Cumilla Medical College Hospital where doctors declared him dead, the BGB official added.

BGB also claimed to have seized 2,000 yaba pills from the spot.

Abu Salam Mia, officer-in-charge of Kotwali Model Police Station, said Abdullah was a listed drug smuggler.

The dead is Dablu Hossain, 32, of Rail Station Para in the upazila. He stood accused in at least 15 cases

including murder and drug.

Mirza Salah Uddin, assistant superintendent of Kotchandpur police, claimed they conducted a raid in the upazila's Kagmari Water Body area on information that two groups of drug peddlers were engaged in a "gunfight" there.

Sensing police presence, criminals fled the scene. Later, police found the body of Dablu while searching the spot, he added.

The law enforcers also claimed to have recovered a gun, one bullet and 25 bottles of Phensedyl from the spot.

The body was sent to Jhenidah Sadar Hospital morgue for autopsy.

In Cox's Bazar, BGB men recovered two lakh yaba pills, worth around Tk 6 crore, from a boat on the Naf river in the district's Teknaf upazila.

No one was arrested in this connection.

Lt Col Shariful Islam Jamaddar, commander of BGB Battalion-2, said

a patrol team of BGB took position at Jhimongkhali Canal around 4:00am on information that a large consignment of drugs was about to be smuggled into the country from there.

Seeing a boat entering the canal, BGB men signalled it to stop but the passengers jumped off the boat and swam into Myanmar water, the BGB official claimed.

Later, BGB found two lakh yaba pills inside the boat. The contraband items were kept at the BGB headquarters. Those would be destroyed, Lt Col Shariful added.

Meanwhile in Chandpur, members of Rab-11 arrested a Rohingya refugee with 10,200 piece yaba pills during a drive at a residential hotel in Pal Bazar area in the town early yesterday.

The arrestee is Abdul Motaleb, 20, inhabitant of Teknaf's Pachuripara Rohingya camp.

Md Kalam, sub-inspector of Rab-11, said they handed over Abdul to Chandpur Sadar Model Police Station after primary interrogation.

In Joupurhat, Rab members detained two drug peddlers with 1,960 yaba pills in separate raids in Panchbibi upazila since Thursday.

The arrestees are Masud Hossain, 38, of Panchbibi upazila and Atiqur Rahman, 22, of Gobindaganj upazila in Gaibandha district.

Azmal Hossain, commanding officer of Joupurhat Rab's Crime Prevention Camp-3, said they raided at Atapara village in Panchbibi around 2:40pm yesterday and arrested Masud Hossain with 1,380 yaba pills.

Earlier, another Rab team arrested Atiqur Rahman with 580 yaba pills from the same upazila on Thursday night.

Both arrestees landed in jail after facing a Joupurhat court.

Diplomats alarm over Uganda crackdown on media freedom

AFP, Kampala

Diplomats from the EU, US and another 14 countries yesterday raised alarm about Uganda's clampdown on media freedoms and protests after the arrest of popular rapper-turned-MP Bobi Wine.

"We are deeply concerned with a series of recent incidents restricting the freedom of expression and freedom of assembly in Uganda," a joint statement from the missions read.

The statement came after the Uganda Communication Commission called for 13 radio and TV stations to suspend their news editors, producers and heads of programming over their coverage of Wine's arrest on Monday.

The singer, whose real name is Robert Kyagulanyi, was detained for allegedly staging an illegal protest in 2018 -- charges fellow opposition MPs decried as ridiculous.

He was freed on bail on Thursday.

"We are also concerned about the excessive use of force by Ugandan police and security services against peaceful protesters and political opposition," the joint statement read.

The popular singer is the figurehead of a new generation who grew up under President Yoweri Museveni but want to see change. His anti-government songs have helped win him a big following.

He has emerged a real challenger to the veteran president who intends to run for a sixth term in 2021.

Ugandan authorities have frustrated Wine's efforts to hold concerts at his private club, and have detained him repeatedly for procedural misdemeanours.

His detention prompted protests in Kampala that were broken up by police with teargas and rubber bullets.

The directive calling for the sacking of top media officials caused outrage in the country.

"In total, over 30 journalists are on the verge of losing their jobs," the Uganda Journalists Association said in a statement Thursday.

"Government through its several agencies should respect the rights of media practitioners."

Amnesty International said the order was a "blatant attack on press freedom".

Sri Lanka

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The warnings came as Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe said some of the conspirators in the April 21 bombings of three hotels and three luxury hotels may still be at large.

"Most of those responsible for the Easter attacks have been arrested. Some have been killed," Wickremesinghe said yesterday during a tour of island's east, where a Christian church was hit.

"We are trying to see if there are any more secret IS cells in the country," he said. "We will ensure that IS terrorism will be eradicated from our land."

He hoped normality would return by Monday when public schools reopen after an extended Easter vacation. About 50 children were among those killed.

As Muslims held prayers, mosque leaders said donations they received will be diverted to help rebuild the three churches.

At Colombo's Dewatagaha Jumma mosque, hundreds of Muslims prayed after being frisked by police for explosives. Vehicles were not allowed to be parked near the Sufi mosque.

Banners in front of the mosque condemned the atrocities and expressed solidarity with Christians. One of the banners offered the mosque for Christians to conduct their services.

"The situation has come to normal but not completely," chairman of the mosque, Reyyaz M Salley, told AFP. "People are still scared. Non-Muslims and Muslims are in a very tense situation."

Police confirmed they had instructed stations around Colombo to deploy additional officers and asked the navy to deploy more vessels on rivers following the leak of police intelligence warning bridges were at risk of attack.

Sri Lanka's military has also set up a special command centre to co-ordinate anti-jihadist operations, while the army said more troops have been deployed for search operations.

Additional troops conducted searches overnight and seized explosives and weapons from several locations, although these were from criminal groups and not jihadists, official sources said.

Authorities had information about a small group of radicals who may be trying to stage more strikes, said health minister and government spokesman Rajitha Senaratne.

He said the crackdown on extremists after the Easter bombings had been largely successful.

"You can't say the threat is over, but the situation is well under control... better than what we expected."

But the government was also still on the hunt for "four terrorists" involved in the Easter attacks who were still at large, Senaratne told AFP in an interview on Thursday evening.