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GAS PRICE HIKE

Why House was bypassed

Ask 3 MPs in JS, blast govt

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Three lawmakers yesterday came down heavily on the government for increasing the price of gas and said the move would affect the people.

Speaking in parliament, they said the price was increased without any discussion in parliament when it was in session and that was tantamount to disrespecting the House.

They asked if it was legal to increase the price without the House's approval.

Workers Party lawmaker Rashed Khan Menon said Bangladesh Energy Regulatory Commission hiked the price within four hours of the passage of the national budget in which the finance minister had said that price of "no item would be increased in the budget".

"It is very humiliating for parliament. The House has been bypassed in making such a decision [price hike of gas]," he said.

"People are reacting against the decision and they are also angry and disappointment ... as it will adversely impact their lives, industries, and the economy.

"Why was the price of gas hiked? Is it to correct the market of LPG [Liquefied petroleum gas]?" he said.

He said he submitted a notice in parliament for holding discussion on the price. Menon urged Deputy Speaker Fazle Rabbi Miah, who was presiding over the sitting at that time, to accept his notice.

Menon also said Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal lawmaker

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Demonstrators block Shahbagh intersection as part of Left Democratic Alliance's half-day shutdown across the country yesterday to protest the recent gas price hike. Inset, a long tailback on Shahbagh-Elephant Road caused by the blocked road.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

Media being watched for fake news

Says state minister for information

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The information ministry is monitoring all the print and electronic media as well as online news portals around the clock to see if they are publishing any fake or confusing news, State Minister for Information Murad Hassan told parliament yesterday.

In reply to a supplementary question from ruling Awami League lawmaker Abu Zahir from Habiganj-3, the state minister also said the ministry would take actions if any media published fake or confusing news.

Zahir said some online news portals were spreading propaganda by publishing fake news to malign the government's image.

He wanted to know about the ministry's actions in this regard.

The government is sincere in ensuring the free flow of information, the minister said, responding

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Rape-accused found shot dead in Ctg

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Police recovered the bullet-hit body of a rape-accused in Anwara upazila of Chattogram yesterday.

Abdur Nur, 25, was the prime accused of a case over gang rape of a garment worker in the port city, said Dulal Mahmud, officer-in-charge at Anwara Police Station. "He was also accused of mugging in three other cases."

Locals spotted the body on a hillock inside China Economic Zone during the wee hours and informed police, he said. "We suspect he was shot around midnight following rivalry between two criminal gangs," added the OC.

A gun, four cartridges, and three knives were recovered from the spot. The body was sent to Chattogram Medical College Hospital (CMCH) for autopsy, he told this paper.

Two suspects of the case - Helal, an auto-rickshaw driver, and Mamun -- were held on Saturday.

The 20-year-old RMG worker was gang raped on Wednesday night while returning home from work, according to the case statement.

"She boarded a CNG-run auto-rickshaw that had three other male passengers inside.

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Trump admin inept, insecure

Say leaked memos from UK envoy in US

AFP, London

Britain's ambassador in the United States has described President Donald Trump and his administration as "inept" and "uniquely dysfunctional", according to leaked diplomatic memos published by the Mail yesterday.

Ambassador Kim Darroch reportedly said Trump's presidency could "crash and burn" and "end in disgrace", in the cache of secret cables and briefing notes sent back to Britain seen by the newspaper.

"We don't really believe this administration is going to become substantially more normal; less dysfunctional; less unpredictable; less faction riven; less diplomatically clumsy and inept," Darroch allegedly wrote in one dispatch.

The paper said the most damning comments by Darroch described Trump, who was received by Queen Elizabeth II during a state visit to Britain just last month, as "insecure" and "incompetent".

A memo sent following the controversial visit said the president and his team had been "dazzled" by the visit but warned Britain might not remain "flavour of the month" because "this is still the land of America First".

He reportedly wrote that the "vicious infighting and chaos" inside the White House -- widely reported in the US but dismissed by Trump as "fake news" -- was "mostly true".

Darroch is one of Britain's most experienced diplomats whose posting in Washington DC began in January, 2016, prior to Trump winning the

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Taliban car bomb kills 14

REUTERS, Kabul

A Taliban attack on a government security compound in central Afghanistan yesterday killed at least 14 people and wounded more than 180, including scores of children, hours before a meeting in Qatar aimed at preparing the ground for peace talks.

Islamist Taliban fighters detonated a car bomb in Ghazni city near an office of Afghanistan's main intelligence service, the National Directorate of Security (NDS), during yesterday morning's rush hour, officials said.

The Taliban claimed responsibility, saying in a statement dozens of NDS officers were killed or wounded.

The attack took place as Taliban officials and a selected group of Afghan activists and civil society figures prepared to meet in Doha, casting a pall

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Viking boat graves found in Sweden



CNN ONLINE

Archaeologists have uncovered two rare Viking boat graves in the Swedish village of Gamla Uppsala.

One of the boats is intact, still holding the remains of a man, a horse and a dog.

Experts from Arkeologerna, archaeologists with Sweden's National Historical Museums agency, believed that it would be a routine dig, so they were shocked to find the two ships, the group's Ninna Bengtsson said.

There are only about 10 other known boat burial sites like this in Sweden, Arkeologerna said. Ship graves of this kind were generally used in the Vendel Period, from about AD 550 to 800, and the Viking Age, from about AD 800 to 1050.

Most people at the time were cremated, with these sorts of boat burials reserved for society's elite.

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N'ganj rape suspect remanded

Another held in Patuakhali

STAR REPORT

A Narayanganj court yesterday placed a madrasa principal on a seven-day remand in connection with a case filed for the rape of at least 12 female students and sexually harassing many more in the district's Fatullah upazila.

Senior Judicial Magistrate Judge Kawsar Alam granted the remand for Al Amin, 45, founder and principal of Baitul Huda Cadet Madrasa in the district's Fatullah upazila,

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PRAYER TIMING JULY 8

Fazr Juma Asr Maghrib Esha
AZAN 4-10 12-45 5-00 6-55 8-17
JAMAAT 4-45 1-15 5-15 7-00 8-45

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

BSF shoots Bangladeshi national dead

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Lalmonirhat

Indian border guards gunned down one Bangladeshi cattle trader near Sreerampur border in Lalmonirhat early yesterday.

Ershadul Haque, 35, of Burimari Islampur village under Patgram upazila was shot after being spotted by the Border Security Force (BSF) near pillar no. 845, said Patgram police OC Mansur Ali.

"Ershad and 6/7 other cattle traders intruded into India to illegally bring cattle from there. BSF members of Changrabandha camp under Mekhilganj Police Station of Koch Bihar opened fire leaving Ershad injured.

"Other cattle traders managed to bring him back home. He died on the way," said the OC quoting Ershad's family and locals.

Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB) later sent the body to Lalmonirhat Sadar Hospital

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Bangladesh Coast Guard seize 32 Indian fishing boats with over 500 fishermen and place them in safe custody near Payra Port in Patuakhali yesterday.

PHOTO: SOHRAB HOSSAIN

ROHINGYA REFUGEE CAMPS

Landslides kill one, displace thousands

AFP, Dhaka

Monsoon-triggered landslides in Rohingya refugee camps in Cox's Bazar have killed one person and left more than 4,500 homeless, aid officials said yesterday.

About 35 centimetres (14 inches) of rain fell in 72 hours before the landslides started Saturday in camps around Cox's Bazar that house more than 900,000 of the Muslim minority who fled Myanmar, the UN said.

Twenty-six landslides were reported in makeshift camps built on hills near the border with Myanmar. Trees there have been torn up to build huts and for firewood, leaving the terrain unstable.

UN refugee agency official Areez Rahman said about 30 shanty camps have been affected by the storms. One woman in her 50s died after being hit by a wall that collapsed, he told AFP.

Nur Mohammad, a 40-year-old Rohingya in the main Kutupalong camp, said 12 relatives had fled their tarpaulin-clad huts on the hills to take shelter with him.

"My home is already overcrowded. I'm worried how I will feed all these people," he said.

Officials said some 5,000 Rohingya on a strip of no man's land between Bangladesh and Myanmar had also been badly hit by the storms.

"Children are suffering from diarrhoea and we don't have enough drinking water," camp leader Dil Mohammad told AFP by phone.

He said most of the camp was knee deep in water as Myanmar authorities had put a dam on a nearby river.

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