

US senators want Poland to pay Jews

US senators are urging Secretary of State Mike Pompeo to encourage Poland to pay victims of Nazi property thefts, a move that earned praise from Jewish groups but risked antagonizing Poland's pro-American administration. Eighty-eight out of the chamber's 100 lawmakers asked the top American diplomat in a letter Monday to "act boldly" to help Poland resolve the issue that has lingered for decades.

When the bones were found in 2008 no one was certain what they were, and they spent 11 years gathering dust on a shelf until the team looked at them again earlier this year. "The thought they were from a giant parrot did not enter our minds. We thought it could be some type of eagle until we went back and looked at it again," Scofield said. The parrot has been named Heracles inexpectatus to reflect its Herculean size and strength -- and the unexpected nature of the discovery. "Heracles, as the largest parrot ever, no doubt with a massive parrot beak that could crack wide open anything it fancied, may well have dined on more than conventional parrot foods, perhaps even other parrots," Mike Archer, from the University of NSW Palaeontology research centre, said.

Three students

The three, aged between 13 and 15, were arrested on Monday. According to police, the three students told the court that they strangled Abir to death over personal rivalry and then raped him. After recording the statements, the accused were sent to jail. They were expected to be transferred to a juvenile correction centre in Kushtia. The beheaded body of Abir, a grade-II student of Koiradanga Nurani Hafiza Madrasa and Orphanage in the district's Alamdanga upazila, was found in a brick kiln on July 24. The victim's mother filed a case with Alamdanga Police Station the same day. Earlier, police arrested the madrasa's principal Abu Hanif and assistant teacher Tamim Bin Yusuf in connection with the murder. The duo was sent to jail on July 31. Meanwhile, Mahbubur Rahman, superintendent of Chuadanga police, said the case had taken a new turn after the juveniles confessed their involvement in the murder. "We want to further investigate the case to identify all the culprits," he said.

3 killed in 'gunfights'

Shishir allegedly admitted possessing firearms during primary interrogation. Later, Kotwali police and DB took Shishir to Mahidia area near a Brick Kiln to recover the firearms. "Sensing the presence of law enforcers, his associates opened fire. Policemen then retaliated, triggering a gunfight," the OC claimed. Shishir was later found on the spot with bullet wounds and was taken to Jashore General Hospital, where he was declared dead. Police claimed to have recovered a pistol and two bullets from the spot. Shishir's uncle Sunil said there were 10 to 12 cases filed against Shishir, but he was on bail in all of them and that there was no arrest warrant against him.

5 high-ups

Hasan, Addl IG at PHQ Shahabuddin Qureshi and Addl IG Iqbal Bahar. All five officials joined the police cadre in eight BCS, 1989. Police sources said the prime minister might make the selection for the post after Home Minister Asaduzzaman returns from his three-day tour of India. Al Mamun, who earlier served as the deputy inspector general of Dhaka range, was recently transferred to the PHQ as an Addl IG. Mamun's name is the most discussed as the next commissioner in the force. He hails from Sunamganj district. Sources said Mamun was in the "good books" of Inspector General of Police (IGP) Mohammad Javed Patwary as he had a "clean image". The IGP wants to see him as the next DMP commissioner, sources added. Since Javed Patwary took charge on January 25 last year, the PM has prioritised his opinions on bringing changes to the police force. Additional IG Shafiqul is another one touted for the post, but sources said since he was appointed as the CID chief on May 16, he might not be transferred. Hailing from Chuadanga district, Shafiqul, has been known as the "clean image" officer in the police force. Meanwhile, officials said if the prime minister chose any of the juniors, then DMP Addl Commissioner Monirul Islam might be picked. In the last couple of months, changes were brought to police super posts in different districts across the country and well-reputed officers got priority for the postings, sources said.

OC, SI closed

Yesterday, the woman's lawyer Faruq Ahmed filed another bail petition with the court, which again rejected it, said the counsel, adding that they would file a case receiving the medical report. On Tuesday, Khulna Medical College Hospital's forensic department chief Dr Shafiqul Islam said it might take around a week to prepare the report. Meanwhile, talking to The Daily Star yesterday, the victim's brother said he had gone to the police station immediately after his sister was detained. He alleged that policemen there demanded Tk 1.5 lakh for her release. "Primarily GRP members told me that my sister stole a mobile phone. When I opposed the allegation, they misbehaved with me and asked me to



A railway employee sprays aerosol in a train carriage at Kamalapur Railway Station yesterday. The authorities have recently decided to spray every carriage to reduce the risk of dengue infection. PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

Sporadic protests flare up in Kashmir

protests during the three-decade insurgency in Kashmir that has left tens of thousands dead. A source told AFP that at least six people have been admitted to hospital in Srinagar with gunshot wounds and other injuries from protests. More than 100 people, included political leaders and activists, have been arrested as part of the lockdown for being a threat to the peace in the Himalayan valley, officials told the Press Trust of India. CONDEMNATION OVER KASHMIR Eight Muslims MPs from UK Labour Party have written to Prime Minister Boris Johnson urging the British government to condemn the recent transgression by India in occupied Kashmir. The letter spearheaded by the Shadow Justice Minister Yasmin Qureshi, was signed by MPs Roshana Ali, Rosena Allin-Khan, Shabana Mahmood, Afzal Khan, Khalid Mahmood, Faisal Rashid, Mohammed Yasin, as well as Liberal Democrat Baroness Shas Sheehan. China has also opposed the end to the special status for Kashmir, according to an NDTV report. Warning that India should avoid "unilaterally" changing the status quo in Kashmir, China also expressed opposition to naming Ladakh a separate Union Territory. New Delhi brushed off China's argument, saying it was "an internal matter concerning the territory of India". Earlier, the United Nations had said it was "deeply concerned" that the government's move on Kashmir will "exacerbate the human rights situation in the region". "The fact that hardly any information at all is currently coming out is of great concern in itself," a spokesperson of the United Nations said. MEDICAL SERVICES All telephone, television, and internet connections stayed severed in Kashmir. By night, police vans had patrolled the streets, with loudspeakers warning residents to stay indoors, reports Reuters. South Kashmir was completely locked down, said a state government official who visited the area. Officials of emergency services, such as hospitals and the fire department, said their staff were also frequently stopped at checkpoints, with access sometimes blocked. The principal of Srinagar's Government Medical College, which runs the state's largest hospital network, comprising about 3,500 beds, has to personally visit district officials to coordinate services or seek approvals, a hospital official said. "The principal doesn't have any means of communication," added the official, who asked not to be identified. "Police stations have been given satellite phones but not him. That shows their [government's] priority."

Sir Abed to guide future strategy of Brac

preparation into his succession plans. "As you know, I handed over my management responsibilities as the Executive Director of BRAC at the age of 65 in 2001 and remained on the Board as Founder and Chairperson. Transitioning from the governance role of BRAC and BRAC International Boards has also been on my mind for quite some time." Before sharing his decision, Abed in the letter described how BRAC became his story. "I started BRAC when I was 36. Growing up, starting an NGO and working in the remote villages of Bangladesh were never in my plans. With my privileged upbringing, 14 years in London, first as a student, then as a Chartered Management Accountant, having a comfortable lifestyle as a multinational company's executive -- my life was on an entirely different trajectory." He said the devastating Bhola cyclone of 1970 was a turning point in his life. He also wrote that the liberation war, which began soon after the cyclone incident, completely transformed him. "I sold my flat in London for 16,000 pounds and returned home in January 1972. With that money and some funds from a few close friends, I set up a relief and rehabilitation project in the remote area of Sulla. The Sulla project covered three unions in the Sunamganj and Habiganj districts in northeastern Bangladesh. That is how BRAC was born." Abed also had a few words of encouragement for those coming after him -- Dr Muhammad Musa, who joined as the executive director of BRAC International in May 2019, and Asif Saleh, who was appointed as the executive director of BRAC Bangladesh. "I am confident in their ability to lead BRAC. Together, they will ensure that we continue to build an equal world. "I have spent my life watching optimism triumph over despair when the light of self-belief is sparked in people. As a team, I want us to keep lighting these sparks. Our work should always reflect our faith in human spirit and our respect for their inherent power." Dr Hossain Zillur Rahman, renowned academic, economist and policymaker will join BRAC as chairperson. Ameerah Haq, former UN undersecretary general for the Department of Field Support, has been elected as the chairperson of the BRAC International.

Eid rush

FROM PAGE 16 the battered stretches of the Dhaka-Rajshahi and Dhaka-Bogura highways might cause sufferings to people. Although Road Transport and Bridges Minister Obaidul Quader on Monday directed the authorities to complete the repair works of all dilapidated roads three days before Eid, many of the regional and district roads could not be repaired within the deadline. A total of 565km roads and highways under the Roads and Highways Department (RHD) have been damaged by recent floods across the country. Of them, 107km are national highways, 51km regional highways and 405km district roads, according to data compiled by the RHD central control room till July 3. SHIMULIA-KATHALBARI ROUTE Operation of vessels on Shimulia-Kathalbari route remained suspended since 10:00am yesterday due to strong currents in the Padma, leaving hundreds of vehicles stranded at the Shimulia ferry terminal. Over 700 light and heavy vehicles, including around 50 buses, had been stranded at the Shimulia terminal since morning, said locals. Kamal Hossain, employee of a private bank, along with his wife reached Shimulia around 9:00am on the way to Gopalganj. "We could not board the last ferry that left the terminal around 10:00am as people who reached there before us embarked it. We waited at the terminal for around nine hours hoping that the ferry services would resume," he said. Kamal told this newspaper over the phone at 6:25pm that they were returning to Dhaka. Ferry services on the route remained suspended till filling of this report at 7:30pm. Earlier, ferry services on the route remained halted for six hours since midnight on Tuesday after the pontoons of Paturia terminals 1, 2 were displaced by rough waves. The services resumed around 6:00am, but were suspended again around 10:00am. Meanwhile, BIWTC officials at the Paturia ferry terminal in Manikganj said strong currents in the Padma were forcing ferries on Paturia-Daulatdia route to wait midway through the journey or take detours. Ferries were taking around 90 minutes to cross the river, around double the time required normally. Zillur Rahman, assistant general manager of Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Corporation (BIWTC) at the Paturia terminal, said they were operating about 17 ferries, but were facing difficulties due to strong currents in the mighty river. As the ferry services were disrupted, the queues of vehicles at the terminal were getting longer, he added. WAIT AT KAMALAPUR STATION In the capital, thousands of people thronged the Kamalapur Railway Station since last morning. The rush of passengers grew in the afternoon. Those who bought advance train tickets on July 29 (the first day of sale of advance tickets) left the city yesterday. People bound for northern and western districts had to suffer delays as at least five trains ran behind schedule by 1-3 hours. Two other trains bound for Mymensingh and Kishoreganj were also delayed. A total of 52 trains were scheduled to leave the station yesterday. Monir Hossain, a private university student, said, "I collected a ticket of Silkcity Express after waiting at the counter for about 11 hours. The delayed schedule is now causing more sufferings to me." Asked about the reason for the delays, Aminul Hoque, station manager at the railway station, said holidaymakers usually take a long time to embark and disembark trains at their respective stations, resulting in such delays. During previous Eid rush for home, railway officials had cited the same reason for delays in schedules. Aminul, however, said damage to a coach of Kishoreganj Express caused the delay in its schedule. ROAD TRIPS SMOOTH Transport operators said although the conditions of Dhaka-Chattogram and Dhaka-Sylhet Highways are better, the speed of vehicles bound for northern districts slowed down after crossing the Bangabandhu Bridge. They said vehicles had to be driven slowly due to a dilapidated bridge in Sirajganj's Nalka area and the repair work of stretches of Hatikumrul-Rajshahi and Hatikumrul-Bogura roads. Rafiqul Islam, employee at a private company, said it took him two and a half hours to reach Bangabandhu Bridge from the capital (109km), but he had to spend three hours and 10 minutes to reach his destination Sherpur of Bogura from the Bangabandhu Bridge (66km). Meanwhile, the BIWTC yesterday published a cautionary notice in different newspapers requesting people and transport operators to contact officials at ferry terminals before heading there as ferry services on some routes were being disrupted due to strong currents and submerged shoals in rivers. Our Munshiganj correspondent Farhana Mirza contributed to this report.