

Thunberg heads to US Midwest for climate protest

AFP, New York

After protests in New York and Montreal, teen activist Greta Thunberg has said she will join demonstrators in Iowa in the US Midwest today for the latest "climate strike."

The 16-year-old Swede generated headlines around the world last week with her so-called "How Dare You?" speech at the UN climate summit, accusing world leaders of betraying her generation.

"This Friday I'm happy to say that I'll join the climate strike in Iowa City!" Thunberg said on Twitter on Wednesday, using the movement's hashtag "Fridays For Future."

"All we're saying is unite behind the science and listen to the scientists," she added.

Thunberg has inspired millions of youngsters through her passion and her mature rhetorical style -- articulated in near-perfect English -- that belies her age.

She said this week that she was slowly travelling through North America to her destination Santiago, Chile, where she is due to attend another UN climate conference in December.

Thunberg, who arrived in the US from Britain on a carbon-neutral yacht, is now travelling by electric vehicle, a spokeswoman said.

Seven dead as WWII plane crashes in the US: reports

AFP, New York

At least seven people were killed when a World War II bomber carrying 13 passengers and crew crashed at an airport in the northeastern US state of Connecticut Wednesday, local media reported.

The Boeing B-17 aircraft, which the US Air Force deployed against Germany and Japan, crashed at Bradley International Airport while trying to land around 10:00 am (1400 GMT).

Ten passengers and three crew were on the aircraft, which was operated by the Collings Foundation, a group catering to aviation buffs who pay to experience vintage planes, officials said.

James Rovella, a Connecticut state disaster emergency official, told a news conference that there had been fatalities but added it was too early to say the exact number.

"Burn victims are very difficult to identify. We don't want to make a mistake," he said.

A maintenance officer working on the ground was also injured, Rovella added.

Local media later cited officials as saying that the crash left at least seven dead and nine injured, including three people who were on the ground at the time.

Ten minutes after the flight took off at 9:45 am, the pilots radioed the control tower to say they were experiencing problems, said Kevin Dillon, director of the state's airport authority.

Trudeau clashes with Tory rival in first Canada debate

AFP, Montreal

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau appeared for his first debate of the 2019 election on Wednesday, clashing with his main rival Andrew Scheer of the Conservative Party just three weeks ahead of the knife-edge vote.

They sparred in French over heady topics such as laicism, abortion, doctor-assisted dying, decriminalizing narcotics, and gay marriage, as well as vote-movers climate change and the economy.

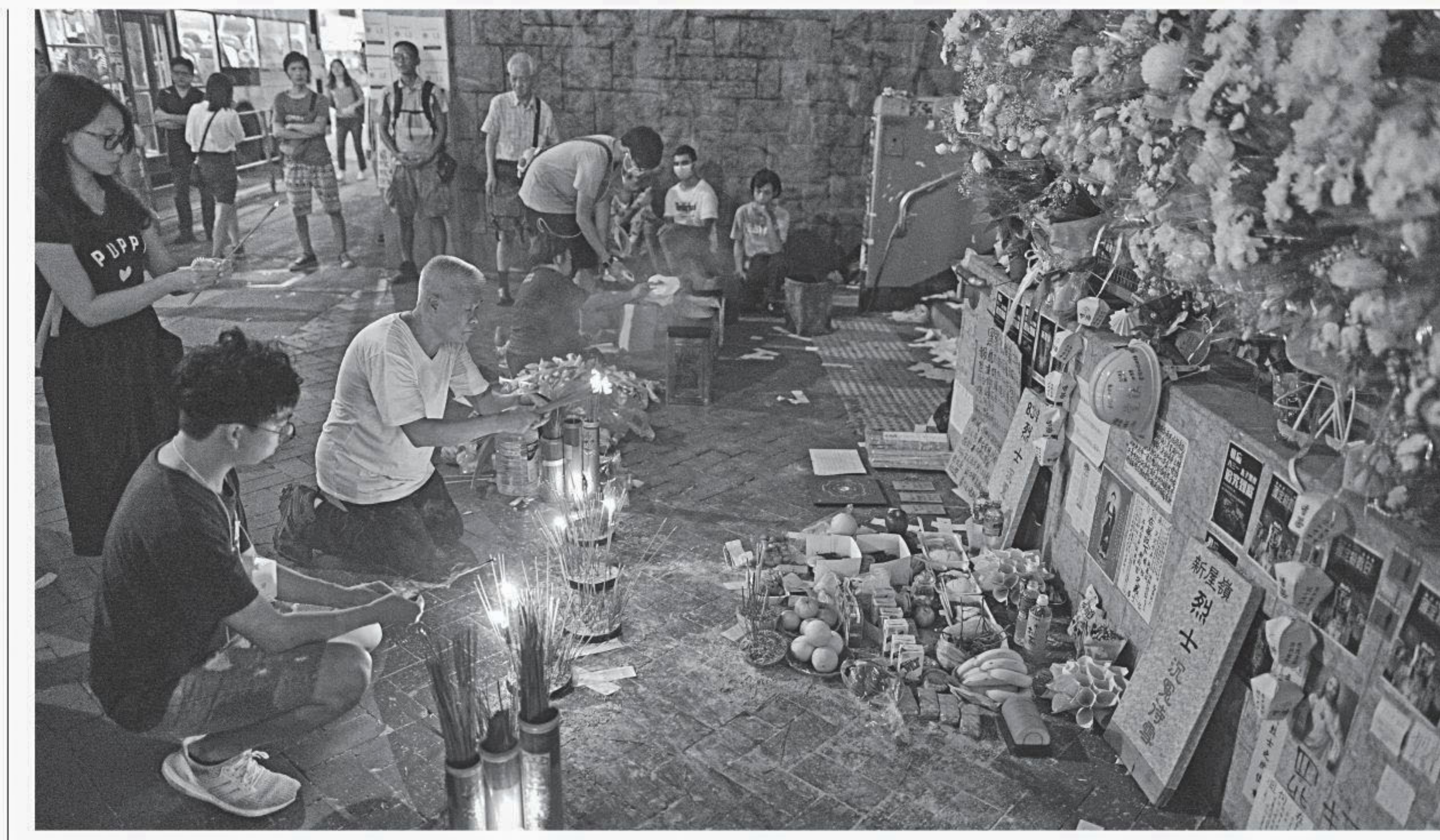
Both were looking to sway votes in the key battleground of Quebec, where one quarter of the 338 seats in parliament are up for grabs.

Going toe-to-toe with Scheer as well as fielding attacks in open floor exchanges from New Democratic Party leader Jagmeet Singh and Yves-Francois Blanchet of the Bloc Quebecois, Trudeau was animated in defending his first-term record.

Scheer, who is untested and less comfortable speaking in French than English, needed to show Canadians that he's ready to be prime minister.

But at times, he seemed like a wallflower.

Scheer dodged questions on his personal views on abortion, and was criticized for expecting other nations to take the bulk of climate actions, while promising to roll back a Liberal carbon tax.



People light incense and leave flowers as they pray at a makeshift shrine outside the Mongkok district police station in Hong Kong yesterday. Anger continued to mount over the police shooting of a teenage protester who attacked officers, in a dramatic escalation of the violent unrest that has engulfed the territory for months.

Britain, EU trade blame

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result in either a crash exit for Britain or a third Brexit delay this year.

Johnson reaffirmed yesterday he had no intention of seeking an extension despite parliament's instruction to do so should he fail to secure a new agreement over the next two weeks.

"We have shown great flexibility without our European friends," Johnson told parliament one day after publishing the details of his long-awaited plan.

"If our European neighbours choose not to show a corresponding willingness to reach a deal, then we shall have to leave on October 31 without an agreement -- and we are ready to do so.

"But that outcome would be a failure of statecraft for which all parties will be held responsible."

Yet European Commission spokeswoman Natasha Bertaud insisted it was up to Britain to come up with a plan that worked for everyone.

"There are problematic points in the United Kingdom's proposal and further work is needed. But that work needs to

be done by the United Kingdom and not the other way around," she told reporters in Brussels yesterday.

UK Brexit minister Steve Barclay has said all real talks had to start by this weekend to stand any chance of securing a deal before EU leaders meet in Brussels on October 17-18.

"We need to move forward at pace, intensively," he told BBC radio. "All sides recognise that the alternative, no-deal, is disruptive."

But Johnson was reminded of the challenges ahead when opposition lined up to denounce his proposals.

Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn called Johnson's plan "not workable" and "reckless".

The pro-European Scottish National Party's parliamentary leader Ian Blackford called the proposals "half-baked".

"Secure an extension or resign," he demanded.

Businesses across Europe fear a "no-deal" Brexit could plug up long-established trade routes and unsettle financial markets for weeks and possibly months.

'VERY GOOD CHANCE'

Johnson appeared to have won vital backing from some members of parliament who had repeatedly rejected the deal his predecessor Theresa May struck with the EU in 2017.

These included at least four more moderate Labour members and some of the most ardent eurosceptics among Johnson's own Conservatives.

"It's got a very good chance of getting through," Johnson's no-deal Brexit preparations point man Michael Gove told ITV television on Wednesday night.

"It seems to be a pretty solid majority, and it's one that the EU can take reassurance from as well because one of the concerns that the EU had in the past (was that) look, if we make a concession, will it get through parliament?"

However, Irish Prime Minister Leo Varadkar warned British proposals "do not fully meet the agreed objectives" for keeping the frontier invisible -- a key part of the 1998 Good Friday agreement that ended

decades of sectarian violence between republicans and unionists.

Johnson's strategy tackles the Irish border issue by taking Northern Ireland out of the EU customs union but keeping it aligned with Ireland's rules and regulations for goods.

This would effectively create two temporary economic borders -- including one in the Irish Sea between mainland Britain and Northern Ireland.

One of the most contentious points of the deal gives the devolved Northern Ireland assembly the right to end its alignment with Ireland by 2025.

A time-limited border solution has been a deal-breaker for Brussels in the past.

EU leaders are keen to preserve the economic bloc's territorial integrity and fear counterfeit goods and other contraband flowing in unchecked.

But Johnson needed to insert the provision to secure the backing of his allies from Northern Ireland's small but influential Democratic Unionist Party.

DUP leader Arlene Foster on Wednesday called Johnson's proposals a basis for future talks.

Hundreds maimed every year

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injuries as many of the victims get maimed for life.

A government survey says around 7,163 people were permanently disabled in 2016 due to electrocution.

The Bangladesh Health and Injury Survey 2016, which interviewed 330,000 people, estimates that about 9,210 people were killed and 2,70,622 others injured due to electric shocks that year.

"More than one third of the people admitted here are electrical burn patients," said Tanveer Ahmed, associate professor of burn and plastic surgery at the DMCH.

The department at Dhaka Medical College Hospital treats around 30,000-35,000 burn patients every year, he said.

"We have to amputate several fingers or a whole limb of at least four people with electric burns every day," he said, citing official records.

According to doctors and fire service officials, electrocution happens mainly because of people's lack of awareness and poor management



Hossain, 11, after his left arm was amputated. PHOTO: COLLECTED

of live wires. The incidents become frequent in monsoon, when the wires often break during strong winds and fall on puddles.

Besides, living or working too close to high-voltage electric lines contribute to the number of accidents.

Working-class people and children are the main victims of electrical burns, physicians said.

"I have seen many people lose their arms and legs due to such incidents," said Samanta Lal Sen, coordinator of Sheikh Hasina National Institute of Burn and Plastic Surgery.

He added that creating awareness could drastically cut the number of casualties.

This correspondent talked to 10 electrical burn patients admitted at the unit who lost their limbs. Some blamed their own ignorance while

others said home owners or authorities were negligent in managing live wires.

Seventeen-year-old Shakib Hossain lost both his arms below the elbow after he got electrocuted while repairing a high-voltage Palli Bidyut line in Natore on August 26.

"My boss told me that the line was disconnected and asked me to start working. After I touched it, I was unconscious for about two days," he said.

"It is not my fault. Who will take the responsibility now?" asked the boy, lying on a bed on the fourth floor.

A few yards away, 11-year-old Hossain of Sirajganj was groaning in pain. His left hand has been amputated. The upper parts of his body and left ear were burnt severely on August 25 after he came into contact with a dangling live wire on the roof of a restaurant where he used to work.

"My son's life is at peril due to the negligence of the restaurant owner. We don't even have the money to bear his treatment costs," said his mother Hosnara Begum, struggling to hide her tears.

Medical tests of the woman were completed.

Contacted, Akhter Morshed, officer-in-charge of Galachipa Police Station, said hearing the news, they sent police to Patuakhali General Hospital and the spot.

No case was filed until filing of the report around 4:00pm, he said, adding that if the victim lodges a case, they would take proper steps in this regard.

The victim demanded punishment of those involved in the rape.

China invents

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Its resolution is five-times more detailed than the human eye but it is not the most high-resolution camera ever developed. A 570-megapixel camera was put to work at an observatory in Chile in 2018, however its purpose is to point skywards in the hope of observing distant galaxies.

The camera is instead built for surveillance, with Chinese state media praising the camera's "military, national defence and public security applications".

The camera uses facial recognition technology combined with real-time tracking to pick individuals out of a crowd, making it a useful tool for China's already extensive surveillance network.

There are an estimated 170 million CCTV cameras currently operating in China -- the equivalent of one for every 12 people in the country.

China is also rolling out some of the world's most advanced surveillance software and hardware to keep track of its population.

Last year, the country began introducing gait recognition technology that uses artificial intelligence to recognise people from up to 50 metres away just by the movement of their walk.

Another initiative uses dove-like drones to monitor crowds from the sky.

The so-called "spy bird" programme uses flocks of robotic birds equipped with high-resolution cameras in order to secretly surveil people on the ground.

This pervasive surveillance network feeds into China's social credit system, which gives citizens a ranking based on their behaviour.

Human rights campaigners have described the system as "chilling", as it places restrictions on things like where people can live or travel if they step out of line.

"By rating citizens on a range of behaviours from shopping habits to online speech, the government intends to manufacture a problem-free society," Human Rights Watch researcher Maya Wang wrote in a blog post about the programme.

"Those with low scores will face obstacles in everything from getting government jobs to placing their children in desired schools."

Trump does it again

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investigation against Trump last week.

Trump froze \$400 million in US aid to Ukraine shortly before he asked its president for the favor, prompting accusations from Democrats that he had misused US foreign policy for personal gain.

The impeachment probe has angered Trump, whose volatile presidency survived a two-year federal probe that found Russia had intervened to help him win the White House in 2016.

On Wednesday, Trump unleashed furious attacks on the impeachment inquiry after Democrats said they were 'not fooling around' with the inquiry.

Democrats should be "focused on building up our Country, not wasting everyone's time and energy on BULLSHIT, which is what they have been doing ever since I got overwhelmingly elected in 2016," Trump tweeted.

Adam Schiff, the impeachment probe's Democratic point man in the House of Representatives, told reporters there is a "real sense of urgency" to press forward.

Trump has fought back in terms once inconceivable for a president, including his claim late Tuesday that this is "not an impeachment, it is a COUP."

Trump assailed Schiff, declaring the House Intelligence Committee chairman "a low life" who should be

arrested for "treason."

But at the same time Trump acknowledged he may yet cooperate with the latest move by Democrats, who threatened to subpoena the White House for documents related to the president's efforts to get Ukraine to probe a political rival.

"We'll work together with 'shifty' Schiff and Pelosi and all of them and we'll see what happens," he said.

Trump insists he did nothing wrong in a July phone call with Ukrainian leader Volodymyr Zelensky and on Wednesday got support from Russia's President Vladimir Putin, who said he saw "nothing compromising" in the conversation.

Given Trump's controversial history with Putin, it was unlikely that the Kremlin leader's backing would do much to calm waters in Washington.

'NOT FOOLING AROUND' A whistleblower, so far only identified as someone from the intelligence services, went to authorities with concerns about the Ukraine call, triggering the impeachment inquiry.

Trump has likened the whistleblower to a spy and called for his or her identity to be made public, although by law whistleblowers are protected.

Schiff on Wednesday called Trump's comments about the whistleblower a "blatant effort to intimidate witnesses."

He also warned Trump and the

White House to treat the pending subpoena with the utmost gravity.

"We're not fooling around here," Schiff said, adding that efforts to stonewall the collection of related data would be considered "evidence of obstruction of justice."

Meanwhile, the State Department's independent watchdog met with a bipartisan group of staffers from House and Senate committees to discuss new wrinkles in the scandal.

Inspector General Steve Linick showed staff, and some lawmakers who attended, documents sent mysteriously to State that included a rehash of conspiracy theories that appeared aimed at discrediting Trump's opponents.

"The briefing and documents raise troubling questions about apparent efforts inside and outside the Trump administration to target specific officials, including former vice president Joe Biden's son and then-US ambassador to Ukraine Masha Yovanovitch," the chairs of the House Oversight Affairs, Intelligence and

Oversight committees said in a joint statement.

The State Department is closely caught up in the probe, with Secretary of State Mike Pompeo confirming that he listened in during the Zelensky call.

Pompeo and Giuliani have been subpoenaed to provide documents. Five diplomats have so far been summoned to testify.

Father killed

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Police said Aminul had long been stalking Rofuf's daughter Sonia Khatun, a first-year student of Sirajganj Government College.

Earlier, he proposed to marry the girl several times, but she and her family refused, said Lutfor.

On Wednesday afternoon, when the girl was returning home from college by an autorickshaw, Aminul and one of his associates suddenly got into the vehicle in Patgram area and harassed the girl, the OC said.

Informed, Rofuf rushed to the spot to rescue his daughter and locked in a row with Aminul.

At one point, Aminul stabbed him with a sharp weapon and fled the scene.

Locals took him to Kazipur Upazila Health Complex where doctors declared him dead, said OC Lutfor.

Victim's brother Abu Taleb filed a case with Kazipur Police Station accusing eight people on Wednesday night, the OC said, adding that police arrested Aminul from Patgram bazar area hours after the case was filed.

We are trying to arrest the other accused, he said.

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chief train controller of Western Railway Zone in Lalmonirhat.

The committee has been asked to submit its report within five days, he added.