

# Search for 7 seamen missing in Atlantic to be scaled down

AFP, Fort-De-France

An operation to find seven seamen missing since their vessel sank off Martinique will be scaled down as no bodies have been found for several days, authorities said Saturday.

The Luxembourg-flagged Bourbon Rhode ran into difficulty some 1,200 nautical miles from the French Caribbean island on September 26 as it sailed into hurricane Lorenzo, and was later confirmed to have sunk.

A major search operation was launched for the 14 people on board the tug supply vessel. Three crew members who had made their way onto a lifeboat were rescued two days later.

One was found dead shortly afterwards, and another three on Monday and Tuesday.

But "since Tuesday, October 1 no bodies have been found. After a week of searching, the survival time for a man in the sea, even well-equipped, is well over", the Martinique prefecture said in a statement.

The crew were mostly Ukrainian, but also included a Croatian captain, a Russian, a South African and a Filipino.

The search area, 110,000 square kilometres (42,000 square miles), lies in the middle of the Atlantic, three days and 17 hours boat from Martinique, and more than three hours by plane from Cape Verde in west Africa.

"This complex operation requires 12 merchant ships and 10 flights," the prefecture said.

It planned to issue regular messages to ships passing through the region to be on the lookout for the seamen.

The ship had passed near the eye of Lorenzo, a category 4 hurricane that produced waves as high as 10 metres (30 feet), according to the survivors.

The Bourbon Rhode is operated by French marine logistics group Bourbon, which provides services to oil rigs.



Communist-affiliated protesters hold placards as they take part in a demonstration to protest against the visit of US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo in Athens, yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

# White House docs subpoenaed

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In a tweet early yesterday, Trump said that "the so-called Whistleblower's account of my perfect phone call is 'way off', not even close... This is a fraud against the American people!"

But if a second whistleblower emerges, and if that person in fact has more direct information about the events in question, as the New York Times reported late Friday, the allegations would become more difficult to shrug off.

The Times said the second official was among those interviewed by inspector general Michael Atkinson about the allegations lodged by the original whistleblower.

The newspaper, citing two people briefed on the matter, said the second official was still pondering whether to lodge a formal complaint.

Congressional investigators led by House Intelligence Committee chairman Adam Schiff have promised a quick and expeditious inquiry, but said Friday that the White House was not cooperating.

"The White House has refused to engage with -- or even respond to -- multiple requests for documents," said a letter signed by the Democratic

chairmen of the House oversight, intelligence and foreign affairs committees.

"His actions have left us with no choice but to issue this subpoena."

In their letter to acting White House Chief of Staff Mick Mulvaney, the committees demanded that he turn over the requested files by October 18.

The subpoena followed a demand earlier Friday for documents from Vice President Mike Pence.

Pompeo -- who recently acknowledged having listened in on the key Trump-Zelensky phone call -- failed to meet a Friday subpoena deadline to turn over Ukraine-related documents, CNN reported, citing a House Foreign Affairs committee aide.

Meanwhile, a series of text messages between US diplomats dealing with Ukraine, made public by the congressional investigators, supported Democratic accusations that Trump had illegally sought foreign help for his reelection effort.

Trump pushed back hard, saying there was no quid pro quo and, in an effort to recast the entire saga, insisting it was his responsibility to investigate "corruption."

"I don't care about Biden's

campaign but I care about corruption," he told reporters.

Biden, the former US vice president, responded by calling Trump "the most corrupt president we've had in modern history."

Trump has alleged that Biden's son Hunter earned "millions" from sitting on the board of directors of a Ukraine tycoon's gas company.

But no evidence has surfaced showing wrongdoing by either Biden. The diplomats' text messages showed that some had doubts about Trump's pressure on Zelensky, including allegedly freezing a \$400 million military aid package.

The release last week of the complaint and a summary of Trump's July 25 call with Zelensky, in which he asked for a "favor" and referred to investigating Biden, ignited the Democrats' impeachment inquiry.

As Democrats raised their attacks on Trump, many Republicans remained quietly supportive of the president.

Breaking with the pack, Senator Mitt Romney, the Republican presidential nominee in 2012, blasted Trump's comments that Beijing and Kiev should investigate Biden, calling the remarks "wrong and appalling."

# Lost

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carvings of Hapi, the Egyptian god of the annual flooding of the Nile, carrying offerings while surrounded by birds and flowers.

Experts are working to save what remains of the temple, which sits on the Nile's western bank.

Ptolemy IV is believed to have ruled Egypt from around 221 BC to 204 BC. His rule was not a successful one and he was more interested in frolicking and pursuing artistic endeavors than kingship.

Ancient texts indicate that the Pharaoh is said to have built the largest human-powered ship ever made. Called the tessarakonteres ("Forty"), the galley had 40 banks of oars, operated by 4,000 oarsmen.

The ancient temple's discovery is the latest in a series of archaeological discoveries in 2019. Egypt is hoping to increase interest in tourism following the country's uprising in 2011.

August 2018 saw the UN's Tourism Highlights Report feature Egypt as the fastest growing tourist destination in 2017, with a 55.1% growth in international arrivals that year.

Important findings include eight mummies from the Ptolemaic Dynasty (323-30 BC) encased in brightly painted coffins at the Dahshur necropolis near Giza, a stone sphinx at Kom Ombo, a riverside temple near Aswan dedicated to the crocodile god Sobek and the discovery of a 4,400-year-old tomb at the Saqqara archaeological site.

These ancient treasures accompany Egypt's current museum construction boom, with new collections scheduled to open soon in the towns of Sharm el-Sheikh and Hurghada. The long-awaited Grand Egyptian Museum is also nearing completion. The world's largest museum dedicated to a single civilization is preparing for a grand opening in mid-2020.

# Saad Ershad

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Government Primary School and Jaheda Khatun Girls School.

The turnout at Dedaba Jamalia Government Primary School centre was 12 percent till 2:00pm, said Presiding Officer Md Azizar Rahman. At the centre at Government Begum Rokeya College, only 223 out of 2,011 voters cast their votes, said Presiding Officer Kamal Pasha, adding that the turnout there was 11.08 percent.

Rangpur-3 constituency fell vacant after JP Chairman HM Ershad died on July 14.

Rangpur is known as a stronghold of the JP. Ershad became lawmaker from there in the national elections in 1991, 2008, 2014, 2018.

His widow Rawshan Ershad and brother GM Quader was also elected lawmakers from the district.

# Thousands stranded on the Padma

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Sixteen ferries operate on Paturia-Daulatdia route, but 13 of them had to be anchored at the ghats around 11:00am yesterday, according to our Manikganj correspondent.

"Only three ferries managed to continue service as the 13 others were old and unable to sail through heavy currents," said Mohiuddin Rasel, assistant manager (business) of Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority (BIWTA).

Meanwhile, Terminal 1 and Terminal 2 at Daulatdia Ghat have been washed away into the river, according to BIWTA officials.

The disruption in ferry services hit hard the truckers as well.

"We reached Paturia Ghat on Wednesday afternoon. We don't know when we could cross the river. My helper and I are starving because I have no money now to buy food," truck driver Gowhar Ali told The Daily Star on Saturday afternoon.

In addition to ferries, BIWTA also suspended launch services on Friday

to avoid accidents, said Faridul Islam, deputy director (Aricha region) of BIWTA.

The Padma started swelling and having strong currents a few days ago following rains and India opening all gates at Farakka.

To ameliorate public sufferings, Manikganj police has urged all vehicles including buses and trucks to avoid Paturia-Daulatdia route for the next few days, said a notice signed by Rifat Rahman Shamim, superintendent of police in Manikganj.

During a visit yesterday, our local correspondent witnessed a heavy gridlock at both Paturia and Daulatdia terminals. Around 50 buses and 300 trucks were stuck at the two ghats and were waiting to cross the river, causing immense sufferings to travelers.

**DURGA PUJA RUSH THRU BENAPOLE PORT**

Meanwhile, Benapole immigration check post is witnessing a heavy rush of travelers to and from India,

marking Durga Puja.

Citing immigration officers in Benapole, our Benapole correspondent reported that some 20,000 Bangladeshis have entered India via Benapole check post in the last two days.

"Thousands of Hindu people are going to India to celebrate Durga Puja. Indians are also coming to Bangladesh," said Mohsin Khan Pathan, officer-in-charge of Benapole check point immigration police.

With people having to wait for five to six hours in long queues every day, additional manpower were deployed at the check post to tackle the rush.

Women, children, the elderly and patients were suffering most. Outside the terminal, passengers also suffered due to lack of restroom facilities.

Meanwhile, police arrested six passport brokers in the check post area yesterday afternoon. A day earlier, 10 other brokers were arrested but they got freed at night after giving undertakings.

# Thai judge shoots self in courtroom

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He acquitted the group, delivered a courtroom plea for a cleaner justice system, before pulling out a handgun and shooting himself in the chest.

"You need clear and credible evidence to punish someone. So if you're not sure, don't punish them," the judge said addressing the court and broadcasting his words on his phone on Facebook live.

"I'm not saying that the five defendants didn't commit the crimes, they might have done so..."

"But the judicial process needs to be transparent and credible... punishing wrong people makes them scapegoats."

The Facebook feed then cut, but

witnesses said Kanakorn recited a legal oath in front of the former Thai king's portrait, before shooting himself in the chest.

"He is being treated by the doctors and is out of danger," Suriyan Hongvilai, the spokesman of the Office of the Judiciary, told AFP on Saturday.

"He shot himself because of 'personal stress'. But the cause behind the stress is not clear and will be investigated," he said.

No Thai judge has ever breached protocol by making similar statements on the wider justice system, he added.

A lawyer working with the suspects said Judge Kanakorn had ruled the prosecutor's evidence was insufficient

to convict.

"Right now the five are still being detained and are waiting to see if the state prosecutor appeals their acquittal," Abdulloh Hayee-abu, of the Muslim Attorney Centre in Yala told AFP.

Over 7,000 people have died in 15 years of conflict in the Malay-Muslim majority southern region.

Thousands of suspects have been jailed for acts linked to the insurgency, many under emergency laws imposed on the restive region.

Advocacy groups in the Thai south have long accused security forces of trumping up charges against Muslim suspects and using emergency laws to drive cases through the courts.

# Violence halts

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mask," said one protester, Sue, 22, who wore a black mask and dark glasses to the Causeway Bay march.

"The government needs to learn it can't squeeze Hong Kong people like this."

The increasingly violent demonstrations that have roiled the city for four months began in opposition to a bill introduced in April that would have allowed extradition to mainland China, but they have since spiraled into a broader pro-democracy movement.

The unrest has plunged Hong Kong into its biggest political crisis since its handover from Britain to China in 1997 under a "one country, two systems" formula that granted it autonomy and broad freedoms not enjoyed on the mainland.

China's Hong Kong and Macao Affairs Office said on Friday the protests were evolving into a revolution backed by foreign forces and could not continue indefinitely.

The United Nations human rights chief yesterday called for an independent probe into the violence during anti-government protests in Hong Kong, saying the injuries were alarming.

MTR Corp said its network, which carries about 5 million passengers each day, would remain suspended, while shopping malls and supermarkets also closed, in a new blow for retailers and restaurants in a city on the edge of recession.

Protesters had set fires at stations, as well as to an empty train, and injured two staff, added MTR, which is known for operating one of the world's most efficient rail networks.

All stations closed late on Friday, stranding passengers and forcing many to walk home, a situation set to worsen during a holiday weekend in the city.

The airport express, one of the most popular routes to the airport, re-opened with restricted service yesterday, MTR said.

More than a dozen shopping malls, supermarkets, and branches of Bank of China (Hong Kong), Bank of East Asia, and Industrial and Commercial Bank of China, which have been targeted by protesters, said they would not open.

The 7-Eleven chain of convenience stores said outlets would close at 5 pm. Shoppers formed long lines in supermarkets ahead of the expected closures.

The ban on face masks, which took effect yesterday, was ordered under emergency laws allowing authorities to "make any regulations whatsoever" in what they deem to be the public interest.

But the move enraged protesters, who took to the streets to vent their anger, many wearing masks in defiance of the ban.

There were no immediate reports of arrests over the masks.

Demonstrators set fires, hurled petrol bombs at police and burned the Chinese national flag, in a direct challenge to authorities in Beijing.

Police said an officer in Yuen Long, a district in the outlying New Territories that saw fierce clashes in July, had fired a shot in self-defence after a protester threw a petrol bomb at him, setting him on fire.

Media said a 14-year-old boy was shot and the city's Hospital Authority said his condition was now stable, but gave no details.

About 100 demonstrators besieged a branch of the Bank of China (Hong Kong) in the high-end shopping district of Causeway Bay, while across the harbour in the district of Kowloon, protesters smashed the glass store front of a China Life Insurance branch.

Police fired volleys of tear gas to disperse protesters in flashpoint districts such as Causeway Bay, Sha Tin and Wong Tai Sin, underscoring the challenges they face as protests show no sign of letting up.

Hospital authorities said 31 people were hurt in Friday's protests, two of them seriously.

# Ten killed in minibus-lorry collision in Romania

AFP, Bucharest

Ten people were killed and seven injured on Saturday when a lorry collided with a minibus in eastern Romania, the country with the highest level of road deaths in the EU, police said.

Nine of the 16 people on the minibus and the driver of the truck died in the accident, one of the most serious in the country where the poor state of the roads is a concern for motorists.

# 8 going to Europe

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a technical person," he said.

The delegation, however, includes only three technical persons while five others are non-technical.

The non-technical persons are Treasurer Prof Jalal Uddin; Registrar Dr Md Humayun Kabir; Prof Dr Md Shahabuddin, dean of Faculty of Arts; Prof Dr Subrata Kumar Dey, dean of Faculty of Business Administration; Sohail Rana, associate professor of Department of Finance and Banking.

The three technical persons in the delegation are Dr Ujjal Kumar Pradhan, proctor and an associate professor at Department of Computer Science and Engineering; Engineer Md Hafizur Rahman, director of planning and development; and Md Mahbubul Islam, deputy chief engineer of the university.

Asked why most of the delegates were non-technical people, the treasurer said, "They have been involved in the development works of the university for long."

The registrar said Creative

Engineers, a private enterprise in Dhaka, would bear the cost of the trip.

Creative Engineers, the sole distributor of Switzerland-based Schindler Management Ltd, got the tender of Tk 13 crore to supply the lifts, he said, adding that a trip for pre-shipment inspection was mentioned in the tender.

The authorities would install 15 lifts of two categories -- 1000 kgs and 1250 kgs -- in three buildings of the university.

The delegation would first visit Switzerland where the lifts are kept and later go to Spain from where the lifts would be shipped to Bangladesh. Many countries clone the lifts and inspection is important to avoid receiving cloned lifts, the registrar added.

According to university sources, the lifts would be installed in three 10-storey buildings one of which is an academic building for Faculty of Social Science and Faculty of Business Administration. Two other buildings would be students' dormitories.

# Tulip among top

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Secretary Gavin Williamson are also listed in the same category.

"Tulip Siddiq MP for Hampstead & Kilburn -- made headlines around the world when she delayed her caesarean section to vote against Theresa May's Brexit deal," read the citation.

"Had she not turned up in person she would have lost her vote or relied on the unreliable 'pairing' system. Her dramatic decision forced the government to set up a landmark proxy voting system for expectant and new parents."

She was first elected to Britain's House of Commons in May 2015 from London's Hampstead and Kilburn,

and drew global attention with her maiden speech in parliament.

Tulip had termed herself "daughter of an asylum seeker" in the speech while describing her mother Sheikh Rehana's ordeal, as she had to take refuge abroad after Bangabandhu was killed in 1975.

One Oliver Denton in a Facebook post wrote: "Such a classic Tulip Siddiq thing -- she wins a spot in the Evening Standard #Progress1000 at the glitziest night in the political calendar -- and she was at home tucking her kids up in bed instead of out on the town. Well done Tulip, we're proud of you! You've got your priorities right."

# Her torment

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He appeared at the girl's house the next morning with a car and picked her up.

Shamim then took the girl to a resort, saying that they would meet a judge there.

Around noon, Shamim took the girl to a room and raped her and then left her near a local market.

After hearing what had happened, her mother took her to the police station later that day and filed a case against Shamim.

"How will we trust people?" the mother told The Daily Star.

Inspector Kamal Hossain of Dhamrai Police Station said police have collected CCTV footage from the resort and saw Shamim at the resort

that day. Dipok Saha, officer-in-charge of Dhamrai Police Station, said Shamim and Alamgir had fled the area.

**11-YEAR-OLD RAPED IN COX'S BAZAR**

Police arrested a 50-year-old hotel employee in St Martin's Island on charges of raping an 11-year-old girl on Friday evening.

Imran Hossain allegedly took the girl to an empty room in the hotel after promising to give her chocolates. Her family members, who were looking for her, rescued her from the hotel room and informed police.

A case was filed against Imran with Teknaf Police Station, said Sub-Inspector Azmir Elahi, in-charge of St Martin's Island Police Outpost.