

South Korean sect leader apologises over coronavirus spread

AFP, Seoul

The elderly leader of a secretive South Korean sect linked to more than half the country's 4,000-plus coronavirus cases knelt before the cameras Monday to apologise for the spread of the disease.

Shincheonji head Lee Man-hee's plea for forgiveness came after Seoul city authorities filed a murder complaint against him for failing to cooperate in containing the epidemic.

South Korea's case numbers -- the largest total anywhere outside China -- are expected to rise further as authorities carry out checks on more than 266,000 people associated with the Shincheonji Church of Jesus, which is often condemned as a cult.

"I would like to offer my sincere apology to the people," said Lee, his voice breaking.

"Although it was not intentional, many people have been infected," the 88-year-old said, twice bowing his head to the floor before reporters in Gapyeong.

"I seek the forgiveness of the people."

"I am very thankful to the government for its efforts," he added. "I also seek the forgiveness of the government."

Lee is revered by his followers as the "Promised Pastor" who has taken on the mantle of Jesus Christ and will take 144,000 people with him to heaven on the Day of Judgement, which he will usher in within his own lifetime.

A 61-year-old female member developed a fever on February 10 but attended at least four services in Daegu -- the country's fourth-largest city with a population of 2.5 million and the centre of the outbreak -- before being diagnosed.

At worship Shincheonji members sit close together on the floor and pray extensively in what critics say creates an ideal environment to spread viral infections.

Lee -- whose organisation says he has tested negative for the virus -- insisted that the group was "actively cooperating with the government".

Country where

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High housing costs, especially in Luxembourg City, mean more than 180,000 of its workforce commute from those neighboring countries every day.

"Luxembourg is a very attractive place for jobs," explains Geoffrey Caruso, a professor at the University of Luxembourg and the Luxembourg Institute of Socio-Economic Research specializing in land use and transportation.

But its "booming economy" and high concentration of jobs have led to congestion issues, he says.

In 2016, Luxembourg had 662 cars per 1,000 people, and driving is a "primary means of transportation" for commuters, according to a 2017 report by the Ministry of Sustainable Development and Infrastructure.

That year, drivers in Luxembourg City spent an average of 33 hours in traffic jams. It fared worse than European cities Copenhagen and Helsinki, which have comparable population sizes to all of Luxembourg -- yet drivers in both only spent an average of 24 hours in traffic.

Luxembourg's public transport system covers the whole country and costs \$562 million (€508 million) per year to run. Each year, it generates around \$46 million in ticket sales, according to the ministry.

Nothing seems

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the construction of the six-kilometre link road, exposing the whole area to risk of landslides, the director general told The Daily Star after their visit in January.

They could have easily spared the hills and taken alternative measures, he added.

"We have not done anything outside the plan. If anything was done outside it, the DoE should investigate and find out who did it," A CDC official told The Daily Star.

Zamir Uddin, deputy director of DoE Chattogram (region), who inspected the hill cutting, told The Daily Star that they visited the project area on March 1 and found that CDA cut the hills afresh just behind their base camp at Salimpur.

They had cut afresh at least 40,000 cubic feet of hill and filled up the low land, he added.

DoE Chattogram Director Moazzam told The Daily Star that he asked his team to produce the investigation report soon.

"We will take stern action as per law," he added.

CDA was also fined Tk 10 lakh in 2017 for not complying with the hill cutting management plan.

Rajib Das, project director and also executive engineer of CDA, did not comment on the matter when this correspondent contacted him over phone.

Nothing new

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Hussain Rousil Azam Moni, deputy director of Rab's legal and media wing, told The Daily Star.

The AG office will submit the report through an affidavit to the HC bench of Justice M Enayetur Rahim and Justice Md Mostafizur Rahman today as per its earlier order, an AG office source said.

The source, however, could not disclose the content of the report.

Contacted, Deputy Attorney General Amit Talukder, who is working with the HC bench concerned, told The Daily Star that he did not know about the matter.

"If we get anything from Rab, we will submit it to the High Court," he said.

On November 14 last year, the same HC bench ordered the investigation officer of the murder case to submit a report on the latest status of the investigation and on the involvement of Tanvir Rahman with the incident by March 4 this year.

On that day, the bench observed that the successes of Rab will be devalued to some extent if the elite force cannot find the motive and perpetrators behind the murders.

"It is undoubtedly a matter of

regret and disappointment that the motive behind the murders has not been found, the offenders could not be identified or arrested through investigation, and they were not put on trial although a long period after the incident has passed," the HC observed.

The HC bench came up with the observation while delivering a verdict on a petition filed by accused Tanvir Rahman, who is now out on bail.

The HC also exempted Tanvir from personal appearance before the trial court in connection with the case until the investigation report is submitted to the court.

On November 11 last year, Investigation Officer Khondker Shafiqul Alam appeared before the HC bench to explain the progress of the investigation. He told the court that the investigation was going on.

Shafiqul Alam was the seventh investigator in the case since July 4, 2019.

When the court asked him to explain whether Sagar's missing laptop had been found, he replied in the negative. He submitted the four samples that Rab had sent to the USA for the DNA tests. Of the four, two didn't match with the accused.

The investigator said that the

American company informed Rab that the two DNA samples found there had not been identified yet.

At least eight people, including suspects Rafiqul Islam, Bakul Miah, Masum Mintu, Kamrul Hasan alias Arun, Abu Sayeed, and two security guards of the couple's house Palash Rudra Paul and Enamul Hoque, and the couple's "family friend" Tanvir had been arrested in connection with the murder.

Later, Tanvir and Palash got out of jail on bail. The others are in jail.

Tanvir, an official of an English medium school in Dhaka, earlier submitted the petition to the HC to scrap trial proceedings against him in the case.

Sagar, news editor at private TV channel Maasranga, and his wife Runi, a senior reporter at ATN Bangla, were killed in the early hours of February 11, 2012 in their rented flat in the capital's West Razabazar.

After Sher-e-Bangla Nagar police and the Detective Branch of police, Rab was tasked with the probe on April 18, 2012.

Rab and other agencies have taken more than 71 dates from the trial court concerned for completing the probe.

Build homes for the homeless

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offices have sought an additional Tk 512 crore for organising celebration programmes. Of them, the liberation war affairs ministry has sought Tk 217 crore, local government department Tk 82 crore, cultural affairs ministry about Tk 31 crore, and youth and sports ministry around Tk 78 crore.

Speaking to journalists at the Secretariat after the meeting, Cabinet Secretary Anwarul Islam said, "She [prime minister] precisely asked all the ministries and divisions to declare a notable programme as the Mujib Borsho celebration programme."

For example, the cabinet secretary said as part of celebrating the event, the Finance Division has planned

to provide pensions to six lakh pensioners who would receive pensions sitting at their homes.

"If there is any exception, the issue of an additional budget can be considered. Otherwise, no need to think about big-budget programmes," he said quoting the premier as saying.

Anwarul also said necessary infrastructure, including stages for celebration programmes, would be built by the Public Works Department.

Asked whether the PM gave the directives in response to additional demands from the ministries, he said, "Many ministries might have thought that new programmes should be taken up. The new directives came for that reason."

Earlier, the government in the national budget for 2019-20 fiscal year had allocated Tk 100 crore for celebrating "Mujib Borsho".

Besides, the Cabinet Division was granted an additional Tk 50 crore for the same purpose, said finance ministry sources.

Following the additional demand of Tk 512 crore, the government formed a committee, led by the cabinet secretary, to assess the demands. The authorities asked the Finance Division not to release any fund without any vetting by the Cabinet Division.

A Cabinet Division official said the government would allocate a small amount against the additional demands.

'Aid must be without strings'

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Soviet Union but such assistance must be without any strings attached. He thanks the wonderful people of Russia for the warm and splendid hospitality they extended to him and members of his delegation as well as the support they gave to the liberation struggle of Bangladesh.

Later, Bangabandhu visits Leningrad, the cradle of Russian revolution, where he is given a hearty and warm reception. Bangabandhu is accompanied by the Soviet Premier Alexei Kosygin. Thousands of people of Leningrad line the 15-km route from the airport to the city in negative three degrees Celsius temperature to cheer the Bangladesh leader.

RS. 80CR FOR REHABILITATION OF WOMEN

The government has prepared a Rs.80 crore rehabilitation plan for displaced women and children of Bangladesh. The scheme which envisages the rehabilitation of over two lakh people is proposed to be executed by 1973 in two phases. Under this plan, a shelter home for displaced women and children will be set up in each thana and another centre will be set up in each district for dishonoured women. Each of these centres will accommodate about 500 people.

FOKKER FRIENDSHIP AIRCRAFT RECEIVED

Bangladesh Minister for Communications, Mansoor Ali, receives at the Dhaka Airport one of two Fokker friendship aircraft procured from India for domestic services.

FIRST INTERNATIONAL TRADE AGREEMENT OF BANGLADESH SIGNED

The first international general trade agreement of Bangladesh is signed today with Bulgaria. The agreement is followed by a barter deal worth Rs.27 million that will be valid for two years. The trade agreement was written in Bangla, English and Bulgarian.

Bangladesh will export, according to this agreement, finished jute goods, tea and leather. Bulgaria will export among other things electrical goods, dyes and chemicals and agricultural implements.

SOURCES: March 4, 1972 issues of Dainik Bangla, The Daily Ittefaq, Azad, Morning News, The Bangladesh Observer and Purbodesh.

2 BCL men killed

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morning, alleging that the bridge was not built on the right place and substandard materials were being used.

In the afternoon, Hadiuzzaman went to the spot with some BCL activists. They picked up Tuhin from his house and beat him up mercilessly.

Tuhin's brother Milon and locals attacked the BCL men. Then a clash broke out between the BCL men and the villagers that left nine, including Hadiuzzaman, injured.

Hadiuzzaman was rushed to the local upazila health complex and later moved to Khulna Medical College Hospital. He died on the way to Dhaka yesterday morning.

Hadiuzzaman is a friend of Harunur Rashid whose construction firm is building the bridge, said Abu Sayeed Khan, vice-president of Khulna district BCL.

The other injured took treatment at the local upazila health complex. Additional police have been deployed in the village after the incident, OC Rabiul added.

Police detained Tuhin and his brother Milon.

Abdus Sattar Par, chairman of Baghali Union Parishad, said the bridge is near Tuhin's house. He heard that there was a quarrel between the manager of the construction firm and locals over building of the bridge.

According to the upazila administration, HH Enterprise, the construction firm, is building the bridge at a cost of Tk 24 lakh.

Firm owner Harun, also a former joint secretary of Khulna district BCL, said one Moniruzzaman from Koyra upazila was constructing the bridge with his contractor's licence.

He dismissed the allegation of irregularities in the work.

Talking to this correspondent, Moniruzzaman said he had no investment in the construction work. He claimed that he was just

overseeing the work.

BCL MAN KILLED IN NOAKHALI

A BCL leader was killed and at least 10 activists injured in an attack reportedly carried out by Islami Chhatra Shibir, the pro-Jamaat-e-Islami student body, in Noakhali's Begumganj upazila yesterday.

The deceased was identified as Rakibul Hossain, 20, joint general secretary of BCL's Ulyapur union unit, our local correspondent reports quoting Arifur Rahman Mahmud, chairman of Ulyapur Union Parishad.

A group of Shibir activists equipped with firearms and sharp weapons launched an attack on the BCL men at Ulyapur Bazar around 9:00pm on Sunday, leaving 11 BCL men injured, Md Alamgir Hossain, superintendent of police in Noakhali, said.

The injured were admitted to the emergency room of the Noakhali General Hospital around 10:00pm on Sunday night with bullet wounds, said Syed Mohiuddin, resident medical officer of the hospital.

Because of the critical nature of Rakibul's injuries, he was taken to Dhaka Medical College Hospital in the capital, where he was declared dead around 2:30pm today.

A case was lodged with Begumganj Model Police Station and police have already arrested four Shibir activists in this connection, Harun-Ur-Rashid, officer-in-charge of the police station, said.

This is our version

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unconstitutional and blatantly anti-Muslim."

"The sole purpose of the NPR-NRC-CAA is to destabilise and divide people not just in India but across the whole subcontinent. If they do indeed exist, these phantom millions of human beings who India's current Home Minister calls Bangladeshi "termites", cannot be kept in detention centres and cannot be deported."

Buttigieg quits

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broad coalition, including support from black voters -- a key Democratic demographic.

Biden's resounding victory Saturday in the first southern state to vote has thrust him back into contention, after miserable showings in the first three states.

With 48 percent of the vote in South Carolina, Biden more than doubled the 20 percent won by Sanders -- positioning him as the leftist senator's main rival.

"Just days ago the press and the pundits declared my candidacy dead," Biden told a crowd in Norfolk, Virginia, one of the states voting on Super Tuesday.

"Now, thanks to the heart of the Democratic Party in South Carolina, I'm very much alive," he said.

"On Tuesday here in Virginia, you could be the launching pad on the path to beat Donald Trump."

Sanders continues to hold poll leads in several Super Tuesday states -- including California.

"I think we've got a great chance to win in California, in Texas, in Massachusetts and a number of states," Sanders said Sunday on CBS.

He later congratulated Buttigieg on "running a strong and historic campaign" and angled for his supporters.

"I urge them to join us in the fight for real change in this country," Sanders tweeted.

In an already turbulent Democratic race -- which has gradually winnowed down a diverse and record-large field -- Biden's victory Saturday injected further uncertainty.

"The biggest question is whether this will slingshot Joe Biden into victory in some Super Tuesday states," said Larry Sabato, director of the Center for Politics at the University of Virginia.

The win, powered by support from black voters, was Biden's first in the race, but came at a crucial time, helping dispel doubts about the 77-year-old's energy level and appeal.

South Carolina brought some clarity: billionaire businessman Tom Steyer, who spent \$23 million campaigning in the state, also dropped out of the race after taking just 11 percent of the vote.

Pressure is mounting on other trailing Democrats -- including Senator Elizabeth Warren and Senator Amy Klobuchar -- to follow Steyer's and Buttigieg's example and then swiftly throw their weight behind a frontrunner.

Warren, Klobuchar and billionaire Michael Bloomberg have all made it clear that they will stick around at least through Super Tuesday.

Buttigieg was feted by rivals including Bloomberg, another moderate, who has poured a staggering \$500 million from his personal fortune into campaign advertising.

New Neo JMB cell

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requesting anonymity.

Moniruzzaman, additional deputy inspector general of Anti-Terrorism Unit, told The Daily Star: "Analysing data and evidence collected from the scene, we are sure that the attack was carried out by a militant outfit and it has similarities with how Neo-JMB operates."

"We did not get CCTV footage. To detect the attackers, we are now looking at their digital footprint and referring to information we got earlier from interrogating different arrestees."

Neo JMB is an ultra-radical offshoot of the banned militant outfit Jama'atul Mujahideen Bangladesh, CITEC officers said earlier.

In Friday's blast, Traffic Sergeant Arafat, Assistant Sub-inspector Attauddin, and pedestrians Jahid Bin Jahangir, Sumon and ten-year-old Nowshad were hurt.

A case was lodged with Panchlaish Police Station on Saturday night accusing unidentified persons.

Officers said the nature of the attack had many similarities with five earlier blasts in the capital and two in Khulna.

As were the cases after the aforesaid attacks, SITE Intelligence Group, which tracks online activity of jihadist organisations and white supremacists, said the Islamic State claimed responsibility for the

Chattogram blast.

Police on January 25 this year claimed that they have arrested two people involved with the attack on Khulna Awami League office. On September 23 last year, CITEC claimed it arrested two others suspected of being involved with the blast in Dhaka.

A high official of CITEC yesterday said his team had dismantled two Neo JMB cells that were behind last year's attacks in Dhaka and Khulna.

"The Ameer [leader], who used to control these cells still remain untraced," he told The Daily Star, seeking anonymity.

"We suspect there are at least two or three other cells under this Ameer, and one of those cells is responsible for the latest blast."

Each of the cell has four or five members. But the cells don't maintain contact with each other, he added.

The counterterrorism unit of Chattogram Metropolitan Police (CMP) investigating the case has not been able to detect any suspect.

Deputy Commissioner Hasan Md Showkat Ali of the unit told The Daily Star: "We have interrogated several persons near the scene but no one was able to give any information about the attackers."

"We are using modern technology to find a clue."



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INVITATION FOR E-TENDERS

Tenders through electronic media (e-tenders) are hereby invited from the local agents /distributors/ importers of the renowned motor vehicles manufacturer for the supply of latest model brand new 11(eleven) units microbus in CBU condition. Necessary information about the tender are as follows:

1	Procuring entity	:	Janata Bank Limited
2	Source of fund	:	Janata Bank Limited's own fund
3	Tender reference no	:	JBL/TD/Vh-Pro/Micro-11/2020 dt.02-03-2020
4	Name of Tender	:	Procurement of latest model brand new 11(eleven) units microbus in CBU condition.
5	Eligibility of Tenderers	:	Local agents /distributors/ importers of the renowned motor vehicles manufacturer.
6	Name & address of the web receiving tender documents	:	www.jb.com.bd
7	Delivery time	:	45 days from the date of issuing work order.
8	Amount of Tender earnest money	:	Tk.10,00,000(ten) lac in the form of Pay Order (Refundable)
9	Performance security	:	10% of the work order value in the form of pay order issued from any schudle bank/ bank guarantee in favour of Janata Bank Limited, Head Office, Dhaka.
10	Last date & time of hand delivery of earnest money	:	Within 06/04/2020 ,2.30pm
11	Date and time for submission of tenders	:	Within 06/04/2020, 2.30 p.m.
12	Date and time for opening of tenders	:	April 06, 2020 on 3.00 p.m.
13	Special terms & conditions	:	a) If any Tenderer produces false or fabricated documents alongwith the tender, the related tender will be treated as cancelled. b) The tenders should abide by all the terms & conditions of PPR-2008. c) The tenderers or their authorized representatives are allowed to attend at the time of opening tenders. d) The procuring entity reserves the right to accept or reject any or all tenders without assigning any reason whatsoever.



02-03-2020
Md. Abdul Motalib
Assistant General Manager &
Incharge, Transport Department

PRD/HO-15/2020