

Australian father and son released from Qatar detention

AFP, Sydney

An Australian father and son have been released after almost six months in detention on unknown charges in Qatar, multiple sources said yesterday.

Professor Lukman Thalib, 58, and his son Ismail Talib, 24, were reportedly arrested in the Qatari capital Doha by local authorities in July.

The pair have been released from Qatari custody, said a Doha-based source briefed on the case, who added that they flew to Turkey on January 5.

UK-based human rights organisation CAGE said they travelled there to receive medical treatment.

“As a family we were overwhelmed with joy when we heard my father and brother were being released. We really couldn’t believe it,” Maryam Talib, the daughter of Professor Thalib, said in a statement released by CAGE.

CAGE said the men had been held in solitary confinement and subjected to sleep deprivation during their detention.

Maryam Talib said the family still had “many unanswered questions”, including why Canberra provided “little” support during the ordeal.

This year’s first

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constitution.

The president’s speech has already been approved in the cabinet.

The successes and future plans, including the development activities of the Awami League government, will get priority in his address, sources at the Bangabhaban said.

The duration of the first session of the year is usually longer. A long discussion is usually held on the “thanksgiving motion on the president’s address”.

However, this session may last for just 10 to 12 working days, sources at the parliament secretariat said.

Several bills are likely to be placed before the House and passed as well in this session.

Before the session sits today at 4:30pm, the Parliamentary Business Advisory Committee is likely to hold a meeting with Speaker Dr Shirin Sharmin Chaudhury in the chair, to fix the duration and businesses of the session.

Sources at the parliament secretariat told The Daily Star that like previous sessions held amid the coronavirus pandemic, the session will be short again.

This session will be held in accordance with all the health safety rules amid the Covid-19 pandemic.

Besides, journalists will be allowed to cover the first day of the 11th session while on the rest of the sittings, they will have to collect news through the live telecast on Sangsad Television.

The last session, a special one marking the birth centenary celebrations of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, was prorogued on November 18.

Court frames

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The same day, she had been taken to Dhaka for better treatment. Besides, his father was also taken to Rangpur Medical College Hospital.

Sheikh Farid Hossain, the elder brother of Wahida, filed a case with Ghoraghat Police Station mentioning the name of nobody.

Two days later, the case was handed over to Dinaipur DB assigning the OC an investigation officer.

Dinaipur police detained Rabiul from his house in Biral upazila on September 9. Later, he was shown arrested in the case on September 12.

Rabiul confessed his involvement before the court after the end of his remand in two phases.

Rabiul was a gardener of Ghoraghat UNO office, lost his job on September 1 last year.



A resident washes a road following gunmen shot dead two Afghan women judges working for the Supreme Court, in Kabul, yesterday.

Tufan Sarkar

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He added that their statements went in favour of the accused.

Tufan had earlier got bail in a separate case filed for torturing, he said.

On July 17, 2017, Tufan allegedly abducted a girl from her home and raped her. He then reportedly asked his party cadres and then Bogura municipality woman councillor Marzia Akter to make sure everything was kept secret.

They picked up the girl and her mother on July 26 and tortured them for four hours and shaved their heads.

Later, the victim’s mother filed a rape case against 10 people and a torture case under the Women and Children Repression Prevention Act-2000 against 13 people, including Tufan, his wife Asha Sarkar, and Asha’s elder sister.

Police arrested Tufan on July 29, 2017.

On October 10, 2017, police pressed charges against the 13 accused, including Tufan.

China unveils

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Magnets are also used to propel the train – opposite poles attract and pull it forward, while the same poles repel and push the train.

The train is designed to travel at 385mph – a speed which would equate to the London-Paris journey taking just over 47 minutes – but scientists think speeds could, at some point, reach 497mph.

It’s also designed to be driverless, capable of self-directing and self-stabilising.

The sleek design includes a smooth, curved nose, finely tuned to be as aerodynamic as possible, while inside the carriage a communal area with sofas was on display alongside more regular seats.

Wu Zili, a senior engineer at Southwest Jiaotong University, said the HTS train “doesn’t need any extra energy to keep itself in suspension”, which makes it “energy efficient”, reports the Scottish Sun.

Although the prototype was revealed to much fanfare, it has yet to complete a full journey; it could be some time before the finished product is ready.

The plan is for the technology to eventually be used for a high-speed rail link between Chengdu and Chongqing in China’s Sichuan province.

If successful, it would halve the journey time between the two cities to just half an hour, according to local media.

It follows the launch of a driverless train capable of travelling at 215mph in China this time last year.

The service connects Beijing with Zhangjiakou, two of the main host cities of the 2022 Winter Olympics. It slashed the journey time from three hours to just 47 minutes.

Vaccine concerns

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The long process of vaccine rollouts mean countries still have few options but to rely on lockdowns, curfews and social distancing to control the spread of the virus.

Switzerland and Italy are tightening their restrictions from today and Britain will require all arrivals to quarantine and show negative tests.

Newspaper reports suggested the UK could try to emulate countries such as Australia and New Zealand in requiring travellers to self-isolate in hotels at their own expense.

Foreign minister Dominic Raab said such a system could be difficult to manage but “we need to look at that very carefully based on the experience of other countries”.

Austria, currently in its third national lockdown, said that the current curbs will be extended by another two weeks until February 8 in face of the rise in infections and the spread of virus variants believed to be much more contagious.

As Europe manages its vaccine rollout, the United States is struggling with a contagion that has killed close to 400,000 as president-elect Joe Biden prepares to take the reins of power from Donald Trump.

Biden says he will sign executive orders to tackle the pandemic on the day he is inaugurated next week.

He has pledged to set up thousands of immunisation sites, deploy mobile clinics and expand the public health workforce in a bid to revive the stuttering rollout of vaccines.

India, second to the United States in the number of coronavirus cases, aims to inoculate 300 million people by July in one of the world’s biggest vaccination drives.

It will use two vaccines, the Oxford-AstraZeneca shot made locally by India’s Serum Institute, and a homegrown jab called Covaxin.

Spain yesterday began administering second vaccine doses to people who had already received the first at the end of December, mostly nursing home residents and care staff.

In Norway, where 13 frail elderly people died after a first vaccine injection, the Medical Medicines Agency, after assessing the cases, suggested last week that the deaths could be linked to side effects of the jab.

But agency official Steinar Madsen told public broadcaster NRK that the there was no cause for alarm.

Biden to bin Trump policies on first day

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memo outlines that Biden plans to send Congress a large-scale immigration plan within his first 100 days in office. The plan would offer a pathway to citizenship for the millions of undocumented immigrations currently in the United States.

Biden rolled out his first legislative priority this week, announcing a \$1.9 trillion coronavirus relief package that included direct payments to Americans. Biden made clear during a speech on the plan that he wanted it to be the first issue Congress takes up after he is inaugurated on January 20.

The memo makes clear a key part of Biden’s overall strategy includes getting

Congress to act on his legislative priorities, something Biden ran on by highlighting his relationships with Republicans in the Senate. The focus is an acknowledgment that only so much can be done via executive order.

“Full achievement of the Biden-Harris Administration’s policy objectives requires not just the executive actions the president-elect has promised to take, but also robust Congressional action,” Klain wrote.

The day after Biden is inaugurated, according to Klain, he will “sign a number of executive actions to move aggressively to change the course of the Covid-19 crisis and safely re-open schools and businesses, including

by taking action to mitigate spread through expanding testing, protecting workers, and establishing clear public health standards.”

And on January 22, Biden will direct his Cabinet agencies to “take immediate action to deliver economic relief to working families bearing the brunt of this crisis,” Klain writes.

The flurry of action is meant to show Americans that Biden is not wasting any time taking control of the coronavirus -- something the Biden transition has been intently focused on. But the scope and breadth of the topics Biden will address also highlights the extent to which Democrats believe the incoming administration will have to

be focused on multiple issues at once to be successful.

From January 25 to February 1, Klain writes that Biden will issue orders on everything from directing his government to buy American products to beginning to fulfill promises to reform the criminal justice system.

During that week-long period, Biden will also order the federal government to determine how to reunite children separated from their families at the US-Mexico border, as well sign additional orders aimed at tackling climate change and expanding access to health care.

3 arrested over rape in Patuakhali

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Hawladar, 32; Raja, 30, and Sajib Sikder, 26, from the same area that night.

Confirming the matter, Mirzaganj Police Station OC Shawkat Anwar Islam said the arrested persons were sent to Mirzaganj Senior Judicial Magistrate’s Court yesterday and the court ordered to send them to jail.

The victim was sent to hospital for a medical test, the OC said, adding that necessary legal action is being taken in this regard through proper investigation, subject to receipt of the medical report.

According to the police, the victim’s day labourer husband went to a market near his house to cut firewood and when she came out of the house to call her husband, three men lying in ambush gang-raped her

in an open field. Locals later rescued the victim.

At Dighalia village in Ishwarganj upazila of Mymensingh, a 14-year-old schoolgirl was raped allegedly by a youth on the night of January 12.

The victim’s mother lodged a case with Ishwarganj Police Station yesterday accusing four persons -- Ismail Hossain, his parents, and brother this afternoon.

Quoting the allegations of the victim and her family members, Ishwarganj Police Station OC Abdul Kader Mia said the girl, a ninth-grader, knew one of the accused, 21-year-old Ismail.

Ismail, an electric mechanic, called the girl to his house last Tuesday evening and later raped her forcibly, police said.

When news of the incident spread among the neighbours, Ismail and his

family members kept the girl captive at their house and threatened her not to disclose the matter. Later, they also tried to settle the matter through local arbitration, said police.

As the matter was not solved, the victim’s family members informed police yesterday.

On information, police went to the spot, rescued the girl, and took her to the police station yesterday. Ismail and his family members fled the area beforehand, police said.

Police drives are on to arrest the accused soon, the OC added.

In Noakhali’s Hatiya upazila, a 32-year-old housewife suffered torture on January 1, when around four to five people -- led by one Jihad and one Faruque -- stormed her house in Ardarsha village in Chandi union while her husband was not home, said inspector Md Abul Hasan of

Morshed Bazar investigation centre under Hatiya.

They allegedly attempted to rape the housewife, raising allegations of the victim having an extramarital affair with a man named Mohi, and failing to do so, tortured the woman nearly stripping off her clothes, locals said to police.

Police rescued both the woman and Mohi, who were tied up with rope, after receiving a phone call to the 999 helpline by locals, said the police official.

The victim filed a case with the court on January 5.

Police are currently investigating the incident, Golam Faruque, assistant superintendent of police of Hatiya circle, said.

(Our correspondents from Patuakhali, Mymensingh, and Noakhali contributed to the report)

Media cannot publish their remarks: HC

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rule against Ekattor TV authorities for allowing PK Halder, a fugitive in a money laundering case, to participate in a live talk show and having his interview broadcast.

Earlier in the day, Ekattor TV authorities submitted an explanation through its lawyer Muhammad Ashraf Ali to the HC saying that they broadcast the interview in good faith and had no mala fide intent to undermine the majesty of the court.

The TV channel authorities said they were not aware of any court order restraining publication and broadcasting any report on the

subjudice matters adding that they will remain more cautious in this regard.

The ACC’s lawyer Khurshid Alam Khan vehemently opposed the explanation saying that the Ekattor TV authorities have indirectly admitted their guilt as they said they will be more cautious.

The channel has allowed PK Halder to participate in live talk show as a guest although he is a wanted fugitive, with an arrest warrant issued against him by a court, while the Interpol is also looking for him.

Deputy Attorney General AKM Amin Uddin Manik supported ACC lawyer Khurshid Alam Khan.

Supreme Court lawyer Mohammad Shishir Manir, as an intervener, told the HC that he is willing to place before it several decisions of courts of different countries allowing the media to publish interviews of convicts and fugitives.

The HC bench asked him to do so and said it will hear in details on this issue while hearing the rule.

At the hearing of the pending rule over the inaction of the ACC and government in arresting PK Halder, the HC on December 30 observed that no accused or convicted of non-bailable and cognisable offences is entitled to make any comment or give an interview.

“Our concrete and considered view is that the accused, the convict, the fugitive and convicted accused of non-bailable and cognisable offences who are wanted by the court are not entitled to make any comments or give interviews before TV channels, electronic media, print media, social media or any other media in respect to the case during its pendency for trial and investigation because it may create confusion, affect the merit of the case and also lower the image and sanctity of the judiciary and the investigating agency,” the bench said.

The court is scheduled to hold hearing on the rule on January 20.



Dhaka South City Corporation
Office of the Executive Engineer
Zone-1, Nagar Bhaban



শেখ হাসিনার মূলনীতি
গ্রাম শহরের উন্নতি

e-Tender Notice

Ref No. egp/dscc/zone-01/02/2020-2021

e-Tenders are invited in e-GP Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) by Executive Engineer, Zone-1, Nagar Bhaban, Dhaka South City Corporation for the procurement of.

| Sl. No. | Tender ID, Ref No. & Package No. | Name of works | Start date & time | Last selling date and time | Tender closing date & time |
|---------|---|--|-------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. | Tender ID- 535057, Ref: TC-APP-170701-z-1-T2-2021 | Emergency repair and maintenance of Nagar Bhaban under Engineering Department, Zone-1. | 17 Jan-2021 17:30 | 02 Feb-2021 12:30 | 02 Feb-2021 16:30 |

This is an online tender, where only e-Tenders will be accepted in e-GP Portal and offline/hard copies will not be accepted. To submit e-Tender, please register on e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>).

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DSCC/PRD/86/20-21
GD-114

Gunmen kill 3 female judges

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which it bears responsibility outrage the world and must cease if peace is to come to Afghanistan,” wrote Wilson on Twitter.

‘SYSTEMATIC MASSACRE’

The shooting came just hours after a high-level meeting between the Taliban negotiation team and US special envoy for Afghanistan Zalmay Khalilzad, along with the head of US forces in Afghanistan, General Scott Miller, according to tweets by a Taliban spokesman.

During the sit-down, spokesman Mohammad Naem said the insurgents called again for the release of the group’s remaining jailed fighters, along with the removal of the Taliban from the UN blacklist.

The Afghan government has already released almost 5,000 Taliban inmates despite widespread concern that the fighters would be used to reinforce the insurgents’ ranks.

President Ashraf Ghani also accused the Taliban of launching an “illegitimate war and hostility”. “The government once again reiterates its call on the Taliban that violence, terror, brutality and crimes... will only prolong the war in the country,” he said in a statement issued by the presidential palace.

The head of the Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission also condemned the murders, calling the ongoing killings a “systematic massacre”. “Afghanistan is losing one of its most important gains, its educated & professional cadre, in what seems to be a systematic massacre & the world seems to be just watching. This must stop,” tweeted Shaharazad Akbar. The killing also spurred a rare statement from the Chinese embassy in Kabul, offering condolences to the victims’ families.

HIGH-PROFILE KILLINGS

In recent months, several prominent Afghans -- including politicians, journalists, activists, doctors and prosecutors -- have been assassinated in often brazen daytime attacks in Kabul and other cities.

Many journalists and activists have left the country, worried they might be the next targets.

Afghan officials have steadfastly blamed the Taliban for the assassinations, a charge the group has denied. Some of these killings have been claimed by the rival jihadist Islamic State group.