

## US charges North Korean

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aliases and is fluent in three languages. CBS News reported that investigations were able to link his social media activities, email correspondences, and usage of proxies with the crimes he is alleged to have committed. The news report also states that Hyok was responsible for infection of over 300,000 computers, including devices of hospitals, schools, and businesses.

FBI in their wanted cyber fugitives list has placed the name of Hyok and two of his associates: Jon Chang Hyok and Kim Il. The trio has been alleged to be working for North Korean government's Reconnaissance General Bureau (RGB).

According to cybersecurity experts, RGB is responsible for earning the North Korean regime foreign currency through cyber exploits.

However, these charges are more symbolic in nature as the US does not have any extradition treaty with North Korea. Hyok is unlikely to ever see the inside of a US courtroom ever.

These conspiracies of RGB have been labelled as "Lazarus Group" and "Advanced Persistent Threat 38 (APT38)" by some private cybersecurity researchers.

Lazarus Group has been notorious for launching several targeted attacks on financial institutions across several countries, including Poland, Iraq, Nigeria, Ethiopia, India, Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia, Costa Rica, and, of course, Bangladesh.

From simple hacks to complex intrusions, the group is capable of launching attacks on even the most secured cyber infrastructure, according to industry experts.

During the early investigation of Bangladesh Bank heist, cyber forensic investigators going through log files identified one particular IP address

which originated from North Korea.

Upon further investigation and analysis, a pattern emerged. These patterns were oddly similar to Lazarus's previous known heist.

Studying the BB heist along with other known work of Lazarus Group, Kaspersky Labs has been able to draw a modus operandi of the group.

The group does initial testing of their hacks in financial institutions to hone their skill as well as recalibrate their tools. Once the tools are ready, they attempt to compromise one single device or system within the target network. Once that is done through injecting malware, sometimes in the form of a simple email attachment, they gradually establish a foothold by replicating the infection within the target network. The group then studies the behaviour pattern of the network, learns about the security protocols, and understands the operation by analysing the network traffic.

Finally, they engineer a plan and then go for the intended rogue transactions by bypassing all the security protocols.

The BB heist happened in the very same fashion.

The Criminal Investigation Department of Bangladesh is carrying out an enquiry on the heist, said Abu Hena Mohammad Raze Hassan, the head of the Bangladesh Financial Intelligence Unit of Bangladesh Bank.

The BFIU is the central agency of Bangladesh responsible for analyzing suspicious transaction reports, cash transaction reports, and information related to money laundering and financing of terrorism from reporting agencies and other sources.

If the CID wants information about the people charged by the US Department of Justice, the BFIU would request the US department concerned for information, Raze Hassan said.



Afghan women cadets handle an AK-47 rifle during a training programme at the Officers Training Academy in Chennai, India yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

## Erfan Salim cleared of arms

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406 yaba tablets and an illegal pistol with four bullets were also recovered from his bodyguard Zahidul Mollah.

Chawkbazar police submitted probe reports in arms and drug cases to the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court of Dhaka on January 5.

In their final report, Chawkbazar police said they did not find any evidence to prove the charges against Erfan in two cases filed under the narcotics control and arms acts. The investigation officer also appealed to the court to discharge Erfan from the cases.

But Erfan cannot walk out of jail as he was yet to get bail in two other

cases filed in October last year, his lawyer Pran Nath told The Daily Star.

One is an attempted murder case while the other is a narcotics case that police find evidence to prove the charge.

Erfan's bodyguard Zahidul, however, was charged with possession of an illegal firearm and narcotics.

Erfan was arrested after a case was filed against him on charge of "attacking" Lt Wasif Ahmed Khan of Bangladesh Navy in the capital's Dhanmondi area on October 25 last year.

Rab later conducted a drive at Haji Salim's house on Debidas Lane following the attack on Lt Wasif that

went viral on social media and filing of the attempted murder case.

A mobile court of Rab on the same day handed six months' imprisonment to Erfan for keeping walkie-talkies illegally and six months for possessing illegal alcohol.

On February 11 this year, Sub-Inspector Mominul Haque of the Detective Branch of police submitted the charge sheet to the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court of Dhaka against Erfan, Zahidul, chauffeur Mizanur Rahman, protocol officer of Madina Group AB Siddique Dipu and their associate Kazi Ripon in a case filed over the assault and attempted murder of the navy officer.

## Hackers target govt portals

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Buses and cars could be seen on live feeds parked around a bridge at North Dagon yesterday morning, as protesters chanted: "Don't attend the office, leave it. Join the civil disobedience movement."

Thousands of protesters crowded key junctions, shouting slogans at the police and flashing a three-finger salute.

Nationwide protests continued yesterday, despite overnight tensions in Myanmar's second biggest city Mandalay where police and soldiers broke up a protest blocking the railway, according to two sources.

A member of a local emergency rescue service said security forces opened fire, though it was not clear whether rubber bullets or live rounds were used, adding one person was injured.

Four train drivers participating

were arrested at gunpoint, then taken to a Mandalay locomotive factory and forced to drive to the northern city of Myitkyina, the Assistance Association for Political Prisoners said.

The group has reported that close to 500 people have been arrested since the coup.

In the early hours of yesterday morning 11 foreign ministry officials in Myanmar's capital Naypyidaw were arrested for taking part in the anti-coup movement, a colleague told AFP.

Later in the day, some protesters painted a massive white "Save Myanmar" sign on a Naypyidaw street. After they were done, police washed it off.

Up in Myanmar's northern city of Myitkyina, local media showed armed soldiers in rows of military trucks looking on as thousands of protesters marched by.

## Facebook blacks out news

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behaviour of Big Tech companies who think they are bigger than governments and that the rules should not apply to them."

The dispute centres on a planned Australian law, which would require Facebook and Google to reach commercial deals to pay news outlets whose links drive traffic to their platforms, or agree a price through arbitration.

Although Australia is a small market, the law is being closely watched around the world by regulators, and could be a test case for a bigger global push to force internet giants to share more of

their revenue with content providers.

News publishers outside Australia leapt on Facebook's tactics as evidence that the company, which also owns Instagram and WhatsApp, cannot be trusted as the gatekeeper for their industry.

Banning news during a global pandemic was "a classic example of a monopoly power being the schoolyard bully, trying to protect its dominant position with scant regard for the citizens and customers it supposedly serves," said Henry Faure Walker, chairman of Britain's News Media Association industry group.

## Only a third of the recipients

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Sherpur, said the area is basically a predominantly agricultural area, due to which most women are busy with their household work.

He also said people, especially women, in the area are not given proper awareness regarding the vaccination campaign.

"We have instructed healthcare assistants to go door-to-door and encourage women to get vaccinated. And if anyone faces any difficulty, they can get registered at the community clinics," he added.

Government officials said they were satisfied with the progress of the vaccination campaign but concerned about the low response from women.

The government launched the mass vaccination programme across the country 336 days after the first Covid-19 case was reported in the country on March 8, 2020. Starting from February 7, vaccination centres have been operating every day except Fridays.

Mushtaq Hussain, consultant to

the Institute of Epidemiology, Disease Control and Research, said women, especially in rural areas, are still reluctant to take vaccines.

"Government should open registration booths in every ward so that people register easily and get vaccinated. Family is the biggest source of encouragement. Family members should come forward and help their women get registered and vaccinated," he said.

The mass inoculation drive began with an initial aim to vaccinate 60 lakh frontline workers and people aged 55 and above by this month. The government, on January 27, opened online registration on www.surokha.gov.bd.

Due to a tepid response in the online registration system, the health directorate brought down the target from 60 lakh to 35 lakh on February 3. On Saturday, however, the target was raised to 70 lakh.

The vaccination campaign gained momentum after the age limit was relaxed to 40 from 55 on February 8.

## Officers get more financial

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challenges, officials said.

The decision has been taken as India looks at ramping up its defence capabilities in view of new challenges over the last 10 months as military tensions with China had sparked a war-like situation even though a disengagement process is in place now.

The Union Cabinet approved enhanced delegation of financial powers under capital procurement to levels below vice-chief of armed forces

for the first time.

The Ministry of Defence has said as per the approval, under Other Capital Procurement Procedure (OCP) of Defence Acquisition Procedure-2020, financial powers up to Rs 100 crore has been delegated to General Officer Commanding-in-Chief (GOC-in-C), Flag Officer Commanding-in-Chief (FOC-in-C), Air Officer Commanding-in-Chief (AOC-in-C) at Services Command and Regional Commanders, Indian Coast Guard (ICG).

## Former Malaysia first lady's graft trial to proceed

AFP, Kuala Lumpur

The corruption trial of Malaysia's scandal-plagued former first lady will proceed after a judge ruled yesterday that prosecutors had presented sufficient evidence to make a case, boosting efforts to bring her to justice.

Rosmah Mansor will now present her defence in the next stage of the case, and told the Kuala Lumpur High Court she will take the stand to testify.

Notorious for her overseas shopping trips and vast collection of handbags, she became a lightning rod for public anger as the government of prime minister Najib Razak was engulfed by graft allegations.

Her husband's long-ruling coalition suffered a shock election defeat in 2018 in large part due to claims he and his officials plundered billions of dollars from the 1MDB sovereign wealth fund.

## World's oldest

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this giant of the Ice Age reveals how mammoths evolved and adapted to life in a cold climate. It also may show a previously unknown species of mammoth.

"This DNA is incredibly old. The samples are a thousand times older than Viking remains and even pre-date the existence of humans and Neanderthals," said Love Dalen, a professor of evolutionary genetics at the Centre for Palaeogenetics in Stockholm.

An international team of researchers was able to isolate DNA from molars from three separate mammoths collected from the Siberian permafrost in the 1970s. They dated the teeth using geological data and by analyzing the DNA.

The research published in the journal Nature on Wednesday.

The oldest mammoth tooth dated back to between 1.2 million and 1.65 million years ago. The younger estimate comes from a method known as biostratigraphy, where scientists assess the presence of small rodents found in the layers of sediment -- species that only existed during certain time periods.

They also measured what's called the paleomagnetism of rock and sediment at the site. This method uses the orientation of Earth's magnetic field, which has changed through time and leaves traces in magnetic minerals in the rock, to determine ages for fossils and rocks.

The older estimate comes from the genome the researchers recovered.

"There could be several reasons why these estimates differ. For example, maybe the Krestovka specimen originally comes from an older layer but had at some point eroded out and then became redeposited in a younger layer," said Dalen.

"Alternatively, and in our view more likely, our estimated molecular clock rate is a bit off," he said, suggesting that pinpointing the date isn't an exact science.

"At any rate, both these types of dating analyses show an age of more than 1 million years."

## Technical glitch

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around 8:00am just to prevent them from joining the rally.

Meanwhile, hundreds of people, including transport workers, suffered as they had to wait on both sides of the river.

The BNP has been holding rallies over the last few days in the capital and different districts.

The party on February 14 made announcements of the rally in Barishal where it would demand fair elections. Twenty-five vehicles carrying BNP leaders and activists reached Shimulia Ferry Terminal around 8:30am.

"We found no ferry at Shimulia terminal. We were told the ferries were in Bangla Bazar. Our vehicles could not go across the river," said Ishraque Hossain, a member of BNP International Affairs Committee.

"The offices of the authorities concerned at Shimulia terminal were closed," he told reporters, adding that the party members could not ask anyone what was going on.

"The ferry services were suspended due to a technical issue," said Shafiqul Islam, deputy general manager (Shimulia terminal) of Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Corporation (BIWTC).

Shafayet Ahmed, who is the manager, said out of 13 ferries, 11 were in operation yesterday morning.

Of the 11, three were moored at Banglabazar and eight were on the river at the time. "That is why they did not find any ferry at Shimulia."

But everything became normal around 10:00am, he informed.

However, a BITWC official, seeking anonymity, told The Daily Star that they received a message on their phones the previous night with instructions to suspend the ferry services.

The official didn't give further details.

Around 700 vehicles were subjected to a tailback at Shimulia due to the suspension, said Helal Uddin, in-charge of Mawa Traffic Police outpost.

The BNP held the rally on Barishal Zila School premises where BNP Vice-chairman Maj (ret'd) Hafizuddin Ahmed spoke as the chief guest.

However, groups of activists threw chairs at each other and scuffled as they quarrelled over front row seats at the rally.

BNP leaders urged people to launch a movement against the government to restore people's right to vote.

[Our correspondents from Munishiganj and Barishal contributed to the report]

## Six children killed playing with old bomb in Uganda: police

AFP, Kampala

Six children were killed and five others injured in northwest Uganda after an old explosive they found in the bushes detonated as they played with it, police said yesterday.

Three children died instantly while three others succumbed to injuries en route to hospital in Adjumani, a district of West Nile region that witnessed years of conflict and insurgencies.

পপুলার লাইফের বীমা দাবীর ২,৯২০ টি চেকে ৮,০৭,০৯,৭০৭ (আট কোটি সাত লক্ষ নয় হাজার সাতশত সাত) টাকা পরিশোধ

মুজিব ১০০ শতবর্ষ

পপুলার লাইফ ইনস্যুরেন্স কোম্পানী লিমিটেড এর চট্টগ্রাম অঞ্চলের ২,৯২০ জন বীমা গ্রাহকের বীমা দাবীর মোট ৮,০৭,০৯,৭০৭/- টাকার চেক হস্তান্তর উপলক্ষে চট্টগ্রাম রীমা কনভেনশন সেন্টারে আলোচনা সভা অনুষ্ঠিত হয়। অনুষ্ঠানে প্রধান অতিথি হিসেবে ভিডিও কনফারেন্সের মাধ্যমে উপস্থিত ছিলেন পিএইচপি ফ্যামিলির চেয়ারম্যান এবং পপুলার লাইফ ইনস্যুরেন্স কোম্পানী লিমিটেডের সাবেক চেয়ারম্যান আলহাজ্ব সুফি মোহাম্মদ মিজানুর রহমান। কোম্পানীর ব্যবস্থাপনা পরিচালক ও সিও এবং বাংলাদেশ ইনস্যুরেন্স ফোরামের প্রেসিডেন্ট বি এম ইউসুফ আলীর সভাপতিত্বে উক্ত অনুষ্ঠানে বিশেষ অতিথি হিসেবে উপস্থিত ছিলেন পিএইচপি ফ্যামিলি ও পপুলার লাইফ ইনস্যুরেন্স কোম্পানী লিমিটেডের পরিচালক মোহাম্মদ জহিরুল ইসলাম চৌধুরী। অনুষ্ঠানে আরও উপস্থিত ছিলেন কোম্পানীর অতিরিক্ত ব্যবস্থাপনা পরিচালক বি এম শওকত আলী, উর্ধ্বতন উপ-ব্যবস্থাপনা পরিচালক ও কোম্পানী সচিব মোস্তফা হেলাল কবির, উপ-ব্যবস্থাপনা পরিচালক সৈয়দ মোতাহার হোসেন ও মোঃ হাবিবুর রহমান সহ কোম্পানীর নিবাহী পরিচালকগণ, প্রকল্প পরিচালকগণ, প্রকল্প ইনচার্জ ও কোম্পানীর অন্যান্য উর্ধ্বতন কর্মকর্তাবৃন্দ। ছবিতে অতিথিবৃন্দকে বীমা দাবীর চেক হস্তান্তর করতে দেখা যাচ্ছে।

জীবন বীমায় বিশ্বস্ত নাম

পপুলার লাইফ ইনস্যুরেন্স কোম্পানী লিমিটেড