



KHASHOGGI MURDER 'US report may single out Saudi crown prince'

REUTERS, Washington

A declassified version of a US intelligence report expected to be released soon finds that Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman approved the 2018 killing of journalist Jamal Khashoggi, four US officials familiar with the matter said.

The officials said the report, for which the CIA was the main contributor, assessed that the crown prince approved and likely ordered the murder of Khashoggi, whose Washington Post column had criticized the crown prince's policies.

President Joe Biden, a Democrat who succeeded the Republican Donald Trump five weeks ago, told reporters on Wednesday he had read the report and expected to speak soon by phone with Saudi Arabian King Salman, 85, father of the crown prince, the country's 35-year-old de facto ruler.

The report's release is part of Biden's policy to realign ties with Riyadh after years of giving the Arab ally and major oil producer a pass on its human rights record and its intervention in Yemen's civil war.

The 59-year old Khashoggi, a Saudi journalist and Washington Post columnist, was lured to the Saudi consulate in Istanbul on Oct. 2, 2018, and killed by a team of operatives linked to the crown prince. They then dismembered his body. His remains have never been found.

Riyadh eventually admitted that Khashoggi was killed in a "rogue" extradition operation gone wrong, but it denied any involvement by the crown prince. Five men given the death penalty for the murder had their sentences commuted to 20 years in jail after being forgiven by Khashoggi's family.

INDO-PAK TIES Military agree to stop LoC firing

REUTERS, New Delhi

The militaries of India and Pakistan yesterday said in a rare joint statement that they had agreed to observe a ceasefire along the disputed border in Kashmir, having exchanged fire hundreds of times in recent months.

The nuclear-armed neighbours signed a ceasefire agreement along the Line of Control (LoC) in the Kashmir region in 2003, but the truce has frayed in recent years, and there have been mounting casualties among villagers living close to the de facto border.

"Both sides agreed for strict observance of all agreements, understandings and cease firing along the Line of Control and all other sectors with effect from midnight 24/25 Feb 2021," the joint statement said.

The return to a truce was settled by the two armies director-generals of military operations who "agreed to address each other's core issues and concerns which have propensity to disturb peace and lead to violence," the statement said.

There has been a significant increase in ceasefire violations since 2014, leading to nearly 300 civilian fatalities, a source in the Pakistan army said.

Pakistan reported 253 ceasefire violations in first two months of 2021 while reported 591 violations by Pakistan.



A military supporter points a sharp object as he confronts anti-coup protesters during a military support rally in Yangon, Myanmar, yesterday. A protester is seen injured on the ground.

PHOTO: REUTERS

WHO warns of long-term Covid

Urges nations to understand health risks posed by post-infection complications on priority basis; Pfizer vaccine 94pc effective on mass trial

AGENCIES

A senior World Health Organization official yesterday urged national authorities to make a priority of understanding the long-term consequences of coronavirus infections as some people show worrying symptoms months later.

"The burden is real and it is significant. About one in 10 Covid-19 sufferers remain unwell after 12 weeks, and many for much longer," Hans Kluge, regional director for WHO Europe, told a press conference.

"It's a clear priority for WHO, and of the utmost importance. It should be for every health authority".

While some studies are beginning to shed light on the illness, it is still unclear why some patients with Covid-19 continue to show symptoms for months, including tiredness, brain fog, and cardiac and neurological disorders.

Kluge stressed that those patients "need to be heard if we are to understand the long-term consequences and recovery from Covid-19."

WHO Europe called on European countries and institutions to "come together as part of an integrated research agenda," harmonising data collection tools and study protocols. In boost for Covid-19 battle, the

Pfizer vaccine has proven 94 percent effective in a study involving 1.2 million people in Israel, the first peer-reviewed real world research confirming the power of mass immunization campaigns to bring the pandemic to a close.

Moderna Inc said on Wednesday it is working with US government scientists to study an experimental booster shot that targets a concerning new variant of the coronavirus. The US biotech company has produced raw material for a booster shot aimed at addressing the virus variant first found in South Africa that may be more resistant to existing vaccines, it said.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Biden's CIA pick says China will be his main focus

Veteran US diplomat William Burns, nominated to lead the CIA, pledged Wednesday to keep the agency free of politics and said China would be his main focus if confirmed. Burns also told the panel that China was the main challenge the country faces, echoing views stated by Biden and other top officials of his administration. Burns called Xi Jinping's approach an "aggressive, undisguised ambition and assertiveness" that must be faced down in a long-term effort, in conjunction with allies that Beijing lacks. If approved as expected by the Senate, Burns will be the first career diplomat to lead the CIA.

Xi boasts of 'miracle' in tackling poverty in China

Chinese President Xi Jinping yesterday declared his country had achieved the "human miracle" of eliminating extreme poverty, though questions continue to surround the Communist Party's criteria for making the claim. "No other country can lift hundreds of millions of people out of poverty in such a short time," Xi said. "A human miracle has been created that will go down in history." China last year claimed it had achieved its long-trumpeted goal of lifting all of its people above a poverty line of \$2.30 in daily income. The World Bank says China has lifted more than 800 million people out of extreme poverty since turning to market reforms in the 1970s, after decades of state planning and ill-advised Maoist campaigns that had stifled the economy.

US ban on many green card applicants lifted

US President Joe Biden on Wednesday revoked a proclamation from his predecessor that blocked many green card applicants from entering the United States. Former President Donald Trump issued the ban last year, saying it was needed to protect US workers amid high unemployment due to the coronavirus pandemic. Biden said it had prevented families from reuniting in the United States and harmed US businesses. Immigrant advocates had pressed in recent weeks for him to lift the visa ban, which was set to expire on March 31. Biden left in place another ban on most foreign temporary workers.

SOURCE: AFP, REUTERS



Rescue teams conduct a search for miners buried by a landslide at an illegal gold mining operation in the village of Buranga in Parigi Moutong Regency, Central Sulawesi, Indonesia, yesterday. Five women and one man killed in the landslide while some 16 survivors were pulled from the debris.

PHOTO: AFP

Death sets Mushtaq free from DSA, jail

FROM PAGE 1
him dead around 8:20pm," Gias Uddin, acting superintendent of Kashimpur High Security Jail, told The Daily Star.

Mushtaq was 53. Asked if the writer had any previous health issues, he said Mushtaq used to take pills for gastric problems but never complained about anything.

Quoting doctors, Brig Gen Md Mominur Rahman Mamun, inspector general of prisons, told The Daily Star that Mushtaq was brought in dead at the hospital and that details would be known once the autopsy was done.

Md Sharif, a doctor at the hospital, also said Mushtaq was dead on arrival.

A relative, wishing not to be named, told The Daily Star that they could not believe that Mushtaq was dead. They did not know whether he had any heart disease.

The jail authorities called Mushtaq's brother-in-law after failing to reach anyone at his home number, added the relative.

Mushtaq's parents went to the hospital at night.

According to family sources, the body would be handed over to them this morning.

Mushtaq lived with his wife Liza Akhter and elderly parents in Lalmatia.

He used to write under the pen name Michael Kumir Thakur. His book "Kumir Chasher Diary" was published in November 2018, and he was working on another book.

He was critical, on social media, of the government's handling of the pandemic.

On May 6 last year, Rapid Action Battalion arrested him at his Dhaka home for "spreading rumours and carrying out anti-government activities".

and he had been in that prison since August 20.

The other arrestees in the case are Ahmed Kabir Kishore, a cartoonist; Didarul Islam, a member of politico-civic organisation called Rashtrachinta; and Minhaj Mannan Emon, managing director of BLE securities and shareholder-director of Dhaka Stock Exchange.

Besides, seven more people, including Swedish-Bangladeshi journalist Tasneem Khalil, who runs Netra News; US-based journalist Shahed Alam; blogger Asif Mohtuddin; and expatriate Zulkarnain Saer Khan were named in the case.

Mushtaq and Kishore were brought into a courtroom before a judge two weeks ago.

Nobody knew they would suddenly be brought to the court, not even their families, who had not seen them in person since their arrests, because of Covid-19 regulations on visitors in prisons.

Their families said this was their first trip out of prison, since they were both produced before a court on May 6 last year.

On February 23, Mushtaq and Kishore were brought to the cyber crimes tribunal for hearing.

Kishore's brother Ahsan Kabir had last seen the duo then.

Upon seeing Mushtaq, Kabir embraced him and Mushtaq requested Kabir to get him some food. "He wanted paratha and beef curry and I gave that to him to eat at the court," he said last night.

Mushtaq was again denied bail that day. The judge directed the investigators to launch a "further probe" into the case and submit a report by March 23.

The week before their appearance at the tribunal, Mushtaq and Kishore

had been officially charged by the police in a case filed under the DSA last year.

In its entirety, the case is a collection of 10 social media posts and links, as per the first information report filed on May 6.

The links submitted as evidence lead to Facebook posts and cartoons made before the pandemic. Those mock the health care system of the country.

There were re-shares of various news articles that commentate on the coronavirus outbreak.

Some of the links were posted by a satirical Facebook page called "I am Bangladeshi", of which Mushtaq and Kishore were admins.

These 10 links were submitted as evidence into a litany of charges, including spreading propaganda against the Liberation War of Bangladesh, Father of the Nation, National Anthem, and National Flag; tarnishing the image of the nation; spreading confusion; creating hostility, hatred among people; destroying communal harmony or creating unrest, disorder; and threatening to deteriorate law and order.

Last night, Kishore's brother Kabir recalled the last time he saw his brother, on February 23.

"Kishore had gone through so much torture that he was walking with a limp ... He told me he was tortured," said Kabir.

Kishore's left ear drum was perforated due to torture and pus was oozing out and his hearing was impaired, he said.

"His eyesight was drastically reduced and he lost at least 10kg in weight," said Kabir.

Kabir now fears for Kishore's life.

"This is a murder in the name of justice," he said about the death of Mushtaq.

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আগ্রহব্যক্তকরণ প্রস্তাব আহবান বিজ্ঞপ্তি (Request for Expression of Interest-EOI)

পাবলিক প্রকিউরমেন্ট আইন ২০০৬ এবং পাবলিক প্রকিউরমেন্ট বিধিমালা ২০০৮ এর (সর্বশেষ সংশোধনসহ) মোতাবেক গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকারের কৃষি মন্ত্রণালয়ের ২০১৮-১৯ অর্থ বছরে উন্নয়ন বাজেটভুক্ত সমাপ্ত ০২টি প্রকল্প এবং ২০১৯-২০ অর্থ বছরে উন্নয়ন বাজেটভুক্ত সমাপ্ত ০২টি সহ মোট ৪টি প্রকল্পের নিরীক্ষা ও মূল্যায়ন করার লক্ষ্যে সিএ ফার্ম/অডিট সংস্থার নিকট হতে সিলমোহরকৃত বামে প্রতিযোগিতামূলক আগ্রহব্যক্তকরণ প্রস্তাব আহবান করা যাচ্ছেঃ

১.	মন্ত্রণালয়/বিভাগ	কৃষি মন্ত্রণালয়		
২.	দরপত্র সম্পাদনকারী প্রধান	সচিব, কৃষি মন্ত্রণালয়		
৩.	আগ্রহ ব্যক্তকরণের বিষয়/কাজের বিবরণ	কৃষি মন্ত্রণালয়ের ২০১৮-১৯ এবং ২০১৯-২০ অর্থ বছরে উন্নয়ন বাজেটভুক্ত সমাপ্ত ০৪টি প্রকল্পের নিরীক্ষা ও মূল্যায়ন		
৪.	আগ্রহ ব্যক্তকরণ বিজ্ঞপ্তির সূত্র ও তারিখ	ইং-১২.০০.০০০০.০০৮.০১.০০৪.১৯-৭০, তারিখ-২৩/০২/২০২১		
মূল তথ্য				
৫.	ক্রয়ের পদ্ধতি	পাবলিক প্রকিউরমেন্ট বিধিমালা ২০০৮ এর 'নিম্নতম ব্যয়ভিত্তিক নির্বাচন পদ্ধতি'		
অর্থের সংস্থান সম্পর্কিত তথ্য				
৬.	অর্থের সংস্থান	কৃষি মন্ত্রণালয়ের রাজস্ব বাজেট		
সুনির্দিষ্ট তথ্য				
৭.	প্রকল্প সংশ্লিষ্ট তথ্য:	ক্র. নং	সমাপ্ত প্রকল্পের বিবরণ (২০১৮-১৯)	বাহ্যাবয়নকারী দপ্তর/সংস্থা
		১.	খামার যান্ত্রিকরণের মাধ্যমে ফসল উৎপাদন বৃদ্ধি- ২য় পর্যায় প্রকল্প	ডিএই
		২.	সমন্বিত খামার ব্যবস্থাপনা অংশ, কৃষি উৎপাদন ও কর্মসংস্থান কর্মসূচি	
		সমাপ্ত প্রকল্পের বিবরণ (২০১৯-২০)		
		১.	বিএডিসির বিদ্যমান বীজ উৎপাদন প্রতিয়োজ্ঞাতকরণ ও বিতরণ ব্যবস্থাদি আধুনিকিকরণ এবং উন্নয়ন (১ম সংশোধিত)	বিএডিসি
		২.	ধান, গম, ভুট্টার উন্নত বীজ উৎপাদন এবং উন্নয়ন প্রকল্প (২য় পর্যায়) (১ম সংশোধিত)	
৮.	আগ্রহ ব্যক্তকরণ প্রস্তাব গ্রহণের সর্বশেষ তারিখ ও সময়	১৩/০৩/২০২১; দুপুর ২.০০ ঘটিকা		

আবেদনকারীর জন্য তথ্য				
৯.	নিরীক্ষা/সমীক্ষা কাজের সংক্ষিপ্ত বিবরণ	সিএ ফার্ম/অডিট সংস্থাকে নির্ধারিত TOR অনুযায়ী ২০১৮-১৯ এবং ২০১৯-২০ অর্থ বছরে উন্নয়ন বাজেটভুক্ত সমাপ্ত মোট ০৪ টি প্রকল্পের নিরীক্ষা ও মূল্যায়ন করতে হবে;		
১০.	আবেদনকারীর যোগ্যতা এবং অভিজ্ঞতা	নিরীক্ষা ও মূল্যায়ন কাজে আগ্রহী প্রত্যাশিত আগ্রহব্যক্তকরণ প্রস্তাবের সাথে অবশ্যিকভাবে নিম্নবর্ণিত কাগজপত্র সংযুক্তপূর্বক দাখিল করতে হবে: ১। পরামর্শক প্রতিষ্ঠানের ইতোপূর্বে সংশ্লিষ্ট কাজে ন্যূনতম ৫ বছরের অভিজ্ঞতা থাকতে হবে; ২। প্রয়োজনীয় জনবল, সংশ্লিষ্ট বিষয়ে বিশেষজ্ঞ এবং সহায়ক উপকরণসহ থাকতে হবে; ৩। প্রস্তাবের সাথে রেজিস্ট্রেশন সনদ (আইসিএবিএর সার্টিফিকেট প্রত্যাবর্তন সাথে সংযুক্ত করতে হবে)/আর্থিক স্বাবলখনের প্রমাণস্বরূপ ব্যাংক রেজিস্ট্রেশন সার্টিফিকেট, টিআইএন সার্টিফিকেট, ট্রেডলাইসেন্স, হালনাগাদ আয়কর প্রদানের প্রমাণক পৃথিবীতে থাকবে ৪। আগ্রহব্যক্তকরণ দলিলে উল্লিখিত অন্যান্য প্রমাণাদিও দাখিল করতে হবে।		
১১.	কাজ সম্পাদনের সময়সীমা	চুক্তি সম্পাদনের পর অনতিবিলম্বে কাজটি শুরু করতে হবে এবং সর্বোচ্চ ৩ মাসের মধ্যে সমাপ্ত করতে হবে;		
১২.	অন্যান্য শর্তাবলী	১. নিরীক্ষা ও মূল্যায়ন কাজে পাবলিক প্রকিউরমেন্ট আইন-২০০৬ ও পাবলিক প্রকিউরমেন্ট বিধিমালা ২০০৮ (সংশোধিতসহ) প্রদত্ত ক্রয় সংক্রান্ত পদ্ধতি অনুসরণ করা হবে; ২. সিএ ফার্ম/অডিট সংস্থার আওতায় নিয়োজিতব্য ফার্মের সদস্যদের শারীরিক ও মানসিকভাবে এ কাজসম্পাদনের উপযুক্ত হতে হবে; এবং ৩. সিলমোহরকৃত আবেদনপত্র (EOI) নির্দিষ্ট তারিখ ও সময়ে নিম্নস্বাক্ষরকারীর কার্যালয়ে জমা দিতে হবে এবং আবেদনের খামের উপরে স্পষ্টাক্ষরে "কৃষি মন্ত্রণালয়ের ২০১৮-১৯ এবং ২০১৯-২০ অর্থ বছরে উন্নয়ন বাজেটভুক্ত মোট ৪টি সমাপ্ত প্রকল্প নিরীক্ষা ও মূল্যায়ন সংক্রান্ত "Expression of Interest (EOI)" লিখতে হবে।		

ক্রয়কারী কর্তৃপক্ষের বিখ্যারিত তথ্য	
১৩.	আগ্রহব্যক্তকরণ প্রস্তাব গ্রহণের স্থান
১৪.	আগ্রহব্যক্তকরণ/দরপত্র আহ্বানকারী কর্মকর্তার নাম
১৫.	আগ্রহব্যক্তকরণ/দরপত্র আহ্বানকারী কর্মকর্তার পদবী
১৬.	আগ্রহব্যক্তকরণ আহ্বানকারীর ঠিকানা
১৭.	আগ্রহব্যক্তকরণ আহ্বানকারীর সাথে যোগাযোগের ঠিকানা
১৮.	কর্তৃপক্ষ কোন প্রকার কারণ দর্শানো ছাড়াই যে কোন বা সকল আগ্রহব্যক্তকরণ পত্র গ্রহণ/বাতিল করার ক্ষমতা সংরক্ষণ করেন।

২৩/০২/২০২১

(ব্রুন সাহা)
সহকারী সচিব
ফোন-৯৫৪৯৬০৭
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