

SEARCH FOR INDONESIAN SUBMARINE

Desperate search on against time

REUTERS, Banyuwangi

Rescue teams were battling against time yesterday to find a missing Indonesian Navy submarine lost in the Bali Sea with 53 crew, which would be running out of oxygen if not already crushed by water pressure.

Search helicopters and more ships left Bali and a naval base in Java heading to the area where contact was lost with the 44-year-old KRI Nanggala-402 on Wednesday as it prepared to conduct a torpedo drill, with the head of the Indonesian submarine fleet aboard.

If the submarine was still intact, officials said it would only have enough air to last until around dawn today.

"So far we haven't found it... but with the equipment available we should be able to find the location," a spokesman for the Indonesian military, told a news conference.

An Indonesian air force pilot said six tonnes of equipment had been flown to a base to help with the search including underwater balloons to help lift a vessel.

An object with "high magnetic force" had been spotted "floating" at a depth of 50-100 metres, Indonesian Navy Chief of Staff Yudo Margono said, and an aerial search had earlier spotted an oil spill near the submarine's last location.

The diesel-electric powered submarine could withstand a depth of up to 500 metres (1,640 ft) but anything more could be fatal, Navy spokesman Julius Widjojo said. The Bali Sea can reach depths of more than 1,500 metres.

The submarine joined the Indonesian fleet in 1981, the defence ministry said, and underwent a refit in South Korea completed in 2012. It was said to be in good condition. Indonesia operates five submarines - two German-built Type 209s including Nanggala and three newer South Korean vessels.

Australia, India, Malaysia, Singapore and the United States have sent specialised ships or aircraft in response to Indonesian requests for assistance.



People bring bodies of the victims who died due to the Covid-19 for cremation at a crematorium ground in New Delhi, India, yesterday. Inset, A non-governmental organisation (NGO) volunteer urges people in a market to wear facemasks as part of an awareness drive against the spread of coronavirus in Siliguri.

PHOTO: REUTERS, AFP



NEWS IN BRIEF

Over 120 wounded in east Jerusalem clashes

Over 100 Palestinians and 20 Israeli police were wounded in overnight clashes in annexed east Jerusalem, authorities said yesterday, as tensions mount over a ban on gatherings and videos of attacks on youths. The violence flared outside one of the entrances to the walled Old City, after police had barred access to some areas where Palestinians usually gather in large numbers during the Muslim fasting month of Ramadan. Tensions were fuelled by the arrival of far-right Jews at the end of a march during which they harassed Palestinians and chanted "death to Arabs". Tensions have been high in Jerusalem after a series of videos posted online in recent days showing young Arabs attacking ultra-Orthodox Jews and Jewish extremists taking to the street to bully Arabs in nightly confrontations.

Norway offers mRNA vaccines as second dose to AZ receivers

Norway will offer those who have received a dose of the AstraZeneca vaccine against Covid-19 to take an injection from an mRNA vaccine as their second dose, the health ministry said yesterday. Norway on March 11 suspended the rollout of the AstraZeneca vaccine after a small number of younger people were hospitalised for a combination of blood clots, bleeding and a low count of platelets, some of whom later died. It is now awaiting a report from a government-appointed commission due on May 10 on whether to resume its rollout. The country, in the meantime, has offered second doses from the vaccines developed by Pfizer and BioNTech and Moderna to those who received the AstraZeneca shot as first dose. Norway becomes the latest country to mix vaccines, together with Denmark, Finland, France and Germany.

China fumes after UK MPs pass Uyghur 'genocide' bill

Beijing yesterday criticised British MPs after they approved a symbolic parliamentary motion declaring that Uyghur Muslims in China's Xinjiang region were "suffering crimes against humanity and genocide", calling the accusations a "big lie". The Chinese government responded by saying that "the so-called genocide in Xinjiang is a big lie concocted by international anti-China forces. The British government has said it is committed to taking robust action in respect of Xinjiang," but has stopped short of invoking the term "genocide", arguing only UK courts can make that legal definition. Before UK parliament, Holland, Canada and the US have already recognised the treatment of Uyghurs by China as "genocide".

SOURCE: AFP, REUTERS

No progress yet in trial of murder case

FROM PAGE 12

On July 18, 2016, the Dhaka District and Sessions Judge's Court framed charges against the 41 accused, including Sohel Rana, also a former Jubo League leader in Savar, in the case.

After the indictment, the court ordered the complainant and several other prosecution witnesses to appear before it to make depositions, said Additional Public Prosecutor Md Mizanur Rahman.

Soon after the charge framing, eight of the accused, including then Savar municipality mayor Refayet Ullah and ward councillor Mohammad Ali Khan, moved the High Court to secure stay orders on the trial proceedings, the lawyer told The Daily Star.

As a result, the trial court could not record their statements.

Mizanur said the HC later vacated the stay orders issued against the petitions of six accused after the public prosecutor wrote to the then attorney general to take steps to vacate the stay orders.

The HC, however, extended stay orders in favour of Refayet and Mohammad Ali, and the orders remain in force till now, the state lawyer said.

Of the 41 accused, only Sohel Rana is now behind bars, while 31 are on bail. Three of the accused have died in the meantime and the rest are still on the run.

On August 29 of 2017, Sohel Rana

At least 130 migrants feared drowned in Mediterranean

REUTERS, Milan

A search in the Mediterranean Sea for boats packed with migrants has found ten bodies floating near a capsized rubber boat that was believed to have been carrying 130 people, the French humanitarian organisation SOS Mediterranee said.

Another wooden boat was still missing with about 40 migrants aboard, a spokesman for SOS Mediterranee said yesterday.

The civil hotline Alarm Phone had reported three boats were in distress on Wednesday, prompting SOS Mediterranee to launch a search "in very rough seas, with up to 6-metre waves", the non-government organisation said in a news release issued earlier.

Three merchant vessels helped the charity's own rescue ship Ocean Viking search for the boats in international waters, northeast of the Libyan city of Tripoli.

SOS Mediterranee said merchant ship MY ROSE found three bodies in the water and an airplane of EU border agency Frontex spotted the rubber boat soon after.

When Ocean Viking arrived on the scene it did not find any survivors but there were ten bodies in the water nearby. The statement issued on Twitter carried



a photograph of a capsized black rubber boat.

A spokesman for the NGO said he had no information on the third boat that Alarm Phone had said was in distress.

Conflict-ridden Libya is a major route for migrants seeking to reach Europe. The French NGO said more than 350 people have died this year in the Central Mediterranean making the perilous voyage.

The UN's International Organization for Migration (IOM) said in a report at the end of March that last year more than 2,200 people perished at sea.

The true toll is probably far higher as aid groups reported at least five "invisible shipwrecks" that were never confirmed as they left no survivors.

Shut borders with India

FROM PAGE 1

that has made it the world's second worst Covid-hit country, surpassing Brazil, after the US.

India has reported more than 14.5 million Covid-19 cases so far and more than 175,600 fatalities.

The new variant, called B.1.617, was initially detected in India with two mutations -- the E484Q and L452R. It was first reported late last year by a scientist in India and more details were presented before the WHO recently.

Viruses mutate all the time, as part of evolutionary biology. Some mutations weaken the virus while others may make it stronger, enabling it to proliferate faster or cause more infections.

India's health ministry first acknowledged the presence of a "double mutant" virus at the end of March.

Reuters reported that India reported the world's highest daily tally of coronavirus infections for a second day yesterday, surpassing 330,000 new cases, as it struggles with a health system overwhelmed by patients.

Deaths in the past 24 hours also jumped to a record 2,263, the health ministry said, while officials across northern and western India, including the capital, New Delhi, warned most hospitals were full and running out of oxygen, it added.

The double mutation has been found in several countries like Australia, Belgium, Germany, Ireland, Namibia, New Zealand, Singapore, the UK and the

US, according to an April 16 statement from the Indian government. "Higher transmissibility of this variant has not been established yet," it said.

Meanwhile, officials of the health directorate in Bangladesh made similar suggestions to the government about imposing restrictions on the borders.

Dr ABM Khurshid Alam, director general of the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS), said, "We have sent our recommendations to the ministries concerned of the government. To avoid any further disaster, the borders with India should be closed now."

However, the decision must come from the government's high-ups, he said.

DGHS sources said 610 people entered Bangladesh from India through the Benapole border yesterday.

When asked whether such a double mutant was found in the country, Mushtaq Hossain, an adviser to the Institute of Epidemiology, Disease Control and Research (IEDCR), said, "It is not unlikely as people cross the border frequently. But we have to stress on genome sequencing."

The noted epidemiologist said genome sequencing should be done rigorously to see which variants were behind the recent surge in Covid cases.

Iqbal Arsalan, another member of the NTAC, said the government should take strict measures to guard against the "Indian variant".

He also said the meeting on Tuesday also discussed ways of finding alternative sources of vaccine.

China initiates platform

FROM PAGE 2

Serum, including 3.2 million doses as a gift from the Indian government, but the export ban put the delivery of expected doses under a deal for 30 million shots in uncertainty. The current stock of vaccines may diminish by mid-May.

Bangladesh is trying to import vaccines from different sources. China said it would send six lakh doses of vaccines to Bangladesh as gifts and necessary documents have already been finalised on this.

China wanted that some 15,000 Chinese citizens in Bangladesh are inoculated with the Chinese vaccines.

"During the ministerial meeting of the China-led initiative, we will seek Chinese cooperation on co-production of vaccines in Bangladesh," the foreign ministry official told this correspondent.

He said Bangladesh has several companies that are capable of manufacturing vaccines.

Bangladesh had earlier backed off from buying the Chinese and Russian vaccines because they did not have the approval of the World Health Organization.

Last year, Bangladesh was in a fix over conducting a third stage trial of the vaccine developed by a Chinese company -- Sinovac Research and Development Co Ltd.

Later, when Bangladesh wanted the trial to be conducted, Sinovac asked for co-funding the trials but then Bangladesh the proposal.

Meanwhile, Bangladesh and Russia recently reached an understanding on the co-production of Sputnik V vaccine in Bangladesh on the condition that the technology will be kept confidential.

The vaccines developed in Bangladesh can also be exported to a third country.

"Russia wanted the joint production because it doesn't have the capacity to produce enough doses to fulfill Bangladesh's need," Momen said.

Asean to press junta to end violence, allow aid

China hopes summit may pave way for 'soft landing'

REUTERS

Southeast Asian leaders will try to persuade Myanmar's junta to end violence and let in aid at a summit today, diplomats said, in the first concerted international effort to ease the crisis in the country.

Leaders will meet behind closed doors at the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean) summit in Jakarta, Indonesia, in the hope of encouraging candid discussions, two diplomatic sources told Reuters.

Senior General Min Aung Hlaing, Myanmar's junta chief who ousted the civilian government on Feb. 1, is likely to attend, officials and diplomats in the host nation have said.

The Southeast Asian country has been in crisis since the February coup, with almost daily protests and a crackdown by the junta in which hundreds of people have been killed.

Initiatives being considered by Asean include a pause in violence to allow medical and food supplies into Myanmar, and the appointment of a special envoy to encourage dialogue between the military regime and its opponents in the rival National Unity Government (NUG), the sources said.

No nations outside of Asean will be

present at the talks, although some of the participating nations and the UN special envoy on Myanmar, Christine Schraner Burgener, will hold meetings on the sidelines of the event, they added.

A spokesman for the NUG, formed by ousted lawmakers and some ethnic groups opposed to the junta, told Reuters the group had "been in contact with Asean leaders", but had not been officially invited to the summit.

Asean's members include Myanmar, Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam. All leaders of the block, except the Philippines president Rodrigo Duterte, will attend the meeting.

The junta has called the NUG an unlawful organisation.

Ahead of the meeting, senior Chinese diplomat Wang Yi said on Thursday that China hoped the upcoming summit would pave the way for a "soft landing".

"The Chinese side expects the meeting to lead to a good start towards helping realise a 'soft landing' for the Myanmar situation," said Wang, China's State Councillor and Foreign Minister.

He was speaking with Thailand and Brunei's foreign ministers, the current and incoming Asean chairs, respectively.



মাইক্রোক্রেডিট রেগুলেটরী অথরিটি
 গুলশেণা প্রাজা (৭ম তলা)
 ৮ শহীদ সাংবাদিক সেলিনা পারভীন সড়ক
 বড় মগবাজার, রমনা, ঢাকা-১২১৭।
 স্মারক নম্বরঃ ৫৩.০৪.০০০০.০১০.৬০.০০১.২১-১০৭০ তারিখঃ ২২/০৪/২০২১

ক্ষুদ্রঋণ কার্যক্রম পরিচালনার সনদের আবেদন দাখিলের মেয়াদ পুনঃ বর্ধিতকরণ বিজ্ঞপ্তি।

ক্ষুদ্রঋণ কার্যক্রম পরিচালনার সনদের আবেদন অনলাইনে দাখিলের জন্য ৩১/০৩/২০২১ তারিখ পর্যন্ত সময় দিয়ে মাইক্রোক্রেডিট রেগুলেটরী অথরিটি কর্তৃক ১৮/০২/২০২১ তারিখে বিজ্ঞপ্তি প্রকাশ করা হয়। পরবর্তীতে সনদের আবেদন জমা দেয়ার সময় ২৯/০৪/২০২১ তারিখ পর্যন্ত বর্ধিত করা হয়। অনিবার্য কারণে সনদের আবেদন জমা দেয়ার উক্ত সময় আগামী ৩০ মে, ২০২১ তারিখ পর্যন্ত পুনরায় বর্ধিত করা হলো। এছাড়া আবেদনের অন্যান্য শর্তাবলী অপরিবর্তিত থাকবে।
 উল্লেখ্য, আবেদন সংশ্লিষ্ট বিস্তারিত তথ্য অথরিটির ওয়েবসাইটে (www.mra.gov.bd) পাওয়া যাবে।

জিডি-৮১৩ এলেকট্রনিক ডাটাইন-চেয়ারম্যান

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
 Ministry of Road Transport and Bridges
 Bangladesh Bridge Authority
 Setu Bhaban, Banani, Dhaka-1212
www.bba.gov.bd
 Memo No: 50.01.0000.408.33.007.20-61 Date: 22/04/2021

Corrigendum Notice (3rd)

It is hereby notified to all concern that the Invitation for Tender (IFT) for "Supply, Installation, Testing, Commissioning, and Maintenance of Low-Speed Weigh in Motion (LSWIM) Scales" invited vide memo 50.01.0000.408.33.007.20-18 date: 25 January 2021. Then, Corrigendum Notice (1st) and Corrigendum Notice (2nd) were also published. Now, for necessity due to COVID-19, Tender selling, closing and opening date as per published Corrigendum Notice (2nd) are changed vide this Corrigendum Notice (3rd) as following:

| Ref. (IFT) | Descriptions | As per published IFT Original date | As per published Corrigendum Notice (2nd) | Amended as per Corrigendum Notice (3rd) |
|------------|--------------------------|------------------------------------|---|---|
| 17 | Tender Last Selling Date | 23/03/2021, Office Hour | 28/04/2021, Office Hour | 20/05/2021, Office Hour |
| 18 | Tender Closing Date | 24/03/2021, 12.00 Noon | 29/04/2021, 12.00 Noon | 23/05/2021, 12.00 Noon |
| 19 | Tender Opening Date | 24/03/2021, 3.30 PM | 29/04/2021, 3.30 PM | 23/05/2021, 3.30 PM |

All others terms and condition will remain unchanged. This 3rd corrigendum is an integral part of IFT which was published vide 50.01.0000.408.33.007.20-18 date: 25 January 2021.

(Quazi Muhammad Ferdous)
 Chief Engineer
 Ph: 02-55040313
 E-mail: chiefengineer@bba.gov.bd

GD-814