Rohingya man

Police recovered the body from the camp around 1:00am and sent it to Cox's Bazar District Sadar Hospital for an autopsy.

Tarikul Islam, captain of Armed Police Battalion-16 in Cox's Bazar, said Shaker was killed over longstanding enmity with his rivals.

He said they arrested 10 people in connection with the killing. Md Hafizur Rahman, officer-in-

charge of Teknaf Police Station, said a relative of Shaker filed a murder case with the police station.

Later yesterday, a local court sent the arrestees to jail after they were produced before it, the OC added. The body was handed over to Shaker's

BSF shoots

According to a member of a local cow smuggling racket, around 12 Bangladeshi people intruded into India to fetch cows. On their way back, they encountered members of the Kaimari BSF camp in India's Cooch Behar district.

The BSF opened fire and shot both Subal and Saddam. Subal died on the spot whereas Saddam managed to flee the scene with a bullet wound,

Contacted, Subedar Farid Hossain, commander of Lohakuchi camp of Lalmonirhat 15 BGB Battalion, said that one person was killed in the BSF firing but it was not yet confirmed whether the victim was Bangladeshi.

The incident took place at the Mahishtuli Baroghari border between the main pillars 920 and 921. The body was taken away by patrolling BSF members of Kaimari camp under Cooch Behar 75 BSF Battalion in India, he added.

"The BSF has not yet officially informed us. No one has claimed the body from us yet," he further said, adding, "Necessary steps will be taken only after the identity of the deceased

Jamiat Ulama

would not contest three by-elections. Besides, the BNP secretary general recently said he does not believe in "Sharia law" which is not supported

Jamiat also said BNP did not stage protests during the recent "nationwide oppression and arrest of Ulema".

The BNP also did not express sympathy following the death of Noor Hossain Kasemi, a top leader of Jamiat and the alliance. The BNP even did not participate in his namz-ejanaza, which caused anger among the Jamiat grassroots, the statement said.

"Therefore, Jamiat thinks that withdrawing support from the 20-party alliance is beneficial for the organisation," it added.

Jamiat vice presidents Ubaidullah Farooq and Abdul Basir, acting secretary general Bahauddin Zakaria, among others, were present at yesterday's meeting, with acting president Zia Uddin in the chair.

Sources at Jamiat told The Daily Star that the party was under pressure from the government to quit the 20-party alliance following the recent government crackdown on Hefajat-e Islam leaders, many of whom are from Jamiat. Quitting the alliance was set as a pre-condition by the government for the release of Jamiat leaders and activists.

Yesterday, Jamiat also demanded the government withdraw all cases filed against its leaders and activists following the countrywide violent protests over Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Bangladesh on March 25.

Meanwhile, BNP standing committee member Nazrul İslam Khan yesterday alleged that Jamiat was forced to quit the 20-party combine following its recent meeting with Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan.

Nazrul was talking to the media about the exit of Jamiat from the

After holding a meeting with the minister on July 5, top Hefajat leaders demanded the government release its "innocent" leaders and activists arrested across the country since March 25.

The government took a tough stance against Hefajat following its three-day violent activities from March 25 over Modi's trip to Bangladesh. The violence left at least 17 people dead and many injured.

Hefajat, a Qawmi madrasabased platform of different Islamist organisations, has been under huge pressure from the government to restructure its central committee since the March violence, sources said.

At least 154 cases were filed against Hefajat men and around 1,230 people, including more than 50 top Hefajat leaders, were arrested following the violence, according to

After the recent crackdown on Hefajat, some of its leaders started trying to reach an understanding with the government to avoiding "arrest

and harassment". Hefajat's previous central

committee was disbanded on April 25. On June 8, Hefajat General Secretay Nurul Islam Jihadi named a 33-member new central committee of the organisation, a 16-member advisory committee and another committee called Majlish-e-Sura comprising nine members.

Buy 20m doses of Sputnik V

during the meeting with the foreign minister, the foreign secretary, and the director general of DGHS. That meeting was satisfactory. They had expressed interest in the proposal." Contacted, DGHS DG Prof

Khurshid Alam said, "I don't know about it. I don't have any information in this regard.' Zafrullah said Russian Direct

Investment Fund (RDIF) appointed LLC MEBTEX as the distributor of Sputnik V vaccine and the latter appointed Gonoshasthaya Nagar Hospital the sole distributor in Bangladesh.

'We have attached relevant documents along with our letters. We did not communicate with the Russian company for the partnership. They were the ones who approached us," said Zafrullah.

Asked why the Russian firm contacted GSK instead of the government, he said, "When RDIF wants to have a partnership with a

country's government through a nongovernment agent. This is why they contacted GSK. But I do not know why they particularly contacted me."

He said RDIF had also contacted him for research collaboration a year ago. "At that time, I did not see any interest from the relevant ministries and departments of the government. So, I suggested they contact the government directly. Recently, they have communicated with us again after the Sputnik V vaccine was approved in Bangladesh.

The GSK founder said on the basis of his long-time connection with the Russian Communist Party, RDIF perhaps researched GSK and thought that GSK would be a reliable partner.

"Perhaps, they also know about our work. That is why they reached out to me. I've notified the government about the communication as Bangladesh desperately needs vaccines at this moment.

Asked how long it will take to get the vaccines if a contract is signed, he country, they communicate with the said they would be able to deliver 10

million doses of vaccine within two to three weeks.

Another 10 million doses will be delivered within a month. Every day half a million doses of vaccine will reach Bangladesh in chartered flights, he added.

Zafrullah said although each dose would cost \$8, it is possible to negotiate the price in the future. "If our government takes a quick Russia will also be decision, interested in assisting Bangladesh in vaccine production. However, if the government takes time, it will be difficult to get the vaccine at this rate due to increasing demands of vaccines all over the world.

"Also, it will not be possible to ensure quick delivery of vaccines," he

Queried about GSK's profit from being the distributor, he said, "I do not have any personal gains here. Gonoshasthaya Kendra will have some monetary profits. And if Gonoshasthaya Kendra can make some profit it will also be beneficial

for the poor people of our country as it works for the wellbeing of the poor.

"But the country and its people will be the most benefited."

He further said, "Compared to the Chinese vaccines, each shot of the Russian vaccine will save \$2. If the government doesn't want to save the public money, we have nothing to say. We need tens of millions of vaccines within a short time, but we are purchasing much less than what is required. We cannot continue mass vaccination this way.

When his attention was drawn to the joint production of vaccines in Bangladesh, Zafrullah said, "Of course we can jointly produce vaccines in Bangladesh. If I am given the responsibility, I shall be able to get authorisation for joint production of Russian vaccines in Bangladesh."

But the decision must come from the government side, he said, adding, "We have written to the government time and again, but it has not even cared to reply.

Explore 'Bengal Tiger' market!

be diversified, both within the sector and by looking at other trade opportunities. Take agriculture - seventy percent of Bangladesh's economy is agriculture. In terms upgrading value chains in agriculture, we're mapping certain Bangladeshi and Dutch companies and bringing them together so they can build strong partnerships. We focus on "niche" high-end quality in poultry, horticulture, dairy and food processing -- sectors where there is a lot of trade potential.

There's a lot to encourage in our bilateral relationship. Improving quality and food safety are essential for international trade. High potential sectors include pharmaceuticals, digital economy and ICT. We're keen on cooperating in "moving up the value chain", not only for your largest export market, the EU, but also for the rapidly expanding domestic market. The Netherlands seeks to advance in the maritime sector. Exporting highend ships, dredgers, but also inland transport ships and assistance in port development are fields where we're able to offer innovative, quality solutions.

DS: What potential do you see in Bangladesh's maritime sector? Harry: Bangladesh is in a highly relevant geo-strategic position. It could

develop further as a regional transit hub by expanding the Chattogram, Payra and Matarbari ports. And don't forget inland waterways -- that's where I hope the Netherlands could expand its investments. Look at the Rotterdam port; it's Europe's most significant goods transit hub. Bangladesh can also transport goods to that scale. There is scope for that sort of development, including railways and all transport from Chattogram to Dhaka happens by road, which is This can be reversed by developing

and waterways can connect the whole region, including India, Nepal and Bhutan. It could change the face of the region.

Right now, Bangladesh's business climate doesn't yet attract large numbers of European and Dutch companies. The key for Dutch success in Bangladesh is having a fully trusted partner here for Dutch companies. If found, it will be a strong indicator for smooth operations and success. A number of joint ventures have already been operational here for a long time. We're trying to expand the maritime industry in Bangladesh and seeking similar joint ventures with Bangladeshi entities. Some of our companies are eyeing government contracts for dredging and ship-building.

DS: What challenges do you see from Dutch companies' perspectives? Harry: Honestly, people don't know

much about this country. My motto on our bilateral relationship was: expand, brand and stand! Branding Bangladesh in Europe was what I considered one of my major roles. Regretfully, Bangladesh is in the lower strata of the 190 countries in the World Bank's Ease of Doing Business Index, so low that you almost cannot believe it. If you come in as a foreign company, it takes, a long time to register your company. It can be difficult to repatriate profits. I don't have answers, but I do observe that the government is working hard to change these conditions. Institutions and agencies need to work faster and be more accommodating to foreign trade and investment. I'm happy that branding Bangladesh is being taken up more professionally. With swift reforms to the business climate, better branding will help improve Bangladesh's position in the indexes. inland waterways. Presently, almost I'd say look to other countries, like Vietnam and Turkey, as examples.

Education is important. Young costly and causes traffic congestion. professionals and academics will need to meet local and global demand environmentally friendly, cheaper, in the labour market. Further skills more efficient transportation. Seaports development is called for. I've been

privileged to meet a huge number of talented, entrepreneurial and energetic young Bangladeshis. They'll inspirational figures to help improve the country's marketplace, image, and economy.

DS: What would you tell Dutch companies about Bangladesh at this stage?

Harry: Explore this growing "Bengal Tiger" market! Come to Bangladesh, find your place here, interact with its entrepreneurs, meet the youth and learn what's great about this country. Transition is taking place, as the middle class is rapidly expanding and the economy is growing. I'm positive about the economic opportunities Bangladesh offers. There is usually a good return on investment and a strong entrepreneurial spirit. That's what we, the Dutch, like. The time to move is now. Bangladesh will soon leave the LDC-group, so early movers will have an advantage

DS: The Netherlands helped formulate the Delta Plan for Bangladesh. Tell us

Harry: The Bangladesh Delta Plan is key in our cooperation. We're working extensively with Bangladesh to advance implementation not only in concrete projects and investments but also in knowledge gaps and financing modalities. Bangladesh is on the verge of starting true implementation of a \$40 billion investment plan that accompanies the Delta Plan. We are supporting a large Jamuna River engineering project where we'll be contributing \$18 million.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina is a strong supporter of the plan. Collectively, the Netherlands thinks that its implementation is an important way forward to protect the country and its people, and will increase climate resilience and enhance livelihoods. It's not only about infrastructure, but complex which I found extremely appealing management and integration -- a combination of agriculture, business,

infrastructure and innovation. We're organizing the first Delta and I will carry.

Conference with the Bangladesh government this year. DS: What can we expect from the

Delta Conference? Harry: Major stakeholders from

Bangladeshi ministries, universities, and civil society groups will come together with development partners like the World Bank, ADB, IMF and JICA. Investment priorities will be discussed related to hot spots like rivers, coastal zones, and urban areas. Strategies will be set out to materialise priorities in the coming decade. Regarding financing infrastructure investments, it's important to involve the private sector since 20% of the Delta Plan investments is expected to come from there. The Delta Plan is holistic, focusing on agriculture, transport, livelihoods, water, and economics. Approaching these issues in an integrated way is a challenge we continue to discuss with the government.

DS: What memories do you carry home as you leave Bangladesh? Harry: There are too many warm

memories to mention but I'd like to underline Bangladesh's cultural aspects. It's an unexplored part of this wonderful society in Europe. I've seen examples like the Durjoy Bangladesh Foundation supporting an artist in residency at the Amsterdam Rijksakademie art school. That's great. People will learn more about Bangladesh culture. The festivals like kite flying, Dhaka Lit Fest, the Dhaka Art Summit are such engaging events that I've experienced. I've been to many art and music festivals. Private investments in the arts by Square Group, the Samdani Art Foundation, Edge Gallery and many others, have an important impact on expanding Bangladeshi culture abroad. Music, Tagore poetry, literature, visual arts, are so ingrained in Bangladesh's culture, and has amazed us continuously. It's been a warm, welcoming and a cultural experience that my wife Akkie

Covid-19. The United Nations in

South Africa expressed concern that

disruptions to transport for workers

from the riots would also exacerbate

month lows, a retreat for what had been one of the best performing

emerging market currencies during

SAPREF in Durban has been

temporarily shut down, an industry

municipality that includes Durban,

estimated that 15 billion rand (\$1

billion) had been lost in damage to

property and another billion in loss

Some 40,000 businesses had been

South Africa's largest refinery

The mayor of Ethekwini, the

The rand is hovering around three-

the problems.

the pandemic.

of stock.

official said yesterday.

Teen raped FROM PAGE 12

was not plying due to the countywide lockdown. When she was looking for a bus ticket, the accused were following her. Later, the accused told her that if she wanted to go to Dhaka, she could go in a microbus.

Before starting the journey, the accused asked her to finish her toilet. The accused then took her to an abandoned house and Lal Mia raped her. Later, locals rescued the girl after hearing her screams and sent her home, the police officer added.

Medical tests of the victim were completed yesterday, said Mahfuzur Rahman, officer-in-charge of Gaibandha Sadar Police Station, adding that they were trying to arrest the accused.

S'pore unveils

The prosperous financial hub has turned to setting up plants off its coasts and in reservoirs, and aims to quadruple solar energy production by 2025.

The new farm can produce up to 60 megawatts of electricity, and will lead to carbon emissions reductions equivalent to removing 7,000 cars from roads, according to Sembcorp Industries and national water agency PUB.

Sembcorp built the project, which covers about 45 hectares (110 acres), with backing from the agency.

"Solar energy is plentiful, clean and green, and is key to reducing PUB's and also Singapore's carbon footprint," said the water agency's chief executive Ng Joo Hee.

Singapore has also built a solar farm in the Johor Strait, which separates the island state from Malaysia, as well as plants on land.

The government in February unveiled a "green plan" that included steps such as planting trees, reducing waste sent to landfills and building more charging points to encourage electric car use.

Singapore has pledged to achieve net-zero emissions "as soon as viable" in the second half of the century.

Pilots say

FROM PAGE 12

problem by July 30 and if the lockdown is relaxed from July 15, all pilots will be consulted and from July 30, 2021, they will operate the flight only in accordance with the bilateral agreement between Biman and Bapa, he added.

The committee, however, said pilots will always be ready to carry any medical equipment, medicine and vaccine during this pandemic time.

The Biman authorities decided to cut the salaries of pilots to reduce the cost of Biman during the pandemic, which irked the pilots. The Bapa, an organisation of pilots

of the national flag carrier, sent a letter to Biman's director of flight operations on Monday. Mahbubur said the decision to reduce the salaries of others Biman

employees to minimise the cost during the pandemic time has been overturned. In the letter, the Bapa said since the pandemic broke out, the pilots have done their duties with utmost

sincerity and dedication like any other "We have operated shuttle flights to many destinations. We have performed our duties beyond our working hours. Sadly, there was no

recognition at all," the Bapa said in the letter. The pilot's organisation added that nstead of getting appreciation, they

learnt that the Biman management had backtracked on its decision of cutting the salaries of all employees, except the pilots. "The pilot community of Biman is

utterly shocked and frustrated hearing this, as we, being the frontliners in Biman, worked relentlessly during the pandemic amidst fear of being infected and infecting our family members ... ," reads the letter. The Bapa president said in the

last one year, 25 pilots were infected. Several pilots are still in hospitals with Covid. Entire families of eight pilots contracted coronavirus. The Biman administration on

Tuesday withdrew the decision to reduce (by 10 percent) the salaries of all officers and employees of Biman, which will come into effect from July. But cockpit crew (pilots) with 5

years or less in service would get 15 percent pay cut. Those five-10 years in the job would 20 percent cut and those above 10 years a 40 percent pay

Several pilots told The Daily Star that there are examples in Biman that salaries of some officials have increased during the pandemic.

"This is injustice, discriminatory and humiliating," said a senior pilot. The pilots said the authorities did not even bother to discuss before making such a decision.

Asked, Abu Saleh Mostafa Kamal, managing director and CEO of Biman, said the Bapa was yet to inform them about their decision.

A top official in Biman said Bapa cannot make any such decisions as their service has been declared emergency. Wishing anonymity, he added

that pilots who are operating aircraft during this pandemic will get outstation allowance as per the rules.

Sources said a senior pilot now gets Tk 3.48 lakh which was Tk 8.61 lakh before the pandemic.

Death toll in S Africa now 72

The violence appeared to have abated in some areas yesterday, but in others, there was renewed burning and

Citizens armed with guns, many from South Africa's white minority, blocked off streets to prevent further plundering, Reuters TV footage showed. One man shouted at a group gathered at a street corner: "Go home and protect your homes".

Other residents crowded outside supermarkets waiting for them to open so they could stock up on essentials.

Some rich Durban residents chartered small planes and helicopters out of the city, a Reuters photographer reported. Others queued for food and fuel. Many roads out of the city were blocked either by people looting or vigilantes.

FOOD SITUATION IN EAST

Joseph Farland, US ambassador to

Pakistan, called on Pakistan President

Yahya Khan today in Rawalpindi. He

expressed serious concerns about

possibility of a famine developing in

rice production and food gap, the

US ambassador stated that unless

heroic efforts were made, famine

conditions would likely prevail.

He also pointed out that if famine

conditions developed, people would

sustain further widespread suffering,

the Pakistan government would face

Referring to USAID's estimates of

Earlier, several shops were being HOSPITALS DISRUPTED looted in the town of Hammarsdale, KwaZulu-Natal.

Plumes of black smoke rose from a burning warehouse in Durban, while nearby people loaded up with goods scattered on the roadside.

Alexandra township Johannesburg yesterday, one of the city's poorest neighbourhoods, a Reuters correspondent saw soldiers moving door to door to confiscate stolen items, with the help of civilians

opposed to the looting. In Soweto, eNCA television footage showed civilians alongside police protecting malls that were yet to be hit by rioters.

Overnight the chaos spread to two other provinces - Mpumalanga, just east of Gauteng, and Northern Cape, police said.

problem, and substantial new exodus

Pakistan government had been

reluctant to admit possibility of

famine and consequently problems of

food and transport had not been dealt

the Ryan report (a survey of the East

Pakistan port and shipping situation

prepared in June 1971 by Joseph A Ryan

of the US Department of Agriculture

at the request of Pakistan), and from

it and his own government's sources

of information he was considerably

Yahya said he had carefully studied

Farland emphasised that the

of refugees might occur.

with sufficient urgency.

The unrest also disrupted hospitals

struggling to cope with a third wave of Covid-19.

The National Hospital Network (NHN), representing 241 public hospitals already under strain from Africa's worst Covid-19 epidemic, said it was running out of oxygen and drugs, most of which are imported through Durban, as well as food.

"The impact of the looting and destruction is having dire consequences on hospitals," the NHN

Staff in affected areas were unable to get to work, it said, worsening shortages caused by the pandemic. The poverty and inequality fuelling

the violence has been compounded severe social and economic restrictions aimed at curbing

Military victory the only solution: Tajuddin

He said as a result of Farland's

suggestion to him that a "food czar"

should be appointed, a suggestion

reflected in the Ryan report, he had as

of yesterday appointed the former head

of the Chittagong Port Authority, retired

commodore Bajwa, as his personal

representative with superior powers to

his concern for East Pakistan and the

multitude of issues that it presented,

he would be going over to Dhaka

HOUSE GROUP BIDS HALT TO US

Yahva further said as a result of

act for alleviation of the problem.

within the next two weeks.

by the food situation.

additional major public relations concerned by the problem presented AID TO PAKISTAN

hit by the unrest, he said.

The US House Foreign Affairs Committee voted today in favour of proposals to withhold military and economic assistance from Pakistan.

The proposal regarding Pakistan would cut off United States funds until East Pakistani refugees return to their homes and "reasonable stability" is achieved in the country.

It was the first concrete move by the US Congress to try to utilise America's foreign aid leverage against the Pakistan government.

Shamsuddoza Sajen is a journalist and researcher. He can be contacted at sajen1986@gmail.com

Final death toll in China hotel collapse put at 17

AFP, Shanghai

FROM PAGE 12

East Pakistan.

PAKISTAN

Nine more people have been confirmed dead in the collapse of a budget hotel in eastern China, bringing the final toll to 17, as state media yesterday announced the end of search and recovery efforts.

Six others were earlier rescued from the rubble of the Siji Kaiyuan hotel, which crumbled in a heap of shattered concrete and bent metal beams two days earlier in the picturesque city of Suzhou.

All of those rescued were in stable condition, state-run television said.

of people linked to the hotel had been detained and an investigation into the cause of the disaster was under way. The hotel opened in 2018 and had

on the travel site Ctrip. Suzhou, a city of more than 12 standards or corruption.

popular destination for tourists drawn to its canals and centuries-old gardens. Building collapses or accidents

54 guest rooms, according to its listing are not uncommon in China and are often blamed on lax construction

It added that an unspecified number million people roughly 100 kilometres (60 miles) west of Shanghai, is a

Police Headquarters data.