Rohingya man

sources told The Daily Star.

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-incharge 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 relatives

BSF shoots

FROM PAGE 12

accompanied him, went missing. 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, he added.

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 is confirmed."

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.

Jamiat Ulama-e FROM PAGE 12

it would not contest three parliamentary by-elections. Besides, the BNP secretary general cently said he does not believe in

Buy 20m doses of Sputnik V FROM PAGE 1

he said. Asked, he said, "We have given our proposal on purchasing the vaccine 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."

Dr 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 Dr Zafrullah.

Asked why the Russian firm contacted GSK instead of the government, he said, "When RDIF

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

There's a lot to encourage in our

bilateral relationship. Improving

quality and food safety are essential

for international trade. High potential

export market, the EU, but also for the

rapidly expanding domestic market.

The Netherlands seeks to advance in

the maritime sector. Exporting high-

end ships, dredgers, but also inland

transport ships and assistance in

port development are fields where

we're able to offer innovative, quality

DS: What potential do you see in

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

inland waterways. Presently, almost

Bangladesh's maritime sector?

pharmaceuticals,

lot of trade potential.

sectors include

solutions.

FROM PAGE 12

opportunities.

wants to have a partnership with a country, they communicate with the 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 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 the contract is signed, he said they would be able to deliver 10 million doses of vaccine within two to three weeks as per the agreement.

Another 10 million doses will be delivered within a month. Every day 500,000 doses of vaccine will reach Bangladesh through Russian chartered flights, he added.

Dr Zafrullah said although each dose would cost \$8, it is possible to negotiate the price in the future. "If our government takes a quick decision, Russia will also be 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 stated further.

Queried about GSK's profit from being the local 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, Dr 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."

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

DS: What memories do you carry

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

home as you leave Bangladesh?

government.

S'pore unveils FROM PAGE 12

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

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.

Pilots say

FROM PAGE 12

(Bapa), today [yesterday] decided that if the Biman authorities do not solve the pay disparity by July 30 and if the lockdown is relaxed from July 15, all pilots will be consulted and from July 30, 2021, the pilots 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 in the national airliner, sent a letter to Biman's director of flight operations on Monday, giving a deadline till July 30 to meet their demand.

Its President Capt Mahbubur said he decision to cut the salaries of all Biman employees to minimise the cost during the pandemic time has been withdrawn.

"But the decision to cut the salaries of pilots, who are the frontliners in Biman during the pandemic, was not withdrawn.'

In the letter, the Bapa said since the coronavirus pandemic broke out, our member pilots have done their duties with utmost sincerity and dedication ike any other time.

"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 instead of getting appreciation, they learnt the recent decision that the Biman management had withdrawn its decision of cutting the salaries of all employees except for the pilots.

"The pilot community of Biman is utterly shocked and frustrated hearing this, as we, being the frontliners, worked relentlessly during the pandemic amidst the fear of being infected us and our family members with Covid-19," reads the letter.

The Bapa said, "Considering the overall scenario and to continue our support for the national flag carrier, the executive committee would like to give concessions for flight as per regulatory approval initially till 30

The Bapa president said pilots have been operating flights with high risk during this difficult time. In the last one year, 25 pilots were infected with Covid-19. Several pilots are still in hospitals with Covid infections. He said the entire families of eight pilots contracted coronavirus. Many pilots even did not get a chance to ensure their quarantine. President Capt Mahbubur said pilots had to go abroad with a flight and carry out Covid tests with their own. But even the airline did not withdraw its decision to cut their salaries. Due to this discriminatory decision, the salary of a senior pilot has been reduced to Tk 5 lakh. It is extremely discriminatory towards them

and waterways can connect the whole region, including India, Nepal and be diversified, both within the sector and by looking at other trade Bhutan. It could change the face of Take agriculture the region. -- seventy percent of Bangladesh's Right now, Bangladesh's business climate doesn't yet attract large economy is agriculture. In terms of upgrading value chains in numbers of European and Dutch

Explore 'Bengal Tiger' market!

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.

digital economy and ICT. We're keen DS: What challenges do you see from Dutch companies' perspectives? on cooperating in "moving up the value chain", not only for your largest

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. I'd say look to other countries, like of talented, entrepreneurial and energetic young Bangladeshis. They'll inspirational figures to help be improve the country's marketplace, Bangladeshi ministries, universities,

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

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 about this.

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.

that I've experienced. I've been to Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina many art and music festivals. Private investments in the arts by Square is a strong supporter of the plan. Collectively, the Netherlands thinks Group, the Samdani Art Foundation, that its implementation is an Edge Gallery and many others, have an important impact on expanding important way forward to protect the country and its people, and Bangladeshi culture abroad. Music, will increase climate resilience and Tagore poetry, literature, visual arts, are so ingrained in Bangladesh's culture, enhance livelihoods. It's not only about infrastructure, but complex which I found extremely appealing management and integration -- a and has amazed us continuously. combination of agriculture, business, It's been a warm, welcoming and a infrastructure and innovation. cultural experience that my wife Akkie We're organizing the first Delta and I will carry.

privileged to meet a huge number Conference with the Bangladesh government this year. DS: What can we expect from the Delta Conference? Harry: Major stakeholders from

image, and economy.

stage?

'Sharia law" which is not supported by Jamiat

Jamiat also said BNP didn't stage protests during the recent "nationwide oppression and arrest of Ulema".

The BNP also didn't 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-e-janaza, 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.

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 Islam Khan yesterday alleged that Jamiat was forced to quit the 20-party combine following its recent meeting with Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan.

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

The government took a tough stance following Hefajat's three-day violence since March 25 in protest of Modi's visit to Bangladesh. The violence left at least 17 people dead and many injured.

Hefajat, a Qawmi madrasa-based platform of Islamist organisations, had been under tremendous pressure from the government to restructure its central committee since the violence in late March, sources said

At least 154 cases were filed against Hefajat men in the following days while around 1,230 people, including more than 50 top Hefajat leaders, were arrested, according to Police Headquarters data.

Hefajat's previous central committee was disbanded on April 25 amid a government crackdown on its leaders following the March violence.

On June 8, Nurul Islam Jihadi announced a 33-member new central committee of Hefajat, a 16-member advisory committee and another committee called Majlish-e-Sura comprising nine members.

all transport from Chattogram to Dhaka happens by road, which is costly and causes traffic congestion. This can be reversed by developing environmentally friendly, cheaper,

Vietnam and Turkey, as examples.

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

Death toll in S Africa now 72

FROM PAGE 12

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

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.

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

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 in In 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.

Military victory the only solution: Tajuddin

Farland emphasised that the

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

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 said.

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 by restrictions aimed at curbing

Covid-19. The United Nations in South Africa expressed concern that disruptions to transport for workers from the riots would also exacerbate the problems.

The rand is hovering around threemonth lows, a retreat for what had been one of the best performing emerging market currencies during the pandemic.

South Africa's largest refinery SAPREF in Durban has been temporarily shut down, an industry official said yesterday.

The mayor of Ethekwini, the municipality that includes Durban, estimated that 15 billion rand (\$1 billion) had been lost in damage to property and another billion in loss of stock.

Some 40,000 businesses had been hit by the unrest, he said.

He said the decision to reduce the salaries of all officers and employees of Biman had been withdrawn in an admin order. But the pilots were left

The Biman administration on Tuesday pulled out the decision, which will come into effect from July.

According to the previous order, t was decided to deduct 10 percent of the salaries of those who were in the pay scale from six to eight and 15 percent for those who were above pay scale nine.

As per the order, cockpit crews (pilots) having service age of 5 years will get 15 percent cut in their salaries, those between five and 10 years of service age 20 percent and those above 10 years 40 percent.

Several pilots told The Daily Star that there are examples in Biman that salaries of some officials have increased during the pandemic time, while the pilots would get reduced salaries.

"This is totally injustice, discriminatory and humiliation towards us," said a senior pilot.

Expressing their utter grievance, the pilots said the authorities didn't even bother to discuss us before making such a discriminatory decision.

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

A top official in Biman said the Bapa cannot take 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. But the others will not get that benefit.

State Minister for Civil Aviation M Mahbub Ali recently told the media that due to a curtailment of salary, a senior pilot now gets Tk 3.48 lakh which was Tk 8.61 lakh before the pandemic.

Final death toll in China hotel collapse put at 17

AFP, Shanghai

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.

It added that an unspecified number million people roughly 100 kilometres 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.

(60 miles) west of Shanghai, is a 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

East Pakistan. Referring to USAID's estimates of rice production and food gap, the

FROM PAGE 12

PAKISTAN

FOOD SITUATION IN EAST

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 additional major public relations concerned by the problem presented problem, and substantial new exodus by the food situation.

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 act for alleviation of the problem.

Yahya further said as a result of his concern for East Pakistan and the multitude of issues that it presented, he would be going over to Dhaka within the next two weeks. HOUSE GROUP BIDS HALT TO US

AID TO PAKISTAN

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.

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