

Imran Khan's arrest warrant suspended

AFP, Lahore

An arrest warrant for former Pakistan prime minister Imran Khan was suspended yesterday, his lawyers said, clearing the way for him to end a holdout at his residence that led to bloody clashes between supporters and police earlier this week.

Khan was ousted by a no-confidence vote last year and has been snarled in dozens of legal cases as he campaigns for early elections and a return to office.

The warrant relates to his non-appearance in an Islamabad court to answer a case brought by the Election Commission of Pakistan accusing him of not declaring gifts received during his time as premier, or the profit made from selling them.

Attempts by police this week to arrest the 70-year-old former international cricket star in the eastern city of Lahore led to pitched battles with supporters outside his home.

After a day of legal wrangling in courts in both cities yesterday, the arrest warrant was suspended.

"The Islamabad High Court has suspended non-bailable arrest warrant," said Faisal Chaudhry, a senior member of Khan's legal team. "Now Imran will appear in the court tomorrow," he told AFP.

After the warrant was lifted, Khan left his home for the first time in days to appear in court in Lahore in a case related to this week's clashes.

Dozens of supporters mobbed his convoy as it slowly exited the compound, cheering and waving flags of Khan's Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) party.

Overnight Tuesday police and paramilitary rangers clashed repeatedly with PTI supporters in the plush Zaman Park neighbourhood, firing fusillades of teargas and dodging rocks thrown by angry crowds.

Since then, PTI supporters have kept a vigil outside his home, wary of police returning to arrest him.



FUN DAY OUT ... Orphans and street children beaming with joy as they got to roam around the capital on BRTC's open top double-decker buses, followed by their first-ever metro rail rides from Agargaon station to Uttara (north) station and back yesterday on the occasion of the 103rd birth anniversary of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and the National Children's Day. The photo was taken from Agargaon.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

BATTLE FOR BAKHMUT

Ukraine holds out assaults

Kremlin confirms Xi's state visit next week

REUTERS, Near Bakhmut

Ukrainian forces continued to withstand Russian assaults yesterday on the ruined city of Bakhmut, as officials said China's President Xi Jinping will travel to Moscow next week to hold talks with Russian President Vladimir Putin.

Xi's visit to Moscow is a diplomatic coup for Putin, whose country has been placed under unprecedented international sanctions since he sent tens of thousands of troops into Ukraine on February 24, 2022.

Beijing and Moscow struck a "no limits" partnership shortly before the invasion and US and European leaders have said they are concerned Beijing may send arms to Russia.

China has denied any such plan, criticising Western weapon supplies to Ukraine, which will soon extend to fighter

jets after Poland and Slovakia this week approved deliveries. The Kremlin said the jets would simply be destroyed.

A Russian official said Xi and Putin would discuss the conflict in Ukraine as well as "military-technical cooperation". The Kremlin said earlier that "important" bilateral documents would be signed, without elaborating.

Chinese foreign ministry spokesperson Wang Wenbin said Xi's visit to Russia his first in nearly four years would strengthen economic partnerships and promote "peace", although he made no explicit mention of the Ukraine war.

An international agreement to allow the safe export of grain from several Ukrainian ports on the Black Sea expires today. Russia has agreed to extend the deal for 60 days while Ukraine, along with the

United Nations and Turkey which brokered the original deal, have called for a 120-day rollover.

Russia has not specifically said why it is insisting on the shorter period, although it has complained that its own food and fertilizer exports are being hindered by Western sanctions.

The United Nations Office in Geneva said yesterday that discussions were ongoing on the renewal of the deal, needed to prevent global food shortages because Ukraine is a big exporter. A shorter extension period would further restrict exports from Ukraine, which remain well below pre-invasion levels.

On the battleground, Reuters reporters roughly 1.5 km (1 mile) from the front lines could hear the constant boom of artillery and the crackle of small arms fire.

Govt agencies

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the easily understandable reality that the people involved in such crimes of money laundering are powerful by any standard including financial, political and governmental connections – direct or indirect?"

The inaction despite the HC intervention given the credible exposure of illicit financial transfer and accumulation of wealth, which is a severely punishable offence by national and international laws, sends a message that the perpetrators of such crimes are eligible for impunity, he said.

If such institutions are influenced by an individual's identity and status it will only deepen and widen corruption in general and money laundering in particular, Iftekharuzzaman added.

In the last couple of years, the HC on several occasions expressed its discontent over the investigation agencies' inaction.

While hearing a writ petition on the issue on March 6 last year, an HC bench said: "It is unfortunate if it [the ACC] fails to stop money laundering. Please, comply with our directives to prevent money laundering. The people of Bangladesh are brilliant and hard-working. If corruption can be eradicated, the golden Bangla that Bangabandhu dreamt of can be established."

During the new year session of the parliament, two Jatiya Party lawmakers came down heavily on the government for its failure to stop money laundering.

JP MP Fakhrul Imam said he "feels helpless when the head of a strong government like Sheikh Hasina does nothing to stop money laundering" even though billions of taka have already left the country.

Another JP MP Kazi Firoz Rashid complained that there is no exemplary punishment for irregularities in the financial sector.

"We have heard that someone left the country with Tk 158 crore. On the other hand, for a small loan, farmers were arrested. The government should think about this," he said.

The financial sector and real estate were the major beneficiaries of the laundered money, according to the C4ADS report.

Of the Bangladeshi who own properties in Dubai, 332 are men.

Of the Bangladeshi real estate owners in Dubai, 318 are aged between 35 years and 59 years, 42 are less than 34 years and 97 are more than 60 years.

'He hooked me with promises of stardom'

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After three months of incarceration, Limon realised that Rabiul was not doing anything to get him out. He then managed to contact his parents, and they were the ones who were able to get him out of jail on bail after informing the court about his real identity.

The court then asked the Detective Branch of police to investigate the matter.

The detectives found that Limon was the son of Md Nuruzzaman and Halima Begum of Ainpur area in Kachua, Chandpur.

Police then accused Limon of fraud in a new case, which is still under trial.

"My father earns very little from his job and he has already spent over Tk 5 lakh for my legal battle. He borrowed the money from a bank. I missed three court hearings because I had no money."

Limon now lives in a mess in the capital's Adabor and he makes rent from his earnings as a Pathao rider.

Arav Khan's mysterious claims on Facebook

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On August 27 and 29 in 2020, he posted two photos claiming that he was in New Zealand and the UK, but it was later discovered that these were actually taken in Coco Beach in Panjim and Anjum Beach in Goa, India.

Rabiul went on Facebook live with singer Noble, who is also from Gopalganj, on May 25, 2021. He later claimed to have produced a music video with the singer.

In the profile, he claims to have graduated from King's College in London between 2015 and 2019. However, police said he could not even pass the SSC exams.

According to law enforcement officials, Rabiul, who also goes by aliases Shohag Molla, Apon and Ridoy, has another Facebook profile, named "Sheikh Hridi" that dates back to 2009.

The criminal record of Rabiul, accused of killing a police inspector in 2018, came under the spotlight after he invited cricketer Shakib Al Hasan to open his jewellery store in Dubai on Wednesday.

Soon after the murder, Rabiul fled to India and then managed to have an Indian passport. He is now living in Dubai.

RABIUL'S RISE

In a Facebook post on November 28, 2021, he said he got permanent residency in Dubai.

Rabiul uploaded photos and videos

Limon's mother Halima Begum said, "After he passed SSC in 2016, he enrolled for a diploma in Medical Assistant Training School in Cumilla where he studied for a few years. His father stopped providing for him after he left his studies and went to Dhaka to be a cricket player."

In Dhaka, Limon got a chance to be in the 2nd division cricket league for Rayer Bazar Club. "But in 2020, I suffered a lot. I often struggled to buy food because I had no money."

"I followed Arav on Facebook and learnt more about him from Didar Pathan, who was a neighbour in Chandpur. One day, I messaged Arav about my struggles and my dream to be a cricketer. That was my undoing."

Limon denied taking money from Rabiul, which a police officer recently alleged.

BRINGING RABIUL BACK

Rabiul fled to India soon after the murder of the police officer. Police pressed charges against Rabiul and

nine others on April 11, 2019.

He obtained an Indian passport in 2020 and later travelled to Dubai, where he has a resident permit until the end of next year.

To bring him to book, the authorities will have to request India to ask the UAE to deport Rabiul, noted lawyer Khurshid Alam Khan told The Daily Star.

If he is handed over to India, he could face charges of trespassing and forgery.

"He may then get six months. After he serves his time, India will deport him to Bangladesh," Khurshid added.

A police officer familiar with the process of bringing back suspects from abroad said it could be done through Interpol.

Bangladesh's focal point for Interpol, the National Central Bureau (NCB), will have to contact the New Delhi and Dubai NCBs, he said.

"The NCBs of the three countries will have to work together," said the officer, requesting not to be named.

Arav Khan's mysterious claims on Facebook

page.

Video clips on social media showed that Shakib went to the shop accompanied by Rabiul in a luxury vehicle.

On Facebook live on Thursday, Rabiul thanked Shakib.

Tigers set

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morning after being prescribed rest by an ophthalmologist. The CT scan report was good, according to BCB chief physician Debashish Chowdhury, which should be a relief to the Tigers.

Shakib Al Hasan also joined the side in Sylhet yesterday after a controversial visit to Dubai.

Bangladesh have won seven ODIs against Ireland and lost twice. They played one bilateral series at home, attaining a clean sweep in 2008, while an away series in 2010 was drawn one all.

Ireland were the only side to beat eventual world champions England in the T20 World Cup last year and Hathurusingha stressed that Bangladesh would not be taking the visitors lightly.

"We respect Ireland just like England, but we don't fear any team. We are not going to treat Ireland any different than England," Hathurusingha said as the Tigers, buoyed by their 3-0 clean sweep of England in T20Is, look to translate that form into ODIs.

Become smart citizens

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103rd birth anniversary of Father of Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and the National Children's Day-2023.

The Women and Children Affairs Ministry arranged the programme under the management of Gopalganj district administration. This year, the theme of the day is "Smart Bangladeshi Swapno Bangabandhu Jammin", Shishuder Chokh Somridh Swapno Rangin".

The PM thanked the Women and Children Affairs Ministry for picking this year's theme, adding that her government wants to transform the country into a smart Bangladesh by 2041.

State Minister for Women and Children Affairs Fazilatun Nessa Indira spoke on the occasion, while Women and Children Affairs Secretary Md Hasanuzzaman Kalol delivered the welcome speech at the event presided over by a child named Sniha Islam.

A documentary titled 'Bangabandhu and Children Rights' was screened.

The premier unveiled the cover of an illustrated book titled "Shishuder Sheikh Mujib," which was composed by Director General of Special Security Force (SSF) Major General Md Majibul Rahman.

President Abdul Hamid and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday paid tributes to Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman at Tungipara.

The president and the prime minister paid their homage by placing wreaths at the mausoleum

Hasina, Modi

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run marketing agency of petroleum fuel, has been implementing the project under a government deal with India to annually import 250,000 tonnes to 400,000 tonnes of diesel from the neighbouring country through the pipeline.

Bangladesh needs to import 6.6 million tonnes to 7.7 million tonnes of petroleum to meet its annual demand.

Official documents show that Bangladesh will annually import 250,000 tonnes in the first three years, 300,000 tonnes annually in the 4th to 6th years, 350,000 tonnes annually in the 7th to 10th years and 400,000 tonnes annually from the 11th to 15th year.

Currently, Bangladesh imports 22,000 tonnes of diesel per month through railway wagons.

BCL leader found dead on railroad

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

A union-level Chhakra League leader was found dead on a railroad in Dinajpur's Phulbari yesterday. His right leg was also found cut off, said police.

Shifat Ahmed Shishir, 17, first year student at Phulbari Shaheed Smriti Adarsa College, was the general secretary of ward-7 BCL at Kazihal union.

Victim's cousin Mezba Kamal said Shishir went out of home on Thursday morning for attending classes but did not return home.

Locals found his body on a railroad near Phulbari Railway Station yesterday morning, he added.

Police are yet to confirm the reason behind his death.

Railway Police recovered the body and sent it to M Abdur Rahim Medical College for autopsy, said AKM Nurul Islam, officer-in-charge of GRP in Dinajpur's Parbatipur.

Elderly man killed in clash over land dispute

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Thakurgaon

An elderly man was killed in a clash over land dispute in Thakurgaon's Haripur Thursday afternoon.

The dead is Hamidur Rahman, 62, of Malani Gedura village in the upazila, said police.

Yasin Ali and Mohammad Hashim had a long-standing dispute over a land. Hamidur was Yasin's brother-in-law, said Tajul Islam, officer-in-charge of Haripur Police Station.

Thursday, Yasin and Hashim locked into a clash. Hamidur received a serious blow in his head during the clash. He was later succumbed to his injuries, he added.

A case was filed in connection with the incident, he further said.

Rohingya boy stabbed to death by co-worker

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Cox's Bazar

A 16-year-old Rohingya boy was stabbed to death allegedly by another Rohingya boy in Ukhia of Cox's Bazar yesterday.