

India does whatever it thinks is good for it

Says Momen

UNB, Dhaka

Describing the Indian government as “very mature”, Foreign Minister AK Abdul Momen yesterday said if New Delhi does something for India, regional peace, and stability, this will certainly be beneficial for the region.

Momen said India is a very strong democratic country and it does whatever it thinks is good for it.

“We have no reason to comment on this. Because we believe that they have a mature government system,” he told reporters at a media briefing at the foreign ministry.

His remarks come after recent reports by Germany-based Deutsche Welle (DW) and India’s Anandabazar newspaper that a message has been conveyed to Washington that “New Delhi is not happy with the current role of the United States regarding the upcoming national elections in Bangladesh”.

Political leaders from both the ruling and opposition parties spoke soon after the reports run by two media outlets.

2 sent to jail over murder of indigenous man

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Thakurgaon

A Thakurgaon court yesterday sent two people to jail over the murder of a member of the local indigenous Orao community.

Police arrested Gabriel Toppo alias Gabe, 30, and Julian Toppo, 42, after the victim’s wife Veronica Khalko filed a case accusing the duo and several others Saturday night.

Stephen Tirki, 50, a motor mechanic, was stabbed to death Friday night.

Gabe admitted to killing Stephen over a land-related dispute at Parishadpara in Thakurgaon municipality, Superintendent of Police Utam Prashad Pathak told a press briefing held at his office in the afternoon.

He said that several years ago, Stephen’s father, Daniel, along with Julian and Gabriel, took possession of a piece of land.

In this connection, a case was filed with the local police station against them. The case trial went on for seven years until it was dismissed.

After Daniel’s death, Julian and Gabriel frequently demanded compensation from Stephen, blaming his father for getting them implicated in the case. Stephen was assaulted previously for refusing to pay them.



PHOTOS: DACCА SOUVENIRS, SEVENDAYSNOTES

DHAKA CHRONICLES: City’s charm in souvenirs

NUSRATH JAHAN

In a life dominated by smartphones, where pictures taken in them are seen as the only way of capturing moments in a frame, souvenirs come with the amazing ability to celebrate life and the magic that surrounds us. Be it the forgotten simplicity or the regular complexities of our lives, it’s surprising how much emotion each of these mementoes holds in them.

Among souvenirs of the past is the humble fridge magnet that stands out as a nostalgic beacon. A small emblem that is placed on the refrigerator, marking our presence at a particular time and place. However, in the desire to collect souvenirs from far-off lands, one often forgets to appreciate the charms of their hometown itself. The narrow streets, busy markets, and whispered histories of Dhaka form a complex narrative that is as vivid as any memento acquired by a traveller.

If you are indeed a vintage soul who loves this city in all its chaotic energy, local souvenirs are just the thing for you.



Not only do these bring a renewed sense of appreciation for the city but also shows how sometimes the most amazing things are within our very reach.

Souvenirs like rickshaws, auto-rickshaws, flags and the like are not hard to come across but if you are in search of the ones that will speak “Dhaka”, you’ll have to narrow your search down a little. Thanks to the rise of online shops that seem to have the answers to all our whims these days, simply browsing through Facebook or Instagram will get you the mementoes you want.

Dacca Souvenirs, for instance, offers a glimpse into a world of unique keepsakes, waiting to be taken by those who want to celebrate Dhaka’s essence. From hand-painted fridge magnets, stamps, and poster frames to miniature figures of iconic landmarks

of the capital, these souvenirs are threads that weave together the past and the present, intertwining our lives with the heartbeats of this city.

Sevendaysnotes is another page that highlights each city, including Dhaka, of our country into vibrant notebook covers. If you are in the habit of writing down your thoughts, I suggest you get your hands on one of these and fast.

There are a few things that come to mind when you think of Dhaka: the loud New Market area, Dhanmondi Lake, the heart of Dhaka University – TSC square, vintage establishments still standing in Old Dhaka or even Baitul Mukarram. Whatever fits your perfect visualisation of Dhaka, there is a souvenir for it.

Perhaps, the best part of online shopping is the absolute freedom of customisation. Several online pages now can take your favourite designs, or in this case, your favourite part of Dhaka just as you want, and replicate them in accessories like wrist bands, key rings, brooches, caps, or even a cool and casual t-shirt.

In this whirlwind of existence, allow yourself the luxury of remembrance, the joy of holding a piece of Dhaka’s essence in your hands. Be it to remember the streets you have roamed or to list the ones you yearn to walk, let this be your gentle reminder to collect a piece of Dhaka’s heart.

University units

FROM PAGE 1

The firearms were made in Pakistan and Myanmar, according to the case statement.

The DB claimed they came to know from the arrestees that the BNP and Chhatra Dal high commands directed the Dhaka University Chhatra Dal unit and other university units “to topple the current government by inciting fear and panic among the public.”

Nurunnabi made no comment and quickly left the stage when journalists asked him if police will conduct any drives to recover firearms brandished by ruling Awami League leaders and activists in recent street rallies.

At a press conference at BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia’s Gulshan office yesterday, party Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir said DB officials are making “false and motivated” claims.

“The Detective Branch said BNP is now collecting weapons to sabotage the election. This is the interesting part. That means they are now speaking entirely politically on behalf of a party,” Fakhrul said.

Two of the six JCD leaders – Mominul Islam Jisan, senior joint secretary of Dhaka University JCD unit, and Mohammad Arif Billah, former vice-president of a private university JCD unit – were placed on a two-day police remand for questioning.

Jisan’s brother Anamul Haque termed the police allegation “false and fabricated”.

“He has a stronghold at Dhaka University and was involved in organising BNP programmes. Law enforcers targeted him to weaken their movement,” he told The Daily Star.

The 12 other BNP leaders and activists who were detained on Saturday night were shown arrested in a case filed with Jatrabari Police Station.

Robin, son of former BNP MP and the party’s Commerce Affairs Secretary Salahuddin Ahmed, was placed on a four-day remand. The rest were sent to jail.

Rooppur will be ready on time

FROM PAGE 1

power plant under construction into the status of a nuclear facility and make Bangladesh a member of the “nuclear community”.

The first unit of the Rooppur nuclear power plant was scheduled to start commissioning in March next year and the other unit a year later.

Another fast-track project, the Tk 16,000 crore Maitree Super Thermal Power Plant in Rampal, is yet to begin full-swing operation for lack of transmission facilities and dredging in the Pashur river, according to the IMED report.

The project’s physical progress is 94.64 percent and financial progress is 89.93 percent.

The deadline for the project was February 2023, and one unit of the plant has already gone into operation in December last year. However, it is yet to reach its maximum production capacity, the IMED report said.

For power supply from the plant, a 400 kV Ameenbazar line and a 230 kV Khulna line have been readied.

However, it has not been possible to supply full evacuation from the operational unit. On the other hand, when the Payra plant is operational, less electricity from the Rampal plant can be supplied through the Ameenbazar line, the IMED report said.

Besides, coal supply to the Rampal plant has been interrupted as navigability in the Pashur river has reduced amid a lack of dredging. Dredging in the Pashur river will not begin before June 2024, according to the Mongla port authority.

“There is no limitation to evacuating the power from Payra and Rampal – we are transmitting what they are producing,” AKM Gause Mohiuddin Ahmed, managing director of PGCB, told The Daily Star.

He said the IMED report might be dated.

“We have issued the clearance a long time back that we can evacuate the total electricity from both the

Payra and Rampal power plants,” Ahmed added.

The second unit of the Rampal plant is expected to go into commercial operation in October this year. The plant will require about 80 lakh tonnes of coal in the next three years as fuel consumption.

For uninterrupted coal supply, the IMED suggested the Bangladesh Bank ensure adequate dollars.

However, one of the fast-track projects, the much-talked-about Padma bridge, was opened for vehicular movement in June last year – which is ahead of schedule. Only 1 percent of the physical work now remains, while the financial progress for the project is 89 percent.

The Tk 39,246 crore Padma Bridge Rail Link Project saw 81 percent physical progress and 75.5 percent financial progress, according to the report.

As of July, the Tk 4,374.47 crore Payra deep seaport project achieved 90 percent physical progress and 86 percent financial progress.

The Tk 33,461 crore Dhaka Metro Rail project, known officially as the Dhaka Mass Rapid Transit Development Project Line 6, has recorded physical progress of 78 percent and financial progress of 68 percent.

Metro is running from Uttara to Agargaon, and from October, it will be ferrying passengers up to Motijheel. The rest of the line – from Motijheel to Kamapur – is under construction.

Another project the Mohekskhali-Matarbari Integrated Infrastructure Development project has 12 components including a 1,200 MW power plant.

The Tk 51,854 crore project has made 77.70 percent physical progress and 64.91 percent financial progress.

The project was undertaken in 2014 with a deadline set for full implementation by December 2026.

The physical progress of the Matarbari port and the power plant is 94 percent and the power plant’s

initial synchronisation has been completed, the IMED report said.

With the power evacuation line completed, the power plant has a target to start producing electricity in December.

The Tk 18,034 crore Single Line Dual Gauge Railway Track from Dohazari to Cox’s Bazar saw 87 percent physical progress and 44 percent financial progress. The railway is likely to be opened in September.

However, a project official said the cost is likely to be slashed by \$400 million as it is yet to be decided whether one of the components – a 28-km railway from Ramu to Gundam near Myanmar – would be constructed.

The total cost for the eight projects is Tk 308,676 crore, 67 percent of which has been spent as of July, according to the report.

Spain clinch

FROM PAGE 1

“We had the feeling we were going to do it.”

England had the first sniff of a chance but Lauren Hemp shot weakly at goalkeeper Cata Coll.

There was little to choose between them in the opening exchanges before both teams had golden opportunities on the quarter-hour mark.

Spain, who had never won a knockout game at the Women’s World Cup until this tournament and had lost 4-0 to Japan in the group phase, went ahead just before the half-hour mark.

With 20 minutes left, Spain were awarded a penalty after a long VAR review decided Keira Walsh had handled in the box.

But Jennifer Hermoso’s penalty was weak and Earps saved comfortably to keep England hopes alive.

But despite 13 minutes of injury time, England rarely threatened and it was an assured Spain who held on comfortably, looking the more likely to score.

Living with traumas and splinters

FROM PAGE 1

lying among the dead on Bangabandhu Avenue. Her kidney on the right side had to be surgically removed a few months after the incident. She still carries around 50 splinters in her body.

Besides, she has been suffering from various diseases, including skin disease with both her legs swelling up at times. Her family has to spend nearly TK 30,000 every month for her treatment.

Stories of Selina Khatun and Nargis Akter are similarly distressing. Selina, 43, the then women affairs secretary of Kalabagan ward unit AL, saw her sister die in front of her own eyes while she lay injured. She survived and now has over 1,000 splinters still stuck inside her body. She lost her job after the incident.

“My elder sister Sufia Khatun and I were sitting in the third row of the rally on that day. Suddenly, I saw my sister lying in the streets, all smeared with blood,” Selina told this correspondent.

After the incident, she lost her job as an office assistant at the National University, Selina said, adding that she’s struggling to provide for her family, let alone continue her treatment.

Talking about the day, Nargis, 50, the then women affairs secretary of Bhatara union AL, said, “I was on the north corner of the makeshift rally stage. Before I could understand

anything, I fell down on the ground after a huge explosion. Memories of that day are still fresh in my mind.”

“19 years have passed since the incident. Still, I could not regain my strength fully. I still can’t have solid food. I spent many days on water. I still have to take more medicine than food,” she said.

“Now I have only one demand –



Daulatunnahar



Selina Akter

punishment of the culprits. If they are punished, I will get some relief,” she added.

In a verdict delivered on October 10, 2018, by a special tribunal in two cases filed over the grisly attack, BNP’s acting chairman Tarique Rahman and 18 others were sentenced to life in prison.

Meanwhile, former state minister for home Lutfozzaman Babar and 18 others were given the death penalty on charges of murder through criminal conspiracy.

All 38 accused were also sentenced to life in prison for causing grievous injuries.

18 burn to death in Pakistan bus crash

AFP, Islamabad

At least 18 people burned to death yesterday when an overnight bus smashed into another vehicle carrying diesel in eastern Pakistan, officials said.

The accident took place on a motorway at around 4:30 am (2330 GMT on Saturday) near the town of Pindi Bhattian in eastern Punjab province.

“Within five minutes, the whole

bus was engulfed in flames. Eighteen people burned alive whereas 16 others were injured, of whom four are critical,” senior police officer Fahad Ahmed told AFP on the phone.

“It seems that the driver of the bus dozed off.”

The Suzuki open-back van was carrying drums of diesel and petrol.

Fatal road accidents are common in Pakistan, where traffic rules are rarely followed.