

Skirmish with J&K rebels over after eight killed

Says India

AFP, Srinagar

India said yesterday that a weeklong battle between its soldiers and suspected rebels in Kashmir had ended with eight people killed.

The battle started last Wednesday when militants ambushed and killed two soldiers and a police officer who were patrolling the Gadole forests in the disputed territory.

Over the following days, three more soldiers were found dead after they went missing during the protracted firefight.

The Indian army deployed helicopters and drones and launched bombs into the forests while pursuing the attackers.

Police officer Vijay Kumar said two militants were killed in the battle including Uzair Khan, a local commander of the Pakistan-based militant group Lashkar-e-Taiba.

NAGORNO-KARABAKH REGION

Azerbaijan begins anti-terror ops

Says its objective is to restore 'constitutional order'; Armenia condemns

REUTERS, London

Azerbaijan launched military action in the Nagorno-Karabakh region, a step that could presage a new war in the volatile area but which Baku said was necessary to restore constitutional order and drive out Armenian military formations.

Karabakh is internationally recognised as Azerbaijani territory but part of it is run by breakaway ethnic Armenian authorities who say the area is their ancestral homeland. It has been at the centre of two wars - the latest in 2020 - since the 1991 fall of the Soviet Union.

It was not clear whether Baku's actions would trigger a full-scale conflict dragging in neighbouring Armenia or be a more limited military operation. But there were already signs of political fallout in Yerevan where Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan spoke of calls for a coup against him.

The fighting could alter the geopolitical

balance in the South Caucasus region, which is crisscrossed with oil and gas pipelines, and where Russia - distracted by its own war in Ukraine - is seeking to preserve its influence in the face of greater interest from Turkey, which backs Azerbaijan.

Loud and repeated shelling was audible from social media footage filmed in Stepanakert, the capital of Karabakh, called Khankendi by Azerbaijan, yesterday.

The Karabakh separatist human rights ombudsman, Gegham Stepanyan, said that two civilians had been killed and 11 people injured as a result of strikes by Azerbaijan's military.

In a statement announcing its operation, Azerbaijan's defence ministry spoke of its intention to "disarm and secure the withdrawal of formations of Armenia's armed forces from our territories, (and) neutralise their military infrastructure".

It said it was only targeting legitimate military targets using "high precision weapons" and not civilians as part of what it

called a drive to "restore the constitutional order of the Republic of Azerbaijan".

Civilians were free to leave by humanitarian corridors, it added, including one to Armenia, whose prime minister, Pashinyan, said the offer looked like another attempt by Baku to get ethnic Armenians to leave Karabakh as part of a campaign of what he called "ethnic cleansing", an accusation Baku denies.

Ethnic Armenian forces in Karabakh said Azerbaijani forces were trying to break through their defences after heavy shelling, but that they were holding the line for now.

Armenia, which had been holding peace talks with Azerbaijan, including on questions about Karabakh's future, condemned what it called Baku's "full-scale aggression" against the people of Nagorno-Karabakh and accused Azerbaijan of shelling towns and villages.

"Driven by a sense of impunity, Azerbaijan has openly claimed responsibility for the aggression," Armenia's foreign ministry said in a statement.

Armenia, which says its armed forces are not in Karabakh and that the situation on its own border with Azerbaijan is stable, called on members of the UN Security Council to help and for Russian peacekeepers on the ground to intervene.



BCB parrots player's defence, says he is sorry

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being gainfully employed deprived their husbands and children of their rights, and brought ruin to family and society.

More recently, he said in a post that if one married a woman habituated to "free mixing" addas, he would be depriving his children of a modest mother.

These were the two posts that went viral after Tanzim, an Under-19 World Cup winner in 2019, bowled superbly on his ODI debut to help deliver a consolation win against India in the Asia Cup on Friday.

He has deleted both posts, but not before those garnered hundreds of comments expressing approval and support. A national cricketer may thus have influenced many others to follow a line of thinking that, according to the BCB, he has now apologised for.

The BCB is a signatory to the International Cricket Council's anti-discrimination policy, in which the sport's global governing body says that

all of its members should "not at any time offend, insult, humiliate, intimidate, threaten, disparage, vilify or unlawfully discriminate between persons based on their race, religion, culture, colour, descent, nationality, ethnic origin, sex, gender, sexual orientation, disability, marital status and/or maternity status".

The cricket board also has a code of conduct that contracted players must abide by. Although Tanzim is not yet on the list of those players, a BCB official, preferring anonymity, said a player comes under the code of conduct once he or she plays for the national cricket team.

This code of conduct includes instructions on how to conduct media interactions and what he can or cannot say publicly, according to the BCB official.

But the BCB apparently does not think his indiscretions warrant a public apology, nor any kind of official censure. Jalal said they would definitely take action if Tanzim did

something like this again.

"He said he was sorry. He said he would refrain from making such posts in the future," Jalal said. "As he has admitted his mistake ... he said a big thing - he is not a misogynist. He said 'My mother is a woman; how can I be a misogynist?'"

Tanzim's surge to fame and national popularity apparently increased people's scrutiny of his activities, and the BCB moved to address it only after that scrutiny caused an uproar that refused to die down.

That they then chose, not once but twice, to parrot one of the most transparently disingenuous defences against the charge of misogyny, that one can't hate women because their mother is a woman (as if there are exceptions to that reality), is a disservice to women, obviously, but also to Tanzim.

A mitigating factor in Tanzim's discriminatory speech can be that he is just 20 years old and therefore not yet quite hardened enough to be immune to

bigoted influences.

But what of the apparently wise old heads in the BCB? Have they provided him any guidance since the time he came under their guardianship as an impressionable mid-teen?

The cricket operations that Jalal oversees involve both men and women cricketers. By choosing to make excuses for Tanzim, what message is he sending to the women cricketers who have arguably brought more plaudits for the nation than their male counterparts?

The BCB had an opportunity to set an emphatic example yesterday against discrimination and misogyny.

They could easily have pointed out the error in Tanzim's assertions - he lives and plies his trade in a country that earns a chunk of its foreign currency through a majority-female workforce in the RMG sector, a country that prides itself on women empowerment, and one that has been led by women for the past 32 years.

They could have arranged for Tanzim to make a public apology on the platform where his posts brought out similarly misogynistic echoes.

The governing body could also have made a statement about the fact that he is a role model, and as such the "freedom of speech" argument offered does not hold. As a national cricketer, who earned the blue check beside his name because of his status, Tanzim has a greater responsibility than the ordinary social media user.

That BCB's policy and code of conduct implementation is failing the cricketers and the nation at large was exemplified by a more senior national cricketer, Mehedi Hasan Miraz. The all-rounder, who has been part of the national team for the last seven years, posted on Facebook in defence of Tanzim yesterday evening, before deleting it a short while later.

If Mehedi, who has played 146 matches and is talked about as a future captain, does not know better than

to inflame sentiments with his social media presence, what hope was there for Tanzim or others of his scant experience?

There is precedent for taking action in such cases. England bowler Ollie Robinson, having taken seven wickets in his debut Test in 2021, was banned for eight matches after racist and misogynistic Tweets from a decade ago resurfaced. In taking the action, the England and Wales Cricket Board sent a strong message of zero tolerance against hate speech. The BCB missed that opportunity yesterday. Instead, they chose to talk about how mothers cannot birth misogynists.

The BCB missed that opportunity yesterday. Instead, they chose to talk about how mothers cannot birth misogynists.

That is true to an extent. Misogynists are not born; they are shaped by the ills of society and the indifference of those in power, and unfortunately, the BCB yesterday played its part to that end.

Promote community

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The event was organised by Antigua and Barbuda, Bangladesh, Bhutan, China, and Malaysia.

She mentioned that community-based primary health care is key to achieving Universal Health Coverage.

"As an emerging voice of the Global South, Bangladesh would champion this issue as a possible avenue for meaningful international partnership," she said.

Hasina also shared her vision with five priorities for the community clinics.

They are:

To make community clinics serve as gatekeepers at the grassroots to prevent huge out-of-pocket payments for health services;

To enable community clinics to provide enhanced digital health and diagnostic services, especially for NCDs; To further develop the capacity of community clinics to address growing climate-induced health crises, like dengue outbreaks;

To improve screening and treatment facilities for mental health and neurological disorders so as to provide accessible services to those affected and their families; and,

To use community clinics as the primary building block for a robust data-driven health and nutrition programme.

Hasina said that there

are now nearly 14,500 community clinics operating across the country. They are designed to act as a one-stop centre for health, family planning, and nutrition-related services.

The community clinics are playing a critical role in reducing infant, child, and maternal mortality, she said.

She mentioned that around 3,000 community clinics offer facilities for skilled birth attendance. On average, there are 9.5 to 10 million visits to the community clinics every month. Among the service seekers, almost 80 percent are women and children.

The premier said that community clinics have become the local hub for universal immunisation. They played a crucial role in securing Covid-19 vaccination coverage.

She mentioned that the community clinics act as a referral point for emergencies and complicated cases to higher medical facilities.

The service providers are equipped with the internet and digital devices to record health data. They also engage in communication on social and behaviour change for health and disability-related issues, she added.

"In 2018, our parliament passed the Community Clinic Health Support Trust Act to further streamline operations and funding modalities," said Hasina.

Prime accused

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his petition seeking bail.

Subsequently, the state filed a petition with the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court yesterday seeking a stay on the bail order.

The chamber judge of the Appellate Division may hold a hearing on the stay petition today, according to sources at the attorney general's office.

Deputy Attorney General Anwara Shahjahan, who opposed Mahmudul's bail petition before the HC bench on Monday, told The Daily Star

yesterday that the prime accused was granted bail on the ground that three accused in the case made confessional statements before the magistrate concerned without naming Mahmudul as an offender

in connection to the attack on Nadim.

However, on June 17, after Mahmudul's detention, Rab said he masterminded the murder.

"It was a planned murder. Nadim's reports on the chairman involving a woman and different anomalies angered the chairman, which led to the murder," said Rab Legal and Media Wing Director Commander Khandaker Al Moin.

The next day, he was placed on a 5-day remand, following which Mahmudul confessed to his involvement in the murder before Jamalpur Judicial Magistrate Hasib Ullah Pias under Section 164 of the Code of Criminal Procedure, the plaintiff's lawyer, Adv Yusuf Ali, told The Daily Star.

Canada suspects India link, Delhi denies

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by giving a Canadian diplomat five days to leave.

Any involvement of a foreign government in the killing of a Canadian citizen was "an unacceptable violation of our sovereignty", Trudeau told the House of Commons in an emergency statement on Monday.

He was referring to Hardeep Singh Nijjar, 45, shot dead outside a Sikh temple on June 18 in Surrey, a Vancouver suburb with a large Sikh population, three years after India had designated him as a "terrorist".

Nijjar supported a Sikh homeland in the form of an independent, so-called state of Khalistan in India's northern state of Punjab, the birthplace of the Sikh religion, which borders Pakistan.

"The government of

India needs to take this matter with the utmost seriousness. We are doing that, we are not looking to provoke or escalate," Trudeau told reporters yesterday.

India's foreign ministry said yesterday it had given the Canadian diplomat five days to leave the country, without disclosing his name or rank.

"The decision reflects the government of India's growing concern at the interference of Canadian diplomats in our internal matters and their involvement in anti-India activities," it said in a statement.

The ministry had summoned Cameron MackKay, Canada's high commissioner, or ambassador, in New Delhi to notify him of the move, it added.

Earlier, New Delhi

urged Ottawa to take action against anti-Indian elements in Canada.

"Allegations of the government of India's involvement in any act of violence in Canada are absurd and motivated," it said, adding that similar accusations made by Trudeau to Prime Minister Narendra Modi had been "completely rejected".

The United States and Australia expressed "deep concern" over Canada's accusations, while Britain said it was in close touch with its Canadian partners about the "serious allegations".

Trudeau said he had raised the matter directly with Modi on the sidelines of G20 summit in New Delhi on September 9 and 10, and had urged his government to co-operate with Canada to resolve it. Modi, in turn, conveyed

strong concern to Trudeau over recent demonstrations in Canada by Sikhs calling for an independent state.

Canada has the largest population of Sikhs outside the Indian state of Punjab, with about 770,000 people reporting Sikhism as their religion in the 2021 census. Khalistan is an independent Sikh state whose creation has been sought for decades. A Sikh insurgency killed tens of thousands of people in India in the 1980s and early 1990s before it was suppressed by tough security action.

However, New Delhi has been wary of any revival, with a particular focus on small groups of Sikhs in Australia, Britain, Canada and the United States, who support the separatist demand and occasionally stage protests outside its embassies.

US reiterates need for free, fair polls

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sanctions against Rab and seven of its officials for alleged human rights violations. It also refrained from inviting Bangladesh to the Democracy Summit that year and in 2023, creating a strain on the bilateral relations.

Over the last year and half, numerous visiting US officials and US Ambassador to Bangladesh Peter Haas repeatedly stressed the need for free and fair elections against the backdrop of the two previous polls marred by irregularities.

The foreign ministry in a statement yesterday said Momen and Chollet discussed democracy,

human rights and the elections.

Momen told Chollet how Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina played a critical role in restoring democracy and human rights from previous "autocratic regimes".

He said there had been a rise in terrorist activities, militancy, deterioration of human rights and a fake voters' list during the BNP-Jamaat alliance government, adding Bangladesh returned to stability and saw a notable socio-economic development after Awami League came to power again.

The minister told the US officials that the Bangladesh government is committed

to holding a free, fair and neutral election. Thus, it formed an independent and strong election commission.

"This Election Commission already fairly conducted local government elections and proved their capacity," he told Chollet.

Momen thanked the US for providing humanitarian assistance to the Rohingyas sheltered in Bangladesh and sought its further support for their quick repatriation.

Derek Chollet lauded Bangladesh for its socio-economic development and sheltering the Rohingyas.

While speaking to Foreign Secretary Masud Bin Momen on the UNGA sidelines, Uzra

Zeya, US under secretary of State for Civilian Security, Democracy, and Human Rights, reiterated the importance of free and fair elections and the freedom of expression in Bangladesh.

After the meeting, she yesterday posted on X saying she had a productive conversation with the foreign secretary of Bangladesh.

"Appreciated meeting again to discuss the importance of free and fair elections, freedom of expression, and continued humanitarian support for [the] Rohingyas [refugees] and communities that host them."

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১. সংস্থার নাম	বাংলাদেশ শিল্পকলা একাডেমি, সেগুনবাগিচা, রমনা, ঢাকা।
২. সংগ্রহকারী প্রতিষ্ঠান	বাংলাদেশ শিল্পকলা একাডেমি, সেগুনবাগিচা, রমনা, ঢাকা।
৩. জেলা	ঢাকা
৪. বাজেট ও অর্থের উৎস	রাজস্ব
৫. প্রাক-দরপত্র সভা	০৫-১০-২০২৩, বিকাল ৩:০০ ঘটিকা
৬. দরপত্র দলিল প্রাপ্তি	অর্থ, হিসাব ও পরিকল্পনা উপবিভাগ, নিচতলা, প্রশিক্ষণ ভবন, বাংলাদেশ শিল্পকলা একাডেমি, সেগুনবাগিচা, রমনা, ঢাকা।
৭. দরপত্র দলিল বিক্রয়ের শেষ দিন ও সময়	১১-১০-২০২৩ বিকাল ৪-০০ টা পর্যন্ত
৮. দরপত্র দাখিলের শেষ তারিখ ও সময়	১২-১০-২০২৩, দুপুর: ২-৩০
৯. দরপত্র খোলার তারিখ ও সময়	১২-১০-২০২৩, দুপুর: ২-৩০
১০. দরপত্র দাখিলের স্থান/দপ্তর	সচিবের দপ্তর, বাংলাদেশ শিল্পকলা একাডেমি, সেগুনবাগিচা, রমনা, ঢাকা।
১১. কাজের নাম	স্বর্ণপদক (নির্দিষ্ট ডিজাইন অনুযায়ী) তৈরি ও সরবরাহ।
১২. দরপত্র দাখিলের মূল্য (অফারতথ্যোগ্য)	১,০০০/- (এক হাজার টাকা মাত্র)
১৩. দরদাতার যোগ্যতা ও প্রয়োজনীয় দলিলাদি	১। জুয়েলারি কাজের হালনাগাদ ট্রেড লাইসেন্স, জুয়েলারি মালিক সমিতির সনদ, ভ্যাট নিবন্ধন সনদ এবং হালনাগাদ আয়কর পরিশোধের প্রত্যয়নপত্র। ২। সরবরাহ কাজের ০৫ বছরের সাধারণ অভিজ্ঞতা। ৩। বিগত তিন বছরের মধ্যে অনুরূপ কাজের একক দরপত্রের মাধ্যমে ২৮.০০ লক্ষ টাকার কাজ সম্পাদনের অভিজ্ঞতা (সরকারি, আধা-সরকারি এবং স্বায়ত্বশাসিত প্রতিষ্ঠানে)। ৪। অন্যান্য যোগ্যতার শর্তাবলী দরপত্র দলিলে রয়েছে।
১৪. দরপত্রের নিরাপত্তা জামানত	দরপত্রের সাথে যেকোন বাণিজ্যিক ব্যাংক (সিডিউল ব্যাংক) হতে মহাপরিচালক, বাংলাদেশ শিল্পকলা একাডেমির অনুকূলে ১,০০,০০০/- (এক লক্ষ) টাকার ব্যাংক ড্রাফট/পে-অর্ডার/ব্যাংক গ্যারান্টি নিরাপত্তা জামানত হিসেবে দাখিল করতে হবে।
১৫. দরপত্র আহ্বানকারীর নাম	সোলাহউদ্দিন আহাম্মদ
১৬. দরপত্র আহ্বানকারীর পদবী	সচিব
১৭. দরপত্র আহ্বানকারীর ঠিকানা	বাংলাদেশ শিল্পকলা একাডেমি, সেগুনবাগিচা, রমনা, ঢাকা।
১৮. বিশেষ নির্দেশনাঃ	(ক) পি.পি.এ ২০০৬, পি.পি.আর ২০০৮ এবং সরকারের প্রচলিত বিধি-বিধান অনুযায়ী দরপত্র কার্যক্রম পরিচালিত হবে। (খ) অনিবার্য কারণবশত নির্ধারিত তারিখ ও সময়ে দরপত্র গ্রহণ করা সম্ভব না হলে পরবর্তী কার্যদিবসে একই সময় ও স্থানে দরপত্র গ্রহণ করা হবে। (গ) কোন কারণ দর্শানো ব্যতিরেকে কর্তৃপক্ষ সকল দরপত্র বাতিল বা যে কোন দরপত্র গ্রহণের ক্ষমতা সংরক্ষণ করে।
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