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Qatar emir arrives tomorrow

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh and Qatar can expect their relationship to get strengthened, both in terms of trade and political affairs with Qatari Emir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani coming to Dhaka tomorrow for a two-day official visit.



Al Thani

During the visit, the two countries will sign at least 10 MoUs (memorandum of understanding) on trade and investment promotion, port management, manpower recruitment, exchange of prisoners, avoidance of double taxation, cooperation in the field of religion and higher education etc, according to a foreign ministry source.

President Mohammed Shahabuddin will receive the emir at the Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport on Monday afternoon.

On Tuesday morning, Qatar Emir Sheikh Tamim and Bangladesh Prime

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A rickshaw lies toppled and its passengers fall in the murky water. The unfortunate mishap occurred after the rickshaw hit a concealed pothole, sending its occupants into a sudden plunge. Locals lament the perilous state of the road, which often leads to injuries for those who navigate it.

PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

Carriers' storing personal data illegal

Say speakers at a programme

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The telecom regulator's directive to mobile operators to store citizens' personal data violates the constitution, and therefore, the decision should be revoked, speakers said at a programme yesterday.

The security of citizens' information is enshrined in the constitution. It is a suicidal decision to hand over the information of citizens to the private sector, said Ruhin Hossain Prince, general secretary of the Bangladesh Communist Party.

"I hope the government will back down from this decision. And we demand that the government should recognise the rights granted to citizens by the section 43 (b) of the constitution."

He was speaking at a press conference titled "Protest against the decision to hand over databases of citizen personal information to private organisations" arranged by the Bangladesh Mobile Phone Users Association at a hotel in the capital yesterday.

The press conference comes as the Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission (BTRC) ordered the mobile operators to store 12 types of citizen data.

The types of data include name, parents' names, current and permanent address and picture, occupations etc.

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A hidden planet in our solar system!

Scientists say they have found evidence

INDEPENDENT.CO.UK

For years, some astronomers have been suggesting that unusual behaviour on the edge of our solar system is best explained by another, undiscovered planet. That helps explain the orbits of objects that lie at the very far reaches of our solar system, more than 250 times away from the Sun than we are.



Now Konstantin Bogytin, an astronomer who helped popularise the theory, says that he and his team have found yet more evidence that suggests that planet exists. The new work represents "the strongest statistical evidence yet that Planet 9 is really out there", he said.

In the new work, scientists looked at a set of trans-Neptunian objects, or TNOs, which is the technical term for those objects that sit out at the edge of the solar system, beyond Neptune.

The new work looked at those objects that have their movement made unstable because they interact with the orbit of Neptune. That instability meant they were harder to understand, so typically astronomers looking at a possible Planet Nine have avoided using them in their analysis.

Researchers instead looked towards those objects, and tried to understand their movements. And, Dr Bogytin claimed, the best explanation is that they result from another, undiscovered planet.

Unregistered news portals will be closed

Says state minister for information

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government will close online news portals that have not sought registration, State Minister for Information and Broadcasting Mohammad Ali Arafat said yesterday.

The government also intends to bring social media under a policy to prevent the spread of misinformation and disinformation, he said.

Curbing the spread of misinformation is the responsibility of both the government and media, he told journalists at Dhaka Reporters Unity yesterday.

DRU organised the discussion with its president Syed Shukur Ali Shuvo in the chair.

"There are 213 online news portals of established media outlets and there are 213 other online news portals registered solely as online entities."

The authorities are making a list of portals that have applied for

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MOHAMMADPUR GENEVA CAMP

Narcos clashing over new heroin spot

SHAHEEN MOLLAH and MOHAMMAD JAMIL KHAN

Mohammadpur Geneva Camp, where narcotics trade is rampant, has been witnessing clashes every day since the day after Eid-ul-Fitr.

The reason: a new "heroin spot" in the camp. According to locals and police, two drug-dealing gangs -- one led by Altaf alias "Bomb" and another by Md Imtiaz -- have been involved in the clashes, which take place mostly after midnight in the stretch between the camp's sector-4 and sector-8.

There are at least four existing spots in the camp where heroin is sold.

These are run by Altaf's gang in collaboration with another.

Imtiaz's gang, however, now wants to open and run a new one.

In the camp, a gram of heroin is currently sold for Tk 2,000.

On April 14, a case was filed with the Mohammadpur Police Station against 102 named and 250 unnamed people.

Mohammad Rezaul, sub-inspector of Mohammadpur Police outpost, filed the case.

According to the FIR, over 200 to 250 people were locked in a clash. They destroyed public property and hurled crude bombs.

Speaking to The Daily Star, SI Rezaul said, "Clashes have been taking place in the camp

every day since the day after the Eid.

"The clashes are occurring over establishing supremacy in the narcotics business. Two gangs -- one of Sayedpur Biharis and another of local Biharis -- are mainly responsible for the situation. We have so far detained 10-12 people in this connection."

Visiting the area on April 15 and 16, The Daily Star witnessed the grim scenario at the Geneva Camp.

Around 11:00pm on Tuesday (April 16), these correspondents saw a clash ensuing near the Kamal Biryani shop. A large number of people were seen indiscriminately hurling brick chunks.

Sources said the fight, which involved at least 100 people, continued till 1:00am.

The day before, the clash began after midnight and continued till 3:00am, they said, adding that the gangs choose such a timing so that law enforcers are not present.

Camp insiders said there are around 12 designated spots for drug trade in the camp. One of those is run by "Rani", known to be the "queen of Marijuana".

Imtiaz, who is Rani's nephew, wants his own spot to sell heroin.

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Journo attacked with stinging powder

Criminals threaten to kill him unless he leaves Savar

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Savar

A crime reporter of Bangla daily Jugantor was injured in Savar late Friday night when unidentified miscreants stopped him on his way home and attacked him with some sort of powdery substance that stung.

Iqbal Hasan Farid was first taken to Savar Upazila Health Complex and later admitted to Enam Medical College Hospital.

The incident took place 20 yards away from Farid's house in Savar's Kalma area around 11:45pm.

Farid told The Daily Star, "I was on my way home from Dhaka after finishing office work late at night. When I reached a dark alley near my house, someone called my name from behind. Later, two youths wearing masks mentioned the names of two local public representatives and threatened to kill me and my family if I did not leave the area within a month."

"At one stage, someone from behind sprayed a type of chemical, like chilli powder, on my head and eyes and pushed me to the ground and fled the scene. I immediately had a severe burning sensation in my eyes and body. Later, I was rescued by locals and admitted to the hospital," he said.

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Iran, Israel 'pull back' from brink of war

Intense bombardment hit Gaza; Erdogan urges Palestinian unity, meets Hamas chief

AFP, Tehran

Iran has dismissed as akin to child's play Israel's reported retaliation for an unprecedented Iranian strike, as both sides yesterday appeared to step back from wider conflict stemming from the war in Gaza.

However, a deadly blast at an Iraqi military base emphasised the high tensions which persist in the region, as did more deadly Israeli strikes in Gaza and intensifying clashes in the West Bank.

Fears have soared this month that escalating tit-for-tat attacks between Israel and Iran could tip over into a broader war in the Middle East.

Israel had warned it would hit back after Iran launched more than 300 missiles and drones a week ago in its first-ever direct attack on its arch enemy's territory.

The Iran attack was itself in retaliation for an air strike -- widely blamed on Israel -- that levelled the Iranian consulate in Damascus and killed seven Revolutionary Guards on April 1.

The Israeli retaliation appeared to come on Friday when Iranian media reported blasts in the

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People who went to their hometowns during the Eid and Pehela Baishakh were still returning to the capital yesterday. The photo of a crowded platform after the arrival of a train was taken at Kamalapur Railway Station.

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

45 'overstaying' Bangladeshis held in Malaysia

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Malaysia Immigration Department has arrested 49 foreigners including 45 Bangladeshis at a construction site in Perlis on suspicions of overstaying and not having valid travel documents, according to a report in Malaysian media.

Quoting Perlis Immigration Director Khairul Amin Talib the Bernama report said, the foreigners -- 44 Bangladeshi men and one Bangladeshi woman, three Indonesians, and one Indian national, all aged between 19 to 54 -- were arrested during a raid at the construction site of Sekolah Sukan Malaysia Perlis Phase 1, Bukit Chabang around 1:10am on Friday.

They were taken to the Kuala Perlis Immigration detention depot for investigation, according to the official.

"A total of 101 foreigners were checked, with 49 of them arrested for not having valid documents and overstaying," he said in a statement on Friday.

The foreigners will be investigated under Malaysia's immigration act, he added.