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US sanctions against Rab to stay Says state dept

UNB, Dhaka

The United States has said the sanctions imposed against Bangladesh's elite force Rab are not being withdrawn.

"Those claims are false. The US is not withdrawing sanctions against the Rab," said Principal Deputy Spokesperson at the US Department of State Vedant Patel.

In a regular briefing at the US Department of State, he said sanctions are intended to change "behaviour and promote accountability".

On Tuesday night, PM's Private Industry and Investment Adviser Salman Fazlur Rahman told reporters that the White House and the US Department of State are in favour of lifting sanctions on the Rab, but it depends on the Department of Justice.

"The issue is with the US Department of Justice, SEE PAGE 6 COL 2



Workers separating spoiled grains from Boro paddy with traditional winnowing fans in Bil Pabla area of Khulna's Dumuria upazila. The grains would be used as cattle feed. Farmers are happy with a good yield this season. The photo was taken on Wednesday.

PHOTO: HABIBUR RAHMAN

3 workers fall to their death from high-rise

They were not provided with any safety gears by building contractor

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Three construction workers died after falling off an under-construction building in the capital's Sasabo area yesterday morning.

Locals said the workers did not have any safety gear. The victims are Altafur Rahman, 45, Antar, 25, and Mofizul Islam, 20.

The three were working standing on a scaffolding on the top floor of the 10-storey building at Mayakanan. They fell when the rope snapped around 9:45am and sustained critical injuries, said Anwar Hossain, a sub-inspector of Sabujbagh Police Station.

They were rushed to the Mugda Medical College Hospital where doctors declared Altafur and Antar dead. Mofizul died at the intensive care unit around 2:00pm, Anwar said.

Locals blamed the deaths on the building owners and the contractor as they did not ensure any safety measures for the workers.

Pralay Kumar Saha, officer-in-charge of Sabujbagh Police Station, said they were conducting drives to arrest those responsible.

Hayatul Islam Khan, deputy commissioner of Motijheel division police, said they would take legal action if the allegation of not ensuring safety measures is found to be true.

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Firearms, ammo, explosives seized in dense forest

Those were meant for militant outfit, says CTTC unit; 'arms supplier' held

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Counterterrorism officials have recovered 10 firearms, a large cache of ammunition, and explosives in Bandarban's Naikhongchhari, intended for supply to the banned militant outfit Jama'atul Ansar Fil Hindal Sharqiya.

Earlier on Wednesday, a team of the Counter Terrorism and Transnational Crime (CTTC) unit of the DMP arrested Abdur Rahim, 32, a key firearms supplier to the banned militant outfit, from Gazipur's Kaliakair.

Based on his information, the team carried out a drive in a dense forest in Naikhongchhari on Thursday and recovered the arms and ammo, CTTC chief Md Asaduzzaman told a press briefing at the DMP media centre yesterday.

The seized items include a foreign pistol, nine locally-made firearms, 16 bullets, 11 cartridges, 24 shotgun shells, two binoculars, one gas mask, one mobile signal booster, two walkie-talkies, six litres of "acid-like" liquid, 60 feet of electric wire, and one wire antenna. These items were kept hidden underground.

The CTTC chief said Rahim was leading the "Rahim Dakat (robbery gang)" and perpetrating criminal activities in Cox's Bazar's Ramu upazila and Bandarban's Naikhongchhari upazila in 2019. "He kept these weapons hidden underground in the dense forest to supply Jamaatul Ansar Fil Hindal Sharqiya."

"Apart from the Kukri-Chin National Front (KNF), the banned militant outfit was buying firearms from Rahim and one Kabir Ahmed for the military training of the outfit's members in the remote hilly areas of Chittagong Hill Tracts. Under an agreement between Sharqiya leaders and KNF, the KNF, an armed group in the CHT, was

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Teenage girl raped in Narayanganj

Case filed against 6

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Narayanganj

A teenage girl in Narayanganj yesterday filed a case against five to six unidentified people over raping her.

The 17-year-old girl was picked up at knife-point by the accused from her house early on Thursday. She was taken to a nearby area and raped, said the case statement.

Ahsan Ullah, officer-in-charge of Araihazar Police Station, said the case was lodged under the Women and Children Repression Prevention Act.

The victim's family used to live in Munshiganj. But they recently moved to their newly built house in Araihazar upazila.

Around 2:30am on Thursday, five to six people broke open the door of the victim's room.

They took the girl to a nearby empty house and raped her after wrapping a scarf around her mouth, according to the case statement.

Later, they dropped the girl at her house and

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Comply with international law in Gaza

Western nations urge Israel as fighting rages in northern Gaza; 31 more Palestinians killed

REUTERS, Rome

Israel must comply with international law in Gaza and address the devastating humanitarian crisis in the Palestinian enclave, a group of Western nations wrote in a letter to the Israeli government seen by Reuters yesterday.

All countries belonging to the Group of Seven (G7) major democracies, apart from the United States, signed the letter, along with Australia, South Korea, New Zealand, the Netherlands, Denmark, Sweden and Finland.

The five-page letter comes as Israeli forces bear down on the southern Gaza city of Rafah as part of its drive to eradicate Hamas, despite warnings this could result in mass casualties in an area where displaced civilians have found shelter.

"In exerting its right to defend itself, Israel must fully comply with international humanitarian law," the letter said.

Meanwhile, Israeli forces battled Hamas fighters in the narrow alleyways of Jabalia in northern Gaza yesterday in some of the fiercest engagements since they returned to the area a week ago, while in the south Hamas members attacked tanks massing

around Rafah.

Residents said Israeli armour had thrust as far as the market at the heart of Jabalia, the largest of Gaza's eight historic refugee camps, and that bulldozers were demolishing homes and shops in the path of the advance.

As fighting raged in the north and south of the territory, the US military

operation in Rafah. "There is a tragic war going on but there is no genocide," its lawyer Gilad Noam told the International Court of Justice, arguing the accusations are "completely divorced from the facts".

At least 35,303 Palestinians have been killed and 79,261 have been wounded in Israel's military offensive on Gaza since October 7, the Gaza health ministry said in a statement yesterday. The toll includes at least 31 deaths over the past 24 hours, it said.

Israeli tanks and warplanes bombarded parts of Rafah yesterday, while the armed wings of Hamas and Islamic Jihad said they were firing anti-tank missiles and mortars at forces massing to the east, southeast and inside the Rafah border crossing with Egypt.

The UNRWA, the main UN aid agency for Palestinians, said that since the military offensive on Rafah started on May 6, more than 630,000 people have been forced to flee Rafah. "Many have sought refuge in Deir al-Balah, which is now unbearably overcrowded with dire conditions," it added. Deir al-Balah, up the coast from Rafah to the north, is the only other city in Gaza yet to be assaulted by Israeli forces.

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- S Africa case at ICJ 'totally divorced' from facts: Israel
- Aid trucks begin moving ashore via Gaza pier: US
- Death toll in enclave rises to 35,303

Five lives lost as bus overturns in Cumilla

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Cumilla

Five people were killed and 10 others injured as a bus overturned on the Dhaka-Chattogram highway at Batisha Basantapur of Cumilla's Chaudhagram upazila last morning.

Biplob Kumar Nath, station officer at Chaudhagram Fire Service Station, confirmed the incident to this newspaper.

Two of the deceased were identified as Badrul Hasan Riyad, 26, of Chattogram and Mohammad Hossain, 30, of Cox's Bazar. The identities of other deceased could not be known immediately.

SM Lokman Hossain, in charge of Miarbaxar Highway Police Outpost, said that a team of highway police recovered the bodies.

According to the passengers of the bus, the accident took place when the driver lost control of the steering and the vehicle overturned on the road.

The injured passengers were taken to the local upazila health complex.

Pyramids in Egypt built along long-lost river

AFP, Paris

Scientists have discovered a long-buried branch of the Nile river that once flowed alongside more than 30 pyramids in Egypt, potentially solving the mystery of how ancient Egyptians transported the massive stone blocks to build the famous monuments.

The 64-kilometre-long river branch, which ran by the iconic Giza pyramid complex among other wonders, was hidden under desert and farmland for millennia, according to a study revealing the find on Thursday.

The existence of the river would explain why the 31 pyramids were built in a chain along a now inhospitable desert strip in the Nile Valley between 4,700 and 3,700 years ago.

The strip near the ancient Egyptian capital of Memphis includes the Great Pyramid of Giza -- the only surviving structure of the seven wonders of the ancient world -- as well as the Khafre, Cheops and Mykerinos pyramids.



Displaced Palestinians queue to buy water from a water truck next to their temporary camp in Rafah in the southern Gaza Strip yesterday. PHOTO: AFP

China 'can't have it both ways' with Russia, West Says US

AFP, Washington

The United States has said Chinese President Xi Jinping cannot both improve ties with the West and support Russia after he vowed to boost relations with his counterpart Vladimir Putin.

"The People's Republic of China can't have its cake and eat it too," State Department spokesman Vedant Patel told reporters on Thursday.

"It can't have it both ways and want to have (better) relationships with Europe and other countries while simultaneously continuing to fuel the biggest threat to European security in a long time," Patel said, referring to Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

The United States has charged that China, while not directly sending weapons to Russia, has supported Moscow's largest defense industry expansion since Soviet times, a concern raised by Secretary of State Antony Blinken on a visit to Beijing last month.