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Khaleda now at Tarique's home

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia went to the house of her eldest son Tarique Rahman around 9:30pm on Friday (local time) after being discharged from The London Clinic where she was undergoing treatment for 17 days. Khaleda will continue her treatment at home under the supervision of Dr Patrick Kennedy and Dr Jennifer Cross of The London Clinic. Tarique, acting chairman of BNP, accompanied his mother from the hospital to their residence in Kingston, North London. Zubaidda Rahman, Tarique's wife, and Syeda Shamila Rahman, wife of Khaleda's late son Arafat Rahman Koko, were also with them. On Thursday night, Khaleda's personal physician, Dr AZM Zahid Hossain, stated that the medical board overseeing her treatment had not made a decision yet regarding her liver transplant. He added that the next course of action would depend on her age and overall health. Khaleda arrived in London on January 8 for advanced medical treatment. She was taken directly to the clinic from Heathrow Airport at 11:30am (local time).

Low water levels in the Sangu river force boats to navigate cautiously through the Raja Pathor (Boro Pathor) area of Tindu in Bandarban. Residents of Thanchi, Remakri, and Bormodak, who rely on river transport, are suffering as a result. One of the major reasons behind this is increasing deforestation and the illegal extraction of stones from streams that feed the river.

PHOTO: MONG SING HAI MARMA

KU STUDENT MURDER Family looking for answers, cops have no leads

DIPANKAR ROY

Arnob Kumar Sarker, an MBA student at Khulna University with aspirations of studying abroad, was brutally gunned down near his home in Khulna city Friday night, leaving his family devastated, and searching for answers. Arnob, 25, had recently completed his undergraduate studies in Electrical and Electronic Engineering (EEE) at Northern University and was pursuing his master's degree while assisting his father, Nitish Kumar Sarker, in their family construction business. His life was tragically cut short just as his family was making plans for his future, including seeking a bride for him. On Friday night, around 9:00pm, Arnob was sitting with friends near Tetultala intersection in the city when unidentified armed assailants on motorcycles opened fire. He was shot multiple times in the head and legs. Locals rushed him to Khulna Medical College Hospital, where doctors declared him dead.

Arnob Kumar Sarker

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Game of Thrones style ice wall on course to hit British island

INDEPENDENT.CO.UK

The world's largest iceberg is on crash course with a remote British island, risking its inhabitants. The floating giant, compared to Game of Thrones' ice wall, stretches from horizon to horizon and is heading towards South Georgia Island, a remote Antarctic haven for millions of penguins and seals. The behemoth, dubbed A23a, poses a potential threat to the island's delicate ecosystem. Scientists are monitoring A23a closely, anticipating two possible scenarios: the iceberg could collide with South Georgia and become lodged, or ocean currents might divert it around the island. If the trillion-ton slab of ice, called a megaberg, gets stuck it could make it hard for penguin parents to feed their babies and some young could even starve. Overall, however, researchers say they aren't too worried about major harm from the iceberg. It's also a natural process happening more frequently because of human-caused climate change, said British Antarctic Survey physical oceanographer Andrew Meijers, who examined the iceberg up close in December 2023 when it drifted past the research ship RRS Sir David Attenborough.

Yunus returns from Davos

UNB, Dhaka

Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus returned to Dhaka from Switzerland yesterday evening after attending the World Economic Forum's annual meeting in Davos where he was hailed as a "beacon, hero and an amazing image of stability". Top private companies are "convinced" about the country's "potentials and its stability" in the post uprising months, said his Press Secretary Shafiqul Alam, adding that they were impressed with the latest economic numbers. "One thing was quite clear that the biggest decision the students made just after the fall of Hasina was to persuade Prof Yunus to lead the interim government. And that has made all the difference," he said.

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US freezes almost all aid except for Israel, Egypt

Reveals memo; all kinds of aid to Ukraine suspended

AFP, Washington

The United States, the world's biggest donor, has frozen virtually all foreign aid, making exceptions only for emergency food, and military funding for Israel and Egypt. Secretary of State Marco Rubio sent an internal memo days after President Donald Trump took office vowing an "America First" policy of tightly restricting assistance overseas. "No new funds shall be obligated for new awards or extensions of existing awards until each proposed new award or extension has been reviewed and approved," said the memo to staff seen by AFP. The sweeping order appears to affect everything from development assistance to military aid -- including to Ukraine, which received billions of dollars in weapons under Trump's predecessor Joe Biden as it tries to repel a Russian invasion. The directive also means a pause of at least several months of US funding for PEPFAR, the anti-HIV/AIDS initiative that buys anti-retroviral drugs to treat the disease in developing countries, largely in Africa. Launched under president George W Bush in 2003, PEPFAR is credited with saving some 26 million lives and until recently enjoyed broad popular support along partisan lines in Washington. But the memo explicitly made exceptions

for military assistance to Israel -- whose longstanding major arms packages from the United States have expanded further since the Gaza war -- and Egypt, which has received generous US defence funding since it signed a peace treaty with Israel in 1979. Rubio also made an exception for US contributions to emergency food assistance, which the United States has been contributing following crises around the world including in Sudan and Syria. Lawmakers from the rival Democratic Party said that more than 20 million people relied on medication through PEPFAR and 63 million people on US-funded anti-malaria efforts including nets. "For years, Republicans in Congress have decried what they see as a lack of US credibility vis-a-vis countries like China, Russia, and Iran," said Representative Gregory Meeks, the top Democrat on the House Foreign Relations Committee, and Representative Lois Frankel. "Now our credibility is on the line, and it appears we will cut and run from American commitments to our partners around the world," they wrote in a letter. Washington has long leveraged aid as a tool of its foreign policy, saying it cares about development and drawing a contrast with China, which is primarily concerned about seeking natural resources.

MATARBARI SCAM Arrest warrant issued for ex-DC, judge of Cox's Bazar

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Cox's Bazar

A Cox's Bazar court has issued arrest warrants against former deputy commissioner Ruhul Amin, former district and sessions judge Sadikul Islam Talukder, and three others in connection with a case related to Matarbari thermal power plant. The five are accused of removing their names from the case involving the embezzlement of Tk 20 crore during land acquisition for the thermal power plant. The alleged forgery included falsifying the complainant's signature and tampering with the case documents. The three other accused are advocate Mostaq Ahmed Chowdhury, who worked at the Cox's Bazar District and Sessions Judge Court; Swapan Kanti Pal, a Nazir (overseer of collectorate) from the deputy commissioner's office; and Zafar Ahmed, a stenographer at the District and Sessions Judge Court. The arrest warrants were issued on Thursday by Munshi Abdul Majid, senior special judge of Cox's Bazar. Public Prosecutor Siraj Ullah confirmed that the court accepted an Anti-Corruption Commission report on forgery and issued the warrants.

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Publish white paper on all crimes since 1971

Jamaat chief urges govt

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinaipur

Jamaat Ameer Shafiqur Rahman has urged the interim government to publish a white paper on the killing, looting, and siphoning off money that happened since 1971. Only the interim government, which is free of political influence, can ensure the publication of such a document, he told a rally in Dinaipur yesterday. Governments formed by political parties will not undertake such a task, he said. "Over the last 53 years, numerous incidents occurred. The nation deserves to know the perpetrators and their victims." Hundreds of people from different districts attended the rally organised by Jamaat. Shafiqur said Jamaat had been the target of Awami League's attack for 15 years. He then urged leaders and activists of his party to stay vigilant, calm, and disciplined.

USA's Madison Keys [R] beams with the Australian Open trophy alongside runner-up Aryna Sabalenka of Belarus following a hard-fought 6-3, 2-6, 7-5 victory in the women's singles final in Melbourne yesterday. Story on page 6.

PHOTO: REUTERS

MORE NEWS

Awami League's melodramatic redemption arc

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WE ARE SADDENED

We are deeply saddened to announce the passing of Mrs. Salma Choudhury, Founder and Chairperson of Ashik Foundation for Childhood Cancer. She passed away on Friday, January 24, 2025, at 5:01 AM (Inna Lillahi wa Inna Ilaihi Rajiun) while undergoing treatment at MGM Hospital in Chennai, India.

Mrs. Choudhury was the beloved wife of Mr. Afzal Hossain Choudhury, Chairman of Sheba Group and a prominent businessman. She is survived by her mother Mrs. Saleha Zaman, her children Asif, Maheen, their spouses Rifat and Adnan, and four beloved grandchildren, Saira, Arhan, Azaan and Aariz.

Her Janazah will be held today, Sunday, January 26, 2025, after Asr prayers at Masjid-Uq-Taqwa, located on Dhanmondi, Road 12/A.

We extend our heartfelt condolences to her family and loved ones during this difficult time. May her soul rest in eternal peace.