



# Newsletter

Press Wing, Prime Minister's Office

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## Keep up pressure on Myanmar: Sheikh Hasina

A delegation of UNSC led by its President Gustavo Meza-Cuadra met Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at her official residence Gonobhaban on 30 April.

Talking to them Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina said the international community should keep up pressure on the Myanmar government to stop persecution on its nationals Rohingyas and take them back from Bangladesh. She said Bangladesh does not want any conflict and it is trying to have a peaceful resolution to the problem.



Sheikh Hasina also expects that China, Russia, India and Japan to play a major role in resolving the crisis. The prime minister appreciated the international community as it extended support to Bangladesh. She also put emphasis on implementation of the Annan Commission's recommendations on the Rohingya issue.

Sheikh Hasina said her government has already carried out the biometric registration of the Rohingyas who entered Bangladesh amid atrocities by Myanmar law enforcement agencies.

The Prime Minister said local Bangladeshis are enduring serious sufferings in the area due to the influx of the Rohingyas. The environment as well as forests of the particular area is getting affected seriously due to this huge influx. In the upcoming monsoon, the prime minister said, the sufferings of the Rohingyas will intensify further.

During the meeting, US representative Kelly Currie highly appreciated the prime minister's role, saying she has raised a level for all creating a new international standard by working from a humanitarian point of view.

Chinese representative Wu Haitao said Beijing will continue playing a constructive role on the Rohingya issue, while Russian representative Dmitry Polyanskiy assured of extending Moscow's support to Dhaka for a sustainable solution to the crisis.

## **Can't force any party to join election: PM**

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has said it was up to a political party to decide whether it would participate in an election.

"I cannot impose my decision on any party... I cannot say to any party that you have to participate in the election," she said responding to a question at a press conference organized to inform the media about the outcome of her just-concluded visits to Saudi Arabia, Australia and the UK.

The Prime Minister visited Saudi Arabia and the UK from April 15-23 and Australia from April 26- 29. She said the BNP did not take part in the 2014 election and it tried to resist the polls through vandalism and killings.

"You saw how the BNP, after assuming office in 2001, had pushed the country to the path of destruction... if they [people] don't want to push the country to the path of destruction again like in 2001, they will definitely cast their votes for Awami League and the party will come to power again.

About the BNP's demand of releasing Khaleda Zia from jail, Sheikh Hasina said she did not send Khaleda to prison. "The court pronounced its verdict. It won't work placing demands before me.... They [BNP] have to fight back legally to free her from there."

About bringing back BNP acting chairperson Tarique Rahman from London, she said the government would surely try to bring him back as a convicted criminal.

"We are in talks with the British government... we will surely bring back a convicted criminal, and for that, we will carry out the necessary process as per law."

She also ridiculed the BNP for its "political bankruptcy" over picking Tarique as its acting chairperson despite the fact that he had surrendered his Bangladeshi passport to the British government seeking political asylum. "Didn't they have any other capable leader for this particular post?"

About quota in government jobs, the PM said she had accepted the students' demand. She, however, mentioned that the freedom fighters were disrespected during the movement.



## US to continue pressure on Myanmar: Trump writes to Hasina

US President Donald Trump has assured Bangladesh of continuing its pressure on Myanmar over repatriation of Rohingyas from Bangladesh.

"The United States will continue to pressure Myanmar to create necessary conditions for the safe and voluntary return of the Rohingya people to their homeland," Trump said in a letter sent to Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina.

US Ambassador in Dhaka Marcia Bernicat handed the letter over to the PM during a courtesy call on her at the Gonobhaban on 3 May.

There is no doubt that the ones responsible for instigating this crisis in Myanmar must be held accountable, the letter reads.

"The United States is deeply grateful to the government of Bangladesh for its generous humanitarian response to the Rohingya crisis," the US President said.

Mentioning that hosting over 1 million Rohingyas is a tremendous burden, he said the world knew Bangladesh's actions had saved thousands of lives.

"Your response is testament to the character and resiliency of the Bangladeshi people, forged in the hardships they endured in 1971."

As the largest humanitarian assistance donor in the world, the United States remains committed to supporting Bangladesh alongside their international partners, he said.

"I hope Bangladesh continues to demonstrate the leadership that has resulted in recognition from around the world, particularly ahead of the challenging monsoon season."

Bernicat highly appreciated women development and empowerment in Bangladesh under Sheikh Hasina's leadership. She also congratulated Sheikh Hasina on being honoured with the Global Women's Leadership Award-2018.



## Continue drives against drug abuse: Prime minister to RAB

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has gave directives to Rapid Action Battalion (RAB) to continue its drives against drug abuse as this menace is spreading fast in society.

"We've been able to achieve success conducting a drive against militancy. Now it'll have to be continued against drug abuse," she said.

The PM came up with the directive while addressing a function marking the 14th founding anniversary of RAB at its headquarters in the city's Kurmitola area.

Sheikh Hasina said drug abuse is spreading fast in society. Nothing can come as a bigger shock than for a family to find out that their child is addicted to drugs, she added.

She also asked intelligence agencies, other law enforcement agencies, BGB, defence forces, educational institutions as well as family members, to be careful so that boys and girls do not get addicted to drugs.

Besides, she directed RAB to continue its drives against different social problems, including food adulteration, smuggling, fake currency and passport forgery. Talking about militancy, she said it had now become a global problem but Bangladesh had set an example in containing the menace.



About the pirates in Sundarbans who have surrendered, the PM said they had to surrender and returned to normal life due to the rigid stance of RAB as the elite force had intensified its drives against them in the world's largest mangrove forest.

Regarding question paper leaks, Sheikh Hasina said the drive continued against this

criminal act during public examinations. Earlier on her arrival at the venue, the PM was given a guard of honour by a contingent of RAB.

At the event, she also laid the foundation stone of RAB Headquarters Complex and inaugurated "Prerana Dhara", a monument built in the memory of the RAB members who sacrificed their lives while performing duty.

## **PM asks Muslim countries to exert pressure on Myanmar**

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has appealed to the Muslim countries under the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) to firmly stand beside the forcibly displaced Rohingyas to protect their dignity and security as there is no scope for the organisation to overlook this crisis.

"The Holy Prophet's (SAW) message for us was to stand beside the distressed humanity. When the Rohingya community of Myanmar is being subjected to 'ethnic cleansing', the OIC fraternity cannot overlook it," she said.

The PM was speaking at the inaugural session of the 45th Session of the Council of Foreign Ministers (CFM) of OIC at Bangabandhu International Conference Centre in the capital on 5 May.

The theme of the year's meeting was "Islamic Values for Sustainable Peace, Solidarity and Development." This was the second time that Bangladesh hosted a CFM after holding the first in 1983.

Sheikh Hasina said the OIC must maintain international pressure on Myanmar authorities and make Myanmar deliver on the ground as it agreed with Bangladesh for Rohingyas to safely return from Bangladesh.

She said having one-fifth of the world's population, more than a third of the world's strategic resources and a number of rising economies with immense prospects, the Muslim world has no reason to fall behind. In this context, Sheikh Hasina focused on five points before the OIC foreign ministers..

Sheikh Hasina also said she believes that all the differences of opinion and views that exist in the Islamic world can be resolved by open-minded discussions and dialogue.

The Bangladesh PM said the Dhaka CFM has come at a very critical time of history. With the accelerating influx of technology, with a rising number of youth -- and inequality, intolerance and social injustice, with adverse climate change -- there has also never been a time more profound when our Islamic beliefs have so fundamentally been challenged.



The PM said the Muslim identity, wrongly though, is being equated with that of extremism and violence.

About Bangladesh development, she said, the country has made high marks in empowering women, progressing admirably in education and health, containing terrorism and keeping global peace through UN peacekeeping missions.

OIC secretary general presented a Gilaf of Holy Kaaba to Sheikh Hasina. The PM also inaugurated a commemorative postal stamp marking the 45th meeting of the foreign ministers.

Representatives of 57 countries, including 52 members of the OIC (out of 56), participated in the OIC CMF.

## **OIC Declaration: Dhaka rejects Islamabad's allegation**

Bangladesh has ruled out a serious allegation brought by Pakistan that Dhaka Declaration of the 45th OIC Council of Foreign Ministers was issued without any discussion with participating states.

The Pakistani Ministry of Foreign Affairs issued a press release from Islamabad on Sunday that read, "Just before the conclusion of the Conference, the host country circulated text of Dhaka Declaration. It only reflected the views of the host country, and therefore, issued under its own responsibility, signifying that the text was neither discussed nor negotiated by participating States. The Declaration is without prejudice to the well-established positions of OIC member states and the organisation, as enshrined in the CFM and Summit documents."

In response to Pakistan's claim, Dhaka yesterday made it clear that the draft of the Dhaka Declaration was received from the OIC Secretariat and suggestions of participating countries were included prior to the council adopting it.

"In view of this, the Ministry of foreign Affairs of Bangladesh is constrained to make the following statement: 'An original draft of the Dhaka Declaration was received from the General Secretariat of the OIC. Subsequently, some additional paragraphs were suggested by some member states, OIC related organisations and the host country. The suggestions were included in the draft declaration prior to its adoption by the council.

"However, there was no amendment made to the original draft of paragraph 18 concerning which Pakistan has made observations."

The paragraph 18 of the declaration reads, "We reaffirm our firm solidarity with Azerbaijan, Sudan, Comoros, Yemen, Libya, Syria, Mali, Somalia, Cote d'Ivoire, Central African Republic, Kosovo, Jammu and Kashmir and Northern Cyprus as well as all Muslim Communities and Minorities in non-OIC Member States within the established principle of the respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the States in which they belong consistent with international law and agreements."

## **Bangabandhu-1 launched**

Bangabandhu-1 satellite has been successfully launched in the orbit making Bangladesh's debut in the global space society.

The historic event took place at 2:14am Bangladesh time on 12 May when the country's first geostationary communication satellite started its voyage towards orbit from the Kennedy Space Centre in Florida, the USA. Falcon 9, the finest rocket of American firm SpaceX, started carrying the satellite to the orbit from the Cape Canaveral launching pad at 4:14pm US local time.

A Bangladesh delegation, led by Prime Minister's ICT Affairs Adviser Sajeeb Wazed Joy, witnessed the launching of the satellite, which was visible for around seven minutes in the Florida's clear sky.

Thousands of people across the world witnessed the launching, which was telecasted by different television channels and was webcasted by the SpaceX.

President Abdul Hamid and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina also joined the proud nation in witnessing the milestone event for the country's communication sector.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina greeted the countrymen for successful launching of Bangladesh's first communication satellite into space, saying that it added a new milestone to the path of continued advancement of the country.

Manufactured by the Thales Alenia Space of France, Bangladesh will operate satellite from 119.1 degree East using a payload comprising 26 Ku-Band and 14 C-Band transponders to deliver focused telecommunications coverage to Bangladesh. One transponder is equivalent to 36 MHz.

Ku-band covers Bangladesh and its territorial area of the Bay of Bengal, India, Pakistan, Nepal, Bhutan, Sri Lanka, Indonesia and the Philippines. C-band covers Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, the Philippines, Myanmar, Bhutan, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, and portions of Kazakhstan.

Two ground stations for controlling the satellite have already been built at Joydebpur of Gazipur and Rangamati's Betbunia. The satellite has 15 years for mission life span while another three years for its design.

## **PM warns students against violence**

Asking students to refrain from resorting to vandalism in educational institutions, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has said the government would no longer tolerate such activities.

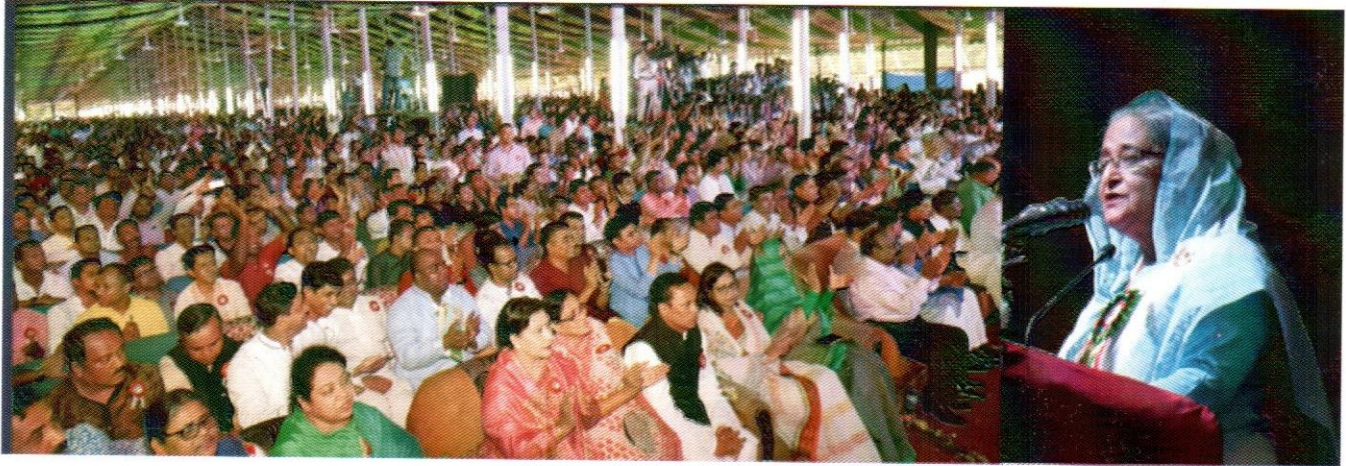


"Any sort of vandalism will not be tolerated. It will not happen that students vandalise their educational institutions and I accept this," she said while inaugurating the 29th national council of Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) at Suhrawardy Udyan on 11 May afternoon.

She said the law enforcement agencies have been asked to take prompt and appropriate steps against those students involved in vandalism.

Referring to the recent attack on the Dhaka University vice-chancellor's residence during the quota reform movement, she said such a heinous act did not happen in the country before.

"An investigation is underway. Many of those involved in the incident have already been arrested while



others will be picked up. I have asked the law enforcement agencies to take proper action against the culprits."

She thanked the general students and the BCL men as no major untoward incident took place in educational institutions in the last nine years.

Talking on a different note, she advised the students to use internet as a platform for learning. She asked them to keep themselves away from militancy, terrorism and drug abuse.

Describing the BCL's role in the country's Liberation War, all democratic movements and struggles, Sheikh Hasina said every achievement of the Bangalee nation came as a result of the sacrifice of BCL leaders and activists.

She said Chhatra League was one of the oldest student organisations in the subcontinent which earned freedom for the nation and worked for making independence and democracy sustainable amid intimidation from the military dictators during the pre- and post-independence periods.

She said the history of Chhatra League and Bangladesh was identical. "Bangabandhu had founded the student front when the Pakistani rulers attempted to snatch the rights of Bangalee people to speak in their mother tongue. Chhatra League was founded at the time of the Language Movement to establish Bangla as the state language."

Earlier, the PM hoisted the national flag at the council venue while the BCL president and general secretary hoisted the organisation's flag. She opened the council by releasing pigeons and balloons.

### **Give highest importance to people's rights: PM to members of police**

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has asked the police to give the highest importance to people's basic and human rights and the rule of law while discharging their duties.

The PM was addressing the passing-out parade of the 35th BCS batch of assistant superintendents of police (ASPs) at the Bangladesh Police Academy at Sarda in Rajshahi on 16 May.

Sheikh Hasina directed the police personnel to display a polite and sophisticated attitude towards women and children. "You must play the role of leaders to eliminate crime from society by building a people-friendly police force."

While speaking of how the government has gained success in uprooting terrorism from the country, Sheikh Hasina said drug was pushing the society towards the path of destruction like a disease.



"We have to save the nation from drugs. For that, you'll have to do special work ... we want you to take strong punitive actions against drug abusers, suppliers, traders and producers, whoever he or she is. For this, you must maintain good relations with the mass people," she said.

She has the belief that the police force will be successful in eliminating drugs from Bangladesh as they did in uprooting militancy.

The PM took salute and inspected the parade. She distributed medals among M Salman Farsi, Asma Akhter Sonia and Mahbub Hossain for their outstanding performance in different fields of the course.

Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan Kamal, Inspector General of Police Mohammad Javed Patwary and Principal of the academy Additional Inspector General Md Nazibur Rahman received the PM upon her arrival at the Sarda Police Academy.

A total of 123 ASPs, including 18 female officers, participated in the basic training of the newly recruited ASPs.

## **Run news on good jobs of government: PM**

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has urged journalists to properly run news on her government's good activities in the interest of the country.

"We don't want mercy and favour from anyone. But at least we can demand that if we do any good work for the country, it should be published properly not in the interest of me or my party, but in the interest of the country," she said.

The PM was addressing the biennial council of a faction of Bangladesh Federal Union of Journalists (BFUJ) at the Jatiya Press Club on May 17.





She said all should work together to brighten the country's image and inform people properly about their facilities.

The PM said Awami League does politics for the people and it established their voting rights. "Some 6,000 local government elections were held in the country during the tenure of the incumbent government. But no one could raise any question concerning a single election because we didn't interfere in those. It is the right of the people. If people vote for us, we will stay in power."

About her government's initiatives on the development of media, she said the AL

government gave approval to 44 private television channels after assuming power in 2009. Of them, around 35 were in operation now.

The AL government also formulated Bangladesh Journalist Welfare Trust Act, 2014, to help journalists. She urged the media house owners and businessmen to donate to the welfare trust fund.

Mentioning that her government already announced the 9th wage board for journalists, she said she wanted that it would become effective soon.

She blasted a section of people for saying that there was no freedom of press in the country. "If there is no freedom of press, how can they say it on television talk shows and write in newspapers?"

## **Hasina, Modi unveil Bangladesh Bhaban at Santiniketan**

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina inaugurated the 'Bangladesh Bhaban' jointly with her Indian counterpart Narendra Modi at Visva Bharati University at Santiniketan in West Bengal, India, on 25 May 2018.

'Bangladesh Bhaban' houses a museum showcasing Rabindranath Tagore's association with Bangladesh, Indo-Bangla relations, and the Liberation War of Bangladesh. The Bhaban has been built with funds from the Bangladesh government.

In her speech after the inauguration of 'Bangladesh Bhaban', Sheikh Hasina said Rabindranath Tagore belongs to both Bengals, and Shantiniketan is a reminiscent of Tagore.

The 'Bangladesh Bhaban' built in Visva Bharati University is the symbol of unity between the two Bengals, the PM said. She recalled how her father Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman was inspired and influenced by Rabindranath Tagore.

"Indians stood by Bangladesh, sheltered 10 million refugees, and provided shelter and training to the freedom fighters," the PM said, as she remembered with reverence the contributions of India and the then Indian PM Indira Gandhi during the Liberation War in 1971.

Sheikh Hasina expressed her gratitude to her Indian counterpart as she referred to the resolution of land boundary problem, that had festered between Bangladesh and India for over four decades, in June 2015 during Modi's visit to Dhaka, and completion of exchange of adversely-held enclaves by 2016.

"We have seen wars have been fought over territories in different parts of the world. But Bangladesh and India provided the only example of exchanging the enclaves in an atmosphere of brotherhood and festivities," the PM said.

The PM expressed hope that the unresolved issues between Bangladesh and India will be solved amid friendly relations between the two countries.

Speaking after Hasina, Indian PM Narendra Modi said Tagore belongs as much to India as to Bangladesh and added that the poet's idea of universal humanism had influenced Bangabandhu.

Modi also said India would give full support to Bangladesh's effort to become a developed country by 2041 and pointed out how New Delhi has given eight billion dollars line of credit to support Dhaka's development agenda.

Congratulating Sheikh Hasina and the people of Bangladesh for the launch of Bangabandhu-1 satellite, Modi said, "I am confident that new avenues will open up for cooperation between India and Bangladesh in the area of space technology." Bangladesh's achievements in social development indices can inspire India, he added.



Earlier in the morning, the Bangladesh premier arrived Kolkata on a two-day visit to West Bengal at the invitation of Narendra Modi.

Sheikh Hasina attended a Visva Bharati Convocation Ceremony and took part in the convocation procession and oath ceremony.

After the convocation ceremony, the Bangladesh prime minister and her Indian counterpart jointly unveiled the commemorative plaque of Bangladesh Bhavan.

Tagore's song 'Anandaloke Mongolaloke' was played at the ceremony. The vice chancellor of Visva Bharati delivered the welcome speech.

### **One-to-one meeting with Modi features security, politics**

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina held a one-to-one meeting with Narendra Modi where they discussed various issues, including security and politics.

## PM receives D Lit degree at Kazi Nazrul University

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has said Bangladesh is being built imbued with the non-communal spirit of poet Kazi Nazrul Islam.

"Nazrul was motivated by non-communal spirit. So, we're building Bangladesh with this non-communal spirit. Non-communal spirit is reflected in our principle and ideology where people, irrespective of their race and religion, will enjoy equal rights," she said.

"So, we hope you'll work with the same (non-communal) spirit," she said pointing at fresh graduates at a special convocation ceremony of Kazi Nazrul University (KNU).

Sheikh Hasina was addressing the function after receiving Doctor of Literature (DLitt) degree from the university at Asansol in Paschim Bardhaman district on 26 May.



The KNU authorities conferred the honorary DLitt degree upon Sheikh Hasina in recognition of her outstanding contributions towards building exploitation and disparity-free society, which is the ideal of poet Kazi Nazrul Islam.

Hasina said non-communalism and humanity were reflected in verses and works of Kazi Narul

Islam, known as Rebel Poet.

"I would like to request you to put humanity above everything in every sphere of life, not only in workplaces," she told the fresh graduates.

The Prime Minister said though the Bangla was parted, but the two great poets -Nazrul and Rabindranath were not divided. "They belong to the two Banglas (Bangladesh and West Bengal)."

She said Nazrul's spirit will remain for ages as source of inspiration for people to work for the welfare of the human being.

The Prime Minister said there are many resemblances between the characters of poet Nazrul Islam and Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. "One person was a poet of literature, while another was a political poet."

Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman brought poet Nazrul to Dhaka after the Liberation War. Bangabandhu also awarded citizenship to the great poet and declared him as the National Poet of Bangladesh.

West Bengal Education Minister Partha Chatterjee also spoke on the occasion, while Vice Chancellor of the Kazi Nazrul University Dr Sadhan Chakrabarti delivered the welcome speech.

## Meeting with Mamata

West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee made a courtesy call on Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at her hotel on May 26. They discussed issues of bilateral interests. A business delegation of Kolkata also met the Prime Minister.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina also visited Jorasanko Thakurbari and Netaji Museum during her two-day stay in Kolkata.

### No godfathers will be spared: PM

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has said steps would be taken if any innocent became a victim of the ongoing anti-narcotics drive. If anyone committed anything wrong during the drive, he would surely be tried, she said.

"Please show us at least one incident from what happened so far whether any innocent became a victim of it."

Sheikh Hasina was speaking at a press conference at the Gonobhaban to brief the media about her recent tour of West Bengal.

Mentioning that drug was like a disease in the society, she said more than 10,000 drug dealers and users were arrested in the drive, but no newspaper covered it properly.

While conducting the drive, the government did not consider whether a person was a "godfather" or a "don", the PM said.

About her India tour, Hasina said all the bilateral issues, including the Teesta (water sharing) agreement, were discussed during the visit.

The Rohingya issue also came up for discussion as India was extending all kinds of support to Bangladesh, including sending aid for the forcibly displaced Rohingyas.



The PM said Bangladesh wanted no return from India and the neighbouring country would ever remember Bangladesh for return of peace to it.

She said her government worked for the country's welfare and did not protect the interest of any particular person.

Asked about BNP's criticism that she went to India to ensure the Awami League's victory in the next parliamentary polls, the PM said, "I don't know whether India will bring me back to power or not."

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