

Economic performance a key factor for nat'l security: FM

UNB, Dhaka

In the wake of security threats emerging from non-military factors nowadays, such as socio-political unrest, Foreign Minister M Morshed Khan yesterday said that in the context of present globalised world, economic performance has become an important ingredient of Bangladesh's national security.

Morshed Khan said nowadays, states are faced with a variety of threats both intra and inter-state. "Broader threat perceptions also continue to persist -- regional hegemony, spheres of influence, domination and neocolonialism."

adding, "We must shape our security environment through an effective and realistic assessment of our national interest." The Foreign Minister said a vital priority is to strive for political stability at home, maintain constant vigilance, seek active cooperation and coordinated efforts abroad and engage in a continuous process of confidence building.

Morshed Khan said security is now regarded to have a much wider focus and range. "In traditional terms security is about threats to the existence of a nation state and adoption of emergency or extraordinary measures to deal with them. But non-traditional approach to security tends to make it all-inclusive."

BLUE FOR PEACE 'Govt nets militants for political gains'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP-led four-party alliance government has arrested militant kingpins Shaekh Abdur Rahman and Bangla Bhai for political gains and not for eliminating religious militants, said the participants at 'Blue for Peace' programme in the city yesterday.

They said a large number of militants carried out bomb attacks across the country under the protection of alliance government killing progressive political leaders, civil society members and intellectuals one after another, but the government has captured only two top kingpins.

Under the programme, a human chain was formed in front of slain former finance minister Shah AMS Kibria's residence in Dhanmondi.

Dr Reza Kibria, son of former finance minister, said the government which is the patron of the militants, caught them as if it is putting the pet birds into the cage. He demanded an international investigation for finding out the mastermind of militants and killers of his father.

'Indo-Bangla relations get a boost during Khaleda's Delhi visit'

PALLAB BHATTACHARYA, New Delhi

India's multidimensional relations with Bangladesh got a boost during Prime Minister Khaleda Zia's recent visit to Delhi and the two countries have a "significant convergence of interests."

"Our multidimensional relations and our traditional friendship and wide ranging cooperation with Bangladesh were given a boost during Prime Minister Khaleda Zia's state visit to India a few days ago," said Indian External Affairs Secretary Rajiv Sikri.

"With our respective rich natural and human resources, India and Bangladesh have a significant convergence of interests in taking full advantage of the shared opportunities, complementarities and synergies that flow out of our historical, geographical, political, economic and cultural closeness and in tackling some of the challenges...such as terrorism and drug trafficking," he added.

Sikri said, "Bangladesh is the most important neighbour and regional partner for India. In fact, I would say Bangladesh is special and unique for India because the Indian State of West Bengal, Bangladesh and the northeastern region of India had historically constituted an integrated space."

15 hurt as JCD factions clash at RU

UNB, Dhaka

Weather is likely to remain mainly dry with partly cloudy sky over the country in the next 12 hours until 6:00pm today. Day temperature may remain unchanged over the country, Met Office said.

Table with 4 columns: City/Town, Temperature in Celsius (Max, Min), Humidity in percentage (Morning, Evening). Rows include Dhaka, Chittagong, Rajshahi, Khulna, Barisal, Sylhet, Cox's Bazar.



Family members of slain former finance minister Shah AMS Kibria, civil society members and leaders of different organisations line up in front of Kibria's house at Dhanmondi in the city yesterday as part of the 'Blue for Peace' programme demanding fair trial of Kibria killing case.

Eden College reopens

DU CORRESPONDENT

The academic activities of Eden College resumed yesterday after a 16-day closure, but the presence of students was thin, as many students feared that the JCD activists might attack them again.

The four residential hostels of the college -- Hasna Khatun Hostel, Razia Hostel, Khodeza Khatun Hostel and Jebunnesa Hostel -- will reopen on April 3, 4, 5 and 6.

On March 13, the college authorities suspended all the classes for indefinite period and ordered the students to vacate the dormitories in the wake of students' demonstration against the Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) college unit's involvement in distributing residential seats in exchange of money.

The next day, the JCD activists launched an attack on the agitating students who defied the authorities' orders and forced them out of the dormitories.

A student, preferring anonymity, yesterday said some JCD cadres have threatened the agitating students with attack if they come to the campus.

Meanwhile, the college authorities are taking fresh initiative to allocate seats among the residential students.

Talking to The Daily Star, acting principal Prof Jahan-e-Gulshan said, "We are now making a list of legal residential students so that we can finish the job successfully."

Sources said a new hostel super committee is likely to be formed at the next academic committee meeting.

The five-member committee formed to investigate the attack on agitating students has been expanded by including four more members, as the head of the committee asked for more members.

At least 15 persons, including four policemen and a journalist, were injured in a clash between the law enforcers and Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) activists on Rajshahi University (RU) campus yesterday.

The clash erupted as the JCD faction loyal to RU JCD Convener Masudur Rahman attacked a police camp on the campus while chasing opponent faction member Anwar Hossain Nipu around 4:30pm.

Earlier in the morning, JCD followers of Golam Kabir beat up Masud over formation of the Bangabandhu Hall committee.

Masud's supporters chased Nipu to retaliate the attack on their leader, but Nipu took shelter at the police camp.

As the law enforcers prevented them from capturing Nipu, the JCD cadres led by Miron and Romel attacked them.

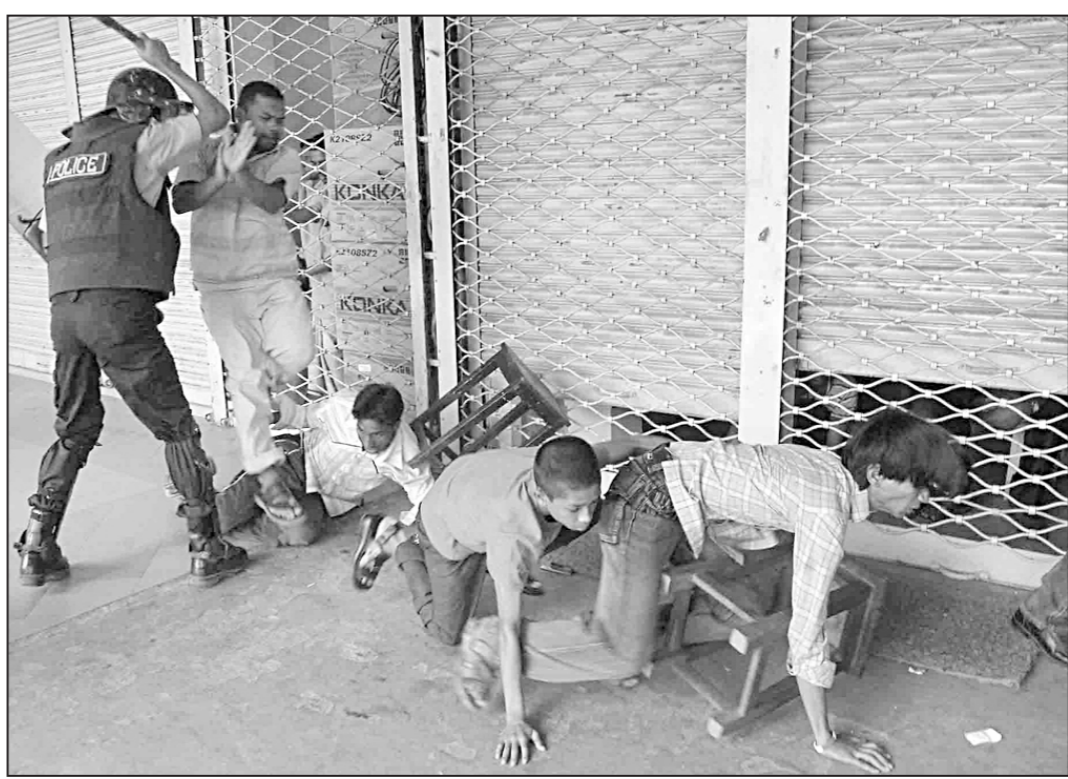
The policemen called for reinforcement who charged baton to fight back the JCD activists equipped with brickbats and iron rods.

Later, the JCD men assaulted RU Proctor Prof Enamul Haque and damaged his vehicle for allowing the police to set up the camp on the campus.

During the clash, the police beat up Ali Asgar Khokon, RU correspondent of the Daily Janata, mercilessly. He was admitted to Rajshahi Medical College and Hospital (RMCH).

Injured policemen--Rana Sarkar, Masud Rana, Abdur Razzak-1 and Abdur Razzak-2--were admitted to police hospital.

The injured JCD cadres--Masudur Rahman, JCD members Anis Ferdous Ratul, Mahmudul Hasan Miron, Nazmul Alam Bony, Hamidul Islam, Nipu and Shankar--were admitted to RMCH and shown arrested in a case for attacking the police.



Police club the pedestrians in the stadium area at Bangabandhu Avenue in the city yesterday during a sit-in programme of the opposition 14-party.

Empower women to stop early marriage

Speakers tell workshop

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a workshop yesterday reiterated the need for women's empowerment and self-reliance to prevent early marriage.

They also called for job-related education to ensure women's participation in national economy. The daylong workshop titled 'Programme and policy options for early marriage in Bangladesh' was organised by The Population Council at the Brac Centre Inn in the city.

Presenting the keynote paper on 'Causes and consequences of early marriage in Bangladesh', Dr Sajeda Amin, senior associate of The Population Council, pointed out that more than 70 percent of women between ages 18 and 24 were married before the age of 18 in 2005.

"Social and economic insecurity

plays a major role for early marriage in the country," she mentioned. Chaired by Dr Hameeda Hossain of Ain O Salish Kendra, the programme was attended by representatives of different organisations including Brac, Care, Unicef, and World Bank.

After the plenary session, a group discussion on 'Role and strategy for advocacy' was held. Speaking on the occasion, Afsan Chowdhury of Brac said, "We have to ensure participation, interaction and mobilisation (PIM) in the community advocacy."

The speakers said marriage costs and dowry, family motivation and mobilisation of communities to change marriage practices should be taken into consideration before adopting any policies to prevent early marriage.

Outlaws kill 1, blasts injure 3

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kushtia

Criminals killed a man in Chuadanga while two boys and a woman were severely injured in two separate explosion incidents in Khulna and Meherpur yesterday.

In Chuadanga, criminals allegedly belonging to an outlawed party killed a man at Khejurtala in the Sadar upazila. Police could not identify the 28-year-old deceased, our Kushtia correspondent reports. Locals found his body in a pair of jeans on a field and informed police.

Meanwhile, two boys were severely injured as a bomb they had earlier got in a dustbin went off around 10:45am on BL College road in Daulatpur in Khulna City, our staff correspondent in Khulna reports.

The injured Forkan, 10, and Jonny, 9 were admitted to Khulna Medical College Hospital (KMCH) for treatment.

Police said the bomb exploded when Forkan tossed it unwittingly. His right arm was blown off in the explosion while Jonny received severe splinter injuries. KMCH doctors said both are in a critical condition.

In Meherpur, Naria Begum, 37, wife of Nabis Uddin of Dorbeshpur in Sadar upazila, was severely injured when a bomb went off in her house around 9:30am, says our Kushtia correspondent.

According to police, Naria touched the bomb unaware that it was a bomb while doing her chores at home.

Her left arm and left eye were blown off and she received severe injuries to her face. She was admitted

to Chuadanga Sadar Hospital for treatment.

Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) arrested Kalu Kha of the village, also nephew of Naria, in connection with the bomb planting.

Rab sources said Kalu is a cadre of the outlawed Purba Banglar Communist Party (PBCP) Janajuddha faction.

Properties worth Tk 1 cr damaged Gournadi fire

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barisal

Fifteen shops were gutted and properties worth Tk 1 crore damaged in a devastating fire at Mahilara Bazar on Barisal-Dhaka highways under Gournadi upazila here yesterday.

Fire service and police sources said the fire originated from Makka Traders, a wholesale shop, and rapidly spread to the bazar at about 4:00am.

Fire Services from Gournadi station rushed to the spot and after two and half hours of efforts with the help of local people extinguished the fire at 6:30am.

Seventeen people were injured while trying to extinguish the fire.

Tank lorry owners' strike from tomorrow

BDNEWS, Dhaka

The Tank Lorry Owners' Association has decided to go for an indefinite strike from tomorrow protesting what it said non-implementation of a decision to raise transport fare of fuel oil.

The association informed Bangladesh Petroleum Corporation (BPC) of the decision in a letter yesterday.

It said a meeting between the BPC and the association on March 13 had decided to raise the transport fare of light fuel (diesel, petrol, octane, kerosene) to 20 paisa from 18 paisa per litre while heavy fuel (furnace oil) to 24 paisa from 20 paisa per litre.

The association said that as the decision was not implemented until Wednesday, it has decided to go for the strike.

Meanwhile, Energy Adviser Mahmudur Rahman has asked the BPC chairman to implement the decision.

19 foreign crews held for illegal fishing

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Members of Bangladesh Navy held nineteen foreign crews for illegal fishing in the Bay of Bengal inside Bangladesh territory in the early hours of Wednesday.

They also detained one Taiwanese vessel J Sing 1 and one Thai vessel Lien Hsing, used for illegal fishing near St Martin Island in Cox's Bazar and seized six tonnes of fishes, sources said.

The arrested crews, 11 Chinese, five Indonesians, two Filipinos and one Taiwanese, were handed over to Patenga Police Station yesterday.

Police in the afternoon produced the crews before the court that sent them to jail custody, sources added.

Seminar on women empowerment held in city

DU CORRESPONDENT

A seminar on empowerment of women was held at RC Majumdar Auditorium of Dhaka University (DU) yesterday, said a press release.

DU Vice-chancellor Prof SMA Faiz was present at the seminar as chief guest, while Jennifer Finch, adviser of an NGO The Good Earth, presented the keynote paper.

Department of Peace and Conflict Studies and The Good Earth jointly organised the seminar.

Dean of Social Science Faculty Prof Harun-or-Rashid, Chairman of Department of Peace and Conflict Studies Prof Dil Rowshan Ara Naznin, Prof Dalem Chandra Barman and Executive Director of The Good Earth Mohammad Rafiqul Islam spoke at the seminar.

Speakers at the seminar said women are to face difficulties in performing their duties in a patriarchal society.

However, they can overcome those if the women help each other, they added.

8 injured in road accident

BDNEWS, Bandarban

At least eight people, including six teachers, were injured yesterday morning in a road accident at Hafezkhana area on the Bandarban-Ruma road.

Police said the accident occurred when a Ruma-bound jeep overturned after its driver lost control and fell into a roadside ditch.

Of the injured, six were primary schoolteachers, including four females and two businessmen.

Miladunnabi April 11

UNB, Dhaka

The holy Miladunnabi will be observed across the country on April 11, as the moon of the month of Rabiul Awal was sighted yesterday.

The decision was taken at a meeting of the National Moon Sighting Committee at the Islamic Foundation yesterday evening, said a PID handout.

Chaired by Religious Affairs Secretary Muhammad Ataur Rahman, the meeting was attended, among others, by Islamic Foundation Director General M Fazlur Rahman and Meteorological Department Director M Akram Hossain.

Death anniversary



says a press release.

Today is the second death anniversary of Dr Noorunnahar Fyzennessa, a professor of the Institute of Education and Research (IER), Dhaka University,

The first elected woman member of DU Syndicate, Dr Fyzennessa was an eminent personality widely respected in academic and liberal political circles. She initiated the Liberation War memorials on the DU campus and Rokeya Hall premises.

The founder of Chayaneer, she launched a merit scholarship project, Rokeya Memorial Foundation. She was also a member of the Pay Commission and Asian Regional Population Association, Bangkok.

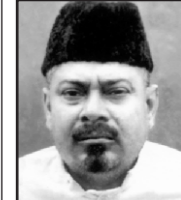
She was also the president of Dhaka City Mahila Parishad and Usha and vice-president of Women for Women.

Dr Fyzennessa also served as provost of the Rokeya Hall of DU. She played a significant role in the movement for establishing women's rights and the country's liberation struggle.

On the occasion of her death anniversary, a milad mahfil will be held at her residence after Asr prayers today.

Also, food will be distributed among the students of Deep Shikha, a school for the underprivileged, and among the orphans in two orphanages at Dhaka and Joydevpur.

Syed Nasiruddin Haider Rizvi



Today is the 35th death anniversary of Syed Nasiruddin Haider Rizvi, says a press release.

Friends and admirers have been requested to offer prayers for salvation of the departed soul.



Qulkhwani

Qulkhwani of Syeda Lutfun Nahar, wife of late Prof Abdul Majid Rushti, and her eldest daughter Humaira Haider, wife of late Shamsuddin Haider, will be held at Musurikhola Shah Shaheb Bari, 47, Shah Shaheb Lane at Narinda in the city after Asr prayers today.

Relatives, friends and admirers have been requested to attend the doa mahfil.

Humaira died due to massive heart attack after seeing the body of her mother.

Begum Lazzutun Nessa

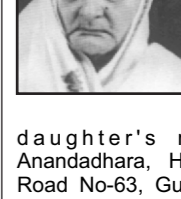


Narayanganj after Juma prayers, says a press release.

On the occasion, a milad mahfil will be held and foods will be distributed among the poor.

Relatives, friends and admirers have been requested to attend the milad.

Ahraj Tahera Khatun



Qulkhwani of Ahraj Tahera Khatun, wife of People's Ceramic Industries Ltd. founder director Ahraj Sekandar Khan, will be held at her daughter's residence at Anandadhara, House No- 12/A, Road No-63, Gulshan-2 after Asr prayers today, says a press release.

Tahera passed away on March 27 at the age of 78.