

FM holds formal talks with British counterpart

Foreign Minister Abdus Samad Azad briefed his British counterpart Robin Cook on the foreign policy initiative taken by the government of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina to improve Bangladesh's relations with neighbours, particularly with India, reports BSS.

The two foreign ministers in their formal talks on Thursday in London reviewed the entire gamut of bilateral relations as well as regional and international issues of mutual concern, according to a message received in the city yesterday.

During the talks, the two sides underscored the need for exchanging high level visits and regular consultations between the two foreign offices.

Dwelling on the efforts to improve relations with neighbours, Azad referred to the signing of the historic 30-year treaty on sharing Ganges water between Bangladesh and India and developments on sub-regional cooperation involving growth quadrangle as well as new areas of cooperation under SAARC.

Britain welcomed the Ganges water treaty and sub-regional cooperation, the message said. Cook expressed the hope that these would provide further opportunities for the South Asian region.

This was the first ministerial level visit from Bangladesh after the labour government assumed office.

Samad Azad apprised his British counterpart of the internal politics and economic situation in the country. He also mentioned the government's consensus approach to governance with parliament as the focal point. The government's policy to attract foreign direct investment and export-led growth strategy was also highlighted.

Besides political matters, trade and investment issues dominated the talks. The British foreign secretary reassured his country's support to Bangladesh regarding the GSP issue and derogation of rules of origin, the message said.

The two foreign ministers also discussed the preparation for the coming Commonwealth heads of government meeting, scheduled to be held in Edinburgh next month. Azad informed that Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina was looking forward to attending the meet.

The Bangladesh foreign minister as the coordinator of LDCs also apprised Cook about the coming high level meeting of the least developed countries, to be held in Geneva in October.



LGRD and Cooperatives Minister Zillur Rahman distributing prizes among the best Union Parishad chairmen at the Local Government Engineering Department Auditorium in the city yesterday. — PID photo

What's on today . . .

Award distribution ceremony: An award distribution ceremony on the occasion of National Education Week '97 will be held. Venue: Osmani Memorial Hall. Time: 4:30 pm. Chief guest: Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina.

Discussion: A discussion meeting on 'Law and order and checking smuggling' will be held. Organiser: Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FBCCI). Venue: FBCCI auditorium, 60 Motijheel. Time: 2:30 pm. Chief guest: Home Minister Rafiqul Islam.

Workshop: A national workshop on 'Government-NGO co-operation for poverty alleviation: Capability building to alleviate rural poverty under economic adjustments' will be held. Organisers: CIRDAP and ESCAP. Venue: CIRDAP auditorium, 17 Tophkhana Road. Time: 9 am - 5 pm.

Muktijuddha Jadughar: Shuosi Nara, Professor of Linguistics, Tokyo University, and president of Japan-Bangladesh Friendship Society in 1971, will reminisce about the War of Liberation. Venue: Jadughar auditorium, 5 Segun Bagicha. Time: 6 pm.

Bangla Academy: Prof Shuosi Nara will deliver a lecture on 'Bangladesh's War of Liberation and the Japanese People'. Venue: Academy seminar room. Time: 11 am.

Symposium: United Nations Association of Bangladesh (UNAB) has arranged a symposium in observance of the International Day of Peace. Keynote speaker: Prof Kabir Chowdhury. Chief guest: State Minister for Foreign Affairs A H Choudhury. Venue: Hotel Purbani. Time: 6 pm.

Zahir Raihan Film Society: Oscar-winning films — 'Through a glass darkly' by Ingmar Bergman, and 'The discreet charm of the bourgeoisie' by Luis Bunuel will be screened. Venue: German Cultural Centre. Time: 5:30 pm and 7 pm respectively.

Rotary Club of Dhaka New City: The weekly meeting will be held. Venue: FICCI, 35/1 Purana Paltan Line. Time: 6 pm.

Rotary Club of Ramna: The weekly meeting will be held. Venue: Dhaka Club. Time: 5:50 pm.

Rotary Club of Dhaka: The weekly meeting will be held. Venue: Sonargaon Hotel. Time: 5:30 pm.

Rotary Club of Shahbagh: The weekly meeting of the club will be held. Venue: Officers' Club, Baily Road. Time: 6 pm.

Call to make Fisheries Week a success

President Shahabuddin Ahmed yesterday said that the National Fisheries Week '97 will make special contribution in inspiring the people for fish cultivation side by side with increasing fish resources, fish preservation and expansion of fish technology, reports BSS.

In a message on the eve of the Fisheries Week, the President said the desired objectives could be attained through the spontaneous participation of the people with the government efforts in the development of fish resources.

In a separate message, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina urged all concerned to actively campaign during the Fisheries Week for developing pisciculture, reports UNB.

The fisheries resources not only make up our nutritional requirement but also are a source of earning foreign exchange," Sheikh Hasina said. "We should be careful in exploiting and expanding the aquatic resources".

She lauded the NGOs and welfare organisations which along with the government are playing active role in increasing fish production and poverty alleviation in rural areas.

The Prime Minister wished the success of the week-long campaign.

Youngman stabbed

By Staff Correspondent

A group of youths stabbed a young man at Jurain under Demra thana in the city yesterday.

The wounded person was identified as Mukter Hossain, 24, son of Abu Jafar of Commissioner Road at Jurain.

Hospital sources said a group of about five unidentified youths intercepted Mukter's motorcycle on Commissioner Road and stabbed him indiscriminately at about 5 pm.

He was immediately taken to Dhaka Medical College Hospital in a critical condition.



Shah Moazzem Hossain (R) addressing a Jatiya Party (Z-M) rally in front of the National Press Club yesterday. — Star photo

Sculpture on TSC island to be inaugurated Sept 17

By DU Correspondent

An anti-terrorism sculpture on the TSC island of the Dhaka University, built in memory of Moin Hossain Raju, will be inaugurated tomorrow.

Moin Hossain Raju, a leader of Bangladesh Chhatra Union (BCU), was killed on March 13, 1993 near the TSC while participating in an anti-terrorism procession.

The decision to inaugurate the sculpture tomorrow was made at a meeting between the Vice-Chancellor of the DU, Prof AK Azad Chowdhury, with the sculptor, Shamul Chowdhury, and leaders of Chhatra Union and Ganotantrik Chhatra Oikya.

Prof Azad Chowdhury will inaugurate the sculpture on the day at 4 pm at the TSC crossing. Former advisor of the caretaker government Habibur Rahman will be present as the chief guest while poet Shamsur Rahman will be the special guest.

Meanwhile, the BCU, at a rally on the DU campus yesterday condemned the attack on its activists by a Chhatra League activist on Sunday at the TSC crossing.

The BCU man assaulted some activists of the BCU following a controversy over the inauguration between the sculptor and the BCU leaders.

Ganotantrik Chhatra Oikya at a separate meeting also condemned the incident and demanded exemplary punishment of the activist involved.

PM shocked at loss of lives in train mishap in India

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has expressed her shock at the loss of lives in the disastrous train accident which took place Sunday in India, reports BSS.

Sheikh Hasina in a message to Indian Prime Minister I K Gujral said "I have been shocked to learn about the loss of lives as a result of the disastrous train accident".

Communist Kendro team calls on Hasina

An eight-member delegation of 'Communist Kendro' led by its joint convenor Ajoy Roy called on Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at her office yesterday, reports BSS.

They discussed socio-political and economic condition of the country. They also discussed country's education and agricultural sectors.

The prime minister gave an overview of the development programme undertaken by her government.

The political leaders also expressed their views on different issues.

LGRD and Cooperatives Minister Zillur Rahman, Awami League presidium members Amir Hossain Amu, Abdul Jalil and Post and Telecommunications Minister Mohammed Nasim were present.

The other members of the delegation were Dr Wazedul Islam, Moulana Hossain Ali, Nurur Rahman Selim, Dr Ashit Baran Roy, Atiar Rahman, Abdul Wahab and Masudur Rahman.

Rat-killing drive begins

A month-long countrywide rat-killing drive began yesterday with an aim to save crops from the attacks of rodents, reports UNB.

State Minister for Information Prof Abu Sayeed inaugurated the drive at the auditorium of Bangladesh Agricultural Research Council (BARC) in the morning. Agricultural Extension Department has launched the drive.

On the occasion, awards were distributed among those who killed the highest number of rodents in 1996. Prof Sayeed also visited an exhibition of rat-killing equipment and medicine.

Presided over by Director General of Agricultural Extension Department (AED) M Enamul Haq, the function was also addressed by Additional Secretary of the Agriculture Ministry M Abdul Halim awarding Ramesh Chandra Balne and AED Director Mohammad Delwar Hossain.

Officials said the rat-killing drive at district level will be held on Tuesday.

A four-day thana level programme, including rallies, is expected to be inaugurated by local MPs tomorrow.

Clarification

By Staff Correspondent

Mayn International Limited sent a clarification related to the news item, "Sacked garments workers gherao owners' house" published on September 13. Signed by Naveen Rahman, Director of the company it said that "The workers in question were not sacked. They left the factory on their own."

It further said, "It is not true that there were 3 months arrears in payment of wages when they left, nor was there agreement on the subject as alleged. However, they would be paid for the actual work done according to the records of the factory."



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