

PM arrives in London

BSS, London

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina arrived in London yesterday on the first leg of her visit to the United Kingdom and Belgium to attract direct investment and promote export as part of her economic diplomacy.

During her stay in London, the Prime Minister will hold a conference of the heads of Bangladesh missions in European countries today to work out a strategy for securing maximum benefits from the developed countries in the light of globalisation.

The Prime Minister will lead a strong Bangladesh delegation to the third UN conference on the least developed countries (LDCs) to be held in Brussels on May 14.

Sheikh Hasina is also expected to play a vital role in convincing the developed countries for maintaining the flow of official development assistance to the LDCs.

The official development assistance to the LDCs has been drastically reduced in recent years.

She will press home the demand for more investment and transfer of technology towards industrialisation in the developing countries and writing off debts.

At the Heathrow airport, she was received by a representative of the UK Secretary of State on Foreign Affairs and Bangladesh High Commissioner in UK Gyasuddin Ahmed.

SEE PAGE 11 COL 8

London confce of Bangladesh envoys today

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh envoys in Europe will attend a conference in London today.

The meet considered "a policy meeting" will be presided over by Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, who will stay in the British capital for three days before flying to Brussels to join the LDC meeting.

"The London conference of the Bangladesh envoys will review the progress and achievements of the government's domestic and foreign policy," said a policy planner involved in the preparations.

Dhaka has reshuffled ambassadors and high commissioners in several capitals.

Recently, new envoys have been appointed in six European capitals: London, Berlin, Moscow, The Hague, Paris and Geneva. But some are yet to reach their stations or present their credentials to the accredited governments.

Normally, it is customary for a diplomat in a large territorial area to hold consultation on a regular basis to "exchange views and review the progress of economic diplomacy."

Dhaka is still unable to formulate any format for ambassador-level consultations except when the envoys come back home on leave. However, it is not customary to brief the envoys when they return to their overseas stations.

Senior foreign ministry officials and the director general of Europe Desk at the foreign ministry chose to maintain a veil of secrecy about the content and format of the upcoming London meet.

INSIDE TODAY

Article 4

Rewards and reservations
Column: Between the Lines
By Kuldip Nayar

Literature 9

Book review: A comprehensive survey of urban governance in Asia

Business 6-8

UN-EU confce to draw investment to LDCs

Donors pressure ADB to refine poverty reducing goal

ECB rate cut comes under fire

	Sun Rises	Sun Sets
May 12		6.32 pm
May 13	5-18 am	

Prayer Timings		
May 12		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fazr	4-30	5-00
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	4-45	5-00
Maghrib	6-30	6-35
Esha	8-00	8-30
Source: Islamic Foundation		

SEE PAGE 11 COL 6

'Eviction notice' served on 200 business firms

Gulistan bldg being demolished without Rajuk's approval

RAZIUR RAHMAN

A developer has started demolishing the 50-year-old Gulistan complex, one of the oldest buildings in new Dhaka, to construct a multistoried building there without approval of Rajuk and clearance from the Department of Environment.

The Western Engineers Ltd has announced a plan to build a 20 -storey shopping cum commercial complex at the site.

Demolition of the four-storey complex began in the third week of last month after Bangladesh Muktiyoddah Kallyan Trust (BMKT), which owns it since independence,

served 'eviction notice' on about 200 business establishments housed there in the last week of February.

Most of the business firms had bought 'possession' at the complex and some others paid certain amounts as deposits. They all pay monthly rent. Besides, some are using rooms at the complex paying monthly rent.

The BMKT asked the business establishments to vacate the complex by May 31, saying they have been 'illegally occupying it'.

The Gulistan Building Babosayee Samity filed a petition with the High Court last month seeking a stay on demolition of the building. Following a time petition by

the BMKT, the court fixed May 24 for hearing of the petition.

Jahiruddin Babar, a leader of the Samity and owner of a film production and distribution firm, told this correspondent, "BMKT served the same eviction notice on all categories of business houses at the complex without any prior discussion with the owners of those."

About 80 per cent of the business firms are film distribution and production companies. Besides, there are banks, restaurants and shops of different kinds operating there for the last 30-40 years.

Traders at the complex alleged that despite repeated proposals from them for discussion, BKMT did

not respond.

"We are not opposing construction of the new complex but the authorities should have considered an option like demolishing it part by part and accommodating the affected business firms at the other parts," said a leader of the Samity.

Gulistan complex was originally owned by Fazal Bhai Doshani, who left for Pakistan during the Independence War. The government later handed over the 'abandoned property' to BMKT.

SEE PAGE 11 COL 1



Gulistan and Naz cinemas housed in Gulistan complex are being demolished to construct new high-rises.

BIMSTEC meeting to focus on setting up road, sea & air links

M ANWARUL HAQ

The ministerial meeting of the five BIMSTEC countries in the Myanmar capital Yangon later this month will focus on setting up multi-modal communications including surface, sea and air links among the members to bolster economic co-operation.

The meeting will also deliberate on removal of impediments to operational aspects of the Trans-Asian Highway, which provides scope for setting up of arterial road links among four of the five member countries.

The scope for establishing shipping links is seen as 'excellent' since all the five are littoral countries of the Bay of Bengal.

The BIMSTEC, launched in

Bangkok in 1997, comprises Bangladesh, Myanmar, Sri Lanka, India and Thailand. The grouping is considered a potential economic platform for promotion of trade, investment, tourism and aviation among its members.

Although the exact date for the meeting is yet to be announced, officials indicated that it could take place towards the end of this month.

This would be the fourth minister-level meeting of the BIMSTEC, to be represented by state ministers or deputy ministers for foreign affairs.

State Minister for Foreign Affairs Abul Hasan Chowdhury will lead the Bangladesh delegation at the meeting.

The meet is likely to deliberate also on tapping the potential in energy sector, collaboration and

pipeline supply of gas among the countries concerned.

It will review the six thrust sectors for which committees have earlier been set up. Bangladesh will head the committee on trade and investment while India, Thailand, Myanmar and Sri Lanka will lead the bodies on technology, transport and communications, energy, and tourism and fisheries respectively.

The grouping is working on forging stronger ties with development partners and international financial organisations. It is learnt to be seeking support of ESCAP for technical co-operation, particularly in the communication sector.

The first ministerial meeting of the grouping was held in Bangkok, the second in Dhaka and the third in

SEE PAGE 11 COL 6

Stolen software: DSE identifies main suspect

STAR REPORT

The Dhaka Stock Exchange (DSE) has identified the main suspect in the theft of its key market administration and surveillance software.

Law enforcers on Thursday night raided the house of the suspect, DSE's system engineer Muttahidur Rahman Shibly, but failed to arrest him.

Sensing that the suspect might leave the country, DSE alerted law enforcers at all the exit points of the country including the Zia International Airport and provided his photograph to them.

The Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) recovered a computer with the stolen key surveillance software on Wednesday from a broker's office in the DSE

SEE PAGE 11 COL 7

BSF had massed troops to capture Muhurirchar

NAZRUL ISLAM, Back From Feni

The Indian border guards, following their debacle at Roumari, had planned to capture the disputed Muhurirchar in Bangladesh's southeastern Belonia frontier, some 28 km from Feni town, on the night of April 21, a highly placed source in BDR said there seeking anonymity.

"With a clear intention to capture the disputed Muhurirchar and attack the Majumderhat Border Outpost (BOP) of Bangladesh Rifles (BDR), BSF had massed 250-300 troops on the other side of Belonia BOP," he told this correspondent during a visit to the frontier on Sunday and Monday last.

When this correspondent moved very close to the border and approached another official for comment on the border situation, he said, "There is still tension but we have been instructed by high-ups to keep mum."

Preparation for self-defence by BDR, based on 'secret information' from villagers, compelled BSF to immediately abandon its plan as it had a "bad experience" at Roumari on April 18, the source said.

But a huge BSF force is still deployed on the other

side of Feni border, he added.

BDR has 21 BOPs in the whole frontier. Two BOPs are under construction, in the frontier in Feni, surrounded by the Indian state of Tripura on three sides. BSF has 17 BOPs.

A total of 16 BSF and three BDR men were killed in an encounter when the Indian border guards intruded into Bangladesh territory at Baraibari in Roumari on the morning of April 18.

Some villagers at Belonia said, since the Baraibari incident, they are watching movement of BSF troops on the other side and keeping BDR men informed.

"For a few days after the (Baraibari) incident, they (BSF personnel) increased their strength and movement, abused us from across the border and focussed high-power search light on our villages, creating a terror. That is why we maintained a round-the-clock watch," said, rickshaw-puller Majid of Uttar Baorkhuma village.

Night vigil by villagers and 'village guards', which is usual in bordering villages, was intensified in Belonia after tension mounted following reinforcement and movement of BSF, said another villager Nurul Islam.

SEE PAGE 11 COL 6

Nor'wester kills 6, damages houses, crops in 4 dists

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

At least six people were killed and 80 others injured as severe nor'wester lashed Chuadanga, Gaibandha, Rajshahi and Magura yesterday and the night before.

Three persons were killed in Chuadanga, two in Gaibandha and the other in Rajshahi.

The storm also damaged homesteads, uprooted trees and electric poles, snapping power supply in three districts.

Our Correspondent from Chuadanga reports: Three persons were killed when a severe nor'wester lashed the district town and Begumpur union late Thursday night.

The dead were identified as Aziran Begum, 60, wife of Bisharod of village Nehalpur, Badar Uddin, 35, son of Bharash Mondal of village Dihikundo and Alraji Bibi, 60, wife of Bahar Ali of village Ranagohail. All the victims were from Begumpur union.

SEE PAGE 11 COL 8

3 murdered in city

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Three persons including an alleged criminal were murdered in separate incidents in the city yesterday.

Manik, 28, son of Mohammad Gofran, was found dead near Kawan Bazaar rail gate in the city's Tejgaon area in the morning.

He was shot in the head and stabbed in different parts of the body.

Police said Manik was wanted in eight cases under the Public Safety Act. He was also an accused in Dano Mizan Murder case.

He was a terrorist in the Kawran Bazaar area and one of the members of Picchi Hannan group, sources said.

Sources further said Manik might have been killed by the gang members as he was a DB source. On the basis of his information, DB team foiled an attempt of robbery at Kawan Bazaar on Thursday, they

added. Police recovered the body at about 7-30 am and sent it to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital for autopsy.

A case was filed with Railway police station in this regard.

In another incident, Khadiza, 3, was strangled allegedly by his father in their resident at Faidabad, Maddyapara, in the city's Uttara area early yesterday.

Local people caught the victim's father Abdul Khaleq and handed him over to police.

Police said Khaleq killed his daughter after an altercation with his wife Dulena.

Police said there were marks of injury in her throat. They recovered the body and sent it to the DMCH for autopsy.

Mother of the victim filed a case with Uttara thana in this regard.

Kafrul police recovered the body

SEE PAGE 11 COL 6



Banani residence of businessman Ashraful Alam (inset) where he allegedly committed suicide yesterday.

Certified copies of Bangabandhu Murder Case signed, sent to Registrar office

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

The certified copies of the judgements in the Bangabandhu Murder Case by the High Court, sentencing 12 to death out of the 15 accused, have been signed.

The copies are being readied for sending to the Registrar of the Supreme Court, the trial court and prosecution and defence lawyers, court sources said.

The certified photocopies of the split judgment given by the Death Reference Bench on December 14 and the Third Court's verdict on April 30 have already been signed and sent to the office of the Registrar on Thursday, the sources said.

After the certified copies are available to the defence lawyers, the accused will have a statutory 30 days to file a petition for leave to appeal before the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court.

The 30 days will be counted from the day the copies are given to the

SEE PAGE 11 COL 6

Mamun's men threaten complainant

OUR CORRESPONDENT, CTG

The petitioner in the case filed under the PSA against alleged criminal and Jubo League leader Mamunur Rashid for assaulting two senior journalists was threatened by Mamun's armed accomplices here in the early hours of yesterday.

Three armed terrorists went to the Firingee Bazar residence of the petitioner, Md Iskander Ali Chowdhury, at about 1 am and asked him to withdraw the case or face dire consequences. Iskander is chief sub-editor of the local Bangla daily Purbokone and one of the two victims of Mamun's attack.

The terrorists identified themselves as Rinku, Bikash and Mehdi.

They also asked the journalist to be present at and give coverage to a meeting they planned to hold in Bridgeghata area yesterday afternoon.

However, the meeting could not be held as police prevented it. But some processions were brought out in the area in support of Mamun and some of his accomplices.

A general diary was filed with Kotwali thana in this connection.

Uttara plots Landowners to lay siege to Rajuk office tomorrow

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Leaders of Rajuk Uttara Khatigrastha Kallyan Samity (RUKKS) yesterday demanded compensation in Rajuk's third phase project in Uttara at market price and allotment of one plot to each of the affected landowners.

RUKKS is an association of landowners who will be affected due to acquisition of land for the Rajuk's project. The acquisition process has started.

Addressing a press conference at Dhaka Reporters' Unity office in the city, RUKKS Convener Kudrat-e-Elahi said the affected landowners

SEE PAGE 11 COL 8