

## Bimstec ministerial meet begins Feb 7

BSS, Dhaka

The sixth session of the ministerial meeting of Bangladesh, India, Myanmar, Sri Lanka, Thailand-Economic Cooperation (Bimstec) begins in Thai sea resort of Phuket tomorrow, official sources said yesterday.

Foreign and commerce ministers of Bimstec member countries will attend the two-day meeting in separate sessions.

Foreign Minister M Morshed Khan and Commerce Minister Amir Khosru Mahmood Chowdhury will

leave for Bangkok today to attend the meeting where an agreement on free trade area (FTA) is likely to be signed.

The meeting is expected to review the level of progress in the implementation level in different areas of cooperation.

It will also evaluate the report of the Trade/Economic Ministers' Meeting and the report of the Senior Officials' Meeting (SOM).

The foreign ministers will review the draft programme of the forthcoming Bimstec Summit meeting, its agenda and the draft summit declaration.

Commerce Minister Amir Khosru Mahmood Chowdhury, who will lead a three-member Bangladesh delegation to Bimstec conference, will embark on another mission in Geneva, Washington, London, Tokyo and Brussels.

Commerce ministers from four other countries Barbados, Botswana, Fiji and Nigeria will also accompany him.

The five-member mission was formed during last Commonwealth Summit in Abuja, Nigeria, to help resume the stalled WTO talks.

During their visits to Europe and Asia, the mission will hold separate meetings with their counterparts.

They will also hold talks with secretary general of World Trade Organisation (WTO) and the commerce affairs/commissioner of European Union (EU).

## First return Hajj flight arrives today

UNB, Dhaka

The first return Hajj flight of Bangladesh Biman arrives in Dhaka at 5:20pm today carrying the pilgrims from Jeddah.

State Minister for Civil Aviation and Tourism Mir Mohammad Nasir Uddin will receive the devotees at Zia International Airport.

Bangladesh Biman, the national flag carrier, will operate its Hajj flights till March 4, said a press release.



PHOTO: PID

Outgoing Bhutanese Ambassador Dasho Dophu Tshering called on Prime Minister Khaleda Zia at her office in the city yesterday.

## DCC, Jica preparing master plan for waste management

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The master plan for proper management of increasing volume of solid wastes in the city is nearing completion, said DCC Chief Conservancy Officer Sohel Faruque.

Dhaka City Corporation (DCC)

with the help of Japan International Cooperation Agency (Jica) has been preparing the master plan.

The master plan for 15 years would take into consideration all aspects of waste management such as collection, local dumping, sorting, recycling and final dumping, the conservancy official said.

Jica has assured that it would help the city managers streamline the waste management sector plagued with various problems, he said.

With the growth of the metropolis, volume of kitchen wastes would

increase manifold within a few years. Without a master plan, waste management would become extremely difficult.

On the basis of the master plan that is likely to be completed within a year, the DCC would start running several pilot projects at different wards of the city.

At present, the city dwellers generate more than 4,000 metric tons of wastes every day. With its present resources, the DCC is able to clear only about 40 percent of the wastes.

## Large amount of carbon dioxide at Mutwail dumping site

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A Dutch team has recently discovered a large amount of carbon dioxide at Mutwail dumping site in the city, which can be used to produce enough methane gas to run a 'small power plant'.

The Dutch experts who conducted a study on the dumping site said the gas could be used for generating electricity. They came to

Dhaka in May last year to explore possibilities of recycling wastes.

"We have cleared the project and are now waiting for an investor to come forward," said Sohel Faruque, chief conservancy officer of Dhaka City Corporation (DCC).

Bulk of the 4,000 metric tons of biodegradable wastes produced in the city has been dumped over a large area at Mutwail daily since independence.



PHOTO: PID

ERD Secretary Mirza Tasadduq Hossain Beg and South Korean Ambassador Kyu-Hyung Lee sign an agreement in the city yesterday. Under the agreement, South Korea will provide 20 million US dollars in loan for expansion of distribution system of the Rural Electrification Board.