



UK Minister of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Office Douglas Alexander MP called on Prime Minister Khaleda Zia at her office yesterday.

UK state minister calls on FM

UNB, Dhaka

UK Minister of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Office Douglas Alexander MP called on Foreign Minister Mosharraf Khan at his office yesterday and discussed matters of bilateral interest.

They reviewed developments at regional and international level and expressed determination to further strengthen the traditionally excellent relations between Bangladesh and the United Kingdom, says a press release.

Douglas Alexander arrived in Dhaka yesterday morning on a day's official visit.

British High Commissioner to Bangladesh Anwar Choudhury was present.

Third bridge on river Karnaphuli demanded

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

conomic and industrial development on the other bank as well.

People from every strata of life joined the human chain.

Elderly revolutionist Binod

Bihari Chowdhury, Awami League President member Ataur Rahman Khan Kaiser, former MP and Gano Forum leader M. Kafil Uddin, Women leader Noorjahan Khan, popular folk-song artist Shefali Ghosh, singer Abdul Mannan Rana, Chittagong Press Club President Abu Sufian, Chittagong Union of Journalists President Mostaque Ahmad and Chittagong city corporation Ward Commissioner Hasina Jafor, among others, took part in the demonstration.

Later, the speakers at rally demanded of the government to take a specific decision on the construction of the Karnaphuli 3rd Bridge at the next cabinet meeting.

They highlighted the plights of people travelling to and from south Chittagong, Cox's Bazar and Bandarban and said that absence of the bridge was hampering eco-

Rights bodies demand arrest, trial of rapist policemen

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A number of rights organisations at a press conference yesterday condemned the gang rape of a housewife in a Chuadanga police camp Saturday night and demanded immediate arrest and trial of the culprits.

Bangladesh Legal Aid and Services Trust (BLAST), Ain o Shishai Kendra (ASK), Bangladesh Mahila Parishad (BMP), Karmojibi Nari, and eight other rights bodies said they would submit a memorandum of demands to the inspector general of police today and send a five-member fact finding mission to Chuadanga.

Farida Yesmin of the BLAST in the key briefing said rape is an offence that demands immediate arrest without any notice. But, in this case, the accused policemen have only been closed or suspended.

The speakers also alleged a vested quarter is trying to cover up the vile crime and destroy its evidence, and said the policemen involved in the outrage should be tried immediately under the Women and Children Protection Act.

BMP General Secretary Ayesha Khanam said, while the ruling party leaders repeatedly claim an improved law and order, the law enforcers make it clear there is no security for people, especially for women, in the country.

"The situation is so bleak that within a few days after the observance of International Human Rights Day and the Fortnight to Resist Violence against Women, law enforcers here gang rape a woman," she lamented. Quoting a BLAST report Ayesha said in January-June 2004 police sexually abused 35 women.

Bangladesh Jatiya Sramik Jote President Shirin Akhtar, Karmojibi Nari co-ordinator Arifa Akhtar, Rowshan Jahan Parvin of ASK, Upama Dasgupta of Samata and Hasina Akhtar of Nijera Kori were also present.

The BLAST said the policemen involved in the gang rape of a woman in Chuadanga should be tried under the Women and Children Protection Act.

They also demanded that the police

and the government take immediate steps to prevent such incidents.

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