



PHOTO: STAR

Bangladesh Paribesh Andolon forms a human chain at Shahabag in the city yesterday demanding an end to use of harmful chemicals in juice products.

FM to attend Asian Cooperation Dialogue

UNB, Dhaka

Foreign Minister M Morshed Khan is expected to leave for Pakistan tomorrow to attend the two-day Asian Cooperation Dialogue (ACD), a forum of 26 countries from East and West Asia.

Pakistan Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz will inaugurate the first-ever ACD ministerial conference while Chinese Prime Minister Wen Jiabao will deliver the keynote address.

Foreign ministers of 17 countries, including Bangladesh, Bahrain, Kuwait, Cambodia, Indonesia, Iran, Kazakhstan, Republic of Korea, Malaysia, Myanmar, Oman, the Philippines, Qatar, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Vietnam and the United Arab Emirates, will take part in the conference.

Thailand keen to help train policemen

UNB, Dhaka

Thailand is keen to extend its facilities to Bangladesh for training of police and other law enforcement agency personnel on anti-crime and anti-drug campaigns.

Thai Deputy Prime Minister and Interior Minister Chidehai Vanasatidya gave the assurance during a meeting with State Minister for Home Lutfozzaman Babar in Bangkok yesterday, according to a message received in the city.

They exchanged views on strengthening bilateral cooperation in the areas of common interest.

Expressing his appreciation about the renewed cooperation, the Thai deputy prime minister said Thailand has always been keen to strengthen ties with Bangladesh.

He mentioned that both the countries share a friendly and close relationship, even at the highest political level.

Babar emphasised the need for greater cooperation in training police personnel and combating crimes and drug trafficking. He proposed that the two countries might arrange exchange programme for the police officers for training.

The state minister also sought

Thailand's cooperation in improving the existing correction facilities in Bangladesh.

He apprised the Thai minister of different projects initiated by the government for poverty alleviation and improvement of law and order.

The two ministers also discussed ways of cooperation under the BIMSTEC joint working group on counter-terrorism.

Member of Parliamentary Standing Committee on home ministry Zahiruddin Swapan MP, former MP Mofiqul Hasan Tripti and Bangladesh Ambassador to Thailand Shahed Akhtar were present during the meeting.

Demonstration against PSCs on April 18

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Nineteen left-leaning political and socio-cultural organisations will stage a demonstration in front of the energy ministry on April 18 demanding cancellation of all production sharing contracts (PSCs) and compensation for Magurchhara-Tengratila gas fires.

The programme was announced at a meeting of the leaders of the organisations at the office of Bangladesh Samajtantrik Dal (BSD) in the city yesterday, said a press release.

The leaders demanded of the government to strengthen the activities of Bangladesh Petroleum Exploration and Production Company Ltd (Bapex) and stop what they said the conspiracy of looting the gas in the name of tri-nation gas pipeline and investment by the Indian company TATA.

They also demanded that the supply of gas to Kamafuli Fertilizer Company (Kafco) at a cheap rate should be stopped and the businessmen, bureaucrats and political leaders including the state minister for power, energy and mineral resources involved in looting national resources should be brought to trial.

The leaders said the US company Occidental damaged resources worth Tk 15,000 crore including gas worth Tk 5,000 crore in Magurchhara Gas Field, and then left the country handing over the ownership to another American company Unocal.

The Canadian company Niko Resources (Bangladesh) Ltd also damaged gas and other resources worth Tk 4,000 crore, but the government did not take any initiative to claim the compensation, they added.

The leaders said, "We cannot sit idle when the resources of our country are being looted, and industries, agriculture, electricity, port and other service sectors are being given to multinational companies."

B S D Convenor Khalequzzaman, Workers Party General Secretary Saiful Haque, Professor Abul Quasem Fazlul Haque, economist Abul Barakat, and journalist Kamal Lohani, were present at the meeting.



PHOTO: STAR

Dhakabashi organises a kite-flying competition at the central playground of Dhaka University in the city yesterday.

BALU, BELAL MURDER CASES

IGP in Khulna to oversee progress of investigation

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Inspector General of Police (IGP) Ashraful Huda arrived in Khulna yesterday evening from Dhaka to monitor the progress of the investigations of the murder cases of journalists Humayun Kabir Balu and Belaluddin as directed by the state minister for home affairs.

He will also hold a meeting with the DIG of Khulna Range, senior officials of Khulna Metropolitan Police (KMP) and SPs of ten districts of the division at 10:00 am today.

Editor of Dainik Janmabhumi Humayun Kabir Balu was killed in a bomb attack on June 27 last year in front of his office-cum-residence on Hazi Ismail Road.

Sub-Inspector Maruf lodged an FIR with Khulna thana as complainant naming none as accused on

August 29 last year.

Chargesheet of the case was submitted to the court naming eight outlaws of both M-L and Janajuddho factions of Purba Bangla Communist Party (PBCP) as accused.

Two out of the eight accused were later dropped from the chargesheet. One of them was BDR Altaf of Janajuddho, who died in a crossfire with police in October last year and the other is Iqbal Hossain Shwadin who is also a Janajuddho activist, now in the jail as an accused of the Dip Azad bomb attack case.

Chargesheet of the case is yet to be submitted allegedly due to negligence of the Investigation Officer (IO) who is an inspector of KMP Detective Branch.

Meanwhile, Journalist Belaluddin of Dainik Sangram was severely injured in a bomb attack

at the press club on the night of February 5 and succumbed to his injuries on February 11 while under treatment at Combined Military Hospital (CMH) in Dhaka.

Two separate cases were recorded with Khulna thana. Twelve persons were arrested by the then IO of the case, SI Asad.

But all on a sudden, Khulna thana Officer in Charge Iqbal Hossain was made the new IO who reportedly shelved investigation of the case for some unknown reasons.

He even refused to give out any information to the local journalists on the progress of the investigation.

The IGP has been accompanied by the DIG Shamsul Islam of CID, ASP of Dhaka CID Mostafa Abdul Halim and the legal advisor of the ministry of home affairs.



PHOTO: STAR

Children take part in a drawing competition at the Institute of Fine Art in the city yesterday.

ICM demands reform in election system

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Leaders of Islami Constitution Movement (ICM) yesterday demanded reform of the election system through a dialogue with all political parties.

"As the present election system helps the victory of corrupt and dishonest people having black money, arms and musclemen, the process has to be changed," they said at a grand rally at Paltan Maidan in the capital.

The ICM leaders said they would launch movement for Islami constitution.

They also criticised the BNP and Jamaat for exploiting the name of Islam.

ICM Amir and Chormonai Peer Maulana Syed Fazlul Karim said the country is on the verge of destruction due to widespread corruption and criminal activities.

He called for a unity with like-minded political parties who will never go against Islamic values and interest of the country.

He also called for a Jihad sacrificing life and wealth to establish the rule of Islam.

The meeting announced a series of programmes which included countrywide rally on April 6, demonstration on April 29, mass procession in Dhaka on August 19, and rallies and processions across the country on May 29 protesting arrest and repression on Alem and Olamas and demanding elimination of corruption and criminal activities.