

Security, trade

FROM PAGE 1
commitment to continue efforts at all levels to further strengthen mutual cooperation.

The last such meeting was held in April 2003 in Dhaka.

"I have come here with an open mind and expect forward movement in bilateral relations," Hemayet told reporters at the Indira Gandhi International Airport on his arrival in the Indian capital.

Saran received him at the airport.

"We will discuss all issues of bilateral interests and cooperation," Hemayet said talking to newsmen before leaving Dhaka.

"We are looking for a positive consultation and attaching considerable importance to the meeting. This is also significant for our foreign policy," he added.

Asked about the issues to figure prominently at the talks, foreign ministry officials said security, border management, trade and sharing of waters of the common rivers may come up for discussion.

The Bangladeshi side will reiterate the issues of duty-free access of Bangladeshi products, removal of tariff barriers and trade gap and the longstanding border demarcation.

Our New Delhi Correspondent Pallab Bhattacharya said the thrust of the talks is understood to be on security concerns of the two countries and enhancement of bilateral trade.

Hemayet, former Bangladesh high commissioner to India before taking over as foreign secretary recently, will meet Saran at 9:15 am at the Ministry of External Affairs. He will then call on Minister of State for External Affairs Ahmed.

This will be followed by two separate sessions of formal talks at Hyderabad House throughout the day today and, if needed, tomorrow morning. The two sides are likely to come up with a joint statement at the end of the talks, sources said.

Project cars offered

FROM PAGE 1
"Sometimes we work until midnight driving for those officials and their families," said an LGED driver.

At the secretariat yesterday, this correspondent found six drivers hanging the LGED identity cards around their necks, waiting in front of the LGRD ministry. They said the high officials of the ministry use the vehicles.

One driver who drive the car of a deputy secretary told The Daily Star that more than 20 LGED cars are being used by the LGRD ministry officials. "We work for LGED, but the service is handed over to the deputy secretary in the ministry," he said.

However, the rush of such luxury vehicles in the secretariat reduced following resignation of the state minister for energy AKM Mosharraf Hossain in a car scandal. Many officials now refrain from bringing such cars to the secretariat.

The parking space and the road in front of the LGED head office in Sher-e-Bangla Nagar always remain blocked with latest model luxury cars.

The officials also use the project cars for sending their children to schools in the morning and for shopping in the evening, the drivers said.

Sources said the use of official cars was prohibited after office hours during the Ershad regime. But the restriction was withdrawn following pressure from the bureaucrats.

Most of the cars used by the high officials are brought from donor-funded projects. Some of those cars were given them on completion of the projects while some others were requisitioned from the under-implementation projects.

State Minister for Local Government Kazi Haque Zia and a number of joint secretaries and deputy secretaries at the ministry use the LGED cars, the sources said.

A high official in the LGRD ministry admitted that the ministry officials use the LGED cars. "It is an open secret," he said, requesting anonymity. "There is a competition among the officials to get better cars from the LGED."

Two outlaws killed

FROM PAGE 1
arrest for several months, police said.

Jamal was a top cadre of outlawed Gono Mukti Fouz (GMF) and an accused in seven criminal cases including a police sub-inspector (SI) murder case.

Quizzed by Rab in Dhaka, Jamal admitted his involvement with underground politics and killing of police SI Ilias on December 24, 2003.

The outlaw also gave information about his arms caches at various locations in Kushtia, Rab said.

Later Rab-3 handed Jamal to Rab-6 in Kushtia the same day.

Accompanied by Jamal, a joint team of Rab and police went to village Hati-Abdulpani, raided Jamal's associate Azmot Ali's house at the village, recovered two foreign made rifles and arrested Azmot, accused in two murder cases.

As the joint force team was returning to Kushtia at about 4:30am, the GMF cadres attacked the law enforcers at Ujogram canal area, prompting the law enforcers to retaliate, a Rab statement said.

Trying to escape from the police van, Jamal got caught in 'crossfire' and died on the spot, the statement added.

Azmot was being interrogated at Rab office in Kushtia.

Our staff correspondent from

Hemayet will also call on Indian home, commerce and petroleum ministers tomorrow.

The Bangladesh foreign secretary is accompanied by joint secretaries of home and commerce ministries Elias Ahmed and Mohammad Mohsin, and directors general of South Asia at the foreign ministry Fazul Karim Chowdhury and Enayet Maula.

Hemayet is also likely to call on Indian President APJ Abdul Kalam and Prime Minister Manmohan Singh.

Meanwhile, Indian External Affairs Ministry spokesman Navtej Sarna said,

"The meeting provides a timely opportunity to review the entire gamut of issues between the two countries in order to strengthen mutually beneficial and friendly relations".

The two sides would discuss issues relating to security, border management, cross-border movements, cooperation in water resources, economic cooperation, defence exchanges, consular and cultural exchanges and other matters of common interest, he said.

Assistant Commissioner (Motijheel) Reza yesterday told The Daily Star police are raiding different places in the city to hunt down Ruhul.

Meantime, Office Secretary Mizanur Rahman of the JCD Dhaka city (North) unit in a press release yesterday said Liton and Ruhul were expelled from the wing on December 11 last year.

Aziz was never a member of the JCD, student wing of ruling BNP, claimed the release.

Bangladesh is opposing erection of a fence by India 150 yards inside the border, saying it violates a 1975 bilateral agreement on not constructing any 'defensive' structures.

India argues the structure does not violate the agreement. It has stopped fencing work at places where Bangladesh opposed specifically.

TK 12 LAKH MUGGING Two JCD men remanded

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday remanded the two students of Dhaka College and its pro-BNP Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) unit leaders for three days in connection with mugging Tk 12 lakh on Sunday.

Motijheel police arrested Golam Obab Liton, science and technology affairs secretary of JCD Dhaka College unit, and Azzul Haq, a member, after they mugged the sum from a jewellery shop employee.

But the police failed to nab Ruhul Amin, assistant general secretary of the college unit JCD, who fled with the money.

Dhahmoni police on Sunday night seized about Tk 10 lakh from a room at the International Hostel at Dhaka College following the arrestee's statements.

Sub-inspector (SI) Akhtheruzzaman took the arrestees to the Court of Chief Metropolitan Magistrate, Dhaka seeking a five-day remand.

Magistrate Mir Ali Reza of the Speedy Trial Tribunal after the hearing remanded them for three days.

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Aziz was never a member of the JCD, student wing of ruling BNP, claimed the release.

Official sources said the two sides will discuss pragmatic solution to the border problem which erupts from time to time.

Bangladesh is opposing erection of a fence by India 150 yards inside the border, saying it violates a 1975 bilateral agreement on not constructing any 'defensive' structures.

India argues the structure does not violate the agreement. It has stopped fencing work at places where Bangladesh opposed specifically.

The arrest, however, stemmed from a gross mistake in identity. The police were looking for a suspect named Milon Shaikh, the thirty-two-year-old son of Amzad Shaikh of Shai Khrapa staff quarter of Khulna city. An FIR-named Milon Shaikh as an accused in the murder of Manzur Morshed Labu, Secretary of Sonadanga thana Awami League, who was killed in a bomb attack in late January last year.

But the Investigating Officer (IO) of the case, SI Narhu Gopal, arrested the minor boy Milon Howlader after being bribed by the real suspect, Milon Shaikh, police later determined. The minor Milon was picked up on the night of May 2 last year. The IO of the case then sent him to court on May 5, showing a statement he made on May 2, showing him arrested in the murder case.

SI Gopal submitted a chargesheet for the murder case to the CMM Court on May 23 last year, accusing six persons of the murder. The minor boy Milon Howlader was named among them after the real culprit, Milon Shaikh, bribed the IO with Tk 2 lakh in order not to be charged.

The government transport pool failed to provide cars for so many ministers, state ministers, deputy ministers, and officials who are entitled to get government car, he said.

The official said the transport pool asked the officials to collect cars from the departments under the ministries concerned. Taking the advantage, the officials began to collect luxury cars from the departments and projects under their command.

Despite the investigation by the Metropolitan Police, the innocent Milon has been languishing in jail only for bearing the same name and also for failing to pay bribes to the investigating officer, the family of the victim alleged.

"My innocent son is still in jail. I want justice from conscious people of the society, who are fervently requested to help me get my son out from behind bars," said Yunus Howlader, father of the minor Milon.

Meanwhile, the real accused, Milon Shaikh, is yet to be arrested.

According to sources, a deputy minister who was earlier in the LGRD ministry was provided with a luxury car from the LGED. He however handed over the car very recently after using it for over two years.

Some of the officials use even more than one car, he said. But he noted that additional cars are necessary for conducting day-to-day work of the ministries.

"How can we work without a car because we have to go outside the secretariat several times in a single day," he said.

He said sometimes ministers visit their home districts with many people including journalists and they have to take project cars for the purpose.

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Asked about the cars parked in front of the LGED head office, Shahidul Hassan said all of those do not belong to the department. "Many of those belong to the officials of donor agencies who work with us," he added.

The canal is being filled up with garbage. The Dhaka City Corporation (DCC) staff are selling the garbage instead of dumping in the selected dumping site.

"We have to spend some money to collect the garbage," Alamgir said. The DCC cleaners and truck drivers supply garbage at Tk 150 to Tk 200 per truck.

"It is a source of income of the garbage cleaners and truck drivers," said a local tea-stall owner.

Iniscriminate filling up of wetlands in and around the capital has become rampant due to lack of monitoring by the Rajdhani Unnayan Kartripakha (Rajuk).

The wetlands are being filled up one after another. Now the wetlands in the suburb area are sold at Tk 4/5 lakh per katha. Influential people are grabbing this land and filling them up, locals say.

"Filling up wetlands is illegal but we do not have adequate manpower to monitor the earth-filling activities," said Rezaul Karim Tarafdar, member (estate) of the Rajuk.

Chandu was rushed to Bagmara Hospital where doctors declared him dead. Rab recovered a shutter gun from the spot.

Accused in three murder cases, the criminal was held responsible for many other crimes including a dozen murders in Faridpur, Atgharia, Sathia and Chatmohor upazilas in Pabna but local people dared not file cases against him, Rab said.

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23 policemen killed

General Hospital revised his earlier count of 20 dead to 13, saying he miscounted bodies amid the confusion. Massive car bombs usually scatter body parts over wide areas and emergency services often miscount them.

Dr Tahseen Hassan reported that Irbil Teaching Hospital received one body from the blast. Another injured man died at yet another hospital.

The attack occurred on a main street that leads to the oil-rich northern city of Kirkuk, which is south of Irbil, police said.

The bomber, wearing a police uniform, slammed his car into a gathering of some 200 traffic policemen in a courtyard behind the headquarters at 8 a.m., police Lt. Sulaiman Mohammed said.

At least 20 died and 100 were wounded, said Dr. Mohammed Ali of Irbil Hospital.

The previous investigation officer of the Khilgaon murder case on June 16 filed a petition in the Court of Chief Metropolitan Magistrate, Dhaka accusing Arman of the killing of the unknown man. The court granted the petition.

Arman was placed on the fresh remand following a petition filed by Rab-4. Sub-inspector Rifat Khan Rajib. The petition said Arman and his accomplices had killed a man on December 18 last year at East Rampura in Khilgaon.

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