

Iran assures cooperation in petrochemical sector

UNB, Dhaka

Iran has assured Bangladesh of considering cooperation in oil and petrochemical sector, particularly in the Liquid Petroleum Gas (LPG) sector.

"As a logical decision and as a base, the issues of oil and petrochemical are considered in Iran and naturally LPG is one of the elements being considered," Iranian Ambassador Hassan Farahzandeh told reporters after a meeting with Foreign Affairs Adviser Iftekhar Ahmed Chowdhury yesterday.

The ambassador mentioned the last year's ministerial meeting between Bangladesh and Iran in Tehran when the two sides signed an MoU for expanding cooperation in different promising areas for mutual benefit.

"There are a lot of issues in the MoU to be followed up," he said,

adding that they discussed ways of expanding economic and cultural activities between the two brotherly countries.

Referring to many commonalities in language and culture between the two countries, the ambassador said more than 8,000 Persian words are used in Bengali vocabulary.

Asked about the UN sanction on Iran for its nuclear enrichment programme, Farahzandeh said: "Sanction is not a new word or action against Iran."

He said people may suffer from the sanction but "I am afraid others may suffer more economically."

He conveyed Iranian Foreign Minister Manucheher Muttaqi's invitation to the adviser to visit Iran.

Foreign Affairs Adviser Iftekhar Ahmed Chowdhury said they have discussed bilateral issues of mutual interest and agreed to identify the areas very soon on

which the two countries would cooperate.

Asked about FTA between the two countries, he said it is too early to make any remarks about it but added that they would consider cooperation across the broader possible spectrum.

In international arena, he said Iran and Bangladesh have been partners and friends.

On Iran's nuclear programme, the adviser said: "We are very closely following it and we are very pleased to note that Iran has been very cooperative."

He said: "We see Iran as an important player in international arena and even in the situation of Iraq, Iran is playing a role which we hope will ultimately lead to the stabilisation of Iraq."

The adviser extended an invitation through the ambassador for the Iranian foreign minister to visit Bangladesh.



Jack, Beth Meyer contribute \$1m to AUW

Chairman of the Asian University for Women Support Foundation Jack R Meyer and his wife Beth Meyer have contributed \$1,000,000 to the work of building the Asian University for Women (AUW) in Chittagong, says a press release of the Foundation.

Their latest contribution comes on the heels of prior personal gifts for general support, a current use scholarship and an endowed scholarship.

It will be matched by \$500,000 of support from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation under an existing challenge grant to the university.

Jack Meyer is the managing partner and CEO of the Boston-based hedge fund Convexity Capital LLP. Prior to founding the largest ever start-up hedge fund in the United States, he served for over 15 years as head of the endowment of Harvard University.

Jack Meyer visited Bangladesh in February 2006 upon his election as the chairman of the Board of Directors of the Asian University for Women Support Foundation and spoke in gatherings in Dhaka and in Chittagong on the critical importance of women's education.

Rokia Rahman, chairman of AUW's Bangladesh Board of Advisors, commented: "We are deeply touched by Jack Meyer's leadership and immense commitment to the Asian University for Women. It is through demonstration of such leadership and global philanthropy that an institution like the emerging Asian University for Women can be created and nurtured. We owe Mr. Meyer a huge debt of gratitude for his relentless support of the project."

The Asian University for Women, chartered through an act of parliament in Bangladesh, is under development at a 100-acre site in Chittagong. Internationally acclaimed architect Moshe Safdie has been commissioned as the master planner for the AUW campus.

Case filed against Lobi

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A Bangladesh-born British national filed a case against former BNP lawmaker Ali Asghar Lobi, his wife Khorsheda Akhter, and two others with Gulshan police station early yesterday accusing them of forcible breaking and entering and looting of valuables.

In the first information report (FIR), complainant Zakaria Khan Junni mentioned that Lobi, his wife, and two other persons forcibly entered his house, damaged furniture and looted valuables on August 14, 2003.

He said a caretaker of the house on Road 42 in Banani was present there when the looting was carried out, Zakaria said.

Lobi is currently in detention following his arrest by the joint forces on charges of corruption.

Arrested Biman employee dismissed

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Biman Bangladesh Airlines yesterday dismissed Ashiqur Rahman, a mechanic of GS (Ground Support Equipment) at Chittagong International Airport, who was arrested by the joint forces.

The joint forces arrested him on Saturday for buying liquor illegally from the duty-free shop at the airport. He was not on duty at that time.

"Biman Bangladesh has fired him (Ashiqur) from his job," a public relations officer of Biman told The Daily Star.

The speakers said the indigenous women are also deprived in the families and they are the victims of early marriage, dowry, non-inheritance of property and wage discrimination.

Besides, they are also the victims of oppression by non-indigenous people who target them to exploit the indigenous people, they added.

The speakers stressed the need for combined efforts of Bangalee and indigenous women to resist violence and exploitation against them.

The first session of the seminar was presided over by a Khasi leader of Sylhet Nirola Tangsang, where rights activist Asma Kibria was present as chief guest and General Secretary of Bangladesh Mahila Parishad Ayesha Khanam as special guest.

Both of them hailed from Durgapur village under Palashbari



PHOTO: PID

President Iajuddin Ahmed presides over a meeting of the governing body of National Defence College (NDC) and Defence Services Command and Staff College (DSCSC) at Bangabhaban in the city yesterday.

COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIP

25000 poor women to be empowered by 2010

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Firoza was simply a housewife even a few years back and she was plunged into darkness one day when her husband returned home after losing his job.

Living at a village of Shaturia upazila in Manikganj, Firoza set up a poultry farm to rebuild her fate but this time she had to lose her house in river erosion.

But her painful days came to an end when Firoza got the job as sales representative of Unilever Bangladesh and started to earn a living by hard labour.

Her little daughter also started to go to school again.

Like Firoza, a total of 5000

women have been provided with job under the collaborative programme of Care Bangladesh, Unilever Bangladesh, Catalyst, Square Group and Bata in 19 districts across the country and changed their fates.

"By the end of 2010 we hope to reach 25,000 women living in extreme poverty-stricken areas like chars and haors of north-eastern and north-western region of the country," said Deputy Country Director of Care Bangladesh Hasan M Mazumder at a discussion yesterday.

The discussion titled 'Poverty and Business: Bridging the Gap' was held as part of its experience-sharing programme among the

partner organisations at the Headquarters of Care Bangladesh.

Representatives of the partner companies explained the strategies to empower the poor women.

They also discussed women's empowerment, gender and business, women enterprise development and violence against women.

The speakers said their overall effort is to focus on the importance of the collaborative partnership between private sector and development organisations to promote women's economic empowerment and fight global poverty.

Care Bangladesh started its Women's Development Programme in 1980s.

Comrade Abdul Hye passes away

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Comrade Abdul Hye, member of Narsingdi unit of Communist Party of Bangladesh (CPB) and vice-president of Bangladesh Krishak Samity, passed away yesterday at the age of 80.

He played an important role in generating peasant and communist movement in Narsingdi.

Different political and peasant organisations expressed deep shock at the death of this veteran peasant leader.

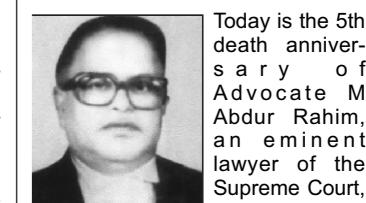
CPB President Manzurul Ahsan Khan and General Secretary Mujahidul Islam Selim in a statement conveyed deep sympathy to the members of the bereaved family.

They also said his life and activities will help people of the country find a way out of this crucial situation.

In another statement, Bangladesh Krishak Samity President Maulana Ahmedur Rahman Azmee and General Secretary Morshed Ali expressed deep shock at his death and conveyed sympathy to the bereaved family.

Paying tribute to the memory of Hye, they said he fought for the emancipation of the poor throughout his life.

Death anniversary



Today is the 5th death anniversary of Advocate M Abdur Rahim, an eminent lawyer of the Supreme Court, says a press release.

Friends, relatives and admirers are requested to pray for the salvation of the departed soul.

Dilruba Rahman



Today is the second death anniversary of Dilruba Rahman, wife of eminent film-maker Badal Rahman, says a press release.

On the occasion, a daylong Qurankhwani, deposite feeding and doa mahfil will be held at her residence at 3G, Eastern Housing, Siddheshwari in the city after Asr prayers.

Her friends, relatives and admirers are requested to attend the programmes to pray for salvation of the departed soul.

DHAKA TODAY Seminar

Commonwealth Journalists' Association organises a seminar on the occasion of the Commonwealth Day 2007. Venue: Radisson Hotel. Time: 10:30am.

View exchange meeting

South Asia Alliance for Poverty Eradication (SAAPE) and Imagine a New South Asia (INSA) will jointly organise a view exchange meeting titled 'Saarc for the people'. Venue: WVA auditorium. Time: 2:45pm.

Seminar

Bangladesh Association of Software and Information Services organises a seminar on 'The strategic approach to Japanese IT outsourcing market, trend of offshore software development in Japan and challenge to Japanese IT market'. Venue: Hotel Sonargaon. Time: 2:30pm.

Symposium

Bangladesh Society of Pathologists organises a symposium titled 'Pandemic threat of Avian Influenza Virus'. Venue: Milan Hall, Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University. Time: 9:00am.

3 arrested on charges of rape

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Three people were arrested on charges of violating a housewife in Tejgaon Industrial Area in the city on Saturday night.

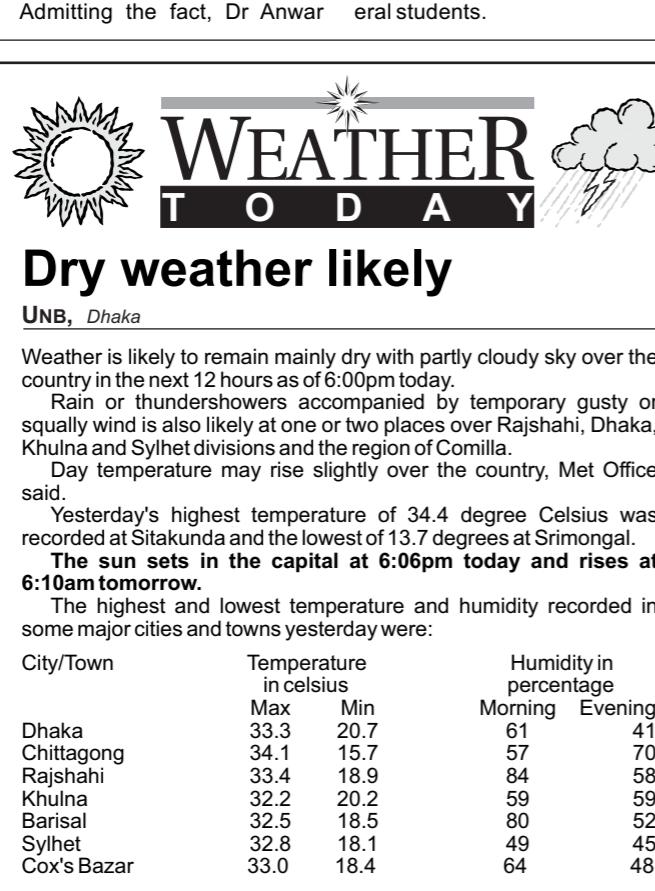
Police said the gang of three people entered the tin-roofed house of the woman at Dakkhini Begun Bari at around 10:00pm and violated her after locking her husband into another room.

When her husband raised an alarm, locals rushed to the spot and caught the three -- Nurul Islam, 50, Abdul Kader, 25, and Abdur Razzak, 28.

Later, they were handed over to the police.

A case has been filed with Tejgaon police station.

The victim is now undergoing treatment at Dhaka Medical College Hospital.



Dry weather likely

UNB, Dhaka

Weather is likely to remain mainly dry with partly cloudy sky over the country in the next 12 hours as of 6:00pm today.

Rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty or squally wind is also likely at one or two places over Rajshahi, Dhaka, Khulna and Sylhet divisions and the region of Comilla.

Day temperature may rise slightly over the country, Met Office said.

Yesterday's highest temperature of 34.4 degree Celsius was recorded at Sitakunda and the lowest of 13.7 degrees at Srimongal.

The sun sets in the capital at 6:06pm today and rises at 6:10am tomorrow.

The highest and lowest temperature and humidity recorded in some major cities and towns yesterday were:

City/Town	Temperature in celsius		Humidity in percentage	
	Max	Min	Morning	Evening
Dhaka	33.3	20.7	61	41
Chittagong	34.1	15.7	57	70
Rajshahi	33.4	18.9	84	58
Khulna	32.2	20.2	59	59
Barisal	32.5	18.5	80	52
Sylhet	32.8	18.1	49	45
Cox's Bazar	33.0	18.4	64	48

House caretaker shot in city

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Suspected extortionists shot the caretaker of a house at Jatrabari in the city yesterday.

Sources said a gang of three extortionists tried to cross the boundary wall of Hiru Mia's house at Pashchim Kazirgaon in Jatrabari at around 9:30am.

Seeing them entering the house, caretaker Mujibur Rahman, 50, tried to resist them and consequently the extortionists opened fire at him.

Bullet-hhit Mujibur is now receiving treatment at Dhaka Medical College Hospital.

Sources said the extortionists had been demanding Tk 5 lakh from Hiru Mia for the last 15 days.

Establish dignity of indigenous women

Speakers tell seminar

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Though it seems that the indigenous women enjoy more dignity compared to that of the women in greater society, in reality their dignity is yet to be established, said speakers at a seminar yesterday.

The seminar titled 'Violence against women and rights as well as dignity of indigenous women' was organised by Bangladesh Indigenous People's Rights Movement at Women's Voluntary Association (WVA) auditorium in the city to mark the World Indigenous Year.

The speakers said the indigenous women are also deprived in the families and they are the victims of early marriage, dowry, non-inheritance of property and wage discrimination.

Besides, they are also the victims of oppression by non-indigenous people who target them to exploit the indigenous people, they added.