

ADB assessing needs to back anti-crime drive

Says deputy director general

UNB, Dhaka

Asian Development Bank (ADB) is in a process of assessing Bangladesh's needs, including institutional capacity building, to support the country's ongoing drive against corruption and improve governance.

"We hope to process it this year," ADB Deputy Director General for South Asia Department Sultan Hafeez Rahman told reporters following a meeting with Finance Adviser Dr Mirza Azizul Islam at the Finance Ministry yesterday.

He was replying to a question whether ADB would help Bangladesh strengthen the capacity of its institutions like Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) in carrying out anti-crime drive to ensure good governance.

The senior executive of the Asian Development Bank arrived in the

city yesterday on a weeklong visit to assess the need of Bangladesh in this regard.

"What I can say is to see which area pays a great deal... be it Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) or other institutions," Sultan Hafeez said.

He added that ADB has active engagement in this area and its major priority is to promote good governance. "We'll continue our effort to be engaged in this area," he said.

The ADB official had talks with the finance adviser on the whole range of issues, including ADB's ongoing projects in Bangladesh.

Dr Aziz said the six-member ADB delegation, which included country Director Hua Du, appreciated the government's ongoing efforts and promised to continue their support to Bangladesh.

They had talks on a number of

issues, including governance reform programmes and power sector development, he added.

Later, the visiting ADB senior executive had a meeting with Anti-Corruption Commission Chairman Lt. General (retd) Hasan Mashhud Chowdhury at the Commission office.

They had talks on governance reform having several components. "We're very much engaged in governance reforms in Bangladesh," Sultan Hafeez told reporters after the meeting.

The ADB DDG is also scheduled to hold talks with few other advisers, Bangladesh Bank governor and the Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FBCCI) as well as visit Chittagong Port and Chittagong EPZ during the visit.

Conjoined twins die soon after birth

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Chittagong

Conjoined male twins were born at Chittagong Medical College Hospital (CMCH) yesterday.

The twins with joined head, chest and abdomen, however, died one minute after their birth.

The twins, weighing 1.7 kilograms, had separate ears, hands and legs in usual number while they shared a single mouth and nose.

A woman, 22, hailing from Patiya gave birth to the twins at about 12:30pm following a caesarean at the Antenatal and Labour ward of the CMCH.

She was admitted to the hospital on March 12, said Dr Samad, one of the four doctors who conducted the surgery.

Dr Lutfar Rahman, gynaecology consultant of the ward, said he did not heard of such birth of conjoined twins in the hospital in last five years.

He said the doctors could not find out the cause of their death immediately as they survived only for a minute, which was so little time to examine.

He, however, said this kind of twins might develop abnormality in internal organs that might cause their death.

Dr Hena led the surgery with the help of Dr Samad, Dr Bithi and Dr Kasem.

The doctors did not want to disclose the identity of the parents of the twins as the parents did not agree.

Dr Lutfar said they might preserve the twins in formalin in the hospital for study.

Smiling Sun clinic opens in Moulvibazar

A community healthcare centre has recently been inaugurated at Kalapur union in Srimangal, Moulvibazar, near the Chevron Bangladesh's gas field, says a press release.

This is the second clinic bearing the insignia of Smiling Sun. Chevron Bangladesh is providing financial support to these clinics.

Andrew L Fawthrop, president and managing director of Chevron Bangladesh, attended the inaugural ceremony as the chief guest while Robert J Timmons, Chief of Party, NSDP, was the special guest.

With the financial support of Chevron Bangladesh and the technical assistance of NSDP, Sylhet Samaj Kalyan Sangstha has set up and will run this second Smiling Sun clinic, a USAID supported healthcare programme.

Under this programme there will be one static clinic and two satellite clinics in the area. The satellite clinics will cover further 24 satellite spots in every month. The static clinic will have facilities for caesarean and normal delivery and will provide pathological as well as ambulance services alongside regular health care services.

Andrew L Fawthrop said, "The success in providing healthcare services to the local people through the first Smiling Sun clinic in Inatganj near the Bibiyana gas field has inspired us to establish this second clinic."

He hoped that it will usher in a new era by ensuring healthcare of local people. He also hoped that members of the community will extend their all-out support to ensure delivery of effective service.

Oxford Int'l School distributes Academic Excellence Award

Oxford International School yesterday distributed 'The Academic Excellence Award' to its students who achieved highest marks in the world and Bangladesh in different subjects in the GCE O Level Examinations of October/November 2006 of Cambridge International Examinations (CIE), says a press release.

Sharmin Khansur and Shajia Meraj achieved the highest marks in Bengali and Mathematics (Syllabus D) respectively in the world.

Among the students who appeared from Bangladesh, Sheikh Md Andan got the highest marks in English Language and Biology, AZM Ariful Haque Real in Additional Mathematics, Chemistry and Physics and Tasneem Akhter got the highest marks in Computer Studies.

William Bickerdike, Manager, South Asia of Cambridge International Examinations, handed over the certificates to the brilliant students as the chief guest.

Congratulating the award winners, William remarked that Bangladeshi students are talented enough to show their brilliance and competency in many areas across the globe.

Mark Parkinson, principal, head of school and GM Nizam Uddin, coordinator of the school, also spoke on the occasion.



PHOTO: BNP

Commonwealth Secretary General Donald McKinnon calls on BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia at her residence in the city, left, and Awami League leaders, right, at a city hotel yesterday.

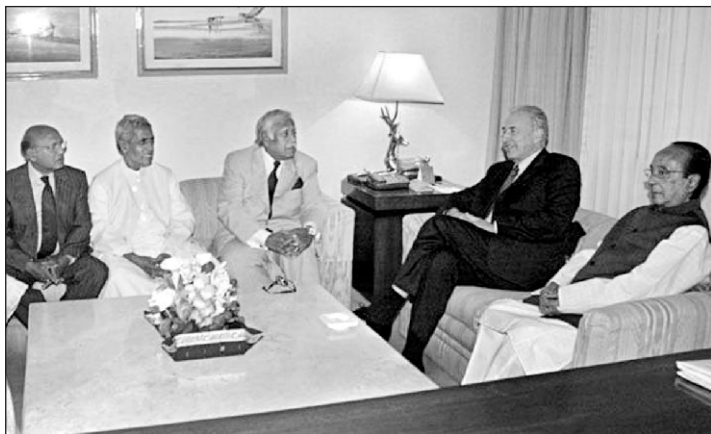


PHOTO: AL

Int'l Day for Elimination of Racial Discrimination today

UNB, Dhaka

Bangladesh reaffirms its unequivocal support for the efforts of the United Nations and international community towards the elimination of all forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance.

Chief Adviser Fakhruddin Ahmed said this in a message on the occasion of 'International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination' to be observed across the world today.

He urged all to protect the rights and interests of the disadvantaged in this era of globalisation. "I fervently hope that the goodwill and concerted efforts of everyone will win over the threat of all kinds of racism across the world."

Fakhruddin mentioned that Bangladesh's constitution prohibits its discrimination against any citizen on the grounds of race, religion, caste or creed, gender or place of birth.

"Also as a party to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, Bangladesh remains fully committed to upholding the sacred principles and objectives of the convention," he added.

Fakhruddin said the annual observance of this day reminds obligation of all to reaffirm commitment to foster respect, equality and diversity in our respective societies.

"As a result of the relentless fight against racism, we have been able to ensure basic freedom and rights of majority of the people but new forms of racism and intolerance threaten to undermine the achievements," he said.

The Chief Adviser said it is unfortunate that immigrants and asylum-seekers often face severe discrimination adding, "It's time we recommit ourselves to protect the rights of the migrant workers to ensure peace and harmony in our respective societies," he added.

Ensure citizens' right to information Speakers tell seminar

A daylong seminar on 'Access to information and prevention of corruption' was held at International Training Complex (ITC) of Bangladesh Public Administration Training Centre (BPATC) at Savar yesterday, says a press release.

The objectives of the seminar are to ensure citizens' right to information and to make the civil officers aware about corruption to prevent it in the country.

Rector Abu Md Maniruzzaman Khan chaired the seminar participated by high officials of different ministries, departments, Rep of UNDP, participants of 56th ACAD & faculty members to the centre.

Chairman of National Housing Authority Mohammad Shafiqul Alam presented the keynote paper while Secretary to the Anti-Corruption Commission Md Delwar Hossain was the key discussant.

Md Delwar Hossain explained the present activity of the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) and said everyone must abide by the rules to perform their duty.

After a daylong floor discussion a recommendation has been prepared that, how to eradicate corruption from Bangladesh through awareness building among the govt officials as well as the general people.

Director Dr Md Mafizur Rahman, Deputy Director Md Abdur Rouf Mia and Assistant Director TKM Moshfiqur Rahman were also present at the seminar.

Jewellery workshop owner held for cheating customers

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Members of the Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) seized 2.2 kilograms of gold ornaments from a jewellery workshop at Tantibazar in old part of the city and arrested one of its owner last night on charges of cheating customers.

Acting on a tip-off, a team of Rab-3 raided the workshop 'GS Manufacturing' on the first floor of Selina Gold Plaza at around 7:00 pm.

Rab sources said the workshop has long been manufacturing ornaments with 17-carat gold but marketing them inscribed with '21 carat',

thereby cheating the customers out of crores of taka.

This workshop, on average, produces 2.2 kg of gold ornaments everyday and supplies them to different parts of the country, they added.

The market price of 17-carat gold is around Tk 14,500 per tola whereas the same amount of 21-carat gold is sold at around Tk 18,000.

Rab arrested Sushil Dhar, one of the two owners of the factory, in this connection while Gonesh Debnath, co-partner of the factory, remained at large.

Later, Rab sealed off the workshop.

Ex-JCD chief constructs CNG filling station on 'grabbed land'

JU CORRESPONDENT

A former president of Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) has begun construction of a CNG filling station at Aminbazar in Savar.

Shahabuddin Laltu is constructing the filling station on a 40-decimal land of which 25-decimal was taken on lease from Roads and Highways (R&H) department.

The remaining 15-decimal land under Salehpur Mouza adjacent to Dhaka-Aricha highway was allegedly grabbed by Laltu during the tenure of immediate-past government in 2005.

The land was owned by Haji Mohammad Ali and Haji Giasuddin of Salehpur.

"As the land of R&H department was adjacent to my land, I applied several times to the authorities concerned to take its lease on priority basis but in vain," said Mohammad Ali.

"With the influence of government high-ups and police, Laltu took the lease of the land and threatened me and Giasuddin with death several times," he added.

Three shops were also demolished during the encroachment of the land.

Parvez Mallick, JCD president of Jahangirnagar University, was reportedly assigned to look after the grabbed property.

Meanwhile, in violation of the conditions put by the Ministry of Communication, Laltu failed to begin construction work of the CNG station within six months from the time of taking the lease.

Construction of the CNG station on the leased-out land must begin within six months of awarding the lease, but Laltu initiated the construction work only a week back.

"An investigation is being conducted against those who have failed to initiate construction work of CNG station on leased-out government property within the stipulated period," said a senior assistant secretary on condition of anonymity.

"There is no report on constructing 'Online Filling Station' owned by Laltu, and action including cancellation of lease will be taken if investigation finds the allegations true," he added.

Despite several attempts, Laltu could not be reached over cell-phone.



PHOTO: STAR

The funeral mass of Archbishop Michael Rozario, the highest religious leader of the Catholic Christians in Bangladesh, was held at St. Mary's Cathedral at Kakrail in the city yesterday.

Ex-AL lawmaker Dr Abu Yusuf passes away

UNB, Dhaka

Former Awami League lawmaker Dr Kazi Abu Yusuf passed away due to old-age ailments at Ibn Sina Clinic in the city on Monday night at the age of 83.

He left behind his wife Shawkat Ara Yusuf, three brothers and a host of relatives and admirers to mourn his death.

Dr Yusuf was first elected a member of parliament from Bhanga-Sadarpur constituency in 1979. Later, he joined the AL and was elected MP in 1991 and 1996 on party ticket.

Dr Yusuf was born in Kaolibera village under Bhanga thana in 1926. He dedicated his life to providing healthcare to poor people after completing his MBBS degree from Dhaka Medical College Hospital.

He was acclaimed for giving treatment to poor people during the Liberation War. He was an uncle of AL presidium member Kazi Jafarullah.

He was buried at his family graveyard at Kaolibera village in Bhanga, Faridpur. His kulkhwani will be held at his Sagarka residence at 46 Mirpur Road in the city after Asr prayer on Friday.

In a condolence message, AL President Sheikh Hasina expressed deep shock at the death of Dr Yusuf.

"The country lost an honest, ideal and dedicated politician and eminent social worker at the death of Dr Yusuf," she said.

Col (retd) Quazi Haider Ali

Col (retd) Quazi Haider Ali, a member of the Trustee Board of Bangladesh University, passed away due to liver problems at Apollo Hospital in New Delhi yesterday at the age of 65, says a press release.

He is survived by his wife and three daughters. His body will arrive in Dhaka tomorrow.

Vice-Chancellor of Bangladesh University Quazi Azher Ali expressed deep shock at the death of Haider Ali.

Md Lutfur Rahman



Md Lutfur Rahman, son of late Saffdar Khan of Chinisapur, Narsingdi, passed away due to intracranial haemorrhage at a hospital in Toronto, Canada, on March 6, says a press release.

He is survived by his wife, son, four daughters and grandchildren.

A doa mahfil will be held at his residence at 52 Alaol Avenue, Sector-6, Uttara, Dhaka after Asr prayers on March 23. Relatives, friends and well-wishers are requested to attend the doa mahfil.

Achhia Khatun

Achhia Khatun, mother of freedom fighter SM Yusuf, president of Lalbagh Thana Muktiyoddha Bahumukhi Samabaya Samity, passed away at a city hospital in the early hours of yesterday at the age of 71, says a press release.

She was buried at Azimpur Graveyard in the city.

Death anniversary



Today is the 15th death anniversary of Nurul Momen Khan Mihir, a former secretary and veteran freedom fighter, says a press release.

Quarankhwani and milad mahfil will be held at an orphanage on the occasion.

Mihir hailed from Bikrampur.

Abdul Zabbar Mia

Today is the 42nd death anniversary of Abdul Zabbar Mia, former president of the then Beraid Union Council at Badda in Dhaka, says a press release.

On the occasion, Baraid Public Library will hold a doa mahfil on March 23.

Abdul Zabbar was the maternal grandfather of former lawmaker AKM Rahmatullah.



PHOTO: STAR

M Syeduzzaman, a member of CPD Board of Trustees, speaks at a seminar titled 'Regional cooperation for agricultural development in South Asia' organised by Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD) at Cirdap auditorium in the city yesterday. On his right are Dr Quazi Shahabuddin Ahmed and Abdul Aziz while on his left are Touhid Hossain and Debapriya Bhattacharya.

Rab nabs 2 JMB men in Rangpur

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Rangpur

Members of Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) arrested two alleged members of Jama'atul Mujahideen of Bangladesh (JMB) from Gangachara upazila of the district on Monday night.

The arrestees were identified as Morshedul Islam, 34, son of Wahedur and Sirajul Islam, 50, son of Azizur Rahman.

Acting on a tip-off, a Rab team arrested them from their houses at Kuribishwa village of Kolkond union.

Rab sources said the arrestees were regrouping themselves in the district to commit onward incident ahead of the execution of the death sentences of top JMB kingpins.



New JICA resident representative

Nobuko Suzuki Kayashima joined as Resident Representative of Bangladesh Office, Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), on March 18, says a press release.

She replaced Akio Arai, who had been the resident representative since June 2004.

Kayashima Joined JICA in 1982. She completed her graduation in education science from the University of Paris V.

She served as director in Basic Education, Human Development Department at JICA Headquarters, prior to her new assignment.

MURDER CASE Eight get life

UNB, Mymensingh

A Mymensingh court yesterday sentenced eight people to life imprisonment in a murder case.

Judge of Additional District and Sessions Court-4 ASM Aminul Islam handed down the verdict to Suruj Ali, Muazzin Kitab Ali, Lutfar Rahman, Nekbar Ali, Jamshed Ali, Shahed Ali, Ayub Ali and Nayab Ali. Of them, Ayub Ali was tried in absentia.

The court also fined Suruj Ali Tk 10,000. If he fails to pay, he will have to suffer one more year's imprisonment. Others were fined Tk 5,000 each. If they fail to pay, they will have to serve six more months in jail.

According to the prosecution, the convicts stabbed Karim to death at Laowari village in Phulpur upazila on February 28, 2002.

WEATHER TODAY

Thundershowers likely

UNB, Dhaka

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

Temporary rain or thundershowers accompanied by gusty or squally wind is also likely at places over Dhaka, Rajshahi and Sylhet divisions and the regions of Jessore, Kushtia and Comilla.

Day temperature may remain nearly unchanged over the country, Met office said in a forecast.

Highest temperature 35.3 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday at Sylhet and lowest 14.3 degree Celsius at Srimongal.

The sun sets in the capital at 6:10pm today and rises at 6:01am tomorrow.

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 | 34.2 | 19.4 | 40 | 39 |
| Chittagong | 32.5 | 19.8 | 63 | 73 |
| Rajshahi | 32.4 | 16.6 | 64 | 48 |
| Khulna | 32.5 | 23.0 | 78 | 66 |
| Barisal | 33.5 | 20.0 | 81 | 64 |
| Sylhet | 35.3 | 18.5 | 41 | 29 |
| Cox's Bazar | 30.7 | 20.5 | 70 | 75 |