

OIC FOREIGN MINISTERS' CONFERENCE BEGINS TOMORROW

Dhaka to press for reducing economic disparity

Iftekhar tells journos

UNB, Dhaka

Bangladesh will press for reducing the rich-poor economic disparity in the Muslim world at the Islamabad conference of the foreign ministers of the OIC countries, beginning tomorrow.

Foreign Affairs Adviser Iftekhar Ahmed Chowdhury, who leaves for Pakistan today to attend the Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers (ICFM), yesterday said Bangladesh would press for reducing the economic disparity between the rich and poor member-states of the Organisation of Islamic Conferences (OIC), apart from important political issues.

Talking to reporters at the Foreign Ministry, he said although

OIC usually discusses political issues, it should also focus on economic development of the member-states.

A group of eminent personalities could be formed to make recommendation for cooperation to increase trade and economic development of the poor member-states.

The advisor spoke of Dhaka's proposition that development projects in poverty alleviation, health and education could be undertaken in poor countries with the assistance of the Islamic Development Bank, which is now showing interest in such activities.

Dhaka will also renew support to the establishment of Islamic

Common Market to increase trade among the forum's member-states.

The adviser said issues of Palestine and Iraq would be discussed at the three-day conference in the Pakistan capital.

In reply to a question, he said the longstanding Palestine problem could be resolved with establishment of an independent state of Palestine with Jerusalem as its capital. If the core issue of Palestine is resolved, the other issues in the Middle East could be settled as well, he observed.

On Iraq, Chowdhury, who had long served as Bangladesh's permanent representative to the United Nations, said the Iraqi people should be allowed to find

on their own the solution of their problems. He avoided a reply whether Dhaka wants pullout of the multinational forces from the war-ravaged Iraq.

On the sidelines of the ICFM, the foreign adviser will meet his counterparts from OIC countries, including the host Pakistan.

The adviser of the caretaker government said he would discuss with his Pakistani counterpart how to reactivate the Foreign Office Consultation to discuss bilateral issues between Dhaka and Islamabad.

There had not been any such consultation since 2005.

The adviser will return home on May 20.

PHOTO: PID

Cops confine journo for 4 hrs

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A reporter of an English daily was allegedly kept confined to Jatrabari Police Station in the city for about four hours yesterday over the assault of the driver of a CNG-run three-wheeler by a traffic police.

Esraf Hossain Esa, crime reporter of The News Today, said he was kept confined to police station from 10:00am to 2:00pm following an argument with Police Sergeant Emdad Hossain over the incident.

The driver was held by a traffic constable for parking his vehicle illegally near Maniknagar intersection at 9:30am.

He was assaulted as he delayed in giving the papers as demanded by the constable.

At this a crowd gathered there and Esa requested the constable to let the driver go.

Soon three sergeants reached the spot resulting a heated argument between Esa and Emdad.

Upon this Esa was taken to police station.

He also alleged that Jasimuddin Ahmed, joint commissioner of traffic police, threatened him using abusive words over land phone during his confinement.

Jasimuddin however denied the allegation and said, "Esa was taken to police station on charge of beating and misbehaving with a traffic constable."

Meanwhile, a press release of the Crime Reporters Association of Bangladesh (CRAB) demanded punishment to law enforcers including Jasimuddin for their involvement in the incident.

TORTURE OF STUDENT

Removal of principal demanded

RU CORRESPONDENT

Parents of a schoolboy yesterday demanded immediate removal of the principal of Rajshahi Adventists International Mission School as he physically tortured their son.

Hundreds of guardians, human rights activists and NGO workers at a press conference at a city restaurant also demanded exemplary punishment to the responsible school principal.

Student's mother Advocate Afzia Zebin Rinku alleged that school principal physically tortured her son Shardin Shalin for a little excuse and threatened him that if he tells his parents about this, he will be further beaten.

Due to torture, the student was seriously injured.

After the incident, the guardian submitted a written complaint against the principal to the president of Adventists Union Mission.

She also alleged that the principal violated child rights act and showed inhuman behaviour, adding that after the complaint the principal sent police to harass father of the student.

At the press conference, the guardians and human rights activists vowed to launch a social movement against the principal if he is not withdrawn from the school within seven days.

They also decided that they would submit separate memorandums to education adviser and Rajshahi police commissioner mentioning the misrule and dictatorial behaviour of the principal.

Human rights organisation ACD director Salima Sarwar and other guardians were also present at the press conference.

When contacted, School Principal Steffen Gomej told reporters that the student was punished for his fault.

PHOTO: AL

Former lawmaker Zahid Hasan Russel greets Awami League President Sheikh Hasina with a bouquet at her Dhanmondi office in the city yesterday on the occasion of the International Mother's Day.

Clampdown on recruiting agencies to have negative impact

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A delegation of overseas manpower recruiting agencies yesterday expressed grave concern over the 'unnecessary clampdown' on the manpower agencies, saying it will have negative impact on the manpower business.

The issues came up when the delegation met Iftekhar Ahmed Chowdhury, adviser to the ministries of foreign affairs and expatriates' welfare and overseas employment, at his foreign ministry office in the city.

The delegation also urged the government to make the passport

offices free of hassle and corruption and speed up the passport issuance process.

The recruiting agents include former Bangladesh Association of International Recruiting Agencies (Baira) leaders Mosharraf Hossain, Minhaz Uddin Ahmed, Mohammad Faruk, Sobhan Bhuiyan, Ali Haider Chowdhury, Mohammad Abdul Bashar, Reazul Islam, Abdul Alim, Mohammad Jahangir and Dr JH Gazi.

"We asked the adviser to take legal actions if there are proven allegations against any agency, but not to harass the innocent agencies," said a manpower agent who was in the delegation.

He said a trend has been observed among the law enforcing agencies that whatever the manpower businesses do is illegal. "They must change this apathetic attitude."

The authorities introduced E-ticketing, but many members of the law enforcement agencies do not understand it, which is why they do not allow entry of the travellers to the airport, he said.

The member of the delegation said police clearance for the passport takes too long and the hassle people face at the passport office is unbearable.

Arrest-panic grips RU Shibir, JCD leaders

RU CORRESPONDENT

Leaders and activists of Islamic Chhatra Shibir (ICS) and Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) of 11 halls of Rajshahi University (RU) are passing days amid arrest-panic.

The panic gripped them as the joint forces raided different dormitories two times in the last week to hunt down listed activists of ICS and JCD, who violated state of emergency by taking part in processions and distributing leaflets on the campus criticising the caretaker government.

Meanwhile, many resident students of different dormitories have left the campus fearing further raids by the joint forces.

Some students of Bangabandhu hall alleged that police also interrogated general students during the raids.

Students also alleged that police in their latest raid on May 9 on two dormitories arrested at least nine general students who do not have any political involvement. However, they were freed on bail next day, Mothor Police Station said.

University authorities have approved raids by the joint forces on any dormitory to maintain law and order at the university.

Admitting general students' harassment due to hall raids by police members, RU Proctor Enamul Haque told The Daily Star that we had a discussion with the police on the issue. We requested them to be more careful so that general students are not harassed when the raids are conducted, he added.

Police and intelligence branches recently prepared a list of leaders and activists of ICS and JCD who violated the state of emergency and who have criminal records, sources said.

WEATHER TODAY

Thundershowers likely

UNB, Dhaka

Rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty or squally wind is likely at a few places over Chittagong, Barisal and Sylhet divisions and one or two places over Rajshahi, Dhaka and Khulna divisions in the next 12 hours until 6:00pm today.

Day temperature may remain nearly unchanged over the country, Met Office said.

Highest temperature 36.8 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday at Sitakunda and lowest 21.1 degree Celsius at Chaudanga.

The sun sets in the capital at 6:33pm today and rises at 5:16am tomorrow.

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

City/Town	Temperature in celsius	Humidity percentage		
	Max	Min	Morning	Evening
Dhaka	35.7	23.3	62	44
Chittagong	34.5	26.3	63	66
Rajshahi	35.3	21.8	76	68
Khulna	36.0	22.8	73	49
Barisal	35.0	25.0	68	67
Sylhet	35.0	25.6	73	58
Comilla	34.5	26.1	60	92

PHOTO: PID

When contacted, School Principal Steffen Gomej told reporters that the student was punished for his fault.

PHOTO: PID

When contacted, School Principal Steffen Gomej told reporters that the student was punished for his fault.

PHOTO: PID

When contacted, School Principal Steffen Gomej told reporters that the student was punished for his fault.

PHOTO: PID

When contacted, School Principal Steffen Gomej told reporters that the student was punished for his fault.

PHOTO: PID

When contacted, School Principal Steffen Gomej told reporters that the student was punished for his fault.

PHOTO: PID

When contacted, School Principal Steffen Gomej told reporters that the student was punished for his fault.

PHOTO: PID

When contacted, School Principal Steffen Gomej told reporters that the student was punished for his fault.

PHOTO: PID

When contacted, School Principal Steffen Gomej told reporters that the student was punished for his fault.

PHOTO: PID

When contacted, School Principal Steffen Gomej told reporters that the student was punished for his fault.

PHOTO: PID

When contacted, School Principal Steffen Gomej told reporters that the student was punished for his fault.

PHOTO: PID

When contacted, School Principal Steffen Gomej told reporters that the student was punished for his fault.

PHOTO: PID

When contacted, School Principal Steffen Gomej told reporters that the student was punished for his fault.

PHOTO: PID

When contacted, School Principal Steffen Gomej told reporters that the student was punished for his fault.

PHOTO: PID

When contacted, School Principal Steffen Gomej told reporters that the student was punished for his fault.

PHOTO: PID

When contacted, School Principal Steffen Gomej told reporters that the student was punished for his fault.

PHOTO: PID

When contacted, School Principal Steffen Gomej told reporters that the student was punished for his fault.

PHOTO: PID

When contacted, School Principal Steffen Gomej told reporters that the student was punished for his fault.

PHOTO: PID

When contacted, School Principal Steffen Gomej told reporters that the student was punished for his fault.

PHOTO: PID

When contacted, School Principal Steffen Gomej told reporters that the student was punished for his fault.

PHOTO: PID

When contacted, School Principal Steffen Gomej told reporters that the student was punished for his fault.

PHOTO: PID

When contacted, School Principal Steffen Gomej told reporters that the student was punished for his fault.

PHOTO: PID

When contacted, School Principal Steffen Gomej told reporters that the student was punished for his fault.

PHOTO: PID

When contacted, School Principal Steffen Gomej told reporters that the student was punished for his fault.

PHOTO: PID

When contacted, School Principal Steffen Gomej told reporters that the student was punished for his fault.

PHOTO: PID

When contacted, School Principal Steffen Gomej told reporters that the student was punished for his fault.

PHOTO: PID

When contacted, School Principal Steffen Gomej told reporters that the student was punished for his fault.

PHOTO: PID