

Avail advantage of investment incentives in Bangladesh

CA urges Bahrain minister

UNB, Dhaka

Bangladesh and Bahrain showed interest in forging the highest level of cooperation in all the potential areas in the two countries.

The unanimous views came when visiting Bahrain State Minister for Foreign Affairs Dr Nezar Sadiq Al-Baharna called on Chief Adviser Fakhruddin Ahmed at his office yesterday, discussing the matters of mutual interest of the two countries.

It was the first-ever ministerial-level visit from Bahrain to Bangladesh, which is being considered 'beginning of a new era' in relationship between the two countries, according to an official.

During the meeting, chief adviser

stressed the need for strengthening cooperation in trade, commerce and investment in various sectors, particularly gas, petrochemicals, ICT, telecommunications and pharmaceuticals, to the mutual benefit of the two peoples.

"Bahrain can invest in Bangladesh availing of the advantage of attractive incentives offered by the government for foreign investors and the prevailing investment-friendly climate," he told the visiting minister from the oil-rich Gulf country.

He said Bahrain can import world-class pharmaceutical products from Bangladesh at competitive price.

Dr Nezar evinced interest in

exploring potential fields of cooperation in Bangladesh.

He said Bahrain is interested to recruit more skilled and semiskilled manpower from Bangladesh, apprising the CA that a new labour policy has been adopted in his country which would ensure insurance coverage to both the domestic and foreign workers with similar facilities.

Presently about 92,000 Bangladeshis are working in Bahrain, and the trend of recruiting manpower from Bangladesh is upward as 15,870 were taken in 2006 while 10,524 in 2005.

The Bahrain Minister lauded the caretaker government's reform recipe, particularly economic and

institutional reforms, under Fakhruddin's leadership.

Dr Nezar said he was pleased to visit Bangladesh and was impressed with the hospitality of the people of Bangladesh.

The CA appreciated Bahrain's impressive economic growth.

He said Bangladesh attaches importance to its fraternal relations with Bahrain and expressed satisfaction over the existing ties and cooperation between the two countries.

The CA invited the prime minister of Bahrain to visit Bangladesh. He conveyed greetings to the King and the Premier of Bahrain through the minister.



PHOTO: STAR

BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia visits ailing party Joint Secretary General Nazrul Islam Khan at Birdem Hospital in the city yesterday.

Security printing chief engineer suspended over graft charges

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Security Printing Corporation (Bangladesh) Ltd yesterday temporarily suspended Chief Engineer Anwar Hossain as he was arrested along with bribes on Tuesday.

General Manager (administration) of the corporation Majibbar Rahman said Anwar was suspended according to service rules and the suspension order will remain in effect until the investigation is completed.

"Action will be taken against him on the basis of the investigation report," he added.

Meanwhile, the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's court sent Anwar Hossain to Dhaka Central Jail after Gulshan police produced him at the court.

The police also sent documents of the case against him to the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) for investigation.

Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) sources said that DGFI and ACC officials are collecting information about Anwar.

Drugged rickshawpuller dies at hospital

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A rickshawpuller died at Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) in the early hours of yesterday after he had been drugged by a gang of Aggayan Party in the city on Tuesday night.

The victim was identified as Shahidul Islam, 25, a resident of Adabar area in the city.

Sultana Begum, wife of Shahidul, told the reporters at the hospital that her husband left the house with his rickshaw on Tuesday afternoon and had been missing since then.

Sultana and her family members went to different city hospitals in search of Shahidul and finally they found him dead at the DMCH.

But they could not find out his rickshaw.

DMCH sources said some unidentified people brought Shahidul to the emergency unit at around 10:00pm in an unconscious condition.

Shahidul became unconscious as he was drugged by the Aggayan Party men, sources added.

Summer Solstice Day today

Anusandhitsu Chakra, a science organisation, is going to observe The Summer Solstice Day for the first time in the country today, says a press release.

Summer Solstice Day is the longest day in northern hemisphere when the sun remains on the summer solstice line perpendicularly/vertically for a certain time and the summer solstice line passes on the middle of Bangladesh.

The organisation has called out elaborate programmes to observe the day at Bishwa Sahitya Kendra at Bangla Motor in the city.

Non-payment of arrears

RMG workers demonstrate in Gazipur

A CORRESPONDENT, Gazipur

About fifty garment workers who left A&A Garments in Gazipur about one and a half months ago staged a demonstration in front of the factory yesterday demanding payment of their arrears.

The workers also put a barricade on Dhaka-Gazipur highway for 10 minutes. Later, Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) and police rushed to the spot and brought the situation under control.

The agitators withdrew the barricade after they were assured that the arrears would be paid within a month following a meeting held between Rab and police and owners of the factory.

Amendment to city corpn act approved

Ward commissioners to get monthly remuneration

UNB, Dhaka

The ward commissioners of six city corporations are being put on payroll as the caretaker government approved a proposal for their monthly remuneration.

A provision has been incorporated in the draft ordinance determining who to carry out the responsibility of mayor in case any commissioner was not given the mayoral responsibility by the mayor in his/her absence.

Meanwhile, four of the six mayors have been arrested and detained during the ongoing army-led drive against serious crime and corruption.

For introducing monthly remuneration of the ward commissioners and provision of acting mayor, the existing city corporation ordinance and laws would be amended.

An unscheduled meeting of the council of advisers yesterday with Chief Adviser Fakhruddin Ahmed in the chair approved in principle a draft ordinance amending the existing City Corporation Ordinance and Acts.

The city corporation commissioners will get monthly allowance like the monthly remuneration drawn by members and commissioners of onion parishads and pourashavas.

The meeting was informed that of union parishad and pourashava chairmen, members and commissioners get monthly remuneration, but the ward commissioners of the six city corporations "don't get any remuneration for lack of such provision in the relevant ordinance and laws".

The meeting also approved in principle the draft of The Pourashava (Amendment) Ordinance 2007 to incorporate provision for suspension of commissioners of pourashavas, an official handout said.

Besides, the council of advisers was apprised of the ongoing activities and future plan of action under the Local Governance Special Project aimed at "strengthening, empowering and decentralizing local government institutions".

Mystery shrouds death of Ctg lawyer

CU CORRESPONDENT

Mystery shrouds the death of a lawyer in Chittagong yesterday.

The victim was identified as Advocate Din Mohammad, 45, son of one Mokbul Ahmed of Lalkhan Bazar area.

Police found Din Mohammad unconscious under the Dewanhat Overbridge in the port city at around 12.30am and sent him to Chittagong Medical College Hospital (CMCH) where the on-duty doctors declared him dead.

A mark of injury was found in his head, said the Double-mooring police.



PHOTO: STAR

Noted litterateur Hasan Azizul Haque delivers a memorial lecture titled 'Sufia Kamal and democratic movement' at the Biam auditorium in the city yesterday.

Rain likely

UNB, Dhaka

Light to moderate rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty or squally wind is likely at a few places over all the six divisions in the next 12 hours until 6:00pm today.

Moderately heavy rainfalls are also likely at places, Met office said predicting nearly unchanged day temperature over the country during the period.

Highest temperature 36.5 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday at Jessore and lowest 23.3 degree Celsius at Rangpur.

The sun sets in the capital at 6.49pm today and rises at 5:12am 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	34.4	27.7	93	84
Chittagong	34.4	27.5	69	76
Rajshahi	33.2	25.6	86	83
Khulna	35.7	27.5	70	94
Barisal	34.5	27.2	77	84
Sylhet	33.9	25.0	73	58
Cox's Bazar	34.5	27.2	63	67

Do not create any group of sycophants

Col Oli urges CG

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) Executive Chairman Col (retd) Oli Ahmed yesterday urged the caretaker government not to create any group of sycophants thinking that they will legalise its activities.

"Good deeds of the government must be appreciated, but there should not be any scope for sycophancy. The government should not create any such group to legalise its activities. Rather, it is the duty of the next government, whoever they are, to legalise this government's activities," he said.

The LDP leader, who quit the BNP in protest against corruption of the previous BNP-Jamaat coalition government, was speaking as the chief guest at a meeting in memory of four National Awami Party (Bhashani) leaders, organised by Bhashani Supporters Group at the National Press Club.

He said the politicians who desert one party and float another for their own benefit can never form a political party based on a strong foundation.

He also cited examples that many leaders from the BNP once joined the Jatya Party but finally quit it.

The LDP leader also said that many of his party leaders are revolting within the party because of his efforts to bring about massive reforms in the party.

"We are including more provisions in the party constitution so that the party refrains from calling hartal, laying siege and resorting to violent activities that hamper development and disrupt the public life," he added.

Besides, there will be provisions not allowing more than two persons of the same family to be members of the party's executive committee, Oli Ahmed said, adding that the presidium members of the respective regions will help form regional committees of the party and there will be no scope for the secretary general to form such committees.

Criticising the BNP, he said if Khaleda Zia and other top leaders of the party had listened to him, they would not have faced such grave danger today.

"The joint forces should investigate how the political leaders who virtually had nothing become the owners of houses in posh areas in the city," he said.

Journalist Gias Kamal Chowdhury and former director general of Bangla Academy Dr Ashraf Siddiqui also spoke at the meeting presided over by Bhashani Supporters Group President Moshtaq Ahmad Bhashani.

Tribute paid to Sufia Kamal

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a programme yesterday paid tribute to poet Sufia Kamal, a champion of women's rights, on the occasion of her 96th birth anniversary.

Bangladesh Mahila Parishad organised a memorial lecture titled 'Sufia Kamal and democratic movement' at the Biam auditorium in the city to mark the day.

Parishad President Hena Das said, "We want to establish a non-communal, humanitarian society free from discrimination and deprivation. To achieve the goal, we must seek inspiration from poet Sufia Kamal as she taught us how to fight."

"We are now passing a very crucial period and we have to move forward courageously," she added.

Delivering the memorial lecture, noted litterateur Hasan Azizul Haque said poet Sufia Kamal was always at the forefront of many democratic movements, although she was not a political activist.

Committed and spirited, she extended her helping hand to the nation during the critical periods, he said, adding that the poet always said that politics, economics, social science and culture are all for the welfare of people.

Parishad General Secretary Ayesha Khanam said the nation now needs a person like Sufia Kamal who played an important role in every democratic movement.

At the programme, the Parishad announced the name of the winner of newly instituted Sufia Kamal Honorary Award. Noted educationist Prof Golam Murshid won the award this year for his research work.

AUST closed sine die

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Ahsanulla University of Science and Technology (AUST) was closed yesterday for an indefinite period in the wake of protests by students demanding that the campus be shifted to the university's permanent building at Tejgaon Industrial Area from the rented buildings at West Tejuri Bazar in the city.

The students, who have been staging demonstrations for the last four days, said they have been raising the issue for the last two years, but the authorities remained indifferent.

They said the university authorities had signed an agreement with them on October 27, 2004 that the campus would be shifted to its permanent building by December 2006.

Since its establishment in 1995, the university has been conducting its academic activities at some rented buildings at West Tejuri Bazar at Tejgaon.

The university, with 3500 students, has no parking and other facilities, the students said.

They, however, said they are quite satisfied with the quality of education at AUST.

M Anwar Hossain, vice-chancellor of AUST, told The Daily Star that the university syndicate had closed the university for an indefinite period because of the present situation.

"But we are also in favour of the students' demand," he said, adding that the construction of the eight-storey permanent building is nearing its completion.

"We are trying our best to shift the campus to permanent location as early as possible," the VC said.

Police have been deployed on the campus yesterday morning.

Construction worker dies in rooftop fall

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A construction worker died after falling off the roof of a six-storey under-construction building at Lalmatia in the city yesterday.

The dead was identified as Mohammad Babu, 30.

Witnesses said Babu was working on the roof of the building and suddenly fell down to the ground at around 1:00pm.

He was rushed to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) where doctors declared him dead.

Recognise us as passport agents

Demand passport form writers

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Leaders of Passport Form Writers' Multipurpose Cooperative Society in a press conference yesterday urged the government to recognise them as 'passport processing agents' by issuing licenses to them.

The press conference was held at Dhaka Reporters' Unity auditorium in the city yesterday.

The passport form writers made the demand following government's recent decision to recruit 'passport agents' in a bid to make passport-issuing process easier for common people. The 'passport agents' would help people in processing documents and getting their passports.

Speaking at the programme, President of the Society Md Rafiqul Islam said that as they have prior experience in this sector, government should issue licences to them on priority basis.

Rafiqul Islam read out a written statement at the press conference while its Secretary Khondkar Muktar Hossain was also present.

New journal to bridge US-Bangla scholars' gap

Speakers tell launching ceremony

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Enterprise Institute (BEI) yesterday organised a seminar to launch 'Journal for Bangladesh Studies (JBS)', a joint collaboration of the scholars of Bangladesh and the USA.

The journal is a joint publication of BEI, Bangladesh Development Studies Initiative (BDI), a platform for expatriate Bangladeshis in the USA, and Services for Professional Education and Enterprise Development (SPEED), a concern of Scholastica Group.

Three issues of JBS will be published a year with scholarly articles from academics, experts, and practitioners in various fields concerning Bangladesh, the publishers said.

While presiding over the ceremony, BEI President Farooq Sobhan said the initiative envisages bridging the gap between the academics in Bangladesh and those in the United States of America (USA) to promote cross-fertilisation of ideas.

He hoped that the launching of the journal would encourage academic institutions to come forward to help these three organisations to reach out to a wider cross section of people, and attract local academics to contribute to this very prestigious peer reviewed journal. This would also in turn encourage the exchange of knowledge and expertise.

JBS will fulfill the very niche for peer-reviewed journals, said former adviser to the caretaker government and Chairperson of Scholastica Group Yasmeen Murshed.

There is no dearth of ideas and opinions but it is time to take a forward step towards academic analysis from mere opinion sharing.

"Bringing out the journal has been an uphill battle for us," Professor Syed Saad Andaleeb, programme chair, Marketing, Black School of Business: Pennsylvania State University, USA and also editor of the journal, said.

In the programme he also discussed the various challenges he

faced in bringing out the journal, including the quality of the articles that were turned in.

Speakers at the seminar said that, to address this lack of expertise to produce scholarly articles, local universities must take the lead to improve the quality of research in Bangladesh, and turn the universities to knowledge generation centres rather than only knowledge dissemination centres.

Manzoor Ahmed, director, Institute of Educational Development of BRAC University, Abul Hasan Chowdhury, former state minister for foreign affairs and Dr S Ferhat Anwar, a professor at the Institute of Business Administration of Dhaka University, also attended the seminar.

Prof Galib, 3 others chargesheeted

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Bogra

Special Trial Tribunal in Bogra yesterday framed charges against four people in two cases filed under Explosives Act, including Prof Asadullah Al Galib of Rajshahi University.

The court fixed July 17 for next hearing of the case. The court also rejected bail petition of Galib.

Other charge sheeted people are bomb-maker Shafiqullah, Joyanal Sarker and his wife Monwara.

One of the two cases was filed on January 14, 2005 following a bomb blast at Sahjahanpur that left a man killed and several others injured. Police submitted charge sheet in the case on March 13 the same year.

Another case was filed on January 15, 2005 following recovery of huge explosives from Chaksadu.

Inauguration

Jalladhana (Butchers' Den), a memorial for the people who embraced martyrdom in a genocide at Mirpur during the War of Liberation, will be inaugurated. Venue: Liberation War Museum. Time: 4:00pm.

Discussion

Steps Towards Development will hold a discussion on the occasion of the 96th birth anniversary of poet Sufia Kamal. Venue: Steps auditorium, 3/4 Block D, Lalmatia. Time: 3:00pm.

AGM

The 8th Annual general meeting of Nitel Insurance Company will be held. Venue: National Shooting Federation auditorium. Time: 11:00am.

Book fair

A book fair will begin in participation of Ankur Prakashani, Pragati Publishers and Onnesha Prakashan. Venue: Public Library premises. Time: 4:00pm.

Seminar on arsenic

Columbia University Arsenic and health Research Office in Bangladesh and Geography department of Dhaka University will jointly organise a seminar titled 'New findings concerning the health effects and geochemistry of arsenic'. Venue: Dhaka Sheraton. Time: 8:45am.

Post-budget discussion

Economic Reporters' Forum (ERF) will hold a post-budget discussion on the proposed budget for 2007-08 fiscal year. Venue: Cirdap auditorium. Time: 10:00am.

Debate

The prize giving ceremony of a three-day debate competition among the ASP-net schools will be held. Venue: Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (Buet) auditorium. Time: 3:00pm.

Workshop

STI/AIDS Network in Bangladesh organises a workshop on 'Advocacy and sensitisation on presentation of HIV/AIDS among young people in Bangladesh'. Venue: Biam Foundation. Time: 9:30am.

Foundation day

The 11th Foundation Day of Baridhara Society will be celebrated. Venue: Gulshan Club. Time: 7:30pm.

DUJ Discussion

Dhaka Union of Journalists (DUJ) and Bangladesh Federal Union of Journalists (BFUJ) will jointly hold a discussion on the Journalists Repression Day. Venue: National Press Club. Time: 11:00am.

View exchange meeting

Bangladesh Jatiya Mahila Ainijibi Samity and Women for Women will jointly organise a view exchange meeting titled 'Women's empowerment: Economic and political scenario'. Venue: National Press Club. Time: 3:00pm.

Exhibition

The inaugural ceremony of a solo exhibition titled 'Journey with wreckage' by Bipul Shah will be held. Venue: Gallery Kaya. Time: 6:30pm. The exhibition will run till July 4 from 11:00am to 8:00pm.

Sapling distribution

British America Tobacco Bangladesh organises a sapling distribution programme. Venue: Krishibid Institution. Time: 3:00pm.

Anti-tobacco discussion

Dhaka Ahsania Mission and World Health Organisation will hold an anti-tobacco discussion. Venue: BIWTC central office. Time: 11:00am.

Low over Bay intensifies

UNB, Dhaka

The low pressure over east central Bay and its adjoining areas has intensified into a well-marked low over the same area.

It is likely to intensify further and move in northwesterly direction, a warning message of the Met Office said yesterday.

Maritime ports of Chittagong, Cox's Bazar and Mongla have been advised to hoist distant cautionary signal number one.

All fishing boats and trawlers over north Bay and deep sea have been advised to come close to the coast and proceed with caution till further notice.

World Hydrographic Day today

Bss, Dhaka

The 2nd World Hydrographic Day will be observed across the world today.

The theme of the day this year is 'Electronic Navigational Chart (ENC), an essential element of safety at Sea and Efficient Maritime Operations'.

Hydrography is the applied branch of science, which is primarily applied for ensuring safe navigational passages through oceans, seas and rivers, said an ISPR release.

Obituary

Bss, Narsingdi

Shamsar Ali Bhuiyan, president of Belabo Upazila Awami League and former chairman of Belabo Upazila in Narsingdi, passed away due to cancer at Bangladesh Medical Hospital in Dhaka on Monday at the age of 65.

He left behind his wife, three sons and three daughters.

Dr Jerin Hyderi



Dr Jerin Hyderi, wife of Dr ATM Khaliquzzaman, passed away yesterday at the age of 47, says a press release.

She had long been suffering from cancer. She is survived by her husband and two sons.

Dr Jerin was the executive director of PSKP.

Death anniversary



Today is the 20th death anniversary of AKM Israil, an anti-British movement veteran and former general secretary of BM College in Barisal, says a press release.

Quranikhwani and doa and milad mahfil will be held in Dhaka and at his village home at Kalia in Baufal, Barisal.

P o e t R u d r a M d Shahidullah

Today is the 16th death anniversary of poet, lyricist and composer Rudra Muhammad Shahidullah, says a press release.

On the occasion, Rudra Smriti Sangsad will hold a discussion on the 2nd floor of Aziz Super Market at Shahbagh in the city.

Rudra Sangsad, Mithekhali, has also taken up elaborate programmes at the poet's home village at Mithekhali.

Falu's flats

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satellite TV channels ntv and rtv, last year gave \$50,000 earned from ntv's "Close Up One" programme to a Bangladeshi expatriate in the US named Hazrat Ali.

Bappi was also claimed to have said Falu has purchased a house worth 8-9 lakh dirham at Russell Khaimon in Dubai and that he also has hotel business in Saudi Arabia with the partnership of one Faruq in Madina.

The ntv MD, who was arrested by the joint forces on March 6 in the city, also told the investigators that Falu has shares of a restaurant in London where he also has a house.

Sources said Bappi also told interrogators that Falu has taken away Tk 8 crore from ntv showing over expenditure but did not pay for its shares. Bappi said Falu might have siphoned off the money to his nephew in Canada. Falu also did not invest in the daily Amar Desh but took shares of the newspaper.

Bappi told the interrogators that businessman Obaidul Karim and Shah Alam, the MD of Amin Mohammad Foundation, the chairman of Islam Group and the MD of Ashiyan City used to visit Falu.

Bappi told the interrogators that he made a mistake being engaged in businesses with BNP leaders.

Falu, arrested on February 5 by the joint forces from his city residence on corruption charges, is now on a four-day remand. Earlier, he was taken on seven days' remand in two phases.