

Dhaka, Delhi

FROM PAGE 1
These are the first steps towards removing the non-tariff barriers long demanded by Bangladesh to expand its market in India and especially stressed by Foreign Adviser Iftekhar Chowdhury during informal bilateral talks in April.

"The two sides emphasised the need for enhanced security cooperation, particularly information sharing between the authorities concerned," reads the joint statement.

Asked about the nature of information to be shared, Menon said, "It's the sort of cooperation that is not done well in the glare of light." The details of expanding security cooperation will be discussed in the upcoming meeting of the home secretaries of the two countries.

On the mud-slinging tradition over cross-border crimes, Menon said, "I think our securities are linked. We have a common security interest. Criminals, insurgents, terrorists—if any of these elements seek sanctuary, then it doesn't help either India or Bangladesh. We are both determined to work against this."

India will also provide Bangladeshi goods with duty-free access to its market "in phases" by December 31, with next month's meeting of the Joint Working Group on Trade to sort out how to reduce the number of goods on India's "sensitive lists" protected from the duty-free arrangement.

Asked if Dhaka has pressed for measures to reduce the cumulative trade gap of \$7-8 billion with New Delhi, Touhid said, "It will not happen overnight... I am sure we will reach a point where Bangladeshi exports to India will increase."

Both the foreign secretaries also identified completion of boundary demarcation, exchange of enclaves and adverse possessions as priorities that require "early resolution".

But, implementation of the 1974 Land Boundary Agreement will be considered practically on the basis of

"ground realities", the joint statement read.

India and Bangladesh share the longest land-boundary with each other.

"We would like to solve these problems as quickly as possible," said Menon, adding, "Nothing holds us apart [on the issue]... If it suits us both, if it suits the situation on the ground, we will implement soon."

The two sides also stressed the need for greater land and train links, with India to send a team in the first week of July to coordinate outstanding logistical issues to start the long-awaited Dhaka-Kolkata rail-link.

They also discussed greater tariff cuts, coordinated development of land customs stations, establishing "border haats" and greater Indian investment into Bangladesh.

Foreign ministry sources, however, said Dhaka's vacillation over the multi-billion dollar investment proposals from Indian business giants Tata and Mittal has annoyed New Delhi. These proposals will be considered by elected governments, said the sources.

Regarding water resources, the two sides decided to leave it up to the upcoming meeting of the water-resources secretaries at the Joint Committee of Experts (JCE) to sort out details on common river water sharing, minor irrigation and drinking water schemes, flood-mitigation cooperation, and dredging and river bank protection work.

The two foreign secretaries hoped to hold a Joint Rivers Commission meeting at the earliest after the JCE meeting.

During his stay, Menon also met with Chief Adviser Fakhruddin Ahmed, Foreign Adviser Iftekhar Chowdhury, and Army Chief General Moeen U Ahmed.

Dhaka expects

FROM PAGE 1
the victims of landslides in Chittagong.

Ahmed felt that foreign secretary-level meeting should be held on a regular basis for the stocktaking of bilateral relations, according to Chief Adviser's Press Secretary Syed Fahim Munain who was present at the meeting.

The head of the caretaker government said, "Bangladesh, as a matter of principle, does not allow its territory to be used by any force inimical to the interest of India."

About trade and economy, the CA recalled and welcomed the announcement of the Indian prime minister during the 14th Saarc Summit that India would accommodate duty-free access of products of the LDCs in the Saarc region, including Bangladesh, by December 2007.

On the point of duty-free access of goods, the Indian foreign secretary said, "We are on track."

On the water issue, Menon said the Joint Rivers Commission will meet soon to discuss the matter. Also, India, Bangladesh and Nepal will sit soon on flood control. He said they have already discussed the matter with Nepal.

About adversely possessed land, border demarcation and enclave issues, the Indian FS said they have submitted a proposal to the government.

The CA said spirit of cooperation can help resolve many issues strengthen bilateral relations.

He said economic development and prosperity of this region are common interest of the two countries and the next-door neighbours should work together to the mutual benefit of the peoples of both the countries.

"Minor irritants should not create hindrance to our friendly relations," the CA said, indicating some prickly issues.

Reciprocating the sentiment of the Indian prime minister about continuing effort to strengthen the bilateral relations, the CA said Bangladesh would like to carry out sincere effort for further deepening the friendly ties.

He mentioned that he had a fruitful discussion with the prime minister of India during 14th Saarc summit in New Delhi.

Terming the foreign secretary-level discussion fruitful, Shivshankar said connectivity issues like railway connection between Bangladesh and India were highlighted during the talks.

He observed that "there is a tremendous positive response" from the two countries towards the restoration of missing links.

The CA said passenger and goods train service between the two countries will help peoples of both the countries.

The Chief Adviser conveyed his best and warm wishes to Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh through the envoy and looked forward to meeting him in the future.

Foreign Secretary Touhid Hossain, Indian High Commissioner in Dhaka Pinak Ranjan Chakravarty and Bangladesh High Commissioner to India Liakot Ali Chowdhury were also present.

ADB okays

FROM PAGE 1
of the project administration unit of ADB's South Asia Department, said.

He also said that some 820,000 existing consumers in Dhaka will be directly benefited by this reliable power supply. It will also help manufacturing and service industries including the garment sector that employs several million poor people, he added.

The programme loans of \$60 million will be released in two stages. The loan carries a 24-year term including an eight-year grace period and will come from ADB's special funds resources.

The loan will also help reform the power sector through financial and organisational restructuring, improved governance and promotion of private sector partnerships, the press release said.

The chairman's power to nominate presidium members and candidates for elections would be scrapped.

Rawshan revolts

FROM PAGE 1
have to stand down as the chairman since he had already been convicted of corruption and had served a prison term for that. Besides, he has been at the helm since 1986.

Rawshan and her allies requested Ershad to serve as the chief adviser of the JP in the light of the reform initiative.

Party's Joint Secretary General SM Faisal Chisti read out the proposals. Shortly afterwards, Rawshan was faced with a barrage of questions from the reporters and struggled to give answers to many.

Asked on what authority she has announced herself as the acting head of the party, she said most of the presidium members endorse the move. She however could not give names and number of those she claimed to be backing her in command.

"Write whatever you think you should," she replied to a query about the status of the present committee of the JP.

"Everything will come clear once the ban on indoor politics is withdrawn," she said when queried if she had suspended the present JP committee.

Rawshan said, "These are all draft proposals and would be finalised at the council meeting." Again, she kept quiet when reporters asked who would then chair the council meeting. At one stage, she said, "We'll chair the meeting."

As questions kept coming to trouble her, she said, "Please try to understand. Most of the presidium members and young leaders are with us."

Then when asked why such a few were present at the press briefing, Rawshan replied, "It's because the press conference has been rescheduled and there is a ban on indoor politics."

"We were not under pressure from the government or from elsewhere to bring changes," she said.

The proposals say that party chairman and secretary general would be elected at the council meeting. Presidium, central committee, and workers committee members would

be elected through council.

ERSHAD'S BRIEFING
JP Chairman Ershad said Rawshan's activities and statements go against the party constitution. "She has no right to expel me or bring reforms in the party. We might take any action including expulsion against her," he said.

"I was elected chairman by the council and will continue in the post until the council chooses the next leader," said the former military强人.

Ershad formed a committee on reforms headed by presidium member Anisul Islam Mahmud.

"I'm not against reforms or new leadership," he said adding that the committee would draw up recommendations on reforms that will be discussed at the Jatiya Party presidium before being placed for approval from the council.

Ershad said some leaders of his party are issuing statements to the media, violating the party discipline.

"Such activities will not be tolerated. Our door is open. Those who don't feel comfortable can leave. But none will be allowed to spread confusion, using the party's name."

REFORM PROPOSALS

The reform proposals say the party chairman and secretary general would be elected for three years but not more than two terms.

An honours degree would be the minimum educational qualification for becoming chairman, secretary-general and president and general secretary of the district committees.

Any person convicted of corruption or criminal cases would not be allowed to be chairman, secretary-general, presidium members or members of the secretariat council.

Chairman, secretary general and presidium members will have to submit wealth statements every year.

The chairman's power to nominate presidium members and candidates for elections would be scrapped.

As questions kept coming to trouble her, she said, "Please try to understand. Most of the presidium members and young leaders are with us."

Then when asked why such a few were present at the press briefing, Rawshan replied, "It's because the press conference has been rescheduled and there is a ban on indoor politics."

"We were not under pressure from the government or from elsewhere to bring changes," she said.

The proposals say that party chairman and secretary general would be elected at the council meeting. Presidium, central committee, and workers committee members would

be elected through council.

"We came on Monday morning and waited till the evening. But failed to admit him. Today we brought him again but the doctors said he could not be admitted as they are on strike," said one of the relatives of Rustom Ali.

Till the afternoon only a doctor visited the patients in the coronary care unit (CCU), where the patients are supposed to stay under direct supervision for 24 hours.

One Swapna Parvin, 29, was found groaning in labour pain. She was admitted on Sunday and since then was waiting for a caesarean operation.

No doctors were found at 4:00pm to provide Swapna a prescription or take her to the labour room.

As the doctors were abstaining from their routine duties, the indoor patients were left almost uncared and unattended. However, they would have to pay Tk 500 as seat rent every day.

But the doctors said on the issue of uniform rule the authorities said it would take around a month and they did not accept.

"There was a misunderstanding and the letter was issued without the approval of the Board of Management," he said hoping the strike would come to an end within a day or two.

Meanwhile, during a visit to the hospital yesterday it was found that some patients were desperately trying to get admission in the country's lone diabetic hospital and others were found leaving the hospital fearing lack of treatments.

Hasina

FROM PAGE 1
also present their reform proposals after lifting the ban on indoor politics.

Toafai said AL's reform proposals "are not targeted at any individual" while Suranjit said their reforms are designed to implement "democratic process" in the party.

He urged the CG to form a human rights commission so that corrective actions are taken, rights are protected and awareness is developed. When formed, the commission could take initiatives to mobilise public support for overall economic and social changes in the

Tigers drown in runs

FROM PAGE 1

Bangladesh are going to face another embarrassing innings defeat as they were still 485 runs behind just to make the hosts bat again.

After toiling the whole day out on the ground, there was a small consolation for the visitors as Javed Omar and Shahriar Nafees successfully negotiated three overs to see the day off at 3-0 although Lankan skipper used three bowlers including Muralidaran. Bangladesh lost their way in the match after some shocking batting in the first innings to be bundled out for 89 runs.

With the huge total, Sri Lanka clipped their previous best of 555-5 declared in 2001 at the same venue against the Tigers.

Resuming the day on 227-3, Sri Lanka lost two wickets in the first session, but before that opener Vandort completed his second hundred against Bangladesh by making 117 runs off 155 balls that contained nine fours and three sixes. He was caught at short-leg off left-arm spinner Mohammad

Shafiq.

Another overnight batsman Tillakaratne Dilshan fell victim of a run out after scoring a 101-ball 79 that featured eight sweetly-timed boundaries and a six as the home side ate a happy lunch with their score on 352-5.

But there was no relief for the visiting bowlers in a very humid condition because the dismissal of Vandort brought his captain Jayawardene to the middle again who made his seventh hundred at his favourite venue. The right-hander went off on Monday evening having retired hurt on 93 runs, played an elegant straight drive against Raafique to reach the three-digit mark off only 127 balls.

Bangladesh pace spearhead Mashrafe Bin Mortaza gave a much-needed breakthrough by removing Raafique, who was caught at point by Shakib Al Hasan after hitting 18 boundaries and one six to score 127 off 159 balls.

Jayawardene's dismissal cre-

ated a chance for Mohammad

Shafiq.

Vaas is playing his 97th Test

match and during his 169-ball 100 runs essay he hit seven boundaries.

Sri Lanka declared their innings only

after the veteran left-hander

reached his hundred as the other

Jayawardene was unbeaten on 120 off 191 balls with the help of ten fours.

The conglomerate bought the Hummer from Auto Museum two years back while Talukder, a former BNP lawmaker from Jamalpur-4, sold his SUV before using it for at least three years.

As per the law, it was illegal to sell a vehicle imported under lawmakers' quota before three years. In April, the present caretaker government cancelled the privilege of duty-free car import as most of the lawmakers had misused it in the past.

Assistant Police Superintendent of R a b - 2 M o h a m m a d Kamruzzaman said manager (transport) and deputy general manager (transport) of Bashundhara City told them that the business group had bought the Lexus from Anwarul Kabir Talukder.

Rab said they have handed over the luxury jeeps to customs officials who are supposed to file cases in this connection.

The Daily Star tried to reach Talukder for comment last evening, but his cellphone was switched off.

Tarique's wife

FROM PAGE 16

Station filed the case against Babar on June 3 under the Arms Act.

KHUSHNUD CASE

Gulshan police arrested Khushnud Asgar who was suffering from heart disease and under treatment at Labaid Cardiac Hospital in the city.

Following her arrest, Gulshan police submitted a petition to a Dhaka court for showing her arrested in the case.

In his forwarding report, Sub-Inspector (SI) Afzal Hossain said she should be shown arrested in the case pending with the Metropolitan Sessions Judge's Court, Dhaka.

After hearing, Judge Azizul Haq granted the petition and directed jail authorities to produce her before the court tomorrow if she recovers.

On June 17, the ACC pressed charges against detained Lobi and his wife Khushnud for submitting false statement about their wealth.

The CMM Court has already got permission from the court to interrogate Tarique at the gate of Dhaka Central Jail, the source added.

The five-member team before

which they were to appear to the court consists of two ACC officials, one army major working with the taskforce, one National Board of Revenue official and an official from Criminal Investigation Department (CID).

According to the ACC sources, instead of coming to the commission, Zubaida and her mother communicated with the ACC yesterday seeking another 2-4 days. But, it could not be confirmed if they were given the time.