

Trade, economic cooperation to figure in Moscow talks

Says Russian spokesman

UNB, Dhaka

Bilateral cooperation in trade and economic as well as in cultural and educational fields will feature conspicuously during Foreign Adviser Iftekhar Ahmed Chowdhury's official talks with his Russian counterpart in Moscow.

Iftekhar left for Moscow Saturday

Quran Foundation team meets president

UNB, Dhaka

A seven-member delegation of Huffazul Quran Foundation, Bangladesh called on President Iajuddin Ahmed at Bangabhaban yesterday.

The delegation, led by Senior Pesh Imam of Baitul Mukarram National Mosque Hafez Maulana Mufti Nuruddin, apprised the president of the activities of their foundation.

The team also informed him that the foundation does not have its own office although carrying out activities for the last 10 years.

The president assured them of extending his cooperation in discharging their activities.

Hafez Quari Abdul Haq, Hafez Maulana Abdul Halim, Hafez Maulana Noor-ur-Rashid Quashemi, Hafez M Nasiruddin, Hafez Maulana Taiyab and Hafez Azam Khan were among the delegation members.

night on a three-day official visit at the invitation of Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov.

A spokesman for Russian Foreign Ministry Mikhail Kamynin in an interview with RIA Novosti said present scale of trade and economic ties between Russia and Bangladesh so far do not correspond to the potential available, although they have already amassed experience in mutual advantageous cooperation, in particular in energy development.

He said the power plants built with Russian aid generate one-third of Bangladesh's electricity output. Talks are underway on continuing cooperation in this area.

The spokesman said expanding contacts between business circles of the two countries is on the agenda, particularly under the auspices of the chambers of commerce and industry.

A bilateral Consular Convention is expected to be signed during the visit, he said.

Kamynin said Russia and Bangladesh are bound by relations of traditional friendship and maintain a regular political dialogue and interact constructively on the international scene, primarily in the UN, OIC, the Asean Regional Forum (ARF) on security, the Asia Cooperation Dialogue (ACD) and other organisations.

Bangladesh is Russia's important partner in South Asia.

He said Russia regards the foreign adviser's visit as "a significant stage" in bilateral relations and as evidence of the sides' striving to intensify their

constructive dialogue on all issues of mutual concern. Since 1991 this is the first visit in Russia of a head of the foreign ministry of Bangladesh.

Replying to a question, Kamynin said interaction between the two countries on regional and international problems, particularly within the framework of the UNGA 62nd session, will be a subject of in-depth discussion between Lavrov and Iftekhar.

"Our countries are for the central role of the UN and its Security

Council in maintaining peace and combining efforts by the world community in the struggle against international terrorism," he noted.

Besides, he said issue of strengthening cooperation in the fight against international terrorism would also figure in the talks.

The spokesman said Russia welcomes the ratification by Bangladesh of the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism and calls on the Bangladeshi partners to accede to the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism, promoted by Russia and the US.

He said Russia highly appreciates the constructive line of Bangladesh on deepening the integration process on the South Asian subcontinent and resolving disagreements in the region in the spirit of good-neighbourliness.

Kamynin said Russia is keen on deepening mutual understanding and expanding cooperation with the Islamic world.



PHOTO: STAR

Former Rajshahi University vice-chancellor Prof Saidur Rahman Khan, Prof Abdus Sobhan and Prof Moly Kumar are being taken to Rajshahi Jail from the court yesterday.

CORPORATE GOVERNANCE

Govt to request judicial service to include it in training module

UNB, Dhaka

The government is likely to request the judicial service to include corporate governance in their training module to derive optimum result from it.

Finance Adviser Mirza Azizul Islam yesterday said he would take the initiative to pursue the matter with the judicial service.

"The judiciary of the country is not attuned with the corporate governance," he said speaking as the chief guest at the inaugural session of the two-day South Asian Conference on Corporate Governance at Bangladesh Enterprise Institute (BEI) conference room.

Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) Chairman Faruk Ahmad Siddiqi was present as special guest at the session, chaired by BEI President Farooq Sobhan.

The adviser said any violation of the corporate governance has failed to get proper attention from the judges for lack of proper knowledge among the judiciary on the subject.

"I feel, I've to pursue the matter with the judicial service to include corporate governance in their training module," he added.

He asked the shareholders and consumers to remain alert about the compliance of the corporate governance in the corporate houses to get better services.

SEC Chairman Faruk Ahmad Siddiqi said the capital market of the country is at the initial stage of development. Corporate sector and capital market development are dependent on each other and, perhaps, good corporate practice is essential for both.

He emphasised on the audit independence and avoidance of

conflict of interest, full disclosure of the company affairs in their annual reports, more efficient internal control, better management, ensuring a corporate environment, and more efficient, informed, independent and dedicated board of directors.

The SEC chief underscored restructuring and strengthening of the Registrar of Joint Stock Companies and Firms for proper supervision of the registered companies.

Quoting a survey, he said that 31.18 percent listed companies have fully complied with the provisions of SEC's corporate governance guidelines and 56.66 percent of the listed companies have partially complied with those guidelines.

He hoped that the remaining 12.16 percent companies, which failed to respond to the guidelines, would practice the corporate governance principles in their own interest.

BEI is organising the two-day conference as part of their initiative to strengthen corporate governance and share best practices in this region. Experts from Bangladesh, India and Pakistan are attending the conference.

The key objectives of the conference are to help strengthen corporate governance and promote responsible business practices in Bangladesh, India, and Pakistan, and to share best practices in the region, which can be documented and further developed

into case studies.

A policy paper outlining specific recommendations on corporate governance for the region, and documented case studies, to be used by academics and training institutions, are expected to emerge from the conference.

Resource persons at the conference are: Prof Mohammad Farashuddin, former governor of Bangladesh Bank and founder vice chancellor of East West University, Anis A Khan, CEO and managing Director of IDLC Finance Limited, Barrister Sheela R Rahman of Syed Ishtiaq Ahmed and Associates, R Krishnan, managing director and president of Associated Vat Recovery Consultants Pvt Ltd, India, NK Jain, secretary and CEO of Institute of Company Secretaries of India, Asad Ali Shah, senior partner of Deloitte and Touché of Pakistan and vice president of Institute of Chartered Accountants of Pakistan, Arif Zaman, senior adviser of South Asia and Corporate Governance, Commonwealth Business Council, Jaweria Haisum, CG specialist of the State Bank of Pakistan, Mamun Rashid, CEO of Citibank NA, Bangladesh, S Manzer Hossain, resident director of Tata Group and Samir Asaf, Group CEO of Rahimafrooz (Bangladesh) Limited.



PHOTO: ISPR

Chief of Naval Staff Vice Admiral Sarwar Jahan Nizam distributes relief among the flood victims in Bhola and Mongla yesterday and observes the various activities of the Naval Contingent in those areas.



Mahbub Jamil, vice-president of Singer Corporation and chairman and managing director of Singer Bangladesh Limited, hands over a cheque for Tk 3.5 lakh to Brac Chairperson Fazle Hasan Abed as donation to Brac Flood Rehabilitation Programme at Brac Centre in the city recently.

More relief for flood victims

STAR REPORT

Different organisations continue to distribute relief among the flood victims across the country yesterday.

Our Gaibandha Correspondent adds: Joint forces at Sunderganj disbursed Tk 17 lakh among 850 marooned ultra poor families to help them rehabilitate.

Each family received Tk 2,000 each as house building grant.

Meanwhile, joint forces distributed Aman seedlings among 150 marginal farmers.

They also extended help for fair distribution of government allocated Vulnerable Group Feeding (VGF) rice among the ultra poor in 17 unions at Sunderganj.

Centre for Disability in Development has distributed relief material among 200 families in flood-affected areas of Haldia and Jumarbari unions at Saghata in the district.

Besides, Bangladesh Krishak Samity and Bangladesh Udichi Shilpi Goshthi yesterday distributed vegetable seeds among 75 flood-affected families at Belab in Narsingdi.

While distributing the relief they urged the government to provide interest-free agriculture loan and to distribute seeds, fertiliser, pesticides and agricultural apparatus among the farmers.

Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters' Association (BGMEA) also distributed relief materials among the flood victims at different villages at Nawabganj in Dhaka on Friday.

Accused in double murder case arrested

OUR CORRESPONDENT, N'ganj

Narayanganj police arrested an accused in robbery and double murder case from a remote area of Madaripur district yesterday.

A special team of police arrested Panu alias Nannu from Shikdarhat of Shibchar upazila.

Panu had been in hiding since his accomplices snatched him away from police custody two months back.

Briefing newsmen at Sadar Police Station, Zannatul Hasan, assistant police super, said Panu and his accomplices hijacked a rod-laden truck from Araihasar and murdered the driver and helper on June 16.

Police arrested Panu on June 29, but his accomplices forcibly took him away after laying an ambush.

Panu took refuge in India and stayed there for sometime.

Later he came back and started living at his relative's house at Shikdarhat in Madaripur.

Tipped off, the special team conducted an operation there on Sunday.

Sensing police presence, Panu and his accomplices opened fire on them.

Police however managed to arrest Panu with a pistol loaded with two rounds of bullet but his accomplices fled away.

Panu is the son of one Amir Hawladar of Faridpur.

New passport office opens in Narayanganj

OUR CORRESPONDENT, N'ganj

A passport office has been opened in Narayanganj yesterday in order to reduce the plight of the passport applicants in the district.

The new passport office is situated on the first floor of the Deputy Commissioner's office.

Passport applications will be available at the district office for free while it will take minimum 3 days and maximum 31 days to issue a passport.

Deputy Commissioner Faizul Kabir visited the passport office yesterday.

Community policing by '08

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Speakers at a consultation programme yesterday stressed on collecting the views of different communities, especially the vulnerable ones, before finalising the draft police reform programme (PRP) to make it successful, sustainable and people-friendly.

The regional consultation programme on community policing was inaugurated by National Project Director of PRP and Additional Inspector General of Police Naba Bikram Kishore Tripura at a hotel in the portcity.

Such consultation programme will also be held in other divisional headquarters in order to formulate a common strategy on community policing, sources said.

In his speech, Naba Bikram urged police officials to be more open minded, unbiased and sensitive enough for community policing.

He hoped that the community

policing, an essential part of the police reform programme to prevent the crimes, could be introduced throughout the country by the end of 2008.

Some donor agencies from Japan, Germany and Australia have shown their interest to financing the PRP in Bangladesh, he informed.

PRP's Anti-Human Trafficking Specialist from the UNDP Neale Fursdon said such consultation programmes would be helpful to formulate a common strategy on community policing.

Chittagong Metropolitan Police (CMP) Commissioner Moinur Rahman said Police Act of 1861 should be replaced by a new one which will widen the role of police to promote the rule of law.

Bangladesh Police organised the programme on community policing funded by European Commission, UNDP and DFID.

Around 70 people from different professions including 30 police officials took part in the programme.