

Russia can be potential partner in N-power generation: Iftekhar

UNB, Dhaka

Foreign Adviser Iftekhar Ahmed Chowdhury, now in Moscow, has said Russia could be a potential partner for nuclear power generation to meet Bangladesh's growing energy need.

As mandated by the Council of Advisers, I've raised the subject at political level in Moscow as Russia could indeed be a potential partner," he said when he met Russian Deputy Minister for Energy and Industry Ivan Materov in Moscow yesterday, according to a message received here.

They discussed the possibilities of energy cooperation between the two countries, as Russia, China, India, South Korea and Pakistan are increasingly relying on this source.

Iftekhar said the danger of proliferation is not an issue as Bangladesh's credentials in this respect are "impeccable" and "we're signatories to the NPT, CTBTO and other International Safeguard Agreements. Also, on this issue, we're in touch with the IAEA," he added.

"We've been preparing Rooppur for this since pre-Bangladesh days; indeed a nuclear plant in Rooppur was a demand that dates back to those times," Iftekhar said.

He said the technology is complex and Bangladesh should probably have a national debate before any final decision.

"If we opt for it, the time to make initial contracts with partners is now," Iftekhar said.

He also welcomed Russian investment in conventional energy sector.



PHOTO: STAR

Commuters experience heavy traffic jam in different areas of the city yesterday. The picture was taken at Purana Paltan.

NEW FOREST BUILDING Construction irregularities investigated

CU CORRESPONDENT

A joint team of Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) and Public Works Department (PWD) yesterday conducted an investigation into alleged irregularities in constructing a new three-storey building of the forest department at Nandan Kanan area in the city.

The building was constructed during the tenure of Divisional Forest Officer (North) Shamsul Azam who was arrested recently on charge of massive corruption.

There are some allegations of irregularities in constructing the building, Natun Ban Bhaban (New Forest Building), sources said.

ACC Field Officer Mohammad Abdul Wadud said irregularity in constructing the new building is one of the charges brought against Shamsul Azam that prompted them to conduct the investigation.

"We along with the PWD engineers have taken the measurement of the building and hope to submit the findings soon," he added.

Wadud said the construction work of the building started in mid-2006 while it was handed over at the beginning of this year.

Shamsul Azam was arrested on different charges in June last.

Sweden to donate \$1m for PERP project

Sweden will provide \$1 million for the Preparation of Electoral Roll with Photographs (PERP) project implemented by the Election Commission, says a press release.

The donation will be channeled through a pooled funding mechanism administered and coordinated by the UNDP.

In this connection, Acting Country Director of UNDP Larry Maramis and Swedish Counsellor for Development Cooperation Ola Hällgren signed an agreement yesterday.

Swedish Ambassador Britt Hagstrom was also present at the ceremony.

"The preparation of a credible electoral roll is a key element for the holding of free and fair elections," said the Swedish Ambassador on the occasion.

"This being so, we naturally feel both pleased and proud to add Sweden's name to the list of Development Partners giving tangible support to this important project," she added.