

## Dhaka-Kolkata Train

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at the MCCI Conference Hall with MCCI President Latifur Rahman in the chair.

About the expansion of multipurpose visa, Chakravarty said if Bangladesh government wanted India could allow Bangladeshi citizens have three to five years' multipurpose visa.

He urged the government to have broader connectivity between the two neighbouring countries for furthering business interests.

"Improved connectivity and dismantling of barriers would enable not only cross-border investment flows and transfer of technologies, but also facilitate market access to a wide range of small and mid-sized businesses. It would reduce transaction cost of doing business," the high commissioner said.

About addressing the trade imbalance issue, he said India has accepted eight million apparel's duty-free access to its market in one calendar year. It will bring forward the scheduled date for reducing duties to zero for least developed countries (LDCs) of South Asia to the end of 2007 from the original date of December 2008, and it agreed to zero-duty import of Bangladeshi cement.

Meanwhile, Bureau of Indian Standards signed a memorandum of agreement with Bangladesh Standard and Testing Institute (BSTI) so that its certifications are recognised by the bureau for textile and apparel products exported to India from Bangladesh.

He also emphasised the need for making quick decisions about India's investment proposals that are pending with Bangladesh for a long time.

MCCI President Latifur Rahman in his speech also stressed the need for reducing the trade imbalance between the two countries and suggested more investments including those with "buy-back" arrangements.

Latifur Rahman requested the

Indian high commission to take initiatives to remove a number of the non-tariff barriers, which are posing problems to Bangladesh's exports to India.

He proposed the Indian delegation to invest in labour-intensive sectors like electronic assembly and manufacturing, light engineering, computer software, composite textile, leather, paper and pulp, energy, healthcare, shipping, telecommunication, and in agro-based and agro-supportive industries.

He also sought an early decision on the withdrawal of the ban on Bangladeshi investments in India, as it still remains.

CII mission leader Shreekant Somany urged both the governments to develop infrastructure at land port customs posts and streamline customs procedures and administration.

Somany proposed Bangladeshi businessmen to participate in a proposed investment promotion seminar and suggested the organising of a "Made in Bangladesh Exhibition" in India.

MCCI Vice-president Feroz Rahman and its Secretary General CK Hyder were also present at the meeting.

The Indian high commissioner said the two-way trade has gone over the \$2.5 billion mark this year, compared to \$2.1 billion in the previous year with a growth of around 21 percent.

India is currently Bangladesh's largest export destination in the developing world with exports over \$290 million in 2006-07, headed.

He said exports to India from Bangladesh have gone up by 480 percent in the last five years while its global exports have gone up only 104 percent in the same period.

This is a sign that there is more demand for Bangladeshi products in India and that the Bangladeshi businessmen are increasingly looking towards India, he concluded.

## Task force

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reforms in the city corporations.

Responding to a query, Khoka said he would submit his wealth statement to the Anti-Corruption Commission after getting letter from the anti-graft body.

Asked whether he knew any corrupt official, the DCC mayor said, "If there are irregularities in the corporation, we also want those to be unveiled. People should know whether any employee, official and even me are involved in corruption."

He said the task force had earlier looked into different DCC projects but this time they will be monitoring activities of the entire city corporation.

"I see the matter positively as facilities for the city dwellers will increase with the intervention of the task force," the mayor added.

Panic gripped the officials and employees as the task force members took position at different key points of the DCC building including its entrance gate.

DCC Secretary Mohammad Golam Mostafa told reporters that they would arrange an office for the task force members on the ground floor of the DCC building.

He said the task force would start its work in full swing within a couple of days.

## Dr Iqbal

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Sub-inspector (SI) of Ramna police station Ahsanul Kabir, also the investigation officer (IO) of the case, told The Daily Star that they sought his 10-day remand showing him arrested in a robbery case but the court granted his four-day remand.

In the prayer, the case regarding the Malibagh incident and two other murder cases were mentioned, he said.

He said they started interrogating Dulal, who was on the run for a long time, to get information about the killings and recover the gun that he was carrying during the procession, led by then Awami League lawmaker Dr HBM Iqbal, on February 13, 2001.

Rab arrested Dulal on Saturday night and handed him over to Ramna police.

## No uncertainty

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judiciary from November 1, reports US-based news agency ENA.

But Moeen quickly added that it would have to take place gradually because a lot of judges will be required and the government plans to train magistrates to fill in the posts.

He said \$129 million dubious or illegally earned money siphoned off overseas has been brought back to Bangladesh and deposited in the central bank. He said another \$72 million has been recovered but is stuck in legal disputes.

Moeen said another \$214 million would be brought to Bangladesh soon using the same process.

"This government is here to reinstate democracy. But everyone has to remember that corruption devours democracy. So, this war against corruption will continue until the corruption levels are brought down to a tolerable limit," he said.

The general said the military sacrificed everything to assist the caretaker government in holding free, fair and credible elections, after they realised the importance of protecting the country from internal and external enemies.

The army chief also cited the caretaker government's achievements, such as recasting and reforming the Election Commission, Anti-corruption Commission, Public Service Commission and the University Grants Commission.

He said government policies have succeeded in reducing the prices of cement, iron rods, and power-line poles, while no relief materials were stolen nor did anyone die from hunger after the floods.

The general also told the audience that the government is trying not to let Biman Bangladesh Airlines Ltd lose its slot at New York's John F Kennedy Airport.

Biman is scheduled to lose the slot on October 26 if no flights operate on that route.

Moeen told the non-resident Bangladeshis that their only identity should be "Bangladeshi" and they should not divide themselves along Bangladeshi political or regional lines, as this would weaken the community.

He said Bangladeshi overseas should unite under the banner "One flag, One Nation, One Country--Our Bangladesh" idea.

The decision came after a number of allegations against some persons of high repute turned out to be bony.

The commission also decided to serve notice on a complainant before initiating the investigation. It will first question the complainant to gauge the merit of the complaint.

The commission so far has received around 60,000 corruption allegations.

According to section 511 of the penal code, a person could be sentenced up to seven years in prison for filing false cases and making false depositions.

The BPC is currently facing about Tk 300 crore loss a month.

## Separation hailed

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due to weak leadership and lack of administrative cooperation.

"Separation of the judiciary is a long-term movement of the lawyers. It is becoming possible due to the government's willingness and the Supreme Court's firmness," read the news release signed by Khandaker Mahbub Hossain, interim vice-chairman of Bangladesh Bar Council.

The release went on to say that it is regrettable that some bureaucrats could not comply with the decision despite being government officials and are apparently opposing it. This goes against the code of conduct of the government officials, it added.

"Some problems may occur while separating the judiciary, but it can be solved as has been done in India," it further read.

Hailing the government move, Sammilita Ainjibi Samonay Parishad said an identified section is opposing the decision and its behaviour in the end of the process is unwanted.

It urged all to abstain from delivering negative speeches and abide by the constitution and the principles of the judiciary day.

The caretaker government has undertaken several schemes including the Banani-Gulshan Bridge to ease traffic congestion in the city, added the adviser hoping that the bridge would be constructed before November 2008 when Chief Adviser Fakhruddin Ahmed would inaugurate the bridge.

Addressing the ceremony among others, Prof Abdullah Abu Sayed, a renowned environmentalist and educationist, said half a million people are settling in Dhaka every year. In order to save the capital, he also emphasised the need to develop a public transportation network and at the same time reduce the number of private cars.

"The services of public transportation will have to be improved. Besides, the government should immediately impose tax on private cars by 500 percent so that people are discouraged to buy and use private cars. Otherwise, it will be difficult to keep the traffic jams under control in the capital," said the professor.

Slating the BCS (Admin) cadres, Bangladesh Nagorik Samaj said it is nothing but conspiracy of a group of bureaucrats.

It urged the government to take stern action against the group as their speeches and activities are "contempt of court" amidst the state of emergency.

Bangladesh Civil Service (BCS) Shamann Committee at a view sharing meeting yesterday said separation of the judiciary from the executive is the demand of democracy. "It is not an issue of inter-cadre relationship."

There is no way to halt implementation of the decision.

They also said opposition of the BCS (Admin) cadres has proved that their apathy in separating the judiciary is the main reason for the delay of 37 years. They also urged them not to oppose it any longer for the sake of the nation.

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