

# Strengthen Indo-Bangla ties thru' more connectivity

Speakers tell discussion

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a discussion yesterday called for taking lessons from historical mistakes and strengthening bilateral ties through more connectivity between the peoples of two neighbouring countries Bangladesh and India.

They said two historical friends should also have more dialogues to settle down problems like water, insurgency and trade barrier to improve the lives of the peoples who have similar cultural heritage.

The discussion was organised by Bangladesh Enterprise Institute (BEI) at its auditorium in the capi-

tal where Indian politician Nitish Sen Gupta delivered a speech on 'Bengal Divided: The Unmaking of a Nation' based on his book of the same title.

"We have to sit together more frequently and concentrate on cross-border communication and cultural exchange," said Nitish, also chairman of the Board of Reconstruction of Public Sector Enterprises of India.

All sorts of export and import duties should be removed for better economic opportunities, he said, adding this may create better business environment than Asean.

"There should not be any threat

perspectives. Bangladesh or India cannot be threats to anyone," said the former Indian civil servant.

"We have to learn from history and look forward to future instead of blaming the past, because the new generation does not like it. They want to go forward," said Indian High Commissioner to Bangladesh Pinak Ranjan Chakravarty.

He said with the strengthening of democracy, the mindset of India has changed towards its neighbours and that Bangladesh should also come forward to join hands for mutual interests.

Responding to an observation

that Bangladesh faces tremendous water crisis due to Farakka Barrage during dry season, the Indian envoy said it is not water availability, rather water management is a problem for Bangladesh.

Water availability in Bangladesh is more than that in India and other South Asian countries, but the problem here is its management, he noted.

Chakravarty said Bangladesh should hand over Indian criminals and insurgents living here for mutual interests because they are enemies for the economy and stability. India has already handed over some criminals to Bangladesh, he added.

Maj Gen (ret'd) Amin Ahmed Chowdhury said there were problems like communal politics and so on in the past, but now the target should be on strengthening regional cooperation.

"We need heart to heart contacts," he said, adding, "We need direct communications with West Bengal."

Former inspector general of police Mohammad Nurul Huda said there is still 'patronising mentality' among some elite Hindus who think that the Muslims are not Bangladeshis. Such attitudes should be uprooted, he noted.

Identity of being Bangalee is a matter of pride, said former state minister for foreign affairs Abul Hasan Chowdhury, emphasising that the unity among grassroots Muslims and Hindus that has always been strong should be highlighted.

Economist Rehman Sobhan, Dhaka University Prof Harun-ur-Rashid, and columnist KZ Islam also spoke at the discussion presided over by BEI President Farooq Sobhan.



Indian politician Nitish Sen Gupta speaks at a discussion at Bangladesh Enterprise Institute (BEI) auditorium in the city yesterday. On his left are Farooq Sobhan and Pinak Ranjan Chakravarty and on his right is Prof Harun-ur-Rashid.

## 2 jetties to be set up on Buriganga

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government yesterday decided to set up two permanent jetties west of Simpson Masjid Ghat jetty within a month in line with the demand of the businessmen of South Keraniganj.

But the leaders of Keraniganj Garment Traders and Shop Owners Cooperatives Ltd, rejected the government decision and said they would announce a tougher programme from a meeting scheduled to be held today to press their demand.

Meanwhile, the launch owners' association has claimed compensation worth Tk 4 crore following the torching and damaging of several launches.

According to sources, officials of

Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority (BIWTA), members of police and joint forces, and the deputy commissioner (DC) of Dhaka district held two separate meetings over the installation of launch jetty and boat jetty on the bank of the river Buriganga.

Representatives from Bangladesh Inland Water Transport (Passenger Carriers) Agency (BIWTPCA) and the market committee were also present at the meeting.

DC Kamal Uddin told The Daily Star that the BIWTA will bear the cost of shifting the boat jetty and building the stairs within a month.

Isa Khan, general secretary of Keraniganj Garment Traders and Shop Owners Cooperatives Ltd, said, "We do not agree to the decision and we would go for further movement if

the pontoon is not removed from in front of the market."

At a press conference at Purana Paltan office of the BIWTPCA, the leaders said the pontoon will have to be reinstalled where it was earlier.

The press conference was attended by acting chairman of BIWTPCA Badiuzzaman Badal, Vice-chairman Lutfur Rahman Kislul and Sahabuddin Milan.

At the press conference, the BIWTPCA leaders blamed the law enforcers saying that they did not cooperate with them in arresting the attackers of the launches and their staffers.

The launch owners' association BIWTPCA also demanded compensation worth Tk 4 crore for setting two launches ablaze and damaging others.

## BABY FOOD PRICE HIKE

### Khelaghar Asar concerned

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a roundtable yesterday demanded implementation of the National Women Development Policy without violating the Quranic laws.

Hailing the government for announcing the policy, they said it should be implemented in the light of the Quranic laws.

The roundtable titled 'Women's Rights in Islam' was organised by Nari Odhikar Andolan at the National Press Club in the capital yesterday.

"If we were given the rights that were given by Islam to us then there was no need to fight for any policy for development," said former principal of Titumir Government College Prof Chemon Ara while presiding over the roundtable.

"Islam has given us proper honour, sometimes more than men, but we do not get that honour in our familial, social and political life," she added.

The speakers said women are repressed at home and outside due to lack of practice of Islamic laws in personal and social life.

They said development and empowerment of women are needed for the welfare of all mankind irrespective of their faith.

The roundtable was also addressed by Hosne Ara Begum, associate professor of Eden Girls' College and University, Dr Razia Sultana, associate professor of Buet, and Khandaker Ayesha Khatun, principal of Al-Quraner Chhayatal Academy.

## New sculpture inaugurated at Bangabazar

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

To beautify the Dhaka city a new sculpture 'Prottyasha' was inaugurated on the tri-angle premises of Bangabazar in the city.

Dhaka City Corporation (DCC) Mayor Sadeque Hossain Khoka inaugurated the sculpture yesterday.

Sculptor Mrinal Haque built the 47-feet concrete and cement made figure, which depicts the great Independence War of our country and call for peace on earth.

Under the supervision of DCC, Mrinal Haque made the sculpture with his own fund.

On the top of the sculpture a globe is set. And upon the globe there are two flying pigeons. And at the basement there are images of five freedom fighters. The figures represent a peasant, a student, an army personnel, an intellectual and a woman.

The statue features a giant rifle and a rope knotted at its top, which symbolise -- no more war, may peace prevail on earth.

There are green trees at the background of the statue reflects the green part of our national flag while big red circle of the figure reflects the red sun of our national flag.

"No more war, anarchy and violence, may peace prevail on earth," that is the message I wanted to deliver in my work, said the artist.

Speaking on the occasion, DCC Mayor Sadeque Hossain Khoka said we should uphold the history and glory of our great Liberation War and 'Prottyasha' is part of this.

Sculpture titled 'Rajoshik' in front of Hotel Sheraton, 'Rotomidi' in front of chief adviser's office, 'Dolphin' in front of Navy Head Quarters, Balaka at Motijheel intersection are some noted sculptures by Mrinal Haque.

## NAT'L WOMEN DEV POLICY

### 'Implement it without violating Quranic laws'

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Chief Adviser Fakhruddin Ahmed calls on President Iajuddin Ahmed at Bangabazar in the city yesterday. (Story on Page 1)

## 'Form nat'l body for emergency diarrhoea preparedness'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a seminar yesterday stressed the need for forming a national planning and policy committee for emergency diarrhoea preparedness with the support of the government and the NGOs.

With the outbreak of diarrhoea worsening in the last few weeks, the speakers called for establishing satellite treatment centers with ICDDR,B-trained staff.

They also suggested appropriate functional plans in collaboration with the government, increased behavioral change communication and awareness programme for the general population.

The seminar titled 'Emergency preparedness plan for the management of diarrhoeal diseases outbreak' was jointly organised by Bangladesh government and ICDDR,B at Sasakawa auditorium at ICDDR,B in the city.

The seminar was organised to share the experience of ICDDR,B in tackling diarrhoea outbreak last year so that the public hospitals can also follow the example.

While addressing the seminar, Director General of the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS) Prof MA Faiz said the service system for the patients with diarrhoeal dis-

eases in the public hospitals would be strengthened soon.

All the hospitals should treat the diarrhoeal patients to minimise the pressure on ICDDR,B as very simple technology is needed to treat the patients with diarrhoeal diseases, he added.

"Yet we are far from utilising the simple technology," he said adding that water and sanitation system should be improved and at the same time creating mass awareness to this end is a must.

"We have lots of limitations in terms of human resources, economy and in our thinking process," he further added.

Dr Azharul Islam Khan of ICDDR,B identified staff knowledge and attitude, structure of hospital management, supportive senior management and especially adaptive crisis management setup as the key reasons behind ICDDR,B's success during the flood in 2007.

He recommended the government to establish satellite treatment centers in different areas of the country with staff trained from ICDDR,B in addition to adopting cholera cots and administering rice-based oral rehydration solutions to patients.

Dr Rick Johnstone of UNICEF presented key findings of usefulness of Point Of Use (POU) water treatment

during emergencies. From his experience during cyclone Sidr, he found Coagulant Disinfectant Tablets (PDR) were more effective in purifying water.

Dr Mark Pietroni, administrator of ICDDR,B Dhaka Hospital, handed over a cholera cot to Prof Faiz at the seminar. ICDDR,B will provide DGHS with fifty cholera cot samples for replicating.

Dr MM Jahangir Alam presented a study on management of diarrhoeal diseases in tertiary level at the Dhaka Medical College Hospital while Prof Dr Moazzem Hossain, director (disease control) and line director CDC of Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, and Dr Ishtiaque A Zaman of ICDDR,B were also present.

The number of patients receiving treatment from ICDDR,B is more this year, compared to that of the previous year although the situation is not that severe, the experts said.

The number of patients with diarrhoeal diseases has been increasing in different hospitals across the country since last week. According to the control room of DGHS around 2482 patients sought treatment for diarrhoea from Monday to Tuesday morning, which was 2263 in the previous 24 hours.

However, the ICDDR,B experienced some 473 patients till 6:00pm yesterday, which was 450 on Monday.

## Govt urged to formulate fair transport policy

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a press conference yesterday demanded the government re-fixes daily deposit money of CNG-run autorickshaws and taxicabs.

They also urged the government to re-fix the fare of first two kilometres of the autorickshaws at Tk 15 instead of the new rate.

They also demanded to re-fix the fare of first two kilometres of yellow taxicabs (air-conditioned) at Tk 30 instead of Tk 40, Tk 25 (non-A/C) instead of Tk 30 and Tk 20 for black taxicabs so that commuters can travel at minimum fares.

The speakers urged the government to formulate a fair transport policy keeping in mind the greater interest of general public.

Citizens Rights Movement (CRM) organised the press conference to press home their demands at the National Press Club in the city.

In a written statement, CRM Secretary General Tusher Rehman said there is no logical reason behind hiking the fares of CNG-driven vehicles though the government increased the CNG (compressed natural gas) price recently.

"Owners of the CNG-run vehicles have long been charging far more fares before the recent CNG price hike and still they are charging more," he said.

Sufferings and harassment have become regular phenomenon for commuters to get CNG-run auto



Journalist Syed Abul Maksud addresses a press conference at National Press Club in the city yesterday. On his left are Tusher Rehman, Engineer Mohammed Alfaz and Ruhin Hossain Prince.

rickshaw and taxicabs and even some drivers do not want to go in meter calibration, he said, adding that some drivers are still asking Tk 10 to Tk 20 extra fare than meter rate.

"Many taxicab and auto-rickshaw drivers directly say no to passengers if they want to go short distance," he said. Tusher alleged that ignoring government rules and decisions, owners of these vehicles once again started to collect extra deposit and the CNG-run bus owners are also plotting to increase fares.

Writer and journalist Syed Abul Maksud said transport sector is the 'most corrupt sector' among other sectors which are considered as 'corrupt' and whenever the government hikes the fuel price, it intensifies

public woes and sufferings.

Other demands include ensuring pure meter in the CNG-run auto rickshaw and taxicabs, fixation of fare of CNG-driven bus at Tk 0.50 per kilometre, launching 1000 more Volvo double-deckers to ease traffic movement and formation of Antazila Sarak Paribahan Samannoy Parishad (Inter-district Road Transport Coordination Council) comprising representatives from communications ministry, Bangladesh Road Transport Authority (BRTA), owners and worker and social organisations.

Citizens Rights Movement President Prof Masud Rahman, Ruhin Hossain Prince of Communist Party of Bangladesh (CPB) and PEACE Secretary General Ifma Husain also spoke.

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### How to Apply

For preliminary assessment please send your application to the address below by the 12th of May 2008 mentioning the course you are interested in along with a detailed CV, a recent photograph and a copy of your most recent educational certificate.

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