

Continuing spirit of close partnership can materialise major dev agenda

Says Prince Aga Khan

UNB, Dhaka

Prince Karim Aga Khan yesterday said a continuing spirit of close partnership would be required to materialise the major development agenda of Bangladesh.

"The Aga Khan Development Network's agenda for Bangladesh reflect your agenda. To achieve the agenda will require a continuing spirit of close partnership," he said this while he was addressing a banquet in honour of him.

Chief Adviser Fakhruddin Ahmed hosted the state banquet at Hotel Sonargaon.

Aga Khan took note of the strides made here in controlling population growth, developing export trade, establishing micro-credit programmes, improving early childhood care, extending education, especially for women, and fighting corruption - in addition to doubling per capita GDP over the past two decades.

He said the challenge now is to make development both sustainable and equitable, so that it fairly benefits people of all classes, cultures and regions.

In a knowledge society, he said, the most productive investments 'we can make are investments in education. And education is another priority we share with the Bangladeshi people.'

He said he thinks appropriate that one of his central purposes on this visit will be to lay the foundation stone of a new Aga Khan Academy in Dhaka.

He said this school would be one mode in a network of 18 high-quality schools located throughout the developing world, global in outlook, but deeply rooted in the

local culture, providing a world-class education for boys and girls of all backgrounds, independent of ability to pay.

"It will educate promising students and develop inspiring teachers. It will be a strong educational resource for the entire country," he said.

He mentioned that his grandfather built on this tradition by founding a network of some 300 educational institutions, including Aligarh University in India. "And we renewed this commitment more recently through the founding of The Aga Khan University and the University of Central Asia."

Referring to celebration of a half century as Imam of the Shia Ismaili Muslims he said his visit to Bangladesh is an important part of that celebration.

"When I inherited my office five decades up from my grandfather, Sir Sultan Mahomed Shah Aga Khan, I also inherited the special feeling he had for this part of the world."

"I remember in particular his response to the partition of India, when he actively encouraged a large number of members of the Ismaili Community to settle in what was then East Pakistan. They found a warm welcome here, and were pleased to integrate fully into Bengali life," he told the function.

He noted that the spirit of partnership in turn has reflected the spirit of pluralism which also characterises this society - the readiness of people to work creatively, side by side, with those who are different from them.

"As we look to the future of development in Bangladesh, it is important to be realistic about the

challenges. But it is also important to remember the distance which has been traveled and the building blocks which are already in place."

Aga Khan offers community services

Earlier, Prince Aga Khan offered his community's services to build bridge between Bangladesh and central Asian countries for promoting socioeconomic relations.

He also expressed his interest in investing in various socioeconomic sectors, including financial services, education, and health, in Bangladesh.

The spiritual leader of the Ismaili community, who arrived in Dhaka earlier in the day on a four-day visit to Bangladesh, made the offer when he called on CA at his office in the afternoon and discussed various socioeconomic matters.

Before formal meeting, the CA and the prince had a one-to-one parley for a while at the CA's office.

Responding to Aga Khan, Fakhruddin said Bangladesh would definitely try to take advantage of the support of the Aga Khan community in expanding trade and investment opportunities in the central Asian countries.

Prince Aga Khan, who last came to Bangladesh in 1993, said they basically focused on standard education at primary and secondary levels and try to harness talents of students to make them best educated and skilled.

In this regard, he mentioned setting up of an educational academy in Dhaka which will be centre of excellence in education where poor meritorious students will also have access.

Listing a number of promising sectors for investment, like banking, telecommunications and agro-processing industries, the CA said the members of Aga Khan Community could take advantage of investment in these areas.

He also made a request for establishing hospital in Bangladesh as it has tremendous prospects and huge number of patients.

Responding positively, the prince said they have set up world-class health centres in Kabul, Karachi and Kazakhstan.

The CA appreciated various socioeconomic activities in Bangladesh by Aga Khan Foundation (AKF) and Aga Khan Development Network (AKDN).

During the meeting the CA asked for revival of the once-popular Aga Khan Gold Cup Football Tournament in Dhaka. Prince Karim Aga Khan responded positively.

The prince said they have investment in health service, education, leather, financial service, microfinance, industry, rural development and rural energy industry.

CA's Press Secretary Syed Fahim Munaim, who was present at the meeting, briefed newsmen about the outcome of the talks.

Shafiq Sachedina, director of diplomatic affairs, and Habib Hirji, president of Aga Khan Council for Bangladesh, were present on the prince side while Foreign Adviser

Iftakhar Ahmed Chowdhury, Principal Secretary to the CA Ali Imam Majumder and Secretary to CA's Office Kazi Aminul Islam were on CA's side.

On his arrival at Zia

International Airport (ZIA) at around 1.30pm, a red carpet reception was accorded to the prince.

Chief Adviser Fakhruddin Ahmed received the distinguished guest at VIP tarmac.

A smartly turned out contingent drawn from army, navy and air force gave a guard of honour to Prince Aga Khan. He took salute standing on a decorated podium at the tarmac and then inspected the guard of honour.

Later, the chief adviser introduced his cabinet members with Aga Khan on the presentation line, while other members were introduced by the chief of protocol. President of Aga Khan Council also introduced the members of the council with the prince on the presentation line.

Finance Adviser Mirza Azizul Islam, LGRD Adviser M Anwarul Iqbal, Foreign Adviser Iftakhar Ahmed Chowdhury, Ambassador of Switzerland and Dean of diplomatic corps Dora Rapold, Cabinet Secretary Ali Imam Majumder, Quarter Master General of Bangladesh Army Lt Gen Jahangir Alam Chowdhury, Naval Chief Vice Admiral Sarwar Khan Nizam, Air Force Chief Air Marshal SM Ziaur Rahman and senior civil and military official were also present on the presentation line.

Bangladesh's Ismaili Muslims, carrying Bangladeshi and their own community flags in front of the VIP terminal, greeted Prince Karim Aga Khan.

Later, a ceremonial motorcade took Aga Khan to Tejgaon Old Airport from where he flew to Savar National Memorial to pay respect to the martyred freedom fighters of the Independence War.



This big shark, caught in the deep sea yesterday, was brought to Fishery Ghat in Chittagong and cut into pieces in the afternoon for selling them among people.

STRANDED PAKISTANIS Mixed reactions to HC verdict

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The War Crimes Facts Finding Committee yesterday welcomed a ruling by the High Court that the Biharis living in the country are citizens of Bangladesh, while the Stranded Pakistanis General Repatriation Committee said it would not bring any good to the stranded Pakistanis.

A High Court bench gave the ruling on Sunday upon a writ petition filed by 11-Urdu-speaking people.

In a statement, the War Crimes Facts Finding Committee said it welcomes, in principle, the high court verdict.

At the same time, it also urged the home ministry and intelligence agencies to remain alert, saying that like Rohingyas, a section of Biharis are involved in 'ISI-sponsored terrorism'.

The statement also said, "Being stateless persons, many of them have the opportunity to work with Middle East-based NGOs who have various agenda. Moreover, they are the family members of those hated Biharis who killed Bangladeshis during the Liberation War."

"It is really a matter of concern

that they could use Bangladeshi passports to carry out heinous acts, the committee said, adding that many Biharis express their allegiance to Pakistan still today.

The names of many Biharis who killed Bangladeshis in 1971 are on the list of war criminals published by the War Crimes Facts Finding Committee recently, it said, adding that the killers must be tried.

Meanwhile, Stranded Pakistanis General Repatriation Committee (SPGRC) in a statement protested the High Court ruling.

The issue of stranded Pakistanis should be resolved through negotiations among the governments of Bangladesh and Pakistan and the SPGRC, it said, adding that the committee has long been demanding repatriation of the stranded Pakistanis.

The SPGRC will stage a token hunger strike from 8:00am to 2:00pm in front of its office at the Geneva Camp today to protest the court ruling. They will also submit a memorandum to the chief adviser.

In another statement, Bihari Punorbashan Sangstha, an organisation for rehabilitation of the Biharis, welcomed the court ruling.

5 drown in Ichhamati

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Sathkira

At least five people, including three women of a family, drowned last night when a boat capsized in the Ichhamati at Mostafapur in Kaliganj upazila while they were coming to Bangladesh from India crossing the river.

According to a report received here across the border, the boat capsized with at least 11 to 12 people on board.

BSF men of Bolitala camp under Hingalganj Police Station in 24 Pargana District West Bengal India recovered the bodies early morning today and handed those to police.

The victims were identified as Hamida Begum, 48, her daughter Hosne Ara, 30, her granddaughter Moina, 10, Abdul Hamid, 45, son of Gahar Ali and Nasrin Begum, 28, of village Katunia at Kaliganj upazila. Hamida Begum went to India and married one Rafiqul Islam of Mumbai 30 years ago.

One murdered

UNB, Gazipur

A fish farm owner was killed by unidentified assailants at Arghoria village in Sadar upazila yesterday.

The victim was identified as Wahidullah Molla, 32, son of late Majid Molla.

Police said miscreants numbering 4-5, swooped on Wahid near his house at about 8:00am and hacked him indiscriminately, leaving him critically injured. He was rushed to the sadar hospital where the on-duty doctor declared him dead.

ROBBER BEATEN TO DEATH Police officer dies seeing macabre sight

UNB, Narayanganj

A police officer died of a cardiac arrest after seeing the brutality inflicted on a robber by a mob in Sonargaon on Sunday night.

The mob beat the robber to death and gouged out both of his eyes following a robbery in a bus, sources said.

The deceased police officer was identified as Abdul Hakim, sub-inspector of Sonargaon Police Station. He hailed from Muktagachha upazila of Mymensingh district.

The identity of the robber was not known immediately.

On information, Hakim went to the spot with his force but suffered a heart attack seeing the deformed body of the robber.

He died on way to Dhaka.

Sources said a gang of eight robbers, who were travelling on a Comilla-bound bus in the guise of passengers, took control of the bus after stabbing the driver at Madanpur under Bandar Police Station.

The bandits looted cash, gold and other valuables worth about Tk 5 lakh after stabbing the passengers.

The robbers got down from the bus at Mograpara, and when they were getting away with the booties, local people rushed to the bus hearing a hue and cry and chased the robbers.

"At one stage, they caught two of them and gave them a good beating, leaving one dead on the spot."

The other captured robber, identified as Rabbani of Rugganj, was also injured seriously and admitted to Sonargaon thana health complex.



Chief Adviser Fakhruddin Ahmed releases two commemorative stamps at Hotel Sonargaon in the city yesterday to mark the 50 years of Prince Karim Aga Khan's leadership of the world's Ismaili Muslims. On his right is Prince Aga Khan.

New food godowns at upazila level in 3 years: Adviser

BSS, Dhaka

The government has decided to build a number of new food godowns up to upazila levels across the country spending more than Tk 350 crore in next three years, Food and Disaster Management Adviser Dr AMM Shawkat Ali said yesterday.

"The warehouses will be built under a government project which aims at increasing food stock capacity in the public sector," he said during his visits to Mymensingh and Netrakona as part of reinvigorating the public sector cereal procurement drive in

the districts.

Shawkat Ali said the food storage capacity in the public sector would be increased by two to three lakh metric tonnes after construction of the new food depots at the local levels. The government can now store an average 15-lakh metric tonnes of food in 652 local storage depots (LSD) and central storage depots (CSD).

"The prime objective of the project is to ensure food security in an emergency or any crisis," Shawkat told journalists, adding steps would be taken to resist millers' design for hoarding to

create artificial crisis.

Expressing his optimism about the success of the ongoing food procurement drive, the adviser said a total of 1.79 crore metric tonnes of rice is expected to be procured from this year's bumper boro crops. The government would buy crops in line with the market price of paddy and rice, he added.

Millers in Netrakona and Mymensingh requested the adviser to ensure uninterrupted power supply between 7:00am and 5:00pm for rice husking. The adviser assured them of looking into the matter and said directives have already been made to this effect.

The food adviser shared opinions with a cross section of people, including mill owners, farmers, businessmen, food officials and journalists, to know about the pros and cons of the ongoing food procurement drive that ends in August.

Muggers kill cellphone mechanic in city

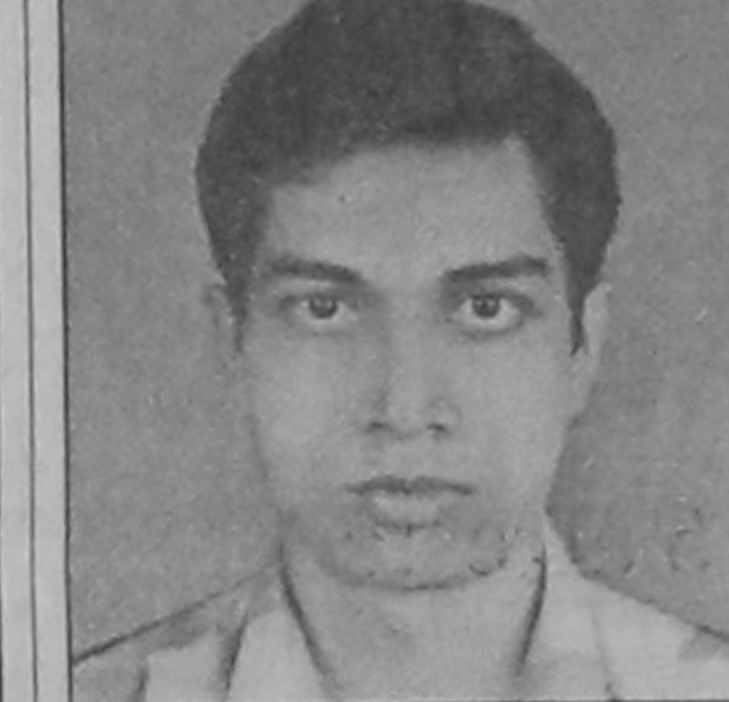
STAFF CORRESPONDENT

After fighting for life for three days, a cellphone mechanic succumbed to his stab injuries in the city in the early hours of yesterday.

A gang of three muggers stabbed mechanic Mohammad Likhon, 20, in front of Suvasu Nagar Valley under Gulshan Police Station on the night of May 16.

The passersby and local people rushed him to Dhaka Medical College and Hospital where he died at about 4:00am.

Likhon's brother Abdus Salam said the muggers stabbed him and took away his valuables while he was returning his home at Dakkhin Khan.



Appeal for help

Md Aminul Hasan, a student of Chittagong University who has been suffering from blood cancer, has appealed for financial assistance for his treatment, says a press release.

Aminul, a master's student of the law department, is now fighting for his life at Lab One Clinic in Dhaka.

Doctors have advised his family to take him abroad for better treatment, which involves about Tk 50 Lakh.

But it is not possible for his father Mobarak Ali Talukder, a low-paid government employee, to manage such a huge amount of money.

So, Aminul has appealed to generous people to extend a helping hand to save his life.

Contributions can be sent to Savings Account No. 4397, Sonali Bank, Kurmitola Branch, Dhaka. Interested persons can also call his father at 01913575748.

Nizami behind bars

FROM PAGE 1

the accused was allowed to sit on a chair during the hearing of a case.

Later, Nizami was permitted to sit on a chair and the hearing proceeded.

Moving the petitions, Nizami's lawyers informed the court that though the High Court (HC) had rejected their client's bail petition earlier, they had already submitted a leave to appeal before the Supreme Court (SC) against the HC order.

Earlier on Sunday, BNP reformist leader former LGRD minister Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan and former minister M Shamsul Islam appeared before the Metropolitan Sessions Judge's Court but the court rejected their bail petitions and sent them to jail.

The same court on May 15 issued arrest warrants against 12 'absconding' accused including former finance minister M Saifur Rahman, Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan, M Shamsul Islam, MK Anwar, Nizami and Amir Khasru Mahmud Chowdhury.

The Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) on May pressed charges against detained former premier Khaleda Zia, her son Arafat Rahman Koko and 22 others in the Gato scam case.

The ACC filed the case against Khaleda, Koko and 11 others with Tejgaon police on September 2 last year, for graft in awarding Gato container handling work at depots in Dhaka and Chittagong.

The investigation officer (IO) prayed for issuance of arrest warrants against Saifur, Mannan, Nizami, Amir Khasru, MK Anwar, M Shamsul Islam and six others, as they have been absconding since the charge sheet in the case was submitted.

TWO MORE MURDER CASES AGAINST NIZAMI

Meanwhile two murder cases against Nizami, filed for killing

freedom fighters and general public during the Liberation War in 1971 with Keraniganj and Pallabi police are currently under investigation.

On December 17 last year, Mozaffar Ahmad Khan, Dhaka district Mujibudda unit commander, filed a case against Nizami, Jamaat-e-Islami Secretary General Mujahed and seven others for killing his nephew and one of his comrades on November 25, 1971.

After the hearing, Judicial Magistrate Ashiqul Kabir recorded the statement of complainant and directed the officer-in-charge (OC) of Keraniganj Police Station to register the double murder as a first information report (FIR).

He also asked the OC to take action against the accused after an investigation into the complaint.

Following the court order, Keraniganj police recorded it as regular case and OC is now investigating it.

PALLABI CASE

Another freedom fighter (FF) on January 24 this year filed a murder case against Nizami, Mujahed, five of their party men and three non-Bangalees for the massacre of 345 people during the Liberation War.

Mohammad Amir Hossain Mollah, a wounded FF and resident of Pallabi's Duairpara, filed the case with the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court, Dhaka.

The complainant stated that the Jamaat men killed them in city's Mirpur area. The victims included 21 of his relatives, one colleague, 43 Mirpur residents and 280 others from different areas of the country on April 24 and December 18 in 1971, he said.

After the hearing, the court directed the OC of Pallabi police to record the case as a regular one and to submit a probe report. Following the court order, Pallabi OC recorded

the case and another sub-inspector is investigating it at present.

The others accused in this case are assistant secretary generals of Jamaat Mohammad Abdul Quader Molla and Muhammad Kamaruzzaman, Jamaat central leader and former Ismaili Chhatra Sangha president Sardar Abdul Salam and activist Khawza Ashim (now deceased), and Akhter 'Gunda', Newaz and Doma (non-Bangalees who later fled to Pakistan).

JAMAAT REACTION

Jamaat-e-Islami leaders yesterday criticised the government for Nizami's arrest and demanded release of all detained top political leaders, including former premiers Khaleda Zia and Sheikh Hasina, and party Ameer Nizami.

Jamaat leaders, at an emergency meeting of the party's central executive committee, said the environment to hold dialogue with political parties and the next elections has vitiated after arrest of top political leaders.

Senior Naye-e-Ameer of Jamaat Abul Kalam Mohammad Yousof has already been made acting ameer of the party after Nizami's name came under the Gato graft case. Party Naye-e-Ameer AKM Nazir Ahmed chaired the meeting yesterday however since Yousof is currently abroad.

Jamaat leaders at the meeting also discussed the party's next courses of action. They might declare different political initiatives to protest Nizami's arrest, party insiders said.

Meanwhile, Matiur Rahman Nizami's post as ameer of Jamaat-e-Islami could become vacant if he remains absent for six months.

However a senior party leader told The Daily Star that they are not worried about this at present.

DHAKA

TODAY

Seminar

Centre for Advanced Research in Humanities of Dhaka University organises a seminar on 'The status of Bengali language in the constitution of Bangladesh'. Venue: 434, Lecture Theatre, DU. Time: 4:00pm.

Discussion

The daily Bhorer Kagoj organises a discussion on tax system and curbing corruption. Venue: National Press Club. Time: 10:00am.

Dialogue

The Visible Studies organises a national dialogue on 'National and local election: Terrorism and corruption'. Venue: National Press Club. Time: 3:30pm.

Workshop

Health Economics Unit in collaboration with WHO, GTZ and ICDDR,B will organise a workshop on 'The problems and prospects of demand side financing with reference to the maternal voucher scheme in Bangladesh'. Venue: Spectra Convention Centre. Time: 9:00am.



Thundershowers likely

UNB, Dhaka

Rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty or squally wind is likely at a few places over Rajshahi Dhaka and Sylhet divisions and at one or two places over Khulna, Barisal and Chittagong divisions in the next 12 hours until 6:00pm today.

Day temperature may remain nearly unchanged over the country during the period, Met Office said.

Highest temperature 36.0 degrees Celsius was recorded yesterday at Jessore and lowest 20.6 degrees Celsius at Sylhet and Sandwip.

The sun sets in the capital at 6:37pm today and rises at 5:13am tomorrow.

Highest and lowest temperature and humidity recorded in some major cities and towns yesterday were:

City/Town	Temperature in Celsius		Humidity in percentage	
	Max	Min	Morning	Evening
Dhaka	34.0	21.8	69	60
Chittagong	31.0	22.1	72	63
Rajshahi	34.0	23.5	65	64
Khulna	35.5	25.0	65	72
Barisal	34.0	25.0	64	76
Sylhet	33.2	20.6	74	62
Cox's Bazar	32.6	21.9	65	71