

# INDIA, MYANMAR Issues of maritime boundaries must be resolved by 2011

Says Iftekhar

UNB, Dhaka

Outgoing Foreign Adviser Iftekhar Ahmed Chowdhury yesterday said his successor would have a challenging but most satisfying responsibility as the new government is poised to assume office today.

Talking to UNB he said the responsibility of his successor, whoever, would be to continue to project Bangladesh to the international community as a 'constructive and responsible global actor'.

Citing the adage 'charity begins at home', he said all foreign policies must begin with looking at the neighbourhood or region first.

Iftekhar, a diplomat with a checkered career, suggested that issues with India and Myanmar must be resolved peacefully through diplomatic maneuvering within a short time frame. The issues of maritime boundaries must be resolved by 2011.

"I will not hesitate to say that it took a lot of skills and patience and diplomatic maneuvering to defuse the tension in the Bay of Bengal, particularly with Myanmar

and, to a lesser extent, with India," he said, referring to gas exploratory ships of Myanmar and survey ships of India in the disputed waters.

Further spelling out his diplomatic tips Iftekhar said, "As we approach these issues, we've to ensure that our sovereignty is protected and the people of Bangladesh feel secure."

With development partners of Bangladesh, he said, it is important to retain a relationship that would ensure continued support and market access of Bangladesh manufacturers to their countries.

Politically, he said, "Russia and China must be kept on the right side."

About relations with the Muslim countries, he said the Muslim countries are important not just because of shared values but also because they host a huge number of expatriate Bangladeshis.

"We must continue to send our excess workers abroad," he noted.

This year, he said, the expatriate workers sent remittances worth a record

amount of 8.75 billion dollars, but "our worker abroad is not just a remittance-generating machine. He is a human being, most of all, and more importantly, a Bangladeshi for whom the country can feel pride."

He said, "In order to protect their interest we must try and enter into and sign MoUs on labour exchange with as many host countries as possible."

On peacekeeping operations, Iftekhar said Bangladesh must remain active in the peacekeeping arena. "This is our biggest contribution to the United Nations. It also enables the world to see us as a global stabiliser," he said, adding: "We must always have troops and equipment ready to deploy abroad at short notice."

He said these are goals that are not unachievable provided the nation stands united behind these efforts.

Iftekhar, who will say goodbye to the foreign ministry today, said, "As an ordinary citizen from now on, my helping hand will always remain extended towards my successor."



The work for laying of sewerage pipe has been going on at Free School Street at Kathalagan in the city for over a month, causing suffering to pedestrians as well as local residents. PHOTO: STAR



Relatives of slain Swachhasebak Dal leader Nazrul Islam wail in front of his body at Dhaka Medical College Hospital yesterday. (Story on Page 1).

## Workshop on Islamic edn teaching method begins

DU CORRESPONDENT

A three-day-long 'National Training Session for Educational Counsellors in the Field of Modernising Islamic Education Teaching Methods Using Computer Programme' began in the city yesterday.

Prof AMM Safiullah, vice chancellor of Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (BUET), formally inaugurated the workshop as the chief guest at BANBEIS Bhaban.

Bangladesh National Commission for Unesco with the support of ISESCO Regional Office, Tehran, organised the workshop with a view to developing Islamic education system using information technology.

Around 50 madrasa and

college teachers are taking part in the workshop, organisers said.

Dr Mohammad Mahmudul Hasan, secretary to the Bangladesh National Commission for Unesco, chaired the opening session. Managing Director of the National Academy of Education Management Prof Baitun Nahar, senior journalist and columnist Zaglul Ahmed Chowdhury, regional director of IESCO Dr Abbas Sadree and Dr Fakar Ahmed were also present.

Addressing the session, Prof Safiullah said education sector must be developed to ensure overall development of the nation.

Stressing the need for such workshops, he said Islamic and Quranic education inculcates values in students, which is essential for development.

## PROGRAMMING CONTEST DU team 1st runner-up

DU CORRESPONDENT

A three-member team of Dhaka University (DU) achieved the first runner-up position in the 'International Collegiate Programming Contest (ICPC)' held in India on December 16 last year.

A total of 49 teams from renowned Indian universities and five other countries of this region participated in the contest at the Institute of Information Technology (IIT) in Kanpur.

The DU team named 'DU Dark Knights' comprising Syed Jubayer Hossen and Jane Alam Jaan from Department of Computer Science and Engineering and Iqram Mahmud from Mathematics department participated in the contest.

Jubayer had led the team under the coaching of Roni Hasinur Rahman, a lecturer of Department of Computer Science and Engineering, says a press release.

The DU team solved the same number of problems as the champion team did, but could not become the champion due to time factor.

Mentionable, DU Dark Knights team earlier on November 8, achieved the second runner up place in the Dhaka Regional ICPC contest, held at North South University in the city.

## BCL-SHIBIR CLASH Daulatpur Govt College closed sine die

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Daulatpur Government B L College has been closed sine die following a fierce clash between the activists of Chhatra Shibir and Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL).

The college authorities have asked the students to vacate all the five residential halls by 4 this afternoon.

Security forces have been deployed in and around the campus to maintain law and order.

The clashes occurred on Sunday night following re-occupation of Shaheed Zoha hall by Chhatra League activists.

The hall was forcibly occupied by Shibir from Chhatra League in 2001.

The sporadic clashes, that continued from 11:30pm of Sunday to 12:30pm of Monday, left at least 15 injured.

Of them, 12 belong to Chhatra League while the rest three are Shibir activists.

Eight of the severely injured were admitted to Khulna Medical College and Hospital and Pyramid Clinic at Daulatpur.

They are Zulfiqar Ali, Asif, Habibur Rahman, Palash, Madhu, Tamal and Ershad of Chhatra League while Mustafiz belongs to Chhatra Shibir.

## Delwar protests killing of party activist

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP Secretary General Khandaker Delwar Hossain yesterday strongly protested the killing of Swachhasebak Dal leader Nazrul Islam in the city and the post-election violence by Awami League cadres claiming the life of Subhashini Das, mother of BNP leader Nityalal Das, at Kuliarchar in Kishoreganj.

He also demanded immediate arrest of the people responsible for the killing.

Meanwhile, the victims of post-poll violence from across the country met BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia at her party office in the city yesterday, said Mahbul Alam, special assistant to Khaleda.

In a statement, Delwar Hossain alleged the AL cadres have resorted to violence across the country in their same old style, creating a dreadful situation, which

proved that the AL chief's call for the workers 'to show restraint' is just eyewash.

Many people have fallen victim to AL brutality, he said, adding that his party is receiving many reports from across the country that the shops and property of BNP men have been looted.

BNP Office Secretary Ruhul Kabir Rizvi Ahmed in a press conference at Party chairperson's office also expressed deep concern over the attacks on BNP leaders and activists in Patuakhali, Tangail, Pabna and Comilla.

In another statement, Delwar Hossain protested the filing of a defamation case against Rizvi Ahmed.

An AL leader filed the case because Rizvi has been giving information about attacks on BNP leaders and activists to the media, he said.

He also demanded immediate withdrawal of the 'false case'.

## Lanka on the ascendancy

FROM PAGE 16

Lankans to finish the day on 296 for four but before that all the top-order batsmen made useful contributions to build up the innings on a pitch where it was not so easy to play shots.

The two undefeated batsmen made the home team bowlers helpless as they made merry in the last session to take their team into a commanding position, after the Tigers picked up four wickets in first two sessions.

Bangladesh once again got early success when Sri Lanka resumed their innings on 13 for no loss but the bowlers lacked application and failed to put pressure on the new batsman every time a wicket fell.

There were few appeals, two run out chances and one dropped catch but the Lankan batsmen hardly faced any trouble from the Bangladesh bowlers despite the fact they lost two quick wickets with the scoreboard reading 55 for 2.

Openers Malinda Warnapura and Prasanna Jayawardene began confidently but Bangladesh skipper Mohammad Ashraf had a golden arm to bring the first breakthrough for his side when the latter handed an easy catch to Shakib Al Hasan at short midwicket.

There was double delight for the home team when Shahadat Hossain trapped the other opener in front in the very next

over but captain Mahela Jayawardene joined his deputy Kumar Sangakkara to steady the ship.

The pair played the remaining overs in the first session safely but after lunch left-arm spinner Enamul Haque broke the Sri Lankan skipper's heart as the right-hander offered a catch to Imrul Kayes at short-cover to make sure that there would be nothing special for him in his 100th Test match where his contribution in the first innings was 11 and 22 in his second knock.

Sangakkara however completed his fifty as the left-hander hit 54 off 104 balls with the help of four boundaries before he dragged one onto his stumps to become the second victim of Ashraf.

After that it was the story for Samaraweera and Dilshan. Both batsmen were however lucky as the former survived a very good run out chance which was missed by substitute fielder Rajin Saleh while the latter was dropped by Zunaed Siddiqui off Mashrafe Bin Mortaza.

Zunaed however suffered an injury in his thumb while trying to take the catch and left the field immediately. He was later declared fit.

There was another setback for the home side as main spinner Shakib could not bowl his full complement of overs as he had a cut in his finger.

## ABC radio formally goes on air tomorrow

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

ABC Radio, a private commercial radio, is set to start its journey formally tomorrow on FM (Frequency Module) 89.2, says a press release.

Apart from programmes, ABC Radio has been broadcasting latest news in every hour through test transmission from August last year.

Over four crore listeners are now under ABC radio coverage. Though the coverage is now limited in Dhaka and its adjacent districts, it will soon extend its coverage to entire country.

## Orientation of FMC first year students Jan 11

METRO DESK

The orientation ceremony of the first year students of the MBBS course under academic session 2008-09 at Faridpur Medical College (FMC) will be held on January 11, says a press release.

BSS adds: The orientation meeting of the first year MBBS students of Comilla Medical College for the 2008-09 session will be held on January 12.

## Russia-Ukraine gas row hits freezing Balkans

AFP, Zagreb

Russian gas deliveries to Croatia have fallen 7.5 percent due to a Russia-Ukraine dispute, officials said yesterday as similar shortages threatened Bosnia and Serbia amid a cold snap.

"Since Sunday, there has been a 7.5-percent reduction in deliveries of Russian gas," Neda Erdeljac, spokeswoman for Croatian national gas operator PLINACRO, told AFP.

However the system was still "operating normally ... there is no danger for supplies to customers," she said.

National oil and gas group INA said earlier it would do its utmost to ensure any shortfall in Russian gas does not affect supplies to households.

Croatia produces some 60 percent of its own natural gas, while the remaining 40 percent is imported from Russia.

Meanwhile, officials in two other former Yugoslav republics, Bosnia and Serbia, warned of a possible reduction of Russian gas needed

for heating with temperatures in the Balkans well below freezing.

An official indicated that for now, however, Serbia had sufficient gas supplies.

## South Asian Women Media Forum formed

METRO DESK

A forum named 'South Asian Women Media Forum' was formed at the National Press Club yesterday, says a press release.

A 10-member convening committee was formed with Nasimun Ara Hoq, president of Bangladesh Nari Sangbadik Kendra and Rasheda Amin, president of Bangladesh Women Journalists Forum, as joint conveners.

Parveen Sultana Jhuma, general secretary of Bangladesh Nari Sangbadik Kendra, will act as coordinator.

Other members of the committee are Mahmuda Chowdhury, Rosy Ferdous, Farida Yasmin, Aditi Rahman, Nadira Kiron, Ibtasam Nasim Mao and Mahbuba Zannat.

## Leadership dev seminar begins tomorrow

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A four-day-long national leadership development seminar titled 'Youth Towards Sustainability' begins in Sylhet tomorrow.

With the support of ACME Laboratories Limited, the Bangladesh chapter of the world's largest student organisation - the Association of International Students Science Economic and Commerce (AIESEC) - organises the seminar aimed at developing leadership skills and competencies of all AIESEC members in Bangladesh.

Around 200 to 250 delegates from home and abroad will take part in the seminar to be held at

Zasat Holiday Resort.

This was disclosed by the organisers at a press conference at the National Press Club in the city yesterday.

"The seminar will be divided into different sessions including training, leadership development and management, and sustainability with special focus on issue-based projects to solve various problems facing the society such as poverty, illiteracy and HIV/AIDS," said the organisers.

One of the key aims of the seminar is to enhance the skills and competence of AIESECers so that they can become 'change agents' for the society, said Farnaz Karim, congress committee president of the seminar, at the press conference.



Farnaz Karim speaks at a press conference on 'National Leadership Development Seminar 2009' at the National Press Club yesterday. On his left are Arman Mahub, Md Rafiqul Islam and Asif Ainul Haque. PHOTO: STAR



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