

Transit to help promote Indo-Bangla business

Says Tripura chief minister

BSS, Dhaka

Transit and transshipment facilities can help both India and Bangladesh promote business and investment enormously, especially in seven northeastern Indian states, including Tripura.

"As the word 'transit' has become politicised, it should be given a different connotation to avert unnecessary debate," Chief Minister (CM) of Tripura Manik Sarkar said at a meeting between Tripura government and three leading trade bodies of Bangladesh at Agartala on Wednesday.

A seven-member team, including Industries and Commerce Minister of Tripura Jitendra Chowdhury, Chairman

of the Northeast Council of the Confederation of Indian Industries Dipanker Chatterjee and President of the Tripura Chamber of Commerce and Industry ML Chatterjee, participated in the talks.

A 21-member high-profile business delegation of the India-Bangladesh Chamber of Commerce and Industry (IBCCI), the Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industries (FBCCI) and the Dhaka Chamber of Commerce and Industry (DCCI) led by President of the IBCCI Abdul Matlub Ahmed attended the meeting.

The Tripura CM said Bangladeshis can use Tripura as the gateway for paving the way for Bangladeshi products

to the seven northeastern states and should allow India to carry goods through Bangladesh protecting its interest.

Manik Sarkar said the eventual expansion of potential trade, commerce and investment opportunities would require improved infrastructure on both the sides of the international border.

The CM said besides trade and investment, Bangladesh can import power as Tripura has now surplus power and has an immediate plan to set up a giant plant to generate huge amount of electricity.

Responding to a question, after the meeting, Manik Sarkar said, "The move of Bangladesh for setting a task

force to combat terrorism in South Asia is positive."

Matlub Ahmed, also chairman of the Nitol-Niloy Group, sought removal of tariff and non-tariff barriers to ease exports of Bangladeshi goods, including garments, melamine products, medicine, toiletries, biscuits, soft drinks, cement and MS rods. He also expressed willingness to set up bamboo and rubber-based industries in Tripura.

A seven-member task force was formed with representatives from Bangladesh and Tripura at the meeting for identifying prospects and hindrances to expansion of business and investment. The task force will submit its report within three months.



PHOTO: STAR

Leader of the Opposition in Parliament and BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia addresses a public meeting on the Shaheed Zia College premises in Bogra yesterday on the occasion of the 73rd birth anniversary of late president Ziaur Rahman.

Five killed in road accidents

A CORRESPONDENT, Gopalganj

At least five people were killed and four others injured in three separate road accidents in Gopalganj during last two days.

The victims were identified as Rina Begum, 35, Dulal, 13, Ajim Mollah, 40, Palash Kazi, 27, and Kamal Kazi, 30.

When a human hauler and a rickshaw van collided at Bherar Hat on the outskirts of Gopalganj town, rickshaw van passengers Rina Begum died on the spot and four others sustained injuries yesterday.

In another incident, Dulal, who sustained injury in an accident on Friday night, died yesterday at Faridpur Medical College Hospital.

The accident occurred when a speeding truck knocked down him on the Dhaka-Khulna highway at Kashiani bus stand in the town.

On the other hand, motorbike rider Ajim Mollah died on the spot and two co-riders Palash and Kamal sustained serious injuries when a truck rammed into the motorbike on the same highway near the town bypass.

Palash died at Gopalganj Sadar hospital, while Kamal died at Khulna Medical College and hospital.

ISHWARGANJ UZ Vice chairman candidate demands vote recount

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Shefali Hamid who contested in January 22 elections for the vice chairman post from Ishwarganj upazila in Mymensingh demanded recounting of votes at her upazila as she found evidence of vote rigging.

She made the demand at a press conference at Dhaka Reporters' Unity in the city yesterday.

She said, "We applied to the Election Commission to recount the votes but yet to get any reply."

She said changing the original result sheet district level election officials declared my opponent candidate Mamataj Sufiyon winner.

"In three centres, presiding officers-provided result sheets showed I received 473, 1192 and 670 votes but in the district election office showed I received 173, 292 and 476 votes", Shefali said.

I received much votes than my opponent in the total 85 centres including the pointed three centres but the administration favoured my opponent Mamataj to win, she added.

Compulsory edn up to SSC by 2012

Says Nahid

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

Education Minister Nurul Islam Nahid yesterday said the government is resolute to enforce compulsory education up to Secondary School Certificate (SSC) level by 2012.

Steps would be taken soon to implement the programme, he said, adding: "We would take measures to remove illiteracy from people up to 45 years age."

Nurul was addressing a meeting at Beambazar Govt College playground with

upazila AL President Abdul Hasib in the chair.

To face the huge and multiple challenges of the new world, the minister said the country's total education system needs a big change immediately.

"We would formulate an education policy within months on the basis of the Kudrat-E-Khuda Commission report of 1974," Nahid said, adding that it would help greatly in eradicating illiteracy.

While the AL was in power in the past regime, a pro-people draft education policy

was prepared but the BNP-led alliance put things in balance and took measures in this regard, he added.

He further said that the government would also try to introduce a unified primary education system throughout the country in place of the existing different types of education to end the huge discrimination in the primary education sector.

Upazila Chairman-elect Abdul Khaliq Mayon and Vice Chairman-elect Ruma Chakravarty also spoke at the programme.



PHOTO: STAR

Participants pose for photograph after a workshop on 'Canon New Technology' at a city restaurant yesterday.

MPs with no housing in Dhaka to get govt flats

UNB, Dhaka

The government will allocate 'on emergency basis' flats in Nakhapara and Manik Mia Avenue areas for newly elected parliament members who don't have their own house or accommodation in the capital.

In its first meeting, presided over by Chief Whip Md Abdus Shaheed, at Sangsad bhaban yesterday the parliamentary house committee took the decision.

Under the decision, the 1800-square-foot flats in Manik Mia Avenue will be

allocated to the MPs on the basis of seniority and party position. Besides, women MPs will be allocated the building no 1 and 2 in the Avenue.

The meeting was told that there are 216 flats measuring 1250 square feet each at Nakhapara and Manik Mia Avenue areas and 108 flats of 1800 square feet in Manik Mia Avenue for the MPs.

So far, 227 applications have been received from the newly elected members of parliament at the parliament secretariat.

"The meeting also decided not to allow people

other than family members and relatives to live in the flats allocated for the MPs and ensure security of the buildings," said an official release.

The meeting also decided to take possession of 16 flats immediately from Public Works Department.

Committee members ASM Firoz, Md Majibul Haq, Bir Bahadur Ushoi Singh,

Md Atiur Rahman Latif, Hafizuddin Ahmed, ABM Ashraf Uddin and Md Abdul Quddus attended the meeting.

Gono Forum hails decision to start trial of war criminals

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Gono Forum has hailed the decision to start trial of the war criminals in the country.

At a meeting on Friday, the party's standing committee described the act of passing a proposal in this regard in parliament as a very positive step towards fulfilling a long-standing demand of the countrymen.

Gono Forum President Dr Kamal Hossain chaired the meeting, said a press release. Speakers at the meeting also expressed concern over the slide in law and order situation in different universities and called on the government to take necessary measures immediately to ensure congenial atmosphere in the educational institutions.

The meeting expressed concern that the killers of Zakir Hossain, who was killed in Narsingdi on the eve of December 29 elections, could not yet be arrested. Zakir was an uncle of Jagul Haider Afri, law secretary of the party.

CM Morshed, Mofizul Islam Khan Kamal, Abdur Rouf, M o h a m m a d Shahabuddin, advocate SM Alaf Hossain and former whip Abdur Rouf were present at the meeting.

Ban on yarn import thru' land port demanded

UNB, Dhaka

Coalition of Local NGOs, Bangladesh (CLNB) yesterday staged a demonstration at Mukhtangan in the city demanding ban on yarn import through land ports.

The CLNB leaders during the demonstration also put forward a six-point recommendation to save country's 341 spinning mills which are on the verge of closure due to unabated import of yarn.

The recommendations include halting import of yarn completely through land ports, providing interest-free bank loan, removing infrastructural problems and scarcity of gas and electricity, taking initiatives in cotton cultivation and providing financial support to the growers.

Scientific Seminar
on
Lacidipine - Simply Better than Amlodipine
in the Management of Hypertension
30th January 2009 at Hotel Pan Pacific Sonargaon, Dhaka.

ARISTOPHARMA LTD.

A seminar on 'Lacidipine-Simply Better than Amlodipine in the management of hypertension' was held at a city hotel yesterday.

Seminar on management of hypertension held

METRO DESK

Speakers at a seminar on management of hypertension said the newly developed 'Lacidipine' medicine provides better tolerability than conventionally used 'Amlodipine' in controlling hypertension.

Aristopharma Ltd, a pharmaceutical company in the country, organised the scientific seminar marking the launching of their new prod-

uct Lacidipine (Lacidipine) at Sonargaon Hotel yesterday, says a press release.

Prof (Emeritus) Dr Sufia Rahman, former adviser to a caretaker government and chief adviser and consultant of Euro-Bangla Heart Hospital Ltd, presented the keynote speech.

She showed that Lacidipine provides better tolerability than conventionally used Amlodipine in management

of hypertension.

Prof Dr AKM Rafique Uddin, former head of Department of Medicine, Dhaka Medical College and currently head of Department of Medicine, Enam Medical College and Hospital, presided over the seminar.

MA Hassan, chairman and managing director of Aristopharma Ltd, and other officials of the pharmaceutical company were also present.



PHOTO: STAR

Children render song at the altar of Mirpur killing ground yesterday marking the 'Mirpur Freedom Day'. Liberation War Museum organised the event.

'Bring changes to Tobacco Control Act to discourage smoking'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Anti-tobacco activists at a discussion yesterday called on the government to bring changes to Tobacco Control Act and make it mandatory to print pictorial warning on each cigarette stick to discourage smoking.

They said printed health warning on the cigarette packets is not useful for illiterate people.

Save the Environment Movement in cooperation with Pratyasha, an anti-drug club, WBB Trust and Manobik organised the discussion at the National Press Club.

Pointing out a number of loopholes in the Act, lawyer Kanij Kanta said many people consume Sadapata, Zarda and

Gul, which causes cancer, but there is no mention of these items in the definition of tobacco products.

She also suggested increasing penalty fee for violation of the Act, repealing article 2 of the Act and raising tax on tobacco products.

Dr Mostafa Zaman of World Health Organisation said, "Tobacco is not an economic crop. Rather, it damages our economy." In 2004, Bangladesh earned Tk 400 crore from tobacco products but spent Tk 5000 crore on treatment for tobacco-related diseases and the gap is widening gradually, he substantiated.

Dr Rashid-e-Mahbub said the National Board of Revenue should take initiative to make the people aware about the effects of

tobacco consumption.

Quoting from the latest study, Dr Arup Ratan Chowdhury said, "Smoking is the cause of all diseases and breast cancer is the result of indirect smoking."

Chairman of Save the Environment Movement Abu Naser Khan chaired the programme.

Mongla river transport workers threaten strike

UNB, Bagerhat

River transport workers at Mongla port yesterday threatened indefinite strike from today if their demand for increase in food allowance to Tk 100 from Tk 30 is not met.

Abul Kashem Master, president of River Transport Workers' Federation, said some 750 people are engaged in about 250 cargo vessels and coasters that carried goods and commodities to and from adjacent Indian river ports.

Tk 30 given to workers per day as food allowance is quite inadequate. This should be raised to Tk 100, he said.

Port sources said 250 shipments per month on an average, mainly from Indian ports, included raw materials for cement and rice. Hardly anything goes from Bangladesh. Most of the government imported five lakh tons of rice from India came in cargo vessels to the Mongla port.

Cargo vessel owners turned down the demand for raising the food allowance.



PHOTO: STAR

Coalition of Local NGOs, Bangladesh (CLNB) forms a human chain at Mukhtangan in the city yesterday demanding ban on yarn import through land ports.