

Ties with Beijing to get new dimension

FM tells Shanghai Institute president

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Foreign Minister Dipu Moni yesterday said the bilateral relations between Bangladesh and China would be strengthened in future.

Relations between the two friendly countries are thousand years old, she said, adding that the relations would get a new dimension during the tenure of the new government.

She made the comments when President of Shanghai Institute for International Studies Yang Jiemian met the minister at the foreign ministry in the morning.

During the meeting, they discussed in details the bilateral relations of the two countries, according to a foreign ministry press release.

The foreign minister assured Yang that Bangladesh would continue to follow 'One China' policy.

She said China is a close friend of Bangladesh, adding that both the countries cooperate with each other on different regional and international issues.

Dipu said, "Among the countries of the region, Bangladesh has excellent investment climate. Chinese businessmen can set up industries here taking advantage of the investment-friendly environment during the present regime. Besides, China can relocate small- and medium-scale industries to Bangladesh."

Yang said China is at present an observer in Saarc. China's relations with Saarc countries are becoming closer. China and Saarc countries can increase mutual cooperation

on different issues, including security.

Yang Jiemian is a brother of China's incumbent foreign minister.

UN Resident Coordinator and UNDP Representative Renata Lock Dessalieu met State Minister for Foreign Affairs Dr Hasan Mahmud at his office in the morning.

During the talks, they discussed different aspects of Bangladesh-UN relations, maritime boundary and border situation, human rights and development issues.

The minister said Bangladesh considers the UN an important development partner. It is playing a vital role in demarcating sea boundary worldwide.

The UN could cooperate with Bangladesh in demarcating maritime boundaries of Bangladesh with India and Myanmar on the basis of equity, he added.



PHOTO: STAR

Students of Jagannath University stage a sit-in in front of the Shishu Academy demanding government steps to retrieve their dormitories from grabbers as police intercepted them while proceeding towards secretariat in a procession.



PHOTO: STAR

Residents form a human chain at Banani in the city yesterday protesting a move to shift Indian visa office to the residential area.

Residents protest move to relocate Indian visa office at Banani

Staff Correspondent

Residents in the city's Banani area and students of Banani Model School yesterday protested the plan to relocate Indian visa office in the Banani residential area fearing that the move would hamper peaceful ambience of the locality.

They formed a human chain and also staged a protest rally at Banani Park to express deep concern over the relocation of the busy visa office which would bring unwanted elements in the locality.

Currently located at Gulshan section-I near the shooting club, the State Bank of India, responsible for processing Indian visa, is planning to move the office to Block F, Road No. 7 at Banani 98/A.

The school students complained that the plot which is adjacent to the their campus would hamper the congenial academic atmosphere.

One of the residents Akter Shahid said, "Indian visa office is one of the most busiest offices in Dhaka. Every day several thousand people stand in queues in front of the current office at Gulshan creating disorder in the area. We don't want that to happen here."

"Hundreds of brokers stand in lines in front of the visa office hours before the daybreak and later sell these standing places to visa seekers for money. They block roads, litter at will, destroy pavements and they even respond to the nature's call in the sidewalk due to lack of facilities," he added.

Along with the burgeoning visitors, traffic movement would increase in the area creating gridlock in the already choked-up narrow lanes. The crowd would bring along hawkers and security of the area will also be hampered, residents complained.

"During festival seasons, many people visit India which would bring even more visa seekers around the area. We would be aliens in our own home. There might be even police barricades near my home every day hindering my movement", said a resident Benedict Bijoy Baroi.

Qumrun Nahar, another resident, said, "Commercial activities are already on the increase at Banani. The relocation would further deteriorate the situation. We fear the only nearby open space Banani Park would be occupied by the visa seekers living no room for our children to play."

Shah Abul Kashem, secretary general of Banani Society, said, "It is illegal to carry out commercial activities in a residential area. When we leased the plots, the papers clearly said there can be no commercial activities. We sent letters to the Rajuk authorities and the Indian high commission but didn't hear from them yet. We urge the government not to allow such move."

Abducted hotel manager rescued

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Police rescued a hotel manager four hours after his abduction with Tk 40,000 from the city's Patuati under Kotwali police station.

A gang of eight to 10 kidnappers looted the cashbox of Hotel Serika and kidnapped its

manager Ismail Hossain, 40, at about 8:00am.

Kotwali police rescued Ismail from Keraniganj and arrested gang members Kawsar and Mamun at about 12:00noon according to his statement. Police also recovered Tk 35,000 from their possession.

Kotwali police station officer-in-charge Abdul Hannan said they are trying to arrest other members of the gang.

Concern over gang rape in Dhamrai

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Mahila Parishad in a statement yesterday expressed concern over the incident of a gang rape of a school student and screening of its video in Dhamrai.

The parishad demanded immediate arrest of the criminals and their punishment and security of the victim and her family members.

The daily Prothom Alo published a report yesterday that a schoolgirl of Dhamrai fell victim to rape by his cousin Mashiur Rahman, 25. Later Mashiur's friends Rajib, 23, Bhulu, 23, Manik, 25, Ranjit Ghosh, 25 and Mosharraf, 26 raped her one after another. Mashiur recorded its video on their cellphone.

A case has been filed with Dhamrai Police Station on Friday in this regard.

The criminals are threatening the victim and her family members and displaying the video footage to the people that forced the girl to stop going to the school.

The parishad urged the authorities concerned to take necessary steps to arrest the criminals.

Car requisitioned by police hijacked

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A gang of armed criminals shot a driver and hijacked his microbus at Moghbazar in the city yesterday morning.

Police requisitioned the microbus on Saturday. The driver identified as Taiyab Ali, 36, was rushed to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) with injuries. He was shot in his face and left hand.

Taiyab said the hijackers numbering four intercepted his microbus near Moghbazar rail crossing at around 7:00am while he was going to Deputy Commissioner (DC) office.

AKM Hafiz Akhter, DC-transport, told The Daily Star that the vehicle was sent to DC's office after the requisition.

Amratnath Group, a garments factory at Tongi, is owner of the car, said Imrul Kayes Sujan, an administrative officer of the company. He said traffic police requisitioned the vehicle on Saturday night at Banani in the city. Sujan filed a case with Ramna Police Station in this connection last night.

'Do not approve anti-RMG workers' interest ordns'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Leaders of the National Garment Workers' Federation staged a sit-in programme at Muktangan in the city yesterday demanding not to approve the ordinances related to workers and garments industry which were promulgated during the state of emergency.

Addressing the sit-in programme leaders of the federation said three ordinances were promulgated during the state of emergency and some controversial amendments had been brought in the ordinances which are against the interest of the workers and the industry as well.

They urged the lawmakers not to ratify the ordinances to avert unrest among the workers.

Sahida Sarker, Aminul Haque Amin, Nurun Nahar, Faruk Khan, Kamrun Nahar and Arifa Akter, among others, spoke at the programme.

Refrain from forming regional taskforce

Delwar urges govt

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Asking government to refrain from signing any deal to form regional taskforce to combat terrorism and militancy, BNP Secretary General Khandaker Delwar Hossain yesterday said people will not accept anything which will go against the country's independence and sovereignty.

He also asked the government to make public the draft of the proposed taskforce to justify its necessity as the country's law enforcement agencies are enough to curb terrorism.

"BNP government controlled militancy and terrorist activities with iron hand. Abdur Rahman and Bangla Bhai were hanged to death and this proves that our law enforcers are enough to curb militancy," said Delwar at a press briefing at party chairperson's Gulshan office in the city.

He alleged that the taskforce, transit and Tifa are nothing but a continuation of 1/11 changeover and stage-managed election of December 29.

"No decision should be taken keeping people in dark," the BNP leader added.

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Dr Rowan Hafiz, principal of Autism Welfare Foundation, speaks at a workshop titled 'Occupational therapy and speech language therapy' at the foundation's office at Shyamoli in the city on Saturday. On her right are Dr Mojammel Hossain Khan and Abul Kashem Muhammad Shirin and on her left is Dr Shameema Haider.

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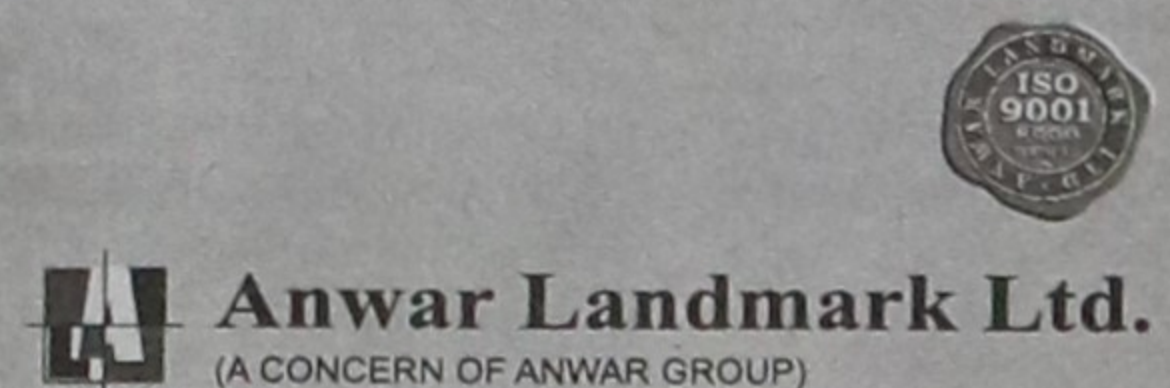


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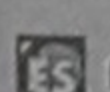
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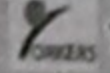
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