

# Russia keen to help in power sector

High-powered team to visit Bangladesh soon

UNB, Dhaka

Russia expressed its desire to extend cooperation to Bangladesh's power sector as a 10-member high-powered delegation led by the Economic Development Secretary will be visiting Bangladesh soon.

Russian Ambassador in Bangladesh Gennady Trotsenko unveiled the plan during a meeting with Foreign Minister Dr Dipu Moni at the Foreign Ministry yesterday.

During the meeting, the envoy also expressed his country's willingness to expand Siddhinganj Power Plant to increase its production capacity, according to a foreign ministry source.

The high-powered delegation, comprising representatives of different institutions, including the Central Bank of Russia, will explore various ways for economic development.

The volume of trade between the two countries is now only 250 million US dollar and opportunity is there to expand the trading areas through signing a Free Trade Agreement (FTA).

The foreign minister told the envoy that Bangladesh is willing to sign such a deal. She expressed satisfaction over Russian contribution to the power sector.

"During the meeting, Dhaka-Moscow cooperation in power, agriculture, trade, economy, political and culture sectors was discussed in detail," said the source.

The Ambassador stressed that the existing bilateral agreements need to be renewed for further strengthening the bilateral ties. He said recently an MoU was signed between the Russian Diplomatic Academy and Bangladesh Foreign Service Academy, which will "facilitate exchange of experience and expertise between foreign service officers of the two countries".

## BARISAL-5 JS SEAT HC tribunal to hear AL candidate's petition

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

An election tribunal of the High Court (HC) yesterday accepted for hearing an election petition seeking cancellation of the result of December 29 parliamentary polls to Barisal-5 constituency and to hold a fresh election to this constituency.

After hearing the submission from the petitioner's counsel, the tribunal of Justice Shahidul Islam entertained the petition for holding hearing on the matter.

Awami League candidate Zahid Faruk recently filed the petition stating that BNP candidate Mujibur Rahman Sarwar who won in the election, has no right to contest the parliamentary polls since Sarwar was a mayor of Barisal City Corporation (BCC).

Petitioner's counsel Advocate Abdul Baset Majumder told The Daily Star that the hearing of the election petition will be held soon.

## Focus Bangla steps into fifth year

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Focus Bangla, a digital news and photo agency, stepped into five years of its service in the city yesterday.

The agency that started its journey with the slogan of 'Every time with technology and news' four years ago organised a daylong programme to mark the day.

Shipping Minister Afsarul Amin inaugurated the programme in the morning by cutting a cake at its office at Bangabandhu Avenue in the city.

He also inaugurated voice new service by dialling 2008. From now, anyone can listen to the updated news of the agency by dialling the number.

Afsarul said journalists have immense responsibilities in making digital Bangladesh through their constructive writings.

He called on all professionals to come forward in building a prosperous nation as it is not possible for the politicians alone to move the country forward.

Sylhet City Corporation (SCC) Mayor Badar Uddin Ahmed Kamran said the agency has already gained popularity among the people through its rare collection of photographs which were printed in many daily newspapers.

Journalists should do constructive criticism of the government apart from upholding development activities positively, he added.

Nadim Kadir, also the founding chairman of the photo agency, Focus Bangla Managing Editor Yeasin Kabir Joy, Chairman Kamal Hossain and World University Vice Chancellor Prof Abdul Mannan Chowdhury also spoke.



Participants of 7th South Asian Free Media Conference observe one minute's silence in memory of the journalists killed in this region at the inaugural session of the conference at Cox's Bazar yesterday.

## DISASTER MANAGEMENT

# Help develop skilled manpower

Minister urges World Bank

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Food and Disaster Management Minister Dr Abdur Razzak yesterday sought the World Bank (WB) assistance in developing skilled manpower for better disaster management and reduction in casualties.

The WB may help in setting up an institute to develop human resources, the minister told the WB Country Director Xian Zhu as he met the minister at his office.

In response to the minister, Xian Zhu said they provided US\$ 8 million after the Sidr and that money could be used for building such an institute. The bank also provided US\$ 5 crore to Bangladesh to face challenges of climate change.

After the meeting Zhu told reporters it was

important to increase safety net programmes and check irregularities in such programmes to help more poor people when food prices are high.

Dr Razzak said the government already instructed the officials concerned to investigate into the irregularities in the safety net programmes.

None of those involved with irregularities in safety net programmes will be spared, he added.

On Monday, he said the government found huge misuse in 100-day Employment Generation Programme. Other safety net programmes include, Vulnerable Group Feeding, Vulnerable Group Development, and Food for Work.

The minister also said that it is important to increase the food stock of the government and therefore the World Bank can help in increasing food storage capacities.

## KILLING OF WOMAN HC jails three acquitted by lower court

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court (HC) yesterday sentenced three people to jail for life for killing a woman at Homna upazila in Comilla.

Earlier, the trial court in Comilla acquitted them of charges.

The HC bench comprising Justice Nozrul Islam Chowdhury and Justice Md Ataur Rahman Khan also upheld the trial court verdict acquitting three others of this case.

The lifers are Abdur Rashid, Abdul Matin and Kalaisa and the acquitted are Abdul Malek, Idris Miah and Joinal Abedin.

After a long hearing on the long pending appeal against the trial court verdict, the HC yesterday delivered the judgment.

Advocate Khurshid Alam Khan, a lawyer for the accused, told The Daily Star that he will file an appeal on behalf of his clients with the Supreme Court against the High Court verdict.

Khurshid said the miscreants killed Ruptunnesa, a woman of Homna upazila in Comilla district on September 24 in 1986. The same day her son Shamsuzzaman filed a murder case with Homna police station in this regard.

Then additional Sessions Judge of the district Md Sohrab Hossain delivered the verdict acquitting all the six accused of the case on March 19, 1989.

The government then filed an appeal with the High Court against the trial court verdict.

Hearing of the appeal started at the High Court last week.

Deputy Attorney General (DAG) Shamsur Rahman appeared for the government.



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina greets veteran AL leader Zillur Rahman, who is set to become the next president, with a bouquet at the ALCWC meeting at the party's Dhanmondi office in the city yesterday. (Story on Page 2)

## Six held with phensidyl

UNB, Dhaka

Detective Branch of police recovered 189 bottles of phensidyl and arrested six people at Alaul Avenue at Uttara in the city yesterday.

Acting on a tip-off, a team of DB police raided a microbus in front of BHBFC Ideal High School and recovered 189 bottles of Indian phensidyl at 12:40pm.

Six drug traders -- Mahbubur Rahman, Abul Kashem, A Rahman, Azgar Ali, Bablur Rahman, and Runa -- were also arrested.

The arrested used to collect phensidyl from Putkhali in Jessore and supply these to different areas in city, said a DMP release.

## Minu assures RCC mayor of all help

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

Rajshahi City Corporation (RCC) Mayor AHM Khairuzzaman Liton appreciated some achievements of former mayor Mizanur Rahman Minu whereas Minu assured cooperation in development work of the mayor at a programme on Monday evening in Rajshahi.

They said these at a programme of BBC Bangla Service titled 'your city, your question' as part of its FM

promotional programme.

Rajshahi Rakkha Sangram Parishad Convenor Zamat Khan and Dr Mahbuba Kaniz Keya of Rajshahi University were among the panelists at the programme.

Sabir Mustafa, head of BBC Bangla Service, moderated the programme.

The programme will be aired on BBC radio on FM 105 in Rajshahi on February 15 after news bulletin 'Prabaha' and will be telecasted on Channel i next day.

## TRAINING ON ETHNIC COMMUNITIES 'Promote human rights'

METRO DESK

Objective journalism can help reducing marginalisation of the ethnic communities and it could be a way of promoting their human rights.

Participants observed this at a five-day training for journalists on human rights of the ethnic communities that concluded at Savar on Monday, says a press release.

Management and Resources Development Initiative (MRDI) with support from Delegation of the European Commission in Bangladesh organised the training for the journalists of the national print and electronic media.

A total of 22 reporters from leading national print and electronic media participated at the programme.

Dr Abdullah Al Faruque, chairman of Department of Law, Chittagong University, Advocate Bahreen Khan,

senior staff lawyer of the BELA, Prof Dr Amena Mohsin of international relations of Dhaka University, Prof Dr Sadeka Halim of Department of Sociology of Dhaka University, Prof H K S Arefeen of Department of Anthropology of Dhaka University and Prashanto Tripura, national coordinator of Local Governance Programme, Care Bangladesh, conducted the sessions as resource persons.

The training programme focused on human right issues emphasising ethnic rights, techniques of investigation, writing skills, quality of reporting and proper reflection of the culture, livelihood, hopes and aspirations of the ethnic communities in the reports.

Hasibur Rahman, executive director of the MRDI, at the concluding session announced that fellowship would be awarded to 10 journalists for in-depth investigative reports on human rights of ethnic communities.

## Lecture on medical physics

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Prof Salahuddin Ahmad, director of Medical Physics and Dosimetry, Department of Radiation Oncology, Oklahoma University, USA, delivered a lecture on 'Scope and prospective of medical physics' at Gono Bishwabidyalay on Saturday, says a press release.

He outlined the academic programme on medical physics and oncology in USA at his lecture.

Gono Bishwabidyalay Vice Chancellor Prof Mesbahuddin Ahmad, Prof Ajay Roy, head of the Department of Biomedical Engineering and Dr Zafrullah Chowdhury, trustee of the university, were present at the programme.

Mentionable, only Gono Bishwabidyalay offers the course on medical physics and biomedical engineering in the country.



Visa seekers stage a protest in front of the Indian visa office at Gulshan in the city yesterday as they failed to submit their visa forms even after waiting in a queue for hours.

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