

# DIRECT ROAD LINK WITH CHINA THRU' KUNMING President seeks Chinese help

UNB, Dhaka

President Zillur Rahman yesterday underscored the need for massive Chinese investment in Bangladesh, especially in textiles, agro-processing, energy and power, pharmaceutical, communications and infrastructure development, to reduce the existing huge trade imbalance between the two countries.

He made the suggestion when newly appointed Chinese Ambassador to Bangladesh Zhang Xianyi presented his credentials to the president at Bangabhaban.

Zillur welcomed the new envoy, saying that "Bangladesh attaches high importance to her relations with China".

Terming China as a trusted partner in overall economic development, he reaffirmed Bangladesh's support to the 'One-China' policy, which does not recognise Taiwan as a separate country.



Chinese Ambassador to Bangladesh Zhang Xianyi presents his credentials to President Zillur Rahman at Bangabhaban yesterday.

Mentioning Chinese government's support in different development fields in Bangladesh, including constructing five friendship bridges and the Bangladesh-China Friendship Conference

Centre, the president sought Beijing's support for establishing the planned cross-border 'Bangladesh-Myanmar-China' road link through Kunming. He also emphasised

increasing Chinese scholarships for Bangladeshi students as well as expanding the student exchange programme between the two countries.

The president assured the new envoy of utmost cooperation and hoped that the existing bonds of friendship and cooperation would be further strengthened during the new ambassadors' tenure here.

Ambassador Zhang Xianyi said he would work on establishing direct road-link between Bangladesh and China through Myanmar.

He also assured the president that he would try to take initiative to reduce the trade imbalance between the two countries.

Referring to the last national general election which was held here in a free, fair and credible manner, the envoy hoped that Bangladesh would go advance towards its desired development goals under the "dynamic leadership of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina".

## EDUCATIONAL INSTTS Tanjim asks law enforcers to ensure security

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government, responding to a recent rumour that terrorists might attack the schools, has asked the law enforcers to take tight security measures at all the educational institutions so that students can attend classes without any disturbance.

State Minister for Home Affairs Tanjim Ahmed Sohel Taj yesterday said, "We call upon the parents not to be anxious as the government has taken required measures to ensure the security of the children at the schools," he told newsmen at the concluding ceremony of the Children Theatre Festival 2009.

Save the Children Sweden-Denmark organised the three-day festival and Children Information Fair at Rabintra Sarobar in the city.

## BASHUNDHARA FIRE Probe body report today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The committee to probe into the fire at Bashundhara City Complex will submit its report to the government today.

"We will submit the investigation report to the home ministry today," Joint Secretary (Police) Iqbal Khan Chowdhury told The Daily Star yesterday.

Meanwhile, with the permission of the probe committee, the Bashundhara authorities have started repairing the gutted floors.

They have also constructed protection shed in the ground so that things that were burnt do not fall on the ground.

Seven people were killed and 11 others were injured in a massive fire that broke out on March 13 at the Bashundhara Group's 20-storey mall-cum-corporate office tower in the city, gutting its top six floors.



Campaign for Good Governance forms a human chain with earthen vessels in their hands in front of the National Museum in the city yesterday to mark the World Water Day.

## Strategy for sustainable waste management soon

Says state minister

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

State Minister for Environment and Forest Mustafizur Rahman said the government is going to develop a strategy soon for sustainable waste management to keep the environment toxic-free.

"After consulting with industry owners or representatives of concerned organisations, we will adopt a comprehensive strategy soon for waste management to keep the environment toxic-free," he added.

Replying to a query from reporters, the minister said this after attending a workshop on 'Chemical safety of food and agricultural sector in Bangladesh' organised by Environment and Social Development Organisation (ESDO) at WVA auditorium in the city.

Speaking as the chief guest, he also stressed the need for coordination between private and public organisations to

develop food quality and safety as well as to control the use of toxic chemicals and persistent pesticides achieving sound management of chemicals by 2020.

Presenting a keynote paper, ESDO Secretary General Hossain Shahrir said almost 85 to 98 per cent out of over 150 million population is under threat by toxic chemicals in the country due to rampant use of the chemicals in food items.

"Chemical fertiliser and persistent organic pollutants (POPs) like DDT is being widely used for dry fish processing and preservation, toxic colours and artificial sweeteners are injected into fruits," he said, adding that intake of those poisonous fruits or vegetables might cause diarrhoea, dysentery, hearing loss, visual impairment and even deadly cancer.

Taking part in the discussion, Biological and Chemical Societies President Prof Abu Jafar Mahmood said the gov-

ernment should take stern action against those who are importing and misusing chemicals by violating import policy.

He also underscored the importance of regulatory measures, coordination between different working groups and creating mass awareness of the issue to overcome the crisis.

Speakers at the workshop highlighted environmental infrastructure, improved technical measures and better enforcement of existing regulations, better education and training to tackle the situation.

They said the government should put environment and public health issues at the top of the agenda for policymaking.

With Bangladesh-Australia Centre for Environmental Research Director Dr SM Imamul Haq in the chair, the programme was also addressed by Prof Dr Nazmul Ahsan Kalimullah and Dr Monjur-A-Chowdhury.



Italian Ambassador to Dhaka Itala Ochhi speaks at a book launching ceremony at the National Press Club in the city yesterday.

## 'La Madre a masterpiece in Italian literature'

Bangla version published

DU CORRESPONDENT

Asian Cultural Federation, an interracial cultural organisation, launched the Bangla version of the Nobel-winning Italian novel titled 'La Madre' of famous Italian writer Grazia Deledda in the city yesterday.

Italian Ambassador to Dhaka Itala Ochhi was present as the chief guest at the launching ceremony at the National Press Club with Dhaka University VC Prof AAMS Arefin Siddique in the chair.

Dr AH Khan and Syed Manzur Mushed, general secretary of the federation, translated the book into Bangla. The name of translated version is 'Maa' (Mother).

Organisers hoped that voracious readers would find a different view of fictions from the book centring the then society of Italian region Sardinia.

The price of the book has been fixed at Tk 150 and would be available at the Asian Cultural Federation office, they added.

The novel La Madre won the Nobel prize in 1926, six years after it was written in 1920.

The Italian envoy termed the novel a masterpiece in the Italian literature, saying that the writer was a painter of nature.

Prof Arefin said the translation work would certainly help Bangladeshis living in Italy learn the Italian literature and enrich the translation literature in Bangladesh.

Prof ABM Farooq of Pharmaceutical Technology department also spoke.

## BNCC founding anniversary today

UNB, Dhaka

The 30th founding anniversary of Bangladesh National Cadet Corps (BNCC) and the BNCC Day will be observed across the country today.

Cadets and officers of different regiments of Army Wing, flotillas of Naval Wing and squadrons of Air Force Wing have taken special programmes to mark the day.

Cadets of Dhaka College, Eden Government Girls College, Chittagong College, Madan Mohan College Sylhet will hold discussions on the contribution of BNCC community towards the country.

The government established the voluntary organisation on March 23 in 1979 unifying the University Officers Training Corps (UOTC), Junior Cadet Corps (JCC) and Bangladesh Cadet Corps (BCC) with the aim of developing moral standards and leadership qualities in young men and women.

At present, the BNCC has 25,777 regular cadets, 431 Professor Under Officers (PUO) and Teacher Under Officers (TUO), and 154 BTFO officers.

The then UOTC took part in the War of Liberation in 1971 and many of the cadets embraced martyrdom, which is remembered with pride by all the BNCC members and the people, said senior BNCC officials.

## 'Generation of 3000MW renewable energy possible by 2020'

DU CORRESPONDENT

Generation of around 3000 megawatts of renewable energy is possible by 2020 through a united effort in the country, speakers said at a seminar on Dhaka University campus yesterday.

The inaugural ceremony of a three-day exhibition of renewable energy technologies was also held at the seminar on 'Renewable energy: Solar thermal energy' at Mokarram Bhaban of the university.

DU Vice Chancellor Prof AAMS Arefin Siddique speaking at the seminar stressed the need for increased use of renewable energy to tackle electricity crisis in the country.

He also said uninterrupted supply of electricity have to be ensured for socio-economic development in the country. He urged all to use renewable energy as an alternative to electricity where possible.

He informed the audiences that establishing a renewable energy research institute at DU is under process.

Bangladesh Solar Energy Society President Prof Muhammad Ibrahim chaired the seminar that was also addressed by Prof Neem Chandra Bhowmik, Prof Muhtasham Hossain and Prof Saiful Haque.

Speakers said at present solar energy is being used in over 2 lakh families across the

country. A total of 12 institutions have been participating at the exhibition with their new technologies on renewable energy.

Renewable Energy Research Centre of DU and Bangladesh Solar Energy Society jointly organised the exhibition. The event will remain open for all from 10:00am to 5:30pm daily on the premises of Mokarram Bhaban till tomorrow.

## DU POL SCIENCE DEPT Students continue sit-in

DU CORRESPONDENT

The fourth year BSS honours students of Department of Political Science at Dhaka University (DU) continued their sit-in programme in front of the office of the chairman yesterday demanding immediate publication of results of their honours final examinations.

They continued their programme for 2 hours. Later, they brought out a procession inside the arts building. No classes were held at the department yesterday.

Later, they cancelled their planned hunger strike after getting assurance from Pro-Vice Chancellor Prof Harun-Rashid on the matter.

## FIRE FIGHTING EQUIPMENT IN HIGH-RISE BLDGS HC asks govt to explain

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court (HC) yesterday issued a rule upon the government to explain within six weeks why it (government) should not be directed to arrange sufficient fire fighting equipment to ensure safety in country's high-rise buildings.

The HC bench of Justice ABM Khairul Haque and Justice Md Abdul Hye issued the rule upon a writ petition, filed by three Supreme Court (SC) lawyers on behalf of the Human Rights and Peace for Bangladesh (HRPB), following the devastating fire at the city's Bashundhara City Complex

on March 13.

Home secretary, finance secretary, food and disaster management secretary and director general and director of the Fire Service and Civil Defence department have been made respondents to the rule.

The petitioners' counsel advocate Manzill Murshid argued before the court that the fire service authorities failed to bring the fire under control at Bashundhara shopping complex due to lack of proper arrangement of fire extinguishers.

It is very important to arrange sufficient fire fighting equipment for the fire service stations to ensure safety of thousands of people living in the country's high-rise buildings, he said.

Asaduzzaman Siddique, Sarwar Ahad Chowdhury and Md Aklas Uddin Bhuiyan filed the writ petition as public interest litigation (PIL) on March 15 seeking an order to ensure supply of adequate fire fighting equipment to the fire service for the safety of high-rise buildings.

The petition also sought a direction upon the director general of the fire service to prepare a list of equipment necessary to fight fires in such buildings and submit it to the HC.

They challenged the government's 'inaction' in arranging fire-fighting equipment necessary to save the lives of people as well as properties.

Deputy Attorney General Mustafa Zaman Islam stood for the government.

## 'Release Akhtar Hamid'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP yesterday demanded immediate release of former deputy speaker and party leader Akhtar Hamid Siddiqui who was arrested on Saturday under the Special Powers Act (SPA) for making 'seditious statements'.

BNP Joint Secretary General Nazrul Islam Khan alleged that the government arrested Siddiqui to divert public attention from government's failure to maintain law and order.

"We believe in laws, if he (Akhtar Hamid) has truly committed an offence, then file a case against him under regular laws, we will fight the

case," he told newsmen at a press briefing at the BNP chairperson's office at Gulshan in the city.

Terming the Special Power Act (SPA) a black law, he demanded scrapping of the SPA.

Nazrul alleged that the case was filed against Akhtar Hamid as part of the government's plan to harass and humiliate the opposition politicians.

Nashrin Siddiqui, wife of the former deputy speaker, their son Rezwan, BNP lawmaker ABM Ashrafuddin Nizan and BNP leader Habibunnabi Khan Sohel were present at the briefing.



Students of Summerfield International School display their artworks and science projects at a two-day art exhibition and science festival on its Dhanmondi campus recently. It was a perfect blend of art and scientific projects and a combination of colour and technology by the young innovative minds. Some significant projects include robotics and androids, global warming, renewable energy, hydroelectricity, biogas, bio-diesel-run powerboat and greenhouse effect.



The 20th Secretary Generals' Forum of South Asia Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies was held at the Hotel Sonargaon in the city recently.

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