



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina holds a meeting with her Bhutanese counterpart Jigme Y Thinley in Thimphu yesterday. (Story on Page 1)

Bhutan seeks support to host 16th Saarc Summit

UNB, Thimphu

King of Bhutan Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuck sought Bangladesh's support for hosting the 16th summit of Saarc as Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina had an audience with the monarch discussing ways of bolstering bilateral cooperation.

The Bhutanese king sought the support when the visiting prime minister met him at his office Tashichodzong yesterday morning.

Hasina assured the king of providing all possible supports to Bhutan for holding the summit, said Deputy Press Secretary to the Prime Minister Nazrul Islam.

The king also sought Bangladesh's cooperation in expediting socio-economic development of Bhutan.

The Bangladesh premier and the Bhutanese king also shared climate woes, as both the countries are victims of the fallout of global warming caused by excessive carbon emissions from the developed countries.

Hasina reiterated her call for closer fraternity among the South Asian countries to face the challenges of climate change and poverty alleviation.

She said, "Bhutan, like Bangladesh, is going to be the

worst sufferer of the global warming as glaciers in the Himalayas continued to melt down."

In this context, the Bhutanese king said there are 4,000 glacier lakes in Bhutan, of which 24 are now in a very dangerous situation as, due to impact of the glacier melting, these can burst anytime and cause serious casualties of life and property.

About the socio-economic issues, Hasina said her government would always stand by Bhutan for helping it in attaining the development targets.

The deputy press secretary said during the hour-long meeting, the prime minister and the Bhutanese king talked various issues of bilateral development, culture and history in a very "cordial manner".

The premier arrived at the king's office in a ceremonial motorcade led by a colourful traditional Bhutanese procession known as 'Chhidprel' at 9:20am (local time).

The ceremonial march started from the south gate of Tashichodzong royal office. On her arrival, Sheikh Hasina and her delegation were received by Dzongda (governor) of Thimphu Lhab Dorji and senior government officials.

Foreign Minister Dipu Moni, Adviser to the Prime Minister HT Imam, Industries Minister Dilip Barua, Commerce Minister Faruk Khan, Principal Secretary to the Prime Minister MA Karim and Ambassador Ziauddin, among others, accompanied the prime minister at the ceremonies.

Several hundred Bhutanese males and females from various cultural groups of the country, wearing different types of colourful dresses depicting Bhutanese traditions, joined the reception pageantry.

At the main entrance of the king's office, Sheikh Hasina was received by the ADC to the king, senior government officials and Bhutan's chief of protocol.

The Bangladesh prime minister was then escorted to the South Court of the king's office premises and accorded a guard of honour as national anthems of the two South Asian nations were played.

Standing on a podium, Sheikh Hasina received salute of the Bhutanese royal army. Later, she inspected the guards.

After the royal reception, the Bangladesh prime minister was then escorted into the king's chamber where she had the audience with King Jigme

Khesar Namgyel Wangchuck.

On the occasion of Sheikh Hasina's meet with the Bhutanese king, the whole of the city was decorated with big ceremonial arches as well as banners and festoons, and national flags of the two friendly countries.

Hundreds of students, standing in queues, welcomed the prime minister on her way to the king's place from her hotel lodge.

Sheikh Hasina through the present king thanked his father, former king Jigme Singye Wangchuck, for voluntarily introducing democracy in the kingdom.

Meanwhile, Economic Affairs Minister of Bhutan Lyonpo Khandu Wangchuk paid a courtesy call on Sheikh Hasina at her hotel suite. During the meeting, the prime minister laid emphasis on enhancing the bilateral trade volume for economic development of the two peoples.

Sheikh Hasina also told the minister that as Bangladesh and Bhutan enjoy trade interaction, if Bhutan wants, Bangladesh can open branch of its any public or private bank here in Thimphu.

Later, the premier and her delegation attended a royal lunch at Dechencholing Palace, the place of residence of the Bhutanese King.

Restore basic principles of '72 constitution

Panellists tell BBC Sanglap

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a BBC dialogue yesterday said Bangladesh should go back to the fundamental principles of the constitution of 1972 to get back the spirit of the liberation war.

Some corrections could be made to any constitution but the fundamental spirit of the constitution could not be changed, they added.

The speakers further said that the country's madrasa education system should be modernised so that the graduates from madrasas could compete at the highest level.

The dialogue based on the

contemporary issues across the country organised by BBC Bangladesh Sanglap was held at Bangabandhu International Conference Centre in the city.

Food Minister Abdur Razzaque, BNP leader ANM Ehsanul Haque Milon, Prof Muntasar Mamon and President of Women for Women Salma Khan were the panellists at the dialogue.

Razzaque said the country was derailed from its track of the spirit of liberation war to a Pakistani track through the changes in the four basics of the constitution.

"Now, we should get back to the spirit of our liberation war that are nationalism, secularism, social-

ism and democracy," he added.

Prof Muntasar said, "Constitution is not the holy Quran or the Bible that no correction could be made to it. But the fundamental principles could not be changed."

"The fundamental spirit of our constitution was not changed by any democratically elected government, rather a military person changed it on his own will," he said.

Milon, however, differed with other panellists, saying, "We cannot go back to the stage of 1972 when we were standing in 2009."

Replying to a query from an audience on the proposed education policy, Milon said there is a

need to teach religion in the schools as it gives moral teaching.

Differing with Milon on the issue, Razzaque said the government doesn't want to cancel the madrasa education system, rather it wants to modernise it so that madrasa students could compete at the highest level.

Prof Muntasar said those who are claiming that madrasa system would be destroyed are only doing it for a political purpose.

The children of Nizami, Golam Azam and others don't study in madrasas. The madrasa education system should be modernised," he added.

Housewife 'kills' herself

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A housewife allegedly committed suicide by hanging herself from the ceiling by her scarf at Joar Sahara in the city's Badda area yesterday morning.

The deceased was Fariha Shahnaz Poly, 26, wife of banker Touhid Hossain.

Locals said the incident was the result of quarrel between the husband and wife.

Seeing Fariha hanging from ceiling, the maidservant of the household Nasrin, 14, jumped off the roof of the three-story building.

Local people said Poly lived on the first floor of the three-story building. At the time of the incident, none other than woman and Nasrin were in the house.

Critically injured Nasrin has been admitted to Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH).

Badda police said Poly's husband Touhid Hossain is an official of City Bank Sadarghat branch. He was not present in the house during the incident.

An unnatural death case has been filed with Badda Police Station.

Officer-in-Charge of Badda Police Station Kazi Wazed Ali said on information police went to the spot and found that the maidservant had just jumped off the roof. They sent Nasrin to DMCH.

Police said they are investigating the incidents.

Zillur assures expats of all cooperation

UNB, Dhaka

Bangladesh expatriates living in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) met President Zillur Rahman on Friday during his stopover there on his way to Turkey.

Some 150 Bangladesh expatriates of different professions, including engineers, physicians, businessmen and community leaders, met the president at a local hotel,

according to a message received in Dhaka yesterday.

Another group of expatriate Bangladesh women and children also met the president separately.

The expatriates welcomed the president in Dubai and apprised him of their activities.

The president exchanged greetings with them and assured them of his all-out cooperation in ensuring welfare of expatriate Bangladeshis.

Zillur Rahman arrived in Dubai International Airport at 1:15 pm (local time) on his way to attend the Economic Summit of COMCEC (Standing Committee for Economic and Commercial Cooperation) under the Organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC) to be held in the Turkish city of Istanbul on November 9.

He was due to leave Dubai for Istanbul by an Emirate flight yesterday.

Deal for rehabilitation of run-down Ctg rail tracks

BSS, Dhaka

Bangladesh Railway signed an agreement with two companies yesterday for rehabilitation of Foulzardhat-Chittagong Port Yard-Strand Road Victoria-Chittagong Section.

The accord was inked with Indian company Enceer Rail Linkers and Bangladesh company Toma Construction and Co Ltd.

Under the deal, 37.50 kilometres of railway tracks -- 12-kilometre Foulzardhat-Chittagong Port Yard Main Line, 17.50-kilometre Chittagong Port Yard, five-kilometre Chittagong Port Yard-Strand Road Victoria-Chittagong and three-

kilometre Strand Road Victoria Yard -- would be rehabilitated.

The estimated cost of the rehabilitation project is Tk 85.49 crore.

Bangladesh Railway Chief Engineer (East) Nuri Mohammad and Toma Construction Managing Director M Ataur Rahman signed the agreement on behalf of their respective sides at a function at Rail Bhavan in the city.

Communications Minister Syed Abul Hossain was present at the signing ceremony as the chief guest.

Road and Railway Division Secretary M Mozammel Haq Khan and Bangladesh Railway

Director General M Belayet Hossain addressed the function.

The communications minister said transportation of goods meant for export and import through the Chittagong port would be easy once the dilapidated railway lines are rehabilitated.

It will enhance the speed of the goods trains too, he added.

He asked the contracting firm to complete the rehabilitation project on time.

Talking to journalists, the minister said the present government has taken various projects for development of railway sector, adding that Enceer has already approved projects involving Tk 2,700 crore in this sector.

DAB rejects polls result

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Doctors Association of Bangladesh (DAB) rejected the results of the election of Bangladesh Medical Association (BMA) held across the country on November 5, says a press release.

In a written statement, DAB leaders said the election has lost its credibility after three out of the four panels, including the main opposition BNP-backed panel of Doctors' Association of Bangladesh, boycotted the election.

The turnout of voters was low across the country while many doctors were forced to cast their votes, which makes the election unacceptable and unethical, the statement said.

Tk 12.5 LAKH LOOT Driver of manpower trader held

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Narayanganj

Police yesterday arrested the driver who fled with Tk 12.5 lakh and a microbus of his employer from Bhuigharh in Fatullah, Narayanganj on October 18.

The arrestee was Shahabuddin, 26, driver of manpower businessman Akbar Hossain.

Assistant Superintendent of Police Mir Abu Touhid of Fatullah Model Police Station said Akbar Hossain and his driver were refuelling the microbus at a CNG station that day. Just when the vehicle was finished refuelling, Shahabuddin took off with the microbus and Tk 12.5 lakh in it leaving his employer at the gas station. Akbar got down from the microbus during refuelling.

Shahabuddin was arrested at Hasra village under Sreenagar in Munshiganj early Saturday. Based on his confession, Fatullah police yesterday morning recovered a briefcase with Tk 12 lakh from the house of Shahabuddin's relative at Bijra village under Laksam in Comilla. During interrogation, Shahabuddin said he had already spent Tk 50,000.

DHAKA TODAY

Seminar
BISS and Safeworld, UK jointly organise a seminar on 'Peace and security in South Asia: Issues and priorities for regional cooperation on small arms and light weapons control'. Venue: Sheraton Hotel. Time: 10:00am.

Workshop
Bangladesh Enterprise Institute with support of governments of Australia and Denmark will organise a regional workshop for senior police officials and prosecutors in South Asia on effective counter terrorism. Venue: Sonargaon Hotel. Time: 9:00am.

Roundtable
Action on Disability and Development organises a roundtable on international cooperation and assistance for organisations of people with disabilities. Venue: BISS auditorium. Time: 3:00pm.

Lecture
Dr Habib Rahman of Islamic University, Kushtia will deliver Mohammad Wajed Ali Memorial Lecture 2009. Venue: Asiatic Society of Bangladesh auditorium. Time: 4:30pm.

Premiere show
The premiere show of the documentary 'Sheikh Mujib the Father' will be held. Venue: Hotel Imperial Convention Centre. Time: 6:30pm.

Roundtable
National People Forum organises a roundtable on national education policy. Venue: National Press Club. Time: 4:00pm.

Seminar
Teacher's Association of Medical College for Women and Hospital, Uttara will organise a seminar on Gemifloxacin, a new generation antibiotic. Venue: Medical College auditorium. Time: 12:30pm.

WEATHER TODAY

Dry weather likely

UNB, Dhaka

Weather is likely to remain mainly dry with partly cloudy sky over the country in next 12 hours until 6:00pm today. Slight fall in night temperature is expected over the country, Met Office said.

The sun sets in the capital at 6:15pm today and rises at 7:09am tomorrow.

Country's highest temperature 34.0 degrees Celsius was recorded yesterday at Sitakundu and lowest 18.4 degrees Celsius at Srimongal.

Highest and lowest temperature and humidity recorded in some major cities and towns yesterday were:

City/Town	Temperature in Celsius	Humidity in percentage
	Max	Min
Dhaka	32.5	22.2
Chittagong	31.8	23.3
Rajshahi	30.8	20.5
Khulna	32.3	22.8
Barisal	32.5	22.8
Sylhet	32.8	21.0
Cox's Bazar	32.2	24.5

Varsity teachers demand separate pay scale

UNB, Dhaka

The Federation of Bangladesh University Teachers' Association (FBUTA) has called for introduction of a separate pay scale for the teachers of public universities.

In a meeting yesterday, the federation placed a three-point charter of demand, including giving due honour to the teachers of public universities in the warrant of precedence and evaluating them equally in allocating RAJUK plots, said a press release.

President of the association Prof Dr Bazul Haque chaired the meeting moderated by Secretary General of the federation Prof ABM Obaidul Haque.

'Bloodbath in Military' screened

DU CORRESPONDENT

The public screening of part-1 of a documentary titled 'Bloodbath in Military: Bangladesh 1975-1981' was held at Public Library in the city yesterday.

Journalist Anwar Kabir has made the two-part documentary. The documentary was placed before the full bench of the appellate division in president's reference hearing this year, Anwar said.

Barrister Tania Amir, Dhaka University teacher Prof Mezbah Kamal, Lutfa Taher, wife of late Col Abu Taher and RAM Obaidul Muktedir Chowdhury were present at the function.

A good number of visitors gathered at Public Library auditorium to watch the three-hour documentary.

'Set up DMC female hall after Dr Zohra Kazi's name'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a condolence meeting yesterday demanded the government set up a female hall at Dhaka Medical College after the name of Dr Zohra Begum Kazi in recognition of her outstanding contribution to medical services and language movement.

Dr Zohra Begum Kazi was the first female Muslim doctor in the undivided Bengal.

They placed the demand at the meeting organised by Dr Zohra Begum Kazi Parishad to commemorate her 2nd death anniversary at Dr Milon Auditorium of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University (BSMMU) in the city.

Dr Pran Gopal Dutta, vice chancellor of BSMMU, Dr Sharfuddin Ahmed, secretary general of Bangladesh Medical Association, and Dr Sahela Khatun, president of the parishad, spoke at the programme.

They also recommended that the government introduce 'Swadhinata Padak' (independence award) and special stipend for medical students after her name.

Deputy Leader of the parliament and Awami League presidium member Syeda Sajeda Chowdhury sent a written statement to the meeting.

She called on the young doctors to follow the way of Dr Zohra Kazi in order to dedicate themselves to serve the people.

AL MP MOLLAH'S APPEAL

SC hearing set for Dec 6

ASHUTOSH SARKAR

The Supreme Court is set to hear on December 6 an appeal filed by Awami League lawmaker Habibur Rahman Mollah against a High Court verdict that declared legal the Anti-Corruption Commission's (ACC) sanction (permitting its officials) to file the graft case against him.

Although the High Court in its verdict cleared the way for ACC to file cases against corruption suspects, the commission cannot go ahead with the cases filed against them, since the Supreme Court in an ad-interim order has stayed the verdict upon a petition filed by Mollah, said a counsel for ACC.

Counsel Khurshid Alam Khan told The Daily Star that over 300 cases, which were filed mostly against politicians and businessmen on charges of amassing illegal wealth, have been affected due to the Supreme Court's stay order.

Habibur Rahman Mollah has filed an appeal with the Supreme Court against the High Court verdict and the chamber bench of the Appellate Division on November 4 fixed December 6 as the date for hearing the appeal, he said, adding that the chamber bench fixed the date following an application filed by ACC.

Khurshid Alam said ACC will get guidelines and instructions regarding the cases against the corruption suspects after the

Appellate Division delivers a judgment on the appeal of Mollah.

The consequences of most of the graft cases are related to the case against Mollah, he added.

The accused in graft cases, including AL lawmaker Obaidul Kader, former BNP lawmaker Fazlur Rahman Patal and controversial businessman Giasuddin-al Mamun, have so far filed over 300 petitions with the HC, challenging the legality of the commission's activities regarding the filing of cases, he said.

These cases were filed under the Emergency Powers Rules during the immediate-past caretaker government.

As a result, the petitioners felt that the ACC "went out of its jurisdiction" in filing and proceeding with the cases, sources said.

On November 20 last year, the High Court gave a ruling that the ACC's sanction to file the graft case against Mollah was legal.

The High Court also observed that the provisions for all the three ACC commissioners to sanction filing a case and submit a report in 30 days since the opening of an enquiry and the investigation report in 60 days since the filing of the case were directory, not mandatory.

Earlier, the High Court stayed the case proceedings in over 300 graft cases and issued rules on the government and the ACC asking them to explain why the proceedings should not be quashed or declared illegal.

Call to stop extra-judicial killing

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A total of 73 eminent citizens yesterday strongly protested the extra-judicial killings and demanded an immediate end to such practice.

The Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) and the police are carrying out such killings in the country under the cover of 'crossfire', 'encounter' and 'gunfight' even during an elected democratic government, they said in a statement.

The also demanded that the government identify the persons involved in such practice and bring them to book.

"We are deeply concerned that senior ministers are supporting and patronising extra-judicial killings in violation of their electoral pledges, creating a chaotic situation in the country," the statement reads.

As many as 100 people have been killed in such actions during the last nine months of the present government, they added.

They also warned that this type of killing in the name of ensuring law and order will only corrode the rule of law and promote fascism.

The signatories to the statement include Badaruddin Umar, president of Jatiya Mukti Council, Prashit Bikash Khisha, president of United People's Democratic Front (UPDF), writers Shawkat Ali and Hasan Azizul Haque, cultural activists Mamunur Rashid and Nasir Uddin Yusuf, artist Murtaza Bashir, Prof KAM Saad Uddin, Prof Aqmal Hossain, Abul Qusum Fazlul Haque, Dr Kaberi Gayen and Shameem Reza of Dhaka University, Prof Anu Mohammad of Jahangirnagar University, Shahidul Islam of Rajshahi University, Advocate Adilur Rahman Khan, Dr T Ali and Hasan Fakri, convenor of Ganasangkriti Parishad.