

UNSC membership

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its support for Japan's permanent membership in the Security Council. Japan welcomed Bangladesh's support."

On July 25, 2006 Khaleda reiterated Bangladesh's support for Japan's permanent membership in the UNSC when the then Japan's foreign minister Taro Aso called on her in Dhaka.

But a number of BNP leaders including Khandaker Delwar Hossain, Lt Gen (ret) Mahbubur Rahman and Reaz Rahman criticised Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina saying it was not wise to extend such support so early because it may affect relations with other countries.

The joint communiqué issued on January 12, 2010 during Hasina's visit to India said: "The prime minister of Bangladesh conveyed her country's support in principle for India's candidature for the permanent membership of the United Nations Security Council when the reform of the UN Security Council is achieved."

It further said Bangladesh conveyed its support to the Indian candidature for a non-permanent seat in UNSC for the term 2011-2012. India also conveyed its support to Bangladesh's candidature for a non-permanent seat in UNSC for the term 2016-2017.

However, the then president Shahabuddin Ahmed on August 20, 2000 told the then Japanese prime minister Yoshiro Mori his country will continue to support Japan's bid to become a permanent member of UNSC.

"We believe Japan has the right to become a permanent

Khaleda

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prime minister's press conference on the outcomes of the India visit held yesterday as the BNP chairperson will clarify the issue.

UN seeks

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"This is a historic disaster. We have never been confronted with such a disaster in the UN memory. It is like no other," Elisabeth Byrs, spokeswoman of the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, told AFP in Geneva.

In the town of Leogane, west of the capital, 80-90 percent of buildings were damaged or destroyed, and "No local government infrastructure remains," she said.

A vanguard of the 10,000 US troops being deployed to Haiti has taken control of the airport, clogged with tons of relief supplies, and has begun the first distribution of aid to quell the threat of violence.

Aid is also being distributed from the USS Carl Vinson, a nuclear-powered aircraft carrier where 19 helicopters have been carrying out limited aid drops.

"We have lift, we have communications, we have some command and control, but we don't have much relief supplies to offer," said Rear Admiral Ted Branch aboard the carrier.

Hillary said she will travel to Haiti to see the earthquake relief efforts first hand, deliver more supplies and meet Haitian President Rene Preval.

"We will also be conveying very directly and personally to the Haitian people our long-term, unwavering support, solidarity and sympathies to reinforce President Obama's message that they are not facing this crisis alone," said Hillary.

The Haitian government is operating out of a police station at the airport, where Preval, looking exhausted with dark pockets under his eyes, said "the government has lost its capacity to function properly, but it has not collapsed."

In an interview with AFP, Preval praised the massive international relief effort but warned that the aid operation remains uncoordinated.

Law minister

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The minister said the government is planning to enact a law for disposing of both civil and criminal cases through Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) system.

He said if the system is launched, the cases will be disposed of outside the courts through compromises, and the judges and lawyers can play their role as mediators there.

The government has already instructed the law commission to make necessary recommendations to the government for enacting the law, said the minister.

He also said there are around 10 lakh cases pending with the lower courts across the country and the backlog of the cases is going higher everyday.

War crime

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in any kind of war crimes under the International Crimes (Tribunal) Act, 1973, which was amended last year.

No one would be spared, he said. The government wants to ensure that the trial conforms to international standards and that is why the trial is being delayed, the law minister added.

The government is working towards the trial, and an amount of Tk 10 crore has already been allocated for the trial and the tribunal building has also been selected, he noted.

"The lawyers and judges in the country are not experienced in trying war crimes, so we might seek international cooperation in this regard," he said.

Dhaka University Vice Chancellor Prof AAMS Arefin Siddique, former DU VC AK Azad Chowdhury, Pro VC Prof Harun-or-Rashid, Prof Mizanur Rahman of law department, among others, attended the meeting.

Mizanur Rahman presented the keynote paper. The killing of former president Ziaur Rahman took place, as there was no immediate initiative to bring the criminals responsible for the assassination of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman to trial after the incident, the minister observed.

BAACP president Biplob Hasan Palash presided over the seminar. On Tuesday, Mirpur Police Station also refused to take any case in connection with the midnight trespassing, said Karim.

Following a revision petition filed by Qazi Faruque, the HC in its order in August last year said he could enter Proshika Bhaban alone to meet the present chairman and chief executive officer without holding any rally or procession.

Proshika has 6000 employees and 620 Upazila-based ADCs and sub ADCs across the country.

the quake had a population of 134,000. "According to the local police, between 5,000 to 10,000 people have been killed and most bodies are still in the collapsed buildings," Byrs said.

Rescue efforts are however being hindered by three major constraints -- transport, communications and fuel. "Transport resources are very limited and hampered by the fact that the fuel stocks are running low," said Byrs. "Another constraint is the lack of ambulances."

With food in such short supply, vendors were selling plates of pasta for 100 gourds (2.5 dollars), 10 times more than before the quake.

The Haitian president called on his countrymen to show patience and defended the government against accusations of inaction.

"No one is alone in his situation. I understand that people suffer because they have relatives under the rubble, but they must understand that there are thousands of people in that very same situation," said Preval.

Earlier the world body appealed for 562 million dollars from donors. The UN mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) was hit hard by the quake, with 37 of its 12,000 employees confirmed dead and some 330 still unaccounted for.

The United Nations is considering redeploying some 5,000 peacekeepers, soldiers and police officers from across Haiti to the capital Port-au-Prince, a UN official in Mexico said Friday.

The United Nations is thinking about ordering "5,000 personnel who are not in Port-au-Prince" to move to the capital "and reinforce their colleagues," said United Nations system coordinator Magdy Martinez during a press conference in Mexico City.

Obaidul Haque Nasir, senior joint convener of JCD DU unit and an leader of Tuku group, said their followers did not enter the campus to avoid clash as per the direction given by the top central leaders.

A tense situation was prevailing on the campus through out the day following rebel faction's presence. Members of the committee and their followers have remained out of the campus amid protest from the rebel group since announcement of the 171-member JCD central committee on January 1 with commission to make necessary recommendations to the government for enacting the law, said the minister.

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Indo-Bangla

FROM PAGE 1
Asian context. It was not just a bilateral visit as the main focus of the trip was connectivity.

Regarding Reaz's claim about the "quantum leap", she said they were in the dark before as there has been no investment in the power sector during the last seven years.

On supporting India for getting permanent membership in the United Nations Security Council, Dipu Moni said the BNP-led government had done the same with Japan on July 14, 2005.

She said the issues of water sharing of the Teesta, Tipaimukh dam project and maritime boundary did not come up suddenly. "After 1975, BNP was in power for 16 years but the issues were never raised," she claimed.

Dipu Moni urged her political opponents not to oppose for the sake of opposing. She said Bangladesh wants to move forward.

Former diplomat Farook Sobhan said if Bangladesh wants to accelerate its growth between eight and nine percent and achieve the status of a middle-income country, there is no other way but to build regional and sub-regional economic cooperation. "The key to Bangladesh's growth and development is connectivity," he said.

Greater cooperation with India, Bhutan and Nepal would open up the opportunities, he said, adding that India has made a major concession in giving Bhutan and Nepal transit to Bangladesh.

He said the visit would also give a huge push for Indian investment in Bangladesh.

Irene Khan, secretary general of Amnesty International, termed the prime minister's India visit "courageous".

"India is an economic power and we need to follow the tail end," she said. She, moreover, expressed sadness for hearing little about the opportunities that might be created by the visit.

Annislug, president of the Federation of Bangladesh Chamber of Commerce and Industry (FBCCI), expressed unhappiness over the lack of cooperation among South Asian countries despite its huge population.

Under South Asian Free Trade Area (Safta), most of the products of Bangladesh, including apparels, get duty-free access but it is the non-tariff barriers (NTBs) that are creating obstacles, he said.

He said, "It [NTB] looks small but the implications are much bigger." Citing an example he said Indian trucks can enter Bangladesh territory but Bangladesh trucks cannot enter Indian territory. He said NTBs such as testing certificates and labelling also hinder the country's exports to India.

The president of the apex trade body also suggested that a committee be formed to address and resolve NTB issues. Anisuddowla, president of Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce and Industry (MCCI), blamed the policymakers for not analysing the full outcome of the agreements.

India has been allowed to use Bangladesh's seaports, he said, adding, "We have nothing in our hand to negotiate the next time."

Former adviser to a caretaker government CM Shafi Sami said a new horizon has opened through the visit. Prof Shahiduzzaman of Dhaka University said the prime minister's India visit has shifted the paradigm of Indo-Bangla relations, which has significant impacts on Bangladesh.

The visit proves that Bangladesh's foreign policy has become dynamic, he said, adding that the opposition of the parliament should consider the geopolitical position of the country.

Referring to killing of Bangladeshis in the borders, former ambassador Ashfaq Ahmed said the issue has been a serious matter of concern but had been almost ignored during the visit.

Harun-or-Rashid, former ambassador to UN, said there is hope that confusion over Bangladesh's relation with India has been removed with the PM's visit.

On trade gap between Bangladesh and India, he said trade deficit between China and Japan is much higher than that of these two countries, but the issue had not been discussed. "Opening up Mongla and Chittagong ports for India, Bhutan and Nepal in no way can be a security threat."

Regarding supporting India for its candidature to the UN Security Council, he said a country is selected regionally

Ashuganj

FROM PAGE 16
last deadline.

On June 1 in 2009, construction work of the plant of Pel began. Fifteen power-generating units with a capacity of four MW each will produce a total of 60 MW of power. The company invested around Tk 200 crore for this plant that has been constructed on a one acre site owned by the Ashuganj Power Station Company Limited (APSC).

MWM Germany, a manufacturer company, has done the work of power generation section while Energy pac Engineering Ltd, a local company, has undertaken the work of all substations.

Engineer Md Ruhul Amin, plant manager of PEL, said it can fulfil the electricity demand of two districts like Brahmanbaria and Habiganj.

He said they need three acres of land for setting up the plant. They have will have to use rented building from APSC as they got only one acre of leased land, he added.

He said it takes maximum one year for the engineers to set up a 50 MW power plant. So the present power crisis may be resolved by establishing such plants in different parts of the country, the plant manager added.

However before bagging the deal, the company agreed to the PDB term that it would be able to build the plant within three months of signing the contract.

Pakistani

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criticising the US for its discriminatory attitude, said that Islamabad would never compromise on the country's sovereignty.

"We will not compromise on our country's honour and self-respect merely for the sake of aid. We have been constantly telling them (the US) we want trade ... not aid," Gilani had said.

Land grabbers

FROM PAGE 1
by Dhaka Nagorik at the National Press Club.

Without making any direct reference to any newspapers Mannan said, "Those newspapers label each other as land grabbers and a newspaper owner put up posters on the walls in the capital demanding death sentence to the owner of another newspaper."

Stating that corruption has become pervasive everywhere -- from the secretariat to the court veranda -- Abdul Mannan Khan said genuine land documents are replaced by fake ones even in the ministry's files.

About the unapproved projects of the real estate companies the state minister said, "How can you walk into a trap laid by the land grabbers? Let our hatred grow against those eye-catching advertisements. I alone will not be able to do anything."

He called upon all to stand in unison to build up resistance with the assistance of locals against the land grabbers wherever they would go to grab the lands.

The seminar was presided over by Abdul Matin, president of Dhaka Nagorik. Lawmaker Mostafa Jalal Mohiuddin and architect Iqbal Habib, also the joint secretary of Bangladesh Paribesh Andolon, among others, spoke at the seminar.

First Test

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will beam live coverage of the match from 9.30am.

Recent performances showed that Bangladesh's batting has found their feet, but the tough task awaits the inexperienced Bangladesh bowler attack against a vaunted batting line-up that includes the likes of master batsman Sachin Tendulkar, batting wall Rahul Dravid, stylish VVS Laxman, dashing Virender Sehwag, in-form Gautam Gambhir and dangerous Yuvraj Singh.

However India will be without their captain MS Dhoni who is out with a back strain. Sehwag will lead the team in his absence.

There is a good chance for Bangladesh go in with three pacers and in that case young Shafiqul Islam may make his Test debut. But left-arm spinner Enamul Haque will have to make way for him.

The Bangladesh team management has not declared the playing eleven yesterday but it was learnt that ICL-returned Shahriar Nafees might return to the playing eleven for the match after two years. It's all but confirmed that left-handed batsman Zunaed Siddiqui and pacer Mahubul Alam will be left out.

24 kids die

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being deprived of life-saving treatment because the upazila health complexes do not have oxygen treatment supplies.

Dr Kajal Kanti Barua, civil surgeon at Cox's Bazar, said there is also a severe lack of doctors in Ukhia and Kutubdia upazila health complexes.

Sources concerned said that seven-month old Sohel, the son of salt farmer Syed Alam of Akbar Boli village in Uttar Dhurong union under Kutubdia upazila died at 7.30 am yesterday on the way to hospital.

Fisherman Abdul Krim of Lemshikhali village lost his 11-month-old baby Monir and Monzur Alam, from the same upazila, lost his 18-month-old baby on Friday.

for such candidature. As china is already a member of the council, it may not like Bangladesh's support to India.

Former ambassador Jamil Majid said having good relations with India did not mean that there would not be any problems in future. Therefore, the Indo-Bangla summit needed serious follow-ups if good results are to be achieved.

"Success of the visit will actually depend on follow-ups," he said. Communist Party General Secretary Mujahidul Islam Selim said the prime minister's visit to India was very important and it should be considered as a step forward.

"Mere joint communiqué would not bring any result for the country if we cannot seal agreements with India," Selim said, calling upon all not to make any sweeping comment on the outcome of the visit.

Anisul Islam Mahmud, presidium member of Jatiya Party, congratulated Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina for her "bold step" to improve relation with India.

He criticised the governments assumed power after the killing of Bangabandhu for their anti-India politics and misleading the people.

He also censured Reaz Rahman for his comment on the government's handing Ujfa leader Arabinda Rajkhowa over to India, which would be a threat to the security of Bangladesh.

He also ruled out another allegation of the government making Bangladesh a market for India, saying, "It was BNP who made Bangladesh an open market for India during its regime in 1991-1996."

BNP standing committee member and former army chief Lt Gen (ret) Mahubur Rahman said the visit was more beneficial to India.

Problems relating to Indian insurgents would intensify through allowing India to use Mongla and Chittagong seaports, he said criticising the government for not holding discussions with the opposition party before the PM's India visit.

National Press Club President Shawkat Mahmud said the PM's visit to India has certainly created a new era and would help build up confidence in India-Bangladesh relationships.

He also accused the government for not informing the people about the agreements that would allow India to use Bangladesh's seaports and railway connectivity with Ashuganj prior to the visit.

He also said the prime minister could not have public opinion on these issues before the visit and feared that severe political disagreement might arise in the country.

Prothom Alo Editor Matiuur Rahman also said the prime minister or the foreign minister could have discussed about the visit with Khaleda Zia as part of their bid for a national consensus on the issues.

He blamed the government for giving confusing information about the visit. "We knew about signing of three agreements. But we did not have a clear idea about the use of ports by India, Bhutan and Nepal," he added.

Abdul Matlub Ahmed, president of Bangladesh-India Chamber of Commerce and Industry hoped that the India visit of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina would boost trade and investment in the country.

PM bins criticism

FROM PAGE 1
the ruling Awami League, observed the tour has ushered in a new era in Indo-Bangla ties. The understanding reached would help enhance connectivity not only between the two countries but also in the entire region including Nepal and Bhutan.

The use of Chittagong and Mongla ports by neighbouring countries would strengthen economy and reduce trade gap. It would lead to modernisation of the ports, turning them into regional commercial hubs, she noted.

Rail and road sectors too would see much-needed development. Besides, the rivers would be dredged to make waterways more operational.

Referring to criticism and anti-Indian statements, the prime minister said bickering with a giant like India would never do any good. Friendly relations with them are crucial to overall development of the nation.

Urging the opposition to place national interests above party gains, she said, "Come to parliament and speak on every issue."

She alleged that the BNP-Jamaat alliance is propagating falsehood over her India visit to confuse people.

"Let's keep our motherland above party interests and unite in endeavour to bring about essential changes," she said in her written speech.

About the opposition allegations that she has failed to protect national interests, the prime minister said, "They have become habituated to spreading falsehood and propaganda."

Hasina reiterated that she would never do anything that might go against national interests.

She said it was her party that ensured fair share of the Ganges waters by striking a treaty during its previous tenure.

"During my visit, I demanded fair share of water of all 54 common rivers. I never shy away from speaking for my country and people. But when she [Khaleda Zia] visited India during her rule, she forgot to talk about our rightful share of river water," she said.

About a question on India's planned Tipaimukh dam, she said Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh has assured that his country would do nothing that would be harmful to Bangladesh and its people.

"The last BNP-Jamaat government approved the Flood Action Plan in which Tipaimukh affairs were included. Why didn't they protest during their tenure?" Hasina asked.

Queried why Bangladesh could not conclude the much-expected Teesta water-sharing treaty, she said the BNP-Jamaat alliance did nothing during their tenure to advance the process of Teesta treaty.

"I'm however hopeful we will be able to ink a deal," she added.

She said, "Most of the people in South Asia are poor. Poverty is our common enemy and we want to fight the menace in unison. And to do so, we must strengthen the relations between us."

There have been agreements at ministerial and official levels to work out solutions to different longstanding issues between Dhaka and New Delhi, said the prime minister.

Citing three agreements and two memorandums of understanding signed between Bangladesh and India, she said both have resolved to help each other in the fight against all kinds of terrorism and extremism.

The border issues would be settled in light of the 1974's Indra-Mujib land boundary agreement.

Besides, cooperation between the border forces of the two countries would be strengthened to fight smuggling.

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