

China to provide support in building digital Bangladesh

BSS, Dhaka
China will provide all out support for communication and socio economic development to build a digital Bangladesh.

The assurance came while visiting Vice Minister of China (CPC) Liu Jieyi paid a courtesy call on Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at her official residence Jamuna here yesterday.

After the meeting, PM's Press Secretary Abul Kalam Azad told journalists that, apart from different issues related to trade and commerce and mutual interests of the two countries, the two leaders also discussed various issues related to the upcoming China visit of Hasina.

The PM is scheduled to visit China on March 17, he said.

Appreciating the scheduled visit, the CPC leader said the people of his country are waiting to welcome the Bangladesh premier.

Expressing his gratitude, the Chinese leader lauded the role of Hasina in further strengthening the friendly and economic relations between the two countries.

Liu also lauded Bangladesh PM's programmes for building digital Bangladesh.

During the meeting, the PM sought expertise and technical support to build digital Bangladesh and the

CPC vice minister responded positively to Hasina's call.

Hasina praised the Chinese contribution to the development of road and railway communication in Bangladesh and requested the communist party leader to continue the support.

The issue of road links between Bangladesh and China via Myanmar figured prominently during the discussion.

Recalling the China visit of the Father of Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and Bangladesh visit of former Chinese premier Chou En Lai, they said foundation of friendship of the two countries was laid in their visits.

The CPC vice minister apprised the PM that China is keen to see the Saarc as a more strong organisation.

Referring to the recent China visit of LGRD and Cooperatives Minister Syed Ashrafur Islam, Hasina said the people to people contact between the two countries is very effective in further strengthening the relations between Dhaka and Beijing.

LGRD Minister Syed Ashrafur Islam, Communication Minister Syed Abul Hossain, Ambassador-at-large M Ziauddin, PM's Office Secretary Mollah Waheeduzzaman and Chinese Ambassador to Bangladesh Zhang Xianyi were also present.



Visiting Chinese Vice Minister Liu Jieyi calls on Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at her official residence Jamuna in the city yesterday.

TIB, BDF to organise debate contest

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB) and Bangladesh Debate Federation (BDF) for the first time is going to organise a shadow parliamentary anti-corruption debate competition and training for high school students.

Students of class eight to class ten (new) will be able to participate in the debate competition individually or by forming a team.

Interested participants will have to submit applications within March 4. Applications should be sent to the TIB head office at house-141 (1st floor), block - E, road - 12, Banani, Dhaka - 1213, says a press release.

Emails should be sent to advocacy@ti-bangladesh.org

The applicants should send a photocopy of a recommendation letter given by the school administration or an identity card, a passport size photograph and telephone number, the press release said.

'Debate Competition' should be written on the envelope.

A memorandum of understanding was signed between the TIB and BDF on February 4 to arrange the debate competition and training. BDF President Dr Abdun Nur Tushar and TIB Executive Director Dr Iftekaruzzaman signed the MoU on behalf of their organisations.



IOM Regional Representative Rabab Fatima and singer Momtaz Begum, who was made Migration Goodwill Ambassador, exchange documents of a memorandum of understanding (MoU) at the National Press Club in the city yesterday. Joint Secretary Begum Shamsun Nahar, extreme left, and Director General of the Prime Minister's Office Dina Haque were present.

Momtaz made IOM goodwill ambassador

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
The International Organisation for Migration (IOM) made popular folk singer Momtaz Begum MP its Migration Goodwill Ambassador in Bangladesh for two years to create mass awareness about safe migration and human trafficking.

IOM Regional Representative for South Asia Rabab Fatima and singer Momtaz Begum signed a memorandum of understanding at the National Press Club in the capital to this end yesterday.

IOM seeks to involve celebrities in promoting safe migration and that Momtaz Begum has been selected as a first step towards this goal, Rabab Fatima said.

"We believe that with her mass appeal, popularity and privileged access to the media, Momtaz Begum can contribute significantly to IOM's mission for safe migration," she said.

Momtaz Begum said she was extremely happy to be part of IOM's mission to ensure safe migration and protect the helpless people, especially the children and women, from being trafficked.

"I will try to do good to the people, because that is my satisfaction and the will of the creator," she said.

Ministry of Home Affairs Joint Secretary Kamal Uddin Ahmed, Ministry of Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment Joint Secretary Begum Shamsun Nahar, Prime Minister's Office Director General Dina Haque were present at the signing ceremony.

FIRST INT'L MUSIC FESTIVAL BEGINS Int'l Mother Language Day to help establish cultural rights

Says Hasina
UNB, Dhaka
Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday said that the International Mother Language Day would be a weapon for people of all languages to establish their cultural rights.

She said this inaugurating the three-day First International Music Festival in celebration of the International Mother Language Day at Sher-e-Bangla Nagar field in the city.

Bangladesh Enterprise for Development and Security Studies is organising the festival with the theme 'Banglay Gaibe Bishwa'.

Antor Showbiz is the event management partner of this festival.

Musicians from 15 countries will sing in Bangla in this festival, showing their respects to the mother tongue of the Bangalees for which the 1952 language heroes laid down their lives.

Information and Cultural Affairs Minister Abul Kalam Azad spoke at the opening function as special guest.

The prime minister said that all human communities in the world -- big or small -- have the right to live in this world with dignity and their own cultural diversities.

She said that after the UN recognition of February 21 as

the International Mother Language Day, huge responsibilities and duties are bestowed on the people of Bangladesh to work for all languages of the world.

"Now it is the responsibility of ours to preserve the rights of all people of the world to speak in their own mother languages," she said.

Taking this into consideration, her government in its previous tenure took initiative to build International Mother Language Institute, she added.

Earlier, the minister unveiled the plaque of a CD and a Video CD published marking the International Mother Language Day.

Joy arrives in Dhaka

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
Sajeeb Wazed Joy, son of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, arrived in Dhaka yesterday morning from the USA.

Joy along with his wife Cristina Joy and child landed at Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport by a Qatar Airways flight at about 7:18am.

PM's Office sources said Joy has come to attend the Digital Innovative Fair 2010 to be held between March 4 and 6 at Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman Novo Theatre.

The fair will be organised following his concept, sources said.

On his arrival, personal staff of the prime minister received Joy, sources said adding that he went to PM's official residence Jamuna directly from the airport.

Awami League Joint General Secretary Mahbubul Alam Hanif handed over Joy's membership form to the party's Rangpur unit convener on February 25.

Criminals set youth on fire in N'ganj

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Narayanganj
A youth is fighting for his life at Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) after miscreants threw acid on him and set fire to his body in the district's Char Syedpur area on Saturday night.

The victim was identified as Shahjalal Akter, 27, a worker.

Police has arrested his co-worker Akhter in connection with the attack.

Sources said Akhter borrowed Tk 1500 from Shahjalal a few days back.

As Shahjalal was pressed Akhter for the money, the latter asked he former to come to Char Syedpur on Saturday night to receive the money.

When Shahjalal went there, Akhter and his cohorts set fire to the former's body and threw acid on him.

Hearing the victim screaming, locals hurried to the spot and rushed him to DMCH.

SC Bar Assoc polls Mar 24, 25

UNB, Dhaka
The election of the 14-member executive committee of the Supreme Court Bar Association (SCBA) for 2010-11 will be held on March 24-25.

SCBA secretary SM Rezaul Karim announced the schedule yesterday.

As per the schedule, the filing of nomination papers began yesterday and will continue up to March 10.

Scrutiny of the nomination papers will take place on March 10 at 5:00pm and the deadline for withdrawal of candidature is March 14.

Official sources said the number of eligible voters is 1971.

A seven-member election sub-committee headed by advocate Abul Kashem Fazul Huq will conduct the election.

Meanwhile, lawyers belonging to BNP-Jamaat-e-Islami alliance have already nominated Khondaker Mahbub Hossain and Badruddoza Badal as candidates for the posts of president and secretary respectively under the banner of Jatiyatabadi Ainjibi Oikya panel.

Lawyers of Awami League-led grand alliance are yet to field their candidates.

WEATHER

Dry weather likely

UNB, Dhaka

Weather may remain dry with partly cloudy sky over the country in the next 12 hours as of 6:00pm today.

Day temperature may remain nearly unchanged over the country, Met Office said.

The sun sets in the capital at 6:02pm today and rises at 6:19am tomorrow.

Yesterday's highest temperature of 35.4 degree Celsius was recorded at Jessore and the lowest of 15.1 degrees at Srimongal.

The 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 | Morning | Evening |
| Dhaka | 33.4 | 19.6 | 58 | 29 |
| Chittagong | 29.5 | 19.4 | 87 | 91 |
| Rajshahi | 33.2 | 16.4 | 73 | 48 |
| Khulna | 34.5 | 20.0 | 87 | 49 |
| Barisal | 33.8 | 19.4 | 91 | 53 |
| Sylhet | 33.2 | 18.7 | 60 | 48 |
| Cox's Bazar | 30.5 | 20.0 | 97 | 83 |

Govt working to ensure HR

Dipu tells HR Council in Geneva
UNB, Dhaka
Foreign Minister Dipu Moni yesterday said the Bangladesh government is working to build a society free of exploitation with human rights and fundamental freedoms protected and justice as well as equality secured by 2021.

"Bangladesh is making efforts to build a society where all can fully enjoy human rights -- civil and political, social, economic and cultural as well as rights to development," she said while speaking at the high-level segment of the Human Rights Council in Geneva, according to a message received here.

Dipu said the government has further strengthened the reconstituted National Human Rights Commission.

"The Anti-Corruption Commission and the Election Commission are also working independently," told the meet.

About extrajudicial killings, the foreign minister said the government is vigilant against application of all extrajudicial methods, including extrajudicial killing.

"Our prime minister has declared 'zero tolerance' for such practices and the government is determined to bring to justice anybody who is involved in any extrajudicial methods," she told the HR meet.

Underscoring the need for eradicating poverty and attainment of universal education as well as full empowerment of women to bring fundamental changes in the enjoyment of human rights by all, Dipu said more than half of the budgetary resources are allocated for programmes designed to eradicate poverty.

She said Bangladesh now focuses more on empowering the poor, especially the vulnerable segments of society, including women, children and the elders.

BCL leader injured in clash over Jhut trade

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
A BCL leader and a trader were injured in a clash between two rival groups over Jhut (garment wastage) trade at West Tejgaon Bazar in the city's Tejgaon area yesterday.

Mizanur Rahman, joint convener of Tejgaon thana BCL, and Sohel Rana, a local Jhut trader, were rushed to Dhaka Medical College Hospital with injuries caused by sharp weapons.

Witnesses said the clash erupted after cadres of Mizan swooped on Sohel when his workers were collecting Jhut from Alauddin and Sons Pvt Ltd, a garment factory at about 12:30pm.

Both the groups used iron rods, bamboo sticks and sharp weapons during the clash.

Some employees of the factory said Sohel used to buy Jhut from the factory, but over the last few months BCL leader Mizan and his gang took control of the Jhut business in the area. But Sohel and his group came to the factory yesterday to take away Jhut.

Later, the police brought the situation under control and took the injured to hospital while the others fled managed to escape.

Death threat to New Age editor condemned

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
The Jatiya Press Club and 17 eminent citizens have condemned the death threat to the New Age Editor Nurul Kabir.

Such threats are a blow to press freedom and democracy, Press Club President Shawkat Mahmud and General Secretary Kamal Uddin Sabuj said in a statement yesterday.

In another statement, 17 eminent citizens also protested the death threat.

The signatories to the statement are Serajul Islam Chowdhury, Dr Nasmin Akter, Badruddin Umar, Hasan Azizul Haque, Nasrin Akter, engineer Sheikh Muhammad Shahidullah, Ahmed Kamal, Akmol Hossain, Anu Muhammad, Fahmidul Haque, Pias Karim, Rehnuma Ahmed, Zonaeed Saki, Raihan Rayed, Zahid Akter, Hasan Al Zayed and Ahmed Zayed Rony.

Nurul Kabir received death threats for his journalistic works from unidentified goons on February 23 and 26.

The anonymous callers asked the New Age editor to stop writing as well as speaking against terrorism and violence and demanded Tk 50 lakh from him.

Call to adopt CDM projects for sustainable development

UNB, Dhaka
Speakers at a seminar yesterday stressed the need for taking necessary steps for adoption of more projects under Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) to ensure sustainable development of the country.

International carbon market will be one of the main financial sources for the country's development if the government adopts CDM projects, they opined.

Hasan said about 80 percent of the CDM projects taken by the UN were implemented in China and India.

"Developing countries like Bangladesh failed to reap the benefit from the system for lack of proper knowledge about the complex CDM process."

Bangladesh has ample opportunity to develop the CDM projects, he said, adding that the government has already given training to the government officials concerned for implementing the CDM projects in the country.

The minister said CDM process should be presented before the people in an easy and comprehensible manner to get the maximum benefit from the projects.

Though the developing countries are supposed to get fund from the United Nations to develop clean technology under CDM, a few developing countries like India and China got the lion's share from the fund, he added.

State Minister for Forest and Environment Hasan Mahmud, FBCCI President Annisul Huq and GTZ Programme Coordinator Erich Otto Gomm were present.

Death anniversary

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
Today is the 3rd death anniversary of Reza-A-Karim Chowdhury Chunnua Miah, a veteran of the Language Movement and freedom fighter.

On the occasion, special doha and millad mahfil will be held at his village residence at Kutuba union under Borhanuddin upazila of Bhola.

Chunnua Miah, hailing from Bhola, played an active role in different democratic movements since 1952 to the '90s.

Brac University launches Koha

METRO DESK
Koha, the first and most advanced Open Source Integrated Library System (ILS) in the world, was launched at Brac University Ayesha Abed Library recently, says a press release.

Prof Nazrul Islam, chairman of the University Grants Commission, formally inaugurated the ILS (http://library.bracu.ac.bd) at a function as the chief guest.

Vice Chancellor of Brac University Prof Jamilur Reza Choudhury and Pro-VC Prof Md Golam Samdani Fakir addressed the function.

Speaking on the occasion, Prof Nazrul Islam praised the initiatives of by the Brac University to establish an Integrated Library System (ILS) and train up library professionals in order to build capacities for other universities.

Prof Jamilur Reza Choudhury ranked Koha as a sophisticated 21st century modern ILS because of its excellent features and characteristics.

T O D A Y

Consultation
An environmental strategy consultation of the World Bank Group will be held. Venue: Hotel Sonargaon. Time: 9:00am.

Convocation
The 13th convocation of Bangladesh (IUB) will be held. Venue: Bangabandhu International Conference Centre. Time: 11:30am.

Democracy Olympiad
Shushashoner Jonney Nagorik organises a Democracy Olympiad. Venue: Prime University. Time: 11:00am.