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TRANSCOM ELECTRONICS

Dhaka, Moscow sign five-year nuke deal

Under framework agreement, Russia to help use nuclear technologies for peaceful purposes

UNB, Dhaka

Bangladesh and Russia yesterday signed a five-year framework agreement on cooperation for the peaceful use of nuclear energy to make ways for nuclear power plants to meet the growing power demand in the country.

State Minister for Science and ICT Yeafesh Osman signed the agreement on behalf of the Bangladesh government while Sergey Kiriyenko, director general of the state atomic energy corporation Rosatom—signed on behalf of the Russian government.

Foreign Minister Dipu Moni, who held talks with her Russian counterpart Sergey Lavrov in Moscow, witnessed the signing ceremony.

According to the agreement, the future cooperation between the two countries would include, among others, (i) design, construction and operation of nuclear power and research reactors; (ii) nuclear fuel supply, taking back the spent nuclear fuel and nuclear waste management; (iii) personnel training and capacity building for operation and maintenance of the plants; (iv) research, education and training of personnel in the Russian Federation in the field of the use of nuclear energy; (v) development of innovative reactor technologies in accordance with International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) safety requirements, non-proliferation of nuclear weapons and environmental protection; and (vi) exploration and mining of uranium and thorium deposits.

The parties shall establish a Joint Coordination Committee to monitor the implementation process of this agreement.

The parties shall also assure the transfer of materials, technologies, equipment and services for implementation of joint programmes in the field of the use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes.

After the signing of the accord, DG of Rosatom Kiriyenko, who is the former prime minister of Russia, expressed his full support and commitment for establishing nuclear power plants in Bangladesh.

A high-level delegation from Russia

SEE PAGE 15 COL 4

Manjur gets more support

Mohiuddin confident about victory

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

CCC COUNCILLORS, RESERVED SEATS AL, BNP to see more rebel candidates

A section of senior BNP leaders yesterday extended their support to the party backed mayoral candidate Mohammad Manjur Alam in the Chittagong City Corporation elections scheduled for June 17.

BNP chairperson's adviser Mir Nasir Uddin, city unit General Secretary Shahadat Hossain, Chittagong north district President Giasuddin Quader Chowdhury and former whip Wahidul Alam expressed their support at a view-exchange meeting.

The meeting was organised

SEE PAGE 15 COL 2

Both the ruling Awami League and opposition BNP may see a rise in rebel candidates for councillors and reserved seats for women in the Chittagong City Corporation polls.

In the last election, many of the rebel candidates won though there had been fewer intra-party feuds in the two parties back then.

This time rift over party endorsements in the June 17 election may push up the number of rebel candidates winning, said AL and BNP sources.

Out of 41 councillor posts, AL-backed candidates won in 18 wards and AL rebels won in seven wards in the previous election, held in 2005.

AL-supported candidates and rebels in its ranks also bagged 12 of the 14 reserved seats for women councillors.

BNP-backed candidates won in five wards and party rebels in six.

One Jamaat-e-Islami candidate and four independent candidates were elected councillors.

The number of prospective candidates for councillors this year is 322, compared to 387 in 2005. Candidates for women's reserved seats total 67, down from 86 in the previous election.

ABM Mohiuddin Chowdhury, candidate of Nagorik Committee and also president of city AL, may see internal conflict affect his re-election bid.

Besides him, city AL leaders Rezaul Karim and Md Ishaq have submitted applications to stand as candidate for mayor.

SEE PAGE 15 COL 6



Loggers transport Golpata in the Sundarbans, the largest mangrove forest in the world. PHOTO: STAR

Criminals rule vast areas of Sundarbans

Unarmed forest guards in West Zone fail to stop armed gangs of robbers, illegal loggers, poachers

PINAKI ROY

Equipped with only sticks, the forest guards of the West Division of the Sundarbans have been engaged in a war against armed robbers, poachers and illegal loggers for the last five years.

The government withdrew their firearms and ammunition in 2005 after three firearms were robbed of the Neelkamal forest beat office. Since then, the protectors of the forest have no firearms.

Generally, there are at least four firearms including 0.303 rifles and shotguns at every forest beat office.

Taking advantage of the innocuous forest guards, organised robbers and poachers have taken control of a vast area of the Sundarbans, plundering resources of the world's largest mangrove forest.

People living in and around the Sundarbans, forest officials and fishermen from Khulna region say that the entire Sundarbans is now controlled by at least three large gangs of criminals who kill deer every day for food and also send venison to influential people as gift.

They say deer poaching and illegal logging have increased dangerously in the Sundarbans in recent times,

which is a sign of forest guards losing the war.

The robbers extort money from fishing trawlers and loggers and often by taking them hostage.

Razu's gang, consisted of 40 to 50 armed criminals, control the "protected" area of the Sundarbans in East and West divisions.

The upper part of the Sundarbans is controlled by Julfikar's gang and the northern part of the West Division by Boro Bhai's gang.

"It has a chain reaction. If the robbers continue to kill deer, the tiger would face food shortage and come

SEE PAGE 15 COL 1



City dwellers head home in heavy rain Thursday night as cyclone Laila which turned into a depression causes rains in the capital. The photo was taken at Mohakhali. PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

Cyclone Laila weakens into depression

Cautionary signal 3 for seaports

UNB, Dhaka

The cyclonic storm Laila over north coastal areas of Andhra Pradesh, India moved slightly north-north eastwards and weakened into a depression over the same area at 6:00pm yesterday.

It is likely to weaken gradually and move in a north or north easterly direction, said a Met office special bulletin.

Under its influence, deep convection is taking place over north Bay and adjoining coastal areas of Bangladesh.

Squally weather is likely over north Bay and the coastal areas of Bangladesh. North Bay will remain rough.

Maritime ports of Chittagong, Cox's bazaar and Mongla have been advised to keep hoisted local cautionary

SEE PAGE 15 COL 4

13 killed in Gaibandha bus crashes

STAR REPORT

Thirteen people were killed and 35 injured in two road accidents in Gaibandha yesterday.

The worst accident that left 11 people dead took place around 11:00am at Katakali on Bogra-Rangpur highway when a stone-laden truck rammed a speeding bus heading for Lalmonirhat, reports our correspondent at Gaibandha.

Three of the deceased were identified as Rozina, 32, Mojibar, 24, and Bhutto, 22.

The 25 injured were rushed to Gobindaganj hospital.

Abdul Jalil, one of the injured passengers currently undergoing treatment, said, "I was sleeping when a heavy jolt woke me up for a moment. The next thing I remember was lying on the hospital bed," he said.

Police rushed to the spot and rescued 27 passengers trapped in the bus.

Miscreants reportedly looted the passengers before the police arrived.

Only five hours earlier another accident occurred on the same highway at Kalitola, about 20 miles from Katakali killing two people and injuring 10, when two buses collided head-on.

None of the deceased could be identified immediately.

SEE PAGE 15 COL 8

Third seaport in Kalapara

Feasibility study soon: minister

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Patuakhali

The government is planning to build the country's third seaport and a dockyard at the estuaries of Ramnabad and Andarmanik rivers at Kalapara of the district, said Shipping Minister Shahjahan Khan yesterday.

The government will appoint consultants soon to conduct a feasibility study, he said.

The minister was addressing a rally at Chariapara under Lalua union of Kalapara upazila in the district.

Before addressing the rally, the minister visited the

SEE PAGE 15 COL 5

Rab arrested innocent, DB held real killers

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Patuakhali

Claims DMP on SI Goutam murder; Rab to comment on it after probe

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka Metropolitan Police authorities yesterday claimed that the people picked up earlier by Rapid Action Battalion in connection with sub-inspector Goutam Roy murder are innocent and Detective Branch of police arrested the real killers.

DMP Commissioner Shahidul Hoque at a press briefing said those two persons arrested by Rab personnel had confessed to their involvement in the murder only because they were scared.

One of them was not even in Dhaka on April 20 the day when the murder was committed. He went to Comilla after he had contracted chicken pox two days before the incident. He returned Dhaka the day after Goutam was

killed, he said.

Rab Director General Hassan Mahmood Khandker, however, said that it is not the right time to come up with a conclusion as a high-powered monitoring committee formed by police headquarters is looking into the matter.

At the press briefing held at the DB office, the DMP commissioner said of the four arrested by DB listed criminals Zakir Hossain alias Kailla Zakir and Zamal Mallik pumped four bullets into SI Goutam's body.

Ahammad Ali alias Hadi accompanied them. Another arrestee Abdur Raouf Bhuiyan alias Sohel was a close aide to Kailla Zakir, he said.

The DMP commissioner also said, of the two persons arrested by Rab, Mohammad Ali

SEE PAGE 15 COL 2

Magura SP closed for corruption

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The superintendent of police (SP) at Magura was closed to the police headquarters on Thursday after a probe committee found him guilty of various irregularities and corruption.

Police headquarters sources said SP Mohammad Shahriar was closed to the headquarters following a directive by the Ministry of Home Affairs.

After receiving allegations of corruption and irregularities against the SP, the police headquarters formed a probe committee that visited Magura a week ago, said NBK Tripura, additional inspector general of police.

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