

SHARING WATER OF TRANSBOUNDARY RIVERS

Call for 'sincere diplomacy' to convince India

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Sharing water of transboundary rivers properly is related to social and economic development as well as human security, speakers said at a discussion yesterday.

They also emphasised the need for 'sincere diplomacy' to convince the 'mighty neighbour India' to work together in river basin management.

They also said that the past governments have discussed the issue with India for years without any fruitful result.

The Bangladesh Institute of International Strategic Studies (BIIS) organised the panel discussion on 'Management of Water Resources and Water Security: the Case of the Ganges-Brahmaputra-Meghna (GBM) River

Basins' at its auditorium.

Mentioning China's initiatives to construct dams and divert water of Brahmaputra as a matter of concern for both Bangladesh and India, the speakers said that India, for the first time, has realised the problems facing a lower riparian country like Bangladesh.

Speaking as the chief guest, Mohammed Mijarul Quayes, secretary to the foreign ministry, underscored the links between water resource management and water security.

He called for changes in the mindset in order to enhance cooperation among the countries of the GBM region.

Mentioning different plans of actions adopted at different regional forums, including SAARC summit, the secretary said collective efforts are needed to make the best use of natural

resources for common interest.

Dr Qazi Kholiquzzaman Ahmad, chairman of Palli Karma Sahayak Foundation, emphasised the need for political will to open water governance in South Asia.

Dr Ainun Nishat, vice chancellor of BRAC University, identified the implementation mechanism as a challenge in water management for Bangladesh.

Maj Gen Muhammed Firdaus Mian, chairman of board of governors of BIIS, chaired the session. Maj Gen Golam Mohammad, director general of BIIS, delivered the welcome speech.

The panel discussion was followed by an open discussion where foreign dignitaries, government officials, academicians and civil society members gave their opinion.

US-BANGLA EXERCISE Communist Party concerned

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Leaders of the Communist Party of Bangladesh (CPB) yesterday expressed deep concern over the US-Bangladesh joint military exercise, says a press release.

They urged the government not to allow activities of the Peace Corps.

CPB President Manjurul Ahsan Khan and General Secretary Mujahidul Islam Selim said the United States is conspiring to use the land of Bangladesh to establish its supremacy in the region.

Joint military exercise is the part of implementation of their 'ill-motives', they said.

They said the Peace Corps is run by US intelligence agency CIA and it would be harmful to the country if joint exercise is allowed again.

RIVER DRIVE 17 more structures knocked down

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Narayanganj district administration along with Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority (BIWTA) knocked down seventeen makeshift structures and illegal portions of two concrete buildings yesterday as part of the ongoing eviction drive to save River Shitalakhya.

The demolition team partially demolished a six-storied building of SM Flour Mills at Bhagabanganj, Bangladeshi Banijjalaya and 17 tin-roofed structures located in the north of Narayanganj river port, said our correspondent.

Responding to their pleas, the authorities granted the owners of the buildings a period of two days to complete the demolition process, said Alamgir Kabir, deputy director of BIWTA.

The BIWTA engaged about 200 labourers, one tugboat and a workboat for the task.

Zahirul Islam, executive magistrate of Narayanganj led the team.

The drive will continue today.

Death anniversary METRO DESK



Today is the 7th death anniversary of Alhaj Sajeda Islam, wife of late engineer Alhaj Fakrul Islam of 6 Arambagh at Motijheel in the city, says a press release.

All have been requested to pray for salvation of the departed soul.

Mahmudul Haque Chy

STAFF CORRESPONDENT



Today is the 12th death anniversary of Mahmudul Haque Chowdhury, a freedom fighter and former senior sub-editor of the Bangladesh Observer, says a press release.

On the occasion, Quran-khwani and milad mahfil will be held at his village home at Matigadha under Chhaganaiya upzila in Feni.

GRENADATE ATTACK Charges framed against Hannan, five others

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

A sylhet court yesterday framed charges against the HUJI chief Mufti Abdul Hannan and five others in a case filed against them for grenade attack in the city Awami League rally on August 7, 2004.

Third Additional District and Sessions Judge Manzurul Haque Khan passed the order after the accused were produced before the court.

The incident left one AL leader killed and 25 others seriously injured.

Police arrested HUJI Chief Mufti Abdul Hannan, his brother Mufizur Rahman alias Muhibullah alias Ovi, HUJI operatives Sharif Shahedul Alam Bipul, Mufti Main Uddin and Dewar Hossain Ripon.

The other accused Humayun Kabir Himu is still at large following the incident.

The attack took place moments after the City Mayor Badar Uddin Ahmed Kamran, also city AL chief left the venue after the meeting.

Sub-Inspector of Sylhet Kotwali police station Enamul Haque filed the case in this connection.

Inspector Zobayer Ahmed of Criminal Investigation Department submitted the chargesheet of the case in 2007.

District and Sessions Judge Md Momin Ullah, on May 4, deferred charge framing of the case till June 15 and sent the case records to third additional district and sessions Judge for starting trial.



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina plants a sapling on the Gano Bhaban premises in the city yesterday. (Story on Page 3)



Fall in temperature likely

UNB, Dhaka

Light to moderate rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty or squally wind is likely to occur at most places over Chittagong and Barisal divisions and at many places over Khulna, Dhaka and Sylhet divisions and at one or two places over Rajshahi division with heavy to very heavy falls at places over Chittagong and Barisal divisions in next 12 hours as of 6:00pm today.

Day temperature may fall slightly over the country, Met Offices said.

The sun sets in the capital at 6:48pm today and rises at 5:11am tomorrow.

Country's highest temperature 37.0 degrees Celsius was recorded yesterday at Rajshahi and lowest 24.0 degrees Celsius at Cox's Bazar and Hatiya.

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	33.2	26.4	64	69
Chittagong	26.4	24.2	97	93
Rajshahi	37.0	26.6	75	92
Khulna	33.0	26.6	92	81
Barisal	31.0	26.8	92	86
Sylhet	32.2	25.3	96	74
Cox's Bazar	26.3	24.0	100	94

DMP refutes allegation of torture on Mahmudur

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP) yesterday dismissed as baseless the allegation that Mahmudur Rahman, acting editor of the daily Amar Desh, was tortured during his remand.

What Mahmudur said about torture before a court is baseless and motivated, DMP Commissioner AKM Shahidul Haque said at a press conference.

Mahmudur made up imaginary stories regarding torture in the remand, he added.

The press conference was held after the monthly crime conference of DMP at its Rajarbagh telecom auditorium in the city.

The DMP commissioner also said a special drive would be launched in the capital soon to recover illegal arms.

Only 13 firearms were seized last month while the figure was 75 in the corresponding month last year, he said and expressed dissatisfaction with this low figure. The firearms recovery figure was 55 in April, he added.

There are many illegal firearms in the hands of criminals, he said, adding that the DMP will launch the special drive within three to four days.

However, the commissioner said the police were busy with several important incidents, which affected the drive against illegal firearms.

The DMP will also intensify drives against drug peddlers across the city, he added.

The DMP Commissioner also warned the police personnel of tough action if found involved in illicit drug business.

According to a DMP report, a total of 26 people were killed last month while the figure was 21 in the corresponding month last year.

A total of 6,475 people were arrested last month. Of them, 113 people were arrested under section 54, seven are listed criminals and 16 are accused in murder cases.

The DMP commissioner said the incidents of attacks on the police increased last month. The police were attacked mostly during the drives against militants.

CU student commits suicide

BSS, Chittagong

A student of Chittagong University (CU) committed suicide on Monday.

He was identified as Joy Narayan Dewanji, a second year student of English Department of the session 2007-2008, also CU correspondent of the daily New Age, who hailed from Raazan in the district.

The members of his family found him hanging with the ceiling fan at his residence at Bandar thana of the city.

The reason of his suicide, however, was not confirmed.

Library science diploma course results published

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Institute of Library and Information Science in Mymensingh has published the results of the admission test for diploma course under 2010-11 session.

For admission, the successful candidates should submit necessary documents and pay admission fee to the institute by June 24, says a press release of the institute.



Chinese Vice President Xi Jinping pays tribute to the martyrs of the War of Liberation in 1971 by placing a wreath at the National Memorial at Savar yesterday.

ELIMINATION OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING

Dhaka does not fully comply with minimum standards: US

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh does not fully comply with the minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking, but it is making significant efforts to do so, a US State Department report said.

The government has continued to address the sex trafficking of women and children, said the report released on Monday.

Briefing reporters in Washington DC, the State Department's anti-trafficking coordinator Luis CdeBaca also highlighted strides made by several countries.

According to the report, the State Department added a number of Asian nations to its Tier 2 watch list -- Afghanistan, Brunei, Laos, Maldives, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam.

Bangladesh, China, India, Micronesia, the Philippines and Sri Lanka remained on the list, unchanged from a year earlier.

Despite efforts, Bangladesh government did not demonstrate evidence of increased efforts to prosecute and convict labour trafficking offenders, particularly those responsible for the fraudulent recruitment of Bangladeshi workers for the purpose of forced labour overseas, the report said.

"Similarly, the government did not demonstrate increased efforts to prevent the forced labour of Bangladeshi workers overseas through effective controls on high recruitment fees and other forms of fraudulent recruitment. So, Bangladesh is placed on Tier 2 Watch List for the second consecutive year."

The report said that some govern-

ment officials and members of civil society continue to believe the forced labour and debt bondage of Bangladeshi workers abroad was not considered labour trafficking, but rather employment fraud perpetrated on irregular migrants.

The State Department recommended that Bangladesh significantly increase criminal prosecutions and punishments for all forms of labour trafficking, establish special courts to prosecute labour trafficking offences, improve oversight of Bangladesh's international recruiting agencies, provide protection services for trafficking victims and victims of forced labour and increase awareness campaigns at potential domestic and international migrants.

China tested friend of Bangladesh: Speaker

BSS, Dhaka

Speaker Abdul Hamid Advocate yesterday said China is a tested friend of Bangladesh and an important development partner.

Bangladesh attaches value to its bilateral relationship with China, he said adding China is cooperating Bangladesh in building infrastructure and other important sectors.

The Speaker said this while he called on Chinese Vice President Xi Jinping at a local hotel here. He hosted a lunch in honour of the Chinese guest and members of his delegation.

Deputy Speaker Shawkat Ali, Deputy Leader

of the House Syeda Sajeda Chowdhury and ministers attended the programme.

Bangladesh believes in 'one China policy' Hamid said and expressed eagerness to form parliamentary friendship group between the two countries.

Xi Jinping said China-Bangladesh friendship is expanding gradually and both the countries can share their experiences in achieving further development.

He appreciated Bangladesh's remarkable development achieved during the last 39 years.

The Chinese vice president invited the Speaker to visit China.

PM's DIRECTIVE TO EDUCATION MINISTRY

Teachers on deputation in Dhaka will have to return

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday directed the education minister to cancel teachers' deputations to Dhaka within a day.

"The teachers who came to Dhaka on deputation will have to go back to their earlier workplaces as the education in the rural areas is being hampered badly," a source

quoted the prime minister as saying at a meeting of the Executive Committee of the National Economic Council (Ecneec).

Either the teachers will have to go back or they will have to leave their jobs, she said at the NEC conference room in the city where the meeting was held.

The teachers have a tendency to come to metropolitan areas especially Dhaka on deputation to get more facilities, which causes scarcity of good teachers in rural areas.

At yesterday's meeting, the premier said the educational institutions in the rural areas are being deprived of good teachers due to the teachers moving to Dhaka on deputation.

As Education Minister Nurul Islam Nahid informed her about the lobbying and pressure, Hasina said she herself would deal with the matter.

Ministers and advisers to the prime minister were present at the meeting.

BDR, BSF trade fires

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

Two stone quarry labourers sustained bullet injuries as BSF and BDR men traded over 400 rounds of bullet on Jaintapur, Sripur, Tamabil, Protappur and Bichhnakandi borders in Sylhet for over an hour since midday yesterday.

Injured Abdul Jalil and Khokan Miah were given treatment at Jaintapur Upazila Health Complex.

Border sources said, the trouble erupted at about 11:00 am when around 30 Indian Khasias backed by some BSF men intruded into Bangladesh territory near the border paddy nos 1279 and 1280 and attempted to plough up paddy fields for the second consecutive day.

The intruders also brought two power tillers along with them.

On information, BDR men from Sripur and Jaintapur border outposts reached the spot and asked them to leave the area, 200 yards inside the zero line between Tamabil and Sripur border. The Indians, however, denied leaving the place.

The BDR men also asked the BSF for taking the Indians back, but to no effect, sources said.

Instead, BSF men from the Naljur border camp started firing, prompting the BDR members to retaliate. Soon the BDR-BSF

gunfight spread to other nearby borders upto Protappur and Bichhnakandi, sources added.

Around 400 gunshots were traded during the fracas, BDR sources said wishing anonymity.

Commanding Officer of 21 Battalion of BDR, Lt Col Khondaker Zahirul Alam told The Daily Star in the afternoon that he contacted his BSF counterpart and made the request for stopping the trouble created by Indian tribesmen inside Bangladesh territory but it did not work.

The BDR had no other option but to retaliate as BSF men opened fire on Bangladeshi civilians, Col Alam added.

Syed Aminur Rahman, in-charge of Tamabil Land Customs station, told The Daily Star in the afternoon that the border trade remained suspended since noon yesterday.

On February 4, the BSF attempted to occupy some croplands on Padua border and traded gunshots with BDR.

Since then, they along with some Khasia tribesmen had been attempting to occupy some Bangladesh lands on Dibir haor, Protappur (Padua) and Tamabil borders.

BSF also shot a quarry labourer dead last month on Bichhnakandi border.

Delwar warns against attempts to foil hartal

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP Secretary General Khondaker Delwar Hossain yesterday said the government would be responsible for any untoward situation if any attempt is made to create obstacle to June 27 hartal.

"Movement against the government has already started. I urge you all to make the hartal a success in a peaceful way," he said at a roundtable as the chief guest.

If any obstacle is put in the way of hartal, the government will have to bear the responsibility for any untoward situation, and more protest programmes will follow, he warned.

The Nagorik Forum organised the roundtable titled 'Freedom of press: Security of a journalist' at the National Press Club, with Forum Chairman Abdullahil Masud in the chair.

The speakers also demanded immediate release of Acting Editor of Amar Desh Mahmudur Rahman and punishment to those involved in torturing him.

Jamaat-e-Islami Secretary General Ali Ahsan Mohammad Mojaheed said, "We will not remain silent any longer if journalists face attacks."

BNP standing committee member MK Anwar said, "This government does not believe in the freedom of press."

TAX EVASION

Jalil discharged from case

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday discharged former Awami League (AL) General Secretary Abdul Jalil from a tax dodge case filed against him by National Board of Revenue (NBR) in 2009.

After hearing the discharge petition, Judge FM Aminul Islam of the Special Judge Court-1 passed the order in presence of the AL leader.

In his order, Aminul said as he (Jalil) had earlier paid all the income tax, he was discharged from the case.

Jalil's lawyers on January 18 submitted a petition seeking discharge of Jalil from the case saying that their client had earlier paid all the income tax imposed on him by the NBR.

Earlier on October 15, 2009, Deputy Tax Commissioner Bazlur Rahman Khan filed the case against Jalil in connection with dodging income tax of Tk 4 lakh.