



It is time of frenzied shopping ahead of Eid al-Fitr as areas around New Market and Gausia in the city are full of shoppers yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

Delhi to implement soon joint statement decisions

BSS, New Delhi

With a view to operationalising the decisions incorporated in the joint statement issued after Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's visit to New Delhi, India took up at the highest level the issue of expeditious implementation of the decisions.

Indian Finance Minister Pranab Mukherjee at a meeting here on Thursday evening with Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, has discussed speeding up the process of implementing the joint statement decisions after Sheikh Hasina's India visit in January.

It was necessary to further bolster the ties between India and Bangladesh, which have been on the upswing ever since the Sheikh Hasina government assumed power more than a year ago, sources said yesterday.

During the meeting, Mukherjee

briefed Prime Minister Singh about his discussions with Sheikh Hasina and other Bangladesh leaders during the whirlwind visit to Dhaka on August 7 to oversee the signing of the MoU for India's one billion dollar line of credit to Bangladesh, they said.

Mukherjee and Singh also discussed broad contours of the current state of India-Bangladesh relations and the major issues of bilateral interest.

The meeting felt that implementation of the joint statement signed after Sheikh Hasina's visit to Delhi from January 11-13 was necessary to keep up the momentum in the bilateral relations.

Among the issues that were understood to have figured at the Singh-Mukherjee meeting were river water-sharing, trade and exchange of enclaves and border demarcation.

Senior officials of the two countries are likely to meet next month on the

issue of exchange of adverse possession of enclaves of India and Bangladesh as per the Indra-Mujib pact of 1974.

Bangladesh has repeatedly stressed the need for implementing the decisions taken during Sheikh Hasina's visit, particularly relating to trade, water-sharing and exchange of enclaves. Mukherjee conveyed Dhaka's concerns during his August visit.

India is reportedly considering including 45 to 50 more goods in the list for duty-free import from Bangladesh in a bid to help reduce the huge gap in bilateral trade. While India's exports to Bangladesh are estimated at over three billion dollars, import from that country is 345 million dollars.

The two leaders also discussed the Bangladesh-India relations during the course of their meeting.

JMB man arrested

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Mymensingh

A close associate of executed JMB kingpin Bangla Bhai was arrested in a drive in Mymensingh early yesterday. Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) arrested the member of Jama'atul Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB) from Shulakia village in Gafarganj upazila.

On information, a Rab-9 team launched a drive in the village around 1:30am and arrested Sultan Miah, 26, of Bariadhala village in Trishal upazila. He was a close associate of Bangla Bhai.

Police said he is wanted in two cases. One of the cases was filed under the arms Act with Muktagacha Police Station in 2009.

Charge sheets were pressed in both of the cases against Sultan, said duty officer of the police station Sub-Inspector Ziaul Haque. He was absconding for a long time to avert arrest.

Sultan was handed over to the police. He was being interrogated at the police station till filing of this report in the afternoon.

Retired army men receive govt funds for their welfare

But govt officials get almost nothing: BBC documentary

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government provide special facility to army by allocating huge funds and its retired officials whereas retired government officers receive almost nothing, said a BBC radio documentary yesterday.

The sixth episode of the nine-part documentary titled "Fouji Banijjo" (Military in business) said the largest part of investment made by businesses involving army comes from the government.

While the government did not invest in any project for welfare of the retired government officials, the documentary said.

"You will get a sad picture if you compare what the government do for army welfare with what government employees receive from the government through their welfare society. The government has allocated

only Tk 2 crore for retired government officials welfare society this year," said M Hafizuddin Khan, president of the society.

The government investment in military businesses lacks transparency, he added.

Dr Ayesha Siddiqi, an eminent expert on military affairs and writer of the book "Military Inc: Inside Pakistan's Military Economy", told BBC the effort of army to accumulate its own property indicates that it is only a matter of time when its financial interest would turn into political interest.

Army is so much involved in businesses in Bangladesh that it commercially runs projects to produce things required for the force.

The documentary mentioned the name of a military dairy farm in Savar as an example, which was established following the logic that milk is needed for army

officers regularly and bringing it from outside involves the risk of poisoning by enemies.

According to the documentary, M Idris Ali, chairman of the parliamentary standing committee on defence ministry, however, sees nothing wrong with army doing business but recommended for doing it in a "limited" manner.

Chief of Bangladesh Institute of Peace and Securities Studies Maj Gen (ret'd) M Moniruzzaman, however, termed the concept of backward supply linkage of the army as old and said that even the USA army do not produce necessary requirements on their own.

He also mentioned that involvement of army in business might change their military characteristics.

Ayesha Siddiqi also explained that taking special facilities from the political governments are not only evident in Pakistan and Bangladesh. Rather the model these two countries have adopted is a mixture of models introduced in China, Indonesia and Turkey.

Indonesia, however, can be taken as an example of army doing business in the name of its retired officials' welfare with an unpleasant effect on the state, said the documentary quoting a recent report of Human Rights Watch on Indonesian army.

"Out of commercial greed army got involved in corruption, violation of human rights and offensive activities, prompting parliament to form a law in 2004 under which it ordered army to withdraw from all businesses in five years," the report said.

Writer of the report Lisa told BBC what was done in five years was formation of a committee to monitor army businesses in future.

Nothing could be done with regards to stopping army business in Indonesia, as a quarter does not want to bring a process to an end that earns them money, Lisa said.

Lack of political wills is another reason while political parties do not want to make a powerful institution like army angry against them, Lisa added.

GD filed for planning to kill PM, 7 others

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Bogra

A freedom fighter yesterday filed a general diary (GD) with Dhunat Police Station of the district against 21 leaders of BNP and Jamaat-e-Islami with an allegation of making a plan to kill Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and seven others by planting a remote controlled bomb at a rally.

Dhunat Police Station Officer-in-charge Yiasin Ali said Abdul Karim filed the GD alleging that 21 BNP-Jamaat leaders had been planning to kill Hasina, Habibur Rahman, lawmaker of constituency-5 in Bogra, and six others at a meeting held at the house of Shariatullah on August 18.

The 21 leaders include Dhunat upazila unit BNP President Abdul Matin, Joint Convener Abul Mansur Ahmed Pasha, Pura BNP Joint Convener Shahdat Hossain Milu, Jamaat supporters Abul Kalam Azad and Harunar Rashid.

In the GD, Abdul Karim also alleged that the plan to kill Hasina and seven others were plotted at the residence of Shariatullah and he (Karim) came to know about the plan while he was passing through the residence.



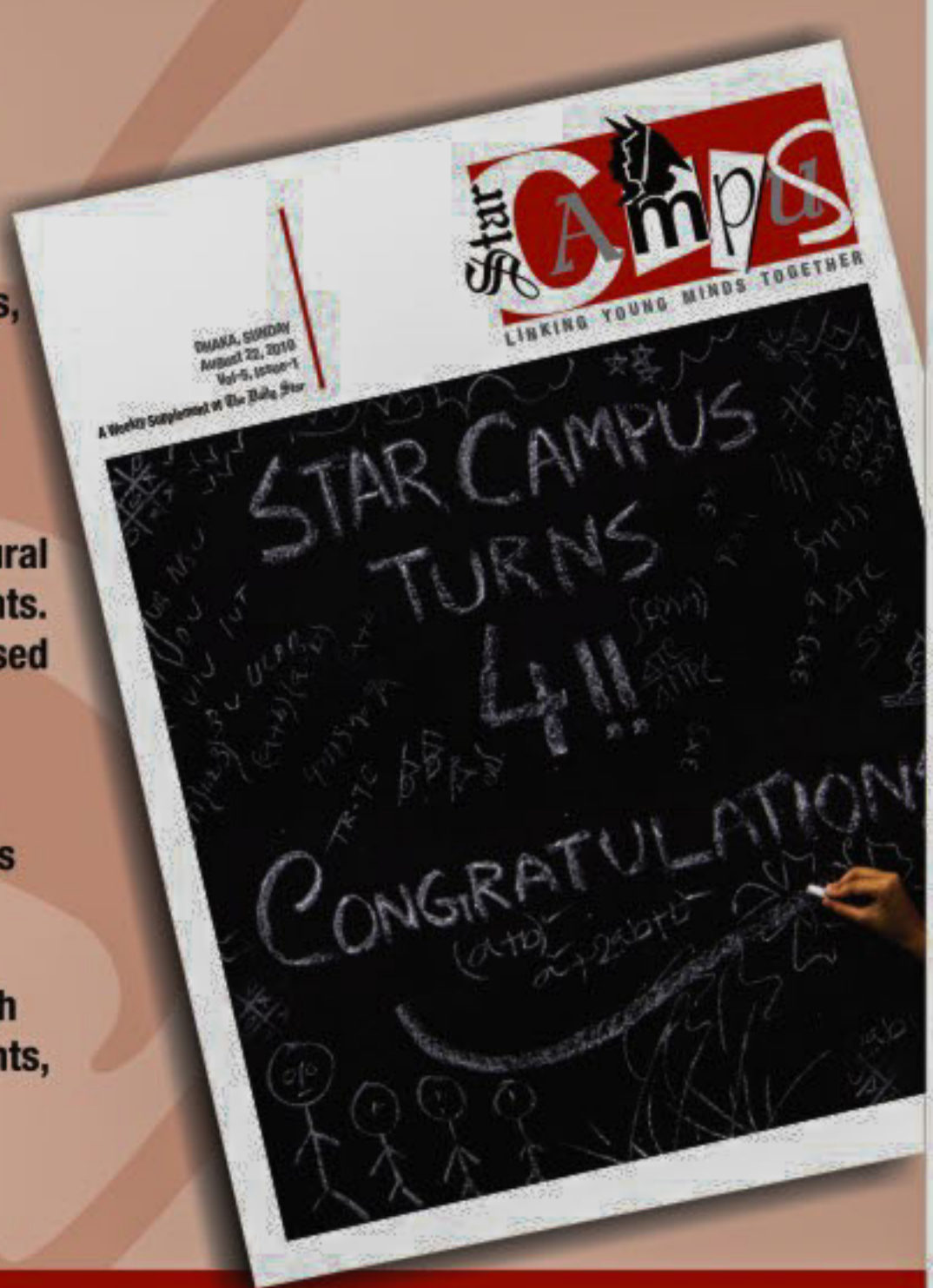
Bangladesh Adivasi Union brings out a demonstration from the city's Muktangoan yesterday demanding trial of all killings of indigenous people, including Alfred Soren's.

PHOTO: STAR

The Daily Star Coming out tomorrow - Star Campus

Linking Young Minds Together

The Daily Star offers campus based weekly magazine 'Star Campus' - the ultimate magazine for the young generation - a common platform for the college and university students and academicians - to share their ideas, thoughts, dreams, opinions and views. Star Campus is an endeavour to bring into the center stage the visionary aspects of our college and university students, alongside their lifestyle, cultural trends and their multidimensional talents. Star Campus is a magazine broadly based on campus life! It contains articles, academic news, achievements, travelogues, interviews, book reviews, quiz, milestones, academic tips, profiles of educational institutes, cultural and extra-curricular activities in campus, jokes, cartoons, photographs and much more. This is a magazine Of the Students, By the Students and For the Students. Star Campus helps link young minds together.



T O D A Y

Discussion
Bangladesh Labour Party will arrange a discussion. Venue: National Press Club, Time: 11:00am.

Meeting
Rotary Club of Dhaka Central will hold a meeting. Venue: Captains world, Mohakhali, Time: 5:30pm.

Photo exhibition
Daffodil International University will organise a photo exhibition. Venue: Prince plaza, Dhanmondi, Time: 11:00am.

Meeting
Bangladesh Mohila Samity will organise a meeting. Venue: 4, Natok Sarani, Baily Rd, Time: 11:00am.

Roundtable
Society for Development and Cooperation will arrange a roundtable. Venue: Cirdap auditorium, Time: 10:30am.

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