

GERMAN OFFICIAL DUE TOMORROW

Talks to focus on economy

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Development of economic and political framework conditions will dominate talks with government leaders and high officials during a three-day visit by German Federal Foreign Office State Secretary Martin Johannes Biesel beginning tomorrow.

Biesel, one of the three state secretaries of Germany, accompanied by an eight-member business delegation, will hold talks with Commerce Minister Faruk Khan and Foreign Secretary Mijarul Quayes. He will also meet other government representatives and take part in discussions with business leaders in Bangladesh.

According to a press release of the German embassy in Dhaka, the visit is taking place following Foreign Minister Dipu Moni's visit to Germany early September.

"The visit will provide an opportunity

to deepen bilateral cooperation as it comes amid signs of growing interest of German business in Bangladesh as a trade and investment partner," the press release said.

Talks will focus on the development of economic and political framework conditions, it added.

As per the programme schedule, Biesel will deliver a speech on the bilateral economic and political relations at a luncheon of the Bangladesh German Chamber of Commerce and Industry tomorrow at the Westin Hotel in the city. Board of Investment Chairman Dr Syed A Samad is expected to deliver a speech on the occasion.

On November 26, Biesel will attend a ceremony in Chittagong marking the delivery of two container ships built by Western Marine Shipyard of Bangladesh to Grona Shipping GmbH of Germany.

He will witness the signing of a memo-

randum of understanding (MoU) between the Geothe Institute and a new partner school, Mastermind International School in Chittagong, under the German PASCH-programme. He will also visit organisations of German development cooperation.

Since 1972, Germany has provided more than Euro 4.4 billion as direct bilateral assistance and indirect multilateral contributions to support Bangladesh in eliminating poverty, protecting human rights and achieving economic success.

Germany is Bangladesh's second largest market for export. Trade with Germany provides Bangladesh with an annual trade surplus of more than Euro 1.9 billion.

In 2009, the bilateral trade volume reached Euro 2.3 billion, increasing by more than 15%. Germany is an open market with free access for Bangladesh goods without any import tariffs.



Communist Party of China (CPC) central committee member Lu Hao, second from left, presents handicrafts to Prof Muhammad Yunus, second from right, at Yunus Centre in the city yesterday.

PHOTO: YUNUS CENTRE

Expand microcredit programmes in all 31 Chinese provinces

CPC member Lu Hao urges Prof Yunus

METRO DESK

Lu Hao, secretary general of the Communist Party of China (CPC) Gansu Committee, said microcredit programmes set up by Grameen Trust (GT) in Gansu have set an example that could be extended to all 31 provinces of China, says après release.

Lu, who also enjoys rank of a minister, said this when he called on Nobel Laureate Prof Muhammad Yunus at Grameen Bank headquarters in the city yesterday.

Lu, Lu, also member of the CPC, was accompanied by a delegation of nine

people including Chinese Ambassador to Bangladesh Zhang Xiany.

During their visit, they thanked Prof Yunus and Grameen Bank for providing microcredit loans successfully to farmers in the province. They said it also can be applied in the poorer western provinces of China.

As Governor of Gansu, Lu had promoted these GT programmes in Gansu's Tongwei county and Dingxi city of Anding district. He discussed in details about the positive impacts that microcredit made on the income and lives of the farmers and their families.

Thanking Lu for his visit, Prof Yunus

said GT has just received a licence from the Chinese government to operate microcredit programmes in Inner Mongolia this month and expected the same in Sichuan.

He briefed Lu on the social business activities of Grameen Bank and their potential to address problems related to agriculture and healthcare in China.

GT Managing Director Prof HI Latifee was present at the meeting.

Lu presented handicrafts made by Chinese microcredit borrowers to Prof Yunus and invited him to visit Gansu province and continue efforts to expand microcredit programmes in China.



Representatives of the Dhaka University Alumni Association headed by Syed Mazur Elahi pose for a photograph with President Zillur Rahman at Bangabhaban in the city yesterday.

Phani made supernumerary IGP, Hasan full fledged IGP

BSS, Dhaka

The government yesterday appointed Phani Bhushan Chowdhury as the supernumerary Inspector General of Police (IGP).

"He will act as the police coordinator with the status of a secretary," an official release said, adding that he will also look after recruitment, training and important cases of the government.

It said the government also promoted acting IGP Hasan Mahmud Khandakar to the rank of the full-fledged IGP.

Khandakar was appointed acting IGP on August 29, replacing Noor Mohammad.

AL lawmaker Sachchu's death condoled

BSS, Dhaka

Political leaders yesterday expressed deep shock at the death of Awami League lawmaker Advocate Lutful Hai Sachchu.

Speaker of the Jatiya Sangsad Md Abdul Hamid Advocate expressed deep shock at the death of Awami League lawmaker Advocate Lutful Hai Sachchu.

In a condolence message, he said in his death the nation has lost a popular political leader and valiant freedom fighter.

Abdul Hamid said the death of Sachchu is an irreparable loss to the country. The people of the country will remember the contribution of Sachchu to different past democratic movements. He prayed for eternal peace of the departed soul and conveyed sympathy to members of the bereaved family.

In a separate condolence message, Deputy Speaker of the Jatiya Sangsad Shawkat Ali expressed profound shock at the death of Lutful Hai Sachchu.

He said the nation will recall the contribution of Sachchu to the War of Liberation.

The deputy speaker prayed for eternal peace of the departed soul and conveyed sympathy to members of the bereaved family.

Chief Whip of the Jatiya Sangsad Vice-Principal Md Abdus Shahid condoled the death of AL lawmaker Lutful Hai Sachchu.

In a condolence message, he said the contribution of Sachchu to the country and its people will remain memorable forever.

He prayed for eternal peace of the departed soul and conveyed sympathy to members of the bereaved family.

State Minister for Youth and Sports Ahad Ali Sarker expressed deep shock at the death of Sachchu, Chairman of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on the Ministry of Commerce, and an eminent sports organiser.

Referring to valuable contribution of Sachchu to sports arena of the country, he said the death of Sachchu is an irreparable loss to the country.

He prayed for eternal peace of the departed soul and conveyed sympathy to members of the bereaved family.

Huda's expulsion 'erratic act'

Says Obaidul Qader

BSS, Dhaka

Awami League (AL) Presidium member Obaidul Qader yesterday called the overnight expulsion of BNP vice chairman Barrister Nazmul Huda as an "erratic act" saying it reflected the lapses of democratic exercise in the main opposition party.

"It appeared as a wayward and erratic act... such a 'tughlagi kando' is possible only in BNP," said Qader, also the chairman of parliamentary standing committee on information ministry, as he was speaking at a discussion on good governance.

He said BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia could strip someone off his party membership and reinstate him in the party with a stroke of pen as the party lacked practice of internal democracy.

Qader recalled that once renegade BNP leader Salahuddin Qader Chowdhury was expelled from the party in that "wayward and erratic manner" but he returned to BNP in the same way.

"This is not possible in Awami League," he

told the discussion organised by Janatar Prottyasha, social organization, at Dhaka Reporters Unity auditorium with its convener MA Karim in the chair.

The speakers called upon BNP to return to parliament and discuss issues related to public interest, as it is the centre for debate and resolving of all issues.

AL's Organising Secretary Ahmmad Hossain, Dhaka City AL Health Secretary Dilip Roy, Muktijoddha Shamannoy Parishad Vice President Akram Hossain and Krishak League leader Khandokar Shamsul Haque also spoke at the function.

Urging the opposition BNP to refrain from destructive programmes like hartal, Qader said the agitation programme on the street would not bring good for the people. This would rather enhance sufferings of the people, he said urging the opposition to join parliament session and play their due role.

"Awami League and BNP are not each other's enemy. We are just political rivals while our common enemies are poverty, militancy and corruption," he said.

Paban's bail term extended for third time

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday extended the bail term till January 9 next year for the third time to Khandaker Akhter Hamid Paban in a cracker blast case.

Judge (in-charge) Fozila Begum of the Metropolitan Session Judges' Court passed the order after Paban's lawyer appeared before her court and submitted a petition seeking extension of bail term as his client is ill.

Paban is the son of BNP Secretary General Khandaker Delwar Hossain.

The case was filed with Gulshan Police Station against Paban and five others on charge of exploding crackers in front of BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia's Gulshan office on February 23 this year.

Earlier on October 25 and November 3, the same court extended his bail term twice.

The court also directed officer-in-charge of Chatkhil Police Station to submit a report by January 9 on execution of arrest warrant issued earlier against Omar Faruk, former Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) president of Chatkhil thana unit of Noakhali district.

Four other accused -- Golam Sabbir alias Shovon, Syed Hasan Rony and Pradip Saha, secretary of Sonaimuri upazila of JCD, and Dakat Babu -- were arrested on different dates, and are now in Dhaka Central Jail.

The whole charade was aimed at consolidating Paban's own position in the party against competing opponents, they told the court.

DU bans cellphones during admission test

DU CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka University authorities have asked all examinees of 'Ga' unit admission test not to enter exam centres taking cellphones or other electronic devices.

The one-hour admission test under the business studies faculty will start at 10:00am on November 26, says a press release.

DU authorities imposed the ban in the wake of sending correct answers of the questions via short message service (SMS).

Uphold image of DU

President urges alumni association

UNB, Dhaka

President Zillur Rahman yesterday said active representatives of the Dhaka University Alumni Association in various policymaking forums would undoubtedly be able to bring dynamism in the ongoing activities of the university, especially help upholding its image.

"Role of alumni association is indispensable in the building of infrastructures and for basic development of the university," he told a delegation of the executive committee of the DU alumni association, led by its president Syed Monjur Elahi, which called on him at Bangabhaban.

Alumni Association Secretary General Raquibuddin Ahmed also spoke on the occasion.

During the meeting, Zillur mentioned representatives of the DU alumni association is spread across the country's various sectors including administration, politics, law courts, trade and commerce, medical services, educa-

tion, bank and insurance, and the mass media. "So, I think the active representatives of DU alumni association in various policymaking forums would undoubtedly be able to bring back more dynamism in the ongoing activities of the university," he said.

The president said with the establishment of Dhaka University on July 1 in 1921, the alumni of the university have been continuously leading in the various sectors for nearly 90 years through their talent, essence of thoughts and sincerity. "It's my hope that this tradition will continue in the future as well."

Speaking at the meeting, Syed Manzur Elahi said alumni association plays a special role in improving the standard of education in the developed world particularly in the United States of America.

He informed the president that some 500 scholarships are awarded from the alumni association through a selection committee headed by the vice chancellor.

Tax Evasion Case Hearing against Partex chair on Jan 13

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday deferred the hearing on charge framing against Partex Group Chairman MA Hashem till January 13 in connection with a tax evasion case.

Judge (In-charge) Fozila Begum of the Senior Special Judge's Court passed the order after Hashem along with his lawyer submitted a time petition seeking adjournment of the hearing.

The National Board of Revenue (NBR) on August 23 this year filed the case with the Sessions Judge Court against Hashem, also chairman of United Commercial Bank Ltd, for evading tax.

Following the case, the court issued an arrest warrant against Hashem and directed the officer-in-charge of Gulshan Police Station to submit a report on execution of the arrest warrant by September 19.

But Hashem had got anticipatory bail from the High Court (HC).

In the case statement, Kabir Uddin Mollah, deputy tax commissioner, alleged that Hashem evaded Tk 4.76 crore income tax from 1977-1978 fiscal year to 2005-2006.

He was also arrested in a case filed on May 28 in 2007 for his alleged involvement with syndicates behind price hike of essentials. He was released on bail from the HC on August 4 in 2008.

Sahara asks BNP leaders not to tell lies

UNB, Dhaka

Home Minister Sahara Khatun yesterday accused Secretary General Khandaker Delwar Hossain of telling lies regarding the cocktail blasts at the chief justice's house.

She said this while exchanging Eid greetings with journalists at her office yesterday afternoon.

On Sunday, Delwar expressed surprise as to how the home minister along with State Minister for Law Qamrul Islam, IGP, DMP commissioner and Rab chief in a group could visit the chief justice's house within 15 minutes of the blasts that occurred at 8:30pm.

The blasts were pre-planned drama of the government to influence the judiciary ahead of the Appellate Division's November 29 hearing on BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia's cantonment house, he alleged.

Refuting Delwar's remarks, the home minister said she went to the chief justice's house at about 10:30pm or 10:45pm as she had to call in the protocol car and other officials after the blasts.

Sahara alleged that it is the habit of the opposition to tell lies and they should change this habit now.

"BNP tells lie about the date of birth of its leader Khaleda Zia and a case is pending before the court about her actual date of birth," she said.

The home minister said while in the government BNP had also "dished out falsehoods against Awami League (AL)."

Asked about the ruling party's stance on BNP's plans to go for a tough movement, she said AL believes in democracy and runs the government democratically. If any programmes are announced against the public interests, people will resist those.

RMG factory gutted

UNB, Savar

The valuables of a garment factory were gutted in a devastating fire in Boro Ashulia Shooting House area here yesterday.

Fire service sources said, the fire originated from an iron machine at Land Mark Fabrics Garment Factory and soon spread to the whole factory.

On information, fire fighters rushed to the spot and extinguished the blaze with the help of local people.

Fire service sources said valuables worth Tk 20 lakh were gutted in the fire while the owners claimed that the extent of loss caused by the fire could go up to Tk 1 crore.