



PHOTO: PID

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina holds a meeting with visiting Bhutanese Prime Minister Lyonchhen Jigmi Y Thinley at Prime Minister's Office in the city yesterday.

IMO secretary general due today

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Secretary General of the International Maritime Organisation (IMO) Efthimios Mitropoulos will arrive here today for a 3-day visit to discuss how to reduce sea pollution specially from shipping industry.

Discussion regarding rescue of Bangladeshi ship MV Jahan Moni with 26 Bangladeshi sailors hijacked by Somalia pirates on December 5, security at the sea and climate change issue will dominate talks with the government ministers and others.

Officials consider IMO secretary general's visit to Dhaka important, as the organisation work in developing international regulations to prevent pollution of the seas by ships, developing international safety regulations and recommendations for shipping, focuses on people involved in every aspect of ship safety and prevention of marine pollution.

During his visit, Efthimios Mitropoulos is due to hold meeting with Foreign Minister Dipu Moni, Shipping Minister Shahjahan Khan and other senior officials.

According to IMO figures, the shipping industry is collectively responsible for 2.7% of global CO2 emissions.

Mitropoulos has argued that the shipping industry's contribution towards climate change funding should be proportionate to that figure.

UN's High Level Advisory Group on Climate Change Funding, which recommends that the shipping industry should be responsible for providing between \$4bn and \$9bn towards the 2020 target of \$100bn in climate change mitigation project funding.

Narsingdi municipal polls stayed

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday stayed for 15 days the process of the Narsingdi municipality election, which was slated for January 17.

An HC bench of Justice Miftah Uddin Choudhury and Justice Jahangir Hossain also directed Lokman Hossain, a mayoral candidate in the polls, to appear before the court within seven days to examine whether he is a fugitive.

The bench passed the order following a writ petition filed by another mayoral candidate Abdul Matin Sarker challenging the candidature of his rival Lokman.

The petitioner prayed to the court for staying the election process, saying Lokman cannot contest the election as he is a fugitive in a murder case.

Barrister M Amir-Ul Islam appeared for the petitioner.

Cold wave hits children

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Most city hospitals begin to receive child patients with cold related diseases like bronchial asthma, pneumonia, coughing, and rota viral diarrhoea as children are hit hard by the recent cold wave.

Almost all the babies seeking treatment at Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) are suffering from respiratory tract infections with fever, said Ariful Islam, resident physician of the hospital.

"Though normally we receive children with diarrhoea, typhoid, and other diseases at the outdoor; during this season the patients come with influenza, gastro enteritis, and respiratory tract infections" he said.

Muskan, a one month and 21 days old baby, was found basking on her mother's lap in front of the DMCH outdoor.

Muskan's father said they have had to visit the hospital four times since its birth as the baby catches cold frequently and faces severe breathing problem.

Two-year-old Trisha, Raihan, and Merry also saw doctors for the same reason while Kaosar, a one year and nine months old baby, had been suffering from rota viral diarrhoea for last

two weeks.

"As the rota virus becomes more virulent in winter, the children aged between 6 and 18 months don't have enough antibody to resist the virus," said Prof Dr Shahadat Hossain, of the International Centre for Diarrhoeal Diseases Research, Bangladesh (ICDDR, B).

He also said 70 percent children receiving treatment at the ICDDR, B currently are 6 to 18 months of age.

Prof Shahidullah of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University (BSMMU) said the number of children with common cold has been doubled compared to a month before.

"The children must be covered with warm clothes properly. As the children are not able to take care of themselves, parents should remain cautious so the babies are not infected with the virus and bacteria," he suggested.

The doctors of Mitford Hospital and Dhaka Shishu Hospital said the child patients have not been admitted to hospital in larger number, though their suffering due to the chilly weather have increased significantly. Most of them are provided treatment at the outdoor department, they said.

The babies seeking treatment at Dhaka Medical College Hospital are suffering from respiratory tract infections with fever



PHOTO: STAR

Initiative for Peace (IFP) forms a human chain in front of Sonargaon hotel yesterday to create awareness among the people about noise pollution.

TRAFFICKING

Rab rescues woman, daughter: 2 held

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) yesterday claimed to have rescued a woman and her daughter and arrested two traffickers in last two days.

Bokuli Begum, 38, and her daughter Halima Akhter Akhi, 10, who were trafficked to India were rescued on Monday.

Rab-1 arrested Mohammad Ukil Mollik, 25, of Sharsha upazila of Jessore the same day and Mohammad Ali, 40, of Tongi on that night.

At a press conference in the city yesterday, Rab officials said they brought the victims back from Hawra Station of India with the help of some 'well wishers' there.

Bokuli, conversely, told journalists that they managed to get freed from the traffickers in India with the help of the locals there who helped them return home.

Lt Col Rashedul Alam, commanding officer of Rab-1, said we began investigation following a complaint by Bokuli's husband Afzal Hossain on December 27 last year.

Bokul said Ali, a next-door neighbour, took her and the child to India alluring her of lucrative job there. "He told me to take my daughter with me saying that it would add extra money to my wage."

The victim said Ali took them to Abdullahpur bus stand and handed them over to Ukil Mallik on December 27, 2010.

Mallik admitted his involvement saying he bought the two for Tk 8,000 from Ali and took them to his house at Sharsha.

On December 28, Mallik took the victims to India's Hawra Station where he sold the two to three Indian cohorts and fled.

Bokuli said she sought help from locals who caught the criminals and handed them over to Indian police. Back home she informed Rab of the incident.

VOIP equipment seized at airport

UNB, Dhaka

Members of Airport Armed Police (AAP) yesterday caught two young men while they were allegedly trying to smuggle illegal VOIP equipment from the import cargo area of Hazrat Shah Jalal International Airport.

The arrestees are Kamal, 24, and Reaz, 26.

Airport sources said members of AAP challenged the two detainees when they were taking away the VOIP equipment after releasing from import cargo with the collaboration of C&F agents at about 2:30pm.

During interrogation, Kamal and Reaz revealed that they took out the VOIP in exchange for money. They disclosed two names -- Sumon and Majibur -- involved in the crime.

Yeafes sees progress in every sector

A CORRESPONDENT

State Minister for Science and ICT Yeafes Osman said Bangladesh is achieving a remarkable progress in every sector, as the present generation drives the country towards digitalisation.

He said Shahjalal University of Science & Technology (SUST) contributes to the digitalisation by spearheading SMS system in admission process. The minister thanked Prof Mohammad Zafar Iqbal for introducing it.

Yeafes was speaking as the chief guest at the inaugural ceremony of a three-day international conference on "Engineering, research, innovation, and education" at SUST in Sylhet yesterday.

"The university is advancing by enriching the students and teachers with latest technologies gained for the communication with other renowned institutions," said SUST VC Prof Saleh Uddin who presided

over the function.

Former Buet VC Prof AMM Saifullah was the keynote speaker. He said engineering must bear any fruit if it fails to fulfill the expectation of the mass community. He explained the techniques and problems of engineering and education in the paper.

Scientists and educationists from home and abroad presented 100 papers at the inaugural day, said Dr Jasim Uddin, joint organising secretary of the conference committee that awarded Prof Zafar Iqbal a crest for pioneering SMS system.

The conference convener Dr Md Iqbal gave the welcome speech at the programme participated by delegates from Japan, Italy, Germany, Sweden, Czech Republic, South Korea, Malaysia, and other countries. Dr Mushtaq Ahmed gave the thanksgiving speech.

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