

Tk 33.56 crore deal signed with UNDP

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A Tk 33.56 crore agreement to address some key concerns of development partners and policymakers on aid management was signed between Bangladesh and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) yesterday.

The agreement over the project titled "Strengthening Capacity for Aid Effectiveness in Bangladesh" would be implemented by Economic Relations Division (ERD) over the next four years from September 2011 to June 2015.

ERD Secretary M Musharraf Hossain Bhuiyan, on behalf of the government, and UNDP Country Director Stefan Priesner inked the agreement at ERD in the city's Sher-e-Bangla Nagar.

UNDP signed the agreement on behalf of 18 development organisations including DFID and DANIDA, who already committed to fund the project. Several other development partners expressed their firm interest to join the project.

Development aid constitutes around 50 percent of the Annual Development Plan of Bangladesh, said UNDP Assistant Country Director KAM Morshed while speaking at the programme.

A recent ERD study titled "Aid Management in Bangladesh: A review of policies and procedures" identified several areas of improvement in the way aid is managed and utilised in the country.

"The unique nature of the project is the effort to materialise a joint commitment made by 18 development partners of Bangladesh," said Stefan.

DFID Country Representative Gwen Hines said, "This is an important step towards maximising the impact of development aid provided to Bangladesh and enhancing transparency to see what is being done and what results are delivered."

SAARC SECRETARY GENERAL MEETS PM Hasina for bolstering regional cooperation

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday emphasised bolstering regional cooperation in South Asia for building it as a prosperous and peaceful region.

Hasina made the remarks when visiting Secretary General of South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (Saarc) Fatimath Dhiyana Saeed paid a courtesy call on her at the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) in the morning.

She expressed the hope that the Saarc countries would join a partnership for promoting democracy, democratic practice and the rule of law in South Asia.

The PM said Saarc is considered as a catalyst for regional cooperation as well as sustainable development and social progress for all the people of the region.

Briefing reporters after the meeting, PM's Press Secretary Abul Kalam Azad said the Saarc secretary general apprised Hasina of the preparation of the upcoming Saarc summit to be held in the Maldives.

Fatimath lauded the leadership of Hasina and her role in upholding democratic rights of

people.

In this regard, the Saarc official mentioned the Charter of Democracy presented by Hasina at the last Saarc summit held in Thimphu, Bhutan.

Ambassador At-Large M Ziauddin, Principal Secretary to the Prime Minister MA Karim, PMO Secretary Molla Waheeduzzaman and Press Secretary Abul Kalam Azad were present.

MYANMAR ENVOY MEETS PM
Meanwhile, Hasina stressed that the developing countries need to intensify their individual and collective efforts for closer economic relations with each other for their rapid progress.

She said this when Ambassador of Myanmar to Bangladesh U Min Lwin paid a courtesy call on her at the PMO in the morning.

The PM and the Myanmar Ambassador discussed various issues of bilateral and international development, Azad told reporters after the meeting.

Congratulating the Myanmar government for their successful holding of the general



Secretary General of South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (Saarc) Fatimath Dhiyana Saeed pays a courtesy call on Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at the Prime Minister's Office in the city yesterday.

PHOTO: PID

election on November 7, 2010, she hoped that Myanmar would be able to establish a democratic government soon as per its constitution and in line with the promised roadmap to democracy.

She stressed increased exchange of visits at various levels between the two neighbouring countries to strengthen the existing cooperation and explore new avenues

of works for development.

Hasina also underscored the importance of establishing direct air, road and rail links for easy movement of commodities between the two countries at a reasonable cost.

She also called for enhancing bilateral trade and commerce between Bangladesh and Myanmar.

Land boundary agreement not 'surrender' to Bangladesh, says Assam govt

PALLAB BHATTACHARYA, New Delhi

Rejecting the opposition charge that the land boundary agreement and exchange of enclaves with Bangladesh were "surrender," the government of India's North Eastern state of Assam yesterday said the deal will help solve the long-standing border dispute between the two countries and insurgency problem.

"The land deal will be beneficial as several acres of land under Bangladesh will come to Assam and the border dispute will be solved," government spokesman and Accord

Implementation Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma told reporters in Guwahati.

As long as the boundary was not demarcated, fencing could not be erected and the open border helped infiltration from outside. Now with proper demarcation of the boundary, border fencing work will be completed, which will not only stop infiltration but help check trans-border crime, Sarma said.

The major opposition parties in Assam include Bharatiya Janata Party, Asom Gana Parishad, student bodies

Assam Students Union and Asom Yuva Chakra Parishad and the popular peasant body Krishak Mukti Sangram Parishad.

The parties opposed the land deal signed recently during the visit of Prime Minister Manmohan Singh to Bangladesh, claiming that several acres of Indian territory were surrendered to a foreign country.

Coming down heavily on the erstwhile Prafulla Mahanta-led Asom Gana Parishad government in Assam, the senior minister alleged that the state "surrendered" huge areas of land

to Bangladesh at that time.

"But it is to the credit of the Tarun Gogoi-led Congress government that those areas have been brought back.

"India has not surrendered land to Bangladesh (as alleged by the political parties) and in fact it has regained its own territory which will in the long run help solve the border problem," Sarma said.

Referring to the recent protests by the opposition parties and the student bodies, Sarma alleged that these were intended to destabilise the government.

WikiLeaks reports 'fairy tales'

Says Fakhrul

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP acting Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir has termed the cables leaked by whistleblower website WikiLeaks "fairy tales".

"WikiLeaks reports are being published (in newspapers) for the last few days. We don't know what WikiLeaks is and from where it has come. Its reports are nothing but fairy tales," he said while addressing a student rally yesterday in front of the party's central office at Nayapalitan in the capital.

He said propaganda has been started against BNP in the name of WikiLeaks reports when the party started to turn around. Every day reports are being published against political leaders.

Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD), pro-BNP student body, organised the rally demanding withdrawal of all cases filed against Khaleda Zia. It was held to mark the 3rd anniversary of her release from jail.

The BNP chairperson was arrested on September 3, 2007 and released on bail on September 11, 2008.

A number of reports published in different newspapers in the last few days are based on the cables leaked by WikiLeaks and concern political leaders including Khaleda Zia and her son Tarique Rahman.

Mirza Fakhrul alleged that a vested quarter is conspiring against BNP. "The ruling Awami League has become politically bankrupt and that is why it is now hatching conspiracy to split BNP," he said.

On Padma bridge, he said construction of it is being delayed due to corruption which is now under investigation by the Canadian government.

Other speakers included BNP leaders Shamsuzzaman Dudu, Amanullah Aman, Nazimuddin Alam and Shirin Sultana. JCD President Sultan Salauddin Tuku was in the chair.

BNP acting Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir said propaganda has been started against BNP in the name of WikiLeaks reports when the party started to turn around



New British Council director joins today

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Rosemary Arnott will take up her post as the Country Director of British Council in Bangladesh today.

Since 1989, she was placed at various directorial level of the British Council at Ethiopia, Ghana, South Africa, Turkey and Black Sea.

She studied European languages at Trinity College, University of Cambridge. She has done a Masters in Social Development.

Her career as an English teacher began in China and Tibet. Her first overseas posting was as a cultural attaché of British council in Romania.

She expressed enthusiasm to come to Bangladesh for the first time and to work with the vibrant teams in Dhaka, Sylhet and Chittagong, said a press release.

NU sacked staffs claim jobs legal

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The staffs of National University (NU), who were recently sacked on allegation of being appointed outside university guidelines, yesterday said there is no fault in their appointment that was done as per due procedure.

"We had applied for the job seeing advertisement in newspapers and we got the job following due procedures," said Mir Monjur Mahmud, one of the staffs.

The staffs, under the banner Job Preservation Committee, organised a press conference at Dhaka Reporters Unity to put light on the real picture of the appointment.

Earlier on August 23 this year, the HC announced the appointment of teachers, officials and employees, who were recruited from November 2003 to August 2004 during the tenure of the BNP-led alliance government, illegal.



PHOTO: STAR

Activists of Bangladesh Chhatra League attack students who were staging a sit-in in front of the administrative building of Rajshahi University yesterday protesting recent price hike of first year application forms. Ten students were injured in the attack.

Turkey suspends military agreements, downgrades mission in Israel

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Turkey has downgraded its mission in Israel and suspended military agreements effective from yesterday as Israel failed to realise its charter of demands, including seeking apology for killing Turkish people.

Israel troops attacked and killed nine people, including eight Turkish, in the international waters of the Mediterranean on May 31 in 2010, against an international aid convoy in which hundreds of passengers from 32 countries participated to bring humanitarian aid to Gaza following Israel blockade.

"We have diplomatic relations with Israel since 1949, but now we have downgraded to the second secretary level," said Turkish Ambassador in Dhaka Vakur Erkul at a press briefing at his embassy office at Baridhara in the city yesterday.

He said all personnel starting from ambassador to officials above second secretary level will come back to Turkey by yesterday. Israel has also been asked to withdraw its ambassador and officials above second secretary level within next three days, he added.

Vakur Erkul said Turkey took up the issue in UN and all other international

communities for condemning the Israeli attack on unarmed civilian.

He said Turkey will take whatever measures it deems necessary to ensure freedom of navigation in the Eastern Mediterranean.

The ambassador said Israel should first seek apology for killing the innocent civilians and give adequate compensation to the deceased and also to those who were injured in the attack.

Israel will also have to abide by the 1967 boundary demarcation, withdraw blockade in Gaza and recognise East Jerusalem as the capital of Palestine State, the ambassador said, adding "Our relations with Israel will not be normalised until those conditions are met."

Criticising Israel government for not realising the situation, he said it is clear that the current Israel regime is incapable of seeing this simple reality and comprehending the consequence of huge changes taking place in the Middle East.

"Our aim is not to harm the historic Turkish-Jewish friendship, on the contrary, we aim to encourage the Israel government to correct this mistake that does not benefit this exceptional friendship," he added.

Tannery owner, wife stabbed in city

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A tannery owner and his wife were injured seriously after a gang of unidentified miscreants stabbed them indiscriminately in their house at Hazaribagh in the city.

Md Rasul Ahmed, 37, owner of Islamia Tannery at Hazaribagh and his wife Jesmin Akhter Rina, 28, were rushed to Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH).

Neighbour said Rasul jerked awake around 2:30am yesterday when he heard a rusty grating noise inside the house. He found some six strangers in the house and managed to grab one of them.

One of the miscreants stabbed Rasul's wife Rina in the abdomen when she comes to aid of her husband. The miscreants also stabbed Rasul in his chest, hand and other parts of the body indiscriminately.

The criminals reportedly entered the house by cutting the grill of a window and carried sharp weapons. Later, they managed to flee.

DHAKA TODAY

View exchange meeting
Save the Environment Movement will organise a view exchange meeting; Venue: Dhaka Reporters Unity; Time: 10:30am.

Anniversary celebration
North South University will hold an anniversary celebration; Venue: Hotel Westin; Time: 7:00pm.

Human chain
Shikkhak Karmachari Oikya Jote will hold a human chain; Venue: in front of Jatiya Press Club; Time: 3:00pm.

Workshop
Royal Danish Embassy will hold a workshop; Venue: Hotel Westin; Time: 9:30am.

Debate inaugural
Notre Dame Science Club will organise the inaugural of a debate; Venue: Notre Dame College auditorium; Time: 5:00pm.

Discussion
Bangladesh Manobadhikar Samonoy Parishad will hold a discussion; Venue: Jatiya Press Club; Time: 10:30am.

View exchange meeting
National Anti-Tuberculosis Association of Bangladesh will organise a view exchange meeting; Venue: Institute of

সেপ্টেম্বর ১৫-১৬, ২০১১
সকাল ৯.০০-সন্ধ্যা ৫.০০

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