

2ND MEETING OF SAARC CABINET SECYS

Boosting of regional cooperation agreed

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Top bureaucrats of Saarc countries have agreed to strengthen regional cooperation and ensure greater dissemination of "best practices" among the member states.

They also agreed to cooperate in respect of administrative reforms, enhancing capacity building, performance management and service delivery.

The top civil servants reached the agreement at the two-day meeting, the second of its kind, of the Saarc cabinet secretaries, which concluded here yesterday, with adaptation of a draft report highlighting the areas of future cooperation and outlining ways for implementation of the decisions taken in the meeting.

The first meeting of cabinet secretaries of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (Saarc) was held in New Delhi in 2009.

At a press briefing at Ruposhi Bangla Hotel, Bangladesh Cabinet Secretary M Mosharraf Hossain Bhuiyan told reporters that the meeting had been very productive, and the top officials had decided to meet frequently and implement the decisions.

He informed that cabinet secretaries of seven countries -- Afghanistan, Bangladesh (host), Bhutan, India, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka -- attended the meeting, but the Maldives did not take part.

Mosharraf said issues related to optimum use of ICT in improving service delivery, putting e-governance in place, identifying poverty as key enemy and taking coordinated efforts to address it, regional cooperation for effective PPP (public private partnership), reducing gender disparity in primary and secondary education, prudent micro-economic management and inclusive cooperation were discussed, which would be implemented through joint efforts.

He said sharing of best practices of the Saarc countries was the most "exciting" session of the two-day meeting, where the participants presented reports of their respective countries.

Saarc Secretary General Arjun Bahadur Thapa, who was also present at the briefing, said though the regional forum could not fulfill expectations for so many reasons, the leaders of the South Asian nations had been able to prevent conflict in the region.

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Believe it or not, this used to be a canal that would carry the rain and flood water from the capital's Basabo, Madartek, and Nandi Para areas to the Trimohoni river. What you see in this photo is the result of the utter neglect of the authorities concerned, putting the residents of the areas in the danger of severe waterlogging during the coming monsoon. This is only the tip of the iceberg that might lead the capital to ruins.

PHOTO: STAR

TWO MEN MISSING FOR A YEAR

Mother of one alleges law enforcers' apathy

Seeks PM's intervention

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

After getting little response from law enforcers, a woman yesterday appealed to the prime minister to bring her son back who went missing a year ago.

"Throughout last year, I have contacted several law enforcement agencies. But they could not give any clue, some of them did not even respond cordially," the depressed mother, Lipi Akter, alleged at a conference in the capital's Crime Reporters'



Rafiul Islam Raja

Association Bangladesh.

Some people posing as Rab personnel whisked away Rafiul Islam Raja, who used to provide alternative power in the neighbourhood, Keraniganj, and his two friends--Nizam Uddin alias Nirjhar and Md Nayeem-- by a white microbus from the front of Lalbagh fort on April 26 last year, said Lipi.

Raja's relative Rony went missing two days after the incident.

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CASE OF SIX MURDER AT MIRPUR

Death for three upheld by HC

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday upheld a verdict of lower court that had given capital punishment to three persons for killing six people at Mirpur in the capital in 2006.

Delivering the verdict on the appeals filed by the convicts, the HC, however, acquitted another one who was also sentenced to death by the lower court in the case.

A security person and five domestic helps were killed as miscreants slit their throats at the house of one Kazi Sirajul Haque on Road No-24 at Pallabi on October 13, 2006.

The victims are the security guard Milon Bakshi, 27, and domestic helps Khadiza, 14, Anna, 11, Monir, 11, Rezia Begum, 35, and her son Tofael, 15.

A Dhaka court on October 26, 2008 sentenced Mohammad Azim, Mohammad Masum Matbar, Mohammad Zakir Hossain Bahar and Mohammad Qamruzzaman to death in the case.

Yesterday, the HC upheld the death penalty of Masum, Zakir and Qamruzzaman after finding them guilty, as they confessed to the killing before the magistrate concerned.

The HC bench of Justice AKM Asaduzzaman and Justice Shahidul Karim acquitted Azim from the charges, as allegations brought against him was not proved.

According to the prosecution, Sirajul's another security guard Azim and former driver Masum along with two hired robbers looted Tk 1.5 lakh and 12 tolas of gold from the house after Sirajul along with his family members had left for his brother's residence on October 13, 2006.

The gang killed the six as they had recognised them.

2-day global conference on migration begins today

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

A two-day international consultation titled "Global Expert Meeting on Migration in the Post-2015 Development Agenda" begins in the capital today.

The meeting will adopt a document (statement) which will be used as a reference to the negotiations at the 69th United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) beginning in September this year.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina will inaugurate the experts' meet at Ruposhi Bangla Hotel this morning.

Some 88 delegates from 58 countries, including seven Middle East countries, will take part in the conference, Foreign Secretary M Shahidul Haque told a press briefing at the ministry yesterday.

"We're very hopeful to creating a global consensus...this meeting has generated so much interest," said Shahidul.

Bangladesh and Switzerland are the co-host of the meet.

MAY 5 MAYHEM CASES

JCD GS, BNP's volunteer wing chief get bail

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday granted bail to the president of Jatiyatabadi Swachhasebak Dal and general secretary of Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal for six months in 17 cases filed in connection with violence and arson attacks during May 5 mayhem by Hefajat-e Islam in the capital last year.

Swachhasebak Dal President Habib-un-Nabi Khan Sohel got bail in nine cases, while JCD General Secretary Habibur Rashid in all the eight cases against him, Masud Rana, a counsel for the leaders, told The Daily Star.

There is no legal bar to Rashid to get released from jail, but Sohel cannot since he has been shown arrested in three other cases, he added.

The HC bench of Justice Naima Haider and Justice Zafar Ahmed granted the bail after hearing bail petitions filed by the leaders.

ENDING VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN DURING WARS

Bangladesh joins global declaration

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh has joined the global declaration to end all forms of violence against women and girls, particularly sexual violence, during armed conflicts.

The "Global Declaration of Commitment to End Sexual Violence in Conflict" was launched by British Foreign Secretary William Hague and UN Special Representative on Sexual Violence in Conflict Zainab Bangura on September 24 last year during the 68th UN General Assembly.

Bangladesh is the 123rd country to join the declaration, said a foreign ministry press

release yesterday.

Bangladesh's decision was conveyed to William Hague in a letter from Bangladesh Foreign Minister AH Mahmood Ali in which the latter reaffirmed Bangladesh's commitment to denounce sexual violence during armed conflict in unequivocal terms and its relentless efforts to supports global initiatives to end sexual violence in conflicts.

Bangladesh was the first South Asian country to have brought the issue of "sexual violence and women peace and security" in the UN Security Council in 2000, as a non-permanent member of the council, and was instrumental in the adoption of UNSCR 1325.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1

JP leaders mull party reform

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Lawmakers and senior leaders of Jatiya Party yesterday emphasised the need for reforms in the party to avoid absolute debacle in the next parliamentary elections.

They made the observation at a joint meeting of JP lawmakers and presidium members at a convention centre in the city's Gulshan.

Some leaders held JP Chairman HM Ershad, who chaired the meeting, responsible for the current situation of the party, which has been reflected in the recently held upazila polls, sources present in the meeting said.

State Minister for Labour and Manpower Mujibul Haque Chunnu, State Minister for LGRD Moshir Rahman Ranga, and lawmaker Salma Islam, among others, said Ershad's "unilateral" decisions had led the party to the current state, the sources added.

They also asked the JP chief to remove his personal staff involved in corruption.

The sources said that the JP boss had assured the leaders of consulting with them in future.


This was the first meeting since the party held its last presidium meeting five months back. A total of 55 presidium members and lawmakers joined the five-hour long meeting.

Contacted, Golam Mosih, political secretary of opposition leader Raushan Ershad, said they had had friendly discussion with Ershad.

"Even some of us criticised the party chief for his previous wrong decisions," he added.


In his inaugural speech, Ershad said a total of 74 cases were filed against him after he left power in 1990. "And since then I was never a free politician, still I am not a free politician. But from now I will listen to all," he said.

Newly appointed JP Secretary General Ziauddin Ahmed said the party's central council was likely to be held in December.



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Status	2013	2012
Long Term	A+	A
Short Term	ECRL-2	ECRL-2

Emerging Credit Rating Ltd. has assigned "A+" (Pronounced as A Plus) upgraded from A rating in the Long Term and "ECRL-2" in the Short Term to First Security Islami Bank Limited.

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An institution rated "ECRL-2" has a strong capacity to meet its financial commitments in a timely manner. However, it is somewhat susceptible to adverse developments in the economy, and in business and other external conditions.

In 2012, Emerging Credit Rating Ltd. assigned "A" (Pronounced as A) in the Long Term and "ECRL-2" in the Short Term to First Security Islami Bank Limited.

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