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Power project gets Chinese support

PM seeks Chinese assistance in five other big projects; talks to continue on Sonadia deep-sea port

STAR REPORT

Bangladesh and China yesterday signed five deals including one for building a large power plant in Patuakhali with Chinese assistance.

During official talks with Chinese premier Li Keqiang in Beijing yesterday, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina also sought support for five other mega infrastructure projects, and Keqiang assured her of taking necessary steps, reports UNB.

The 1,320-megawatt coal-based power plant will be set up in Kalapara upazila of Patuakhali.

The four other deals signed yesterday include an agreement, a memorandum of understanding and two Exchange of Letters to enhance cooperation in sectors like trade

and investment and climate change.

The issue of constructing the Sonadia Deep-Sea Port figured prominently in the talks, and the two sides agreed to continue discussions, Foreign Secretary Shahidul Haq told the media afterwards.

Hasina and Keqiang led their respective delegations at the talks that lasted an hour at the Great Hall of People in Beijing.

The five other mega infrastructure projects, for which Dhaka had sought loan and grant support, are National ICT Network for Bangladesh Government (Phase-III), construction of Rajshahi Wasa Surface Water Treatment Plant, construction of second railway/road bridge over the Karnaphuli at Kalurghat point, construction of a new dual gauge railway line from Chittagong to Cox's

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Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina talks with Chinese Premier Li Keqiang as they attend a signing ceremony of agreements at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

5 deals inked with China

UNB, Beijing

Dhaka and Beijing yesterday signed two agreements, one memorandum of understanding and two exchange of letters (EoLs) to enhance mutual cooperation in sectors like trade and investment, power generation and climate change.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and her Chinese counterpart Li Keqiang witnessed the signing ceremony after the official talks at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing.

Of the two agreements, one is on establishing a coal-based 1,320 megawatt power plant in Patuakhali and another on economic and technical cooperation between China and Bangladesh.

The EoLs are on the exchange of second batch of calamity rescue equipment

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Can't get enough of Brazil 2014



PHOTO: SK ENAMUL HAQ

A football fan painting the flag of Brazil on a corrugated iron sheet fence at the capital's Ahmedbagh in Sabujbagh as the nation prepares for the World Cup.

ANISUR RAHMAN

As the greatest sporting spectacle of the world, the FIFA World Cup 2014, draws nearer the excitement among the country's football supporters and the demand for merchandise -- be it flags, jerseys, wristbands, posters, key-rings, bandanas or car stickers of favourite teams -- have now reached a fever pitch, especially in the capital.

Although Bangladesh are light years away from qualification for the showpiece event the way supporters celebrate and argue with rival supporters, it seems that it is Bangladesh playing in the World Cup. For a long time and through many editions, Bangladesh's football maniacs have infused the quadrennial global event with a unique, Bangladeshi flavour.

Branding rooftops with the banners of different countries come World Cup time has virtually turned into a part of Bangladeshi culture -- a phenomenon probably not seen anywhere else in the world.

From brick fields to corporate houses, rooftops to treetops, rickshaws to private vehicles flags of countries like Argentina, Brazil, Germany, Italy, Spain, France, etc. colour the cityscape. However, the capital's Aminbazar, situated on the Dhaka-Aricha Highway, draws special attention due to the quantity of flags they raise during every World Cup. It has sometimes been seen that as many as 15 to 20 flags of either Argentina or Brazil decorate a single rooftop.

"Hoisting flag in this area started during the 1982 World Cup and reached its climax before the 1990 World Cup because Toyota used the picture of Maradona on their vehicles after the 1986 World Cup. That encouraged the people of this area, most of who were involved in the motor sector," said 65-year-old Hazi

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28 killed as militants raid Karachi airport

AFP, Karachi

Twenty-eight people were killed as Pakistan's military fought an all-night battle yesterday with Taliban gunmen who besieged Karachi airport armed with rocket launchers and suicide vests, leaving a nascent peace process in tatters.

Ten militants were among the dead, officials said, as Pakistan's biggest city witnessed a return of the kind of spectacular offensive waged before by the Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) during an insurgency that has claimed thousands of lives since 2007.

The attack at Karachi's Jinnah International Airport began just before midnight Sunday. At around dawn, the military said that all 10 attackers had been killed.

Some of the gunmen were dressed in army uniform, as authorities put their mangled bodies, assault rifles, grenades and rocket launchers on show for the press. At least three blew up their suicide vests, witnesses said, and one severed head formed part of the grisly display.

But after authorities initially declared the airport cleared around dawn, an AFP reporter witnessed fresh gunfire break out inside the airport -- where explosions and fires had erupted during the night -- prompting security forces to relaunch the operation.

"The attack is over and we have cleared the area of all militants," a spokesman for the paramilitary Rangers, Sibtain Rizvi, told reporters later after nearly 12 hours of fighting in all.

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Delhi to press for rail, road transit

Connectivity to top agenda during Sushma's visit

REZAUL KARIM

India is expected to make fresh proposals for road and railway transit through Bangladesh and increasing the service frequency of Maitree Express for boosting bilateral trade and cultural ties.

Under the new proposals, the road and railway transit routes would be Kolkata-Agartala and Kolkata-New Jalpaiguri through Bangladesh, said diplomatic sources.

Indian External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj, who is likely to visit Dhaka at the end of this month, will table the connectivity plans during her meetings with Prime Minister

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Sushma Swaraj

N'GANJ 7-MURDER BNP demands arrest of Col Ziaul Ahsan

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The BNP yesterday demanded that law enforcement agencies arrest Rab Additional Director General Col Ziaul Ahsan and others for their alleged involvement in the gruesome seven-murder in Narayanganj.

Rizvi Ahmed, joint secretary general of BNP, made the demand at a press conference at the party's Nayapaltan headquarters.

He said two arrested Rab officials have already confessed that Ziaul Ahsan was involved in the incident.

"People are stunned as Col Ziaul Ahsan and others are not arrested yet although the arrestee Rab officials in their confessional statements [to courts] mentioned their

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1996 ABDUCTION OF KALPANA CHAKMA

No probe report yet

TAMANNA KHAN and SHANTIMOY CHAKMA, from Rangamati

The Rangamati superintendent of police yesterday once again did not submit to the court the re-investigation report on the abduction of indigenous community leader Kalpana Chakma 18 years ago.

Asked why she failed to comply with the May 8 order of the district chief judicial magistrate's court, SP Amena Begum said she was yet to complete the tasks assigned by the court in the case.

This was the 11th time she did not submit

the report after the court in January 2013 ordered a re-investigation into the abduction.

On June 12, 1996, Kalpana, the then organising secretary of the Hill Women's Federation, was kidnapped allegedly by some military personnel and law enforcers from her house in New Lalyaghona of Baghaichhari, Rangamati.

Her elder brother Kalindi Kumar Chakma filed a first information report with Baghaichhari Police Station hours after the kidnapping.



Kalpana Chakma

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