

Hasina for common Saarc platform for remittance flow

Urges Sri Lankan president to constitute financial centre; inaugurates newly built chancery complex in Tokyo

BSS, Tokyo

Bangladesh yesterday proposed developing a common platform for flow of remittance in the Saarc region and said Sri Lanka might share its initiative to constitute a financial centre to this end.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina came up with the proposal at a meeting with Sri Lankan President Maithripala Sirisena in Nagoya city, Japan.

Briefing reporters after the meeting, Senior Secretary to the Economic Resources Division M Mejbahuddin said Bangladesh had shown interest in the financial centre being developed in Colombo.

Prime Minister's Principal Secretary Abul Kalam Azad, Foreign Secretary M Shahidul Haque and PM's Press Secretary Ihsanul Karim also briefed reporters about the issues discussed.

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Dhaka not ready to tackle earthquake disaster

Fire Service and Civil Defence seminar recommends demolition of risky buildings, enforcement of nat'l building code, retrofitting of important buildings

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka despite being highly vulnerable to earthquake disasters, preparedness for disaster management still remains almost at zero, said a leading expert at a seminar in the capital yesterday.

A 7.5 magnitude earthquake in Modhupur fault line will render 1.6 lakh families homeless, said Dr ASM Maksud Kamal, dean of faculty of Earth and Environmental Sciences at Dhaka University.

It will be impossible to provide accommodation to one lakh dislodged families, as

none of the 13 designated open spaces for setting up disaster-time tents is ready, he said.

Around 32,000 volunteers were trained in 2007 on post-earthquake rescue and disaster management, costing Tk 2.8 lakh to train each group of 50 volunteers, he said.

But until recently, there has been no organisational arrangement in place to maintain them and many have gone traceless, he added.

At least five sources of a major earthquake lie within Bangladesh territory, he said.

A 7.5 magnitude earthquake will cause deaths of 88,000 people and collapse 72,000 buildings in the capital, said Koichi

Kitamura, a representative of Japan International Cooperation Agency in Bangladesh, citing the findings of Comprehensive Disaster Management Programme.

So demolishing the risky old buildings, enforcing the national building code for new buildings and retrofitting the important buildings are extremely vital, he said.

Fire Service and Civil Defence (FSCD) organised the seminar on Earthquake Vulnerability and Preparedness sponsored by GPH Ispat and Crown Cement at Krishibid Institution Bangladesh.

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PUBLIC HUMILIATION OF TEACHER Workers Party also demands expulsion of Salim Osman from JS

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Workers Party of Bangladesh yesterday demanded cancellation of Jatiya Party lawmaker Salim Osman's membership of the Jatiya Sangsad, his arrest and trial for "violating the constitution and existing laws" by publicly humiliating a school headmaster.

A key ally of the Awami League-led government, the party said Salim humiliated Narayanganj schoolteacher Shyamal Kanti Bhakta in a planned way and used religion cards to divert the issue.

In a press statement, the party president Rashed Khan Menon and general secretary Fazle Hossain Badsha demanded the actions for upholding social order, inter-religious tolerance, non-communal democratic spirit, rule of law, and the constitution.

Menon is the civil aviation and tourism minister of the incumbent government, while Badsha is a lawmaker from Rajshahi.

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REDUCING MATERNAL, CHILD MORTALITY Govt, Brac University join hands to train midwives

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Since ensuring midwives in rural areas can drastically reduce maternal and child mortality, the private sector has been training them up in significant numbers along with the government to meet the needs, experts told a roundtable yesterday.

The government and Brac University started developing a midwifery programme since 2012 and so far 661 graduated from Bangladesh Nursing and Midwifery Council (BNMC). Of them, Brac University alone developed 163 into qualified midwives, they said.

Brac University, ukaid and The Daily Star jointly organised the roundtable, "Towards a Midwifery Profession in Bangladesh - a systems approach for a complex world".

Bangladesh - a Systems Approach for a Complex World", at The Daily Star Centre in the capital.

Dr Jahir Uddin Ahmed, interim chairperson of the Department of Midwifery and Nursing at Brac University, gave a keynote presentation on "Developing Midwives in Bangladesh."

He mentioned that the main purpose of the midwifery programme was to develop a competent and compassionate cadre of midwives to serve in hard-to-reach areas of the country.

"The country needs more than 20,000 midwives whereas we have very few of them graduated so far. To overcome this situation, both the government and private

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Participants at a roundtable, "Towards a Midwifery Profession in Bangladesh - a Systems Approach for a Complex World", jointly organised by Brac University, UKaid and The Daily Star at The Daily Star Centre in the capital yesterday. PHOTO: STAR

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