

INDIA'S PROPOSED DEFENCE PACT

Dhaka uneasy

PM goes to Delhi April 7

REZAUL KARIM

Leaving aside several bilateral issues, including the unresolved Teesta water-sharing deal, India has proposed a long-term comprehensive defence pact with Bangladesh that encompasses training, sale of military hardware and wide range of military to military cooperation.

Highly placed official sources said though discussions are still going on, India is expecting to sign a comprehensive, 25-year framework agreement on bilateral defence cooperation during Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's upcoming state visit to India on April 7-10.

According to sources, India in its proposed agreement also wants coordinated operations against mutually perceived threats. Prime Minister of Bangladesh will be visiting India on an invitation extended by Prime Minister of India Narendra Modi, according to a joint announcement made yesterday simultaneously in Dhaka and New Delhi.

Along with the military cooperation agreement, India has also offered a \$500 million line of credit to Bangladesh for the purchase of military hardware, including purchasing of fast patrol craft for the coastguards, radar, and other items for air defence.

Bangladesh, however, is still reluctant to sign such an agreement in the area of defence which India is pushing for. Dhaka is reluctant about such a long-term framework agreement, sources say. Instead it prefers to sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), which would be less formal and would have no time frame.



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Iron rods stick out to oncoming traffic from a girder of the under-construction Moghbazar-Malibagh flyover near the city's Malibagh level crossing yesterday. The contractor has been building the structure for several years which already led to some serious accidents. Only a day ago a girder fell from a pillar of the flyover at this location, killing one and injuring two others.

Tigers in flux for 100th Test

Liton ruled out with rib injury

SAKEB SUBHAN from Colombo

If history is any indicator the following five days for Bangladesh are not likely to be particularly happy at the P Sara Oval in Colombo, where Bangladesh's 100th Test will start today from 10:30am Bangladesh time. 0-1 down in the two-match series against Sri Lanka following a 259-run defeat in the first Test in Galle last week, Bangladesh will have to win this match in a venue where they have only known innings defeats in three tries in the past.

The picturesque P Sara Oval was the site of Bangladesh's lowest Test score when they were bundled out for 62 in their last match here in 2007. After the reversal in Galle, a venue where Bangladesh have much happier memories having drawn their previous

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DEEP-SEA GAS EXPLORATION

S Korean firm gets block-12

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh yesterday awarded an offshore block to Posco Daewoo Corporation of South Korea for gas exploration.

Senior officials of Posco Daewoo and Bangladesh's Petrobangla and energy ministry signed a production sharing contract for the deep-sea block-12 in the Bay of Bengal at the headquarters of Petrobangla in Dhaka.

As per the agreement, the two-dimensional seismic survey would begin this year, and based on the outcomes of the survey, the real picture of gas availability could be known by 2019, according to Petrobangla.

Posco Daewoo is also exploring gas at a block of neighbouring Myanmar and has discovered gas reserves last year.

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4 'criminals' killed in 'shootout' with cops

ASK says at least 51 got killed in such 'shootouts' since January 1

TUHIN SHUBHRA ADHIKARY

With four people killed in a "shootout" with law enforcers in Meherpur yesterday, the number of victims of such extrajudicial killing reached 51 in the first two and half months of this year, amid growing concerns of rights organisations.

Thirty-two people had become victims of "gunfight" in the first three months of last year, according to Ain o Salish Kendra (ASK). The rights body says the total number of victims was 195 last year against 192

in 2015. Yesterday's "shootout" in Meherpur Sadar took place a week after Law Minister Anisul Huq in a dialogue with UN Human Rights Committee in Geneva reiterated Bangladesh's commitment to make further efforts in realising the civil and political rights of its people. Those killed in the "gunfight" were former cadres of Lal Pataka, a faction of outlawed Purbo Banglar Communist Party, said police. They are Saddam Hossain, 25, SEE PAGE 10 COL 1

Judiciary held hostage: SC

Expresses displeasure at govt over non-issuance of gazette on lower court judges' conduct

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Supreme Court has once again expressed dissatisfaction at the government failure to issue the gazette notification on the rules determining the disciplines and code of conducts for lower court judges.

"The judiciary has been held hostage by not issuing the gazette," the SC said, noting that institutions are larger than individuals and they must be protected.

The apex court came up with the observation when Attorney General Mahubey Alam sought four more weeks to issue the gazette, saying Law Minister Anisul Huq was abroad now. The gazette requires the law minister's approval.

The court was holding a hearing on the Masdar Hossain case, popularly known as separation of judiciary case.

On February 27, an eight-member bench of the Appellate Division headed by Chief Justice Surendra Kumar Sinha gave the government two weeks to publish the gazette

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"The judiciary has been held hostage by not issuing the gazette on the rules determining the disciplines and conducts for lower court judges."

THE SUPREME COURT DURING A HEARING YESTERDAY



Schoolteacher Misfa Sultana undergoing treatment at Chittagong Medical College Hospital yesterday.

Stalker attacks teacher at classroom

Her both hands, a leg broken

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Misfa Sultana was teaching children yesterday morning when her stalker stormed into the class with a shovel and started beating her indiscriminately.

It took a few moments for other teachers in nearby classrooms at Purba Dengapara Government Primary School in Patiya upazila, Chittagong to understand what was happening.

To save herself, she ran out. As the attacker, Ahasan Ullah Tutul followed

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