



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina shows a copy of *Karagarer Rojnamcha* (Diary in Jail) to the audience at the publication ceremony of the book written by Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. Bangla Academy, the publisher of the book, organised the programme in the capital's Krishibid Institution yesterday. The book is based on the historical jail life of the great leader from 1966 to 1968 under the Pakistan regime.

PHOTO: PID

SHAHJALAL AIRPORT

Bangladesh, UK to jointly assess security

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh and the United Kingdom have agreed to assess together aviation security at Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport for the resumption of direct cargo flights from Dhaka to London.

They came up with the agreement at the first-ever Bangladesh-UK Strategic Dialogue held in Dhaka yesterday.

The UK delegation led by Simon McDonald, permanent under-secretary and head of the diplomatic service for the UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office, expressed its willingness to provide necessary assistance regarding the matter.

From the Bangladesh side, a team led by Foreign Secretary Md Shahidul Haque conveyed its readiness to assess what is further needed to improve the security situation at the Dhaka airport and accordingly draw up an action plan.

Once all the necessary things are put in place, the UK will take steps for the resumption of UK-bound direct cargo flights from Dhaka, according to a joint statement issued after the dialogue.

Both the countries also agreed that countering terrorism requires global

collaboration since addressing the root causes and upholding respect for the rule of law and international human rights commitments are imperative in doing so.

Bangladesh and the UK condemned the recent terrorist attacks they saw at home and expressed sympathies for the victims.

The UK appreciated the huge burden that Bangladesh has been bearing in hosting a significant number of Muslims who had fled sectarian violence in Rakhine state of Myanmar.

The issue calls for a permanent solution, delegates from both the sides said.

Regarding the issuance of UK visa to Bangladeshis applicants, the UK delegation spoke in favour of expanding 3-5 day priority visa services from June 2017. A move has already been made to make decisions on visa applications from the UK instead of New Delhi.

The UK welcomed Bangladesh's commitment to taking back its citizens who no longer have the right to stay in the UK.

Bangladesh gave an assurance that it would take steps to expedite their repatriation.

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Five more sewer treatment plants planned for city

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka Water Supply and Sewerage Authority (Wasa) has taken an initiative to set up five sewer treatment plants to improve sewerage facilities in the city.

The move aims at bringing the entire city under sewerage treatment coverage by 2025, Dhaka Wasa Managing Director Taqsem A Khan said at a seminar at the office of Bangladesh Water Development Board yesterday.

Currently, less than 20 percent of the city is under the coverage.

Sewerage treatment plants would be set up in Pagla, Dasherbandi, Uttara, Mirpur and Rayerbazar.

There is also a plan to construct another 11 new sewage treatment plants along with pipelines and other structures and develop Pagla Sewerage Treatment Plant, the Dhaka Wasa chief said.

The seminar was organised by Bangladesh National Committee of ICID with the assistance of Bangladesh

Water Development Board, Institute of Water Modelling and Centre for Geographical Information Service.

Prof Mujibur Rahman of Bangladesh University of Engineering Technology said wastewater contains a number of pollutants and contaminants that can cause health, environment and economic hazards.

Bangladesh faced a loss of \$9 billion in 2014-2015 fiscal year due to environmental pollution while it was \$1.5 billion due to water pollution in Dhaka, he said.

"Globally, over 80 percent wastewater generated by society flows back into the ecosystem without being treated or reused. Unsafe waste water, poor sanitation and hygiene cause around 842,000 deaths each year," he said.

Quoting studies, Mujibur said an estimated 30 percent of wastewater is released untreated in high income countries while it is 62 to 72 percent in middle income countries and 92 percent in low-income countries like Bangladesh.

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Islamabad pulls out of IPU meet

UNB, Dhaka

Pakistan has withdrawn from the 136th Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) to be hosted by Bangladesh on April 1-5.

The Pakistan foreign ministry conveyed the decision to Bangladesh High Commission in Islamabad through a "note verbale", a foreign ministry official in Dhaka told UNB yesterday.

Amid India-Pakistan tensions, a number of countries, including Bangladesh and India, boycotted the Saarc Summit scheduled to be hosted by Pakistan in Islamabad in November last year, resulting in postponement of the Summit.

Taking decisive actions to end economic, political and social inequality will be the focus of deliberations of more than 650 MPs from 132 countries meeting in Dhaka early next month.

Lawmakers, including 53 Speakers of parliaments, will make concrete proposals on a range of issues during the IPU Assembly.

Nobel Peace Prize laureate and child rights activist Kailash Satyarthi will be the keynote speaker during the opening session of the debates on April 2.

Pranab may move to end stalemate

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consensus on water sharing issue and conclude a deal with Bangladesh soonest," said a highly placed source.

The source told The Daily Star that Pranab is expected to invite all the five chief ministers of Assam, Tripura, Mizoram, Meghalaya and West Bengal, states bordering Bangladesh, at Rastrapati Bhavan for a meeting with Sheikh Hasina under his stewardship.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina will be staying at Rastrapati Bhavan as guest of the Indian President, first time a Bangladeshi head of government is getting the rare honour during her four-day state visit.

Sources in New Delhi said Pranab may also arrange a meeting between Hasina and Mamata to continue the current bilateral relations as well as the historical ties between Bangladesh and West Bengal.

Political analysts said the landslide BJP victories in UP and Uttarakhand and formation of BJP governments in Goa and Manipur on the one hand have given Modi the strength in India politics and on the other hand these sweeping victories have left Mamata Banerjee worried. Congress and the left are also apprehensive about the rise of BJP in West Bengal.

They said Modi's stance may soften and slow down his expansion of BJP in West Bengal as well as the expedition of prosecution in the Saradha-Narada

scam case if Mamata agrees to sign the Teesta agreement.

This time, if Mamata again tried to block the Teesta deal, sources said, the government in India might expedite the prosecutions in the Saradha-Narada scams case, in which many of her party men are involved. The case is now in the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI's) hand.

Meanwhile, sources said Modi has reportedly brought Congress and the Left to back him in signing the Teesta deal and was desperate to bring Mamata on board to make a breakthrough during Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's visit.

They said the Modi administration is also willing to finalise a formula to work out not only the Teesta but also for similar pacts on other common rivers between Bangladesh and India.

"This is Indian sovereign commitment to sign the Teesta water sharing deal with Bangladesh," a highly placed source in New Delhi told The Daily Star adding that the Indian Prime Minister is to give Mamata another chance to come on board or else do it on his own by isolating Mamata politically.

In a sudden development, the WB Chief Minister on March 23 in an interview with ABP Ananda, a local TV channel, said she had heard the Teesta treaty might be signed on May 25 "but I have not been consulted so far. I don't have any clue about the discussions. I cannot put a seal of approval on the treaty

at the cost of my state's interest."

However, on the next day (March 24), the Indian government rejected Mamata's assertion she was not being consulted on Teesta.

"I would not like to comment on the remarks of the (WB) Chief Minister in the interview. At this stage, I can only make some remarks in general. As you have seen, the approach of the (federal) government is quite cooperative federalism," Gopal Bagley, spokesman of the Ministry of External Affairs told the weekly media briefing in New Delhi on March 24.

Indian sources said if it was not possible to sign the Teesta agreement during Sheikh Hasina's visit to India next month, there would be a clear announcement from the Modi government to ink the actual pact on Teesta a few months later.

"Modi will try to give a firm timeline on Teesta if not the agreement right now but you never know. This guy loves last minute stunts," a source in New Delhi said.

The source said Modi is being advised on Teesta by BJP's former West Bengal President and now Tripura State Governor Tathagata Ray, who even a few days ago publicly said Bangladesh's rights as lower riparian must be respected.

Sources said National Security Advisor Ajit Kumar Doval is also working in dealing the water issue with the concerned quarters in India.

Made in Bangladesh

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The Bangladeshi universities will showcase rovers developed by their students at the competition scheduled to take place at the Mars Desert Research Station on June 1-3.

The Mars Society has been holding the annual competition since 2007.

After Bangladesh's first nano-satellite "Onnesha" and lunar excavator "Chondrobot," students of Brac University have taken a stride further with their Mars rover "Mongol Tori".

A team of six students designed and engineered the rover which will be showcased at the URC.

"We are delighted that our design was approved for the University Rover Challenge," Niaz Sharif, leader of the Brac University team, told The Daily Star yesterday.

"We hope we will make our country proud," he said.

Khalilur Rahman, an adviser to the project who was also behind "Brac Onnesha" and "Chondrobot," said, "It is a remarkable feat what our students have achieved."

He said six Bangladeshi universities reaching the final round was a remarkable feat for the country as well.

"I hope this will brighten Bangladesh's image both at home and abroad," he said, adding that the government needs to support such initiatives of students.

Brac University is expected to launch the country's first nano-satellite "Brac Onnesha" into space by May. The 10cm-10cm cubic satellite will be used primarily for research purposes.

Back in 2011, students of the university made lunar excavator "Chondrobot" which participated in a contest of Nasa lunar excavator.



Police taking Abdus Sattar, a war crimes accused from Mymensingh, to jail after he surrendered to the International Crimes Tribunal-1 yesterday. He is the first suspect to have surrendered to the ICT. PHOTO: TUHIN SHUBHRA ADHIKARY

1971 WAR CRIMES

An accused surrenders for first time

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

In an unprecedented instance, an accused in a war crimes case yesterday surrendered before the International Crimes Tribunal-1.

Mohammad Abdus Sattar, 64, of Jail Road in Mymensingh Sadar, surrendered before the tribunal around 10:30am and sought bail through his lawyer. The three-member tribunal led by Justice Anwarul Haque however rejected his bail petition and sent him to jail.

No accused had earlier surrendered before the tribunal in the history of Bangladesh war crimes trial that began in March 2010.

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Four killed

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of Chingrakhali village, and Nadia Begum, 20, wife of Moazzem Hossain of Uttar Phulhata village of the upazila.

At least 30 other passengers were injured in the incident and five of them were shifted to Khulna Medical College Hospital as their condition deteriorated.

The Fire Service and Civil Defence, Coastguard, police and locals were trying to rescue the missing people as of filing of this report last evening.

Witnesses said the trawler with more than 100 passengers on board left the bank of the Panguchi river on Sholombaria bus stop side for Old Thana Ghat at Morelganj around 10:30am.

As the trawler was about to anchor, a speeding vessel heading for Mongla

crossed the river creating huge waves. The trawler capsized due to strong current as well as the waves, witnesses said.

On information, firefighters from Morelganj, Khulna and Barisal, law enforcers and a team of Bangladesh Navy rushed to the spot to rescue the passengers.

Muhammad Obaidur Rahman, upazila nirbahi officer (UNO) of Morelganj, said four bodies were recovered and at least 15 passengers remained unaccounted for.

The district administration of Bagerhat had formed a five-member probe committee headed by Md Mominur Rashid, additional district magistrate, said Tapan Kumar Biswas, deputy commissioner.

The committee had been asked to submit its report within three days, he added.

Rain spoils second ODI

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for the second game in a row and changed tack by choosing to bat first on a flat pitch.

Bangladesh had allowed only 71 runs off the last nine overs as Taskin ran up to bowl the last over and Asela Gunaratne slapped a leg stump full toss to the third man fence off the second ball. But off the next he was caught by Soumya Sarkar at mid on, before Mustafizur Rahman caught Suranga Lakmal inside the circle at midwicket off a full toss in the next ball. On a hattrick, Taskin did what was the appropriate thing, fire in a full and fast delivery on the stumps, and Nuwan Pradeep missed it to give Taskin a hattrick and figures of four for 47 in 8.5 overs.

Earlier, Danushka Gunathilaka came out all guns blazing and after four leg byes off the third ball of the match, he hit Bangladesh skipper Mashrafe Bin Mortaza for a cut boundary in the open-

ing over. In Mashrafe's next over Gunathilaka continued the attack, missing a loft over cover that landed safely, before smashing the next ball for a four behind the bowler. The wily Mashrafe, realising the trigger-happy nature of his opponent, slipped in a slower bouncer that the left-hander top-edged off a hook, and wicketkeeper Mushfiqur Rahim took a fine running catch just beyond the 30-yard circle behind where short fine leg would have been.

Uplul Tharanga and Mendis then set about taking singles as they got a feel for opening bowlers Mashrafe and off-spinner Mehedi Hasan Miraz. By the eighth over, Tharanga had decided that the pitch had no demons whatsoever when he hit Miraz for two boundaries. In the 12th over of the innings, Bangladesh missed a chance off Mendis when the batsman was on seven, as an edge off Mustafizur went between Mushfiqur

and wide first slip Mahmudullah Riyad, with neither moving.

The partnership reached 111 when Tharanga, batting beautifully, fell to a freak run out. Having already hit two boundaries off Mustafizur -- who was having a bad day at the office, bowling on both sides of the wicket -- he missed a beamer that was called a no-ball but then went for a run, and was callous in placing his bat as the throw from Mahmudullah at short fine leg, where the ball had gone after Mushfiqur failed to gather cleanly, hit the stumps.

But Sri Lanka carried on unfettered. The free hit resulting from the beamer was deposited over long-on for six. Mendis dominated an 83-run stand in just 12.1 overs with Dinesh Chandimal. Bangladesh's spinners were guilty of bowling on middle and leg, and Mendis took full advantage, scoring 74 of his 102 runs on the leg side. Chandimal fell for 24 in the 37th over when he was

adjudged leg-before trying to hoick Mustafizur to the leg side, a decision he could not overturn upon review.

That was the beginning of Bangladesh's comeback in the match. 212 for three became 216 for four when the big fish, Mendis, was caught and bowled by Taskin in another freak dismissal. A hammered straight drive in the 38th over hit Taskin flush on the right shoulder and ricocheted high enough for Taskin to take a running catch just behind the stumps at the non-striker's end.

Although the bowling was not of the highest quality, Bangladesh's fielding was up to scratch, especially from keeper Mushfiqur Rahim, who affected two run-outs from behind the stumps, sending back Thisara Perera and Dilruwan Perera in the 47th and 49th overs respectively with direct hits from behind the stumps after the batsmen decided to run off misses.