



Russian PM due in Dhaka in mid-Aug

Over a dozen of deals likely to be signed

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT
Russian Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev is expected to pay a visit to Bangladesh in mid-August. The two countries are likely to sign over a dozen of deals during the visit. "Work is underway on about 15 agreements. We agreed on a work schedule in order to see to it that they are finalised and signed," according to a Russian foreign ministry statement on April 13. Bangladesh foreign ministry officials, however, said about 25 agreements, memorandum of understandings (MoUs) are being discussed and already half of them are at the final stage.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has invited the Russian prime minister to visit Bangladesh, marking the 45th anniversary of establishing diplomatic relations between the two countries. Hasina wrote a personal letter to Dmitry Medvedev, which Foreign Minister AH Mahmood Ali handed over to Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov during his April 12-13 visit to Russia. Officials said both Bangladesh and Russia have ambitious and constructive agreements on promoting them in all areas. For example, there is the flagship project of the construction of a nuclear power plant.

The two countries are also promoting political dialogue and trade and economic cooperation; and an intergovernmental commission on trade, economic, scientific and technical cooperation. Military cooperation is also developing. They said Russia considers Bangladesh as their reliable partner in South Asia.



People under the banner of Garments Shramik o Shilpa Rakkha Jatiya Mancha demand trial of all who are responsible for Rana Plaza collapse and announcement of April 24 as "Mourning Day for Garment Workers", at a human chain in front of the capital's Jatiya Press Club yesterday, marking the fourth anniversary of the tragedy.

PHOTO: STAR

Draft law on EPZ to be reviewed

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government has withdrawn the draft of the Export Processing Zone law from parliament for a review by the prime minister, said a top official of the labour and employment ministry yesterday.

The move was prompted by the European Union's threat to suspend Generalised System of Preferences (GSP) for Bangladeshi products if the labour law is not amended by mid June this year.

After the cabinet approved the draft law in February last year, it was sent to parliament. But then it was withdrawn on Thursday, said Mikail Shipar, secretary to the labour and employment ministry.

He, however, did not elaborate any further on the issue as he spoke at a discussion linked with the garments sector in the capital. The Centre for Policy Dialogue and International Labour

Organization jointly organised the event on the eve of the fourth anniversary of the Rana Plaza building collapse.

The EU wants amendments to the labour law for EPZs as per ILO suggestions adopted at the International Labour Conference (ILC) in Geneva last year.

The legal framework should be changed to ensure workers' full freedom of association, freedom of association by EPZ workers, investigation into anti-union discrimination and simplification of union registration, according to the suggestions.

The EU also asked the government to show progress in amending the labour law, which would be applicable to the EPZs, in the third round of Sustainability Compact meeting in Dhaka on May 18.

Following the Rana Plaza building collapse, Bangladesh signed the ILO-brokered

Sustainability Compact with the EU in September 2013. Later, the US and Canada joined Sustainability Compact.

The EU also suggested that Bangladesh should demonstrate its progresses in amending the law in the next ILC to be held in June this year.

As a member of the league of least developed countries (LDCs), Bangladesh is enjoying zero-duty benefit on exports to the EU since 1971 under its Everything But Arms (EBA) scheme.

According to Export Promotion Bureau, Bangladesh exported goods worth \$18.68 billion to the EU in the last fiscal year, which was 54.57 percent of the country's total exports.

Of the amount, apparel accounted for \$17.15 billion. The EU currently receives just over 62 percent of all Bangladeshi garment exports.

Govt plans 560 model mosques to spread Islamic values

Project to cost Tk 9,062cr, of which S Arabia will provide Tk 8,000cr

UNB, Dhaka

The government has initiated a move to set up some 560 model mosques across the country, aiming to develop and spread the Islamic values and culture.

The Executive Committee of the National Economic Council (Ecnc) is likely to consider a project to this end at tomorrow's meeting, with an estimated cost of Tk 9,062 crore, said a Planning Commission official.

Of the total project cost, Saudi Arabia will provide Tk 8,000 crore as grant while the rest will come from the national exchequer, the official told the news agency wishing to remain anonymous.

The Bangladesh Islamic Foundation will implement the project under which the model mosques-cum-Islamic cultural centres will be set up in all the districts, city corporations and upazila areas.

During Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's visit to Saudi Arabia in 2016, the Kingdom promised to provide assistance to Bangladesh for building mosque-cum-Islamic cultural centres in all upazilas of Bangladesh.

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Don't run after

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of technical and madrasa division of the ministry; Khondoker Muhammad Asaduzzaman, a trustee of BSK; SM Wahiduzzaman, director general of the Directorate of Secondary and Higher Secondary Education; Beatrice Kaldun, head and representative of Unesco Dhaka office; and Mahmud-Ul-Haque, project director of Secondary Education Quality and Access Enhancement Project also spoke.

Govt to weigh need

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are languishing in jails for five to 10 years, SCLAC sources said. On April 18, SCLAC Chairman Justice Enayetur underscored the need for a specific law to rehabilitate people languishing in custody for long periods due to delays in trial proceedings.

Justice Enayetur Rahim, also a judge of the High Court Division of the SC, said a specialised centre might be established for rehabilitating the ones who get released from jail after long periods.

Survey all rivers

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recommendations at its 31st meeting held at the Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban with its chairman Kazi Keramat Ali in the chair.

The committee suggested taking effective measures for protecting Daulatdia Ferryghat before the upcoming holy month of Ramadan, monitoring the standard of the firm's works in repairing Daulatdia Ghat, and increasing the number of ferries under Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Corporation (BIWTC).

Committee members Rahamat Ali, Abdul Majid Khan, and Mir Mostaque Ahmed Robi attended the meeting.

The acting secretary of the shipping ministry and chairmen of the National River Protection Commission and BIWTC were present.



Leoni Margaretha Cuelenaere, ambassador of the Netherlands in Bangladesh, at a Hepatitis B vaccination programme in Tongi on the outskirts of Dhaka recently. Northern Tosrifa Group in partnership with FPAB and SNV Netherlands Development Organisation launched the programme for RMG workers of the four factories of this group.

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High time to focus

FROM PAGE 3

education -- Bangla medium, English medium and madrasa -- are creating divisions among the population.

Experts have been advocating for promoting vocational education, but the authorities concerned have been quite negligent, he said. The government is not looking into these issues seriously, but doing "politics" with education.

He said earlier the government talked of reforming the madrasa syllabus, instead they are now recognising Qawmi madrasa syllabus without any reforms.

Campaign for Popular Education (Campe) Executive Director Rasheda K Choudhury questioned if the government really has any policy on improving the quality of education.

"We need to rethink if four public exams before the university can really ensure quality education," she said. She suggested that the government focus on education of children in the chars, haors, tea gardens and slums who remain far behind the other kids in terms of education.

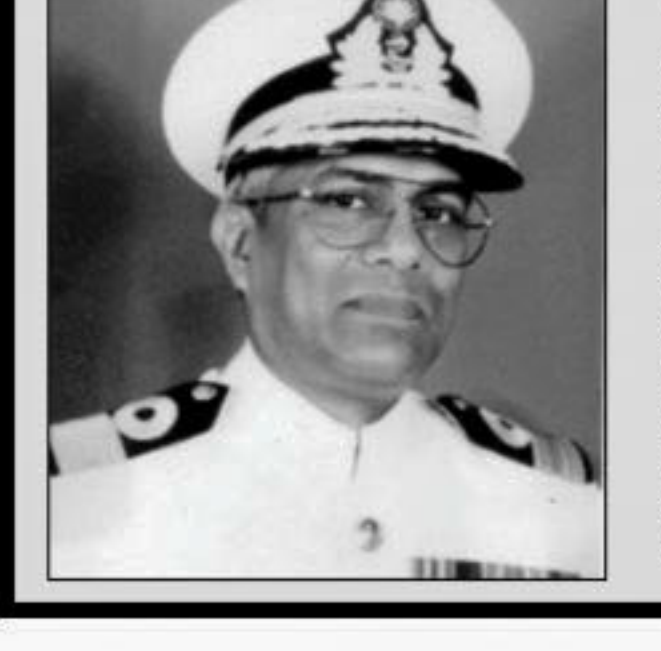
In his keynote speech, Dr Minjah Mahmud of BIDS said good nutrition for children and parenting are important for their cognitive development.

Academics also suggested investing more in education and providing incentives to draw quality teachers.

In a different session on labour market, experts stressed the need for designing education based on the market demands.

Farhana Rahman, vice president of Bangladesh Association of Software and Information Services, and Syed Nasim Manzur, managing director of Apex Footwear Ltd Managing, spoke.

IN REMEMBRANCE



With fond memories we remember today, Late Cdre Ghulam Rabbani (BN) Ex-Chairman of Chittagong Port Authority and Ex-MD of KEPZ on his 13th death anniversary, who was robbed of his life by miscreants in Chittagong on April 24, 2004. Relatives, friends and well wishers are requested to remember him in their prayers. Quran Khatam, Prayer and Feeding the destitutes have been organized.
-Bereaved Family

Re-tender notice for automatic high speed vertical type pouch filling & sealing machine

| | |
|--|---|
| Name of the tender | Supply, installation, commissioning and testing of high speed vertical type pouch filling & sealing machine at SMC Enterprise Ltd. at Bhaluka, Mymensingh |
| Quantity | 03 |
| Tender Security | 2% of the total quoted amount |
| Availability of tender document | Schedule is available free of cost at http://www.smc-bd.org/index.php/tender. In addition, hard copy is also available at 11 th floor of SMC Tower. |
| Date & time for availability of documents | April 24 - May 14, 2017 between 8:30 am to 05:00 pm |
| Method | Two Envelope system |
| Tender submission and opening place, date and time | To be submitted by 3:00 pm on May 15, 2017 in the Tender Box kept at SMC Tower, Level: 11, 33 Banani C/A, Dhaka-1213. Tender will be opened 3:30 pm on the same date. |

Bangladesh Jute Mills Corporation
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Ref. No. : 24.04.0000.704.01.086.17-81 Date : 20/04/2017

Cancellation of Expression of Interest (EOI)
Due to some unavoidable circumstances Expression of Interest for consultancy services of BJMC Research and Training Center, Reference no. 24.04.0000.704.01.086.17-61, date : 20/03/2017, published date on 23/03/2017 in The Daily Ittefaq and The Daily Star has been cancelled. All concerned are requested to take necessary action accordingly.
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