

Unique ties of close friendship

Sheikh Hasina sends ‘warmest wishes’ to Modi on India’s Republic Day



OUR CORRESPONDENT, NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday extended the “warmest wishes” to her Indian counterpart Narendra Modi and the people of India on the occasion of the country’s Republic Day.

In a letter to Modi, the PM wrote, “We look forward to working with India in the next fifty years and beyond, towards realising the shared vision of building a peaceful and prosperous region.

“The unique ties of close friendship, cooperation and trust between our two countries have flourished and grown from strength to strength in recent years ... many new frontiers of cooperation alongside all traditional areas have been identified, particularly during the Covid-19 pandemic,” Hasina wrote in the letter.

She said the year 2021 “was a historic one for the Bangladesh-India relationship, marked by celebrations of epochal events and engagements at the highest levels”.

Hasina said she “thankfully” recalled Modi’s visit to Dhaka in March last year to join celebrations of the golden jubilee of Bangladesh’s independence, the birth centenary of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and 50 years of establishment of diplomatic ties between Bangladesh and India.

“Your gracious presence on these occasions had added extra enthusiasm to the celebrations and allowed us to further consolidate our excellent bilateral relations, which so happily exist between our two countries,” she wrote.

The Bangladeshi PM said she recalled with gratitude the support rendered by the government and the people of India during Bangladesh’s Liberation War in 1971 and said this set the foundation of “our unique relationship”.

The joint celebration of “Moitri Dibosh” held across the globe on December 6, the day when India recognised Bangladesh as a sovereign and independent country in 1971, “projected this special relationship”, wrote Hasina.



A patient who underwent surgery on her eyes waits in a rickshaw for the traffic jam to clear on a road in the capital's Chawk Bazar yesterday. Traffic jam has recently become common in the area due to development work of Dhaka Wasa.

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

Set up dedicated cybercrime unit

Senior officials discuss a host of demands with IGP on 4th day of Police Week

SHARIFUL ISLAM

Police high-ups yesterday started discussing with their chief a list of over 100 demands, including a replacement of long-barrel firearms with short arms for on-duty policemen, and the establishment of an independent cyber unit and a cyber and IT training academy to cope with rising cybercrimes.

Around two dozen demands were placed before the Inspector General of Police Benazir Ahmed during a day-long meeting attended by mid and high-ranking police officials on the fourth day of the ongoing police week at Rajarbagh Police Lines.

They asked for a dedicated cyber crime unit to deal solely with cyber crimes and criminals.

Under the unit, there can be wings, they suggested, in all districts to effectively deal with such cases. The proposal comes as cyber crime is growing along with the use of social media, particularly during the pandemic.

The Police Headquarters earlier asked all units to bring forth their

innovative ideas and demands to make the police a skilled, people oriented, modern and professional force. Out of the total ideas and demands, the PHQ compiled 107.

Police authorities will also raise some major demands during their meetings with the home minister, scheduled for today -- the final day of police week.

Meeting sources said Assistant Inspector General and Deputy Inspector General of concerned units at the PHQ yesterday raised around 25 demands with the IGP. Those include the formation of an independent medical service for police, a separate prosecution service to deal with cases properly and expanding the scope for people to file general diaries online.

Other major demands, which could not be heard yesterday, include a separate police division at the home ministry, providing SP and upward officers a car loan of Tk 30 lakh and Tk 50,000 for monthly maintenance, and the formation of a cell to coordinate with the ministry or the Secretariat about implementation of

promises made by the prime minister and home minister, said a number of officials who attended the meeting.

Besides, acquiring a 100-acre land on the Padma char for Bangladesh Police Academy, and providing training allowance for policemen are also on the list of demands.

After yesterday’s meeting, Haider Ali Khan, deputy inspector general (Media and Operation) at the PHQ, briefed journalists on the demands.

37 FAILED DOPE TEST
Replying to a query, Haider said the authorities have so far terminated 37 policemen after they failed the dope test.

He added the test has been made mandatory for the recruitment in police.

Asked whether the police authorities will take any action against policemen who have been accused of attacking and harassing students of Shahjalal University of Science and Technology (Sust) during their ongoing agitation, he said inquiry is going on about the allegations and if the allegations are found true, action will be taken.

Sust hunger strike ends

FROM PAGE 1

However, Education Minister Dipu Moni yesterday said the resignation of the VC was not a solution.

“One VC will go, another VC will come. Problems will remain,” she said.

She urged the students to end their demonstrations. “All their allegations and the incidents in the university will be scrutinised. Proper steps will be taken against those who were negligent in duty,” she said.

“Here, the teachers, students, university administration, and the

government are all on one side. There are no two sides here. We want to resolve the problem through discussions,” she said.

FIVE ALUMNI GET BAIL

A Sylhet court yesterday granted bail to five alumni of Sust who had been detained in Dhaka on Monday for donating money to the demonstrators.

The former students -- Reza Noor Muin, Habibur Rahman Khan, AFM Nazmus Sakib Dip, AKM Maruf Hossain and Faisal Ahmed -- were arrested by the CID and later handed over to Sylhet Metropolitan

Police on Tuesday.

Among them, AFM Nazmus Sakib Dip was admitted to Shamsuddin Ahmed Hospital after he was diagnosed with Covid.

On Tuesday, Sujat Ahmed Layek, organising secretary of Bangladesh Tanti League’s Sylhet district unit, filed a case with Jalalabad Police Station accusing the five and 150 unnamed people for “violating the VC’s executive order for closing the university”.

According to the case statement, the alumni financed the demonstrations with

ill motives and made derogatory posts on Facebook on the VC.

Talking to The Daily Star, plaintiff Sujat said, “Financing a movement is a serious offence, and the financiers and the demonstrators are Jamaat-Shibir men. I filed the case as a concerned citizen.”

Sust Teachers Association yesterday condemned the filing of the case and demanded no student be harassed.

Human Rights Forum Bangladesh also condemned the arrest of five alumni in a statement yesterday.

Md Haider Ali Khan,

DIG (operations, media and planning) at police headquarters, yesterday said, “The allegation of police action and harassment of Sust students are being investigated and departmental action will be taken against people concerned if found true.”

Asked whether donating money was a crime and whether Prof Zafar’s donation of Tk 10,000 to the demonstrating students was also a crime, the DIG said, “It is a matter of investigation. Actions would be taken if specific allegations are found against anyone.”

Syria Kurds retake prison, ending six-day IS attack

AFP, Hasakeh

Kurdish forces yesterday retook full control of a prison in northeast Syria where Islamic State group jihadists had been holed up since attacking it six days earlier.

The brazen IS jailbreak attempt and ensuing clashes left more than 180 dead in the jihadists’ most high-profile military operation since the loss of their “caliphate” nearly three years ago.

Ghwayran prison in the city of Hasakeh was thought to hold around 3,500 IS inmates when the initial attack was first launched on January 20 with explosives-laden vehicles steered by suicide bombers.

Tejgaon industrial area tops the list

FROM PAGE 1

Mirpur had 66mgs of PM 2.5, Gulshan 65mgs, Dhanmondi 63mgs, Abdullahpur 62mgs, Agargaon 61mgs, Motijheel 60mgs, Parliament area 59mgs and Ahsan Manjil 57mgs, read the study.

The average PM 2.5 concentration in the 10 areas is 63mgs per cubic metre, 4.2 times higher than the national standard set in Environment Conservation Act-1995.

The concentration is also 6.3 times higher than that set by the World Health Organization (WHO).

Megaprojects like metro rail, bus rapid transit and mass rapid transit, unfit vehicles and construction materials deteriorate the air quality of the city, the study found.

Apart from the heavy presence of PM 2.5,

another particulate matter -- PM 10 -- was also found in Shahbagh, Mirpur-10 and Abdullahpur areas, the study said.

PM 10 was found at 101mgs per cubic metre in Mirpur, 100mgs in Shahbagh and 99 in Abdullahpur. The presence of the particulate is twice the national annual standard.

The concentration of PM 2.5 and PM 10 varies from season to season in different areas.

In pre-monsoon, the highest concentration of PM 2.5 was 108mgs per cubic metre in Shahbagh whereas the upscale Dhanmondi-32 area saw the lowest concentration 57mgs per cubic metre.

In post-monsoon, the concentration of PM 2.5 is the highest in Tejgaon Industrial Area -- 113mgs per cubic metre -- while Gulshan-2 sees a bit improvement in its air quality -- 58mgs per cubic metre.

In winter, Dhanmondi-32 sees the highest concentration of PM 2.5 -- 155mgs per cubic metre and the lowest was found in Ahsan Manjil -- 74mgs per cubic metre.

Prof Dr Ahmad Kamruzzaman Majumder, who led the study, told The Daily Star that the scenario was really grim for Dhaka dwellers.

“We have to go for an inclusive way if we want a scientific and sustainable solution to air pollution,” he said.

Contacted, Sharif Jamil, general secretary of Bangladesh Poribesh Andolon (BAPA), demanded a clean air act to contain the air menace urging the government to change its mindset towards air pollution.

Mohammad Asadul Haque, director (Dhaka metropolitan) of the Department of Environment, declined to make any comments saying they would have to take permission from the director general to talk to the media.

DoE Director General Md Ashraf Uddin, however, could not be contacted over the phone after repeated attempts.