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'US for lifting Rab sanctions'

Salman F Rahman says after meeting Donald Lu

PORIMOL PALMA

US Assistant Secretary of State for South and Central Asia Donald Lu yesterday told the government they will support the withdrawal of sanctions against Rapid Action Battalion, Prime Minister's Private Industry and Investment Adviser Salman F Rahman said.



The US also asked Bangladesh to ensure timely payments to American companies conducting business here.

Rahman was briefing journalists after a meeting with Donald Lu at his Gulshan residence last night.

However, neither Lu nor the US embassy in Dhaka spoke publicly about the meeting.

Lu has been in the region since May 10, visiting India and Sri Lanka, and arrived in Dhaka yesterday morning.

Rahman claimed the US side told him that the White House is also for the withdrawal of sanctions, but they have a procedure that needs to be followed. Sanctions are within the jurisdiction of the US Department of Justice.

The US last year announced a visa policy for Bangladesh, saying those undermining democratic elections would be denied visas. Earlier in 2021, it imposed sanctions on Rab

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A boatman struggles to navigate through the thick water hyacinths clogging the entrance to the Buriganga Adi (old) channel. Despite the inconvenience, many residents of Kamrangirchar and Zinzira choose the boat ride from Old Dhaka as it is cheaper than road travel. The photo was taken in Dhaka's Islambagh yesterday.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

Taskin named Shanto's deputy

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh announced a 15-man squad for the forthcoming ICC T20 World Cup yesterday with Taskin Ahmed's appointment as vice-captain and all-rounder Mohammad Saifuddin's omission being the biggest highlights.

The Najmul Hossain Shanto-led 15 with two travelling reserves are scheduled to board a flight in the early hours of Thursday for the USA, where they will first take on the hosts in a three-match T20I series starting on May 21, before beginning their T20 World Cup campaign.

The national team selectors were originally scheduled to announce the squad on Monday but pushed it back by a day as they were waiting on Taskin's scans.

The pacer had suffered a side strain in the fourth T20I of the five-match series against Zimbabwe, which put his position in the World Cup-bound squad under threat.

Even though Taskin is still nursing his injury and at risk of not being match ready before the Tigers start

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Cattle for Eid to have barcodes

50,000 animals to be registered giving customers access to their health history

MUNTAKIM SAAD

For the first time, Bangladesh introduced an online cattle identification and registration system, providing customers with access to comprehensive information about the registered cattle through barcode scanning.

By scanning the barcode, customers would know the breed, dietary preferences, and health records including vaccination status of the registered cattle among other things. The database will track diseases of the registered cattle until its death. It will also contain information on location and owner of cattle.

Initially, 50,000 cattle will be brought under online registration by 2025. Registered cattle will be tagged with a barcode on their ears.

The pilot programme titled "Bangladesh Integrated Network for Livestock Information (BINLI)" was initiated by the Department of Livestock Services under the "Livestock and Dairy Development Project".

Speaking with The Daily Star, Arabinda Kumar Saha, deputy project manager of BINLI, said the implementation of ear tags will streamline vaccination, treatment, and overall livestock management. Additionally, it will enhance the process of exporting meat and livestock products.

Among the registered cattle, 4,800 cattle will be

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Bureaucrats dominate legal aid services

Says chief justice

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Chief Justice Obaidul Hassan yesterday expressed utter dismay at the inconsistencies and financial constraints of the National Legal Aid and Services Organization (NLASO), saying that this organisation is not run by the judiciary, but in fact dominated by the bureaucrats.

"The chief justice has no role in the national committee of this organisation. There are no representatives from the chief justice there. After the minister, those who are in the committee, are all bureaucrats. It is also not clear to whom the Supreme Court Legal Aid Committee is accountable," he said.

The chief justice was speaking as chief guest to a discussion meeting titled, "Smart Legal Aid, Smart Country - Bangabandhu's Bangladesh" and "Proliferation of Smart Legal Services in the High Court" organised by the Supreme Court Legal Aid Committee.

The event was organised at the Supreme Court Auditorium on the occasion of National Legal Aid Day 2024.

He said there is a Legal Aid Committee in the Supreme Court and its chairman will be nominated by the chief justice.

"He or she will be a judge of the High Court Division. It has been decided who will be with the chairman of the Supreme Court

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Foreign airlines carving up market for themselves

Local carriers fail to capture increasing number of flyers

RASHIDUL HASAN

Even though Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport now deals with twice the number of passengers it used to 10 years ago, local carriers have been losing market share.

The 32 foreign airlines serving Dhaka on the other hand have been carving up the market for themselves.

The number of passengers using the Dhaka airport in 2014 was around 60 lakh while in 2023 it increased to around 1.20 crore, according to documents of Civil Aviation Authority of Bangladesh (CAAB) placed before Monday's meeting of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on the Civil Aviation Ministry.

In 2014, the airport had 95,191 flights and in 2023, it had over 1.88 lakh, according to CAAB statistics.

Aviation expert ATM Nazrul Islam

said it is good that the Dhaka airport terminals have the surplus capacity to deal with the increasing number of passengers, but the sad story is that Biman's market share of 32 to 34 percent in 1990 has come down to 22 to 24 percent.

Local carriers Biman, US-Bangla, and Novoair operate international flights. Of them, the national flag carrier with its fleet of 21 aircraft flies to 23 international destinations, while US-Bangla with its fleet of 24 aircraft operates flights to 12 destinations. Novoair flies to one regional destination, according to the officials of the carriers.

Nazrul, who served several local carriers, said when the third terminal is operational in October, five to six new foreign airlines will serve Dhaka. "The foreign carriers will serve Dhaka as we could not operate flights to

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"But Biman failed to capture the market due to the absence of proper planning, marketing, and expansion of its fleet and network."

Kazi Wahidul Alam, editor of The Bangladesh Monitor



A man crosses a trench dug for installing underground power lines at Tikkapara in the capital's Mohammadpur. Locals said the work has been going on for around 25 days. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

Modi files nomination from Varanasi

Denies stoking divisions to win polls

REUTERS, New Delhi

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi defended himself against criticism that he is stoking divisions between Hindus and Muslims to win national elections as he filed his nomination yesterday for re-election from Varanasi, one of Hinduism's holiest cities.

India began voting April 19 in the seven-phase election in which Modi, 73, is seeking to be the second prime minister to win a third straight term since independence leader Jawaharlal Nehru.

Although Modi began his campaign by showcasing his economic record, governance and popularity, he has changed tack after the first phase to accuse the main opposition Congress party of being pro-Muslim.



US tells Ukraine 'aid on its way'



'What's happening in Gaza is not a religious crisis'



World Cup squad unveiled with reserved expectations

360 MW POWER PLANT SALE

Hariপুর Power Limited ("HPL") is a private company incorporated in Bangladesh, which owns a 360MW combined cycle gas turbine ("CCGT") power plant located at Hariপুর, Narayanganj, in Bangladesh. HPL is a wholly-owned subsidiary of Pendekar Energy (L) Ltd ("PEL"), a joint venture between Edra Power Holdings Sdn Bhd ("EPH"), Malaysia, and Aljomaih Energy and Water ("AEW"), Saudi Arabia. PEL intends to divest either 100% or 45% of its shares in HPL ("Proposed Transaction"). The HPL plant was in excellent operating condition, having completed its 22 successful years of operation and its Power Purchase Agreement ("PPA") expired on the 30th Nov 2023. The plant is well-preserved and ready for operation at short notice. The plant has recently received approval for a 5-years extension of its power plant operations.

Parties interested in the Proposed Transaction are invited to submit their company profile and an Expression of Interest to the following contact details before 31st May 2024 Email to: haripur.sales@edra-bd.energy