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Fakhrul discusses bilateral issues with Chinese envoy

UNB, Dhaka

BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir yesterday had a meeting with Chinese Ambassador to Dhaka Yao Wen and discussed various issues relating to the bilateral interests of the two nations.

The hour-long meeting, which began around 11:00am, took place at the Chinese ambassador's Baridhara residence, said a BNP leader close to Fakhrul.

The Chinese embassy, in a post on its verified Facebook page, said the ambassador met the BNP secretary general. It also said the two sides exchanged views on issues of mutual concern.

On August 21 last year, the Chinese envoy met a BNP delegation, led by Fakhrul, reaffirming China's commitment to supporting Bangladesh.



Speakers at a discussion titled "Pathways to a Just Energy Transition: Balancing Sustainability, Equity, and Industry Growth in the RMG Sector," at The Daily Star Centre in the capital yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

RMG sector must lead renewable energy push

Speakers tell discussion; call on govt to align policies, set timeline to achieve net zero emissions

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Although not a major carbon-emitting country, Bangladesh can emerge as a global pioneer in carbon reduction as a victim of climate change, experts said at an event yesterday.

They said the RMG sector should lead this effort, given its potential to increase the use of renewable energy in factories. Additionally, they called on the government to align policies and set a timeline to achieve net zero emissions.

The remarks were made during a discussion titled "Pathways to a Just Energy Transition: Balancing Sustainability, Equity, and Industry Growth in the RMG Sector," at The Daily Star Centre in the capital.

The event was jointly organised by The Daily Star and Oxfam.

In his keynote presentation, Dr Mohammad Emran Hasan, head

of Climate Justice and Natural Resource Rights (CJNRR), said while Bangladesh contributes minimally to global carbon emissions, it is among the most impacted countries globally.

He said the RMG and textile industries could save approximately 1,159 kilotonnes of oil equivalent (KTOE) of energy annually by adopting energy-efficient machinery and conservation measures.

The overall industrial sector in Bangladesh consumes about 3,740 KTOE per year.

Hasan suggested measures such as introducing Solar PV Systems, Net Metering Policy, energy-efficient machinery and processes, automation and digitalisation, green financing initiatives, and access to green bonds to ensure a just energy transition.

Azad Abul Kalam, manager

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A betrayal of July uprising's spirit

Speakers on removal of the word 'Adivasi' from textbook

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Removal of the word "Adivasi" from the back cover of NCTB textbooks is a betrayal of the July uprising's spirit, said speakers at an event yesterday.

"Those who participated in the July uprising were not in favour of removing the term 'Adivasi'. If they were, it wouldn't have appeared in graffiti on the streets," said Khushi Kabir, executive director of Nijera Kori.

She was speaking at a remembrance event marking the first death anniversary of indigenous leader Rabindranath Soren at Dhaka Reporters Unity.

She criticised the decision to remove the word, saying, "Why are we so quick to consider such changes just to appease a small group?"

She urged people to resist the discrimination that comes with minoritisation.

"Bangladesh has begun to dream of a new future through anti discrimination movements. To realise that, we must work to end long-standing inequalities and secure the rights of all, including indigenous peoples," Khushi Kabir said.

She also called for a separate land commission for indigenous peoples in the plains and demanded the

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The withdrawn cover symbolised Bangladesh's diversity, pluralism, and multi-ideological identity. We cannot let this achievement of the uprising be wasted.

Shamsul Huda
ALRD Executive Director

ROAD ACCIDENTS IN 2024

Fatalities rise as initiatives ineffective

5,480 lives lost on roads, says BRTA

TUHIN SHUBHRA ADHIKARY

At least 5,480 people died in 5,856 road crashes in 2024, according to the Bangladesh Road Transport Authority.

This marks a nine percent rise in fatalities and a 6.57 percent rise in crashes compared to 2023, as per the data released on its website yesterday.

BRTA collected the data through its field offices across the country.

The development comes at a time when most government initiatives to curb road crashes have remained ineffective.

On January 4, Bangladesh Jatri Kalyan Samity presented its annual report, in which it reported 8,543 deaths in 6,359 road crashes in 2024, reflecting an 8.11 percent increase in fatalities and a 1.56 percent rise in crashes compared to the previous year.

On January 8, the Road Safety Foundation reported 7,294 fatalities last year, a 12 percent increase from 2023.

Referring to the Road Safety Foundation report, Fouzul Kabir Khan on Saturday said, "We, the interim government, take responsibility for it. We take responsibility that we could not reduce the number of road crashes and deaths."



Data from both government and NGOs indicates that small and unauthorised vehicles, including motorcycles, three-wheelers, and battery-run easy bikes, are major contributors to road crashes.

In 2015, the previous government banned three-wheelers on 22 major highways but failed to enforce the restriction. The situation remained unchanged after the change in

government in August 2024.

The previous government had taken two separate initiatives to prepare a regulation guideline for three-wheelers and motorcycles, but they were not finalised.

No progress is still visible in this regard. However, Senior Secretary Ehsanul Hoque recently said the Local Government Division is working on a guideline for battery-run easy bikes.

Old and outdated vehicles also contribute significantly to crashes.

In May 2023, the then government set 20 years for buses and 25 years for trucks as economic lifetime, but it backtracked from the decision in August, 2023.

In October last year, the interim government gave vehicle owners until May this year to remove outdated vehicles from the capital, but no visible action was taken for such vehicles in other parts of the country.

Admitting failures to curb road crashes, the road adviser said BRTA

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1972 CONSTITUTION

'Repealing it is like denying Liberation War'

Say 36 freedom fighters in a statement

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Thirty-six decorated freedom fighters have condemned and protested the attempt to repeal the 1972 constitution, saying that the issues achieved and resolved through the Liberation War cannot be questioned or changed.

In a joint media statement issued yesterday, they also condemned and protested the incidents of assaulting and humiliating the freedom fighters, vandalising their homes and offices of the Muktiyoddha Sangsad across the country since August 5.

The gallantry award recipient freedom fighters said amending or updating the constitution to meet the aspirations of the people as per the need of the time is an ongoing process, but repealing the 1972 constitution achieved through the great Liberation War means denying the Liberation War and betraying the three million martyrs.

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The previous governments have repeatedly distorted the original constitution of 1972 in their own ways to achieve their interests.

Seize tax documents of Benazir, daughter

Court directs ACC

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday directed the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) to seize income tax documents of former Inspector General of Police Benazir Ahmed and his eldest daughter, Farheen Rishta Binte Benazir, over allegations of illegally amassing wealth.

Judge Md Zakir Hossain of the Dhaka Metropolitan Senior Special Judge's Court issued the order after ACC Deputy Director Md Hafizul Islam, who is leading the investigation, filed two applications.

ACC Public Prosecutor Mahmud Hossain Jahangir moved the petitions on behalf of the anti-graft body.

In the applications, the ACC official said Benazir

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Prioritise justice, stop crime

IGP instructs police

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Inspector General of Police Baharul Alam yesterday said police must make every effort to stop crimes like extortion, mugging, and murder.

He said this while attending DMP's monthly crime review meeting for December at the Police Auditorium in Rajarbagh.

"Police must work with honesty and stay on the path of justice. They must make every effort to stop extortion, mugging, and murder. With the highest level of professionalism, police must eliminate all crimes, including extortion and drug-related offenses," he said.

Dhaka Metropolitan Police Commissioner SM Sazzat Ali said a zero-tolerance policy must be followed for snatchers and extortionists. Muggers and extortionists must be arrested.

He said the police stations of DMP must play a more active role. Progress in the investigation of cases must be further increased.

"A response must be provided within an hour of filing the GD at the police station, and necessary actions related to it should be initiated immediately," he said.

He also said the recovery of stolen mobile phones must be given the utmost importance. "If we all work together, the public will regain full trust in the police," he said.

Additional Commissioner (Crime and Operations) SN Nazrul Islam and Additional Police Commissioner (Admin) Faruk Ahmed also spoke.



NO GAS... An empty filling station in the Paribagh area of Dhaka yesterday. It had to shut down operations around 2:00pm due to a countrywide gas shortage.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN