



DHAKA WEDNESDAY JANUARY 22, 2025



REGD. NO. DA 781

VOL. XXXV No. 9

MAGH 8, 1431 BS

www.thedailystar.net

RAJAB 21, 1446 HIJRI

16 PAGES: TK 15.00

FOREIGN ADVISER'S CHINA TOUR 10 extra years for repaying Chinese loans

Interest rates might be lowered

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Beijing has agreed in principle to extend the repayment period for Chinese loans and assured Dhaka it will look into the request to lower the interest rate to ease Bangladesh's foreign debt repayment pressure.

China is Bangladesh's fourth-largest lender after Japan, the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank, with total loans disbursed since 1975 coming to \$7.5 billion.

The development came yesterday during Foreign Adviser Touhid Hossain's bilateral meeting with Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi on his four-day tour of China at the Diaoyutai State Guest House in Beijing.

At the meeting, Hossain requested lowering the interest rate on Chinese loans from 2.3 percent to 1 percent, waiving the commitment

- 1 Bangladeshi goods to get duty-free access to China for 3 yrs after LDC graduation
- 2 Dhaka urges Beijing to ramp up concessional loans, grants and the number of projects
- 3 Both sides discussed the financing of metro rail projects

and management fees and extending the loan repayment period from 20 years to 30 years for both the preferential buyer's credit and government concessional loans.

Praising Bangladesh's good track record in repayment, Wang agreed to extend the maturity period for loans provided to the country and also assured of looking into the request of lowering the interest rate on the loans, according to a statement from the Bangladesh foreign ministry.

China places Bangladesh at a very important position in her neighbourhood diplomacy, the statement said quoting Wang as saying.

Also yesterday, Hossain held a meeting with Luo Zhaohui, the chairman of the China International Development Cooperation Agency, about Chinese loans.

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Bangladesh Railway uses a digger to destroy around 100 shanties built on its land at Karwan Bazar in the capital during an eviction drive yesterday.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

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PHOTO ON PAGE 12

A judicial council to pick SC judges

Govt issues ordinance

ASHUTOSH SARKAR

The interim government has issued an ordinance for recruitment of competent judges in the two Supreme Court divisions through a seven-member Supreme Judicial Appointment Council led by the chief justice.

Even though the constitution mandates formulating a law for appointments of judges in the appellate and High Court divisions, none of the previous governments did it.

Yesterday, President Mohammed Shahabuddin issued the Supreme Court Judge Appointment Ordinance, 2025. It says that an SC judge cannot be younger than 45.

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DRAFT DATA LAW Privacy still under threat

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The interim government released the draft of the Personal Data Protection Ordinance, 2025, yesterday, and it appears that it retains some of the clauses of its Awami League era predecessor that had drawn criticism.

Once enacted, the law is supposed to afford citizens the right to know what personal information is being collected by any

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Trump pauses US aid for 90 days

Executive orders target int'l
treaties, threaten trade wars

AGENCIES

US President Donald Trump began his first full day in office yesterday, riding a wave of executive orders signed just hours after his inauguration on everything from immigration to the environment and culture wars.

He used his first hours back in the White House to begin upending the global order, withdrawing the US from international climate and tax agreements, and culture wars.

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