

We should focus on trade, regional connectivity

Foreign affairs adviser tells event in China

BSS, Dhaka

Foreign Affairs Adviser Md Touhid Hossain, who is now in China on an official visit, yesterday laid emphasis on narrowing trade gap and fostering regional connectivity with China to promote equitable growth.

He made the remark while delivering a keynote address at a seminar titled “Our Shared Vision for Peace, Stability, and Prosperity” in the Shanghai Institute for International Studies in Shanghai, said a foreign ministry press release.

He outlined a forward-looking vision for global peace, and stressed that economic cooperation is a cornerstone for sustainable development and stability.

Reflecting on global challenges, he noted that peace and security are collective responsibilities that demand inclusive economic frameworks and greater emphasis on empowering underrepresented groups, particularly the youth and women.

Touhid also stressed on creating a congenial atmosphere in Myanmar's Rakhine State for a dignified return of the displaced Rohingyas sheltered in Bangladesh.



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Chief of Army Staff General Waker-Uz-Zaman being adorned with the 17th “Colonel of the Regiment” of the traditional East Bengal Regiment in Chattogram Cantonment yesterday.

PHOTO:ISPR

Army chief adorned with ‘Colonel of the Regiment’

BSS, Dhaka

Chief of Army Staff General Waker-Uz-Zaman was adorned with the 17th “Colonel of the Regiment” of the traditional East Bengal Regiment at the Shaheed MR Chowdhury Parade Ground in Chattogram Cantonment yesterday.

He has been ceremoniously given the title and responsibilities.

“Colonel of the Regiment” is a prestigious military position signifying leadership and guardianship over a specific regiment within the army.

On his arrival at the parade ground, the army chief was given a guard of honor.

Later, he visited the quarter guard of EBRC and planted a sapling said a release of the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR).

Two arrested with 10,000 govt textbooks

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Detective Branch of the Dhaka Metropolitan Police arrested two members of a syndicate involved in stockpiling government textbooks.

Speaking at a press briefing at the DMP Media Centre yesterday, Mohammad Nasirul Islam, joint commissioner of DMP (DB-South), said the two were arrested from the Banglabazar area in Sutrapur on Wednesday.

Acting on a tip-off, the DB conducted the raid and seized two trucks carrying 10,000 textbooks meant for free distribution to primary and secondary school students.

The arrestees are Sirajul Islam Ujjal, 55, and Md Delwar Hossain, 56.

The government provides free textbooks to primary and secondary school students at the start of each academic year. However, a group has been undermining this initiative by illegally hoarding the free textbooks and selling them on the open market, said the joint commissioner.

The Kotwali Zonal Team of Lalbagh DB also conducted raids in several warehouses in Ispahani Lane, Banglabazar, Sutrapur, and recovered the textbooks.

The seized textbooks are valued at around Tk 8 lakh. These books, published by the National Curriculum and Textbook Board (NCTB), were of various subjects meant for students of classes one to nine.

Tk 250cr assets of Salman F Rahman seized

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Financial Crime Unit of the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) has seized assets worth Tk 250 crore belonging to Salman F Rahman, adviser to ousted prime minister Sheikh Hasina.

The CID said the Beximco Group owner laundered money by exporting goods worth \$260,14,984 to his son's Dubai-based company, RR Global Trading FZE, under the names of Apollo Apparels Limited and Kanchpur Apparels Limited through 21 LCs/Sales contracts between 2020-2024.

A money laundering case is under investigation. Following a court order, approximately 2,000 decimals of land in Dhaka's Dohar and structures built on it have been seized. The current market value of these properties is Tk 250 crore.

The Financial Crimes Unit of CID has filed 17 cases against Salman and his associates for laundering \$83 million to various countries.

Worker dies falling from ladder

UNB, Dhaka

A power company worker died after falling from a ladder while setting up an electric line behind the BSMMU hospital in Dhaka yesterday.

The deceased, identified as Zahid, 35, was employed by Moon Power Company. He was from Jamalpur, said Inspector Md Faruk, in charge of the Dhaka Medical College Hospital Police Outpost.

Zahid was rushed to BSMMU hospital, before being transferred to the DMCH emergency department for advanced treatment at 3:20pm. Doctors declared him dead at 4:25pm, the police officer said.

Expand ACC nationwide

Proposes reform comittee

DIPAN NANDY

The Anti-Corruption Reform Commission has proposed a nationwide expansion of the ACC's activities to strengthen the anti-graft body's operations.

In its report submitted to Chief Adviser Prof. Muhammad Yunus on January 15, the commission, led by Dr Iftekharuzzaman, recommended establishing ACC offices in every district and setting up special judge courts.

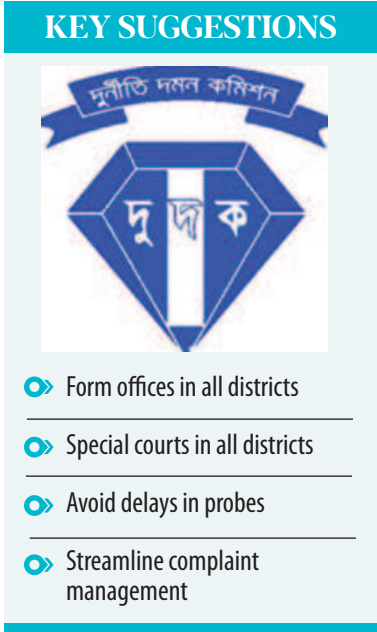
Currently, 36 regional ACC offices operate across 34 districts, with two regional offices each in Dhaka and Chattogram.

The districts without ACC offices include Rajbari, Manikganj, Netrokona, Natore, Chapainawabganj, Sirajganj, Nilphamari, Gaibandha, Satkhira, Narail, Meherpur, Barguna, Sunamganj, Moulvibazar, Khagrachhari, Brahmanbaria, Bhola, Feni,

We hope that if these recommendations are implemented, the ACC will become more dynamic.

DR IFTEKHARUZZAMAN
Head of ACC Reform Commission

Bandarban, Shariatpur, Munshiganj, Sherpur, Jhalokati, Lakshmipur, Magura, Chuadanga, Joypurhat, Rangamati, Panchagarh, and



Lalmonirhat.

The commission advised establishing district ACC offices in a phased manner, ensuring each office is adequately equipped with the necessary logistical support.

The commission suggested establishing “special judge courts” in all districts with existing ACC offices. They also proposed establishing such courts as soon as possible in districts where new ACC offices will be set up.

The report also suggested how to streamline complaint management and minimise delays in ACC investigations and inquiries.

To enhance efficiency, the commission recommended that recommendations from district or divisional review committees should not be re-evaluated by the central review committee of the ACC.

Furthermore, it advised granting district or divisional offices the authority to take post-complaint actions in cases involving offenses below a certain threshold, as determined by the ACC. Dr Iftekharuzzaman, also the executive director of Transparency International Bangladesh, said, “The reform commission has made several recommendations, including forming offices in all districts, to avoid delays in ACC investigations and inquiries and to streamline complaint management.”

“We hope that if these recommendations are implemented, the ACC will become more dynamic.”

Most people lost trust in interim govt Says GM Quader

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Majority of people in the country have lost trust in the current government, said Jatiyo Party Chairman GM Quader yesterday.

He also questioned whether the current government is capable of conducting a credible election.

“Jatiyo Party is being victimised by neo-fascism. Efforts are being made to exclude us from the election. If elections are held excluding political parties that represent the majority of people, no legitimate government can be formed,” he said.

He made the remarks while speaking at a views-exchange meeting with Munshiganj district leaders in Dhaka.

Accusing the government

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‘Article 116 has destroyed judicial independence’

Shishir Manir tells HC

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Article 116 of the constitution has destroyed the independence of judiciary, lawyer Shishir Manir told the High Court yesterday.

He said this while the HC was holding a petition challenging the constitutionality of Article 116, which grants the president control over lower court judges.

Petitioner's lawyer, Mohammad Shishir Manir, argued that the current provision undermines judicial independence. He called for the restoration of the original 1972 provision, which empowered the Supreme Court to manage lower court judges.

“Article 116 is a stumbling block for establishing a separate judicial secretariat and needs to be restored to its original position,” Manir told the HC bench of Justice Farah Mahbub and Justice Debasish Roy Chowdhury.

The court issued a rule in October 2022, questioning the legality of Article 116 and the 2017 Judicial Service (Disciplinary) Rules. The rule also sought an explanation for the non-establishment of a separate judicial secretariat at the Supreme Court.

The hearing concluded without a fixed date for further proceedings.

Article 116 of the 1972 Constitution originally granted the SC significant authority over lower court judges, including posting, promotion, and leave. The current version, however, vests these powers in the president.

The petition was filed by 10 SC lawyers.



A boy rides a bike through a road dug up for drainage work in the Janata Housing area of Adabor yesterday. Despite the project running for over a week, there are no proper safety measures or barricades in place, putting pedestrians at risk.

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON