

Dhaka seeks more trade ties with Islamabad
Pakistan commerce minister calls on adviser Adilur

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh has expressed interest in industrial collaboration with Pakistan in sectors such as leather, shipbuilding, sugar, agro-processing and SMEs.

Pakistan, on its part, stressed the importance of using its economic and industrial base to address food security, promote value addition in the food industry, and strengthen industrial technology for mutual benefit.

The issues were discussed at a meeting between Bangladesh Industries Adviser Adilur Rahman Khan and Pakistan Commerce Minister Jam Kamal Khan at the adviser's office in Dhaka yesterday.

Pakistan's High Commissioner to Bangladesh, Imran Haider, was also present.

Jam Kamal Khan arrived in Dhaka yesterday on a four-day visit. He is scheduled to visit Chattogram and attend a bilateral meeting with Foreign Adviser Touhid Hossain on August 24, where Pakistan Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar will also be present.

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A clash broke out between the students of Dhaka College and Dhaka City College in the Science Lab area of the capital yesterday afternoon, leaving at least seven persons injured.

PHOTO: ORCHID CHAKMA

7 hurt as students of Dhaka College, City College clash

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A clash between the students of Dhaka College and Dhaka City College broke out at Science Lab and adjacent areas yesterday, leaving several people injured.

The intermittent clashes, which lasted for more than three hours, caused severe traffic congestion in the surrounding areas, forcing many commuters to walk to their destinations.

AKM Mahfuzul Haque, officer-in-charge of New Market Police Station, said the violence was a sequel to an incident on Tuesday, when some City College students allegedly beat Dhaka College students over seating arrangements at a coaching centre.

Around 11:30am yesterday, students of both colleges took to the streets and started hurling brick chips at each other. They also chased each other with sticks, leading to the clash.

Police said students from both sides attacked law enforcers during the incident, leaving several policemen injured. The law enforcers used batons and a sound grenade to disperse the students. At least seven students from both sides were injured.

Traffic movement began to return to normal on the roads around Science Lab after 3:00pm, as students from both groups retreated to their campuses.

Speaking to reporters at the scene, Masud Alam, deputy commissioner of Ramna Division, said such incidents occur frequently and even trivial matters spark clashes between the two colleges.

"We will talk to the principals of both colleges. This time, we want to identify the root cause. People suffer due to this," he said.

AUG 21 GRENADE ATTACK
SC verdict on appeal against acquittal of Tarique Sept 4

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Supreme Court yesterday set September 4 to deliver its verdict on appeals against a High Court ruling that acquitted BNP Acting Chairman Tarique Rahman, former state minister Lutfozzaman Babar, and others in two cases related to the August 21 grenade attack.

A six-member bench of the Appellate Division of the SC headed by Chief Justice Syed Refaat Ahmed fixed the date after hearing arguments on the appeals for five days.

Earlier in the day, defence lawyer Mohammad Shishir Manir prayed to the apex court to dismiss the appeals and to uphold the HC verdict.

It appears from the confessional statements that the accused were brutally tortured in the taskforce for interrogation (TFI) cell and this type of incidences are rampant and hence directions should be given to formulate guidelines for recording confessional statements such as presence of lawyer and audio-video recording of confessional statements, the lawyer told the apex court.

The investigation agencies were misused

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DENGUE SURGE

Delayed hospitalisation driving up fatalities

HELEMUL ALAM

With five new dengue-related deaths reported yesterday, the nationwide death toll this year has climbed to 110, more than half of them from Dhaka South City Corporation (DSCC) areas.

According to the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS), of the five latest deaths, three occurred in DSCC and two in Rajshahi division.

So far this year, 18 deaths have been reported from Barishal division, 17 from Chattogram, 11 from Dhaka North City Corporation, six from Rajshahi, five from Khulna, and one each from Mymensingh and areas of Dhaka outside the two city corporations.

Dr HM Nazmul Ahsan, associate professor at Shaheed Suhrawardy Medical College Hospital, identified delayed hospitalisation as one of the main reasons for the higher fatality rate this year.

"Although the number of dengue cases is slightly lower than in previous years, deaths are higher because people are paying less attention to dengue amid the presence of other viruses," he said.

For instance, out of 10 patients with viral fever, eight are currently found to have chikungunya and only two dengue. "Because of this, many patients do not take dengue seriously and reach hospitals late, often already in a critical stage," Dr Ahsan explained.

At present, four viral infections -- influenza, dengue, chikungunya, and Covid-19 -- are circulating in the country, according to medical experts.

"Many patients fail to recognise warning signs such as severe abdominal pain, difficulty breathing, bleeding, extreme fatigue, or a sharp drop in urination or platelet count. By the time they arrive at hospitals, their condition is often critical."

record the highest number of deaths, Dr Ahsan said many critically ill patients are referred from outside Dhaka to major hospitals in the city.

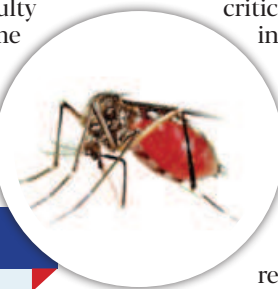
"When these patients arrive, their condition is often already critical. They are infected outside the capital but die in Dhaka hospitals, which may explain the higher death count reported here," he said.

He said delays in referral are another major factor. "A patient from Barishal or other distant districts may need five to six hours just to reach a Dhaka hospital and another hour for admission. If the patient is already in shock, this delay can be fatal," he said.

Dr Ahsan urged district-level hospitals to strictly follow the national dengue treatment guidelines and treat patients locally.

Public health expert Mushtaq Hussain echoed the call for earlier treatment and stronger local healthcare capacity.

He stressed the need to strengthen secondary care hospitals for vulnerable groups such as elderly patients, infants, and those with comorbidities, so they can be stabilised before being referred to tertiary hospitals.



AT A GLANCE

- 5 new dengue deaths in a day
- Death toll climbs to 110 this year
- Over half of deaths in DSCC areas
- Four viral infections now circulating

TK 400CR GRAFT
CID sues Al-Aqaba Cooperative directors

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Criminal Investigation Department has filed a case against the directors of Al-Aqaba Multipurpose Cooperative Society for allegedly embezzling nearly Tk 400 crore from customers. The case has been filed under the Money Laundering Act.

In a press release yesterday, CID special superintendent of Police (Media) Jasim Uddin Khan confirmed that the cooperative lured customers by promising higher profits than banks and collected substantial amounts of money through deceitful means.

According to the press release, the cooperatives operated under registrations from the Madarganj Upazila Cooperative Office in Jamalpur and carried out banking activities under different cooperative banners.

Among them, Al-Aqaba Multipurpose Cooperative Society Limited of Madarganj is notable for attracting customers from Jamalpur and surrounding districts by offering high short-term returns.

The CID statement mentioned that the cooperative reportedly collected funds from around 13,000 to 14,000 customers, promising monthly returns of Tk 1,200 to Tk 1,500 per lakh.

Initially, limited payments were made to maintain credibility, but later the cooperative stopped payouts. The owners and officials then locked the offices and went into hiding.

"Investigations revealed that the directors embezzled nearly Tk 400 crore and laundered the money by purchasing properties under their own names, reportedly generating 3,113 decimals of land in assets.



Army chief leaves for four-day visit to China

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Chief of Army Staff General Waker-Uz-Zaman left Dhaka yesterday morning for a four-day state visit to China.

According to an Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) statement, he will hold courtesy meetings with senior civilian and military officials in Beijing and discuss ways to enhance bilateral military cooperation.

General Waker is scheduled to return home on August 27.

EXPLOSIVES CASE
Fakhrul, 64 BNP leaders, activists acquitted

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka tribunal yesterday relieved 65 leaders and activists of BNP and its front organisations, including its Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir after accepting the probe report in a case filed under the explosives act.

Standing committee members Gayeshwar Chandra Roy, Amir Khasru Mahmud Chowdhury, Vice Chairman Shamsuzzaman Dudu, Barkat Ullah Bulu, former Home Minister Altaf Hossain Chowdhury, Joint Secretary General Barrister AM Mahbub Uddin Khokon, former BNP Chief Whip Md Zainul Abdin Farooque, Engineer Ishraque Hossain, a member of BNP Chairperson's Foreign Affairs Advisory Committee, and Barrister Nasir Uddin Ashim were also relieved.

Judge Md Zakir Hossain Galib of Dhaka Metropolitan Special Tribunal-1 passed the order.

According to the case statement, it was alleged that leaders and activists came to the Ramna Police Station area to attend a pre-announced BNP rally in the capital on October 28 of 2023. During this time, they damaged vehicles and obstructed policemen from discharging their duties.

Face people's verdict through politics, not tactics
Tarique urges parties

UNB, Dhaka

Stating that some political parties are resorting to unfair tactics to block his party's victory in the next election, BNP Acting Chairman Tarique Rahman yesterday urged all to confront politics with politics instead of preventing people from giving their verdict.

While virtually exchanging greetings with Hindu communities, he also sought their support and active cooperation for his party in the upcoming national election. "It is a big opportunity to build a safe Bangladesh for the future generation," he said.

The Bangladesh Hindu-Buddha-Christian Kalyan Front arranged the programme at the Institution of Engineers, Bangladesh, marking Janmashtami, the birth of Lord Krishna.

"There are still some parties and quarters who fear that if the election is held, people will vote for BNP to form the government. Out of this fear, they are resorting to evil tactics and setting conditions to obstruct BNP's victory," he added.

"I would like to draw their attention by saying -- confront politics with politics. Put your trust and confidence in people's strength. If BNP's victory truly comes from the people, then do not block the people's right to give their mandate just to resist BNP's triumph," he said.

Tarique said his party believes the Proportional Representation system of election is still not suitable for Bangladesh, considering its socio-economic, geographic, and political realities.

"People have the right to know who they are voting for and which individual is being elected as their representative in Parliament. But under the PR system, voters have no clear way of knowing exactly which person is being elected," he said.



The Daily Star and ActionAid Bangladesh are jointly organising Season 4 of "Our Planet, Our Responsibility". A Mentoring session was held for the nine finalist teams selected under three categories -- Green Business, Water Rights, and Energy Transition -- at the capital's The Daily Star Centre yesterday. On August 23, the finalist teams will present their ideas to the judges as they compete for the championship title.

PHOTO: STAR