

# Saifur urges WFP to integrate aid with poverty reduction

UNB, Dhaka

Finance Minister Saifur Rahman yesterday urged a delegation from UN World Food Programme (WFP) to integrate their assistance with the government's poverty reduction programme under I-PRSP.

"We want to increase resources... it will be good to include their resources in the I-PRSP," he told newsmen after a meeting with the delegation.

The delegation members, comprising the Chief of Staff and

Director (Administration) of the Office of the Executive Director from Rome Michael B Stayton and Regional Director from Bangkok Anthony N Banbury, made a courtesy call on the minister at his secretariat office.

WFP Representative in Bangladesh Douglas Casson Courts was also present at the meeting where the delegates briefed the minister on the priority and major interventions of the WFP country programme.

The minister sought technologi-

cal support from the WFP and FAO to give a boost to production in the government's priority areas of agriculture and agro-processing.

He apprised them of the government's strategies to develop the sector for generating employment and reducing poverty.

Meanwhile, a WFP statement said the visiting delegates of the UN World Food Programme stressed the need for strong partnership and alliance building to fight hunger.

During the discussion, they reaffirmed their commitment to

extending cooperation to Bangladesh in achieving one of the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) -- bring down to "half the hunger in Bangladesh by 2015".

They appreciated the role of government in implementing the food aid programmes, targeting the most vulnerable poor women across the country.

To achieve the MDG, WFP stressed strong partnership and building alliance among various development partners, UN agencies, donors and the government.

The delegates also appreciated the government for sharing 30 per cent of total resources used for the Vulnerable Group Development (VGD) programme, the world's largest WFP-assisted development programme in Bangladesh.

The delegation members emphasised stronger collaboration with the government in implementing WFP's ongoing School Feeding Programme, which has been proved to be a very successful intervention.

Appreciating WFP assistance to the hardcore poor, the minister underlined the importance of linking food security and school feeding programme with the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP).

The delegation left Dhaka yesterday afternoon ending a three-day good will visit to Bangladesh. They visited different WFP-aided government programmes at the field level.



PHOTO: PID

Chief of Staff and Director (Administration) of World Food Programme Michael B Stayton called on Finance Minister Saifur Rahman at his secretariat office yesterday.

## Ctg lawyers boycott courts

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Lawyers in Chittagong yesterday boycotted the courts to express their solidarity with the countrywide protest programme of the Six-Point Demand Implementation Committee.

All activities in different courts of the port city remained suspended as a result of the boycott, sources said.

A meeting was held at the Chittagong District Bar Council office at noon with council President Ferdous Ahmad in the chair.

Speakers at the meeting demanded immediate repeal of the proposed amendment to Bar Council Rules 1972, and Code of Civil Procedure.



PHOTO: PID

Foreign Minister of Pakistan Khurshid Mahmud Kasuri called on President Iajuddin Ahmed at Bangabhaban yesterday.

## Police assault on journalist condemned

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

President of Bangladesh Federal Union of Journalist (BFUJ) Iqbal Sobhan Chowdhury and Secretary General Akhtar Ahmed Khan and President of Dhaka Union of Journalist (DUJ) Abdul Jalil Bhuiyan and General Secretary Omar Faruk yesterday condemned the police assault on Ashok Kumar Singh, senior sub-editor of the Ittefaq.

In a joint statement, BFUJ and DUJ leaders demanded exemplary punishment to Police Sergeant Mohammad Ullah who physically assaulted Ashok.

They said if proper action is not taken against the police officer concerned, the journalist community would take tough programme.

## Khaleda greets Bhutanese PM

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia has congratulated new Bhutanese Prime Minister Lyonpo Jigmi Y Thinley on his assumption of office.

"It gives me immense pleasure to convey you our heartiest congratulations on your assumption of office of Prime Minister of Bhutan," she said in a message to Lyonpo Jigmi Y Thinley yesterday.

Khaleda Zia said Bangladesh highly values relation with Bhutan and looks forward to working in close cooperation, according to a handout.

# Bangladesh to participate in next SAARC summit

## President tells Pak FM

UNB, Dhaka

President Iajuddin Ahmed yesterday hoped that Bangladesh and Pakistan would cooperate each other in the fields of trade and education.

The President made the observations when Pakistan Foreign Minister Mian Khurshid Mahmud Kasuri called on him at

Bangabhaban.

He said Dhaka and Islamabad can also initiate linkage programme in the university level and cooperate among the scientists. He said Bangladesh would participate in the SAARC summit to be held in Islamabad January next.

Foreign Minister Kasuri said SAARC has potential for ensuring peace and development and better cooperation among the member

countries.

He reiterated Pakistan's support to Bangladesh's candidature to the post of OIC secretary general.

A Bangabhaban press release said Pakistan High Commissioner Iqbal Ahmed Khan, Secretary to the President M Anisul Huq Chowdhury and Foreign Secretary Shamsur Mobin Chowdhury were present.

# 'Genetically modified seeds may pose threat to health'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Speakers at a seminar here yesterday called for comprehensive studies on applications and ultimate implications of genetically modified technology before introducing it in the agriculture sector.

They apprehended that the extensive use of genetically modified seeds for increased production would create an adverse affect on bio-diversity and human health.

It will also make the farmers of developing countries hostage in the hands of powerful seed producers of developed countries, the speakers added.

The seminar on 'Genetically modified technology in food security and rights of the consumers' was organised by the local chapter of Consumers Association of Bangladesh (CAB) at the conference room of Chittagong Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CCCI).

CCCI President Amir Humayun Mahmud Chowdhury inaugurated the seminar chaired by S M Nazer Hossain, president of CAB local unit.

CCCI Senior Vice-President Ershadullah, Chief Scientific Officer of Bangladesh Agriculture Research Institute, Hathazari A F M

Ekrumul Haque, ADAB Chittagong Chairperson Monowara Begum, President of the Dokaan Malik Samity Federation Salauddin, member-secretary of CAB Chittagong chapter Kazi Iqbal Bahar Sabery and journalists M Nasirul Haque and Nazimuddin Shayamol took part in the discussion.

CAB Central Treasurer Khalilur Rahman Sajal presented the keynote paper.

Amir Humayun Mahmud Chowdhury said we must take into account the economic, environmental and health factors before

introducing genetically modified technology in our agriculture sector.

He stressed the need for proper dissemination of information about the possible outcome of this latest innovation.

Khalilur Rahman Sajal in his keynote paper said a small syndicate of multi-national companies, engaged in seed and agro-chemical business, are pursuing a hectic campaign in favour of genetically modified technology by alluring the farmers of double production for controlling the global market.

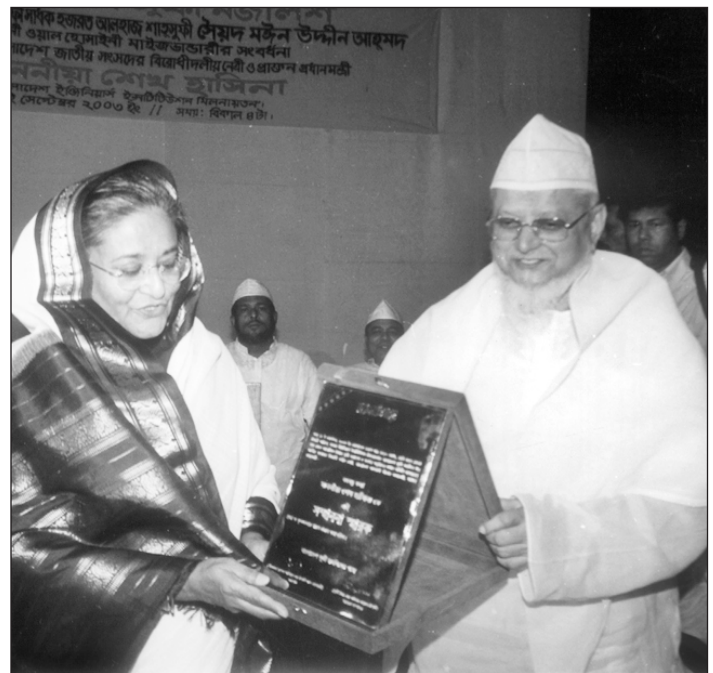


PHOTO: STAR

Alhaj Shah Sufi Syed Moinuddin Ahmad presents a crest to Leader of the Opposition in Parliament and Awami League president Sheikh Hasina at a reception ceremony at the Engineers' Institute auditorium yesterday. The Bangladesh Sufi Majlish organised the function to accord reception to Syed Moinuddin Ahmad.

# Landlessness, unemployment leave indigenous people backward

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Landlessness, lack of employment and absence of diversified livelihood options have put indigenous people in a backward position compared to other communities in the country, according to a study released yesterday.

The study also revealed that inadequate health service and lack of awareness about formal education played a role in keeping the indigenous people in lower position in the society.

The Research and Development Collective (RDC) and Oxfam Great Britain (GB) jointly conducted the study.

The objective of the study was to disseminate information about the indigenous people, said Farid Hasan Ahmed, country programme manager of Oxfam GB.

He called for concerted efforts involving people from all strata of society to improve the social and

economic conditions of the indigenous people.

Presenting the research work, Professor Mesbah Kamal of Dhaka University recommended that the meritorious students from indigenous backgrounds should be provided with scholarships.

Deputy Minister for CHT Affairs Moni Swapan Dewan said the politicians are to blame for the problems as they seem indifferent to

the woes of the indigenous people.

"I am sceptical whether the problems that have been identified and the recommendations would reach the government," he added.

Presided over by Dr HKS Arefin, professor of anthropology, DU, the function was addressed by Eshani Chakrabarti of sociology department, DU, Abu Rakib and Salma Akther.

## Workshop on internet broadcasting

BSS, Dhaka

A five-day training workshop on "Internet Broadcasting" ended at the National Institute of Mass Communication (NIMC) yesterday giving importance to continued training on latest technology.

Information Secretary Nazmul Alam Siddiqui distributed certificates among the participants of the workshop jointly organised

by the NIMC and the Asia-Pacific Institute for Broadcasting Development AIBD.

The workshop was participated by broadcasters from BT, Bangladesh Betar, Channel "I". Director General of the NIMC Syed Shujauddin Ahmed chaired the concluding session. The workshop was conducted by AIBD consultant Dr Hara Prasad Paddy.

## JS panel of chairmen nominated

UNB, Dhaka

Speaker Jamiruddin Sircar yesterday nominated five members for the panel of chairmen, who will preside over the current session of Parliament in the absence of the Speaker and the Deputy Speaker.

Members of the panel: Barrister Ziaur Rahman Khan, Prof Md Shahjahan Mia, Mozahar Hossain, Shah Md Ruhul Quddus and Prof Dr Md Serajul Akbar.

## JS passes condolence motion

UNB, Dhaka

Parliament yesterday adopted a motion condoling the death of former minister Begum Nurjahan Murshid, former provincial assembly member Mozammel Hossain and former MP Mozammel Hossain Sikder.

The House unanimously passed the condolence motion, which was moved by Speaker Jamiruddin Sircar.

A prayer for the salvation of the departed souls was also held in the House. Jamaat MP Maulana Delwar Hossain Saidee led the 'munajat' (prayer).

## New scholarship at DU Islamic studies deptt

DU CORRESPONDENT

A new scholarship was launched in Islamic studies department of Dhaka University yesterday.

It is named as 'Mouli Ishak Ali Khan and Baritan Nessa Khan scholarship', says a press release.

Every year, two students who will secure highest marks in their second year, will receive TK 200 per month for one year.

The scholarship has been launched in memory of late Mouli Ishak Ali Khan and Baritan Nessa Khan.

Their son Khan Mahmudul Haque handed over a check for TK one lakh to Prof AHM Mujtaba Hossain, chairman of the Islamic studies department.

# UN team in city to talk on troops for Liberia

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A three-member team of the United Nations (UN) Peacekeeping Department yesterday arrived in the city to assess the feasibility of sending a Bangladesh military contingent to Liberia.

The team members -- Commander Roy Tore Mentzen, Ohyoung Kwon and Veronica A Carter -- will visit the Dhaka, Bogra and Rajendrapur cantonments.

The team will also inspect different equipment and witness training activities and preparations of the infantry battalions, engineers unit, logistic unit and medical unit, which are scheduled to join the UN peacekeeping mission in Liberia.

Bangladesh is preparing a brigade group to take part in the mission in response to the request of the UN, a press release of the Inter-services Public Relations said.

This assessment process is the first step to join any UN peacekeep-

ing mission around the globe, the press release added.

The delegation team is expected to leave on September 16.

## Attack on tempo stand in Barisal

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barisal

A gang of hoodlums set fire to a tempo and damaged another at the Battala tempo stand near Battala police post during a raid with bombs on Wednesday night.

Police recovered two explosives from the scene after the attackers fled away.

Protesting the attack, locals took out a procession yesterday and demanded punishment to those involved in the incident.

Located on a busy road, the tempo stand was set up without any permission from the authorities.

In a similar attack about a week ago, at least three tempos were damaged.



PHOTO: STAR

The Bangladesh Anti-Tobacco Jote stages a sit-in at Mukhtangan yesterday demanding enactment of a tobacco control law.