

ATOMIC ENERGY COMMISSION

Working amid dearth of manpower, equipment

NOVERA DEEPIA

The Bangladesh Atomic Energy Commission (BAEC) is struggling to cope with the number of projects and other tasks that have uncontrollably increased with the limited manpower, equipment and raw materials they have at hand.

"Most of the current projects are running smoothly. But as a whole, the service volume of the commission is too big compared to the limited scientists, equipment and raw materials required," said Muhammad Rokunuddin, project director of the Biological Science Department.

Established in 1973, BAEC has been involved in the implementation of 17 development projects among which 13 are on going. The other four are already completed.

Commission sources said that they have been providing services to 1,60,000 patients in different hospitals of the country by standardising radiation monitoring instruments, and instruments used in cancer treatment, sterilisation and other surgical and medical instruments.

The commission also provides therapeutic services to different critically diseased patients.

"If the present number of

people and the budget allocation is not increased, the services that the commission provides would decline very soon," said a scientist of the commission, on condition of anonymity.

Role and Responsibility of Atomic Energy Commission: The BAEC has the tradition and experience in research and development activities in Nuclear Science and Technology and other related fields over three decades. It has offered a wide range of opportunities for the application of this frontier science in various fields of economic development, including power generation, health and medicine, analytical chemistry and materials development, materials testing and quality control, preservation of food and other essential products, radiation processing technology for quality products, process control and instrumentation, environmental studies and many other fields of applied and fundamental research.

The primary objectives of BAEC are promotion of the peaceful uses of atomic energy in agriculture, medicine and industry development of related technology like electronics, computer, material sciences; planning, implementation and operation of nuclear power station; service in the sterilization of medical products, food preservation, non-destructive

testing, elemental analysis, hydrology etc and discharge of international obligations.

Present condition of nuclear facilities in Bangladesh is very bright. Both sealed and unsealed sources of radioactive materials and radiation producing devices are being increasingly used both in the private and public sectors.

Mia Mustaque Ahmed, Secretary, Ministry of Science and Information & Communication Technology, said that they have taken measures like new recruitments for specific projects, to cover up the shortage of equipment and manpower.

"We will employ efficient people for the new projects and import some equipment very soon for the projects," he said.

"We hope then to find solutions for the existing workload and contain the present crisis," he added.

CS Karim, chairman of the commission was unavailable to comment on the issue as he is indisposed and in hospital with complications of the gall bladder. When other officials were contacted, they refused to talk.

"We have no permission to talk to the press," one said.

Speakers at seminar emphasise on English for ICT, literature

CITY CORRESPONDENT

A rising compulsion in study of English as a mean of transferring knowledge and skill instead of serving mere colonial purposes has resulted in new tensions and concerns in the South Asian region, said professors of English literature and language from across the region.

Hybridity, diasporas or the "chutnification of the language" are some of the consequences of being between languages, and South Asian writing in English and English language teaching in Bangladesh, which is language of officialdom, trade, commerce and even of politics have all registered traumas and creative frissons characterising linguistic and pedagogical situation in the region they said at an international conference organised by English department of East West University in the city on Saturday.

A host of English professors from home and abroad took part in the two-day conference titled "Passages - English Studies in the Region" that ended yesterday.

The English colonisers had two purposes of introducing English in the British India. One is 'subordinating and the other is widening,' said Professor Serajul Islam Chowdhury, who was the chief guest.

"Now is the time to ask ourselves whether we must stop serving the subordinating purpose in a struggle against the capitalist control of the academic world," he said.

"But deciding alone is not sufficient to serve the widening purpose," Islam said. "We must play a role in the struggle against capitalist control," he added.

"English is being placed as a language of conveying knowledge of Information and Communication Technology (ICT)," said the chair of English department, Brac University, Dr Firdous Azim presenting her perspective on problems of English Studies in Bangladesh.

Professor Krishna Sen from University of Kolkata, India, said that de-colonisation must be seen in as a 21st century perspective.

"We have to forge our own literary theory developing our

south Asian perspective," Sen said.

"English is becoming a language of ICT media and cyber," said Prof Syed Manzoorul Islam, of Dhaka University's (DU) English department.

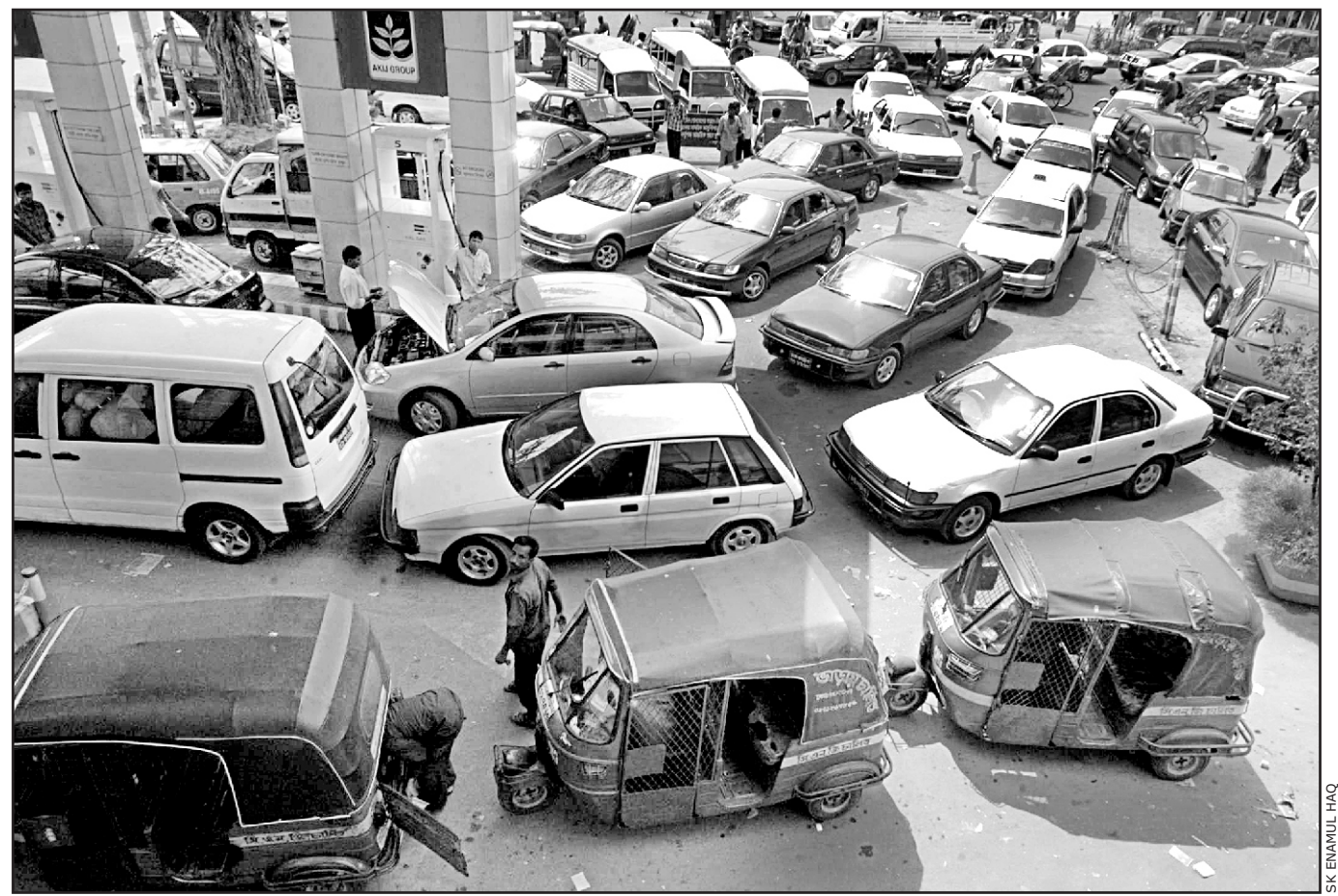
Professor Kailash C. Baral of Northeast Campus of CIEFL in Shillong spoke on Postcolonial Fiction and the Chutnification of the English Language, Urbashi Barat from Rani Durgavati University in Jabalpur, India spoke on English Literature in the

South Asian Post Graduate Classroom. Helen Sim and Dr Raja Maznah Raja Hussain from University of Malaysia spoke on SMS (Short Messaging Service), Breaking in Language Learning among others on the first day.

A creative writing session took place on Saturday with Professors Kaiser Huq, Syed Manzoorul Islam, Niaz Zaman, and Nuzhat Amin, Rumana Siddique and Batool Sarwar from DU, Hasan Al Zayed and Rubana Ahmed from East West university,

Khademul Islam from The Daily Star.

Hafiz Abid Masood from International Islamic University, Islamabad, Pakistan spoke on English Studies in Pakistan and Dr Antonia Navarro-Tejero from Universidad de Cordoba, Spain spoke on Information Access and Globalisation while others spoke on various other issues.



Insufficient gas pressure and haphazard load shedding has resulted in long lines of vehicles at CNG re-filling stations as can be seen in this picture taken at a station in Tejgaon.

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