

Wanted a comprehensive development plan Potentials of Greater Sylhet yet to be exploited

By Staff Correspondent

The greater Sylhet districts of Habiganj, Maulvibazar, Sunamganj and Sylhet are beset with numerous problems which are hampering the growth and development of this economically important region.

Inadequate educational facilities, lack of proper utility services and civic amenities, poor transportation and communication facilities, absence of irrigation and flood control programme and the total lack of incentives for industrialisation are stalling the overall growth of the region, according to Mr. E. A. Choudhury, former president of the Jalalabad Association in Dhaka. In a recent interview with The Daily Star, he said that over the years the region has been to a large extent neglected by the policy-makers, although the region holds great potentials.

Being extremely rich in agricultural and other natural resources, the greater Sylhet region contributes significantly to the national economy. Earnings from the region's tea plantations is one of the mainstays of the country's export sector. Natural gas and condensate petroleum from the region meets a good portion of the nation's energy needs. Building materials like boulders and clinkers also come from this region. The region is also rich in forestry, fishery and agricultural resources. In addition, a large number of people from the greater Sylhet districts live abroad, remitting huge amount of foreign exchange every year. Considering the economic importance of the region one would have expected development projects to be undertaken to enhance and fully utilize the region's potentials.

However, over the years, infrastructural and industrial development in the region has been negligible and inadequate, pointed out Mr Choudhury, currently the chairman of Pubali Bank Ltd. and a former Inspector General of Police.

Problems in the education sector of the region are acute, he noted. The existing primary and secondary schools lack adequate facilities and equipments and most of them are in urgent need of repairs. Overcrowding in the schools is a perennial problem, thus more schools need to be established to accommodate the increasing influx of students. Furthermore, there is a need to establish polytechnic schools or vocational training centres in the districts of the region.

Civic life in the four district towns are far from comfortable. Poor utility services, a virtual absence of civic amenities and narrow streets needing repairwork are common problems in these towns. There are no parks in Sylhet town, yet the district jail occupies a vast area of the central part of the town.

The road and railway transportation network is also in poor condition. No new roads have been built in the region for a long period of time and most of the existing roads in the region are badly in need of repairs. "The Dhaka-Sylhet road is probably the worst among the highways of Bangladesh," commented Mr Choudhury.

He said that in spite of past assurances of the government, the Osmani Airport in Sylhet is yet to be made into an international airport for the convenience of the large number of foreign travellers of the region.

The supply of electricity is also grossly inadequate in the greater Sylhet region, he pointed out. Irregular supply of electricity hampers production in existing industries and deters further industrialisation. Surprisingly, the region also has been left out of the gas distribution network to a large extent, although the network has been extended to more distant parts of the country. Mr Choudhury noted.

In the absence of a comprehensive irrigation and flood control programme in the greater Sylhet area, large amount of land is lost due to river erosion, while agriculture suffers during the dry season.

There are a number of historical places of importance and numerous scenic places in greater Sylhet which can be developed and promoted for tourism, Mr Choudhury remarked.

He said that a comprehensive development plan for the greater Sylhet district should be undertaken, alongwith favourable incentives for industrialisation, for the overall development of the region.



Acting Jatiya Party Chairman Mizanur Rahman Chowdhury addressing a gathering of the newly elected MPs of the Party at Gulshan on Thursday. Story on Page 1 —Star photo

Particulars of Bangladeshis from Kuwait sought

The Bangladeshi nationals who returned home after the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait last August but did not furnish their full particulars at the time of disembarkation have been requested to do so in writing personally to the nearest district employment and manpower offices (Employment Exchanges), an official handout said, reports BSS.

The following particulars will have to be furnished: name, father's name, present address, permanent address, age, passport number with date and place of issue, date of arrival in Bangladesh, name of the employer/organisation with full particulars including Post Box No. and Telephone No., name of the post and residence/work permit number.

Contributions sought

'Gulshan'—a social, cultural and literary periodical will come out soon. Emdad Hossain Bhuiyan, Editor of the planned journal requested the interested writers to send poems, story and contemporary article either in English or in Bengali to the Editor at his Gulshan house, P.O. Bara Berad, Gulshan, Dhaka - 1212 by Mar 20.

Eden College viva voce exam Mar 14

Viva voce examination of MA (Final year) (traditional 1987) and BA Honours (traditional 1988) of Bengal Department of Eden College will be held at 9 am on March 14 and 15 respectively at room number 2071 of Dhaka University Arts Faculty.

Rural doctors greet BNP

Bangladesh Palli Chikishhok Association felicitated BNP for its victory in the just concluded Parliamentary election. In a Press release by Dr. Nazimuddin Ahmed, President of the association and Enayetuddin, Organising Secretary conveyed the greetings to the Joint Secretary General of BNP A Matin Chowdhury and Organising Secretary Brigadier (Rtd.) Hannan Shah.

The association launched its member-raising week on Thursday.

Kuwait thanks Dhaka for stand against aggression

Ambassador K M Shehabuddin leaves today (March 8) for Kuwait to resume the function of the country's mission in the Sheikhdom, just liberated from the 7-month Iraqi occupation, reports UNB.

He will be accompanied by four officials - two counsellors, one First Secretary and one Labour Attache.

Shehabuddin is expected to carry a message from Acting President Justice Shahabuddin Ahmed for Ameer of Kuwait Sheikh Jaber Al Ahmed Al Sabah.

Ambassador Shehabuddin expressed satisfaction in returning to the liberated Kuwait and said "I shall try my best to further strengthen the relations between the two fraternal countries in all fields of co-operation".

"Kuwait is one of our best friends", he observed.

Kuwaiti Ambassador to Bangladesh Muhammad Ibrahim Al Najran on Monday delivered a message from the Ameer to the Acting President. The Ameer, according to the message expressed thanks and gratitude for Bangladesh's firm stand in condemning the

Iraqi aggression and seeking the liberation of the Emirate.

Bangladesh suspended the function of its embassy in Kuwait City mid September last year following the occupation and annexation of the Sheikhdom by Iraq.

Nagarik Parishad thanks people

Bangladesh Nagarik Parishad, a non-political organisation of different professional groups, has congratulated the people of the country for electing the nationalist forces in the parliamentary election, reports BSS.

Dr. Golam Hossain, President of the Parishad thanked the Acting President, his Council of Advisers and concerned officers and employees for the successful completion of the Jatiya Sangsad polls.

The Parishad called upon the people to remain alert against any conspiracy to disrupt democratic process already started through holding a free and fair election.

Consensus on education policy needed

By BUET Correspondent

Speakers at a seminar on "Higher education in Bangladesh: crisis and alleviation", stressed the need for a national consensus on the education policy in resolving the crisis in higher education.

The seminar organized by World University Service (WUS), was addressed by Dr Abdullah Al-Muti Sharfuddin as chief guest and Dr Fazlul Bari, Prof. Mosharrar Hussain Khan, Prof. Harunur Rashid, Prof. Bazlur Rahman Khan and Dr. Mahfuzul Hoq with Prof. Amanullah Ahmed, Vice-Chancellor of Rajshahi University in the chair.

Dr. Abdullah Al-Muti said that only independence or advancement of democracy could not provide the nations progress unless the excellence of human resources was updated.

Dr. Fazlul Bari said that the solution of crisis in higher education might be sought through structural changes by identifying draw backs in the education system.

Prof. Mosharrar Hussain Khan, Vice-Chancellor of BUET stressed the need for proper utilization of human resources providing the top priority to the education sector.

Dr. Iqbal Mahmud read out the key note paper in the seminar suggesting the way of

resolving the crisis and ensuring excellence in teaching and academic working environment.

Removal of UZ Magistrate demanded

A protest rally was held at Daudkandi under Comilla demanding the removal of Upazila Magistrate, said a Press release today.

Presided over by Jamshed Ali, President of Durniti Ussed Committee (Corruption Elimination Committee) the meeting termed the Magistrate as 'corrupt'.

Plea to relocate coin-box phone

Mahbubuddin Chowdhury, President of the International Pen-Pals Club in a statement condemned the withdrawal of the coin box telephone from Hari Charan Roy Road, Faridabad at Dhaka operating under their supervision as this coin box was of immense help to the local people.

Mr. Mahbub urged the T & T Board to re-fix the coin box immediately, says a press release.

International Women's Day today

Equal rights to be stressed

The International Women's Day will be observed throughout the country today (March 8) as elsewhere in the world, reports.

Refugee women is the theme of the Day and of the entire year 1991, in acknowledgement of the United Nations High Commission for Refugee's (UNHCR) 40th anniversary.

The International Women's Day is observed worldwide in accordance with a resolution adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 1977.

The date March 8 was chosen to commemorate the historic strike on the Day in 1957 by a group of New York garment workers protesting their working conditions.

In a message on the eve of the Day, UN Secretary General, Javier Perez De Cuellar called upon the women who are among the least fortunate to encourage the international community to do its utmost to enable all women to enjoy equality, development and peace within the framework established by the UN.

In observance of the Day in Dhaka, the International Women's Day Observation Committee 1991 will hold a procession today at 9.30 a.m. from the Dhanmondi Club play ground. The procession will terminate at the Sangsad Bhavan premises by announcing a charter of demands.

Bangladesh National Women's Lawyers' Association, in cooperation with UNIC, will organise a seminar on March

11 at 4.30 p.m. at the UNIC premises.

Dr. Syeda Firoza Begum will be the chief guest on the occasion while UNDP resident representative W. Temple will be the special guest.

Training course on industrial finance ends

A 15-day long regular training course on 'Industrial Finance', conducted by the Bangladesh Institute of Bank Management (BIBM), ended in Dhaka on Thursday, reports BSS.

Twenty six officers from different banks and financial institutions took part in the course.

The course was designed to develop knowledge and skills in identification, formulation, appraisal and follow-up of industrial projects, according to a press release.

A. B. M. Mahbubul Amin Khan, Director, BIBM, presided over the concluding session and gave away the certificates among the participants.

Jessore Zilla School ex-students

A meeting of the ex-students of Jessore Zilla School will be held at 4 pm today (Friday) at Hotel D Palace near Mouchak Market in the city, says a press release.

All ex-students of the institute have been requested to attend the meeting.

37 intellectuals plead for a BNP govt

Thirty-seven intellectuals of the country on Thursday said formation of Council of Ministers of the President by a party which secured majority seats in the election would be considered as showing respect to the verdict of the people, reports BSS.

Jamaat meet today

By Staff Correspondent
The meeting of the Central Working Council of Jamaat-e-Islami will be held today (Friday).

A press release of the party said the meeting of the Central Majlis-e-Sura will be held on Sunday.

In a joint statement they said Bangladesh Nationalist Party has emerged as a single majority party in the polls.

The joint statement was issued, among others, by Dr Sirajul Islam Chowdhury, Professor of English, Dr. Anwarullah Chowdhury, Dean of the Social Science, Mr. S. M.

A. Faiz, Chairman, Department of Social Science, Dr Shamsur Ali, Professor of Physics, Dr Tauhidul Anwar, Associate Professor of the Department of Mass Communication and Journalism and Dr Saidur Rahman, Professor of the Department of Bangla of the Dhaka University.

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Dateline Chittagong

'Feb 27 polls an example'

CHITTAGONG, Mar 7 : The British High Commissioner in Bangladesh, Mr. Colin Henry Impre said here Wednesday that Bangladesh had set a new example by holding a free, fair and impartial parliamentary election on February 27 in spite of an instable world situation created by the Gulf war, reports BSS.

He expressed the hope that the parliamentary election would favourably influence the future economic development of Bangladesh.

Mr. Impre said this during his meeting with Chittagong Chamber of Commerce and Industries President Amir Khashru Mahmud Chowdhury at the Chamber Building, a Chamber press release said.

The British High Commissioner said that Bangladesh had enough resources and her productive forces were industrious and as such the country could attain

economic prosperity, he said. Bangladesh had already made significant advancement in garments, shrimps, fashion wear and textiles. He suggested use of French and German languages side by side English in Bangladesh export trade and further activation of Bangladesh embassies abroad for attracting foreign investment in the country.

Mr. Amir Khashru said that open market economy was indispensable for a developing country like Bangladesh for which price support for agriculture, its over all infrastructural development and long term fiscal policy had to be introduced.

Mr. Khashru called upon the government to set up a cell for monitoring the number of Bangladeshis returning to Kuwait.

Chittagong Sammita Peshajibi Sangram Parishad Wednesday said that parli-

mentary election on February 27 was free and fair.

The Parishad also congratulated leaders of Bangladesh Nationalist Party to achieve single majority in the election and called upon them to honour the joint declaration of the three Alliances signed on November 19 last by establishing parliamentary system of government.

In a meeting of the Parishad held here Wednesday with Prof Abdul Mannan, Convener of the Parishad in the chair, the speakers also expressed concern at the reported post-poll violence at different areas of the country. They urged the concerned authorities to check such violence.

Among others, Advocate Ibrahim Hussain Babul, Dr. Mamtazuddin Patwary, Akhtarunnabi, Anjan Sen, Dr. A. Q. M. Sirajul Hoq and Advocate Ranadas Gupta addressed the meeting.

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