

Political direction needed to rout corruption: Saifur

Finance Minister M Saifur Rahman Friday stressed the need for an honest, efficient and corruption-free administration to ensure desired progress and prosperity of the country, reports BSS.

Giving an in-depth analysis of the existing socio-economic structure, the Finance Minister told a seminar on "Problems and solutions of youths and the role of government and private sector" here that the immediate need of the hour was a "political direction" to wipe out the corruption and inefficiency which existed almost in all sectors.

He felt that the present society, during last nine years of autocracy and corruption, has become so inefficient and corruption-oriented that it has turned difficult to handle the situation. But he expressed the hope that if the government took the course of "self-criticism" and "soul searching" it would not be very difficult to overcome the long accumulated problems and lead the nation to its cherished goals.

The seminar was organised by the Youth Development Directorate in observance of "National Youth Day, 1991 at Engineers Institute. It was presided over by its director Abdus Sobhan. The main paper of the seminar was presented by Dr Selim Zahar of Dhaka University, on which a number of persons participated in the discussions.

Explaining the existing situation Saifur Rahman observed that because of the disparity — with one section accumulating huge wealth and other being deprived — the society was imbalanced. In this respect he pointed out, while richer sections of the society were not repaying their huge bank loan, the poorer sections are showing good response in returning the borrowed money from the banks.

The Finance Minister also mentioned that in the name of projects, programmes and trainings hundreds of thou-

sands of Takas are being spoiled, while a slightest utilisation of the amount would have ushered in a new era for the country. To overcome these problems, he felt the need for an honest and dynamic administration, which he said was possible under this democratically elected government.

Saying that the whole society has become stagnant, the Finance Minister said the rule of autocracy and the failures of the past leaderships was responsible for the existing situation, which the democratic government was now facing. He also felt that there should be a "basic change" of the mentality of the people and there must be a "moral re-generation" to make the society mobile towards better prospect.

Showing instances from several South-East Asian countries, including Thailand, he said one of the basic reasons why Thailand could emerge as a powerful country has been the higher rate literacy.

DU teachers go on strike from today

By Staff Correspondent

The Dhaka University teachers will go on strike from Saturday in protest over the government's inaction to root out terrorism from the campus.

The Dhaka University Teachers' Association earlier had set November 1 as the deadline for the government to take measures to check terrorism on the campus.

In a meeting held on Friday presided over by the President of the Association Prof Anwarullah Choudhury, it was decided that the teachers will begin their work stoppage from today, which will only include holding of classes and administering of examinations, says a press release.

Arrest killers of Galib, Liton, demands JCD

An emergency meeting of Bangladesh Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal at its central office Friday demanded immediate arrest of the killers of Mirza Galib and Liton and awarding exemplary punishment to the culprits, according to a party press release, reports BSS.

The meeting presided over by Amanullah Aman MP, convener, Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal, expressed its profound sorrow at the killing of the two Chhatra Dal leaders.

The meeting urged the Leader of the Opposition, Sheikh Hasina to expel the killers of Dr Milton, Mahbub, Mirza Galib and Liton from Chhatra League.

The meeting was critical of certain newspapers for publishing "false and imaginary" reports about terrorism and killing on the Dhaka University campus.

In a unanimous resolution the meeting convened the council session of Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal on November 25. All members of the Central Convening Committee, president and general secretary of each organising district or convener or first joint convener have been invited to attend the council session.

Biman pilots

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since March this year and a draft of the fresh agreement for 1991-93 has been submitted to the management.

"But there is no initiative from the management to renew the agreement", the BAPA leaders regretted.

The pay and other facilities of Biman pilots are being determined under the agreement between BAPA and Biman management which is renewed every two years.

When contacted, Biman authorities told The Daily Star that they will need some time to get clearance from the Finance and Civil Aviation ministries for the new agreement with BAPA. All the Biman flights operated normally on Friday, they added.

BAPA President Captain Monwar said that his association is still trying for an amicable settlement on the agreement issue with the Biman management.

Bangladesh Biman's present pilot strength is 112 while the actual requirement is 141 for a fleet of eight aircraft.

Mrs Schaffer leaves for Calcutta

The United States Deputy Assistant Secretary of State, Mrs Teresia Schaffer, left here Friday ending a three-day visit during which she had "wonderful discussion," reports BSS.

Schaffer, currently on a swing of the South Asian countries, left for Calcutta on her way to Colombo. She had already been to Pakistan, India and Nepal.

During her stay in the capital, the United States official met Prime Minister Begum Khalida Zia, Foreign Minister A S M Mostafizur Rahman and Leader of the Opposition in Parliament Sheikh Hasina.

Lathicharge

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Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and against communalism and pelted stones and bricks at the police when obstructed to proceed further. There was an hour's chase and counter-chase in the area.

The shopkeepers closed the shutters and people ran for safety.

The processionists later gathered at Jamal Khan Road near Andarkilla and tried to hold a rally. But police broke the rally with random baton charge. Five people were picked up from both the places but were released later.

Police cordoned the Jamal Khan Road for few hours in a bid to foil further attempts of organising rally.

Tension flared after the incidents. Police and BDR vehicles were seen patrolling the roads and were also posted at several important points of the city.

Thursday night also, some processions were brought out by Muslims in the city in protest against the Babri Mosque incident but police dispersed those with baton charge.

In Khulna, leaders of the minority community expressed deep concern and condemned the role of BJP and Bishaw Hindu Parishad. They asked the government of India to take appropriate action against those fanning communalism.

Meanwhile the law enforcement agencies took all precautionary measures against outbreak of communal incident, in the city. Special police contingents have been deployed in all the important places of the city.



The month-long Fifth Asian Art Biennale was inaugurated by President Abdur Rahman Biswas at Osmany Memorial Hall on Friday. A total of works from 13 Asian countries will be put on display. — Star photo

DU VC

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campus... you started it", Prof Miah told the opposition leader.

Hasina urged the Vice-Chancellor to take the initiative to talk to the leaders of political parties and ask them for steps similar to the one taken by her to stop terrorism in the campus.

"We want to see a peaceful academic atmosphere on the campus. Awami League does not believe in politics of arms", she said.

Awami League General Secretary Begum Sajeda Chowdhury, MP, was also present on the occasion.

10 hurt as JCD factions clash in Habiganj

HABIGANJ, Nov 1: At least 10 activists of Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal were injured in a clash between its two rival factions here today, reports UNB.

Three of the injured — Aminur Rashid Emran, Kamal Uddin Sclim and Motakabbir Akkas — were rushed to Habiganj Sadar Hospital with serious wounds, hospital sources said.

Witnesses said the clash erupted when processions of the two feuding factions confronted each other in the town this evening.

Dhaka for stemming watercourse diversion

NEW YORK, Nov 1: Bangladesh has called for evolving an international mechanism to keep watch over the pollution level of water of international rivers and to suggest measures to the riparian states to fight the problem, reports BSS.

Making a statement at the International Law Commission of the United Nations on "Law of the non-navigational uses of international watercourses" on Thursday Bangladesh delegate, Akhter Hamid Siddiqui, MP,

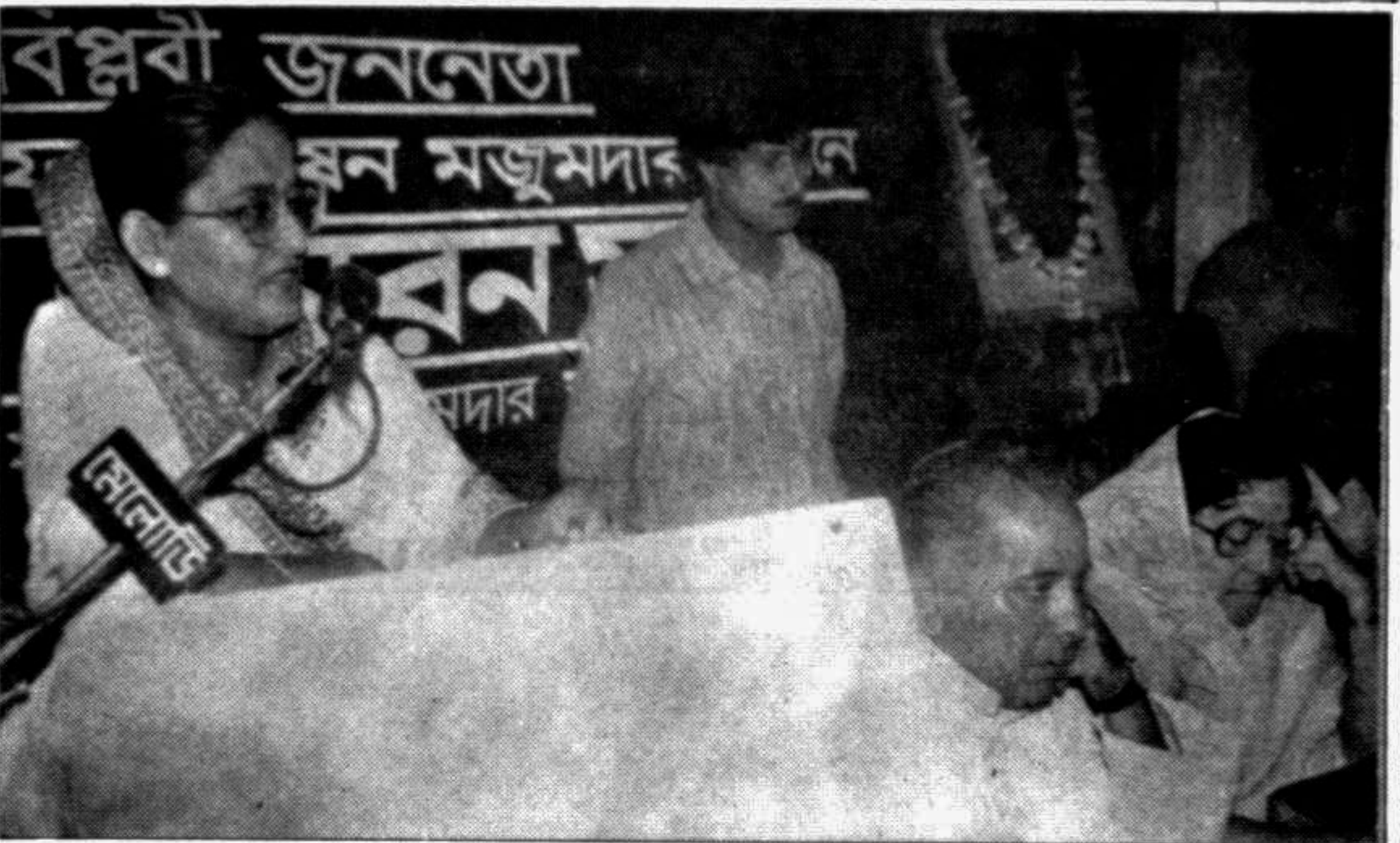
pointed out that not only contamination but also drying up and diversion of watercourses by upper riparian to the detriment of lower riparian should be strictly prohibited.

"This is essential for the protection and preservation of the ecosystem of the lower riparian," Siddiqui said.

Siddiqui urged the International Law Commission to include in the draft body of rules, which would inter alia, stipulate that an upper riparian state: a) does not have the right to divert the natural flow of an international river through unilateral action, b) is under obligation to refrain from implementing its proposed project that may cause alterations in the existing water regime without the consent of the lower riparian state and c) should respect the existing or traditional uses of water of the lower riparian states.

Dixit made Indian foreign secy

NEW DELHI, Nov 1: India's current High Commissioner (ambassador) to Pakistan, JN Dixit, has been appointed Foreign Secretary replacing Muchkund Dubey who retires November 30, it was announced here today. Dixit, 55, a career diplomat, will take over his new post at the beginning of December, a foreign office spokesman said, reports AFP.



Awami League chief Sheikh Hasina addressing a meeting commemorating the death of Phani Bhushan Mojumder at the Institution of Engineers yesterday. — Star photo

Hasina: BNP has failed

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rorism it is wants, but it lacks sincerity in containing violence, she remarked.

Awami League has fulfilled its election pledges and is committed to carry forward the movement for establishing people's rights, she said and asked the ruling party why the people were still deprived of basic rights although the government was democratically elected.

Chaired by the city AL chief, Mozaffar Hossain Poltu, the function was also addressed by the AL General Secretary Begum Sajeda Chowdhury MP, Joint Secretary Amir Hossain Amu, central and city leaders including Abdur Razzak MP, Mozaffar Hossain Chowdhury MVA, Shahara Khatun, and M A Aziz.

The membership renewal and new membership drive will also be initiated in other parts of the country.

Begum Sajeda Chowdhury called upon the party workers to renew their pledges to strengthen the movement for people's causes by renewing their party membership.

She said that the BNP had come to power unexpectedly and was following the footsteps of the deposed President Ershad.

"Khalida Zia will have to meet the same fate as Ershad's, if she continues to follow his (Ershad's) path, the AL leader warned.

UNB adds: Later, in the evening addressing a meeting commemorating the death of AL leader Phani Bhushan Mojumder at the Institution of Engineers, Sheikh Hasina urged Prime Minister Begum Zia to suspend her student wings' activities in the Dhaka University to help restore academic atmosphere.

Hasina who banned all activities of her party's student front Chhatra League in the University from Wednesday warned that the BNP government would be solely responsible for any renewed violence on the campus.

"Begum Zia will have to suspend the activities of Chhatra Dal at the Dhaka University, otherwise she herself and her government will be held responsible for any shootout, bombing, bloodshed or

killing," she said.

The AL chief alleged that the ruling party was harassing her party workers and filing false cases against them in different districts. She demanded stoppage of harassment and withdrawal of false cases against leaders and workers of Awami League and its front organisations.

Sheikh Hasina criticised "undemocratic" steps of the government and said its attitude and actions may eventually jeopardise parliamentary democracy.

"People started losing confidence in democracy and parliamentary system because of the BNP government's failure in tackling problems facing the nation," she said.

Hasina said Prime Minister Begum Zia was all along against the parliamentary system but was compelled to accept it in the face of pressure from the people and her party.

But the way she is running the government now and taking steps creating unrest and chaos, it seems that the Prime Minister is conspiring to discredit the parliamentary system and revert to presidential form, the Awami League chief alleged.

Hasina, who returned recently from the northern districts, blamed the government for what she called utter failure in saving people from starvation and disease in the region.

She claimed that as many as 9,000 people died so far due to "famine" while several lakhs are moving towards death for want of food and medicine in the northern region.

She said the British and Pakistani rulers suppressed news of famine in the past. "The Zia and Ershad regimes also blacked out the famine news though people died from starvation during their rule."

During the Zia government, she alleged 300 women in Rangpur registered their names at the DC's office for prostitution to earn their livelihood.

Referring to the famine in 1974, the Awami League chief reminded the adverse situation prevailing in post-independence Bangladesh as well as worldwide economic recession.

Vagaries of weather

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and the severest in history in terms of the area coverage and the windspeed.

The cyclone was followed by a severe flood in the Meghna basin due to onrush of water from across the border. The late monsoon flood of September was due to unusually heavy rainfall both inside Bangladesh and outside, experts say.

The tornado-like storm that struck the Meradia part of Dhaka city destroyed hundreds of houses rendering thousands shelterless on September 25 has been termed as a 'water spout' by Azizul Hossain, Deputy Director, Bangladesh Meteorological Department.

Such storms are normal during the pre-monsoonic months of April and May, and not in the late monsoon month of September, says Hossain.

An experienced weatherman Azizul Hossain would not draw any conclusion from the deviations from normal behaviour of the weather this year. Says he, looked from a long-term perspective there does not appear any significant change in weather pattern.

Quoting from Met Office records he says the rainfall in March was below normal as the westerly and south westerly lows remained weak throughout the month.

In April almost a drought-like situation prevailed over the country before the April 29 cyclone hit killing an estimated 1,40,000 people. In May on the other hand there were 15 severe nor'westers as against the maximum average of six during the month.

The rainfall in May was 87 per cent and 48 per cent above normal in the divisions of Rajshahi and Dhaka, normal in Chittagong division, but 57 per cent below normal in Khulna division, records show.

In June the rainfall was more or less normal in all divisions except Rajshahi where the downpour was 17 per cent below normal. In July the rainfall was 18 to 21 per cent below normal in all the four divisions. In the following month Rajshahi had 47 per cent less than normal rainfall while it

was close to normal in other districts.

September was marked by excessively heavy downpour that caused the devastating floods in Rajshahi, Rangpur, Dinajpur and Bogra regions. In Rajshahi division the downpour was 149 per cent above normal, and in Dhaka 115 per cent above the mark.

The September rains again were caused by an abnormal phenomenon. Instead of lows and depressions causing the precipitations, the rainfall was induced by the trough of a low that extended from the Arabian Sea to Bangladesh and Assam across India. The trough of low persisted for a long period of time due to the absence of strong 'steering wind' and continued to be energised by flow of moisture from the Bay, says Hamiduzzaman Khan Chowdhury, Director, Meteorological and the heavy precipitations totalled 300 millimetres in 24 hours at places like Sylhet, Moulvibazar, Mymensingh, Feni and Cox's Bazar, adds Azizul Hossain.

The rainfall in the month of October was also approximately 50 to 60 per cent above normal, Met Office sources say.

BCL: Terrorism

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campus "an outburst of JCD's longstanding internal conflict."

Alam said the press note on the incident was baseless and motivated, aimed at tarnishing the image of his organisation through government-controlled Radio and Television. "The press note also inspired JCD to fresh acts of terrorism."

Asked how the BCL members were injured on the day, Alam said "We have so many supporters and activists on the campus that whenever there is a shootout some of our members are hit."

The BCL President said that without repeal of the Indemnity Ordinance, it is impossible to eliminate terrorism and politics of killing.

The Midnight File

Cholera claims 500 lives in Madhya Pradesh

NEW DELHI, Nov 1: A cholera epidemic sweeping tribal lands in the central Indian state of Madhya Pradesh has claimed 500 dead and the federal government has stepped in with funds to fight the spread of the disease. Indian Prime Minister PV Narasimha Rao had sanctioned 20,000 dollars from a special federal relief fund to combat the disease which has swept through the Ghndol, Pushprajgarh, Anupur and Kotama districts, reports AFP.

103 burnt alive in Niger

NIAMEY, Nov 1: Farmers battling nomadic shepherds over scarce arable land burned alive and hacked to death 103 people, mostly children, women and the elderly. It said the death toll was not complete and was expected to rise. Seventeen survivors were injured critically, Niger News Agency said, reports AP.

Chiluba poised to unseat Kaunda

LUSAKA, Nov 1: Trade union leader Frederick Chiluba appeared poised to unseat Zambia's founding father and President, Kenneth Kaunda, initial returns indicated Friday. With almost one-third of the ballots cast across the country counted, Chiluba's Movement for Multi-Party Democracy captured 34 of 39 seats, with 111 constituencies to be tallied for the parliament's 150 members, reports AP.

Madrid talks

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Israeli fighter-bombers attacked a bridge and other targets with rockets in southern Lebanon today, security sources reported.

Israel kept nearly half a million Palestinians in the occupied territories under military curfew today, the third day of the Madrid peace conference, Palestinians said.

Israeli soldiers shot dead a 17-year-old Palestinian youth during the night when he ignored orders to stop in the West Bank village of Awarta, Israel Radio said.

Yassin Mohammed Ali Awwad was the third Palestinian killed by Israeli soldiers since the eve of the US brokered Middle East conference.

The meeting ended with both the United States and the Soviet Union calling on the parties to begin bilateral talks in Madrid as soon as possible. In a veiled warning to Israel, which is demanding that the talks move to the Middle East, Baker said:

"It would be very difficult to understand how a party could now refuse to attend bilateral negotiations simply because of a disagreement over the site of those negotiations."

Shamir, first to speak, pugnaciously accused the Arabs of twisting history and perverting facts. Shara, wagging his finger angrily at Shamir's empty chair, described the Israeli leader's charge that Syria persecuted its small Jewish community as "utter lies" and said his early departure proved he did not take peace seriously.

The most extraordinary moment came when he pulled out the picture of Shamir, a leader of the so-called "Stern

Gang", which killed UN envoy Count Folke Bernadotte and British Middle East Minister Lord Moyne in the campaign for Israeli statehood.

Shamir reserved some of his harshest words for the Palestinians, accusing them of murdering Jews, collaborating with the Nazis and rejoicing earlier this year when Iraqi Scud missiles slammed into Tel Aviv.

Abdel-Shafi said it was "regrettable and disheartening" that Shamir had found nothing in the Palestinian statement worthy of response.

Shamir referred to the Palestinians only as a "community". Abdel-Shafi responded: "The Palestinians are a people with legitimate national rights."

"You may wish to close your eyes to this fact, Mr Shamir, but we are here in the sight of the world, before your very eyes, and we shall not be denied."

The Palestinian delegate said: "We, the people of Palestine, hereby offer the Israelis an alternative path to peace and security... approach us as equals within a two-state solution, and let us work for the development and prosperity of our region based on mutual benefit and well-being."

An incident at the close of the meeting highlighted Arab Israeli difference over the purpose of the conference.

Soviet Foreign Minister Boris Pankin declared the session closed but Shara interjected that it was only being adjourned "until to be reconvened by consensus".

Pankin then corrected himself, saying: "Yes, the meeting is adjourned."

End exploitation of youths

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tribution of the youths in the anti-autocratic movement in the Nineties. The distressed, people also found them by their side after they were hit by the devastating cyclone last April, she said.

The Prime Minister regretted that during the past years no efforts were made to fully utilise the talent of the youth force and as a result in many cases they had become the victims of frustration and eroding of values.

She said Shaheed President Ziaur Rahman was the first person who had taken realistic programmes to involve the youth force in the development process and for this end he had set up the Youth Development Ministry and the Youth Directorate.

Begum Zia regretted that even after the establishment of a democratic government vested interest groups were pushing the youths in the wrong direction and exploiting them.

Begum Zia said this could not be allowed to continue anymore. She said her government would put in its best efforts to realise the dreams of Shaheed President Ziaur Rahman to make the youth force of the country self-reliant and a catalyst to the development of the nation.

Earlier the Prime Minister released pigeons and hoisted national flag on the occasion to mark the opening of the Youth Day. She also went round the different stalls in the exhibition put up by various youth organisations from the country on the occasion.

Prime Minister Begum Zia distributed national youth awards. They included Mrs Rahela Begum of Dhaka, Faiz Reza Chowdhury of Chittagong, Zahid Hossain Murad of Khulna and Khondoker Touhidul Karim Mukul of Rajshahi and Mosammat Mohsina Akhtar Mira the women winner at the national level. The youths have been awarded for achieving of self-reliance through their own efforts.

Mosharrar Hossain, Dhaka City Mayor and Jubadal President Mirza Abbas and State Minister for Youth and Sports Sadeque Hossain. TV actor Pijus Bandopadhyaya also spoke on the occasion.

Terming the youths as architects of social progress the Prime Minister said the nation always remembered with honour and gratitude the con-

Relief

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the army while there was no supervision by the local administration or by the army in the relief operation of the NGOs. The independent relief operation by the NGOs without co-ordinating with either of the two was over-lapping relief supplies at places and no relief at others.

When contacted Additional District Magistrate in-charge of Deputy Commissioner of Rangpur also confessed the surreptitious move by the NGO and said that it was not clear why the NGO did not come for coordination.

In Gangachara upazila the total number of households is about 43000 while 38,822 of them have been brought under relief operation.

In some areas of the district, the union parishad chairmen were allegedly doing politics with relief. As the union parishad election is due next December, the union parishad chairmen were trying to please their supporters, it was alleged.

In the worst affected Alamdhitor union under Gangachara, people of Ward No. 3 alleged that they were not getting relief as required because the local chairman hailed from a different ward and was giving more preference to the people of his area.

When asked, the upazila administration said that the distribution of relief was dictated by the people's representatives while the army officials were only supervising that the quantity allotted was properly distributed.