

DOWN TO EARTH

A Women's College With A Difference

By A. S. M. Nurunnabi

The Government Home Economics College at Azampur, Dhaka, was established in 1961 providing for higher education for women on a model in line with their natural aptitudes. In fact, this model was based on ideas gathered from western countries, particularly the USA. Its beginning owed much to the help given by America. In its initial stage, the College received the assistance of two American advisers in setting the courses and syllabi. In this respect the Ford Foundation also contributed with books and laboratory equipment. The element of American help continued till 1968.

Starting as a degree college, it gradually offered courses for B.Sc (Honours) and M.Sc degrees. The courses taught here are characteristically different, such as food and nutrition, home management, child development, clothing and textiles and related arts and crafts. Until 1988 these subjects formed part of an integrated Home Economics course. Thereafter each of these subjects has formed independent Honours and Post Graduate courses.

The College has a total of about 3000 students on its rolls in different classes with a staff of 60 teachers. Last year 130 students passed out with M.Sc degree.

Several questions were raised about the distinct character of the College. When asked whether, on account of its being different from other general colleges, its students encounter difficulties or disadvantages after passing out, I was informed that the College has some good points in the context of the present educational scene. Calm and peaceful academic atmosphere always prevails in this institution. There is no indiscipline activity. Because of multi-dimensional character of the courses, the students passing out are said to get openings in several fields, such as nutrition, and child management. Background in clothing textiles and related arts and crafts is also claimed to be of practical value in many occupations.

Since the College was founded on American model with American textbooks predominating the courses, a further question was asked

whether a student's education at this institution is meaningful in the context of the present stage of our own society. The answer was that though the American textbooks provide the theoretical guidelines, the characteristics of our social conditions are always kept in view by the teachers. Besides,

which shows that many students of this College experience serious difficulties for want of suitable text and reference books in Bangla for the advanced courses. In such a situation, they are compelled to depend on American and other western books in many subjects. Since the students' level



a large number of textbooks in our own language have since been published with our country's orientation. Moreover, in the present fast changing world, no particular society remains insular. In this perspective, though our society is comparatively underdeveloped, there are good reasons for learning what benefits a developed society.

In this context, it was pointed out that on account of certain misconceptions on the role and functions of the Home Economics College, there was a suggestion some years ago that the College be converted into a general college. The suggestion was ultimately dropped as there was no reason for doubt as to the utility of the College in our educational system.

Despite the above claims of the advocates of this College, there is no dearth of evidence

Storm: Four killed

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health complex and one to Myemstingh Medical College Hospital while 38 others were released after first aid. All the injured are from Sarishabari thana, the worst affected in the district, police said.

The cyclone-affected villages are: Baushi Bazar, Barabaria, Sataripara, Rudra Boyra, Jhalopara, Madhypara, Simla Bazar and Bhataria in Sarishabari thana; Siduli of Madarganj thana; Sanandabari, Taratia Bazar and Bahadurabad of Dewanganj thana; Charputimari, Golecher, Polbandha, Ghuthal and Mahmudpur of Islampura thana.

The tornado also hit several unions of Tangail district adjacent to Sarishabari Thana, according to BSS.

State Minister for Relief Lutfar Rahman Khan accompanied by Deputy Minister for Health Sirajul Haq visited tornado hit areas of Sarishabari and adjacent affected areas of Tangail district.

The State Minister assured Taka five lakh in cash, 400 bundles of CI Sheets, 500 tonnes of wheat, 500 sarees and lungis for the affected people of Sarishabari thana. He also announced cash relief of Taka two lakh for the tornado hit people of Tangail district, the sources said.

Meanwhile, normal life in the district town was disrupted since Thursday afternoon following a cold wave, accompanied by drizzle.

A Sirajganj report says, at least 10 people were injured in a Norwester accompanied by sandstorm, that lashed over Kazipur thana and some adjoining areas of the district town Thursday.

Several houses were damaged and trees uprooted when the Norwester hit the areas for nearly eight minutes, local people said yesterday.

Two of the injured persons were admitted to Kazipur health complex.

Meanwhile, the cold temperature has intensified in the district due to the sudden and

untimely Norwester. A Lalmonirhat report adds: A hailstorm lashed the town yesterday smashing 500 households and damaging standing crops on 15,000 acres of land.

Witnesses said the hailstorm sweeping over the town and adjoining Teesta and two other unions for about two hours from 11 am also uprooted some electric poles and caused damage to a good number of vehicles.

Meanwhile, cold wave claimed five lives in different parts of the district in last three days as drizzle continued to disrupt normal life in the district. Driven by biting cold some people were seen taking shelter in piled up straws.

Pak army chief

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nearby Rawalpindi, where he died around 3.30 pm (1030 GMT).

Nawaz, 56, took over the army's command last year. Western diplomats described him as a bastion of stability in Pakistan's political life, and he fashioned himself as one of the guarantors of army neutrality.

"It's a huge loss for Pakistan. He was the best and the most honest of Pakistan's leaders. His death opens a crisis in Pakistan's leadership," said a Western diplomat.

The army chief is traditionally seen as one of the troika that governs Pakistan, along with the Prime Minister and the President.

PM condoles Asif's death

Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia last night in a message to Pakistan Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif expressed deep shock at the sudden demise of the Pakistan army chief General Asif Nawaz, who died in a heart attack in Rawalpindi yesterday, reports BSS.

"Punish those involved in Ctg incidents"

By Staff Correspondent

Bangladesh Women Forum and Working Women leaders Friday demanded exemplary punishment to those involved in the recent shooting, rape and arson at Patenga and Halishahar in Chittagong.

Speaking at a press conference at the Jatiya Press Club in the capital, they also demanded that the government ensure security to the women working at different mills and factories in the Chittagong Export Processing Zone and restore working atmosphere there.

Leaders of the two women organisations resented the January 2 incidents and said that the activities by some unruly members of the Navy at Patenga and Halishahar had tarnished this image of the whole nation.

"The nation's security is now at stake because of such activities by those who are entrusted with the duty to defend the sovereignty of the state and security of the people," said advocate Ferdousi Sultana of the Bangladesh Women Forum, who read out the statement.

Quoting newspaper reports, speakers at the press conference claimed that about 30 people were killed and more than 200 injured in the incidents.

They hoped that the government would come up with a white paper on the incidents following submission of the report by the enquiry committee.

Forum leaders Mehbooba Mokhles, Jasmine Zakiya and Toufique Mallick and working women leaders Hamida Hossain, Shirin Akhter, Shahin Jahan and Rokeya Rafique were present at the press conference.

Meanwhile, leaders of the Chittagong Association in Dhaka brought out a silent procession Friday to mourn the deaths and protest the Chittagong incidents.

The black badge-wearing marchers of the Association later held a rally in front of the Jatiya Press Club in which Dipankar Talukder MP, Md Yusuf MP, Prof Abu Taher ad Maimuddin Khan Badal spoke among others.

Iraq ready for war

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The agency said. Senior US military officials said Thursday that Iraq has moved anti-aircraft missiles positioned in the southern no-fly zone.

But the Washington sources said it was not clear where the batteries had been shifted or if Baghdad complied with the ultimatum — which required Iraq to remove missiles from below and near the 32nd parallel, the northern limit of the air exclusion zone.

The current confrontation began Dec 27, when Iraqi Mig-25s began intruding into the no-fly zone. One was shot down that day by a US F-16, but the incursions have continued, possibly in an attempt to lure allied warplanes into range of the missiles.

In recent days, Iraq moved mobile Soviet-made Sa-2 and Sa-3 surface-to-air missiles into the zone.

US officials said the Iraqis began focusing the batteries' radars onto patrolling allied aircraft, a move considered hostile because it indicates the planes are being targeted.

"I don't think it would be hard to take them out," CIA director Robert Gates said on public television's MacNeil-Lehrer NewsHour program on Thursday.

President Bush, already frustrated by Saddam's continued hold on power, has grown increasingly irate with Saddam's provocations since the Nov 3 presidential election.

President-elect Clinton has said he intends to uphold Bush's policies on Iraq.

Standing firmly by president Bush, Clinton late Thursday warned Iraq not to expect any change in US policy in the Gulf when he takes over the White House on January 20.

Clinton said he concurred totally with Bush's policy in the present standoff with Iraqi president Saddam Hussein, a policy forged in close cooperation by the outgoing Republican and incoming Democrat administrations.

Asked whether Saddam might expect better treatment from him than from the man that launched Operation Desert Storm two years ago, Clinton firmly replied, "No. I don't know whether he is testing our resolve or not, but I agree with what President Bush is doing."

"It's not going to (make) any difference in the dedication of the United States to the terms to which he (Saddam) agreed at the end of the Gulf war," the President-elect added.

Among the military options open to the allies are air strikes on the missile batteries' radars, without which the weapons are useless.

The United States also could bomb the runways of the air bases from where Iraq is launching the intrusions below the 32nd parallel, officials said in Washington.

In Kuwait, the prospect of renewed hostilities raised fears that the emirate adjacent to Iraq could be a target for Baghdad's retaliation.

Western officials estimate that Saddam still has an estimated 100 to 150 surface-to-surface Scud missiles which can reach Kuwait, northern Saudi Arabia and Israel.

Reuters adds: Kuwait accused Iraqi border forces today of attacking one of its frontier posts and United Nations observers said they were investigating the incident.

Kuwait's interior ministry said in a statement the attackers, who opened fire on the border post 80 km (50 miles) north of Kuwait city on Tuesday night, numbered 25 and came from an Iraqi frontier post.

Iraq's ambassador to the European Community dismissed the report, telling NBC television: "that is absolutely not right."

Proper social policy vital for human development

By Staff Correspondent

The country can achieve a high level of human development even with the existing lower level of income rate if an appropriate social policy is adopted.

Noted economist Dr Kazi Kholluzaman said this while addressing on "Economic Growth and Human Development in South Asia" Friday afternoon at the BIRDEM auditorium in the city.

He said human development was more than an economic development as it encompassed almost all the aspect of social development other than economic growth and increase of productivity.

Expressing concern over the increases in the cost of agricultural inputs Dr Zaman said the country's highest priority should be agriculture. The role of industry should also be determined with reference to agriculture, he felt.

Referring to the increased agricultural output in the last few years, he said this was not because of the government policy, but because of the favourable climate. The government would have to face crisis if the climate became whimsical, he said.

Dr Zaman was presenting his paper at a ten-day-long public lecture series that began on January 6 under the

auspices of Independent University (College), Bangladesh. Former Education Minister Dr a Majid Khan Presided over the function.

The government's policy of import liberalisation also came under scrutiny of his lecture. He said the import liberalisation policy would have to be modified and certain regulations should be introduced to protect the vulnerable group.

He also suggested without elaborating that a code of conduct should be followed by the importers.

Referring to the improper utilisation of foreign aid, he said quoting an official concerned that 10 per cent or even less of the foreign aid went to the targeted people. He, however, stressed the need for developing human resource defining it as a combination of skill and character.

Replaying to questions raised by the audience, he said development must be from grass-roots levels, but the macro-level policy would have to be appropriate.

Dr Zaman also stressed the need for increasing productivity of the country to promote export and said that there must be a big domestic market of the export oriented industries for their sustenance.

CPB defers discussion on party line

By Staff Correspondent

The CPB (Communist Party of Bangladesh) central committee has deferred its discussion on difference of opinions relating to the guiding principle of the party to the end of February, party sources said.

The difference of opinions on the issue surfaced in the party rank and file especially after the disintegration of the former Soviet Union.

A section of the party leadership is reportedly in favour of abandoning Marxism as the guiding ideology while another section feels for 'creative application' of the Marxist philosophy for the emancipation of the common people of the country.

Both the groups in the Central Committee already submitted their respective stances on the issue, in black and white, to the committee for discussion much earlier.

The CPB Central Committee meeting that began yesterday was scheduled to debate on the issue but the committee members yesterday reached a consensus to defer the discussion to the last week of February. The meeting ends today.

Meanwhile, the group that wants 'creative application' of Marxist philosophy has demanded of the concerned leaders distribution of the position papers among rank and file of the party.

The decision relating to the demand, however, depends on the opinion of the majority of the central committee members.

Meanwhile, the Central Committee meeting yesterday deliberated on the present situation of the country.

The report of the party general secretary placed in the meeting yesterday expressed its concern over the demolition of Babri Mosque in India and its repercussions in the South Asian countries including Bangladesh.

The report said that the communal forces of Bangladesh had resorted to exploiting the Babri Mosque incident in consolidating their evil influences on the peace-loving people of Bangladesh.

Strongly condemning the Hindu militants of India, the CPB General Secretary, in his report, demanded of the government to take actions against those involved in destabilising communal harmony in the country.

The CPB leader has also called upon the people to combat those trying to provoke communal feelings in the society untidely.

However, none was arrested in this connection.

Violence marks N'ganj BNP confce : 5 injured

From Our Correspondent

NARAYANGANJ, Jan 8: The biennial conference of Narayanganj town branch of BNP was held amidst chaos followed by violence today that left at least five persons injured.

The two rival groups of the unit clashed several times before and after the conference which was held at the Zia Hall auditorium. The day-long conference, followed by the election of new leaders of the branch, was also marked by uproar by the supporters of Abul Kalam, MP and Sirajul Islam, MP.

As Jute Minister Hannan Shah, who conducted the election, announced the poll results, the followers of the two BNP MPs clashed in the Zia Hall compound and its adjoining areas around Chashara. Nearly a dozen of shops were ransacked at Khwaza Super Market and Sayam Plaza and three minibuses, parked in a garage, and a taxi passing through the area were damaged.

They hoped that the government would come up with a white paper on the incidents following submission of the report by the enquiry committee.

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Muggings, robbery in city

By Staff Correspondent

At least two muggings and one robbery were committed in the capital yesterday.

House of one Maudur Rahman at Nurjahan Road, Mohammadpur, was robbed of cash, gold ornaments and other valuables worth about Taka one lakh in the morning.

Within a span of 30 minutes, two persons were stabbed and robbed of Taka 18,000 in cash at Joykali Mondir Road yesterday afternoon.

However, none was arrested in this connection.

19 to die in Algeria

ALGIERS, Jan 8: A military court has sentenced 19 people, many of them military personnel, to death for plotting against the government, Algerian radio said Friday, reports AP.

Rao

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Indian Prime Minister will be unable to proceed to Dhaka for the summit due to this development.

Dhaka has, however, made every possible effort to hold the summit and round the clock preparation has been made in this regard.

The Midnight File

Baghdad won't allow UN planes to land in Iraq

UNITED NATIONS, Jan 8: Iraq has told the United Nations none of its planes, including those scheduled to bring in weapons destruction team, will be allowed to land in the country, a UN source said today. He said notification of this was delivered in writing on Thursday to the UN office in Baghdad. The reported Iraqi move came as a deadline approached later on Friday for the removal of Iraqi surface-to-air missiles from a no-fly zone declared by the Gulf War allies over the south of the country, reports Reuter.

Bush meets security advisers

WASHINGTON, Jan 8: President George Bush met with his national security advisers today as Iraq rebuffed allied demands to remove anti-aircraft missiles from no-fly zone and a deadline for possible military retaliation fast approached, reports Reuter.

Warring Somali factions agree to ceasefire

ADDIS ABABA, Jan 8: Warring Somali factions agreed in principle Friday to a ceasefire and decided to hold a national reconciliation conference here by early April. The 14 factions, meeting under UN sponsorship, left undecided what would be discussed at the reconciliation conference. The factions also had not decided how the ceasefire should be implemented. They pledged to clear away any obstacles by Monday, reports AP.

Dr Kamal in Barisal 'Consensus a must for realising people's hopes'

From Staff Correspondent
BARISAL, Jan 8: Dr Kamal Hossain said here today that the hopes and aspirations of the common people could be realised only through ensuring a democratic system based on consensus.

He was addressing a public rally at the premises of the Central Shahid Minar.

Organised by the Barisal unit of the Democratic Forum, the rally was addressed, among others, by Barrister Amirul Islam, Engineer Kashem and Kazi Akram Hossain. Enaet Peer Khan, convener of the Barisal district unit of the forum, presided over the meeting.

Rousing welcome

From Page 1 Col 8
(ZIA) where the plane carrying him is scheduled to land at 12.50 pm.

On his arrival, Menon will be accorded a rousing reception at the airport. From there, he will be driven in a ceremonial motorcade to Topkhana Road where a civic reception will be accorded to him.

Menon will address the reception scheduled to be held at 2.30 in the afternoon. WP President Amal Sen will chair the function which will also be addressed by leaders of different political parties.

Menon was shot and critically injured by gunmen in front of his Topkhana Road party office August 17 last year. He was rushed to the Combined Military Hospital (CMH) in the capital where he was operated upon immediately. On August 27 last he was shifted to Kings Hospital in London where he underwent another operation. Menon was again transferred to a Bangkok hospital on November 6 for convalescence.

Jamaat

From Page 1 Col 7
Jamaat parliamentary party, said Muslims of Bangladesh, shocked by the demolition of the Babri mosque, brought out the peaceful march towards Ayodhya, but police opened fire on them unprovoked.

"They did not touch any non-Muslim or damage any temple," he said.

The Jamaat leader was critical of the police firing, saying that it was designed to sabotage the Islamic movement and to please the Indian authorities responsible for razing of the mosque.

He also criticised the Indian government for non-implementation of its cabinet decision for rebuilding the mosque. "Indian government took the decision to bluff the Muslim world," he said.

Nizami urged the Bangladesh government to raise the issue in world bodies including United Nations, OIC and SAARC to create pressure on India to rebuild the mosque.

He refuted allegations of some opposition political parties who compared Jamaat with BJP and said that the Babri mosque was demolished after a meeting between leaders of Jamaat and BJP.

In an oblique reference to Awami League and its allies, he said, "When we visit India once in 20 years, it comes under wide criticism. But when leaders of some other political parties visit India several times a year, it does not make any news. Is it because India is their second home?"

ATM Azharyul Islam told the rally that activities of the government proved that it was working for the Indian imperialist forces instead of the people of the country.

The rally was followed by a procession.

VHP to challenge

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three Hindu groups, which were later outlawed.

Shahabuddin said the ordinance was biased against Muslims, India's largest religious minority, and "favours those who illegally occupied" the site of the mosque after destroying it.

"Our immediate objection is it will set a wrong precedent and become a tool in the hands of a hostile government in the future for the takeover of all mosques and Muslim graveyards," he said.

"By this act, the government has blocked the path of our recovering the occupied mosque," he added.

"Muslims are very, very angry," said Abdullah Bukhari, Chief Imam of the Jama Masjid, India's biggest mosque here.

"We want the mosque reconstructed on the same spot. One inch away, and we will not accept it."

Some newspapers said Muslim ministers were opposed to the ordinance, but Rao persuaded them to fall in line.

The Tribune newspaper dubbed the government move "belated and purposeless." The mass circulated Indian Express and the pioneer dailies agreed.

"Hypothetically, if the court comes to the conclusion that there indeed was a temple over which the Babri Mosque was built would it mean a constitutional endorsement of (what happened) on December 6?" asked The Tribune.

The ordinance "is set to create further controversy," The Express warned.

The Babri Mosque's destruction sparked one of the bloodiest ever outbreaks of Hindu-Muslim rioting across India, leaving more than 1,150 people dead. Sporadic clashes have continued in Bombay.

Indian communists also joined the chorus of criticism. "It sets a dangerous precedent for any similar claim to right a historical wrong," said Prakash Karat, a Politburo member of the Communist Party of India (Marxist).

Waterfowl

From Page 1 Col 5
Waterfowl and Wetland Research Bureau (IWRB), Asian Wetland Bureau (AWB) and the Forest Department.

Prof Kazi Zaker Hossain, the global 500-laureate opened, the counting in the Dhaka Zoo at a small ceremony organised by the census team.

The function was also addressed by National Coordinator of the census Anisuzzaman Khan, Harun-ur-Rashid, Dr Paul Thomson.

Prof Zaker Hossain said that a constant monitoring and research was needed to develop practical management system for birds. Harun-ur-Rashid suggested that a massive environmental education programme at both policy level and grassroots level should immediately be implemented to stop the erosion of wildlife resources.