

Dhaka Day by Day

Women's Fate in Eastern Germany

by Fayza Haq



Dr S I Khan seen with his audience

Assistant Professor S I Khan of the Department of International Relations, DU, recently delivered a lecture at "Women's Health Coalition" as part of a programme organised by "Nari Pokho".

He compared the situation in the eastern part of Germany with that of the western section, and gave comparative studies of figures over five decades. He also explained the difference of male and female work force in jobs, such as production and installation, manufacturing and processing, electronics and electrical goods, textile and garments, food production, trade/gastronomy-oriented jobs, agriculture, building construction, communication and transport, administrative jobs, health service and pharmaceuticals.

Dr S I Khan explained how women suffered by the privatisation, and how the unification of Germany adversely affected women both socially and economically. The women in eastern Germany, until the unification of Germany, had suffered, he said, as they had few-feminine geared items-like journals and magazines. He added that he had friends on the then eastern border and so had access to facts dealing with the difficulties that the women faced.

When the Berlin Wall fell, the assistant professor said, each family got 50,000 marks in the eastern part of Germany but most of it went to purchase of luxury like western cars and dish antennae. This, by disinvestment, and by privatisation, led to the workers being laid off, resulting in general unemployment, specially in the fields of education, health. He said that only the administrative and secretarial jobs took in women readily.

By 1980, Dr S I Khan, elaborated that the gender-based division of labour still prevailed, which was noticeable from the '50s. He insisted that if one wanted a progressive society, no gender-based division of labour could exist according to Marxism, which received a steady lip service in the then East Germany.

Dr Khan explained that after World War II, since a large number of the male population had died in East Germany, women got entry into certain jobs fairly easily. Although development proceeded both in East and West Germany, East Germany concentrated on heavy industries and had to compete with countries like Korea, he added.

The teacher also talked about how in East Germany, people were not encouraged to go for higher studies and specialisation. After their "abitur", they left for jobs which taught, while paying them, instead of specialising in subjects like Latin, Physics etc. i.e. white collared jobs - as was being done in West Germany - as jobs and education were government controlled and the youth in eastern Germany wanted the "quick buck".

However, he added, that in the fields of medicine, dental surgery and nursing, women were in demand, as these jobs were considered conventionally suited to women in eastern Germany. Whereas, in West Germany, jobs were competitive, and higher education was encouraged.

By 1992 and the collapse of Soviet Russia, privatization came in, in Eastern Germany, and the heavy industries collapsed too, as the world was not eager to buy obsolete products like 'Skoda'. When West Germany faced a similar competition they had gone into software, and had American and European buyers at their back and call. Moreover, people from West Germany, who were already skilled, were welcomed in the eastern part of Germany," Dr Khan explained.

The East Germans introduced "O Hour" work and part time work, Dr S I Khan elaborated, which confused the schedules of couples leading to boredom, frustration and even divorce. He pointed out to the listeners that Abortion Law had been legalised. Common Law Marriage became rampant, day-care centres began charging fees, so that society did not improve but, stultify in the eastern part of Germany. Child abuse, separations, gay movements and lesbian movements flourished by '93, and the people in authority could do little about it.

"There was no way", he added, "to have extra political movement for women. The Anti-Vietnam Movement and the rebellion of the Sorbonne University had adversely affected eastern part of Germany already," Dr Khan insisted.

"Books like How I 'Hate a Man' became popular, Erich Von Iloncker could not compel women to join the army in '89, and as the borders opened up, groups like 'Lilac Offensive', 'Women for Peace' and 'Lesbian Rights Group' flourished, while the Protestant Church tolerated it all," Dr. S I Khan added.

One learnt of the confusion of eastern Germany in more details from the lecture, and one would welcome more such informative socio-economic talks in the metropolis.

Dr Robert Elder to teach JU students from Sept

The visiting Fulbright Senior Scholar Dr Robert Elder will begin his teaching assignment at the Department of Government and Politics of Jahangirnagar University in September this year, reports UNB.

This was disclosed during the meeting of US's Director Dr J Michael Kroff-Rodriguez with the Vice Chancellor of Jahangirnagar University Prof Kazi Saleh Ahmed on April 1.

Dr Elder, a prominent Professor of Political Science at Hope College, Michigan, has been awarded a Fulbright grant to Bangladesh by the US Government's Board of Foreign Scholarship.

Zakaria's death condoled

By Staff Correspondent

Different cultural organisations Monday expressed shock and their condolence at the death of eminent TV and stage performer Mohammad Zakaria (70).

Zakaria died on Sunday night.

The members of Nagorik Natya Sampradaya expressed their deep shock at the death of Zakaria the founder-member of the pioneering group of the modern theatre movement and initiator of group theatre movement 'Bohurupee' of Calcutta and founder-member of Theatre of Dhaka.

Natyakendra, a theatre group held a commemorative discussion on Zakaria in the city yesterday.

In a condolence message, Bangladesh Betar-Television Shilpi Sangsad said that his death had created a vacuum in the drama world.

Aranyak Natya Dal in its condolence message paid homage to the departed soul.

80,000 cases of under valuation of land detected

Hafiz assures steps to fix up standard price of land

Minister for Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs Mirza Golam Hafiz said in Panchagarh yesterday that steps were underway to fix up standard price of land in different localities of the country like some areas of Dhaka city, reports BSS.

He said this was necessary in order to stop under valuation of land in time of deed registration and thereby ensure proper collection of government revenues from the sector.

The minister was speaking at the foundation stone laying ceremony of sub-registrar office building of Atoari thana under Panchagarh district.

Presided over by district BNP president Abdul Aziz, the function was addressed, among others, by Deputy Commissioner of Panchagarh.

The Law Minister said that about eighty thousand cases of under valuation of land had so far been detected which caused loss of about one hundred crore revenue.

Underlining the need for proper preservation of land records and 'balam books' Mirza Hafiz asserted that steps had been taken to construct new registrar offices and repair the old ones. He directed the concerned authority to complete the construction

work of Atoari sub-registrar office building within one year at a cost of Tk 37 lakh already allocated for this purpose.

Describing the illegal possessors of land in the fictitious names beyond the fixed quota, Mirza Hafiz asserted that these lands would be recovered from the illegal occupants and distributed among the landless and marginal landless peasants.

Earlier, he visited under-construction Panchagarh town protection embankment to see the progress of construction work. This one mile long embankment is being built at a cost of Taka 17 crore.

Later he formally unveiled the plaque.

Referring to present tempo of development activities undertaken in different fields, Mirza Hafiz said that government of Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia never believed in politics of bogus commitments but in politics of production and improvement of people's lot.

He sought constructive criticism of different activities of government by all sections of people including the opposition.

Dhaka, UNICEF spent Tk 21.15 cr for CHT development

RANGAMATI, Apr 5: Bangladesh government and the United Nations International Children's Education Fund (UNICEF) have spent Taka 21,15,90,000 on various projects for socio-economic development of the people of Rangamati and Khagrachhari hill districts during the period from 1985 to June 1993, reports BSS.

According to an official source here, the projects implemented during the period included development of 50 villages through coordinated social development and service-oriented programme, sinking of tubewells, granting special scholarships to tribal students, supplying saplings of fruit trees, training tribal female school teachers and midwives, vocational training for tribal women and supplying sewing machines and improving sanitation arrangements.

UNICEF showed its keen interest in taking part in socio-economic development programme of the hill tract people and thus the agency started its works in the hill tracts in 1980 under an agreement with Bangladesh government, the source said.

Training programme for health workers, building of residential schools and godowns for food storage and granting of small loans among poor people are also included in the coordinated social development and service-oriented programmes of the hill tracts.

Works on some of the projects like construction of new schools, sinking of tube wells and imparting training to female school teachers and vocational training for women are still going on in different parts of the two hill districts.



Nurses' procession in city yesterday for fulfilment of their demands. - Star photo

DU admission 'Ga' unit interview Apr 15

Interview of candidates securing merit positions upto 580 in the written test for admission into 1st year B Com Honours classes under 'Ga' unit (Faculty of Commerce) for the session 1992-93 of the University of Dhaka will begin at 10 am on April 15 (Thursday) in the room of the Dean of Commerce Faculty, reports BSS.

Abbas distributes relief goods

The Mayor of Dhaka City, Mirza Abbas MP, yesterday distributed relief goods among the victims of Monday's fire at Pyrabagh slum in Maghbazar area, a City Corporation press release said, reports BSS.

The relief goods were distributed in cooperation with the Bangladesh Red Crescent. Chairman of the Red Crescent Society Syed Shahidul Huq Jamal MP and Director (Relief) of the Society Azharul Islam were present. The relief goods included saree, lungi, rice and pulse.

Tk 200 cr to be spent for communication net-work in Ctg'

CHITTAGONG, Apr 5: Communications Minister Oli Ahmad has said people had given their verdict time and again in favour of BNP as the unblemished sincerity of the party for their cause had withstood the test of time, reports BSS.

He was speaking as the chief guest at the district rally of BNP-Chittagong (South) at Muslim Institute hall here yesterday.

Jatiya Sangsad whip Abdul Karim Advocate, Chittagong City Corporation Mayor Mir Mohammad Nasruddin, Syed Wahidul Alam MP, Begum Rosy Kabir MP, district and city BNP-leaders Golam Akbar Khondakar, Ekramul Karim, Alhaj Abdur Rahim and Begum Moor-Ara-Safa, among others, addressed in the rally. It was presided over by Chittagong (South) BNP President Advocate Abu Saich.

Oli Ahmad said, it is now beyond doubt that BNP has no alternative for the progress and prosperity of the country.

People had tested all the political parties in power and finally reposed their trust on Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia and the epoch making politics of nationalism initiated by Shaheed President Ziaur Rahman for the first time in the country which had been in conformity with the will and

expectation of the mass, he added.

The Communications Minister said, government had taken steps more than any of the previous government to develop the communication net-work in and around the port-city of Chittagong and different parts of greater Chittagong district. About 200 crore Taka will be spent for the purpose which is inclusive of hindering and development of Chittagong-Dohazari road at a cost of 75 crore Taka.

The minister said, construction works of 59 community centres and a youth training centre were underway in Chittagong.

He said, nine plots of rail-way-owned land have so far been allotted to different organizations for construction of as many specialised hospitals. He said, a TV relay-station would soon start functioning as per long awaiting demand of the people of Chittagong.

Oli Ahmad directed the concerned to complete immediately the repair and reconstruction works of the temples damaged in Chittagong at the hands of miscreant as aftermath of historic Babri Mosque-demolition.

KMC students continue class boycott

KHULNA, Apr 5: Students of Khulna Medical College (KMC) continued their class boycott after the college reopened today (Monday) after the Eid vacation, reports UNB. Campus sources said the students went on an indefinite class boycott on March 6 to press home their 10-point demand.

What's on today . . .

Photography exhibition The photography exhibition of Md Saiful Islam will start from today (Tuesday) at the Institute of Fine Arts at 5 pm. Photographer M A Beg will inaugurate the exhibition which will contain 35 experimental photos.

Rotary Club of Sher-e-Banglanagar The US Ambassador to Bangladesh William B Milam will deliver a talk on "US-Bangladesh relations" in the regular weekly meeting of Rotary Club of Sher-e-Banglanagar today (Tuesday) at 5:45 pm at Sonargaon hotel.

JAGPA founding anniversary The 13th founding anniversary of Jatiya Goutantrik Party (JAGPA) will be held today (Tuesday). On this occasion, a discussion meeting will be held at Jatiya Grantha Kendra auditorium at 4 pm.

. . . and tomorrow

Baby show Bangladesh Girl Guides Association has arranged a 'Baby show' tomorrow (Wednesday) at Guide House at 10 am to celebrate the 'World Health Day', a press release of the association said. Khorsheda Begum, Deputy National Commissioner (Programme) of the association, will distribute the prizes among the winners.

Weather Dry weather likely

By Staff Correspondent Weather forecast for the next 24 hours commencing 6 am today (Tuesday) says, dry weather with partly cloudy sky over Rajshahi division is likely to remain over the country.

The Met office says, day temperature is likely to rise by one to two degree Celsius over the country. The maximum temperature of the country recorded yesterday (Monday) of 37.9 degree Celsius was reported from Rajshahi and the minimum of 14.8 degree was reported from Rangpur.

The sun sets today (Tuesday) at 6.17 pm and rises tomorrow (Wednesday) at 5.45 am. The maximum and the minimum temperature and humidity of some of the major cities and towns of the country yesterday were:

Table with columns: City/Towns, Temperature in degree Celsius (Max, Min), Humidity in percentage (9 am, 6 pm). Rows include Dhaka, Chittagong, Rajshahi, Khulna, Barisal, Cox's Bazar, Sylhet, Dinajpur.

গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার সংস্থাপন মন্ত্রণালয় প্রশাসন-৪ শাখা দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি. নং সম (প্র-৪)-৩৯-১২/৯২-২১৪ তারিখ: ০১-০৪-১৯৯৩/১২-২১৪খ. এতদ্বারা সংস্থাপন মন্ত্রণালয়ের সচিবালয় শাইবেরগৈতে সন্ত্রস্ত ও ব্যবহারকৃত বিভিন্ন প্রকারের ত্রুটিপূর্ণ পুস্তক ক্রয়ের জন্য উপযুক্ত বিজ্ঞপ্তি/সরবরাহকারী প্রতিষ্ঠানের বিক্রেতা হতে সীলমোহরকৃত দরপত্র আহ্বান করা যাচ্ছে।

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