

Jute bodies hail proposed budget

By Staff Correspondent

More organisations yesterday hailed the proposed budget for 1993-94 saying it would benefit the larger section of the people.

The Bangladesh Jute Association (BJA), at a post-budget discussion chaired by its chief Prof Rezauul Karim, MP, said the proposed budget would have far-reaching effect in strengthening the role of the private sector for the economic development of the country.

The BJA hoped the new budget would be able to raise the socio-economic condition of the commonman as it has not levied any new taxes.

The meeting noted with satisfaction the reduction of duty from different goods, particularly withdrawal of Value Added Tax (VAT) from jute cuttings and introduction of the jute sector renovation programme under the new budget.

The Bangladesh Jute Exporters' Association (BJEA) president M A Wahab, while addressing a post-budget discussion yesterday, also congratulated the government for the new budget, which he said, reflected the government's liberal industrial policy and market econ-

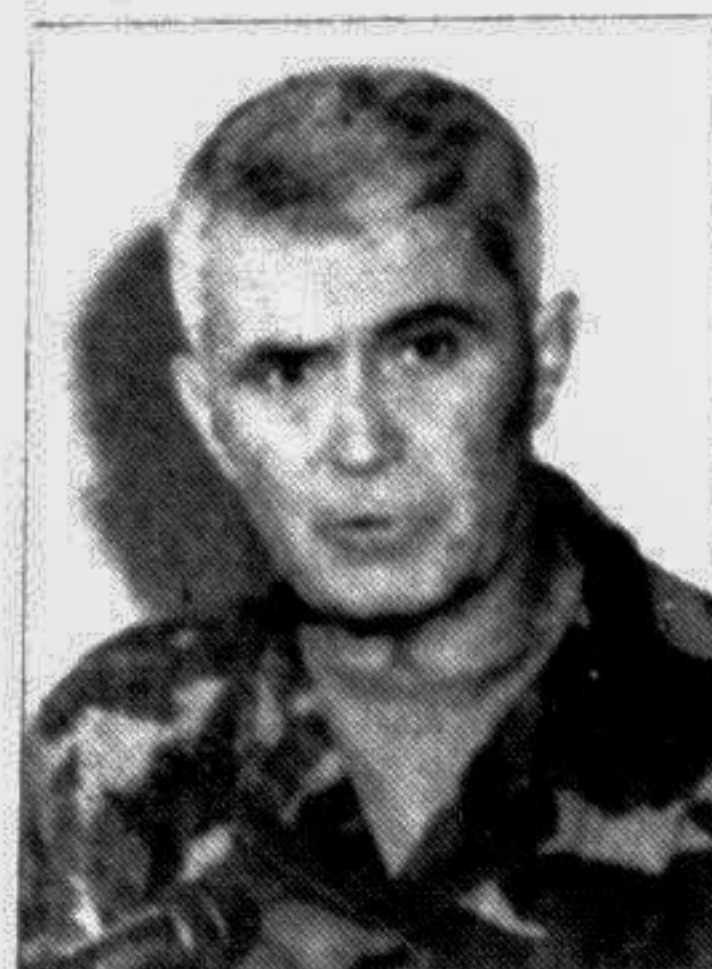
He hoped that the proposed budget, which imposed no taxes on essentials, would help the larger section of the people.

Mentioning the steps proposed for mobilising domestic resources, poultry farming, fisheries, education, human resource development, family planning and others, the BJEA meeting said increased allocations for these sectors would benefit majority of the population.

However, it expressed concern that the budget had not provided any specific direction for the jute sector.

Meanwhile, the Bangladesh Jute Mills Association (BJMA), in a statement, remarked that the new budget confirmed the Finance Minister's commitment to further deregulating and opening up the country's economy, with the eventual aim of integrating it with the global market.

The BJMA thanked the Finance Minister for lowering the interest rates and making the taka fully convertible on trade account.



Gen Stackpole arrives June 16

US marine Lieutenant General H C Stackpole, Commander of Marine Forces Pacific and Commanding General, Fleet Marine Forces Pacific, will visit Bangladesh from June 16 to 19, reports BSS.

General Stackpole commanded joint task force Operation Sea Angel, which was engaged in the US military relief effort in Bangladesh following the cyclone and tidal bore of April, 1991.

He is coming to Bangladesh to discuss humanitarian and relief planning and exercises with officials of the Bangladesh government and military. General Stackpole will meet with President Abdur Rahman Biswas, the Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia, the Chief of Army Staff, and other officials. General Stackpole will also meet with the members of the Overseas Correspondents Association of Bangladesh (OCAB) and participate in a programme arranged by the Bangladesh Institute of International and Strategic Studies (BISS).

The visit will further solidify the strong ties between the US Pacific Command and the leaders and people of Bangladesh which developed during Operation Sea Angel.

General Stackpole has been in his present command for one year. Prior to this assignment he served at marine corps headquarters in Washington as Deputy Chief of Staff for Plans, Policies and Operations.

His other positions included Commanding General, III Marine Expeditionary Force and a number of commanding positions in Vietnam, the Pacific and the United States.

As Commander of the Marine Force in the Pacific, the General is responsible for all marine deployments, bases, and activities throughout the Pacific Ocean area and much of Asia.

The General has received numerous awards for his service, including the Silver Star Medal, Defence Superior Service Medal, Legion of Merit, Purple Heart with Gold Star, Government of Japan Order of the Rising Sun (3rd order) and Vietnam cross of Gallantry.

JP walks out

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had asked him to issue a statement in the House Wednesday following JP leader Mizan Chowdhury's allegation that the police resorted to atrocities against a JP procession on June 7.

Explaining the police action, Home Minister told the House that the JP activities were demanding release of Ershad, who had been sentenced to 20 years of imprisonment by the courts in different corruption cases.

The JP activists had resorted to damaging vehicles and even attacked the police, the minister added.

Defending the mild police baton-charge, the minister said it was the government's sacred duty to protect lives and property of the people.

At this point the Home Minister termed Ershad a thief as well as a terrorist. Substantiating the comments, Matin Chowdhury said that Ershad had been jailed for misappropriation of public money and usurping an elected government in 1982.

Munirul Haque Chowdhury, Whip of the Jatiya Party, stood at this stage and protested the comments — without microphone — saying: The Home Minister's statement is a clear aspersion on the former President.

Following the incident, Munirul Haque Chowdhury announced, again without microphone, the walkout at 9 pm.

The Home Minister, however, went on to say that the JP activists had been resorting to wanton terrorism with the black money Ershad had amassed through various illegal means, basically to satisfy their master.

The Home Minister warned that JP activists would face tougher action in future if they were found creating trouble in public places in the name of demanding Ershad's release.

The House was adjourned at 9.20 pm to resume at 10 this morning.

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Members of the Greater Sylhet Division, Implementation Committee brought out a procession in the city yesterday demanding the region be declared a 'Distressed Area'. — Star photo

30 more killed in Kashmir violence

SRINAGAR, India, June 13: Thirty people including 14 Muslim militants died across Kashmir overnight and Saturday as Indian troops stepped up an operation in the northern state against the insurgents, officials said here, reports AFP.

A woman died and six others were wounded when separatists hurled a grenade in downtown Srinagar Saturday at a security force patrol vehicle. The bomb missed the target and burst on the road, police said.

Police officials said 14 Muslim secessionists died overnight in four separate gun-battles with security forces in Kashmir's Kupwara and Baramulla districts where troops have stepped up an operation to crush insurgency.

The latest slayings by the troops took to 40 the number of suspected Muslim militants to die since Monday in Muslim

majority Kashmir valleys north-east region, the officials said. Kashmir police chief Balwinder Singh Bedi told the Press Trust of India news agency that 14 other Kashmiri militants were arrested in the past 24 hours.

Three people including an Indian border guard were killed in street clashes in the Batamalo Residential Quarters of Srinagar — urban hub of the Muslim separatist drive, the officials said.

Batamalo residents pured out into the streets on Saturday to protest the overnight deaths of two civilians, saying they were killed in cold blood by the security troops, witnesses said. Police said 12 more civilians died elsewhere in overnight violence related to the four-year-old Muslim secessionist drive for Kashmir's separation from India.

Climatologists predict

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spend scarce resources now on strategies designed specifically at reducing the anticipated effects of climate change. Rather, precautionary social and hazard adjustments policies and programmes should be undertaken, especially relating to climatic variations and extremes — floods, droughts and cyclones.

It also suggested the need for raising awareness regarding possible hazards and the ways of reducing them.

The scientists predicted that the Sundarbans mangrove forest could be adversely affected by increased salinity due to a rise in the sea level. The changes in climate and sea level would add to the severe pressure on crop, forestry, fisheries and livestock production caused by the increasing population pressure on Bangladesh's natural resources.

The workshop recommended development of precautionary measures now for hazard mitigation to remain prepared for any consequences that may happen due to sea level rise and climate change.

It also recommended development of strategies within the framework of an equitable international sharing of responsibilities for global warming for adequate assistance to be made available by advanced countries to environmentally vulnerable countries of the South.

The recommendations also include strengthening of linkages with relevant international organisations, review of existing data from various sources on

coastal morphology and hydro dynamics, sea level etc, and conducting of socio-economic studies aimed at identifying strategies to reduce the impacts of climate change and sea level rise on health, settlements, economics and infrastructure.

Research Director of the Centre for Environmental and Resources Studies (CEARS), University of Wajkate, New Zealand, Dr. Richard A Warrick, Director of CEARS, Neil Erickson, British Scientist Hugh Brammer and Bangladeshi scientists Prof. K B Sazzadur Rashid were present at the press conference.

Precious statue recovered

By Staff Correspondent

Detective police Saturday evening recovered a black stone statue worth about Tk 8 lakh and arrested one person from Gulshan area.

Acting on a tip, DB carried out a raid at the residence of Adam Ali, 40, at Kalachandpur, Gulshan at 8.30 pm Saturday and recovered the statue of mythical Hindu god Vishnu, weighing six kilograms.

Detective police was interrogating Adam Ali, a security guard of the Netherlands embassy, when reports last came in.

Police sources said Adam Ali was an active member of an international ring engaged in smuggling precious statues and antiques out of the country under the cover of diplomatic missions.

Hasina pleads for

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ment by all states to outlaw social and cultural practices which violate women's rights.

Speakers at the opening session included Vera Cherwa, a lawyer from Malawi, freed this January after 11 years in detention, Ibrahim Fall, Secretary General of the World Conference, Sheikh Hasina, Bangladesh Awami League chief, and Issam Abdelhalid, head of the Union of Palestinian Women.

Rigoberta Menchu, the Guatemalan Nobel Peace Prize winner, was unable to attend due to the current situation in her country.

The Forum elected Albertina Sisulu, a veteran ANC leader and women's rights activist of South Africa as chairperson. Adilur Rahman Khan of the Bangladesh NGO delegation, commented: "We deplore the act of the World Jewish Congress which is representing the Zionist state of Israel and attempting to stifle the voice of the Palestinian people."

The NGO representatives expressed their resentment at UN attempts to dictate ground rules for the NGO Forum. It noted that the "UN is insisting that events on specific country situations cannot be held on UN Premises at the Austria Centre, Vienna, during the current World Conference."

The speakers also alleged that the UN had confiscated

programmes printed for NGO parallel activities which list such events and has banned the Dalai Lama from addressing the NGOs at the Austria Centre at the best of China.

Some speakers observed that "it seems the UN is submitting to pressures from some powerful and repressive states to restrict NGO freedoms."

Nimalka Fernando, of the Asia Pacific Forum on Women Law and Development observed, "NGOs from the South are talking about our lives and our deaths. How can you expect us to come here to speak on abstract thematic issues, and ignore the daily violence against our people?" she asked.

Ayesha Khanam, General Secretary, Bangladesh Mahila Parishad stated: "Despite all the problems, we have great expectations that a meeting of so many grassroots activists from around the world must take a step forward in protecting human rights."

Justice K M Subhan, Father Timm, Dr F R M Hasan, Ms Rasheda Chowdhury (ADAI), Ms Ayesha Khanam, Ms Masuda Rehana Begum (Mahila Parishad), Ms Ayesha Arshad (ASK), Mostafa Farook, Adilur Rahman Khan (ASK), Sara Hossain, Akram Chowdhury (BHR), Ms Habibunnessa, Ms Roushan Jahan Parvin (BTMAS) are attending the conference from Bangladesh.

Sylhet flood

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affected areas of Golapganj and Fenchuganj thana under Sylhet district yesterday.

The minister saw the inundated portion of Sylhet-Zakiganj road and also visited the breaches in the Dhaka-Sylhet highway near Fenchuganj.

Another report says, former Foreign Minister Humayun Rasheed Chowdhury has urged the government to declare the greater Sylhet as a "distressed area" in view of severe floods gripping the area.

In a statement here, he said flood situation in the greater Sylhet district has deteriorated sharply, causing losses of property.

Blast in BJP MP's house: 2 injured

NEW DELHI, June 13: Two politicians were seriously injured when a powerful bomb exploded today in the house of Firebrand Hindu woman MP Uma Bharati in central India, the Press Trust of India (PTI) reported, said AFP.

Bharati, a member of the Hindu-revivalist Bharatiya Janata Party (Indian People's Party), was here when the blast occurred at her home at Tikamgarh town in Madhya Pradesh state, the news agency said.

Laxmi Narain Gupta and Magan Lal Goyal two former lawmakers of the state, were seriously injured when the bomb hidden in a window went off, the MP told PTI.

She said she was to go to Tikamgarh Sunday, but cancelled the trip due to "unavoidable reasons."

Bharati was in the forefront of an emotive campaign to replace the 16th century Babri Mosque in Ayodhya, razed by Hindu fanatics on December 6, with a temple for the Hindu god Rama.

493 more Rohingyas go home

COX'S BAZAR, June 13: Some 493 Rohingya refugees comprising 118 families voluntarily returned to their homes in Myanmar through three transit camps at Teknaf here today.

An official source told BSS tonight that with this 57th batch of repatriation, the total number of repatriated persons stands at 27,235.

Meanwhile, an official-level talks between Bangladesh and Myanmar held Saturday gave approval for 3,000 more refugees for repatriation on priority basis.

Mob gouges eyes of alleged Sarbahara man

From Our Staff Correspondent

BARISAL, June 13: Agitated mob gouged both eyes of an alleged 'Sarbahara' man and severely assaulted another at Rahimganj, Barisal today, following the killing of one Shaheb Ali.

Shaheb Ali was shot dead at a tea stall on the outskirts of the town reportedly by Sarbaharamen on Friday.

The enraged villagers got hold of Hannan, 26, and took out his eyes and assaulted another Mannan, 18.

The alleged Sarbaharamen were later handed over to the Babuganj police, according to sources.

Anti-Terrorism Committee meet held in Barisal

From Staff Correspondent

BARISAL, June 13: An anti-terrorism meeting was held at the Gournadi High School premises Sunday.

Organised by the local Anti-Terrorism Committee, the meeting was presided by the committee president Golam Hossain, while Barisal Divisional Commissioner, MA Rashid, DC Matanjuddin, SP Anisur Rahman, Additional DIG Nurul Alam attended.

Since the formation of the Anti Terrorism Committee in Barisal last March acts of terrorism have noticeably reduced, the meeting viewed.

The Midnight File

Rabbani, Hekmatyar hold talks

KABUL, June 13: Afghan President Burhanuddin Rabbani met Prime Minister-designate Gulbuddin Hekmatyar west of Kabul late today for talks relating to the formation of the cabinet, a government spokesman said. The President and Prime Minister agreed upon the formation of a special commission which would decide how and when the Hekmatyar would come to Kabul, the spokesman for the state news agency Bakhtar said, reports AFP.

Commanders of Serb, Muslim and Croat likely to meet

BELGRADE, June 13: The chief of UN peacekeepers in Yugoslavia said on Saturday he was arranging a meeting between the commanders of Bosnian Serb, Muslim and Croat armies at Sarajevo airport on Tuesday at 11 am (0900 GMT) to discuss a lasting ceasefire, reports Reuter.

Pak peacekeepers

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residence of Mohamed Farah Aided, Somalia's main warlord and the man held responsible by Pakistan for the June 5 slaying of 23 of its peacekeepers.

It was the second day of air attacks by United Nations forces hitting back for the killing of the Pakistanis, many of whose bodies had been severely mutilated.

Four Somalis were wounded today when US attack planes blasted a garage owned by General Aided's chief financier Osman Ato, said hospital sources.

The garage, a few hundred yards from Aided's house, was reduced to a tangle of twisted and chartered metal after the attack. Aided was said to have left his home Friday.

Somalis said nine people were killed in Sunday's air raids. Various reports — not all independently confirmed — put the number of Somalis killed at up to 36 since UN reprisal attacks began. No UN casualties have been reported.

The latest air raid, following air strikes Saturday against Aided's arsenals and radio station, rocked Mogadishu with a series of massive explosions as rockets hit gas cylinders and a container of paint, sparking a fire that was still burning eight hours later.

Engineer stabbed in city

By Staff Correspondent

An engineer was stabbed at his Lalmitia office in the city yesterday when he refused to favour a party in a tender bid.

Witnesses said, a group of unidentified young men forced into the room of one Rawshan Kabir, Executive Engineer of the Middle Town Project under the Local Government Engineering Directorate around 12:30 pm and locked it from inside.

Identifying themselves as local people, they accused Rawshan Kabir, 30, of being unsympathetic to them and repeatedly stabbed him, sources said.

The hoodlums, numbering seven, fled the scene by an auto-tempo, sources added.

An injured Kabir was rushed to the Suhrawardy Hospital. A case has been lodged with the Mohanmadpur Police.

BIDS

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ness in appointing the new DG of the institute.

The senior fellows, who were present at the meeting included Prof Mozaffar Ahmed, AKM Ahsan, Prof Nazrul Islam, Prof Jahanara Huq, Dr Kazi Khaliquzzaman, Syed Manzur Elahi, Prof Sirajul Islam Chowdhury and Prof Ainun Nishat.

Among the researchers, Dr Abu Abdullah, Dr Abul Kashem, Dr Asaduzzaman, Omar Hajdar Chowdhury, Dr Zillur Rahman, Dr Atiur Rahman, Dr Shahabuddin and Dr Debopriya Bhattacharya were present in the meeting presided by Dr M A Gafur.

The senior fellows assured the researchers of their all-out cooperation in getting the appointment rescinded and said they would try to convince high-ups in the government in this regard.

Meanwhile, work-stoppage in the BIDS continued for the 13th consecutive day yesterday, leading to a total deadlock in its operation.

PM: Tokyo's help

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She assured all cooperation to Shigoe Takenaka during the tenure in Bangladesh.

The Japanese Ambassador, who had earlier visited Bangladesh twice — first as an official after independence and then with Prime Minister Toshiki Kaifu — said "You had made a remarkable progress."

He assured his cooperation in attracting Japanese private investment in Bangladesh.

Takenaka praised the government's new investment policy but reminded "Bangladesh has to compete with other countries trying to attract Japanese investors."

The Prime Minister conveyed through the Ambassador greetings to the Emperor and the Empress of Japan and also to the newly-wed Prince and Princess.