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Nothing to fear if cheap foreign goods flood market: Saifur

Finance Minister M Saifur Rahman yesterday reiterated that the economic reforms and deregulation measures undertaken by the present government were aimed at making the economy more market-oriented, reports BSS.

The Finance Minister was inaugurating a seminar on 'deregulating economies of South Asia' in a local hotel Saturday morning. DF Robinson, general manager of the ANZ Grindlays Bank presided.

Organised by the Grindlays Bank the two-day seminar is being participated by the delegates from India, Nepal, and Bangladesh.

The Finance Minister said in a market-oriented economy there should not be any fear of being flooded by the cheap

goods coming from outside, rather deregulation measures would pave the way for more extrovert and outward looking economy. Such measures means, Rahman said, abolishing all the restraint handicaps in the free way of conducting transaction.

It is to some extent difficult to undertake deregulating measures in a society like ours, which are used to regulation for 40 years or so, he added.

Regarding the imposition of restrictions by some western countries on certain exportable items like shrimps and garments from Bangladesh, the Finance Minister regretted that when we are deregulating and liberalising our import policies these countries are pursuing policies

which are not in conformity with the deregulation and trade liberalisation.

Rahman expressed the hope that the deregulating measures adopted by the present democratic government would make "Our vast labour force more production-oriented since there is very little scope of drawing salaries without work."

He said, good governance, rule of law, and democratic process are inter-related and a good governance means caring for the people and their welfare.

The Finance Minister outlined the series of deregulating and trade liberalisation measures undertaken by the present government.



The low-lying areas of Rayer Bazar in the city went under knee deep water following two days of incessant rainfall Thursday and Friday. — Star photo

The Midnight File

Scam: Delhi statement soon

NEW DELHI, June 19: The Parliamentary Affairs Minister, VC Shukla today said that a categorical statement would be made in the next two days on whether the Prime Minister had ever met Harshad Mehta. "We are checking with the records to see whether any person of this description met the Prime Minister. We don't want to be on a weak ground," he said while replying to a spate of questions from journalists, reports PTI.

Nawaz Sharif launches journalists' foundation

ISLAMABAD, June 19: Pakistani Premier Nawaz Sharif launched today a government-sponsored organisation for the welfare of journalists and other press industry workers starting it up with a 800,000 dollar grant. The journalists' foundation will extend financial help in cases of disability, layoffs and accidents, Sharif told a gathering of newspaper employees invited by him to a luncheon, reports AFP.

Clinton-Yeltsin meet in Tokyo July 10

TOKYO, June 19: US President Bill Clinton and Russian President Boris Yeltsin will meet in Tokyo on July 10 a day after an annual summit of Group of Seven (G7) heads of government has ended, Kyodo news agency said today. Kyodo, quoting Russian diplomatic sources said Clinton and Yeltsin, during their second meeting, are to discuss issues including nuclear disarmament and US aid to Russia, reports AFP.

Debate on budget

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middle of the year bypassing Parliament.

On subsidy in agriculture, the said even rich countries like in Europe, Japan and China gave heavy subsidies to farmers.

Haldar expressed dissatisfaction at the raising of duty on ambulance while giving duty relief to trucks.

Sharfuddin Khasru (Jatiya Party) called for effective measures including construction of embankments, to protect greater Sylhet from frequent flooding. He also demanded adequate funds for development of haors in Sylhet district.

He regretted that his party was not allowed to hold meetings and bring out processions. The ruling party should practise political tolerance as it has been preaching democracy, he added.

Advocate Abdul Karim (BNP) described the budget as 'realistic', aimed at mobilising domestic resources for attaining self-reliance.

He, however, called for protecting the jute sector from further decay. Jute is the main cash crop and effective measures should be taken to protect its market abroad, he observed.

poverty, alleged that they were serving the interests of the donors and some embassies here.

A total of eight women members belonging to the Treasury and opposition benches participated in yesterday's debate. They were: Mrs. Roushan Elahi (BNP), Mrs. Selina Rahman (BNP), Begum Lutfunnessa Hossain (BNP), Begum Shamsunnahar Khwaja Ahsanullah (BNP), Mrs. Matia Chowdhury (AL), Begum Rasheda Khatoun (Jamaat), Begum Rahima Khandkar (BNP) and Mrs. Roushanara Begum (AL) in the debate.

The other participants of the debate included Shankar Gobinda Chowdhury (AL), Khalilur Rahman Chowdhury (JP), Latifur Rahman (Jamaat), and Sharif Khasruzzaman (AL).

Speaker Shaikh Razzak Ali, who presided over the House for an hour after Maghreb prayers, adjourned the session at 8.30pm till 12 noon today.

HC jurisdiction

From Page 1 Col 7
portedly remarked Money speaks, everything is possible with money, on the floor of the Jatiya Sangsad on May 11, 1993.

Speaker Shaikh Razzak Ali yesterday asked minister Rafiqul Islam Miah to submit the certified copy of the High Court order before discussion on Monday.

The hands of the High Court are long, Speaker Shaikh Razzak Ali said. The question is, whether those are too long to stretch to parliament," the Speaker said.

He, however, agreed with Barrister Rafiq and said Article 78 of the Constitution is clear and categorical about it.

Red letter day for Roushan Ara

By Staff Correspondent
It was possibly a red letter day for Roushan Ara Begum, MP who delivered her maiden speech in Parliament on Saturday, after being elected almost seven months ago.

It was also an occasion of sorrow and joy because she was elected in a by election late last year from Mymensingh's Gouripur constituency, previously held by her husband Nazrul Islam of the Awami League.

Nazrul Islam was killed in a road accident on August 18, 1992.

A housewife-turned-politician, Roushan was assisted by three of her senior party colleagues when she read out her written speech on the proposed budget for 1993-94.

Matia Chowdhury, Mirza Azam and Amirul Islam of the AL sat beside her during the speech.

Roushan Ara alleged that the present government had stopped development works in the Gouripur area after she was elected on an opposition ticket.

She demanded allocations for development of roads, schools and colleges of her constituency.

BJP behind Mehta

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Briefing newsmen later, the Parliamentary Affairs Minister, VC Shukla said 'government has nothing to hide'. A 'political onslaught' had been launched against the Congress and 'we will meet it politically', he added.

The Congress Party's deputies in parliament passed the resolution expressing their 'full faith' in Rao.

But lawyers for Harshad Mehta, a swashbuckling broker known as 'big bull' said they have evidence, including an audio tape, to prove Rao accepted a big campaign donation.

Although Congress is rallying behind Rao, it is almost certain to face a no-confidence motion when parliament reconvenes next month, analysts said.

The 38-year-old Mehta, who once owned 30 cars, is free on bail and is fighting charges of bribery, fraud and currency violations.

He is a central figure in a 40 billion rupee (1.28 billion) securities scandal in which money was allegedly siphoned from a securities market to pump into the Bombay Stock Exchange, then booming partly because of reforms introduced by Rao.

More than 50 bankers and stockbrokers have been arrested and India's Commerce Minister and Attorney General have quit.

Mehta alleged at a news conference on Wednesday that

Beel Kuralia

From Page 1 Col 6
the locality kept their possession on the land at Beel Kuralia, some 25 kilometers north of Pabna town.

During a fact-finding trip to the remote hamlets around Beel Kuralia, this correspondent found:

* The landless peasants have organised themselves and have taken over the land they could not claim for more than 32 years.

* Although the land belongs to the government, the local administration has no control over Beel Kuralia which became state or khas land in 1956.

* The thana administration is silent over continued repression of the peasants by the landowners.

* The top police official at Chatmohar thana is reported to be personally involved in the dispute over the beel and the landless people accuse him of siding with the rich jotedars.

* A law and order situation, worse than before, may arise any time if the land dispute is not resolved and legal tangles untied soon.

Night are sleepless for the villagers of Dharail in Hartpur union.

Landless villagers — men and women — of Dharail now keep a regular night-time vigil over Beel Kuralia where they have almost finished harvesting the boro rice.

Men, with sticks and lanterns, patrol the rice fields to deter the jotedars' men from cutting away their crop.

The Dharail neighbourhood earlier comprised mainly fishermen who used to earn their bread from fishing at Beel Kuralia before it dried up.

With the flushing out of water from the beel, the whole fishing community had to change its profession to become farmers.

Yar Ali, a 46-year-old former fisherman from Dharail, said he used to haul some 20 kilograms of fish from the beel everyday, good enough to support his family.

But with the drying up of the beel, he changed his profession and became a menial labourer.

Floods: Ctg

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the headquarters after their houses were swept away.

Official sources also said that all the rivers and canals here including the Halda, the Matamhuri, the Sangha, the Dalu and the Srimal were flowing above danger-levels with the onrush of rain waters from the hilly areas.

Road communication between Chittagong and Cox's Bazar was snapped Saturday after four bridges on the highway were washed away by swirling flood water, official sources said.

Roads in Chakaria, Khurulla and Satkania remained under three to four feet of flood water since Friday, the source said, adding that some 40,000 people of the district were marooned. People of Chakaria, Kutubdia and Maheshkhali were the worst hit.

Incessant rain and gushing water from the hilly region caused the flood and submerged the roads. Local meteorological official said that 328 mm of rain was recorded in three days at the tourist town since Thursday.

Thrift at UNB director's home

A theft took place at the Lalmatia residence of Hasan Saeed, Executive Director of the United News of Bangladesh (UNB) on Friday night, reports UNB.

The burglars, who cut open the window grills to enter the house, decamped with a VCR, two in-one and a couple of small electronic items.

Minibus kills one in city

By Staff Correspondent
One Abul Azad, 25, was killed when a speeding minibus ran over him near the Sukrabad bus terminal at 2:55 pm Friday, police sources said.

The driver of the vehicle managed to flee the scene.

Gen Stackpole leaves

The US marine Lt General Henry C Stackpole, Commander of Marine Forces Pacific and Commanding General, Fleet Marine Forces Pacific, left Dhaka yesterday, ending his four-day visit to Bangladesh, reports BSS.

He was seen off at the Zia International Airport by senior military officials. The US ambassador in Bangladesh, William B Milam and other embassy officials were present at the airport.

Earlier, General Stackpole called on the Chief of Army Staff Lt General Muhammad Noor Uddin Khan at the army headquarters yesterday morning. He stayed with the Chief of Army Staff for some time.

General Stackpole then went to the Prime Minister's office, armed forces division at the Dhaka Cantonment where he called on the Principal Staff Officer Major General M S A Ishaque.

MH Khondaker passes away

M H Khondaker, a senior advocate of Bangladesh Supreme Court, died of a heart attack at his Dhanmondi residence yesterday evening, reports BSS.

He was 89.

Khondaker, the first Attorney General of Bangladesh, was elected president of the Dhaka High Court Lawyers Samity in 1964.

His body has been kept at BIRDEM and will be buried after arrival of his wife from abroad.

Meanwhile, President Abdur Rahman Biswas expressed his deep grief and sorrow at the sad demise of M H Khondaker.

In a condolence message Biswas said at his death the country has lost a very eminent lawyer and his death is indeed a great loss for the legal profession.

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