

# Experts suggest a vigorous search for energy sources

By Staff Correspondent

Energy experts, in a seminar Tuesday, stressed the need for research and investment in renewable energy technology because the country's natural gas reserves are likely to be exhausted within the next 25 years.

They also called for more vigorous exploration of gas, petroleum and coal fields to meet the future growing demand.

The experts expressed this view at the first session, "resource assessment," of the day long seminar on energy policy, organised by the Forum on National Energy Policy at the National Economic Council (NEC) auditorium.

The session was presided over by the Energy Secretary Faizur Razzak.

Prof Monirul Hoque of the Geology Department of Dhaka University, while presenting the keynote paper, said the country has a reserve of about ten trillion cubic feet of natural gas, which will dry up by the year 2020. He said use of coal and peat, which are found in abundance in the country, may solve the energy crisis.

Anwar Hossain of the Islamic Centre for Technical and Vocational Training and Research (ICTVTR) said solar energy has a good prospect in the country.

"We have to set a target of

solar energy uses by the year 2000," Hossain said.

He also said liquid fuel and coal-fired power plants should be set up to cope up with the gas crisis.

Dr Wazed Miah of the Atomic Energy Commission said the country has bright prospects of coal and uranium in the Sylhet, Rangpur and Dinajpur regions which should be explored.

He also proposed the massive plantation of eucalyptus trees to meet non-commercial demands of fuel.

Prof S T Ahmed, an energy expert taking part in the discussion, said mining of peat would destroy agricultural land and proposed the use of biomass for energy supply. He also stressed the need for exploring gas and oil in the Pabna and Khulna regions.

Prof Shamsur Ali, Vice-Chancellor of the Open University, stressed the need for mineral prospecting and efficient use of available resources. He also said that an institutional approach must be undertaken to develop non-commercial energy sources.

Former chairman of the Power Development Board M N Munim said there should be a study to determine the proportion of energy to be derived from different sources.

There should be definite and continued resource allocation

for energy exploration," Munim said.

Faizuddin Mahtab, a former Planning Minister, said supply of energy to the rural areas is a must to generate rural employment.

He said agriculture is exploited for energy supply and added that if a comprehensive plan for energy is not chalked out, agriculture will be ruined.

Mostam Hassan, another energy expert, said an individual organisation must be set up in the country to research in solar energy uses.

"All components of renewable energy must be made tax free and subsidies should be provided in this sector to encourage the use of solar energy," Hassan said.

Engineer Mujibur Rahman Khan of the Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FBCCI) suggested petrochemical complex should be set up in the country for optimum utilisation of natural gas. He also demanded the setting up of a condensate natural gas (CNG) plant in the country to substitute petroleum uses.

Others who spoke in the first session of the seminar were Dr Nazrul Islam, Nuruddin Kamal and Abdul Awal Miah. MP.

The session was attended by over a hundred energy experts, politicians and business people.



Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia looking at a catch of shrimps during her visit to some shrimp farms in Cox's Bazar yesterday. —PID photo

## Shrimp Dev Board

From page 1 col 7

ited the Pioneer hatchery, the Government Ideal Hatchery and the Kalaboti Nursery.

This little town on the coast of the Bay of Bengal was bustling with people upon the arrival of the Prime Minister, who is staying here overnight after a busy schedule.

Schoolchildren and residents of Cox's Bazar lined up along the roads to greet Begum Zia.

The Prime Minister said modern technology-based pisciculture is one of the effective means of poverty alleviation and employment generation. Referring to the quick success in shrimp cultivation, she said our condition will improve fast if the efforts are continued.

"Similar efforts and success in other economic sectors will help us reach our desired goal of development," she added.

The government's policy is to provide all sorts of facilities to private sector entrepreneurs in shrimp cultivation, Begum Zia said.

Begum Zia said shrimp hatcheries have been identified as industrial units and the Kalaboti area has been declared a hatchery zone where infrastructural facilities will be enhanced.

Livestock and Fisheries Minister Abdullah Al-Noman, Communications Minister Col (Retd) Oli Ahmed, Planning Minister Zahuruddin Khan, Industries Minister Shamsul Islam Khan, President of Cox's Bazar Chamber of Commerce and Industries Mohammad Ali, eminent pisciculturist Dr Mohammad Abul Hossain, Fish-

eries Secretary AZM Nasruddin and President of the Frozen Foods Exporters' Association Mahmudul Haque also addressed the concluding function, attended by local MPs and elite.

Earlier, in the afternoon, the Prime Minister addressed the district officials at the DC's office.

"We have achieved self-sufficiency in rice and now we have to motivate the people for crop diversification in order to attain self-reliance in other crops. We have to take proper steps so that production of items like salt and shrimps are not hampered due to natural calamities."

The Prime Minister stressed the need for ensuring security and facilities like power and communications to entrepreneurs in order to encourage them in boosting production.

The Prime Minister directed the officials of the coastal districts to ensure security to the people during natural calamities. She asked them to immediately start construction of the planned schools and clinics in all multi-purpose cyclone shelters in the coastal areas.

During the meeting, the Prime Minister assured that Cox's Bazar will be expanded with all necessary facilities of a tourist resort under a comprehensive development plan.

Begum Zia had a separate meeting with local elite, which included the municipal chairman, businessmen, journalists, freedom fighters, social workers and lawyers.

## Work for people, Khaleda asks partymen

COX'S BAZAR, Aug 17: Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia today called upon the workers and leaders of the BNP to work for people as the party belonged to the masses, reports BSS.

Addressing the leaders and workers of local BNP, the Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal and the Jubadal at the Circuit House the Prime Minister said the party could not be used for any vested individual interest. She said the members had to follow the constitution of the party.

Begum Zia said that good people should be given chance to take part in the party activities. She said it was natural to have differences of opinion under democratic system but these differences should not turn into clashes.

The meeting was addressed, among others by Livestock and Fisheries Minister Abdullah Al Noman, JCD district president Akhtar Chowdhury, Jubadal president of the district Hamiduddin Yusuf and BNP leaders Korban Ali, MA Gani and Golam Kibria.

## US to place Sudan on 'terrorist list'

WASHINGTON, Aug 17: Secretary of State Warren Christopher was preparing to place Sudan on the US list of state accused of sponsoring terrorism and an announcement could come as soon as Wednesday, US officials said today.



Former Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif (R) addressing the crowd on the fifth death anniversary of ex-president General Zia-ul-Haq in Islamabad yesterday. Afghan Premier Gulbuddin Hekmatyar (extreme-left) also witnessing the ceremony. —AFP photo

## Repatriation of Afghans in Pakistan agreed upon

ISLAMABAD, Aug 17: Pakistan, Afghanistan and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) signed here today a tripartite agreement to facilitate repatriation of some two million Afghan refugees, officials said, reports AFP.

The accord, coinciding with the current official visit here of Afghan premier Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, envisages the establishment of a commission to promote "safe, orderly and voluntary" repatriation.

According to UN estimates, Pakistan has 1.5 million registered and some half a million unregistered Afghan refugees.

The commission which is to be composed of a dozen members, four from each side, will meet at least once every two months to suggest measures for repatriation and reintegration of refugees in Afghanistan, officials said.

The meetings will be held alternately in the two countries. The agreement was signed by Pakistani Minister for States and Frontier Regions, Nisar

Memon, Afghan Minister for Repatriation, Farouq Azam, and UNHCR Chief of Mission here, Raymond W Fell.

Hekmatyar is scheduled to leave here Wednesday for an official visit to Iran, which shelters more than two million Afghan refugees.

The UNHCR plans to start an operation in September to repatriate thousands of Afghans living in Iranian Baluchistan through Pakistani territory.

The Afghan premier has met Pakistani President Wasim Sajjad and Prime Minister Moen Qureshi.

Earlier in the day, he attended along with former Pakistani premier Nawaz Sharif, a memorial public meeting held in Islamabad to mark the 5th death anniversary of military ruler General Mohammad Zia-ul-Haq.

Zia, killed in a plane crash in 1988, is honoured by Afghan Mujahideen for his support to their war against the military occupation of their homeland by the former Soviet Union.

## Khaleda, Hasina

From Page 1 Col 8

Institution of Engineers. He said foreign leaders were unlikely to attend the convention as they could not invite any foreign leaders due to limited time for preparation.

Some 3,017 delegates from different districts and a large number of observers are likely to attend the convention, said the Forum Convenor.

Responding to a question on possibility of the Jatiya Party leaders joining his "political forum," Dr Karnal said "if anyone expresses his solidarity with our ideal and objectives, we may think about him. But ours will be the final decision."

## Pranab Mukherjee wins election

CALCUTTA, Aug 17: The Deputy Chairman of Planning Commission Pranab Mukherjee and the noted economist, Dr Ashok Mitra today won biennial elections to Rajya Sabha from West Bengal. It is learnt from authoritative circles, reports PTI.

The results are yet to be officially announced.

# The Midnight File

## Arms seized in Mogadishu

UNITED NATIONS, Aug 17: Malaysian UN peacekeepers in Somalia seized mortars, grenades and other weapons during a search of a Mogadishu hospital early Monday, according to a UN statement. Earlier in Bonn, the relief organisation Caritas said some 50 UN troops seriously damaged the children's wing of the Benadir Hospital in Mogadishu, reports AFP.

## UNGA to reduce main bodies

UNITED NATIONS, Aug 17: The General Assembly, in a move to streamline its work, decided today to reduce the number of its main committees from seven to six. Much of the work of the 184-member assembly is carried out in the committees, whose decisions are then normally ratified by the assembly plenary, reports Reuter.

## Turkish planes bomb Kurds

ANKARA, Aug 17: Turkish warplanes and helicopter gunships bombarded Kurdish guerrillas on eastern mountain peaks today, causing heavy casualties, a security official said. Unal Erkan, emergency rule governor of 10 provinces in the east and southeast, said the bombing resumed after a one-day lull in air strikes begun on Friday against rebels roaming high country around Semdinli near the Iraqi and Iranian borders, reports Reuter.

# Bosnian peace talks

From Page 1 Col 5

70 per cent of the republic after almost a year and a half of fighting. They went most of the land they captured to remain within a Serb republic.

"The Muslim side claims most of the territory of eastern Bosnia and would like to exercise sovereignty there," said Bosnian Serb spokesman Jovan Zametica. "In the Serbian view that is unacceptable."

Bosnian Croat leader Mate Boban later joined the negotiations, which resumed Monday after a two-week boycott by Iztetbegovic.

Iztetbegovic's spokesman, Mirza Hajric, said the talks could last for days or even weeks before an agreement is reached.

Serbs and Croats, the victors in the war, have offered Muslims a landlocked republic covering nearly 30 per cent of

Bosnia. The Muslims currently control only about 10 per cent of Bosnia.

Iztetbegovic wants 40 per cent for the Muslims, who made up 44 per cent of the pre-war population. He has demanded that Serbs give back land they have seized around eastern enclaves and allow them to be linked by broad corridors to the rest of the Muslim republic.

Zametica, the Bosnian Serb spokesman, said Serbs would make some compromises over the towns of Zepa, Gorazde and

A three-man committee, meanwhile, started work on details of a preliminary agreement for temporary UN administration of Sarajevo. It would include Srebrenica but want to retain rural areas of eastern Bosnia traditionally populated by Serb majorities.

## DPRK to celebrate anniversary of Zia's visit

North Korea will celebrate the 15th anniversary of the visit of Shaheed President Ziaur Rahman to that country on September 9, reports BSS.

This was intimated to State Minister for Cultural Affairs Prof Jahanara Begum by Chang Won Sik, the Ambassador of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, when the latter called on the State Minister at her secretariat office yesterday.

The envoy informed the State Minister that a high level delegation from DPRK led by Cultural Minister would visit Bangladesh by the year end. He further said that his country was interested, to hold an exhibition of Korean photography, handicrafts and books in February next year in Dhaka.

## JUTA deplures

From Page 1 Col 4

Following the filing of cases, the JUTA held an emergency meeting and refuted the charges, terming them 'fabricated, false and baseless,' according to a press release.

"Without the support of the ruling party such impertinence cannot survive," the statement issued by the JUTA general secretary said.

The JUTA statement also demanded withdrawal of the charges against the teachers. Officer-in-Charge of Savar Police Station recorded the case based on a written allegation by the former JUCSU VP which reached him by mail on July 13.

The student leader also accused a few teachers with threatening the Vice Chancellor, which allegedly forced him to resign.

The Jahangirnagar University Employees' Association, the Employees' Union, and the Bangladesh Chhatra League BCL (M-I), in separate statements, slated the 'motivated' charges brought against the ten JU teachers.

Meanwhile, the probe body formed on Aug 7 earlier by the government, is likely to start working soon. According to campus sources, Additional Deputy Commissioner, Dhaka, requisitioned three office rooms at the university for commencing their investigation.

## Hasina

From Page 1 Col 5

A conspiracy is going on to weaken the pro-liberation forces in the name of third force, she said.

The press release said among those joined Awami League yesterday were Mirza Abdul Bari, vice-president of Gafargaon BNP thana unit, Fakir Abdul Matin, general secretary of CPB, Joyanal Abedin of Krishak Samity, Jalal Uddin of Khatunajur Samity, Abdul Awal, Dr Abdur Rashid and Mirza Ayub Ali.

Awami League leader Amr Hossain Amu was present.

## Public sector

From page 1 col 7 agencies' development work suffered.

As part of its effort to improve budgetary discipline the Finance Ministry took up the task of up-dating the register of debts owed by the public agencies to the government. The task, which started in 1991, has been completed early this year.

The debt register, updated in May this year, shows that 43 agencies owed Taka 2283 crores as debt service payment to the government during 1992-93. The best case scenario was that Taka 905 crore will be realised. The balance of Taka 1278 had to be carried over into the accounts for 1993-94.

The updated debt register show that just three agencies — the Bangladesh Power Development Board, the Bangladesh Chemical Industries Corporation and the Bangladesh Oil, Gas and Mineral Resources Development Corporation accounted for nearly one-third of the debt service payment owed to the government in 1992-93.

The Finance Ministry projected that a little over half of this money will be realised, with the best repayment performance coming from the Bangladesh Power Development Board.

Thirty public sector agencies, including Bangladesh Biman, BTMC and BADC were yet to make any debt service payments to the government on their 1992-93 account until the end of May this year.

## Aliya Madrassah

From Page 1 Col 3 the allocation of a hall seat.

However, the madrassah administration told newsmen the clash followed a brawl over outsiders staying in the student hostels.

Ashraf Ali, 45, a teacher, also came under attack when he attempted to save one student during the clashes.

Witnesses said, crackers, machetes, knives and other lethal weapons were used during the melee which occurred between 12 noon and 2 pm.

Police, on receipt of information, rushed to the spot and arranged transport service for the evacuating students. Panic gripped the institution of religious studies as armed activists looted and rampaged the rooms of the students. The JCD, however, claimed that the damaged rooms belonged to their activists.

Our DMCH Correspondent reports: Nine persons were admitted to the hospital while some six others were treated as outdoor patients.

The injured students are: Khalilur Rahman, Benazir Ahmed, Kiran, Abdul Matin, Maulana Ashraf Ali, Syeedur Rahman, Mozammel, Anwar and Matnuddin. Of the injured only Matnuddin is said to be an ICS activist while others belong to the JCD.

The injured teachers are: Abdur Rahim, 50, Siddiqur Rahman, 45, and Maulana Ashraf Ali.

## Impact of FAP

From Page 1 Col 5

JPP would destroy the rich open fisheries of Jamalpur and would likely render many fishermen of his 115-member association jobless, he said.

Abul Hasan, a farmer from Madarganj thana, however, pointed out that the embankments were necessary to mitigate the damages caused to crops by the recurring flood waters.

Maulana Mohiul Islam, a farmer from Sariakandi thana in Bogra district, which is located just across the river Jamuna and the JPP project area, suggested that dredging should be carried out by the government alongside construction of embankments so that the rivers could drain out the flood waters.

A farm-hand of Islampur thana, Mazharul Haq pointed out that the government should take necessary steps to rehabilitate those damaged by the embankments, particularly the fishermen and the farm labourers.

"We need water but we don't need excess water," said Mohammad Ali, a peasant from Sherpur. "During my 65 years, I have experienced many floodings, and survived," he added.

Awami League MP from Jamalpur Abul Kalam Azad suggested that the country should try to "convince" the donors for resolving the international water sharing problems.

"If we cannot check the excessive inflow of river waters from across the border, all our efforts will go in vain," he said. Azad said the embankments were required for combating the floods, but he suggested that the negative impacts of the structures should also be taken into account.

"What will happen to those affected by the levees, who will pay the compensation, and what will be the environmental impacts of the project?" he asked.

Taking part in the discussion,

Kamruzzaman Tarafder, a former chairman of the Madarganj upazila, suggested that "something" should be done at once to save the people from the scourge of floods.

Shah Khatrul Basheer Chisti, president of the Jamalpur district BNP, sensed "an international conspiracy to foil the FAP activities."

"We are not ready to bow down to any evil design against the country," he vowed.

A farm-hand of Sharishabari, Mujibur Rahman, was vehemently against construction of any embankment.

He pointed out that the levees would destroy thousands of homes in the shoals and charlands (sandbars) in the Jamuna.

Awami League MP Matia Chowdhury suggested that the collective experiences of the people against floods should not be ignored by the policy planners.

She chided both the pro and anti-FAP groups saying, "None should be obstinate on this crucial issue... Please take the right decision, keeping in mind the interests of the country."

Dr Shapan Adrian cautioned that no programme should be planned that may aggravate the flood problems.

"We can learn many things from the people who live with the floods," he added.

ADAB chairperson Khushi Kabir said that the government should not take hasty decision on the FAP which might harm the posterity.

The beneficiaries of the FAP must have the right to know about the programmes, discuss the issues and give their opinion, she said.

She urged the government to suspend all construction before the various studies under the FAP were completed.

"We are not against the FAP," Kabir said. "What we want for the people is a collective decision and an agreeable solution to the flood problems."

## Container terminals

From page 1 col 7

Meanwhile, the Chittagong Port Authority in September, 1991, made the first phase of MPB operational. This has enabled the handling of 50,000 containers. Four straddle carriers were procured on emergency basis as the number of containers marked a rapid increase.

As a result, the handling rate was recorded at 17 containers per hour per vessel as against eight containers previously when the containers were handled with fork-lifts and mobile cranes, Port sources said.

The port authority plans to procure some more straddle carriers and other equipment to promote productivity in the container handling operation.

According to reports received from the Chittagong Port, the growth of container cargo registered a fifteen-fold increase in the past ten years.

In 1992-93 fiscal Chittagong Port handled 1,50,787 containers as against only 15,000 containers handled in 83-84 fiscal.

## Burglary in Bangladeshi diplomat's house in Delhi

NEW DELHI, Aug 17: Burglars intruded into the home of a Bangladeshi diplomat in the India capital and fled with cash and jewellery worth US 10,000 dollars, police said Tuesday, reports AP.

Bangladesh Counsellor Ahmed Faizul Kabir was not at home when five men entered his house at 11 am Monday on the pretext of delivering packages.

They tied Kabir's wife, Sharifa and their servant and ransacked the home in the posh Kalindi residential district area, police chief Prabhhat Singh said.

The Bangladesh High Commission has asked for a thorough probe into the incident.

Bangladesh High Commission has 14 diplomats and about 25 support staff.

## Saifur

From Page 1 Col 8

"Atrocious misuse of gas in the fertilizer factories must be stopped," he said, adding punitive action would be taken against the misusers of gas at the domestic level.

In this context, Saifur Rahman cited the agreement with KAFCO (Karnaphuli Fertiliser Company) and said there would be heavy pressure on gas from April when the factory would go into production. "So, gas exploration is a must," he said.

Terming energy, agriculture, health and education as the most vital sectors in the development activities, he said the government had taken various steps to explore new sources of energy.

Speaking about system loss, he said this happened in high-tension areas in the industrial belts. Domestic power consumption contributes less than industrial units to system loss, he said and called for a countrywide movement against the loss.

The national energy policy will play an effective role in the development activities of the country, he hoped in appreciating the recommendations of the meet. "I agree with the recommendations made by the participants and the government will try to provide all support in this regard."

Chaired by Energy and Mineral Resources Minister Dr Khandaker Mosharraf Hossain, the concluding session was also addressed by Abdul Awal Miah, MP, former Planning Minister Dr Faah Uddin Mahtab, former PSC Chairman SM Al Hussainy, scientist Prof M Inna Ali and FBCCI President Mahbubur Rahman. Prof Mohammad Ibrahim presented the recommendations.

## Mizan disowns

From Page 1 Col 5

the desertion from JP arise when these Johnnies do not belong to it," he asked in a sarcastic tone.

Referring to Shamsul Huda Chowdhury, the JP acting chairman noted with an ironic grin that Huda had kept the flag flying atop his house and his car long after the fall of the Jatiya Party government. "Did that indicate he was an esteemed leader of the Jatiya Party?"

He, however, admitted the "blunder" he had committed by making Huda a member of the JP Presidium. He said in exercise of the power vested in him as the acting chairman he had made Huda a member of the party presidium.

If Huda had that at the back of his mind when he made a pointed reference to politics of a particular coterie in JP, Mizan Chowdhury said with a sarcastic smile, "I have nothing to add."

The JP leader dismissed as baseless Shamsul Huda Chowdhury's allegation that the JP had wavered from its principles, policies and ideologies. "Farthest from his accusation," the JP had not deviated even an inch from its avowed ideals."

Referring to Prof MA Matin, Mizan Chowdhury said he and some others under his leadership had tendered their resignations before the fall of the Jatiya Party government.

"It is strikingly funny that they are now claiming their JP membership with retrospective effect," he said. "They have signed the statement with Huda Chowdhury to mislead public opinion."