

SAARC convention on narcotic drugs ratified

By Shamsad Mortuza back from New Delhi

The SAARC Convention on Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances signed in Male in November 1990, came into force on September 5, 1993, following completion of ratification procedures by all SAARC member countries.

However, in a recent regional meeting in the Indian capital, member nations were urged to adopt necessary legal changes in their respective domestic laws to comply with the SAARC convention.

Agreed during the fifth SAARC Summit in Male, the convention aimed at promoting regional cooperation among member states to introduce legal changes in demand reduction, after the mandate given by the fourth SAARC Summit held in Islamabad, in 1988.

Only one member country, India, has so far brought about necessary legal changes while some others have initiated the process of implementing the provisions of the SAARC convention regarding illicit drugs.

This was disclosed at the follow-up meeting Sept 7 to 10 at a local hotel in New Delhi, attended by five of the SAARC member states.

Chaired by the Indian delegate leader A K Srivastava, the meeting reviewed the mutual legal assistance among member states in investigation, prosecution and jurisdiction.

Most of the member states in the meeting, however, conceded that their laws did not provide obligations to seize illicit drug-related property. The representative members recommended

Strike paralyses much of Karachi: 2 killed

KARACHI, Sept 18: Protesters demanding equal treatment for immigrants from India clashed with police in Pakistan's industrial city of Karachi today, leaving two people dead and nine injured, including four policemen, reports Reuter.

Police said they arrested more than 30 people when a strike called by the Haqiqi splinter group of the Mohajir Quomi Movement (MQM), which represents Urdu-speakers who came from India after partition in 1947, turned violent.

One man was shot dead as he emerged from a mosque in Easter Karachi and a teenage protester died from burns suffered when he was setting up a

Demonstration against FAP

TANGAIL, Sept 18: Some 3,000 peasants, fishermen and landless people staged a noisy demonstration in front of the DC's office here today (Saturday) demanding scrapping of FAP-20, a flood control pilot project in the district, reports UNB.

The marchers from Sadar, Delduar and Basail thanas of the district also submitted a memorandum to the Deputy Commissioner calling for suspension of the Tangail Compartmentalisation Pilot Project (CPP) under the ambitious Flood Action Plan (FAP) of the government.

WB help

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The minister, leading a five-member high-level delegation, apprised Wood of the just-concluded 'Bangladesh Petroleum Investment Round Table Conference' in Houston which was attended by 82 representatives of 37 international oil companies from 14 countries.

Dr Mosharraf informed him that preliminary memoranda of understanding were signed with five international oil companies in Houston after the round-table conference. He underlined the need for expeditious conclusion of gas development project and new investment in power sector.

He referred to the new petroleum policy of Bangladesh and highlighted various reform measures initiated by the government to attract foreign investment into energy and mineral sectors.

Joseph Wood lauded the measures of the government which contributed to improvement of the power sector through reduction of system loss and enhancement of revenue collection.

The World Bank executive called for sustaining the development trend in this sector and indicated that the WB was very hopeful about the Bangladesh Gas Infrastructure Development Project (GIDP).

Energy Secretary M Faizur Razzak, alternate Executive Director to the World Bank M A Sayeed and Economic Minister of the Bangladesh Embassy in Washington Ezzal Haq represented the Bangladesh side while the World Bank was represented by Director of Country Department 1 Mrs Ani Hamilton, division chief of Country Department Frederick Temple and Principal Operation Officer Abid Hasan.

According to the Speaker, the government should now give priority to overhauling the bureaucracy and reorganising it in such a manner so that the public servants are imbued with sincerity in performing their prescribed jobs.

Speaking on the functioning of Parliament, the Speaker strongly felt changes in the ex-

pected introduction of necessary laws.

All of the member nations, save one, had necessary legislation against drug offenders as defined in Article 5 of the Islamabad Convention of 1988.

Article 3 of the 1988 convention termed production, preparation, sale, cultivation, despatch in transit of psychotropic substances as criminal offences.

Taking the nature of the offences in consideration, treatment, education, aftercare, rehabilitation or social re-integration of the minor offenders were also recommended in the meeting.

It also earmarked to utilise the SAARC Drug Offence Monitoring Desk, established in the Shri Lanka Police Narcotic Bureau, properly to gear up inter-state information exchange regarding drug-related offences.

The meeting also suggested legal assistance to the technical committee to shape a model agreement between neighbouring states. The bilateral agreement between the member states, whose territories or borders are used for drug trafficking, could be designed after the model agreement, the meeting viewed.

The Bangladesh team in the New Delhi meeting was led by Deputy Director of Dhaka Metropolitan Zone of the Department of Narcotics Control.

Bangladesh, Bhutan, Shri Lanka, Nepal and host India participated in the three-day meeting.

Strike paralyses much of Karachi: 2 killed

KARACHI, Sept 18: Protesters demanding equal treatment for immigrants from India clashed with police in Pakistan's industrial city of Karachi today, leaving two people dead and nine injured, including four policemen, reports Reuter.

Soldiers in armoured personnel carriers patrolled the city, which was virtually paralysed by the strike.

Police said at least nine people, including four policemen, were wounded when protesters opened fire with semi-automatic weapons in Central and Eastern Karachi.

Dozens of protesters blocked roads and set fire to buses, a truck, a jeep and two cars near the city centre as well as a petrol station.

Bursts of gunfire echoed in the industrial zones of Landhi and Korangi in Eastern Karachi.

The Haqiqi faction called the strike to protest against what it called injustice to their community in government jobs.

It was the third strike in three weeks in Karachi.

Dhaka elected UNGA session vice-president

Bangladesh has been elected one of the four Vice-Presidents for the 48th session of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) beginning at the world body's headquarters in New York on Tuesday, reports UNB.

Foreign Minister A S M Mostafizur Rahman, who left here yesterday for New York, is scheduled to preside over the session, as one of the Vice-Presidents, on September 28.

Bureaucracy, JS need overhauling

By Staff Correspondent
isiting Rules of Procedure of Parliament were necessary to cater to the needs under the changed form of government.

The present Rules of Procedure were framed during the days of a Presidential form of government and now need to be amended in conformity with parliamentary democracy," he said.

In this context, the Speaker referred to other democratic countries where pre-budget discussions are held on fiscal policies. But, he regretted, no such discussion took place here by

the day-long seminar was sponsored jointly by the Study and Research Group on Democracy and Socio-economic Development (SRG) and the Manabik Shahaya Sangstha (MSS) at the Women's Voluntary Association Hall at Dharmundi.

While criticising the bureaucracy, Shaikh Razzak Ali accused the civil servants of behaving like masters and also hindering the growth of accountable and democratic government.

"It's the bureaucracy, not the politicians, who ruled the country all through," he said. "Even under the changed perspective, the civil servants consider themselves masters and forget that they are the servants of the people."

According to the Speaker, the government should now give priority to overhauling the bureaucracy and reorganising it in such a manner so that the public servants are imbued with sincerity in performing their prescribed jobs.

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He said even the journalists and the teachers have become victims of the terrorism of the BNP activists.

Matia Chowdhury, MP, said the government did not maintain any of its commitments given to the people or the opposition political parties.

Mohammed Nasim categorically blamed a minister for the incident in which the teachers of the Jahangirnagar University were assaulted and said the government was patronising terrorists.

He also blamed the government for destroying the country's economy in a planned way by destroying agriculture and industries.

He called upon all to gear up agitation against the government to put an end to the situation.

Tofael Ahmed, MP, reiterated his challenge that if he failed to prove the allegations of corruption against Irrigation Minister Majid-ul-Huq and his ministry he would resign from Parliament.

He also alleged that most of the BNP ministers and leaders were involved in corruption and nepotism. If the BNP high command fails to remove them from the ministries and the party, it would affect everybody like cancer, he said.

Tofael also criticised the government for criticising all the institutions of the country and there by polluting the working atmosphere.

Abdur Razzak, MP, blamed the government for providing shelter to the terrorists and unleashing a reign of terror.

This was decided at a meeting on 'Prime Minister's special fund for the rehabilitation and welfare of the distressed women' held at the Bangladesh Secretariat here yesterday with State Minister for Women's Affairs Sarwar Rahman in the chair.

Women MPs of the concerned areas will act as advisers in loan distribution programmes from the Prime Minister's special fund for rehabilitation and welfare of the distressed women from now on, reports BSS.

Abdur Razzak, MP, blamed the government for providing shelter to the terrorists and unleashing a reign of terror.

He also called for the scrapping of FAP-20, a flood control pilot project in the district, reports UNB.

The union claimed that when the staff demanded the target bonus after the hotel reached its target profit last year, the authorities said according to the union's charter of demand any financial claims outside the charter can not be settled in the middle of the year. To this, the union had said that if they were not awarded the bonus, they would stage a hunger strike from September 21.

When newsmen asked General Manager (GM) Andrew J McBirnie, — confined at his office — for his reactions, Imdad GM exploded: "I refuse to join any press conference which I am forced to attend."

"I am being kept here against my will," McBirnie said.

When asked if he had contacted the police to bail him out, he said: "I have no telephone in this room, and I am not allowed to go out. Anyway, how the hell would it help the situation by calling in the police?"

The union is not allowed to bring out any issue as per its charter," McBirnie said. "Whether their demand is justified or not is another matter. But their action is absolutely diabolical and highly militant."

Blutto has challenged the judge's action while Sharif defended his distribution of charity funds after devastating floods in September 1992, saying he would have used more money if it had been available.

Sharif also asked why they should not be disqualified from the October 6 elections.

It was also decided that women MPs of the concerned areas from now on will preside over the meeting relating to credit disbursement programme and will give approval to the final list of the distressed women.

The special fund of Taka two crore and 74 lakh was created in early 1992 and Taka 4,600,500 has so far been disbursed.

The loan recipients have been striving to become self-reliant by involving their credit money in poultry farming, sewing projects, pisciculture, cow and goat farming, tailoring, grocery and confectionery shops and small business.

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