

Business

55 m forced by poverty to work in India

Child labourers stage protest

NEW DELHI, Sept 19: About 250 child workers staged a protest in New Delhi on Saturday against the use of child labour in Indian industry, reports Reuter.

Aged from about six to early teens, they sat in front of labour minister Purno Sangma's office with a range of the products they make, including bricks, glass bangles, brassware and locks.

"We consider child labour as a contemporary form of child slavery," said Kailash Satyarthi of the South Asian Coalition on Child Servitude (SACCS), which organised the protest.

Indian law bars children under the age of 14 from working, but the ban has never been enforced. SACCS estimates some

55 million Indian children are forced by poverty to work, often in cramped, dangerous conditions which damage their health.

Occupations range from agricultural work, such as tending cattle, to quarrying, production of matches and fire-works, and craft like brassware and sought-after hand-knotted rugs.

Some are caught in the literal slavery of bonded labour, in which unscrupulous bosses tempt workers to factories or quarries far from home with promises of cash and good prospects, only to trap them with spurious debts and violence.

Fourteen-year-old Devanandan said he was coaxed from

his village in the north Indian state of Bihar two years ago to join a carpet factory in neighbouring Uttar Pradesh.

He was told he would work for two hours a day, learn a trade, attend school and earn 2,000 to 3,000 rupee (65 to 100 dollar) per month.

Instead, he said he was forced to work, eat and sleep in the same locked room, knotting carpets from 4.00 am until midnight.

He was rescued in March after his parents alerted SACCS, which intervened with the help of local authorities.

"I'm very angry about it and I also feel sad," he said.

Sangma, the labour minister, said India was planning to tighten its labour laws to pro-

tect children.

The government aimed to improve children's working conditions and gradually reduce their numbers, he told Reuters.

Satyarthi agreed many children had no choice but to work to supplement their family income, but he said stamping out child labour need not increase poverty.

He said the 55 million child workers were matched by 55 million unemployed adults, who could take over their jobs if employers were no longer able to hire under-age labourers for pitiful wages.

"You can't eliminate poverty and improve literacy without eliminating child labour," he said.

Indian SC orders closure of 190 factories near Ganges

NEW DELHI, Sept 19: India's Supreme Court has ordered the closure of 190 factories near the river Ganges for defying pollution rules, United News of India (UNI) said, reports Reuter.

The court directed the closure on Friday after the factories, in the Ganges basin in the North Indian state of Uttar Pradesh, failed to comply with a state directive to install effluent treatment plants.

UNI said they were among 800 factories which ignored instructions from the Uttar Pradesh pollution control board.

Emirates completes airbus delivery series

Emirates' 13th airbus — an A300-600R — arrived in Dubai on September 1, with fully operational inflight phones. The new arrival, called sign EKM, is also the latest of the airline's current contracted deliveries from Airbus Industry, says a press release.

Maurice Flanagan, Emirates' Group Managing Director was at Dubai International Airport to meet the arrival of the 13th airbus and said: "This new airbus is Emirates' fifth A300 and will meet the demands of our long-haul routes following the airline's massive expansion last year."

This is the second airbus in the fleet to arrive with EMTEL, the new telephone system, enabling calls to be made inflight.

BARD implementing 4 projects at a cost of Tk 17 cr

Bangladesh Academy for Rural Development (BARD) has been implementing four projects at a cost of Taka 17 crore to eradicate rural poverty, reports UNB.

It was disclosed in the 52nd meeting of the Board of Governors of the BARD, held in the conference room of LGRD and Cooperative Ministry with LGRD and Cooperatives Minister Barrister Abdus Salam Talukder in the chair Saturday.

The projects covered two investment and two technical assistance projects. The Academy is also executing action-re-

search and study oriented projects — local level planning and management, international training for rural development, house hold horticulture production and processing, income generation for women, literacy and nutrition, family planning, basic needs and environment.

The meeting, reviewed the activities of BARD, approved the proceedings of the last meeting of the Board of Governors and took a number of decision regarding different administrative activities of the Academy.

It was attended among others, by Rabeyen Chowdhury MP, AKM Abu Taher MP, Lutfuzz-

zaman Babar MP, Agriculture Secretary ANM Yusuf, Local Government Secretary Moshique Rahman, Rural Development Secretary Md Mahe Alam, Establishment Secretary Habibur Rahman, Member of Planning Commission Harunur Rashid, Director General of BARD Syed Margub Morshed.

It may be mentioned here that the Academy has given training to 3040 different level officials and conducted '80 training courses which include 10 workshops and seminars and one international training course during the last six months ending June this year.



The Mercedes 300D being off-loaded from Emirates' 13th airbus at Dubai International Airport.

Occupied territories may be top IMF, WB meeting issue

WASHINGTON, Sept 19: As the global economic elite gather next week for the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank annual meeting, a new issue is sure to occupy their deliberations — how to support the historic agreement between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organisation, reports Reuter.

Gaza and the West Bank, moving toward independence but not yet states or countries, pose unprecedented challenges for policy makers since basic institutions need to be built from the ground up.

"In one way, it's harder than what is going on in the former Soviet Union, since basic institutions such as a central bank do not exist," said a bank official, adding, "on the other hand, nothing has to be dismantled."

Bank sources said the lend-

ing institution is moving at full speed to put an assistance package in place, but the process is highly complex and help, even if everything goes without a hitch, is many months away.

"There is a sense of urgency, but it will still take time," said one official.

The IMF, for its part, can do little until a new Palestinian state is formed, recognised as a country by the United Nations, and then becomes a member — a protracted process.

The fund can only lend to member-states or countries, newly-independent countries, they must be countries defined as countries and recognised as countries under the UN system," an IMF official told a briefing for reporters.

The World Bank is less constrained, but still faces a very difficult process.

Even before a specific project to be supported can be identified, it must obtain a commitment from a third party country to guarantee the lending.

Presumably, guarantees could come from any member country, but officials now believe that an obvious choice will be Israel or Egypt, either separately or perhaps, together.

The plan is expected to serve as the focus of an international drive led by the United States to provide financial backing for Palestinians' self-rule in the Israeli-occupied territories.

Officials from the region will gather Monday and Tuesday under bank auspices to discuss regional cooperation, including assistance to the PLO and the occupied territories.

How this will finally unfold is uncertain, but it is already clear that aid for the region will be based at least as much on politics as on hard-nosed economic considerations.

Already there is a behind-the-scenes debate on how the assistance should be organised with some crumblings about whether the bank is the best institution for this effort, or whether the United States should take the lead.

The Bank has proposed a

3.0 billion US dollar, 10-year economic development plan for the West Bank and Gaza designed to improve economic conditions in the region in a bid to make the peace process stick.

The plan is expected to serve as the focus of an international drive led by the United States to provide financial backing for Palestinians' self-rule in the Israeli-occupied territories.

How this will finally unfold is uncertain, but it is already clear that aid for the region will be based at least as much on politics as on hard-nosed economic considerations.

The meeting had been planned prior to the historic handshake between PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat and Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, so no assistance plan for the territories is expected to emerge from the talks.

The Bank has proposed a

3.0 billion US dollar, 10-year economic development plan for the West Bank and Gaza designed to improve economic conditions in the region in a bid to make the peace process stick.

The plan is expected to serve as the focus of an international drive led by the United States to provide financial backing for Palestinians' self-rule in the Israeli-occupied territories.

How this will finally unfold is uncertain, but it is already clear that aid for the region will be based at least as much on politics as on hard-nosed economic considerations.

Already there is a behind-the-scenes debate on how the assistance should be organised with some crumblings about whether the bank is the best institution for this effort, or whether the United States should take the lead.

The Bank has proposed a

3.0 billion US dollar, 10-year economic development plan for the West Bank and Gaza designed to improve economic conditions in the region in a bid to make the peace process stick.

The meeting had been planned prior to the historic handshake between PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat and Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, so no assistance plan for the territories is expected to emerge from the talks.

The Bank has proposed a

3.0 billion US dollar, 10-year economic development plan for the West Bank and Gaza designed to improve economic conditions in the region in a bid to make the peace process stick.

The meeting had been planned prior to the historic handshake between PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat and Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, so no assistance plan for the territories is expected to emerge from the talks.

The Bank has proposed a

3.0 billion US dollar, 10-year economic development plan for the West Bank and Gaza designed to improve economic conditions in the region in a bid to make the peace process stick.

The meeting had been planned prior to the historic handshake between PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat and Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, so no assistance plan for the territories is expected to emerge from the talks.

The Bank has proposed a

3.0 billion US dollar, 10-year economic development plan for the West Bank and Gaza designed to improve economic conditions in the region in a bid to make the peace process stick.

The meeting had been planned prior to the historic handshake between PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat and Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, so no assistance plan for the territories is expected to emerge from the talks.

The Bank has proposed a

3.0 billion US dollar, 10-year economic development plan for the West Bank and Gaza designed to improve economic conditions in the region in a bid to make the peace process stick.

The meeting had been planned prior to the historic handshake between PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat and Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, so no assistance plan for the territories is expected to emerge from the talks.

The Bank has proposed a

3.0 billion US dollar, 10-year economic development plan for the West Bank and Gaza designed to improve economic conditions in the region in a bid to make the peace process stick.

The meeting had been planned prior to the historic handshake between PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat and Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, so no assistance plan for the territories is expected to emerge from the talks.

The Bank has proposed a

3.0 billion US dollar, 10-year economic development plan for the West Bank and Gaza designed to improve economic conditions in the region in a bid to make the peace process stick.

The meeting had been planned prior to the historic handshake between PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat and Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, so no assistance plan for the territories is expected to emerge from the talks.

The Bank has proposed a

3.0 billion US dollar, 10-year economic development plan for the West Bank and Gaza designed to improve economic conditions in the region in a bid to make the peace process stick.

The meeting had been planned prior to the historic handshake between PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat and Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, so no assistance plan for the territories is expected to emerge from the talks.

The Bank has proposed a

3.0 billion US dollar, 10-year economic development plan for the West Bank and Gaza designed to improve economic conditions in the region in a bid to make the peace process stick.

The meeting had been planned prior to the historic handshake between PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat and Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, so no assistance plan for the territories is expected to emerge from the talks.

The Bank has proposed a

3.0 billion US dollar, 10-year economic development plan for the West Bank and Gaza designed to improve economic conditions in the region in a bid to make the peace process stick.

The meeting had been planned prior to the historic handshake between PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat and Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, so no assistance plan for the territories is expected to emerge from the talks.

The Bank has proposed a

3.0 billion US dollar, 10-year economic development plan for the West Bank and Gaza designed to improve economic conditions in the region in a bid to make the peace process stick.

The meeting had been planned prior to the historic handshake between PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat and Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, so no assistance plan for the territories is expected to emerge from the talks.

The Bank has proposed a

3.0 billion US dollar, 10-year economic development plan for the West Bank and Gaza designed to improve economic conditions in the region in a bid to make the peace process stick.

The meeting had been planned prior to the historic handshake between PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat and Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, so no assistance plan for the territories is expected to emerge from the talks.

The Bank has proposed a

3.0 billion US dollar, 10-year economic development plan for the West Bank and Gaza designed to improve economic conditions in the region in a bid to make the peace process stick.

The meeting had been planned prior to the historic handshake between PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat and Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, so no assistance plan for the territories is expected to emerge from the talks.

The Bank has proposed a

3.0 billion US dollar, 10-year economic development plan for the West Bank and Gaza designed to improve economic conditions in the region in a bid to make the peace process stick.

The meeting had been planned prior to the historic handshake between PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat and Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, so no assistance plan for the territories is expected to emerge from the talks.

The Bank has proposed a

3.0 billion US dollar, 10-year economic development plan for the West Bank and Gaza designed to improve economic conditions in the region in a bid to make the peace process stick.

The meeting had been planned prior to the historic handshake between PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat and Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, so no assistance plan for the territories is expected to emerge from the talks.

The Bank has proposed a

3.0 billion US dollar, 10-year economic development plan for the West Bank and Gaza designed to improve economic conditions in the region in a bid to make the peace process stick.

The meeting had been planned prior to the historic handshake between PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat and Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, so no assistance plan for the territories is expected to emerge from the talks.

The Bank has proposed a

3.0 billion US dollar, 10-year economic development plan for the West Bank and Gaza designed to improve economic conditions in the region in a bid to make the peace process stick.

The meeting had been planned prior to the historic handshake between PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat and Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, so no assistance plan for the territories is expected to emerge from the talks.

The Bank has proposed a

3.0 billion US dollar, 10-year economic development plan for the West Bank and Gaza designed to improve economic conditions in the region in a bid to make the peace process stick.

The meeting had been planned prior to the historic handshake between PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat and Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, so no assistance plan for the territories is expected to emerge from the talks.

The Bank has proposed a

3.0 billion