

JS : Labour problems

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The Treasury Bench members, especially the ministers concerned, said there was no such labour unrest right at the moment in the country. "Although vested interest groups in the sector were out to destabilise the situation."

Labour and Manpower Minister Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan, reading from the magazines published by the industrialists, told the House that even the owners of the industrial units had no complaint about labour-unrest.

The Labour Minister said the main problem is not the unrest in the labour sector but to make the industries viable. He denied the opposition allegation that workers are being sacked in the name of Golden Handshake Programme without paying them.

The government, he said, has already started giving salary to workers under the new wages commission in the public sector. Besides, steps are being taken to fix minimum wages for workers in 14 different industries in the private sector.

In this context, he said the structure of minimum wages for

garments, printing and riverine transport sectors is now on the final stage of adoption.

Bhuiyan said the Law Reforms Commission comprising owners, trade union leaders, the government and legal experts are working hard to update the labour laws for the interest of production and industrialisation by maintaining good management-union relation.

The minister observed that it was not the labour unrest, rather how to make the existing industries run profitably was the main problem in the sector.

In this respect, the minister called upon the opposition to come forward with constructive suggestions and said the government was ready to accommodate the opposition's thoughtful suggestions. The minister also observed that there was no problem in reaching a national consensus on the issue especially when all the major parties now believed in the system of market economy.

Taking part in the discussion, Barrister Moudud Ahmed of the Jatiya Party told the House that there was no economic activity in the country right at the moment. Terming the government "a body of mismanagement," the JP leader said, the BNP privatisation scheme was going on without any systematic policy.

Tofael Ahmed (AL), taking part in the debate, criticised the government for not implementing agreement signed four times between workers and government.

He said a national consensus is required to steer the country out of the crisis created by labour unrest, unemployment and other national problems.

Rashed Khan Menon said the government has closed down some 4,000 industrial units and has been retrenching workers on the advice of the World Bank and IMF.

He warned that the workers, for their own survival, might embark on a movement.

Among others who participated in the discussion included, Jute Minister Brig (Retd) Hannan Shah, Deputy Leader of the Opposition Abdus Samad Azad, Chief Whip of the Opposition Mohammad Nasim, Rahmat Ali of the AL, Maulana Abdus Sobhan of the Jamaat Whip Ashraf Hossain and Abdur Rab Chowdhury of the BNP.

Apart from the discussion on the labour issue, the JS yesterday disposed of three call attention motions including one relating to the creation of Sylhet division.

The Jila Parishad Bill was on the order of the day, but discussion on the issue could not be held due to constraint of time.

Speaker Shaikh Razzak Ali adjourned the House at 9:45 pm to resume again at 4 this afternoon.



Awami League chief and Leader of the Opposition in Parliament Sheikh Hasina flanked by her party leaders offering feteha at the mazar of Hussain Shaheed Suhrawardy in the city yesterday. —Star photo

India won't starve Bangladesh of water: Dinesh

Indian External Affairs Minister Dinesh Singh left here yesterday for home after attending the 13th session of the SAARC Council of Ministers, reports BSS.

The meeting went off very good — there was no controversy — there was general appreciation for economic cooperation," he told newsmen before departure at the airport.

Singh lauded the outcome of the meeting and praised Foreign Minister A S M Mostafizur Rahman for efficient conduct of the meeting.

Asked about his meeting with the Bangladesh Foreign Minister yesterday morning, the Indian Minister said he was very happy with the meeting and described the bilateral ties as "excellent".

About the "Farakka issue", Singh said Indian Prime Minister P V Narasimha Rao had said that India would not starve Bangladesh of water. "We will make every effort for solution of the problem," he said.

The Indian Minister stressed the need for a greater economic cooperation in the region and said the SAPTA would be the beginning in that direction.

SAARC FMs review

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the greatest attention to economic development and economic cooperation in the region.

Mostafiz said the 13th meet of the Foreign Ministers covered all the 13 points in the agenda.

The Bangladesh Foreign Minister stated that the members "have decided to be serious about SAPTA." Responding to a question, he said the next meeting of the Inter-Governmental Group on trade liberalisation would be held in Islamabad in the first quarter of the next year.

Asked if Pakistan has any reservation about SAPTA, he replied, "Why should it have since the next meeting is being held in Islamabad. He reminded newsmen that it had already been agreed earlier that SAPTA would be implemented by 1995. "SAPTA is moving. It is only a question of time," he emphasized.

Mostafiz said, the schedule of the Indian Prime Minister's visit to Bangladesh in January still is on and that outstanding bilateral issues including water sharing would be discussed at the highest level.

He said the Foreign Ministers of the region had bilateral discussions during their stay

but he was not in a position to reveal them to newsmen.

Discussions on ways of combat terrorism and drug abuse were also held at length, he said.

Mostafiz said that during his recent visit to Brussels, he had discussions with EC officials on establishing links between the two organisations.

Mostafiz also informed the newsmen that discussions took place with Pakistan's Foreign Minister over the repatriation and the division of the assets and expressed the hope that the issues would be solved soon. "It's a new government and we must give them some breathing time too."

On the Chakma issue, he said, there was a time-table "which we are trying to adhere to."

Rahman said the Foreign Ministers' meeting had unanimously appointed Yadav Kant Silwal, Foreign Secretary of Nepal as the Secretary General of SAARC for the next two-year term beginning January. He will succeed Ibrahim Zaki of the Maldives who completes his tenure at the end of December and is expected to be a minister of his own country.

To bow or not

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after his treasury bench colleague Ataur Rahman Khan sought permission to move the resolution.

While objecting, Barrister Huda asked the Deputy Speaker Humayun Khan Panni how a person, having no hands, would show his respect to the chair if he or she was elected to Parliament.

Following the objection, the Deputy Speaker asked if there were at least 15 members to support the move. The move was, however, rejected by the chair as only 13 members, nine from the Jamaat-e-Islami, and four others, two each from the ruling BNP and the Jatiya Party seconded the motion.

Chief Whip of the Opposition Mohammad Nasim, rising on a point of order, told the House that objection to the treasury bench's move by an 'influential' minister reflected indiscipline in the ruling party. He also drew the Deputy Speaker's attention to Article 70 of the Constitution that barred an MP from acting against his or her party decision.

Responding to Nasim's observation, LGRD Minister Barrister Abdus Salam Talukder took the floor and said that the BNP Parliamentary Party meeting discusses only the important issues. He also denied having any indiscipline in his party. Supporting his cabinet colleague's opposition to the move, Salam Talukder told the House that the convention of bowing existed worldwide.

In our country too, he added, the Members of Parliament, irrespective of religion, had been showing respect to the chair in this manner since long.

Deputy Leader of the Opposition Abdus Samad Azad also clarified and repeated Nasim's contention.

Salam Talukder reacted to Samad Azad saying the matter of discipline in his party was their own affair and others had nothing to do with it.

Fall of Ershad regime

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along with his wife Roushan Ershad and 17 others co-accused. The charge was that he had abused his official powers and directed RAJUK chairman in writing to hand over a plot at Kawranbazar to 13 co-applicants. Three of them later handed over their shares of plot to the former first lady Roushan Ershad illegally.

Official sources said, he earned Tk 77 lakh throughout his life from the known source of income. Roushan is convicted in one case only and is now on bail.

Ershad appealed to the High Court against all the three convictions. None of the appeals has yet been enlisted for hearing, court sources said. His lawyers have submitted another petition in the High Court challenging his solitary confinement.

The former President is being detained in a specially renovated room in the central jail. A father who shot and killed his son in Uttara is now his roommate.

A televised camera has been installed at his room to monitor his movement. His lawyers termed it humiliating and a violation of human rights but the government officials said it has been installed to look after his health. The camera was installed after the press reported that Ershad sent letters to his party colleagues through special emissaries.

Attorney General office sources said that Ershad is in good health. He is being allowed free hand exercise and given meals of his choice. But his lawyers said he was sick and his health had deteriorated.

His lawyers have been boycotting the court protesting that they were not permitted exclusive interview with their client. Former Vice-President Barrister Moudud Ahmed is moving the cases.

Besides the deposed president, some 31 cases have been lodged against his former aides and cabinet colleagues. The cases have been stayed by the High Court after the accused filed revision petition with the court.

35 MPs demand rapid implementation of JMB project

Thirty five members of Parliament in a joint statement yesterday demanded early implementation of the Jamuna Multipurpose Bridge project to ensure rapid industrialisation of under-developed northern region and overall national development, reports UNB.

They said the Jamuna Bridge project symbolises the hopes and aspirations of the people of the country and it should no more be the unaccomplished dream of the people of the area.

The implementation of the project will not only help the transportation of commodities but also lead to rapid industrialisations of the under-developed northern region of the country, with establishment of all-weather communication with the whole country.

The MPs, in their statement, welcomed the high-powered Japanese delegation which is now in Bangladesh to finalise assistance to the Jamuna Bridge project.

The signatory MPs included Fazlur Rahman Patal, G M Siraj, Advocate AYM Khalilur Rahman, Tabirur Rahman Sarder, Mirza Moraduzzaman, Abdul Mannan Talukder, Rebecka Mahmud, Selina Shahid, Syeda Nargis Ali, Mujibur Rahman, Haji Abdul Majid Talukder, Abu Bakar, Azizul Huq and Dr Habibur Rahman.

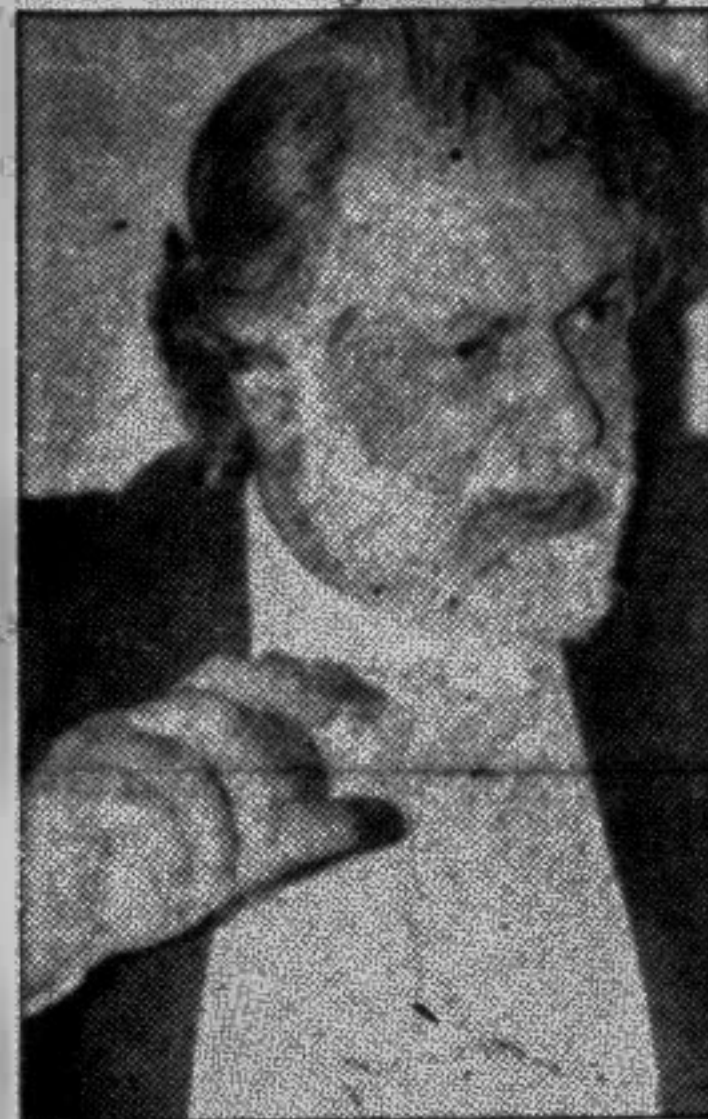
Pak FM

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way diminish Islamabad's role in SAARC, Ahmed Ali said. "Pakistan sees it as complementary to one another."

He, however, underlined the importance of ECO to Pakistan. To us, ECO is very important because of common economic interests and added that Bangladesh can also become a part of ECO.

Speaking about the international scene, he said, right wing groups in the Western countries were becoming more stronger



Sarder Asef Ali and negative. He was critical of the leadership role of the West and said, "They lack the stature to see the vision of the future. It is not a healthy world, and it is likely to get worse, before it gets better."

Regarding the Sub-continent Asef Ahmed Ali observed that "we are stuck with the problems of Kashmir, demarcation of maritime boundaries, sharing of water and a host of other problems."

About the newly elected government in Pakistan of which he is the Foreign Minister from the Pakistan Muslim League, Ahmed Ali stated that the key element is the deep understanding between the majority PPP and the major coalition partner PML.

"Our shared perception is the economy." There was growth of crony capitalism during Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif's rule," Asef said and added "we should not squander our national assets in the name of demarcation."

Expressing confidence in the leadership of Benazir Bhutto, he stated, "She is now a completely different person. She has learnt from her experiences."

Asked if Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto would visit Bangladesh, the Pakistan Foreign Minister stated, "Bangladesh is one of the first countries she is likely to visit after formal invitation is received."

The Midnight File

Cyclone claims 50 in Tamil Nadu

NEW DELHI, Dec 5: The death toll in a cyclone which hit southern India soared to 50 today with more people succumbing to injuries, the Press Trust of India (PTI) reported. All the deaths took place in the coastal state of Tamil Nadu, which was devastated on Saturday by the cyclone, powered by winds reaching speeds of up to 120 kilometers (74 miles) per hour, reports AFP.

7 Kashmir militants killed

SRINAGAR (India), Dec 5: Indian troops have shot dead seven Muslim guerrillas in a fierce gunbattle in Kashmir that erupted overnight Saturday and was still raging, police sources said today. An army major was also wounded in the heavy fighting in the forests of Usemarg, some 45 kilometres (31 miles) south of this summer capital of Kashmir, the sources said, reports AFP.

336 AIDS cases found in India

NEW DELHI, Dec 5: A total of 336 full-blown cases of AIDS were detected and over 100,000 people were found infected by the AIDS virus in India till June, 1993. Speaking at a symposium on different aspects of AIDS in Kanpur city of northern Indian state, Uttar Pradesh today, R K Gupta, Head of the Department of Social and Preventive Medicine of Kanpur Medical College, said that two-thirds of the HIV infections were due to heterosexual transmission and would cross 75 to 80 per cent by the year 2000, reports Xinhua.

Question hour dropped from JS session

By Staff Correspondent

Dropping of the question hour from the day's business generated heat at the Jatiya Sangsad yesterday.

Opposition members strongly protested the discontinuation of the question hour saying it was mandatory under the rules, while the Treasury Bench held that it was necessary in view of the extension of the current session.

Deputy Speaker Humayun Khan Panni, after both the sides debated the issue, told the House that he would consult the Speaker on the matter. Panni also informed the House that there was no question left with the Parliament Secretariat for answering.

Opposition members interrupted the Deputy Speakers several times from starting the day's business demanding assurance that the question hour be included in the day's order during the rest of the on-going session.

Deputy Leader of the Opposition Abdus Samad Azad, opening the debate, said dropping of the question hour was not decided at the November 19 Business Advisory Committee meeting nor were they (the Opposition) informed of the matter. He said that no meeting of the advisory committee was held later to extend the duration of the current session. Samad Azad demanded extension of the current session by a few more days.

"It is needed to discuss a number of important issues including the Zila Parishad Bill, labour unrest, road accidents etc.," he said.

LGRD and Cooperatives Minister Barrister Abdus Salam Talukder said the November 19 advisory committee meeting decided that the on-going session would continue until December 2 and accordingly the questions were distributed for answering.

The Speaker had later decided that there would be no question hour for the extended days.

Quoting the relevant section of the Rules of Procedure, BNP Whip Mahabub Alam Tara said the Speaker could decide on dropping the question hour.

Opposition Chief Whip Mohammad Nasim urged the chair to convene a meeting of the advisory committee within a day or two for deciding on the duration of the current session.

Opposition creating chaos

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most reached food autonomy. "We are even thinking about exporting foodgrains."

She called for making the government's education programmes a success. Without education, it is impossible to develop the country, Begum Zia said, adding that her government has given top priority to education to remove illiteracy.

The Prime Minister said her government attached more importance to women's education and informed that it was considering providing free education for girl students up to class X. Presently girl students can get free education up to class VII.

"We are filling up the vacant posts in schools and colleges through appointing new teachers," Begum Zia said.

The local leaders at the meeting informed the Prime Minister about the different problems of the area, including that of a massive erosion of the river Padma.

Begum Zia assured the people of Louhajang of fulfilling their demands and resolving their problems. Measures would be taken to check the erosion, roads and bridges will be constructed and educational institutions would be nationalised.

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FBCCI team leaves for Kuala Lumpur

An eight-member delegation, led by President of the Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FBCCI) Mahabubur Rahman, left here yesterday for Kuala Lumpur to attend meetings of an Islamic organisation, reports UNB.

The delegation will participate in the 22nd Executive Committee and 11th General Assembly meetings of the Islamic Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Commodity Exchange (ICCIC&CE), scheduled to begin in Kuala Lumpur from December 5 to 7.

Democracy Day today

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Avenue. Party chairperson Sheikh Hasina will address the rally where she is expected to announce the outlines of a caretaker government.

Central party leaders will also address the rally.

The Jamaat-e-Islami Bangladesh will hold a rally near the Baitul Mukarram Mosque. The Five-Party Alliance, the Ganatantri Party, the CPB, the Gana Forum and other smaller parties will also observe the day.

The Jatiya Party will however observe the day as 'Democracy Protection Day'.

A discussion will be held at the Gulshan residence of acting JP chief Mizanur Rahman Chowdhury on the occasion.

In a message on the day President Abdur Rahman Biswas has called for greater unity to consolidate democracy.

He said, a representative government has been established in the country through a free and fair election. The present government would march forward to attain self-reliance by alleviating poverty, he added.

President Biswas said the nation would remember the heroic sacrifices of the martyrs.

Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia called upon the people irrespective of party affiliations to work together to build the country by strengthening democracy.

In a message she said "the country is bigger than a party and individual. Let this be our commitment on the democracy day."

Begum Zia said the main objective of the nine-year-long

Opposition creating chaos

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Begum Zia started her journey by launch from the Mawa Ferry Ghat to see the extent of erosion. Her launch was escorted by more than 50 engine boats and a dozen of small vessels.

Presided over by Louhajang thana unit BNP president Shawkat Hossain Bepari, the meeting was addressed among others by Agricultural Minister Majid-ul-Huq, Finance Minister M Saifur Rahman, Shipping Minister MK Anwar, State Minister for LGRD Abdul Hye, M Hamidullah Khan MP, Begum Shamsun Nahar Khawaja Ahasanullah MP and local leaders Advocate Abdus Salam Azad, Gazi Shahidul Huq, Mujibur Rahman and leaders of the BNP front organisations.

Earlier, Begum Zia addressed two separate meetings at the Ekuria Baily Bridge under Keraniganj thana and Medanimondal under Louhajang thana on her way to Louhajang.

Addressing a meeting of women at Medanimondal, Begum Zia asked the women to involve themselves in various development activities.

Hartal observed in Chakoria

From Our Correspondent

COX'S BAZAR, Dec 5: A half-day hartal protesting the killing of a lawyer in Chakoria was observed peacefully here today.

Advocate Belaluddin Ahmed was killed in a clash between the activists of Jamaat-e-Islami

and police at Chakoria on Saturday.

Meanwhile, police arrested 29 workers of Jamaat and its student wing Islami Chhatra Shibir in connection with the clash.

Additional police have been deployed at Chakoria and Cox's Bazar.

An all-party meeting at Chakoria today condemned the killing and demanded immediate arrest and trial of those responsible.

IDB President due tomorrow

By Staff Correspondent

The President of the Islamic Development Bank (IDB) Dr Ahmad Mohamed Ali is scheduled to arrive in the capital tomorrow on a two-day visit.

The IDB President will attend the General Assembly of the Islamic Shipowners Association, due to begin in the city on the same day.

Dr Ali is expected to call on the Prime Minister, the Finance Minister, and other government officials.

He is also scheduled to sign a loan agreement for financing the construction of primary schools and madrasahs in the country.

এজেন্টদের প্রতি বিশেষ বিজ্ঞপ্তি

দি ডেইলী স্টার পত্রিকার সম্মিলিত এজেন্ট, যাহারা নবেম্বর '৯৩ মাসের বিল এবং বকেয়া টাকা পরিশোধ করেন নাই, তাদেরকে চলতি মাসের ১৫ তারিখের মধ্যে নবেম্বর '৯৩ মাসের বিল ও বকেয়া সম্পূর্ণভাবে পরিশোধ করিতে বিশেষভাবে অনুরোধ করা যাইতেছে। উল্লেখ্য যে সমস্ত এজেন্ট নির্ধারিত তারিখের মধ্যে বিল ও পূর্বের বকেয়া পরিশোধ করিতে বাধ্য হইবেন তাদের এজেন্টিতে পত্রিকার যাবতিক সরবরাহ আমাদের একান্ত অনিচ্ছা সত্ত্বেও বিস্তৃত হইতে পারে। আপনাদের ব্যবসায়িক সহযোগিতা আমাদের একান্ত কাম্য। এখন হইতে সাক্ষরকৃত যাবতীয় ব্যাপারে নিম্নস্বাক্ষরকারীর সাথে যোগাযোগ করিতে অনুরোধ করা যাইতেছে।

এ, বি, এম, আব্দুস সালাম
কমার্শিয়াল ম্যানেজার
দি ডেইলী স্টার
ফোন: ৫০০০১১ (সরাসরি)
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