

Leading economists tell seminar

WB, IMF prescribed reforms protect only donors' interests

Some leading economists from home and abroad yesterday criticised the economic reforms imposed by the World Bank and the IMF, saying that these did not contribute positively to emancipate the toiling masses in the poor countries, reports UNB.

The economists were participating in a day-long seminar organised by the Workers' Party of Bangladesh at a local hotel.

They were Former Finance Minister of West Bengal Dr Ashok Mitra, Vice Chancellor of the Calcutta University Dr Rathindra Narayan Basu, Dr Delhi Raj Khanal of Nepal, Prof Rehman Sobhan, Prof Anisur Rahman, Prof Muzaffar Ahmad, Prof Mosharraf Hossain, Dr Wahiduddin Mahmud, Prof Mainul Islam, Dr Debapriya Bhattacharya, Anu Muhammad and Dr Qazi Khaliq-uz-Zaman Ahmed of Bangladesh.

A West Bengal journalist, Mridul Dey, also took part in the discussions.

The seminar on economic reforms was split into three sessions: The South Asian Experience With Economic Reforms, Implication of GATT for South Asian Economies, and Bangladesh's Experience With Economic Reforms.

The sessions were presided over by Prof Rehman Sobhan, Workers' Party General Secretary Rashed Khan Menon, MP and President of the Party Amal Sen respectively.

Narrating the Indian experience of reforms Dr Ashok Mitra said the rate of national savings declined to 20 per cent from 24 per cent, investment fell by four per cent and employment stagnated during last 3/4 years of reform programmes carried out by the Indian government.

India's foreign debt jumped to 1250 billion rupees in 1990 from 230 billion rupees in 1984. But foreign investment in the country did not rise at the expected level, he said.

Dr Mitra said the philosophy of reforms is to protect the interests of the donors not for the welfare of the poor in the recipient countries.

On the GATT, Vice Chancellor of the Calcutta University Dr Rathindra Narayan Basu said the agreement has related intellectual property right with trade taking intellect as a commodity. The developed countries will earn 61 billion dollars annually through this new right.

He said the developed countries have framed all techniques like process patent and seed tailoring to make the poorer countries dependent on them.

The Asian trade would increase by only 25 billion dollars after implementation of the GATT while China's trade alone would have increased by 37 billion dollars outside the GATT, Dr Basu added.

Nepalese economist Dr Delhi Raj Khanal accused the donors of having started the neo-colonialism process through the GAT and conditioning the Third World Countries for opening up their markets.

He said since reforms started in 1985-86 in Nepal, foreign debt was 21 per cent of the total GDP in 1985 but increased to 53 per cent in 1990. Negative growth was observed in agriculture, petroleum, power and other sectors.

Referring to a World Bank study, Dr Khanal said poverty in Nepal has increased to 76 per cent in 1993-94 from 40

per cent in 1985, an evidence of negative impact of economic reforms imposed on the country.

Prof Rehman Sobhan said the experience of economic reforms was nothing encouraging during the last 10 years all over the world. Their own reform programmes are under criticism by the World Bank and the IMF, and they are now aware of its failure.

The East Asian countries did not take the reform programmes as designed by the World Bank and IMF. They formulated their own reform packages according to their need but the South Asian countries followed the programme as designed by World Bank/IMF, he observed.

Before taking up the reform programmes, Prof Sobhan said, good governance, strong decision making system and production structure would have to be ensured for better results.

"It is both our intellectual and political poverty that we failed to give any solution to the problems created by reforms," he said.

Prof Anisur Rahman was of the view that only 10 per cent people of the society could benefit through the trickle-down process of these reform programmes. The growth rate has declined in all those countries which adopted the reform programmes.

Speaking of Bangladesh experience, Prof Rahman said the genuine entrepreneurs are not buying the disinvested industries while the surplus income of agriculture sector goes to other sectors creating a negative impact on the overall economy.



A Palestinian demonstrator returns a teargas shell towards Israeli soldiers during a demonstration in Ramallah yesterday where protests erupted for the second day following the killing Tuesday by Israeli troops of an armed activist of the Islamic Hamas. — AFP photo

News analysis : ADP

From Page 1 Col 7

generated by the government by reducing private spending, if not fully invested, depresses economic activity to the extent of shortfall in investment over savings.

The revised ADP figure that the government has announced for the current fiscal year comes as a strong reassurance that the gap between planned and revised ADP, which is closely related to the gap between savings generated by the government through taxation and actual investment therefrom, shall be minimal.

There is very little foundation for the apparent confidence of the government about ADP outcome for the current fiscal year. The original plan was for an ADP of Taka 97.5 billion. At the end of the third quarter of the current fiscal last March the Finance Minister, after holding a series of review meetings, came to the conclusion that the best case scenario was an annual ADP of Taka 85 billion for 1993-94. This, too, assumed that ADP expenditure in the fourth quarter would be double of what it was in the preceding three quarters. The dismal ADP implementation progress sent alarm bells ringing

throughout the government and the Prime Minister herself sat through several implementation review meetings.

After an interval of only two months, the government is saying that the ADP for 1993-94 will be Tk 96 billion, which is Tk 11 billion more than the March projection and only Tk 1.5 billion less than the original plan.

Nothing has happened in these two months to give credence to such optimism.

In fact, according to Ministry of Planning sources, actual ADP expenditure up to May 1994 stands at only 52 per cent of the recently revised target of Tk 96 billion. This means that in the remaining last two months the ADP expenditure will exceed Tk 46 billion, which is impossible.

The realised ADP is unlikely to exceed what the Finance Minister had estimated two months earlier. This makes the 1994-95 ADP target of Tk 110 billion highly improbable because it implies an annual increase of nearly thirty per cent in realised ADP.

It is surprising that the fiction about the ADP that was presented to the nation last Wednesday did not draw any opposition from the Finance Minister.

As mentioned earlier, the target ADP is a critical number in determining how much tax revenue has to be raised. An unrealistically high ADP target means a pressure on the Finance Ministry to divert more resources from the private sector than the government can spend.

On the other hand, with election in the air, there is pressure to reduce taxes. The only way that these pressures can be balanced is by making the ADP target a "loose" one. This is a major compromise from the Finance Minister because, to accommodate this unrealistic ADP, he shall have to forsake internal consistency of his next budget.

Prokrichi

From Page 1 Col 5

BCS Central Action Council at a meeting strongly condemned what it called the 'unjust' transfer order and demanded its immediate withdrawal.

The meeting also accused a section of bureaucrats at the PM's secretariat of trying to foil the Prokrichi movement and demanded their removal and probe into their activities.

Death of nurse

Police yet to unearth mystery

By Staff Correspondent. Police are yet to unearth the mystery of the death of nurse Sanchita Sarker, who was found dead in her room in a private clinic in the city Wednesday.

However, police suspect that unmarried Sanchita committed suicide.

"We are waiting for the autopsy report," said an officer of Mohammadpur Police Station. Police interrogated the manager, the supervisor and two nurses of Al-Beruni Clinic where Sanchita worked for the last one year.

All personal belongings of the late nurse, including a diary and personal letters were seized by police who also found birth control pills in her purse.

Next NAM summit in Colombia

CAIRO, June 2: Next year's Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) summit meeting will be held in Colombia, a spokesman said Thursday, reports AP.

Nabil Fahmy, spokesman for the 33-year-old movement's 11th ministerial conference under way in Cairo, said the summit meeting site will be announced officially Friday with the session's other decisions.

Fahmy, political adviser to Egyptian Foreign Minister Amr Moussa, did not disclose where in Colombia the conference will be held.

The 109-member Non-Aligned Movement's last summit meeting was in Jakarta, Indonesia, in 1992.

Gunshots on DU campus

By DU Correspondent

Some unidentified gunmen fired at least nine rounds of gunshots on the Dhaka University campus yesterday afternoon.

The cause of gunfiring could not be known.

Besides, the pro-Awami League Chhatra League brought out a procession and held a rally at the Aparajeo Bangla demanding immediate release of its leader Shahabuddin Ahmed.

The speakers at the rally alleged that the government was harassing the leaders and activists of the BCL and arresting them without any cause.

The rally was addressed by Iqbalur Rahim and Ataur Rahman.

The Jatigatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) also held a rally protesting the violent activities on the campus.

The JCD leaders held the BCL (M-I) responsible for violence on the campus.

Business remains closed for 6-hr in N'ganj

From Our Correspondent

NARAYANGANJ, June 2: All shops and business houses here remained closed for six hours from six in the morning today protesting the attack on two shops in the town Wednesday.

The businessmen also brought out a big procession, submitted a memorandum to the DC and held a rally in front of the Gulshan Cinema Hall demanding immediate arrest and trial of the terrorists responsible for ransacking the two shops.

The speakers at the rally chaired by Khwaja Rahamatullah gave the authorities a 72-hour ultimatum to arrest the terrorists.

Meanwhile, a case has been filed accusing five persons in this connection.

On Wednesday, a shopowner was seriously injured when a group of armed miscreants attacked and ransacked two electronics shops in the Narayanganj DIT market.

Police team leaves for Mozambique

A 75-member police team yesterday left Dhaka to join the UN peacekeepers in Mozambique, reports UNB.

The team comprised six additional police superiors, 18 assistant police superiors, 30 inspectors, 12 sub-inspectors and 9 sergeants.

Malaria

From Page 1 Col 7

Sadar thanas, official sources confirmed today. Nazir Hossain MP, after visiting some affected villages, said "malaria has been claiming lives almost everyday."

When contacted, the Civil Surgeon of Sunamganj said that blood tests of 410 patients were done last month. Of them, 218 were found carrying the 'falciparum' germs. Seven temporary medical camps had been set up in the affected areas, four in Tahipur, two in Biswambharpur and one in Dharmapasha thana.

Meanwhile, a high-level team comprising representatives from the WHO and Health Directorate reached Tahipur two weeks ago and began distribution of 1400 pieces of insecticide-mixed mosquito nets among the affected families. About 200 mosquito nets were distributed among the poor families in Lakma and Putia villages. Local people have demanded for immediate spraying of Malathion or DDT as suggested by the Health Directorate Officials.

Some physicians working in the areas alleged that treatment of patients is being hampered seriously due to absence of necessary transport. The authorities are yet to arrange boats for the medical workers. As most of the affected villages are located in remote areas, poor people can not easily move to the only government health complex at the thana headquarters.

Temporary medical camps had been opened in rented small rooms in Lakma, Laurgarh and Kalagaon bazar. These lack some basic amenities, the physicians alleged.

The Midnight File

US to press for sanctions against DPRK

ROME, June 2: The International Atomic Energy Agency has notified the United Nations that it can no longer assure North Korea is abiding by nuclear safeguards and the United States will press for international sanctions against Pyongyang, a senior US official said today, reports Reuters.

Arafat seriously ill

TUNIS, June 2: PLO leader Yasser Arafat was reported to be seriously ill, and his doctors planned to move him to a hospital in Amman, Jordan, PLO officials and diplomats said Thursday. The officials, speaking on condition of anonymity, said Arafat, 64, was ordered by Palestinian and Tunisian doctors to rest in bed after he became ill following a meeting Wednesday with three US senators, reports AP.

Businessman shot dead in city

By DMCH Correspondent

Street-gangs killed a businessman at Rankin Street, Wari, in the city yesterday afternoon.

Ratan Mia, 40, was going to Tipu Sultan Road from Motijheel by a rickshaw at around 2:30 pm.

A group of armed men riding an auto-rickshaw knocked down the rickshaw carrying Ratan with their vehicle at Rankin Street. When Ratan fell down, the armed men jumped on him and shot him at a close-range, witnesses said.

The gang fled the scene by their auto-rickshaw. Ratan was immediately taken to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) where the doctors declared him dead.

Sutrapur police said they were yet to get any clue to the murder. But police suspect it was a pre-planned murder out of previous rivalry. Ratan was a leaseholder of a jetty near Sadarghat.

A case was lodged with Sutrapur police but no arrest was made. The body was sent to the DMCH morgue for autopsy.

Five injured in mugging incident

By Staff Correspondent

At least five people, including a constable, were injured during an attempted street mugging at Aga Sadeq Road in the city yesterday.

A businessman Gaurango Chandra Pal, constable Habibur Rahman and a rickshawpuller Abu were wounded by the muggers. Two of the muggers were held by a mob and severely beaten up.

A group of muggers followed Gaurango from Gulistan to Aga Sadeq Road where they hit him with a revolver and repeatedly stabbed him while trying to snatch his hand bag containing Tk 47,000 around 2 pm.

Following Gaurango's cry for help, local people came and chased the muggers. While fleeing the muggers fired gunshots one of which hit constable on duty Habibur Rahman. The muggers also blasted a number of crackers injuring the rickshawpuller.

However, the mob apprehended two of the fleeing muggers identified as Zitu and Zakir Uddin and severely beat them up. Later the muggers were handed over to police.

Gaurango has been admitted to the Sir Salimullah Medical College Hospital in a critical condition. He was operated upon yesterday evening, according to our SSMCH Correspondent.

The constable was rushed to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) from where he was shifted to the Chest Diseases Hospital at Mohakhali in the afternoon.

The three others — the rickshawpuller and the two nabbed muggers were admitted to the DMCH.

Mostafiz

From Page 1 Col 8

"very positive and fruitful" talks in the course of these meetings, especially in the context of Bangladesh's abiding interest in resolving all current bilateral problems with some of these countries through negotiation and peaceful dialogue, and strengthening existing relations with others.

Earlier in the day, Mostafiz made an important intervention in the plenary session of the ministerial conference to state clearly before the international forum the position of Bangladesh on topical issues like the critical situation in Bosnia, other regional conflicts, non-military threats to security and NAM's role in contributing to its solution.

The format of the ministerial conference has been changed and there is no general debate this time. But ministers are free to make interventions on specific themes.

The dominant themes for the current conference include reflections on the report of the NAM chairman on the movement's activities since the Jakarta summit of 1992, restructuring of the UN disarmament issues, international economic cooperation, human rights and preparations for the World Social Summit.

Political situation

From Page 1 Col 4

administration is sworn in. Meanwhile, UNB reported last night that the AL president had demanded the immediate resignation of the BNP government and polls under a non-partisan administration.

In another development, the team of negotiators assigned by the BNP chairperson to explore avenues for a dialogue with the Opposition for bringing them back to the Jatiya Sangsad is reported to have told Begum Zia that they had so far received no positive response from the other camp.

Meanwhile, the Jammat-e-Islami, Bangladesh, in a resolution

Japanese investors keen to set up towel industry

A four-member Japanese investors team led by Yotoka Kazama called on Industries Minister A M Zahiruddin Khan at his office in Dhaka yesterday, reports UNB.

During the meeting the Industries Minister said that few of suitable Japanese industries were looking for relocation to set up their industrial establishment in Bangladesh with comparative advantages and opportunities.

Leader of the delegation informed Zahiruddin Khan that they were interested to set up a towel industry in Bangladesh and hoped that this industry would be able to export towel worth Tk 34 crore per annum.

Members of the Japanese team also expressed their hope that more Japanese investors would come forward to invest in Bangladesh for their comparative advantages.

lution adopted yesterday at the end of a two-day meeting of its central working committee, accused the government of not doing enough to clear the political climate.

The meeting, chaired by party chief Golam Azam, also resolved not to contest the by-election next month in the Bogra constituency of the JS because of its "bitter experience of vote robbery by the ruling party in the Magura by-election" last March.

However, the Jamaat, although repeating its demand for a caretaker government to hold the next elections, nevertheless mentioned in a press release last night that the present Jatiya Sangsad should be allowed to complete its full five-year tenure.

Regarding a return to Parliament sessions by its MPs, a Jamaat leader maintained there had been no positive development yet to warrant a change in his party's present stance to keep away from the House.

Brazil may withdraw anti-dumping duties on jute goods

Brazil has assured to consider seriously the withdrawal of anti-dumping duties on Bangladeshi jute and jute goods as it (Bangladesh) does not provide subsidy to jute products, a message from the Brazilian capital said, reports BSS.

The assurances came during meetings between the visiting Bangladesh Jute Minister ASM Hannan Shah and Brazilian ministers for Finance Rubens Ricupero and Minister for Industries, Commerce and Tourism Elcio Alvares.

Rain may ease hot spell

By Staff Correspondent

Relief from the oppressive heatwave may be just around the corner as considerable amount of rainfall throughout the country is being forecast for the month of June.

According to a Met Office monthly forecast released yesterday, a south westerly wind is expected today and a monsoon depression is also likely to be formed over the Bay of Bengal during the month.

More flash flood is likely in some parts of the greater Sylhet district, the Met Office said.

The highest amount of rainfall of about 650mm is expected over the Chittagong division while the amount of rainfall expected over the four other divisions are, Dhaka: 350 to 400mm, Rajshahi: 300 to 350mm, Khulna: 260 to 310mm and Barisal: 400 to 450mm.

Robbery at Shantinagar

By Staff Correspondent

Gold and other valuables worth Tk 3.90 lakh including Tk 8000 in cash were looted from a house at Shantinagar in the city early yesterday morning.

An armed gang of dacoits barged in the house of Gazi Golam Faruk, the eldest son of the late Gazi Golam Mostafa, at 111 Shantinagar around 2 am and looted 50 kilos of gold ornaments, Tk 8000 in cash and other valuables during a two-hour heist.

The house owner, an Awami League member, said some eight dacoits broke open the grilled fence on the ground floor of his house and entered the bedroom.

The dacoits tied up Faruk and pointed gun at his wife while they looted their belongings.

He said all the dacoits were aged between 18 and 25. They locked the main entrance when they fled around 4 am, he added.

A case was lodged with Motijheel police, but no arrest was made, said police.

30 feared drowned in Narail bus plunge

JESSORE, Jun 2: At least 30 passengers were feared drowned when a Lakshmi Pashabond passenger bus from Khulna fell into the river Chitra at Narail ferry ghat this afternoon, reports BSS.

According to Narail police control room, the mishap took place following the brake failure as the bus was boarding the ferry.

Four persons including a baby and a woman managed to come out of the sunken bus. The local divers tried in vain to salvage the bus and rescue the passengers trapped inside the bus.

The bus driver and the employees of the ferry ghat have fled immediately after the accident, it was learnt.

DV-1 fever!

Thousands of people thronged Post Offices across the country in last two days in a frenzied rush to mail applications for the latest American DV-1 immigration visa lottery, reports UNB.

Post Offices in capital Dhaka and other major towns kept their counters open beyond normal hours and installed additional franking machines to keep up with the mad rush.

At some post offices, including the Dhaka GPO, police forces have been deployed to deal with the desperate crowd, redoubled by hundreds of tourists and form sellers, witnesses said.

Shamsul Alam, Additional Post Master General, told UNB yesterday that some 16 special counters had been opened at Dhaka GPO to meet the rush. Some post offices have been working overtime with their counters open from 8 am to 7 pm without break. Besides, the RMS will function during Fridays to handle the rush.

The Postal Department is expected to earn more than Tk. one crore from the DV-1 visa applicants, each of whom is paying Tk 18 in postage fee for a letter to America.

Italian investors

From Page 1 Col 5

Italian investors are keenly looking forward to the upcoming trade seminar in the industrial town of Milan in September next, to be organised by the Export Promotion Bureau and the Bangladesh Embassy in Rome. Invitations are being sent to apex trade and business bodies and leading Italian companies.

Frittelli pointed out that Italy is the third largest importer of Bangladeshi products after the US and Japan.

Italy, he said, is also the second largest European country to employ Bangladeshis who remit to their country around 100 million US dollars annually.

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বকেয়া আদায়ের লক্ষ্যে গ্যাস লাইন বিচ্ছিন্নকরণের বিশেষ অভিযান

বকেয়া আদায়ের লক্ষ্যে তিতাস গ্যাস আওতাভুক্ত সকল এলাকায় সরকারী ও স্বায়ত্বশাসিত প্রতিষ্ঠানসহ সকল খোলাপী গ্রাহকের গ্যাস লাইন বিচ্ছিন্নকরণের বিশেষ অভিযান ৬ই জুন ১৯৯৪ থেকে পুনরায় শুরু হচ্ছে। পবিত্র ঈদুল আজহা উপলক্ষে সংযোগ বিচ্ছিন্নকরণের বিশেষ অভিযান সাময়িকভাবে স্থগিত ছিল।

সকল সমানিত গ্রাহককে অবিলম্বে বকেয়া গ্যাস পরিশোধ করে সংযোগ বিচ্ছিন্নকারী দলকে গ্যাস ব্যবহারের স্থানে বকেয়া পরিশোধের রসিদ প্রদর্শন করার অনুরোধ জানানো হল। সংযোগ বিচ্ছিন্নকৃত গ্রাহক বিকাল ৫-০০টার মধ্যে কোম্পানির সর্বশ্রেষ্ঠ জেন/অফিসে পরিশোধিত বিলের রসিদ দেখাতে পারলে তৎক্ষণিকভাবে পুনঃসংযোগ প্রদানের ব্যবস্থা গ্রহণ করা হবে।

সংযোগ বিচ্ছিন্নের ৩ (তিন) মাসের মধ্যে পুনঃসংযোগ না নিলে গ্যাস সংযোগ স্থায়ীভাবে বিচ্ছিন্নকরণসহ গ্যাস সরবরাহ চুক্তি বাতিল করা হবে।

গ্যাস অত্যন্ত মূল্যবান জাতীয় সম্পদ। এর পরিমিত ব্যবহার ভবিষ্যৎ প্রজন্মকে জ্বালানী সংকট থেকে রক্ষা করবে। রাস্তা শেষ হওয়ার সাথে সাথেই গ্যাসের চুলা বন্ধ করুন।

বিদ্যুৎ ও সার উৎপাদনে এবং অন্যান্য শিল্প ও বাণিজ্যিক কার্যক্রমে গ্যাস দেশের অর্থনৈতিক উন্নয়নের চাবিকাঠি। তাই সর্বক্ষেত্রে গ্যাসের অপচয় ও অবৈধ ব্যবহার থেকে বিরত থাকুন। বকেয়া আদায় এবং গ্যাসের অপচয় রোধ ও সংরক্ষণকল্পে সকলের সহযোগিতা আমাদের একান্ত কাম্য।

তিতাস গ্যাস ট্রান্সমিশন এন্ড ডিস্ট্রিবিউশন কোম্পানী লিমিটেড

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"পাছ লাগান, পাছের পরিচর্যা করুন এবং পরিবেশ বাঁচান" — প্রধানমন্ত্রী

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