

'Resist those using religion to incite violence'

By Staff Correspondent

Speakers at a discussion meeting organised by Bangladesh Sangbadpatra Parishad in the city yesterday urged the people to resist those who, in the name of religion, were inciting public hatred and violence against newspapers and 'progressive' intellectuals.

They maintained that the recent attacks on newspapers was only the 'tip of the iceberg', part of a 'master plan' to destroy pro-independence journalism.

Programmes to resist June 30 hartal

By Staff Correspondent

Different political parties, socio-cultural organisations and student bodies have taken up programmes against what they called 'ominous' activities by 'fundamentalist and anti-liberation forces.'

They have also called for resisting the June 30 hartal, called by some 'religion-based' organisations and supported by similar political parties demanding a ban on some leading dailies, including the Janakantha, and trial of writer Taslim Nasreen.

The eight-party Left Democratic Front has called a public meeting in the city on June 27, the Sammito Sangkritik Jote has arranged a citizens' gathering at the Central Shaheed Minar on June 26 and the left-leaning Ganatantrik Chhatra Oikya has decided to hold agitations on the Dhaka University campus on June 23 and throughout the country on June 25 to protest the activities of fundamentalist forces.

The Muktiyoddha Chhatra Command has called a rally in front of the Jatiya Press Club today to protest the hartal call of June 30.

The Ghatak Dalal Nirmul Samannaya Committee leaders will meet this afternoon at the JSD (Inu) office in the city and take up action programmes.

Meanwhile, 81 noted personalities in the cultural arena in a joint statement yesterday called for resisting the June 30 hartal.

Those who signed the statement include: Nasiruddin Yusuf Bachchu, Ramendu Majumder, Aly Zaker, Mamunur Rashid, Ferdousi Majumder, Asaduzzaman Noor, Dr Inamul Haq, Lucky Inam, Humayun Faridi, Afzal Hossain, Raisul Islam Asad, Jamaluddin Hossain, Tarek Anam Khan, Khairul Alam Sabuj, Sarah Zaker, Subarna Mustafa, Abul Hayat, Bipasha Hayat, Khaled Khan, Towkir Ahmed, Azizul Hakim, Shomi Kaiser, Tarana Halim, Progaa Laboni, Fakir Alamgir and Shilpee Sarkar Apu.

The Adhikar Sangrakkya Committee '94, a human rights organisation, in a statement, also supported the call for resisting the June 30 hartal.

Strike paralyses Kashmir

SRINAGAR, India, June 19: A strike today paralysed the Indian state of Kashmir, a day after some 50 people were injured when border guards fired on a crowd protesting the deaths of two militant, police said here, reports AFP.

Shops, government offices and schools were closed and traffic went off the roads across the Kashmir Valley in response to calls by a Muslim separatist group to denounce 'recent killing by Indian security forces.'

Indian authorities claim to have killed about 50 Muslim guerrillas in gunbattles in the past four days.

'High import duty to affect CI sheet units'

By Staff Correspondent

The Bangladesh G P & C I Sheet Manufacturers' Association in its reaction to the proposed budget said, high import duty on CR coil will affect CI sheet industries.

The association regretted that no action has been taken on its appeal to the NBR to bring the duty of CR coil to 15 per cent from its enhanced rate of 30 per cent last year (below 0.40 mm thickness).

It said, CI sheets are used by a large number of our rural population and will go beyond the buying capacity of the people because high import duty on CR coil will increase the price of the CI sheets.

This will affect the rural housing that goes against the avowed government policy, the statement signed by the Association's acting President Deen Mohammad, stated.

Thai FM leaves for home

Foreign Minister of Thailand Squadron Leader Prasong Soonsiri yesterday expressed satisfaction at his talks in Dhaka during a three-day visit, hoping that the discussions would further strengthen the close ties between his country and Bangladesh.

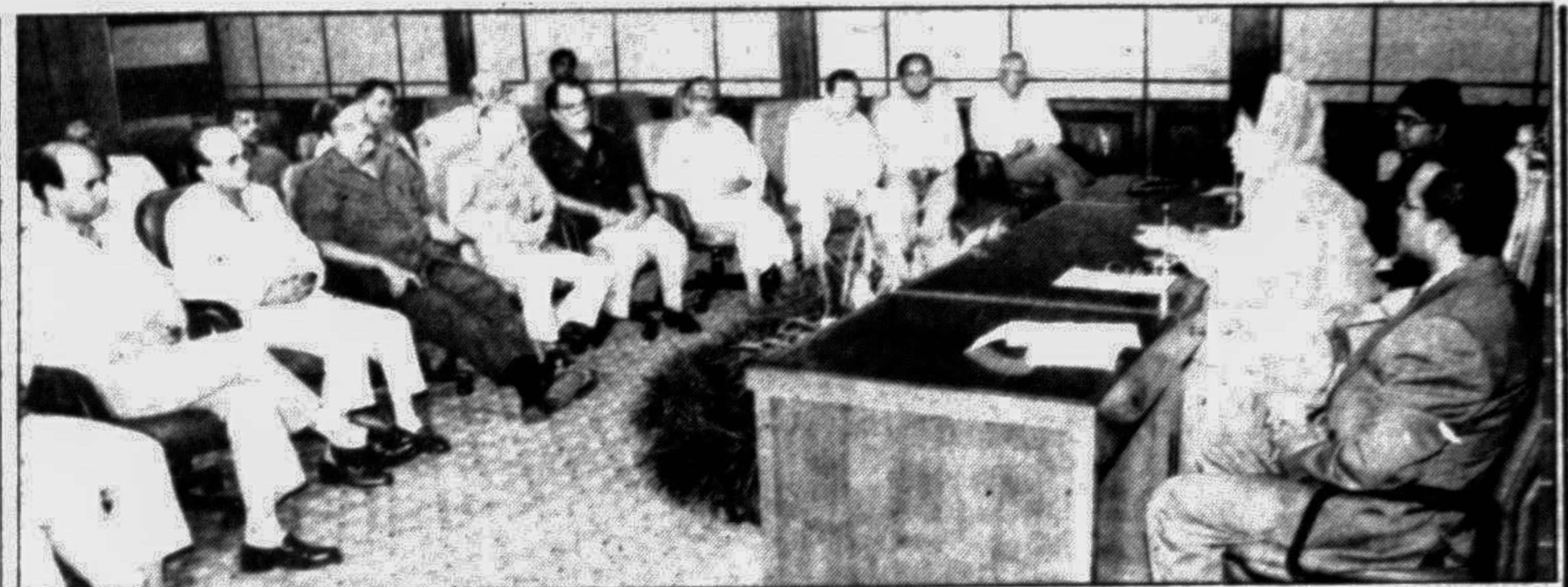
The talks went off very well — the fifth session of the Joint Commission for Cooperation took a number of decisions to expand the economic and other cooperation, he told BSS prior to his departure for home ending the visit.

Foreign Minister ASM Mostafizur Rahman saw him off at the airport.

Soonsiri said talks under the aegis of the Joint Commission covered wide areas of mutual interest.

Editor: Mahfuz Anam

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Members of the Bangladesh Council of Editors exchanging views with Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia on various matters including newspaper industries at her office yesterday.

Vigilance indeed!

By Staff Correspondent

The Postal Department Sunday admitted that 'due to rush, some customers may have not taken back the chai of Taka 20 after paying Taka 20 for postage to the counter operator', despite 'constant vigilance and watch.'

In a rejoinder, the Post Master General said, they had deputed 'a responsible officer' (on publication of the report) inquire into the allegation and found that 'there was no dearth of such small currency notes.'

The rejoinder also said the Postal Department had received from the customers no complaint about the alleged illegal collection of money by the 16 franking machine operators, as was reported by The Daily Star.

The report, titled 'And now, a DV-1 surcharge' on June 18, however, had neither spoken about any 'dearth of changes' nor about the rush for which people were leaving behind their money at the counter.

Rather, the report referred to a section of GPO teller operators illegally realising money from the people.

When the malpractice was on the respondent, as a matter journalistic practice had brought the matter to the notice of the officer on duty at the GPO who gave the same reply I have not received such complaint.

\$ still strong

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From the bank counters, the clients can get their dollars between Tk 40.30 and Tk 40.37 while they can sell it between Tk 40.08 and Tk 40.1050.

The high rates of the dollar have been attributed to a jump in the opening of the Letters of Credit (LCs) this month coupled with a slow down of inward remittances. Moreover, the Dollar supply has gone down because of the fall in foreign investment in the country's stock market.

Sources say, there are signs the economy has overcome the recession which was typically marked by slow economic activities resulting in the slump of imports. This also kept the dollar rates suppressed.

Budget discussion

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than in the present Parliament in the next general elections.

He also said that the Leader of the Opposition had been staying outside the House because she could not accept the BNP government's achievements in different sectors. 'That leader is now trying to make Parliament ineffective,' he said.

Earlier, the JS had a question-answer session.

Deputy Speaker Humayun Khan Panni was in the Chair yesterday.

The session was adjourned at 8:50 pm and resumes at 5:15 this afternoon.

Pak-Saudi FMs discuss way to end Afghan war

JEDDAH, June 19: The foreign ministers of Pakistan and Saudi Arabia today discussed proposals for ending the violence in Afghanistan.

There were several proposals with regard to the Afghan tangle, however, it is premature to disclose anything in this regard right now, the Pakistani Foreign Minister, Sardar Asf Ali, said in an interview with the Associated Press (AP).

He also stressed that 'it is for the Afghan parties' to decide the steps that should be taken to end their bitter fighting.

Pakistan and Saudi Arabia are the co-sponsors of the 'so-called' Makkah accord signed in March 1993 to contain the rivalry among the combatant guerilla groups after the collapse of Marxist rule in Kabul.

Asked how the two countries hoped to ensure compliance with the accord, the visiting minister said the issue was discussed with his counterpart Prince Saud al-Faisal.

Japanese-aided irrigation project opens

RUPGANJ, June 19: Agriculture, Irrigation, Flood Control and Water Development Minister M Majidul-Haq today inaugurated the Japanese-assisted Narayanganj-Narsingdi Irrigation Project (Block A-1) at the Baniadi Pump House complex here, reports BSS.

The rest of the money was provided from the local resources.

Matin Chowdhury said before the commissioning of the project, the farmers had to spend about Taka 500 for irrigating one acre of land through diesel or power pumps. With the completion of the project now they will get the irrigation facilities at a least cost," he said.

Mannan Bhuiyan stressed optimum use of water resources in the country for the development of the whole agriculture sector.

Dr Moyeen Khan said the investment cost of the project would be recovered after about 12 years if effective operation of the project could be ensured.

Takenaka said the project would provide a quite impressive socio-economic benefit to the people. 'Since the completion of the project last year, when it's experimental operation started, many farmers have changed their cultivation pattern from the traditional single cropping to diversified cropping,' he said.

It has been estimated that the project which covers 3000 hectares of land, would help produce additional 16,000 tonnes of paddy and 217 tonnes of wheat every year. Besides, it will create employment opportunity of nine lakh workdays in agri-sector and promotes small and cottage industries in the area.

Non-govt teachers resume duties

The teachers of non-government schools and colleges resumed their duties throughout the country yesterday, co-ordinator of the teachers' liaison action committee Kazi Faruque told BSS last night.

The non-government teachers and employees have been joining their duties following a decision of the liaison committee to call off their sit-in and hunger strike on Friday last in the capital.

Meanwhile, the liaison committee expressed its gratitude to all political parties, professional organisations, cultural groups and people of all walks of life who expressed sympathy and solidarity during the sit-in and hunger strike programmes of the teachers and other employees.

Govt should realise reality: Tofael

Awami League leader Tofael Ahmed MP yesterday said the Opposition would go to any extent in democratic means to force the BNP to concede to their demand for a caretaker government to hold next general elections, reports UNB.

Talking to newsmen in the parliament office of Deputy Opposition Leader in the evening, he said the government should realise the present political reality and bring a caretaker government bill to maintain political stability in the country.

"The constitutional provision for neutral non-party interim caretaker administration is the only panacea to the present political stalemate ... otherwise, the government will be responsible for any consequences," he cautioned.

Responding to a question, Ahmed said there has not been any positive proposal from the government side to make a breakthrough in the current stalemate caused by the government-Opposition tangle on the concept of a caretaker government.

DPRK N-crisis is over: Carter

WASHINGTON, June 19: Former President Carter spoke with President Clinton today and afterward said he believes the nuclear crisis with North Korea 'is over,' reports AP.

Carter said he presented top administration officials with a proposal he received from North Korean President Kim Il Sung during his visit to North Korea last week.

"I personally believe that the crisis is over," Carter told reporters outside the White House after meeting with Clinton aides. "I personally don't see any need to proceed with the sanctions against North Korea."

"I believe he (Kim) wants to work toward reconciliation with South Korea on a mutually advantageous basis."

At a news conference before leaving Seoul, South Korea, Carter reiterated that the leaders of rival North and South Korea had agreed to meet in a bid to resolve doubts about the North's nuclear programme.

Carter also said communist leader Kim agreed to freeze his nuclear programme during 'good-faith talks' with the United States.

The developments marked a dramatic breakthrough in the 15-month deadlock over suspicion that the hard-line communist North has been developing nuclear weapons.

North Korea claims that its nuclear programme is peaceful but has failed to prove it.

AFP adds from Seoul, South Korea started preparations today for a historic summit meeting with North Korea by forming a task force to make contacts with Pyongyang, officials said.

Vice Unification Minister Song Young-dae chaired the first meeting of officials involved in preparations for the summit, which was brokered by former US President Jimmy Carter, Song's office said.

Foreign Ministry officials also held an unscheduled meeting to analyze the motives of North Korean President Kim Il-Sung, who conveyed his invitation to President Kim Young-Sam through Carter on Saturday.

Kim Young-Sam immediately accepted and asked his cabinet to contact North Korea for working-level talks.

The south's national news agency Yonhap quoted a senior official as saying however that preparations to arrange a summit should not disrupt efforts to seek access to North Korea's nuclear programme.

"The sanctions push should not be stopped yet, and we have to see what it really means," the official said.

PM: Editors

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in a democratic system.

She stressed for ensuring responsible journalism in order to flourish and strengthen democracy.

The Prime Minister urged the members of Council of Editors to contemplate on the formulation of a 'code of ethics' for the journalists for ensuring responsible journalism.

Information Minister Nazmul Huda and Press Secretary to the Prime Minister M Mozammel Huq were present.

Those who spoke on the occasion were Convenor of the Council of Editors and Editor of the Dainik Miellat Chowdhury Mohammad Farooq, Editor of the Bangladesh Observer Prof KMA Munim, Editor of the Ittefaq Anwar Hossain Manju, Editor of the Inqilab AMM Bahauddin, Editor of the Dainik Bangla Ahmed Humayun, Editor of the Dinkal Sanaullah Nuri, Editor of the Morning Sun Atiqul Alam, Chief Editor of the Bangladesh Sangbad Sangstha (BSS) DP Barua, Editor of the Bangladesh Times Mahbub Anam, Editor of the New Nation Alamgir Mohiuddin, Editor of the Sangram Abul Asad, Editor of the Khabar Mizanur Rahman Mizan, Editor of the Shakti AQM Zainul Abedin, Editor of the Janapad Syed Mesbauddin Ahmed, Editor of the Purbanchal (Khulna) Liaqat Ali, Editor of the Samachar Abul Kashem Majumder, Editor of the Dainik Kallian (Jessore) Ekramuddin, Editor of the Dainik Thikana (Faridpur) Abul Hossain Mir, Editor of the Dainik Probashi (Barisal) Mustafizur Rahman, Joint Editor of the Bangla Bani Aziz Misir and Associate Editor of the Daily Star Shah Hossain Imam.

HC rule nisi on Mahamaya UP chairman

By Staff Correspondent

The High Court yesterday issued a rule nisi on the chairman and members of Mahamaya Union Parishad in Chagalnaya thana of Noakhali district as to why the recent UP elections there should not be declared illegal because women voters were intimidated into staying away from the polling stations by a religious decree (fatwa) issued by a group of fundamentalists, including the chairman.

A Division Bench of the HC, comprising Justice Ismail Uddin Sarker and Justice Hamidul Huq, issued the show cause notice in response to a writ petition filed by 'Adhikar Sangrakkhan Karmasuchi '94', on behalf of petitioner Beena Akhter.

Some 6,436 women voters out of a total of 14,253 could not exercise their voting rights during the UP elections in Mahamaya held on March 21 last, the petitioner said.

Before the elections a written religious decree (fatwa) was issued by the principal of a local madrassah in cooperation with three of the candidates for the post of chairman, including the eventual winner. Widely circulated, the 'fatwa' said that it is against the Islamic principles that women would vote in polling centres, the petition said.

Advocate Salma Ali of Bangladesh Mahila Ainjibi Samity, moved the petition.

Potato

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to food in either economic or food value considerations.

One gram of rice or wheat is equivalent to 4.3 grams of potato in respect of food value, the report said. It said 100 grams of potato contains 80 calories whereas the equal quantity of rice or wheat contains 350 calories. Production cost of the same quantity of potato is also higher than that of rice or wheat.

It suggested that potato should be cooked along with its peel to prevent loss of nutrients. Some 84 per cent of vitamin 'O' can be protected if potato peel is taken off after cooking while only 62 per cent can be obtained if cooked after taking it off.

The report said potato contains a little harmful substance like 'glyco alkaloid as solanin and chakonin'. It emphasised more research on potato.

It suggested that alkaloid-free varieties of potato should be cultivated to lessen the harmful elements in it. The report said green potato is harmful to health. Farming and use of sweet potato (kamala sundari/triplot) should be encouraged as it contains more carotene and its production cost is also lower.

The report said production of potato had increased over the years and per head availability of potato increased slightly. But, it added, people have not yet responded largely for using potato as staple food instead of rice.

The Midnight File

French Socialist Party chief resigns

PARIS, June 19: Michel Rocard resigned as head of the French Socialist Party today after the movement's of national council voted a no-confidence vote against him, delegates said. Rocard was the party's likely candidate for next year's French presidential elections, reports Reuters.

Tutsi rebels to attack peacekeepers

KIGALI, Rwanda, June 19: Tutsi-led rebels say they will attack peacekeeping troops that France is planning to send to Rwanda, the UN commander said Sunday. "The responses, I've received from the RPF (rebels) are very emphatic," said Maj. Gen. Romeo Dallaire of Canada. "They would consider the French forces the enemy and target them accordingly," reports AP.

Minister fails to place data in parliament

The Industries Minister apparently took Parliament leisurely in the absence of the Opposition and came unprepared, reports UNB.

During the question hour yesterday AM Zahiruddin Khan sought notice when Akbar Ali wanted to know the production cost and selling price of newspaper.

"It's a matter of statistics, I need time," Khan said replying to a supplementary.

Sharp came Deputy Leader of the House. "You should require no notice to provide such information," said Dr Badruddoza Chowdhury, "you should have the relevant figures ready."

Dr Chowdhury requested the minister to provide the member with the information by today.

Zahiruddin Khan, an industrialist with reputation, was apparently embarrassed. He calmly digested the bitter pill.

Again, Dr Chowdhury ducked in when Akhtaruzzaman wanted to know from and Energy and Mineral Resources Minister the justification of higher increase of gas rate for single burner than that of double burner.

This is the question also vexing my mind," the Deputy Leader of the House said. The lower income group of people use single burner and hence the price increase should have been lower for them.

Explaining the reasons, the Energy Minister said survey showed that consumption of gas through single burner is higher. It was found that more than one families use single burner and at may places it burns almost the whole day.

The increase in gas price was 26.98%, in case of single burner, 16.27% for double burner, 10.45% for power sector, 10.56% for fertiliser factories and 9.95% for industrial sector.

Belgians

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Weber.

Belgium, who were without suspended defender Philippe Albert, welcomed back midfielder Lorenzo Staelens who had been a doubtful starter because of problems adjusting to the extreme heat and humidity.

Weber was booked for his foul on goalkeeper Azmi barely a minute before the final whistle.

Azzouzi became the third Moroccan cautioned for a foul nine minutes from the end.

Belgian captain Grun's booking came in the 82nd minute, two minutes after he had fired a rasping long-range drive just wide.

The chance was a rare one for Belgium as they hung on to their slender advantage. Their emphasis was on defence and defender Marc Emmers replaced striker Nills 10 minutes after the interval.

TEAMS

BELGIUM — Michel Preud'homme, Rudi Smids, Michael de Wolf, Georges Grun, Lorenzo Staelens, Franky van der Elst, Danny Boffin (Vital Borkelmans 84), Enzo Seifo, Marc Degryse, Luc Nills (5-Marc Emmers 53), Jospf Weber.

MOROCCO — Khalil Azmi (Zakaria Alaoui 88), Abdellah Nacer, Ismail Triki, Nourredine Naybet, Abdelkrim El Hadryoui, Rachid Azzouzi, Larbi Hababi, Mustapha Hadji, Mustapha El Hadaoui (Ahmed Bahja 68), Mohamed Chaouch (Aziz Samadi 82), Rachid Daoudi.

DCCI: Hasina

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ment.

Sheikh Hasina said she failed to understand why the BNP government is not accepting the peoples' demand when it itself is the outcome of a caretaker government.

The Awami League chief told the chamber leaders that her party is working for broad consensus on vital national issues like industry, agriculture, education and poverty alleviation.

Referring to the recent visit of a Japanese investors' delegation, she alleged that the government did not allow it to meet her.

"If it (the Japanese delegation) met her, she would have very much called upon it to come forward to invest in Bangladesh and this would have created a favourable investment among the foreign investors as a whole," the press release quoted Sheikh Hasina as having told the chamber leaders.

The DCCI delegation included Sr Vice President Strajuddin Malik, Vice President M H Rahman and Directors Mahbubzaman, AYM Kamal Golam Khan, Mohammad Younus, Benezir Ahmed, Nasiruddin Khan, Alhaj Abus Salam, Abul Kalam Md Sham-suddin, Syed Zohirul Huq, Hossain Akhtar and Abdul Malek.

From the Awami League side Begum Sajeda Chowdhury, S A M S Kibria, Alhaj Syed Abul Hossain MP, Prof Abu Sayeed and Abul Hasanat Abdullah MP were present.

Dynamic BOI

From Page 1 Col 3

Recruitments for the BOI would be carried out by the PSC while the recruitment rules would be formulated by the UNDP advisory committee.

A tripartite meeting of the World Bank, UNDP and the PSC was also held recently to discuss matters relating to the recruitment of staff for the Board of Investment.

Meanwhile, the BOI authorities have abolished some of its divisions and renamed some of those, assigning new responsibilities. Besides providing registration and information services, the BOI would also provide the investors with consultancy services and help explore markets for the industrial products.

Programmes are being taken to train and motivate the officials of the BOI for enabling them to perform their new assignments properly. A consultant from Australia recently conducted such a training programme for the BOI officials.

However, the concept of providing 'one stop services' to the investors by the BOI has been opposed by the World Bank on the ground that the promotional activities of the board might be affected if it involved itself in the 'real estate activities.'

Officials of the BOI, however, felt that some at least industrial zones can be handed over to the board with all infrastructural facilities to enable it to provide quick service to the investors, specially foreign investors.