

Cairo population confce opens

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other population controversies today at the start of a big UN conference in Cairo.

Most world leaders preached compromise and tolerance while two women Prime Ministers, Gro Harlem Brundtland of Norway and Benazir Bhutto of Pakistan, set the limits for an abortion debate likely to continue throughout the nine-day meeting.

US Vice President Al Gore told a seminar the best course to agree to disagree while trying to make the conference 'programme of action' as rigorous as possible.

Behind the scenes some of the 3,500 government delegates are working on language to placate Catholics and Islamists who object to large sections of the draft programme because it does not take a moral stand against abortion and extramarital sex.

Four mainly Muslim states — Iraq, Sudan, Lebanon and Saudi Arabia — are boycotting the meeting, but others including Iran and the Organisation of the Islamic Conference, say Muslims should come and put their views.

Egypt's own Muslim militant organisation, the Gamma al-Islamiya, has told foreigners to stay away for their own safety but so far militant gunmen and bombers have not attacked.

Thousands of police lined streets to the Chinese-built conference centre, where some 8,500 delegates and activists from more than 150 states have gathered to map out a population strategy for the next 20 years.

Gro Harlem Brundtland cut through the initial mood of cosy compromise set by male Arab leaders. She demanded abortion be legalised and accused religious opponents of hypocrisy.

"Morality becomes hypocrisy if it means accepting mothers... dying in connection with unwanted pregnancies and illegal abortions and unwanted children," she said.

"None of us, whatever our religion, can disregard that abortions occur and that where they are illegal or heavily restricted the life and health of the women is often at risk. Decriminalising abortion should therefore be a minimal response to this reality," she added.

JP opposes bilateral

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the Jamaat and the JP), we now know what the opposition parties demand. We hope we will be able to sit together with a broader agenda," Prof Badruddoza Chowdhury told reporters after yesterday's meeting.

"We tried to read the Opposition's mind during the meeting," he added.

Prof Chowdhury said that the JP had declined to discuss the caretaker government issue on a one-on-one or bilateral basis. Instead, the issue should be discussed with the representatives of all opposition parties, the JP leaders were quoted as saying.

The Deputy Leader of the House said he would try to talk with the Opposition leaders again within two days.

He said that the September 10 'Dhaka siege' programme did not come up at the discussion.

In a separate press briefing, Mizanur Rahman Chowdhury said the JP informed the ruling party leaders of its reservation about discussing the issue of a caretaker government at any bilateral meeting.

"We have communicated to the ruling party leaders that the problem relating to the demand for a caretaker administration for holding general

Bureaucracy

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the chair.

The state minister said government officials should put in their best efforts to utilise foreign aid to ensure sustainable development based on poverty alleviation and human resources development.

Amul Huq also said the officials should conduct aid negotiations in such a way that the conditions of the loans do not go against the interest of the country.

Shahidul Alam, who is also Convenor of the BIAM, said the country's foreign aid management is extremely poor. This has been delaying the implementation of foreign aided projects, he said.

Chief Technical Adviser to the ERU Balliram Babul and Assistant Chief Zakir Hossain jointly presented a paper on 'Flow of External Resources into Bangladesh' at the working session of the workshop.

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game is still wide open," a senior Vatican official told reporters.

In the opening session UN Secretary-General Boutros-Ghali urged the delegates to accept each other's religious beliefs and social customs but said this should not make the conference declaration so weak it is meaningless.

Tolerance must be shown in the strongest possible way, for it should not lead to... half-measures, vague solutions or, still worse, statements that pull us into complacency," he added.

Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak said the delegates should seek a common denominator through dialogue.

"We want our dialogue to avoid dogmatism and fanaticism, for extremist opinions should remain outside the framework of the development of societies," he said.

Outside the official forum, more than 3,000 activists of all kinds have gathered at a nearby stadium to lobby the delegates and peddle their views to anyone who will listen.

Groups from around the world set up booths there to advocate anything from routine family planning to the Kundalini yoga path to health and happiness.

Nowhere was the divergence more apparent than at booths 93 and 94 where representatives from Marie Stopes International, vocal campaigners of women's rights to family planning — including abortion services — sat next door to the International Right to Life.

She argued that Islam approved of family planning but would never accept abortion or non-traditional forms of family planning.

Regrettably this conference's document contains serious flaws striking at the heart of a great many cultural values in the North and in the South and in the church and in the mosque," said Bhutto, the only one of the three Muslim women prime ministers who originally planned to come.

Delegates said the European Union had drafted a new version of sensitive sections, especially the chapters on reproductive rights, health and family planning, morbidity and mortality.

The Vatican has welcomed the EU proposal to find compromise language but few details have yet emerged. "The

Cabinet okays

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elections could be resolved in a dialogue between the ruling party and the United Opposition," Mizan Chowdhury said.

Replies to a question he said, "We have only expressed our grievances relating to the police atrocity during our August 23 rally in the city and so many charges brought by the police under the Anti-Terrorism Act against JP activists."

Asked if they expect the government to withdraw the charges following yesterday's discussions, Mizan Chowdhury said: "We saw the BNP leaders taking notes on the allegations and writing down names of some of the accused JP leaders and activists."

Moudud Ahmed told newsmen that the JP had clearly informed the ruling party leaders that there was now no relevance of the Opposition-sponsored bills seeking constitutional provisions for a caretaker administration. "Now we want the ruling party to move a bill on the issue," he said.

Newcomers to BNP

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CBA leaders who joined the Jatiyatabadi Sramik Dal, the labour front of the BNP, yesterday evening at Hare Road in the city.

Brushing aside speculation that workers would be retrenched, Begum Zia said her government will not go for any retrenchment and asked the jute workers to help make the jute mills profitable by boosting production and raising the level of efficiency.

Welcoming over ten thousand jute workers to the fold of the Sramik Dal, those who spoke on the occasion included BNP Joint Secretary General and Fisheries Minister Abdullah Al-Noman, Jute Minister Hannan Shah, Sramik Dal president Iskandar Ali and general secretary Nazrul Islam Khan.

The Prime Minister said the BNP is the organisation of those involved in the process of production and that is why, she reminded them, the support of the people for the BNP has been increasing.

The Prime Minister said production at the Adamjee Jute Mills has been increasing and the loss brought down.

Admitting that violence took place in presence of police, the VC said, "I cannot blame the police and decry their activities since they are only playing the role of an auxiliary force. But I believe they could play a better role."

"How can I blame the police when my students don't abide by my instructions. So I am to be blamed."

Replies to a question on various probe bodies formed following terrorist activities, he said, "We can take action against the students only. But we can't do anything against those outsiders, mostly found involved in campus violence."

Regarding the DU Teachers Association's demand for a judicial inquiry into the August 4 violence in which a teacher was shot and injured and two others were assaulted, Prof Ahmed said such an inquiry was beyond his jurisdiction. He, however, said he had already informed the higher authorities of the DUTA demand.

The VC said that he had been proceeding in a planned way with some priority steps aimed at removing session jam, developing the university and strengthening its academic activities since he took over two years ago. "But terrorism is affecting all these steps."



Chief Whip Khandaker Delwar Hossain welcomed the members of a British parliamentary delegation at Zia Airport in the city yesterday.

— PID photo.

UK parliamentary team in city

A six-member British parliamentary delegation led by Conservative Party MP Michael Colvin arrived in the city yesterday on a six-day visit, reports UNB.

Chief Whip Khandaker Delwar Hossain received the delegation at Zia International Airport. Whip Ashraf Hossain and British High Commissioner to Bangladesh Peter Fowler were present.

Other members of the delegation are: Jack Aspinwall MP (Conservative), Andrew Bennett MP (Liberal), Roger Godfray MP (Labour), David Hinchliffe MP (Labour) and Viscount Waverley, a member of the House of Lords.

During the visit, the delegation will call on President Abdur Rahman Biswas, Speaker Sheikh Razzak Ali, Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs Minister Mirza Golam Hafiz, Deputy Leader of the House Prof A Q M Badruddoza Chowdhury, LGRD Minister Barrister Abdus Salam Talukdar and Leader of the Opposition Sheikh Hasina.

Dhaka team

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delegation led by Health and Family Welfare Minister Chowdhury Kamal Ibne Yusuf is also attending the ICPD '94. Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia, who was scheduled to speak at the opening plenary session cancelled her trip.

The inaugural ceremony which started amid strict security was a full house as heads of states and government, leaders of different delegations including one from the Vatican, and representatives of different UN organisations and NGOs.

A seat of ancient civilisation, the Cairo city, with its 14 million populace, wore a festive look. Flags flew along the wide garden-frilled avenues of the Egyptian capital while placards and banners greeting the guests of Hosni Mubarak displayed at all prominent places.

Security police cordoned off the whole Nasr City area of Cairo, site of the ICPD '94 while jeeps bristling with heavy weapons hid discreetly behind trees.

Endless metal detectors, police dogs sniffing bags for explosives and thorough frisking of the delegates were also arranged to deter a possible threat from extremists to disrupt the last population conference of this century.

The Midnight File

Turkish air raid kills 51 Kurds

ANKARA, Sept 5: A Turkish air raid on a suspected Kurdish rebel camp across the border in northern Iraq on August 29 killed 51 guerrillas, the military said Wednesday. The air strike, the seventh such attack since July 26, took place last Monday in the region of Hakurk, some 20 kilometres (12 miles) south of the Turkish border. The guerrillas use bases in northern Iraq for hit-and-run attacks inside Turkey in their decade-long battle for autonomy. The rebels belong to the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK), reports AP.

India to sign extradition treaties with US, Canada

NEW DELHI, Sept 5: India will sign extradition treaties with the United States and Canada later this year to combat the menace of terrorism, India's interior minister said Monday. The modalities for signing such treaties are being worked out in consultation with these countries, Interior Minister S B Chavan told reporters in New Delhi, reports AP.

Political will for admin reform lacking

By Staff Correspondent

Speakers in a dialogue on public administration reform severely questioned the government's willingness to make the administration accountable and pro-people and pointed out that implementation of the reform is more needed now than just identifying and justifying it.

They also agreed that political will, transcending party interests, is needed most now to bring about changes in the civil service that is characterised by secrecy, red-tapism and non-responsiveness.

The discussion session, organised by the Centre for Development Research, Bangladesh (CDRB) at a local hotel, was attended by some 40 Members of Parliament, donor representatives, bureaucrats, professionals and academicians.

Governments since the late 80s had initiated a number of studies on administrative reform, for changing the present bureaucracy. These include one USAID-funded study, one UNDP-funded and four reports of secretaries.

BNP MP Abdur Rab Chowdhury, himself a former civil servant, said the oversized bureaucracy must be downsized by at least one-third within the next five years.

Professor Mohabbat Khan of the Public Administration Department of Dhaka University said, "The government has miserably failed to implement any of the recommendations on reforms because of lack of political will."

বাংলাদেশ হাউস বিল্ডিং ফাইনান্স কর্পোরেশন

বার্ষিক হিসাব বিবরণী

১৯৯৩-৯৪ অর্থ বছরের হিসাব বিবরণী (মাস্টিখণ্ড) বিলির জন্য প্রস্তুত করা হয়েছে এবং কর্পোরেশন তবমের ৪ৰ্থ তলায় কল্পিত শাখা থেকে এখনই সংস্থৰণ করা যাবে। সাধারণ ক্ষেত্রে বার্ষিক হিসাব বিবরণী ৭-৮ তারিখ নাগাদ বিলির জন্য প্রস্তুত হয়ে যাবে বলে আশা করা যাবে। এখন ক্ষেত্রে গ্রাহীতাগণও তখন তাদের হিসাব বিবরণী সংস্থৰণ করতে পারবেন।

আপনি জানেন কি?

কর্পোরেশন ইতিমধ্যে ঢাকা ও চট্টগ্রাম মেট্রোপলিটন এলাকা বাতীত দেশের সকল এলাকার জন্য ১৩%, ১১% এবং ১০.৫% হার সুদে গ্রহীত খালের সুদ ১০% ধার্য করেছে (ব্যাংক খালের ৭.৮৭% সমতুল্য)। ঢাকা ও চট্টগ্রাম খালের ১০.৬% এবং ১৬% হার সুদে গ্রহীত খালের সুদ হাস্ত করে ১২%- ধার্য করা হয়েছে (ব্যাংক খালের ৭.৮৭% সমতুল্য)।

খেলালী খাল গ্রহীতাকে কোন অবস্থাতেই হাস্তকৃত সুদের সুবিধা দেয়া হবে না। অবে খেলালী গ্রহীতাগণ অর্থ জমা করে সমতুল্য দাখিল করেন তাহলে তাদেরকে রিসিডিউলিং (কিটিপ্লানিংরিভারণ)-এর সুবিধাসহ হাস্তকৃত সুদের সুবিধা প্রদান করা হবে।

কর্পোরেশন থেকে খাল নিয়ে এলাকাতে ১৩০০, ১৫০০ ও ১৮০০ বর্গফুট পর্যন্ত আয়তনের ঝ্যাট কেনা যাবে। এজন্য যথাক্ষম সর্বোক্ত ৭.৮ লক্ষ, ৯.০ লক্ষ ও ১২.৯৬ লক্ষ টকা খাল পাওয়া যাবে।

ছোট আয়তনের ঝ্যাট কেন্দ্রিক নির্মাণের জন্য সিলিং বাড়ানো হয়েছে। সর্বোক্ত ১০০০ বর্গফুটের ৪৮ টি ইউনিট নির্মাণের জন্য জমির অবস্থান ও পিনিয়োরাম উপর নিয়ন্ত্রণে ভিত্তি প্লানিংরিভারণ:

বর্তমানে ১৩% ও ১৬% হারে গ্রহীত খালের কিটি ২টিকে একত্রিত করে ১২% হারে নির্ধারণ করে ১টি কিটি কর্পোরেশন থেকে খাল নিয়ে এলাকাতে ১৩০০, ১৫০০ ও ১৮০০ বর্গফুট পর্যন্ত আয়তনের ঝ্যাট কেনা যাবে।

একজন যথাক