

People-centred strategy to combat poverty stressed

By Staff Correspondent

Winners of the Ramon Magsaysay Award yesterday called upon the world leaders to chart a people-centred approach for combating global poverty in the upcoming World Summit on Social Development.

They also urged the leaders to emulate the SAARC example of setting a target date for global poverty eradication and put resources at the disposal of the poor so that they could achieve their goals through a participatory process.

The call came after a two-day meeting of the Magsaysay Award winners at Rajendrapur in Gazipur district that ended on October 29.

The joint declaration of the awardees was released to the press only yesterday.

The declaration points out that while global thinking on the issue of poverty was still taking shape, Bangladesh and other SAARC states have already articulated a strategy to eradicate poverty by the year 2002.

The SAARC strategy calls for placing the poor at the centre of the development process, in a participatory approach, that will involve the poor people, especially the women, in decisions that affect them, it said.

"This innovative people-centred approach, developed from the ground-up through years of confronting directly the challenges of poverty, is of paramount relevance to the Social Development Summit," the declaration added.

The signatories to the declaration are: Professor Mohammad Yunus of the Grameen Bank, Fazle Hasan Abed of the Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee (BRAC), Dr Zafullah Chowdhury of the Ganas-hasthya Kendro, Father Richard W Timm, and M Yeasin of the Yeasin Foundation — all five Magsaysay award winners from Bangladesh — as well as Dr Sima Samar from Afghanistan and Tun Muhammad from Malaysia.

These seven Magsaysay Award winners from South Asia took part in the Rajendrapur meeting together with senior government officials from Bangladesh, NGO leaders, scholars, researchers, representatives from a number of donor agencies and journalists.

The Ramon Magsaysay Award Foundation, a Manila-based trust that awards the prize every year in honour of a former Philippines president, organised the meeting at the BRAC's Centre for Development Management at Rajendrapur.

The joint declaration of the awardees was released to the press only yesterday.

The declaration points out that while global thinking on the issue of poverty was still taking shape, Bangladesh and other SAARC states have already articulated a strategy to eradicate poverty by the year 2002.

The SAARC strategy calls for placing the poor at the centre of the development process, in a participatory approach, that will involve the poor people, especially the women, in decisions that affect them, it said.

The SAARC strategy calls for placing the poor at the centre of the development process, in a participatory approach, that will involve the poor people, especially the women, in decisions that affect them, it said.

Hasina spurns BNP plan

From Page 1 Col 3

hence there could be no free, fair and impartial elections with it in power.

The Awami League president was speaking at a discussion meeting organised by her party at Bangabandhu Avenue in observance of the 19th death anniversary of four national leaders slain in jail on this day in 1975 by a group of disgruntled army men.

Reiterating the Opposition demand for general elections under a caretaker government, Hasina said there is no alternative to it for establishing the people's fundamental and constitutional right to vote.

"Our politics is to restore people's right to vote and elect a caretaker government," she said, adding that security of voters can only be ensured if the elections are held under a caretaker government.

Justifying their demand, the Opposition leader said elections under a caretaker administration would help restore political stability which, she said, is required to create a favourable atmosphere for foreign investment.

She accused the governing

party of foiling the Commonwealth-brokered dialogue, aimed at resolving the government-Opposition stand-off on the caretaker government issue.

Dubbing the ruling BNP as the most corrupt one, Hasina said it had exceeded all sleazy records of the Ershad regime, ousted in 1990 on charges of corruption.

She said the ruling party did not even allow the corruption charges against a minister and an MP to be discussed in Parliament.

"The present government has adopted corruption as its policy," she said, continuing the innuendo.

Paying tributes to the memories of the four slain leaders — Syed Nazrul Islam, Tajuddin Ahmed, M Mansur Ali and A H M Quamruzzaman — Hasina said only a "democratic and elected government" can try the killers of Bangabandhu and his four followers by scrapping the Indemnity Ordinance.

Castigating the incorporation of the Indemnity Ordinance into the Constitution, she said the BNP had promised to scrap the ordinance which blocked the trial.

She accused the governing party of foiling the Commonwealth-brokered dialogue, aimed at resolving the government-Opposition stand-off on the caretaker government issue.

Dubbing the ruling BNP as the most corrupt one, Hasina said it had exceeded all sleazy records of the Ershad regime, ousted in 1990 on charges of corruption.

She said the ruling party did not even allow the corruption charges against a minister and an MP to be discussed in Parliament.

"The present government has adopted corruption as its policy," she said, continuing the innuendo.

Paying tributes to the memories of the four slain leaders — Syed Nazrul Islam, Tajuddin Ahmed, M Mansur Ali and A H M Quamruzzaman — Hasina said only a "democratic and elected government" can try the killers of Bangabandhu and his four followers by scrapping the Indemnity Ordinance.

Castigating the incorporation of the Indemnity Ordinance into the Constitution, she said the BNP had promised to scrap the ordinance which blocked the trial.

Opposition says 'no'

From Page 1 Col 4

caretaking administration without Begum Khaleda Zia at the helm.

When asked to comment on certain newspaper reports yesterday that a senior minister had a plan of his own which he reportedly divulged in a special interview with a leading vernacular daily, only to retract it late Wednesday night, a top ranking BNP leader told The Daily Star, on condition of anonymity: "The party high command has nothing to do with the reported plan."

The BNP leader also said that such a formula, under which the Chief Justice would head a caretaker government, had never even been discussed at any forum of the party.

The minister to whom this new plan was ascribed, when

contacted over telephone last night, refused to talk to the press.

Sir Ninian's aide Christopher Childs is learnt to have met Deputy Leader of Parliament Prof. Badruddoza Chowdhury last night.

According to BNP sources, Childs handed over a written copy of the Opposition's plans for the caretaker government to Chowdhury. Chowdhury is expected to meet Sir Ninian sometime today.

Meanwhile, the western diplomatic missions in Dhaka are learnt to have been trying to persuade the opposing camps to end the crisis through negotiations.

Australian High Commissioner Kenneth W Aspinall had a 90-minute closed-door meeting with Sheikh Hasina at her Minto Road residence yesterday morning, while US Ambassador David N Merrill met her Wednesday night.

The German Ambassador and the High Commissioners of Britain and Canada are also expected to call on Hasina, diplomatic sources said.

Earlier, Sir Ninian had a meeting with all the five mission heads Tuesday.

The diplomats are also maintaining regular contacts with the government leaders.

Fake visa office found in city: one arrested

One person was arrested by police on charge of opening a fake visa office from city's Simpson Road last night, reports BSS.

A press release of the special branch police said that a squad of the branch arrested one Modan Mohan Kundu from a 'fake visa office' which was operating in the ground floor of the Sankar Boarding at Simpson Road under Kotwaji thana.

Police also recovered one seal for Indian visa, one seal for renewing passport, one seal of Deputy Assistant Director (Passport) Md Motahar Hussain Khan, 17 International, 5 special and 4 Indian passports from the office. A signboard of the office was also recovered.

According to the police, Kundu confessed to the authorities that he had been doing this business for the last 22 to 25 years, he also told the police that similar illegal business was being conducted in various parts of the country.

US team refused permission to see Suu Kyi

BANGKOK, Nov 3: A visiting US delegation was refused permission to see detained Myanmar dissident Aung San Suu Kyi this week, a State Department official said on Wednesday, reports Reuter.

The United States voiced concern over its lack of democracy, respect for human rights and control of narcotics, Thomas Hubbard, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State, told reporters at Bangkok airport.

New city unit of Ainjibi Forum

A 111-member executive committee of the Jatiyatabadi Ainjibi Forum, Dhaka unit, was formed at the first biennial conference of the unit in the city yesterday, reports BSS.

Advocate Fazlur Rahman Khan and Advocate Mohammad Sanaullah Mia have been elected president and general secretary respectively of the Dhaka unit.

Convener of the Jatiyatabadi Ainjibi Forum Justice T H Khan attended the function as chief guest.



Bosnian troops from the Croatian Defence Council march into the village of Rauno yesterday in the Kupres region following Wednesday's victory in the fierce battle against Bosnian Serb forces who had kept this area as a stronghold since 1992. — AFP photo

Dozen hurt as JCD factions clash in Sylhet

From Staff Correspondent

SYLHET, Nov 3: At least twelve persons were injured in a series of clashes between two rival groups of the Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal here today.

Of the victims, one Harun who received bullet wounds was admitted to the Sylhet MAG Osmani Medical College Hospital. His condition was stated to be critical. Others have been taken to private clinics.

Police arrested eleven persons — four of them JCD activists.

Selim, reportedly the leader of one of the groups, was staffed at the Government College area at about 11:30 am today.

As a sequel to this, a mob set fire to the Jalali Club of the Electric Supply area at about 3 pm.

A number of motor cycles were also burnt and dwellings attacked amid sporadic shooting.

At least nine people were injured in the incident.

The Habib-Zaman group of the JCD brought out a procession in the town protesting the attack.

The feuding factions clashed several times during the last few months.

Muslim, Croat forces close in on Serb-held town

BUGOJNO, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Nov 3: Muslim-led government forces and their Bosnian Croat allies on Thursday closed in on a strategic Serb-held town in central Bosnia after heavy fighting overnight, reports AP.

Government forces were reported to be just 1.2 miles (2 kms) north of Kupres. The Croats were about 6 miles (10 kms) to the south, with some forces reportedly reaching the southern edges of Kupres by afternoon.

Government soldiers returning from the front to this garrison outpost 12 miles (20 kms) northeast of Kupres boasted that the town was about to fall. Truckloads of fresh troops poured in to Bugojno, their mood buoyant in anticipation of a major victory.

UN officials reported heavy shelling — 3,400 explosions over the last 24 hours — and intense infantry fighting along the Bugojno-Kupres front. They also reported steady shelling between Kupres and Croat-held Tomislavgrad, to the south.

The rare coordinated attack could open a new chapter in the 2 1/2 year civil war. Thousands of civilians fled Kupres in anticipation of the assault.

The town of 3,500 sits on a plateau linking Serb-held territory in northwest Bosnia and neighbouring Croatia with Serb land in central Bosnia.

Muslim-Croat control of the plateau could allow their forces to push north and link up with government troops to try to cut Bosnian Serbs off from Serbs in neighbouring Croatia.

"We are on the outskirts of Kupres," said Razija Mehic, spokeswoman for the government army's 7th corps in Bugojno. "This will be our major victory in the 2 years of war."

Serbs call the plateau "the gates of Bosnia." It was one of the first regions they captured after war began in April 1992, at which time Kupres was 51 per cent Serb, 40 per cent Croat and 8 per cent Muslim.

The bitterness of the Serb-Croat fighting in Kupres at the outset of the war may explain why it is the first place the Croats are cooperating militarily with the government against the Serbs.

Paul Risley, a UN spokesman in Zagreb, Croatia, said the shelling indicated the participation of Bosnian Croats because the Muslim-led army doesn't have the artillery for round after round.

UN military observers and journalists were being kept away from the front. UN officials, who would not be named, said army units of neighbouring Croatia had been spotted in the Kupres area in support of the Bosnian Croats.

Another injured mugger held

By Staff Correspondent

One more suspect of Wednesday's daylight Tk 50,000 heist in the city was arrested from a clinic yesterday.

Wednesday morning a gang of four muggers snatched the money from a businessman Monirul Haq at Demra. In their bid to beat a police pursuit one of the criminals died and the others were injured when they were reportedly carrying exploded inside the autorickshaw by which they were attempting to escape.

Later, on that day Detective Police arrested one of the muggers — Abdul Mannan — from the Janaseba Nursing Home at Shyamoli.

Later yesterday, Detective Police arrested one Baqar from the Shahjalal Poly Clinic at Mohammadpur.

IMF's denial

From Page 1 Col 8

Hasina, claiming to quote an IMF report had alleged that there was no trace of some Tk 570 crore from the two previous budget accounts (1992-93 and 1993-94).

Lifting of ban on newsprint import hailed

By Staff Correspondent

The Bangladesh Sangbadpatri Parishad at a meeting yesterday hailed the government decision withdrawing restriction on the import of newsprint.

The meeting, presided over by its president Kazi Shahed Ahmed, also demanded VAT and duty-free import of newsprint for the newspapers of the country.

The meeting said that if VAT and duty on import of newsprint are imposed, the decision to allow newsprint import would not help the newspapers or the publication industry.

Gunfire rocks CU campus

From Staff Correspondent

CHITTAGONG, Nov 3: Gunfire and cocktail blasts rocked the Chittagong University campus Wednesday night.

The shooting spree and explosions of hand bombs continued for about half an hour from 9 am in all the residential halls occupied reportedly by supporters of a student faction, police said. There was, however, no report of injury.

The situation in CU became tense following an incident in which a JCD leader was seriously injured. He was attacked allegedly by the activists of Shibir. Shibir later denied the charge.

Meanwhile, JCD of the CU unit called for flushing out the armed outsiders who have occupied the halls.

Govt to request Japan to finance Rupsha bridge

The government will formally request Japan to finance Rupsha bridge in Khulna which is likely to cost between Tk 350 and 500 crore, reports UNB.

A decision to this effect was taken at an interministerial meeting yesterday at the Planning Commission in the city with Finance Minister M Saifur Rahman in the chair, meeting sources said.

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) will commission a feasibility study on the bridge in January. Sources said Japan would also be requested to take part in the study.

The meeting also decided to select the site of the bridge at least three to four kilometres downstream off the Rupsha ferry ghat.

Asiaweek

From Page 1 Col 6

"Strikes are labour's last resort, to be exercised only if arbitration and negotiations fail. But South Asia's politicians seem to have made them their tactic of first choice," it said.

It cited the case of South Korea where the 'economic miracle' almost ended in the 1980s by a growing addiction to strikes. There were some 3,500 stoppages in several months in 1987 and national productivity and competitiveness declined disastrously.

Fortunately, authorities prevailed upon management and labour to bridge their differences and the South Korean economy is again booming, it said.

The Asiaweek observed that the regional economies have emerged from a prolonged period of stagnation and in Bangladesh, inflation is plummeting, and such developments look set to pay sizeable dividends to the region's workers.

"But if they let others hijack their most potent weapon — the strike — for political ends, they risk delaying the prosperity and security they have long deserved," it cautioned.

The Midnight File

Atlantis lifts off to study ozone layer

FLORIDA, Nov 3: The space shuttle Atlantis lifted off from Florida today carrying five American astronauts and one from Europe at the start of an 11-day flight to study earth's diminishing ozone layer. Atlantis thundered into a clear sky at 11:59 am est (1659 GMT), taking aloft a cargo bay observatory and a small satellite that were to study the composition of the atmosphere and the sun's effect on ozone, a thin gas that envelops the planet in a natural radiation shield, reports Reuter.

Russian scientists call for resumption of N-tests

MOSCOW, Nov 3: Russian scientists on Thursday called for a resumption of nuclear testing, saying that Russia would otherwise be unable to keep its nuclear weapons safe. "Politicians forced the nuclear test ban on us," said Dr Rodyl Ilyayev, a leading expert at Russia's military Federal Nuclear Centre. "But nuclear tests are necessary for preserving the safety and reliability of nuclear weapons," reports AP.

Wearing of headscarves

Benazir blasts French Muslim schoolgirls

PARIS, Nov 3: Pakistani Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto today criticised French Muslim schoolgirls for insisting on wearing Islamic headscarves in class, reports AFP.

"The best veil is the veil in the eyes," Bhutto said, quoting from the Prophet Mohammed (SM), adding that she would never have become Prime Minister if she had been forced to wear the full Islamic dress prevalent in her country when she was a girl.

Bhutto, who wears a long scarf that covers a part of her hair, told journalists, "When I was 13, luckily my father (the late Premier Zulfikar Ali Bhutto) did not ask me to wear the veil, otherwise I would not have been here today before you in my capacity as the Prime Minister of Pakistan."

Of French Muslim girls, she said, "May be they are searching for an identity. May be they want to make an identity of their own and preserve what they consider is their own traditions."

Bhutto, who is on the second day of a four-day official visit to France, said that when she was growing up, far from wearing headscarves, "Women in my family could not leave the four walls of the house."

She added, "I was one of the people who broke through. I think it was a generational thing."

In France, a ban on "ostentatious religious insignia" in schools — effectively headscarves — has provoked outrage among Muslims, since it allows the wearing of crucifixes and skullcaps.

Some 25 Muslim schoolgirls have so far been expelled from school for insisting on wearing scarves.

On Wednesday, Bhutto jokingly appealed to French couriers to design a new headscarf for her after the garment slipped off when she was posing for pictures.

Girl rescued from Tanbazar brothel: 2 held

From Our Correspondent

NARAYANGANJ, Nov 3: Narayanjanj thana police rescued a young girl, Ruposhi (14), from the Tanbazar brothel at 3:30 pm today.

Two persons, including a madam of the brothel, were arrested by the police allegedly for forcing the girl into prostitution.

According to police, Ruposhi was brought to Dhaka by one Mostafa Zaman alias Swapan from her village home at Kaimasardi of Boalmari thana of Faridpur promising to provide her with a job.

Instead, Swapan kept her at a house in the Paikpara area of the city for about five months.

On October 28, he took Ruposhi to Narayanjanj and handed her over to Aleya, a madam of the Tanbazar brothel, for Tk 2000.

Police have arrested both Aleya and Swapan. A case was also lodged with the local thana in this connection.

Govt college teachers' 3-day strike from Nov 12

By Staff Correspondent

Teachers of government colleges will abstain from work for three days from November 12 at the call of the BCS General Education Association for realising their demands.

The decision was taken at a meeting of the association held at the Teachers' Training College yesterday with its President, Dr QATA Habibur Rahman, in the chair.

The demands include 50 per cent selection grade for the lecturers, and removal of anomalies in the inter-cadre pay structure by granting proposed scales to the teachers.

The meeting also protested the appointment of the BCS (Administration) officials as deputy directors of primary education.

They also demanded withdrawal of the administrative cadre members who were appointed in violation of the recruitment rules as well as other cadre members appointed in the education service.

The association, however, withdrew its continuous strike programme that was scheduled to begin on November 12 considering the ensuing degree examinations.

Jailbreak

From Page 1 Col 5

juries at the Sadar Hospital at five this afternoon.

Meanwhile, police arrested Momina Khatun, wife of a prisoner — Bachchu — from the town allegedly for supplying the hack-saw blades to her husband and his accomplices.

Authorities suspended two jail wardens following the incident.

No figures were available of the number of prisoners who might have escaped.

Kazi Zafar

From Page 1 Col 6

and the member deposited Tk one crore in the BCI Bangladesh Branch on June 28, 1990, the BCI was shut down in April 28, 1992 without any prior notice. For this reason, the Board could not draw the deposited money.

It was further pointed out that Kazi Zafar Ahmed, Sagir Ahmed, Md Khurshid Alam and Md Yunus Mia collaborated with each other and misused their powers in depositing the board's money in a non-banking company thus causing a loss of Tk one crore to the government.

Md Khurshid Alam is presently the chairman of the Text Book Board.

Shantibahini

From Page 1 Col 8

of top rebel leader Rupayan Dewan by Indian authorities. Rupayan was the political secretary of the Parbatya Chattagram Jana Sanghati Samity (PCJSS), the parent organisation of Shantibahini.

According to reports from across the border, unrest and dissatisfaction are prevailing in the rank and file of Shantibahini.

Meanwhile, Honshadhoo Chakma, convener of the Liaison Committee set up for brokering the peace talks, has met the government side and Shantibahini leaders with the proposal for extension of the truce as well as for holding the next round of talks by the first half of December.

The government is expected to formally announce the extension of the ceasefire soon.



A colourful rally was brought out in the city yesterday on the occasion of National Youth Day '94 organised by the Youth Development Directorate. — Star photo

Students block Ctg-Nazirhat road for 4 hrs

From Staff Correspondent

CHITTAGONG, Nov 3: Several hundred school boys put up barricades at several points on Chittagong-Nazirhat road at Katirhat under Hathazari thana, this morning blocking traffic movement for about four hours.

During the blockade protesting price-hike of newsprint some unruly students damaged a number of vehicles. A large number of passengers including women and children became stranded during the incidents, witnesses said.

The local thana police who rushed to the spot failed to persuade the agitating students to remove the barricade.

The traffic movement resumed after 1 pm.

Jail Killing Day

From Page 1 Col 4

enquiry committee comprising Justice Ahsanuddin Chowdhury, Justice K M Sobhan and Justice Syed Mohammed Hossain on November 5, 1975 which failed to come up with a report on the jail killings.

The Mustaque government relinquished power the day after November 6, 1975.

UNESCO founding anniversary today

The 48th founding anniversary of UNESCO will be observed in the country as elsewhere round the globe today, reports UNB.

Bangladesh National Commission for UNESCO, Education Ministry and the National Association of UNESCO Clubs in Bangladesh have jointly organised a discussion on "UNESCO in today's world" at a city hotel today at 4 pm on the occasion.

Education Minister Barrister, Jamiruddin Sircar and UNDP Assistant Resident Representative Richard Dictus will address the the function as chief and special guests. Professor Masuda M Rashid Chowdhury of Dhaka University will present keynote paper.

Vice Chancellor of the Bangladesh Engineering University (BUEU) Prof Shahjahan will preside.

The United Nations Association of Bangladesh (UNAB) will also hold a discussion today at 5 pm at the UNAB office.

Students block Ctg-Nazirhat road for 4 hrs

CHITTAGONG, Nov 3: Several hundred school boys put up barricades at several points on Chittagong-Nazirhat road at Katirhat under Hathazari thana, this morning blocking traffic movement for about four hours.

During the blockade protesting price-hike of newsprint some unruly students damaged a number of vehicles. A large number of passengers including women and children became stranded during the incidents, witnesses said.

The local thana police who rushed to the spot failed to persuade the agitating students to remove the barricade.

The traffic movement resumed after 1 pm.

New city unit of Ainjibi Forum

A 111-member executive committee of the Jatiyatabadi Ainjibi Forum, Dhaka unit, was formed at the first biennial conference of the unit in the city yesterday, reports BSS.

Advocate Fazlur Rahman Khan and Advocate Mohammad Sanaullah Mia have been elected president and general secretary respectively of the Dhaka unit.

Convener of the Jatiyatabadi Ainjibi Forum Justice T H Khan attended the function as chief guest.

Jail Killing Day

enquiry committee comprising Justice Ahsanuddin Chowdhury, Justice K M Sobhan and Justice Syed Mohammed Hossain on November 5, 1975 which failed to come up with a report on the jail killings.

The Mustaque government relinquished power the day after November 6, 1975.

UNESCO founding anniversary today

The 48th founding anniversary of UNESCO will be observed in the country as elsewhere round the globe today, reports UNB.

Bangladesh National Commission for UNESCO, Education Ministry and the National Association of UNESCO Clubs in Bangladesh have jointly organised a discussion on "UNESCO in today's world" at a city hotel today at 4 pm on the occasion.

Education Minister Barrister, Jamiruddin Sircar and UNDP Assistant Resident Representative Richard Dictus will address the the function as chief and special guests. Professor Masuda M Rashid Chowdhury of Dhaka University will present keynote paper.

Vice Chancellor of the Bangladesh Engineering University (BUEU) Prof Shahjahan will preside.

The United Nations Association of Bangladesh (UNAB) will also hold a discussion today at 5 pm at the UNAB office.