

# Salient features of WSSD declaration

COPENHAGEN, Mar 11: The 10 commitments contained in the declaration of the UN summit for social development reached in Copenhagen late Friday are as follows:

1. "creating an enabling economic, political, social, cultural and legal environment that will enable people to achieve social development."
2. "eradicating poverty in the world, through decisive national actions and international cooperation, as an ethical, social, political and economic imperative of humankind."
3. "promoting the goal of full employment as a basic priority of our economic and social policies, and... enabling all men and women to attain secure and sustainable livelihoods through freely chosen productive employment and work."
4. "promoting social integration by fostering societies that are stable, safe and just and based on the promotion and protection of all human rights, and on non-discrimination, tolerance, respect for diversity, equality of opportunity, solidarity, security and participation of all people including disadvantaged and vulnerable groups and persons."
5. "promoting full respect for human dignity and... achieving equality and equity between women and men, and... recognizing and enhancing the participation and leadership roles of women in political, civil, economic, social and cultural life and in development."
6. "promoting and attaining the goals of universal and equitable access to quality education, the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health, and the access of all to primary health care."
7. "accelerating the economic, social, and human resource development of Africa and the least developed countries."
8. "ensuring that when structural adjustment programmes are agreed to they should include social development goals, in particular, of eradicating poverty, promoting full and productive employment and enhancing social integration."
9. "to increase significantly and/or utilize more efficiently the resources allocated to social development in order to achieve the goals of the summit through national action, and regional and international cooperation."
10. "an improved and strengthened framework for international, regional and subregional cooperation for social development, in a spirit of partnership, through the United Nations and other multilateral institutions."



Awami League chief Sheikh Hasina addressing a joint meeting of the party's working committee and advisory committee at the central office in the city's Bangabandhu Avenue yesterday.

## 48-hr hartal

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mands including dissolution of Parliament, resignation of the BNP government, national elections under a caretaker administration and reduction of the prices of essentials.

The parties had announced their hartal programmes at separate rallies in the city on January 25. The 48-hour hartal will continue till 6 am on Tuesday without any break. AL General Secretary Zillur Rahman told The Daily Star last night. Only medicine and food shops and ambulance, fire service and newspaper transports will remain outside the purview of the hartal, he said. Even rickshaws will not be exempted from the shutdown, he added.

AL chief Sheikh Hasina has called upon the people to observe the hartal. She was addressing a joint meeting of her party's central committee, advisory committee, presidents and general secretaries of the thana and ward units and ward commissioners of Dhaka City Corporation at the Party Central office at Bangabandhu Avenue yesterday morning.

Hasina also addressed a public rally, organised by the Awami Juba League's Dhaka South Branch at Bangabandhu Avenue to drum up support for the hartal. She also attended a meeting of the ward commissioners belonging to her party.

## Farmers

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a meagre quantity of urea fertilizer against their real demand. He said since first week of February, demand for 6,150 metric tons of urea had been placed to the authorities, but the allotment was only 340 tonnes.

## Manikganj

In Manikganj, several hundred farmers today held a demonstration in front of the DC office to demand supply of fertilizer all over the district at fair price.

Later, the demonstrators arranged a protest rally there, which was addressed by CPB district president Azharul Islam Arzu. JP district secretary general Saiful Islam Badal and JP student wing president Ismail Hossain.

Speakers at the rally expressed grave concern over the recent price hike of fertilizer and called upon the authorities to ensure supply of fertilizer from thanas upto union level throughout the district.

## Sirajganj

Another report from Sirajganj adds: About 5,000 farmers today staged demonstrations in the town demanding immediate supply of fertilizer at fair price.

Awami League-backed Krishak League and Left Democratic Front organised separate rallies and assembled in front of the DC office to stage the demonstration.

Addressing the Krishak League rally, district Awami League General Secretary Abdul Latif Mirza blamed the administration and local BNP leaders for creating artificial crisis of fertilizer in the district.

Two separate memoranda were submitted by the organizations to the local DC.

## College teachers

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society, in a statement yesterday, said they would go for an indefinite strike from April 8 and boycott the HSC examinations, to be held in May, June and July, if their demands were not met immediately.

They urged the teachers to be prepared for launching a greater agitation at 24-hours' notice.

Detail of the greater agitation will be announced on April 7 at the joint meeting of the representatives of teachers and association leaders, the statement said.

## Slow pace of reforms

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progress in administrative reform, privatisation and other reform measures were highlighted in the draft CEM. It cautioned that the unfinished reform agenda would limit the success of the achievements of the past few years. Emphasising a faster pace of reform, the World Bank warned that the failure to carry forward the reform process would impair the growth prospect of the economy and would also cause setbacks for the poverty alleviation and other employment generating programmes.

The Bank also cautioned the government against the pitfalls of any surge in the unproductive current expenditures, jeopardising the macro-economic stability prevailing in the country.

It noted that not much progress has been made in the administrative reform process and pointed out that in the government's privatisation drive only six per cent of the targeted public sector units, most since 1991, have so far been privatised.

The draft CEM noted that the annual losses in the 200 or so state-owned enterprises amounted to one per cent of the country's gross domestic product (GDP) and described it as a major drag on the economy. It also termed the system loss in the power sector as a major waste of resources.

Regarding financial sector reforms, it expressed concern over the high proportion of non-performing loans in the banking sector and over the poor rate of recovery.

The Bank also called for 'depoliticising' the labour-management relations and for instituting a productivity-based wages regime.

This, it said, is necessary to maintain an investment-friendly environment, strengthen competitiveness and improve the country's image abroad.

The prospects for aid commitments and disbursements to Bangladesh in the 1995-96 fiscal, the draft CEM says, would critically depend on how speedily the reform programme is implemented.

The bank concludes that Bangladesh would require some 1.85 billion US dollars in aid commitment for next year, including 1.3 billion in project aid, 400 million in commodity aid and another 150 million in food aid.

At last year's Paris meet, the donors pledged 2.1 billion dollars. Official sources said that only some 700 million dollars have so far been disbursed this fiscal.

## World leaders focus on the poor

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been greater, he added. "... now is the time to act because no economy — developing, transitional, or developed — can escape the problems of social development," he pointed out. "New form of global conciliation and mutual progress are now necessary and possible."

Ghani said the letter and spirit of the new social contact at the global level must reflect a sense of solidarity among the nations.

"Such a sense of solidarity cannot permit those who are privileged to ignore those who are poor, vulnerable and disadvantaged," he observed.

Welcoming the world leaders, Danish Prime Minister Poul Nyrup Rasmussen said social rights and duties were not written in the stars but belonged to the earth.

"We therefore need to make a common and global framework for social development," he said.

Rasmussen saw affluence and poverty making strange bedfellows — as global wealth multiplied sevenfold in the past 50 years, so increased poverty, unemployment and social dislocation.

Taking a pro-poor stand, the Danish Prime Minister pointed out that only a fraction of the military spending by the rich nations could provide primary health care for everybody in the poor countries.

He also appealed for debt relief which "is of huge importance for the poorest countries."

Sponsored by the UN, the World Summit for Social Development started on March 6.

The three main themes of this global gathering is to explore ways to reduce poverty, create productive employment and promote social integration.

## JCD stages anti-hartal rally at DU

The Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD), student wing of the ruling BNP, brought out a procession and held an anti-hartal rally on the Dhaka University campus yesterday, reports UNB.

Addressing the rally held in front of the 'DUCSU Bhaban' JCE leaders criticised the opposition political parties for calling the hartal for today and tomorrow and described it as anti-people and anti-democratic.

The rally was addressed, among others, by Moni-ruzzaman Monir, Shahiduddin Chowdhury Anney, Mosharrar Hossain and Jakir Ahmed Bablu.

The leaders urged the student community to consolidate democracy and remain vigilant against all kinds of conspiracy to destroy the hard earned democracy.

Pro-Awami League Chhatra League also brought out a procession on the campus in support of the 48-hour hartal beginning today.

## Manzur's brother seeks the truth

By Asiuzzaman  
Barrister Abul Mansur, elder brother of Maj Gen M A Manzur has said he wants proper investigation into the killing of his brother, not media publicity.

"I do not want publicity. I want a probe into the killing of my brother," said Abul Mansur, who filed a case with Panchlaish thana in Chittagong on February 28 last.

He told The Daily Star The matter seemed to be taboo for a long time and I was not even given a copy of the autopsy report of Manzur, needed for filing the case. He said he had miraculously got the report late last month and immediately lodged the FIR with the thana.

Investigators of the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) had contacted him once after the filing of the case and sought some documents, he said.

"I will tell everything before the court if I am summoned," he said, declining to elaborate. "I will not say anything that might hamper or influence the investigation."

Abul Mansur denied that he had talks with ruling party leaders and government attorneys before filing the case.

"These are speculations by a section of the press. I never spoke with the Prime Minister or the Attorney General," he said, adding: "Being a lawyer, I know which document is necessary for the case and I waited for long 14 years for the autopsy report."

Abul Mansur said he believes a thorough and proper investigation would reveal the truth.

## Fertility level

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reduction to disproportional use of chemical fertiliser and excessive pressure on land.

"In the past, farmers used to give their land a season's rest but this is hardly possible now," the BARC man clarified. Consequently the arable lands were not being replenished properly.

Although the farmers are being constantly informed by the agricultural wing of the government about the proper use of fertiliser and scientific ways of farming to increase production, they are not reciprocating up to the required mark because of a lack of incentives from the government.

"More advice never produces practical results. To make the farmers listen and follow instructions, the government must cut back the prices of agricultural inputs through subsidy," the scientist opined.

"Even in the USA or Canada, the government subsidizes farmers in order to keep the market price of crops profitable for them and also to increase output."

"If the current trend continues and we sit back taking no action to increase or replenish the fertility level, by 2010 our soil would lose its ability to produce crops economically," he warned.

## The Midnight File

### Pro-Rabbani troops rout Taliban forces in S Kabul

KABUL, Mar 11: Backed by tanks and truck-mounted anti-aircraft cannons, troops loyal to Afghan President Burhanuddin Rabbani stormed into south Kabul late Saturday and routed Taliban and Shi'ite opposition forces. "We have given the Taliban such a lesson they'll never attack us again," boasted a victorious pro-Rabbani commander to AFP. The Taliban Islamic student militia entered south Kabul Wednesday afternoon to take over positions surrendered by the Shi'ite-Hezb-i-Wahdat faction.

### Red Cross plane shot at, Sarajevo airport shut

SARAJEVO, Mar 11: The United Nations closed Sarajevo airport today after a Red Cross plane was hit by small arms fire while landing. The plane was hit from underneath and was able to unload its cargo and two passengers before returning to Zagreb, said Nina Lindquist, spokeswoman for the International Committee of the Red Cross in Sarajevo, reports Reuters.

### Khaleda invites investors

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foreign investment and strengthen trade relations with the other countries.

She gave a brief resume of her government's socio-economic programmes, including those on rural development, education and credit facilities for rural women.

The Dutch Prime Minister appreciated Bangladesh's efforts to improve the quality of lives of her people as well as to develop the country.

Kok also wanted to know about the Flood Action Plan (FAP) and floods that occur frequently in Bangladesh.

Begum Zia said the people of Bangladesh are facing serious problems due to unilateral withdrawal of water from the common international rivers by the upper riparian country.

Begum Zia also had a meeting with Indonesian President Soeharto at the Bella Centre.

Both leaders underlined the need for further increasing relations between the two Asian countries, having common religious and cultural ties.

### SEC may reconsider

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of IPOs to the extent of 25 to 80 per cent and there was no lock-in restriction.

In the joint letter, the foreign fund managers said, "For the sake of the smooth running of Bangladesh's capital market, we would be very appreciative if you reconsider the lock-in period of one year on private placements and allotment of securities, as the success of the (Dhaka) stock exchange last year owes much to Bangladesh's commitment to liberalisation."

"We are equally happy to see that a greater role will be given to local investors in IPOs and right issues," they said, but apprehended that the negative effects of the 'lock-in' may be greater than the positive effects they were meant to have.

The foreign investors have so far injected more than 200 million US dollars into the Dhaka Stock Exchange (DSE) over the last two years. All the five securities firms have been operating in the sub-continent from their regional offices in Hong Kong.

DSE Vice Chairman Imtiaz Hussain said the lock-in period may create a 'grey market' of local shares outside the country, causing distortions in prices. The local brokers would also be deprived of commissions from the external trading of shares, he added.

He said the regulations regarding right issues is good, reflecting that the SEC has been trying very hard to understand the market. But the 'lock-in' is an "anti-foreign investors' rule, which may not be good for the bourse at this emerging stage, he felt.

### Bihar polls violence

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reported. While travelling through Gaya District, this reporter saw Janata Dal Workers openly rigging the election by preventing supporters of other parties from voting. No troops were seen in the rural areas because most were deployed in towns and cities.

More than 50 people were killed in gun battles and other violence during the campaign that was held in the three weeks before the voting began on Saturday.

Bihar has long been considered one of the poorest, most backward and corrupt states in India.

### MSC back in race

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44.4 ovens. The more immediate source of delight for the large number of Mohammedan supporters at the nearby packed Dhaka Stadium yesterday was the fact that it was the first victory of their team over Abahani after two seasons. Mohammedans last won against Abahani in the 1991-92 season.

Results on the voting in Bihar, which also will be held on two other days, won't be announced until March 21.

As voting began Saturday, a land mine planted by suspected left-wing rebels who oppose the election killed Magistrate D M Sharma and his driver, Gulam Sarwar, in a jeep in Hazaribagh District in south Bihar, United News of India said.

In the nearby districts, dozens of clashes broke out near polling booths, killing four people, including a supporter of the governing Janata Dal Party, Press Trust of India

However, some of the countries were not as enthusiastic as others when they thought the Summit failed to tackle the resource issues in favour of the poor.

The Copenhagen Declaration, even if signed by all the 119 participating countries, will not be a binding document but a voluntary one.

Now the burning question is how to implement the programme of action and remove the social and economic brackets around the lives of the poor people.