

Accord of Immense Potential

At last the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for elimination of child labour from the country's garment industry has been signed.

With the help of the two UN organisations the BGMEA is taking up a rehabilitation programme for the terminated children.

These are welcome developments. But the issue — because of its complex nature — will demand working out the details flawlessly.

On the other side of the MOU, lies the Bangladesh garment industry's interests abroad, particularly in the USA.

Why not Private Ferries?

There is little in this land of epic grandeur. Go to Aricha, the ghat on the Padma that is, and you will meet some spectacle on the epic scale.

The spectacle has also its elevating aspect, however. See the drivers and the ferrymen make do of that impossibly inadequate and maddeningly uncared for state of the facilities.

There is a weight limit to any carrier vessel or vehicle. There is none for these that service the Padma ferry-load.

The pressure at these ghats beggars description. And it exacts an economic price of billions of Taka. The vehicles pay their way across the great river.

Handsome Win for Major

Prime Minister John Major has got more than he had gambled for. No one thought John Redwood would indeed upset him and the challenger's stance was as such taken as part heroics and part ritual.

In that ritual of John Major resigning as Tory chief all to give a test of the strength of his following before he can take on Labour at the polls — we in Bangladesh have much to learn.

John Major's calling for a vote on his party leadership question and winning it handsomely has allowed him to recoup a face of respectability out of an already hopeless case.

The resuscitated Major is not feared to present any problem to Tony Blair. All that will accrue from this confirmation of democratic norms and values is a healthy and firm run-up to the polls.

TWO momentous events concerning the media and press freedom have recently taken place in Pakistan.

Congratulations are in order to former PM Mian Nawaz Sharif because the incumbent PM has brought back into information power almost the whole team who had made her life miserable.

The second major event to rock the boat was the banning of six Urdu eveningers of Karachi by 'competent authority' because of publication of news detrimental to the 'Maintenance of Public Order'.

Monitoring and Evaluation of Development Activities

MONITORING and evaluation of public sector development activities in Bangladesh are done mostly at donors' insistence.

Unfortunately, despite the weakness in these two functions they have not as yet received the attention they deserve, although it is very much possible to make these two interrelated activities far more effective within the existing resource constraints.

The Wind Cannot Read

It is fantasy to assume that the "dream merchants" invariably manage to convert a frog into a prince, the basic product has to have an inherent potential of acceptability by the masses for it to be successfully promoted.

ment in Pakistan. The government media has very little credibility, to further erode it by trying to change or colour facts is asking for a media-disaster.

public eye for free. Whether you have people like Hussain Haqqani and Farhad Zaidi or Haji Akram and Rana Shaikh, the basic credibility problem remains, if the government is hell-bent on breaking the very democratic principles it loudly espoused while in Opposition.

to attract an audience that had already read the morning dailies in some depth. Evenings do tend to border on the fail-safe line with respect to public sensibilities.

ence of the Fourth Estate. The only honourable (and pragmatic) course is to sound full retreat and thereby limit the damage to Ms Benazir's reputation as one of the world's foremost advocates of democracy.

Would things in the media discipline be better under Mian Nawaz Sharif or for that matter anyone else? The problem lies in the quality of leadership we are blessed with.

AS I SEE IT

Ikram Sehgal writes from Karachi

Satcchi-type local image-makers is to portray their clients time as gentlemen farmers of substance deeply involved in benevolent concern for issues that bedevil the common man.

Ms Benazir's regime took a spectacular nose-dive from its pedestal with respect to freedom of the press on the banning of 6 Urdu eveningers in Karachi.

ing) the entire national print media against her government, a rather unfortunate faux pas (and predicament) for a democratic government.

Monitoring and Evaluation of Development Activities

The Implementation, Monitoring and Evaluation Division (IMED) should no longer be located in the Planning Ministry. In a free market economy, there is no need for a large Planning Commission and Planning Ministry. We should instead emphasize on strengthening the planning capability of the individual Ministries.

must oversee the implementation of all important public sector development projects and programmes of different Ministries, the IMED, as an effective tool of the chief executive, should be located in the PM's Office rather than in the Planning Ministry.

existing form. In such a situation, the MIS becomes more costly in terms of time, manpower and money, the quality of information deteriorates, and information gathering degenerates into a burdensome ritual.

with them individually as well as collectively in order to diagnose both organization specific as well as common problems. Since the insistence of donors is, to a great extent, responsible for different MIS in our development organizations, they will also have to be brought to the negotiation table during this exercise.

tions. For example, in case of poverty alleviation projects, the usual drill is to go for detailed pre and post-project bench mark surveys and then to compare them. This is both time-consuming as well as costly.

ever, at the present moment, its capacity for training others is rather limited. Before attempting to train others, it needs to train its own officers both at home and abroad.

Making Government Work

quality rather than quantity, identify key concerns and arrange for computerization of data at all levels so that these can be electronically transferred, retrieved and used, to the best advantage of all.

given the "will" and with patient and knowledge-based handling of the situation, the IMED can bring about the much required discipline in this field without compromising the main objectives of MIS.

Fourthly, the IMED must ultimately emerge as the key trainer in monitoring and evaluation for development agencies in Bangladesh. How-

Full Text of the President's Letter to the Supreme Court

AND WHEREAS the first meeting of the Parliament took place on 5th April, 1991 and the duration of Parliament is 5 (five) years since that date as provided in Article 72 (3) of the Constitution;

to be made to a referendum and accordingly the Acting President referred it to referendum and the voters enthusiastically participated in the referendum in large number and voted in favour of the amendments, thereby supporting the amendments passed by the parliament and thus giving the Constitution its present shape.

AND WHEREAS the opposition members while so acting, by-election to Magura constituency was held and the opposition parties made certain allegations to the Election Commission and the Election Commission after causing enquiry and having found the allegations not true declared the final result whereupon the opposition parties declared that unless fresh election was held in Magura by cancelling the result declared by the Election Commission, they would not return to Parliament.

country would never be possible through democratic process which is the expressed will of the people as stipulated in the Constitution;

the principles of democracy as set forth in the Constitution;

the consequent period of non-return by all the opposition parties taking exception to a remark of a ruling party Minister being construed as 'absent' from Parliament without leave of Parliament

Table with 4 columns: Session, Commencement of sitting date, Date of Prorogation, Number of boycott days. Rows include 13th, 14th, 15th, 16th, 17th, 18th, 19th, 20th sessions.

AND WHEREAS as a result of the said boycott question has arisen whether this boycott is 'absent' from Parliament and what should be the basis of computing ninety consecutive sitting days occurring in Article 67 (1) (b);