

Political parties have failed to provide realistic plans

By Staff Correspondent

Political parties never presented to the nation coherent and realistic plans and programmes on the basis of which they would govern the country if elected, observed a conference paper of the Bangladesh Economic Association (BEA).

Another paper, presented at the 11th biennial conference of the BEA, called for building of a national and regional perspectives into the teaching of economics.

The former was delivered by Dr Qazi Kholiuzzaman Ahmad, chairman, Bangladesh Unnayan Parishad (BUP) while the latter was tendered by Prof Wahiduddin Mahmud, chairman, department of economics, University of Dhaka at the Engineers' Institution auditorium in the city yesterday.

No detailed programme or vision for dealing with various problems facing the country is available to the nation from any (Political) party," noted Dr Ahmad while giving the Dr M N Huda memorial lecture titled 'Nation Building in Bangladesh: Putting People First'.

As regards to the politics, practised by different political parties, he said, "has, as the basic ingredients, demagoguery instead of dialogue and muscle power instead of power of ideas."

Referring to the BNP, he said that its only choice was to adopt most of the policies that were being implemented

with donor influence and support, as having come to power without working out its economic vision and plan in details.

Pointing to the AL's declaration of accepting market economy as its basic economic policy plank, he added, "I have not seen any document detailing out how will that be implemented in addressing the fundamental economic problems of persisting mass poverty and lack of growth facing the nation and the peculiar problems faced by particular sectors."

Praising the success of stabilisation, he, however, said, "these reform programme can be meaningful only if economic growth can be significantly accelerated and poverty adequately reduced as a result."

On these crucial fronts, the rate of achievement has remained a sluggish as ever, he said adding, "Poverty has remained entrenched and in fact, afflicts more people now than ever before."

Speaking on the Prof Mazharul Haq memorial lecture, Prof Wahiduddin Mahmud observed that teaching profession in South Asia did not attract enough number of people who were motivated as well as equipped to handle an evolving body of thought.

"In the better university departments, demands on faculty for research and other responsibilities are usually so high while the faculty strength is often eroded by the brain drain," said who was lecturing on 'The Teaching of Economics in South Asia.'

Because of the 'credentialist' education system, there is little incentive for the students to develop skills beyond what are required for passing examinations, he said.

"The kinds of textbooks used in university departments rarely originate in these regions," he said adding "therefore, do not illustrate the application of economic ideas in the particular South Asian setting."

Referring to the strong desire of the university departments to catch up with the standards of the best western universities, he said "the catching-up syndrome often takes the form of introducing into courses a degree of theorising and technical sophistication that may be fashionable but is well beyond the grasp of the average students."

Most of the bright graduates set their hearts on obtaining a PhD degree from one of the reputed Western universities since locally obtained PhD is usually viewed as carrying less prestige," he pointed out.

"More often than not, they end up pursuing professional careers outside their home country", he added.



The visiting women affairs ministers of SAARC countries enjoying a fashion show organised by the Women's Affairs Department at Eskaton in the city yesterday. - PID photo

Dhaka Resolution adopted

From Page 1 should be reinforced by a favourable international economic environment including access to market, financial resources and technology on equitable terms.

"A categorical commitment from the international community to new and additional resources to identify and objectives identified under the draft platform of action would be an essential preliminary prerequisite," it added.

It emphasised empowering women at all levels in the economic, political, social and the national decision-making process to promote the status of women.

The Dhaka Resolution, adopted following extensive deliberations on social and economic condition of women in the region, advocated effective national machinery for identification, planning and implementation of strategies, and enabling

women to realise their full potentials.

The meeting urged all member states to reiterate their commitment at the highest level to eliminate all forms of discrimination against the girl child and also to take appropriate measures for their development, particularly in fields of education, health and nutrition.

The meeting stressed the need for further strengthening the legal and institutional frameworks at the national level to halt violence against women and girl child including trafficking in women.

It suggested a gender-sensitive education system in order to ensure educational and training opportunities and also attached high priority to meet the healthcare needs of women throughout the life cycle.

Action would require a favourable international economic environment in terms of free and unrestricted market access and transfer of technology.

At the beginning, Begum Rahman said that 48 delegates from the seven SAARC countries participated in two-day deliberations, splitting into two working and a concluding sessions.

Responding to a question, she said that the meeting in while drafting the resolution emphasised on a collective position of the member countries.

The State Minister was flanked at the press conference by secretary for Women's and Child Affairs Shahadat Hossain, Joint Secretary of the ministry Md Serajuddin, SAARC Secretary General YK Sitwala and the Director General (SAARC) of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Humayun Akhtar Kamal.

Spl economic zone

From Page 1 in revenue if the SEZ comes true.

The report on Industrial Development in Chittagong was prepared by the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) experts.

Board of Investment (BOI), Chittagong office, organised a discussion meeting on the draft report here on Saturday with Vice Chancellor of Chittagong University Prof Dr Rafiqul Islam Chowdhury in the chair.

The study has projected a salutary impact of SEZ on the national economy, and particularly on the economy of Chittagong.

The projected national per capita income would double in next 15 years while the duration would be 10 years for Chittagong if the proposed SEZ is implemented.

The report assumed that every one hectare of land devoted to sites leads to creation of 100 jobs. Rough calculation says that SEZ has the potential to create 30,000 jobs by the year 2005.

It also projected that 70 per cent of gross output in SEZ would be exported in the first year, and 80 per cent thereafter.

Priority sectors within the SEZ have also been earmarked in the report. These are: textile and light industries (garments, leather

footwear, caps, sports and athletic goods, toys, pens and other office goods, umbrellas and leather goods); electronics and electric components, other electrical apparatus and supplies like tape players; insulated wires and cables for machinery equipment; steel processing; ship and boat building and repairing; structural metal products; and other machinery industries, including repair and maintenance services.

The study report deals with two broad titles: Industrial Development Plan in Chittagong and Implementation Plan for Chittagong Special Economic Zone (SEZ) in two parts.

It envisaged formation of Chittagong Development Company (CDC) within 2000 AD with necessary enactment under the direct control of the Prime Minister.

The JICA report also stressed on some projects, including construction of new crossings over the river Karnaphuli, massive improvement in services in Chittagong Port and a deep-sea port, for fostering the industrial development in Chittagong.

Improved water and sewerage system in Chittagong, and tourism development in Kapital and Cox's Bazar have also been recommended in the report.

EC ready

From Page 1 Some 142 MPs are likely to lose their seats since June 20 for absence from the House for 90 consecutive sitting days without the leave of Parliament.

The Supreme Court in its opinion on July 27 on the President's reference about the boycotting MPs declared that their walkout and boycott of Parliament since March 1 last year, on the demand for a caretaker government, be considered absence.

Asked whether it will be possible for the EC to hold by-elections within the stipulated time - 90 days from the date of vacation - he said: "Let's first receive the gazette notification. We have to do it. It's constitutional obligation."

In reply to a query about EC's preparation for holding general elections, he said, "Initial obstacles were overcome. We are preparing very hard for the election."

About voters' ID card, the CEC said the Commission was working on 'war gear' for achieving the target of issuing identity card to each voter.

If not possible, the CEC went on to add amendment to the existing laws might be required for issuing ID cards in specific areas before next polls.

Sajjad's murder

From Page 1 to send him abroad with an employment.

On request, Sajjad took up the matter and requested Khasru, the reported manpower recruiting agent, to pay back the money.

He along with another man went to Malibagh as Khasru promised to repay the money, but as soon as the victim reached there, a group of thugs seized and mercilessly beat the young man and left him there in an unconscious state.

The local people took him to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital where the attending doctors declared him dead.

When contacted, Deputy Commissioner (DB) Abdul Quyum said they had 'fixed up' the main culprit but were yet to arrest him. Investigation of the murder case, lodged with Motijheel police, is being carried out by DB team, he added.

Additional Attorney General Abdul Wadud Khandaker, approached for a comment, said: "this is a heinous crime and criminals should be dealt with severely."

A young housewife at Siddheswar, giving her reaction, said: "The death proves serious deterioration of law and order of the country."

"The mastermind behind the killing need to be hanged to set an example," she said.

Farhad Mazhar

From Page 1 Branch (SB) and took Farhad Majhar with them for 'interrogation'.

The SB men did not give any reason for their action, the press release said.

Ramna police, when contacted at 11:30 last night, said Farhad Majhar was sent to them but they expressed their ignorance as to why he was picked up.

Body of Alaya's husband arrives

By Staff Correspondent

The long ordeal of Alaya Begum and her family ended when her husband's body arrived at Zia International Airport from Saudi Arabia yesterday.

Her husband, Kazi Badiul Alam, an immigrant worker, had died of heart attack in Saudi Arabia on June 15. For about a month, the body could not be traced despite repeated queries from the family.

After the report was published in The Daily Star on July 15, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Dhaka took up the matter and the body was traced in Dammam. Badiul worked for a rent-a-car company there.

The body of Badiul was taken to Chittagong yesterday and buried in the family graveyard.

Meanwhile, family sources yesterday alleged that the Al Falah Rent-a-Car company for which Badiul used to work did not pay any compensation to his family.

"The only money the company has agreed to pay is a very nominal outstanding salary," said Babu, the teenage son of the deceased.

Three DU students beaten up in Nilkhet area

A group of students of the Dhaka University were beaten up allegedly by employees of a medical store in the Nilkhet area in the city yesterday, reports UNB.

2 boys rescued from child lifters: 2 held

From Our Correspondent

NARAYANGANJ, July 30: Siddhirganj police arrested two child traffickers and rescued two minor boys at Sanarpur today.

The child traffickers - Akkas Khan and Rina Begum - identified themselves as husband and wife. They admitted that they had lifted Suman, 6 and Liton, 5 from Comilla in order to smuggle them to the Middle East, police said.

Patrol police challenged Akkas and Rina because of their suspicious movement. They were taken to custody as they failed to give any satisfactory reply, police said.

Later, they confessed that they were taking the children to one Motaleb of Mijmiji village under Siddhirganj thana who frequently visit different Middle East countries.

Clandestine arms factory discovered

By Staff Correspondent

A special squad of CID police on Saturday unearthed a firearms manufacturing factory and recovered huge quantity arms from Mirpur Section 7 under Pallabi police station. One Raqib Dewan, 22 was arrested.

Acting on a tip off, the CID police raided the Mirpur Engineering Workshop and recovered a large number of equipment used for producing arms. The arms recovered included six pipe guns, six pipes, three springs, 10 hacksaw blades, one hacksaw frame and bullets.

Accord to build Dholaikhal Pumping Station

By Staff Correspondent

The Dhaka City Corporation (DCC) yesterday signed an agreement with a Chinese firm for construction of the Dholaikhal Pumping Station under the DCC's environment protection programme.

The Dong Feng Electric Corporation of China got the 27 crore taka work. Of the total cost, the World Bank will provide Tk 17 crore and the rest will be given by the Bangladesh government.

The pumping station is being constructed to remove waterlogging in Dholaikhal and its adjoining six square kilometre area and protect the area from flooding, says a DCC press release.

The construction work is expected to begin in September this year and end in March, 1997. About 1.77 crore gallons of water will be pumped out per hour through the pumping station.

BGMEA: Nepal

From Page 1

skills in manufacturing garments, particularly in respect of fashionable items and value addition.

"Nepal can benefit a lot by adopting the improved techniques of Bangladesh in the RMG sector," Redwan said, hoping that the delegation would keep the point in mind during bilateral talks at the Joint Economic Commission.

"Possibilities of investment in Nepal is encouraging. But if the facilities in Nepal are not more than those in Bangladesh, we would not be encouraged enough to go there," the BGMEA chief said.

Pointing at increasing export earnings from the RMG sector, Redwan said Bangladesh fetched 1.8 billion US dollar in 1993-94 and the expected income from sector is 2 billion dollar in 1994-95.

He projected that exports of readymade garments from Bangladesh would grow on an average 20 per cent a year over the next 10 years.

At the same time, demand of fabrics is also increasing, but the local fabric producers and suppliers can supply approximately about three per cent of the total requirement, he said.

The BGMEA president observed that small savings in the two countries could be invested in textile sectors which would mutually benefit both the nations.

Moreover, the rich source of animal yarn of Nepal can further play a vital role in further development of the woollen apparels, Redwan added.

Adhikari referred to the 'intimate' relationship of his country with Bangladesh and said absence of a land route between the two countries hindered further development of trade and economic cooperation.

The Midnight File

Saddam pardons opponents

NOCOSIA, Cyprus, July 30: Saddam Hussein on Sunday pardoned political opponents jailed in Iraq and those living abroad in his second surprise general amnesty in just over a week. The pardons, along with other recent actions, indicate Saddam may be making a new effort to meet conditions set by the UN Security Council before it will consider lifting the punishing economic sanctions imposed after Iraq invaded Kuwait in 1990, reports AP.

Parliament

From Page 1 signatures of the 55 opposition MPs in the attendance register during the Opposition boycott of the House.

The Parliament Secretariat, it was learnt, decided to issue letters to the 55 MPs, including several from the Awami League, the Jatiya Party and the Jamaat. The AL MPs reportedly include Salahuddin Yusuf and Matiya Choudhury whose seats have not been vacated while Matur Rahman Nizami is learnt to be the lone MP from Jamaat whose seat has been vacated.

The Parliament Secretariat will issue letters to the 55 MPs, whose seats are not being immediately vacated, asking them if they had attended the House. They would be asked to reply within a specified period, the sources said.

These 55 MPs had reportedly signed the attendance register but did not attend the session. The Secretariat will publish another gazette notification declaring their seats vacated.

The State Minister was flanked at the press conference by secretary for Women's and Child Affairs Shahadat Hossain, Joint Secretary of the ministry Md Serajuddin, SAARC Secretary General YK Sitwala and the Director General (SAARC) of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Humayun Akhtar Kamal.

Question bank

From Page 1 already been informed about it.

The government observed that the students had not been able to acquire adequate knowledge although they were getting maximum marks in the examinations by memorising the answers from the question bank.

Meanwhile, schoolboys staging rowdy demonstration demanding reintroduction of the question bank system in SSC Examination damaged about two dozen vehicles in the city's Rampura area yesterday.

Report from Khulna adds: At least 11 people were injured and another 20 students were picked up by the police from the city yesterday when they were staging demonstration demanding restoration of the question bank in SSC examination.

'Terror' of Khulna arrested

JESSORE, July 30: Police arrested Zahir Kamal Babchu, an alleged 'terror' of the district, from Khulna New Market area this afternoon, police said, reports BSS.

Jamaat

From Page 1 tions with the ruling BNP, said the Jamaat leader, requesting anonymity.

The Jamaat-e-Islami recently conducted a survey in search of suitable party candidates in the next general elections and found a shortage in their number, sources said, adding that's why the party was contemplating opting for non-Rokoms also to ensure fielding of candidates in all the seats.

"This time - the party is unlikely to compromise its longtime political ally - the BNP - on nominating candidates in the general elections, due early next year," a Jamaat leader said, adding the relations between the two parties "worsened further due to the ruling party's on-going practice of buying Jamaat leaders."

He further said BNP's 'success in procuring Jamaat MP Maulana Shakhawat Hossain has given rise to an atmosphere of distrust'.

Another Jamaat leader, who also did not want to be identified, however, said, "There's nothing final in politics. Everything would depend on the need and reality of the time once the election schedule is announced. But Jamaat would no more allow its big political partner to exploit the party."

The Jamaat-e-Islami refrained from fielding candidates and supported BNP contestants in many seats in the 1991 polls and later supported BNP to form the government. In return, the BNP gave Jamaat two reserved women's seats in Parliament.

STOL service

From Page 1 The flight took-off from Tejaoga Old Airport at 1 pm and landed at Sharmshernagar Airport after 45 minutes. The airport was constructed during the World War II.

A member of the Civil Aviation Authority and the Director of Air Traffic Service was in the route checking flight which returned in the capital at 2:50 pm, said a press release.

Aero Bengal launched its first Short Take-off and Landing (STOL) service to southern Barisal town on July 16.

One-way fare for the Dhaka-Sharmshernagar route has been fixed at Tk 1200.

Bangladeshi troops

From Page 1 He reiterated that Dhaka's position had been expressed quite vocally both at the London conference and the Geneva meet of the OIC contact group, participated by Foreign Minister Mostafizur Rahman.

Dhaka, he said, had stressed massive air strikes against Serb positions throughout Bosnia.

"Besides preemptive air strikes on a massive scale must be launched immediately on Serb positions in Pale and in the pockets of Bihaq, Sarajevo and Gorazde. This request has already been communicated to Washington, London and Paris for action," the Foreign Secretary said, referring to a statement he made while briefing the OIC envoys in Dhaka on July 27.

Farooq Sobhan refuted criticism that Dhaka was not doing enough and pointed out that Bangladesh have called for withdrawal of sanctions on Bosnia and for the supply of arms.

"We have called for strengthening the UNPROFOR, preemptive air-strikes, and for taking retaliatory measures. We have also fully endorsed OIC decisions. Besides we have our own troops committed there."

"All these speak of Bangladesh's strong commitment and role to stand by the hapless Bosnians," he said.

BSF kidnaps 3 Bangladeshis

JHENIDAH, July 30: Indian Border Security Force (BSF) abducted three Bangladeshis farmers from a paddy field near Benipur border in Jibannagar thana of Cudadanga district today, reports UNB.

Officials said a group of BSF men from Sonaganj of Nadia district kidnapped Idris Ali, 35, Israrul Haq, 25, and Ziaul Haq, 25, when they were working in a field in Bangladesh territory at about 5.30 pm.

Meanwhile, Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) protested the incident and asked the BSF to return the farmers.

Draft of Fertiliser (Control) Ordinance '95 approved

A meeting of the National Coordination Committee for ensuring fair distribution of fertiliser was held yesterday at the conference room of the agriculture ministry, reports BSS.

Presided over by Agriculture and Food Minister Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan, the meeting was also attended by Minister of State for Industries Lutfur Rahman Khan.

The meeting approved the draft of the Fertiliser (Control) Ordinance 1995 for ensuring proper production, import, quality control and marketisation of fertiliser to be used in agriculture.

Editor: Mahfuz Anam

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