

'Women hindered from working in industries'

By Staff Correspondent

Lack of congenial atmosphere, proper training and appropriate legal support are the main obstructions for the participation of women in public and private sector industries.

This was observed yesterday at the concluding session of the two-day seminar on 'Gender issues in export-based industrialisation in Bangladesh'.

The speakers said, the existing labour laws, most of them promulgated 30 to 40 years ago, need to be amended immediately.

New labour laws covering every aspect and needs of the present socio-economic condition should be formulated, they noted.

"Although there are some provisions for recruiting female workers in the public sector enterprises, yet it was seen that applications from women for employment were very few," Dr Sadat Hossain, Secretary, Ministry of Women Affairs, said.

"Because they don't feel comfortable to work in a place where atmosphere is not congenial," he added.

Dr Shah Mohammad Farid, Secretary, Ministry of Planning, Dr Hamida Hossain, Advocate Sigma Huda, Rokeya Quader, Khushi Kabir, Dr Nasreen Khandaker, Dr Debapriya Battacharya and Dr Shirreen Huq were among the

participants who took part in the yesterday's discussion. Prof Rehman Sobhan, Executive Chairman of the Centre for Policy Dialogue, presided over the meeting.

Shah Mohammad Farid said the laws are related to the overall socio-economic situation of the country. So, it cannot be changed overnight.

For the participation of the women in the industrial sector, he stressed the need for proper training for improving skills. If the female workers are adequately trained, the owners would not be able to discriminate against them regarding wages, he added.

Dr Rehman Sobhan emphasised on work based training which will enhance the skill of all workers, including women workers.

On the issue of wage discrimination between men and women he said, in the government pay-scale there is no gap between men and women regarding wages. But in some private sector, particularly lower level jobs, the wage gap is wide.

He stressed on the need for creating awareness among the women about their work rights.

Concluding the discussion, Rehman Sobhan said the views and observations made by the representatives of different organisations at the seminar will be summarised and a concrete set of recommendations will be placed before the government later.

JCD, BCL clash at Bhawal College

By DMCH Correspondent

At least 10 people were injured in an armed clash between two rival student groups on the Bhawal Badre Alam College campus at Gazipur yesterday morning.

Of the injured, two first year students of the college — Zahurul Islam, 18 and Alamgir, 18 — who received bullet injuries, were rushed to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital while the others were treated at local health centres.

The clash between the activists of the pro-BNP Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) and the Awami League backed Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) took place around 10:30 am. The cause of the clash could not be known immediately.



Outgoing ambassador of Kuwait in Bangladesh Mohammad Ibrahim Al-Najran made a farewell call on Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia at her office yesterday. — PID photo

HK-based firm

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Zia of Hopewell's other areas of interest, the entrepreneur from Hong Kong said his house had a wide experience in road and railway communications infrastructure in developing countries.

The company has invested some 16 billion US dollar in the power sector in the Philippines, involved in the railway sector in Thailand and highway construction in Indonesia.

Wu informed the Prime Minister that the Hopewell had signed MOU for power generation with India and Pakistan.

Welcoming the Hopewell in Bangladesh, Begum Zia said her government had given top priority to the power sector and was very much eager to supply electricity to the common people.

Begum Zia urged the Hopewell's Managing Director to go immediately for generating power because electricity is a burning need for the country's development endeavours.

18 injured in Barguna clash

From Staff Correspondent

BARISAL, Oct 28: At least 18 people were injured in a clash between two rival groups over land dispute at Pajorbhanga village under Amtali thana of Barguna district this afternoon.

Seriously injured Masuma Begum, 40, Siddiqul Rahman, 20, and Biplob were admitted to Amtali thana health complex.

PM offers more manpower to Kuwait for reconstruction

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Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia yesterday offered more manpower to Kuwait for the post-war reconstruction of the oil-rich Gulf state, reports UNB.

"We have already actively participated in the reconstruction of war-battered Kuwait, and if necessary, we are ready to send more manpower to Kuwait," she told the Kuwaiti Ambassador in Dhaka, Mohammad Ebrahim Al-Najran, who made a farewell call on her at the PM's office in the afternoon.

"Our relationship is very cordial and brotherly and we have special feelings for the people of Kuwait," Begum Zia said, adding "both the countries will be benefited if Kuwait takes more manpower from my country."

In response, the outgoing envoy said Kuwait had always given special consideration to the import of manpower from Bangladesh and assured its continued attention to the brotherly people of Bangladesh.

The envoy, who stayed in Bangladesh over six years with his diplomatic assignment, said the Ameer, government and people of Kuwait have love and respect for the people of Bangladesh.

Lending rates

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cial deregulation from yielding downward flexibility in lending rates.

The report contends that the gap being maintained between lending and deposit rates, over 7 percentage points, is high by international standards.

The irrationally jacked up lending rates, imposed by the "gross inefficiency" of the NBCs, are providing chances to the private banks to make "excessive profits."

Debt recovery is still poor and non-performing loans are snowballing, says the report, restricting the government's recapitalisation of NBCs programme from yielding desired results.

The report was prepared by ADB-appointment consultants Abdur Rab, Khandaker Mustahidur Rahman and M Zahid Hossain.

Saifur on reforms

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have attained certain achievements in tax collection, removal of fiscal and current deficits and reduction of public enterprise expenditure.

Finance Secretary Nasimuddin Ahmed, stressing on the need for systematic analytical approach of policy evaluation, said, "In order to understand and evaluate the implications of macro-economic policies, a framework of tool of economic analysis seems to be essential."

Bhanuphol Horayangura, Resident Representative of the Asian Development Bank, welcomed the participants.

Bid to smuggle 2 minor boys: 8 arrested

By Staff Correspondent

Police rescued two minor boys and arrested eight alleged child traffickers from a house near Matuall graveyard under Demra thana early yesterday.

The rescued boys are Jamal, 7 and Manwar, 8. The arrested were: Rabeya Begum, Masud, Abdul Majid, Abdul Hye, Akil Uddin, Qaiyum, A Hye and Setara Begum.

Police said the children were lifted in a bid to send them to Rabeya Begum's husband living in Dubai. The under-aged boys are usually used for camel race in Dubai.

A group of twelve children were repatriated from India on October 19, after years of confinement in a Bombay remand house following their rescue from child traffickers who were taking them to Dubai.

Border confce

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Director-General of Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) Major General Ejaz Ahmed Chowdhury will lead the Bangladesh delegation.

15 Sarbahara men arrested

MEHERPUR, Oct 28: At least 15 activists of outlawed Sarbahara Party were arrested by police after a gunfight between two armed groups at Gopalgarj village in Sadar thana tonight, reports UNB.

Police sources in Sadar thana said activists of the Purba Bangla Communist Party, led by Ruhul, and activists of Workers' Party led by Mohajanpur UP Chairman Babul Islam Babul traded gun fire for about four hours leaving one person seriously injured.

JCD-BCL clash at Barisal Govt College: 12 hurt

From Staff Correspondent

BARISAL, Oct 28: At least 12 students were injured in a clash between the activists of the ruling party backed Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) and pro-Awami League Chhatra League (BCL) at 11 this morning on Barisal Government College campus.

The office of the principal was also ransacked.

The Midnight File

Serbs cancel meet with Croatia

OSLJEK, Croatia, Oct 28: Serb negotiators today cancelled a planned meeting with Croatia that was called to avert a war over the last piece of Serb-held land here, saying they needed more time to study a US and UN-brokered deal, a UN official said, reports AFP.

Khaleda sends letter

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A source in the Prime Minister's office, on condition of anonymity, said that he did not know the exact details of the letter but learnt that it carried an invitation from the PM to the former Leader of the Opposition to find through discussion ways to make the forthcoming polls acceptable to all quarters and to approach the issue with a genuinely open mind.

Newsmen who later rushed to Hasina's house was told that on her return she was handed over the letter by the staff who received it.

Tareq Rahman, the Prime Minister's son, who was blessed with a daughter three days ago was then visiting Sheikh Hasina carrying

BSF frees 3 Bangladeshis

From Staff Correspondent

SYLHET, Oct 28: The three Bangladeshi workers, who were kidnapped from Ghabajpur border of Moulvibazar district two days ago, were returned by the BSF yesterday afternoon.

A group of BSF personnel of Baliachhara camp intruded into the Bangladesh territory near border pillar number 1376 (2/s) and kidnapped the three Bangladeshis from the Pallathal Tea Garden areas of Barlekha at about 1 PM last Wednesday.

The BDR protested on the same day but the BSF returned the kidnapped Bangladeshis after two days.

Mob attacks RMC

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In the afternoon, a huge number of people attacked the hostels and damaged the rooms. Police left the area failing to contain the outrageous mob.

Later, paramilitary BDR was deployed in the medical college area to bring the situation under control. Tension was prevailing in the town.

The town-dwellers called a dawn-to-dusk hartal here tomorrow to protest the killing.

Arsenic

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ter in Jessore, Jhenidah, Chuadanga, Meherpur, Kustia, Rajshahi, Naogaon and Chapainawabganj also contains Arsenic.

Stressing on extensive study, officials of PHED and Department of Environment could not confirm the causes of pollution of groundwater by Arsenic.

They feared that it might have been caused by excessive extraction of groundwater, toxic effluents of industries and excessive use of toxic pesticides.

Referring to official reports of West Bengal government, they said that 86 lakh people in six districts in the Indian state had been affected by Arsenic. Some non-governmental sources, however, estimated that at least three crore people had been affected there.

In India, toxic effects vividly exposed in the body of more than 2 lakh people and the Arsenic level in water in Maldah, Nadia, Murshidabad and Chhabish Pargana districts reached an alarming state. They pointed out that the West Bengal government had already taken steps to purify groundwater from the toxic substance.

"These ground toxic Arsenic in various districts of the West Bengal may be trickling down into our bordering districts and polluting our water," one official of the Department of Environment cautioned and suggested for extensive study on the problem.

Transport strike

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President of the Sarak Paribahan Samity Mirza Abbas, MP and President of the Paribahan Sramik Federation Mohammad Ismail Hossain along with other leaders of the two organisations held a three-hour discussion on their problems and issues with the two ministers.

Out of the 12-point demand of the transport owners and workers five were accepted in the meeting. Besides the ministers assured the leaders to consider and take up effective measures regarding the other problems of the two forums within next 25 days.

The transport owners and workers postponed their programme in view of the assurances.

28 Thai pilgrims die in road mishap

BANGKOK, Oct 28: Twenty-eight people on a religious pilgrimage were killed today when their bus collided head-on with a 10-wheel truck, police said.

5,600 Bangladeshis

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5,000 Bangladeshi workers in 1996," said Dr Haroon-ur-Rashid, Secretary, Ministry of Labour and Manpower.

When asked whether the Bangladesh Embassy in Seoul has advised the illegal Bangladeshi immigrants in South Korea to comply with the order of the Ministry of Justice there, an official said, "those who managed to go there illegally, know what to do in a situation like this."

"To the best of our knowledge, the Korean employers are taking advantage of their illegal status by offering cheap wage rate," said an official of the Ministry of Labour and Manpower.

Agricultural subsidy

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mutating a strategy for expansion and diversification of export trade.

However, the study did not identify the products to be subsidised and the process of giving subsidy.

To phase out or to discontinue subsidies, the country will require huge relocation of investment in target areas of industry and agriculture sectors and in research and technology which will have a 'social cost' for Bangladesh, the study noted. But it does not provide the extent to which the relocation may cost.

The study recommends that education, training and human resource development programmes should be related with the proposed subsidy policy so that the sub-sectors chosen for subsidy receive adequate supply of qualified persons as entrepreneurs, managers and workers.

Investment in infrastructural facilities should be linked with the subsidy policy and programmes, it added. Investment in research and technology should be related to subsidy policy, industrial policy and strategy to expand the export base.

The government, under its on-going reform programme, is discouraging subsidy in all sectors to remove inefficiency as prescribed by the World Bank and the IMF.

"But it is now widely believed that all subsidies are not useless. Subsidy should be given in some sectors and withdrawn from some others," said a high official of the Commerce Ministry.

Budget documents in Bangladesh do not define the term 'subsidy'. In the current budget, one of the heads of expenditure is 'subsidy and grants in aid' which means the term 'subsidy' in Bangladesh is synonymous with direct cash grants, the study noted. Other forms of subsidy as defined in the ASCM is not covered by this concept.

Dr Qazi Kholiqzaman Ahmad, a leading economist of the country, said international competition may wipe out many productive activities particularly in agriculture and non-farm rural sectors. "In such cases, depending on

the prospects, countervailing measures are necessary to allow them to raise their productivity and efficiency with a reasonable period of time for becoming competitive," he added.

The phenomenal growth in the OECD countries, particularly in the agricultural sector were achieved under heavy protection, Ahmad said. "I would think that Bangladesh must be careful in allowing free competition in all sectors of its economy, carefully designed selective protective measures should be taken to help move the economy forward."

Bangladesh maintains subsidy in the following mechanisms: direct subsidies; internal transfer of funds within state corporations; development investment financing through ADP; credit availability on concessional lending terms and debt conversions; financial credit access; guarantee schemes; price support mechanisms; export subsidies; income tax rebate; agricultural subsidies; interest rate subsidy; regional assistance; pricing and marketing arrangements; public services and utilities; bank defalcation; and research and development.

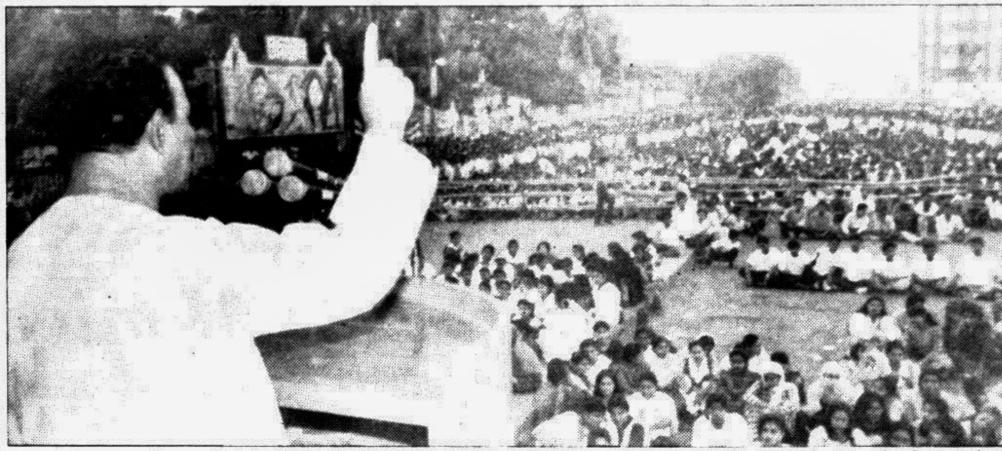
Person accused in 17 cases arrested

A person accused in 17 cases was arrested with one of his accomplices when they were fleeing by an auto-rickshaw after snatching money from a rickshaw passenger in the city yesterday.

Abu Bakkar Selim alias Hatkata Bakkar, 30 and Moksed, 27 stabbed a passenger and snatched money from him in front of Nila Diagnostic Centre at Shariat Gupta Road at about 8:30 am, police said.

The patrol police of Sutrapur thana chased the muggers and managed to arrest them. Police also recovered from them one double barrel pipe gun, one round cartridge, four live cocktills, two razors and three big knives.

Police said, Abu Bakkar wanted in connection with some 17 cases of mugging, terrorism and murder under Demra, Sabujbagh, Sutrapur and Kotwali thana had been absconding.



Acting Secretary General of the BNP Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan addressing a public meeting organised by the Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal at the Democracy Square in the city yesterday. — Star photo

BNP leaders at city JCD rally

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grammes, to protest what it called the politics of destruction of the opposition parties, and to protect democracy and the country.

Dr Hossain, who was the chief guest at the rally, said Sheikh Hasina does not want people to live in peace and is taking revenge against the people by enforcing hartals because they had rejected her party five times through ballots.

He also accused the opposition leader of creating chaos "with instigation from their foreign masters" and said that she wants a caretaker government to renew the 25-year treaty.

Labelling the Opposition as "irresponsible", acting secretary general of BNP and Food and Agriculture Minister Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan said there is no instance of seven-day hartal anywhere in the world.

He said frequent hartal calls by the Opposition is destroying the environment for foreign investment in the country and diminishing employment opportunities for millions of youths.

Bhuiyan wondered why the opposition parties do not demand the Election Commission to be strengthened, saying "it is the Election Commission, not the government, who conduct elections."

calling hartals, we have also created history of remaining in power for over four years. If we are not elected in the next polls, we won't remain in power for a single day," he said.

The acting BNP secretary general urged the opposition leadership to call off the hartal and sit with the government to find out a solution to the prevailing political impasse within the ambit of the Constitution.

Echoing his party colleagues, Post and Telecommunications Minister Tariqul Islam said the people's government cannot be toppled as it has been elected by the people and enjoy confidence of the majority in parliament.

Opposing the demand for a caretaker government, he said Sheikh Hasina had even questioned the fairness of the 1991 election held under an interim government by alleging 'subtle rigging'.

"Now there is no alternative to discussion. The Prime Minister has given concession... now why don't you sit with the government on such an important issue," said Barister Nazmul Huda, pointing to the Awami League chief.

The former minister warned her that people would "dump you into dustbin if you do not sit with the government" seeking a negotiated settlement of the crisis. Housing and Public Works

AL observes hartal at B'baria

BRAHMANBARIA, Oct 28:

A half-day hartal was observed in the town today in protest against the killing of Chhatra League leader Shah Newaz, reports UNB.

Newaz, a local leader of the pro-Awami League Chhatra League, was shot dead here October 16, the first day of 96-hour hartal enforced countrywide by the Opposition to press the demand for a caretaker government.

During hartal hours, pickets halted a Chittagong-bound train, "Mahanagar Provati", from Dhaka at the Brahmanbaria station for two hours.

Shops were closed and vehicles went off the road during the shutdown from 6 am to 12 noon. Transactions in banks were disrupted during hartal, and no classes were held at the local schools and colleges.

Housewife commits suicide in city

By DMCH Correspondent

A young housewife reportedly committed suicide in the city yesterday.

Shakerun Noor, 21, wife of one Zinaullah of Mirpur Section One committed suicide by fastening a scarf around her neck in the morning.

Police recovered the body from their house in the evening and sent it to the DMCH morgue for autopsy.

বাংলাদেশ পোশাক প্রস্তুতকারক ও রপ্তানীকারক সমিতি

বি, টি, এম, সি ভবন,
৭-৯ কাওরান বাজার, ঢাকা-১২১৫

পোশাক শিল্প মালিকবৃন্দের জরুরী সমাবেশ

উদ্ভূত রাজনৈতিক পরিস্থিতির কারণে সংকটাপন্ন রপ্তানীমুখী পোশাক শিল্পের অস্তিত্ব রক্ষার্থে পোশাক শিল্প মালিকবৃন্দের জরুরী সমাবেশঃ

স্থানঃ দি ইন্সটিটিউট অব ইঞ্জিনিয়ার্স অডিটোরিয়াম, ঢাকা।

তারিখঃ ৩০শে নভেম্বর ১৯৯৫

রোজঃ সোমবার, সকাল ১০-৩০ ঘটিকা

বস্তানীমুখী পোশাক শিল্প মালিকবৃন্দকে উক্ত জরুরী সমাবেশে যোগদান করার জন্য বিশেষভাবে অনুরোধ জানানো হচ্ছে।

সচিব
বিজিএমইএ

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