

# 'Good governance needed to fight urban poverty'

By Staff Correspondent

More people-oriented research on urban poverty was emphasised at a seminar yesterday on "Urban Governance in the Developing World."

The seminar was jointly organised by the Global Urban Research Initiative (GURI) and the Centre for Urban Studies (CUS), Dhaka.

Within the next 15 years over half the world's population will be living in urban areas. Developing countries in particular are experiencing the fastest growth of large cities and mega cities, speakers at the seminar said.

Rapid urbanisation results in high incidences of poverty, environmental problems and problems of social unrest, said Professor Nazrul Islam, Director of CUS and Coordinator for the Asian Region of GURI, in his introductory presentation. He stressed the importance of good governance as essential to urban growth and development.

"Relations between civil society and the state, the

governors and the governed in the context of urban growth and poverty is essential for the improvement and development of cities," stated David Chiel, Representative of the Ford Foundation in Dhaka. He went on to add that although the urban poor play a critical role in the country's economy, their needs and wants are largely ignored.

Dr Humaira Islam, Executive Director of the Shakti Foundation, also called for a focus on human factors and relationships as an essential element of urban governance and suggested more "research on action oriented programmes in order to generate more realistic and useful data relating to urban governance."

The seminar was attended by representatives of the government, NGOs, donor agencies, international organisations, academic and research institutions and the private sector.

## Move to enhance direct trade

# Asia-Europe summit in Bangkok Mar 1-2

BANGKOK, Jan 11: The first-ever summit of 25 nations from Asia and Europe, to be held in Bangkok March 1-2, will focus on enhancing direct trade and investment in Asia. Thai officials said today, reports AFP.

Foreign Ministry Deputy Permanent Secretary Saroj Chavaviraj told reporters that talks were intended to be "free-flowing" and to touch on politics and cultural concerns as well as economics.

"Leaders may raise any topic during the summit," he said, but participants have "agreed to give the priority to supporting trade and investment."

Thai officials described European investment in Asia as negligible. "Only one per cent of external European direct investment was invested in the Asian region during 1982-1992," Saroj said.

Asia-Europe trade in 1992, the last year for which complete figures were available, amounted to 238 billion US dollars, or around 19.8 per cent of total European trade and a level similar to Europe's trade with the United States, Canada and Mexico, the officials said.

The officials acknowledged that differences could emerge over human rights and democratisation when the talks turn political, but Saroj was optimistic that no country would be singled out for direct criticism.

Participants would not "sidestep" problem areas, he

said, but would hold "straightforward" talks.

Regional security and nuclear non-proliferation, including the issue of nuclear testing, are expected to be on the informal agenda as well, the officials indicated.

France plans to complete a controversial series of nuclear tests in the South Pacific before the summit.

## Process on to recruit 20000 workers for Malaysia

Malaysia is recruiting workers from Bangladesh on priority basis. Labour and Manpower Minister Mir Shawkat Ali said in Dhaka yesterday.

The minister told UNB that the process of recruiting 20,000 workers from Bangladesh for Malaysia had already begun.

Malaysia, where at present 170,000 Bangladeshis are legally employed in various public and private establishments, had agreed to take further 20,000 workers from Bangladesh.

The agreement was reached during Mir Shawkat Ali's recent visit to Kuala Lumpur.

About press reports that a large number of Bangladeshis have been detained in camps in Malaysia, the minister said the authorities concerned are taking care of the inmates of the camps.

# Mahathir's call to build new Asia

KUALA LUMPUR, Malaysia, Jan 11: Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad said today that Asians must unite and build a new Asia, but warned they would face opposition from the Western news media, reports AP.

Speaking at a forum on the future of Asia, Mahathir said, "This new Asia must continue to be an achieving Asia, a continent of progress, bringing massive and comprehensive development to all Asians."

"We should come together, not to confront others, not to form a trade bloc, not to be obstreperous and arrogant," he told more than 100 delegates from 10 nations.

Mahathir, a strong critic

Fresh CU exams schedule

## ML team meets President

CHITTAGONG, Jan 11: The University of Chittagong has fixed the dates of some of the examinations of the different academic years due to unavoidable reasons, a university press release said last night, reports BSS.

According to a fresh schedule, terminal examination of the M A Final Year (session 1991-92) of the Department of English will now be held on February 7.

The press release further said that the viva-voce examination of the MSS (Preliminary) in the Department of Sociology for the year 1993 will now be held on Jan 20 instead of Jan 15.

The examination of M A (Preliminary) for the year 1993 of the Department of Oriental Languages has now been postponed. A fresh date of the same would be announced later on, the press release added.

During the meeting, party secretary general Muhammad Aymenuddin said the solution of the present political crisis lies only in resignation of Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia and appointment of a neutral non-partisan premier.

He hoped that the President would play an important role in restoring atmosphere of stability and mutual understanding among parties.

**Editor : Mahfuz Anam**

Printed & Published by A. S. Mahmud, Managing Director, on behalf of Mediaworld Ltd, 52, Motijheel C/A, Dhaka-1000, from City Publishing House Ltd, 90 Kakrabi, Dhaka-1000. Editorial, News & Commercial Offices: House No: 11, Road No: 8, Dhanmondi B/A, Dhaka-1205. PABX: 500092-4, Commercial: 500091 (Direct), Fax No: 88-02-863035, GPO Box No: 3257, Cable: DAILYSTAR, DHAKA.



Newly-elected Japanese Prime Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto bows to members of the lower house at the national Diet following his getting majority votes yesterday.

— AFP/UNB photo

## Hasina at BCL rally

# Illiteracy main obstacle to alleviating poverty

Amami League chief Sheikh Hasina yesterday advised the Chhatra League activists to devote themselves to their studies first and to help remove illiteracy on the side.

Sheikh Hasina was addressing a rally of the Bangladesh Chhatra League at the Ramna Batomul yesterday afternoon organised to mark its 48th founding anniversary.

Identifying illiteracy as the number one obstacle to alleviating poverty, Hasina said, "If we are voted to power, we will try to eradicate illiteracy within 10 years." The student community would play a vital role in this regard, she added.

The AL chief said that her party wants terrorism-free educational institutions and alleged that the ruling BNP

has not taken any effective step to make the campus violence-free.

Hasina said Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman formed the Qudrat-e-Khuda Education Commission to establish a people-oriented, secular education system, according to UNB.

But, she said, the Commission report could not be introduced after the killing of Bangabandhu. She demanded introduction of a national education policy based on the report of Qudrat-e-Khuda Commission.

Turning back to politics, the Amami League chief said during its five-year rule BNP had destroyed the democracy, snatched people's voting right and grabbed their property.

She alleged the Prime Minister betrayed with the joint declaration of the three alliances. She (PM) neither scrapped the Indemnity Ordinance, nor give the inde-

pendence of the judiciary and autonomy of the state-owned media, said the former Leader of the Opposition in Parliament.

About the arms recovery drive Hasina said it was not possible to maintain neutrality during illegal arms recovery under a party government.

She alleged her party activists were being harassed in the name of arms recovery and demanded arms drive after the formation of caretaker government to ensure neutrality and effectiveness.

BCL president Enamul Hug Shah presided the rally, conducted by its general secretary Ishaq Ali Khan Panna. Central Amami League leaders were present.

Earlier, the Chhatra League activists brought out a colourful rally in the city chanting anti-government slogans.

## Mitterrand buried

JARNAC, France, Jan 11: Former President Francois Mitterrand was buried in his home town in south-western France today, in a ceremony blending the nation's tribute with the private grief of his family and friends, reports Reuter.

Under drizzly skies, the three women in Mitterrand's life — his widow Danielle, his companion Anne Pingeot and their daughter Mazarine — led mourners through the tranquil town of Jarnac, which owes its wealth to the local brandy trade.

As a military band struck up a dirge at the funeral march in the main square, a gust of wind suddenly blew the tricolour flag off Mitterrand's coffin of polished wood. Danielle stepped forward to put it back in place with the help of officers.

Alongside her stood her two sons, and close by Pingeot holding 21-year-old Mazarine tightly. It was the first, and probably last, public appearance by Mitterrand's companion, who wore a black and veil, and her student daughter.

The Fifth Republic was first to pay tribute to the socialist president, who died of cancer aged 79 on Monday, with an honour guard of the armed forces in the square. Officer cadets served as pall-bearers after a military plane flew his body from Paris.

In accordance with Mitterrand's last wishes, the flag was then removed from the coffin and the last bodyguards to serve him carried it down a narrow alley to the Roman Catholic church.

French military academy students yesterday carrying the coffin of former president Francois Mitterrand, who died January 8 at the age of 79. The body was taken from his Paris home to the Villacoublay military base outside Paris, where it was flown to the Southwestern city of Cognac for burial.

— AFP/UNB photo

From Page 1

A delegation from the Bangladesh Muslim League (ML) called on President Abdur Rahman Biswas at Bangabhaban yesterday and handed over a memorandum to him, reports UNB.

The delegation, headed by party president Alhaj Abdul Kader, discussed with the President the latest political situation in the country, said a party press release.

During the meeting, party secretary general Muhammad Aymenuddin said the solution of the present political crisis lies only in resignation of Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia and appointment of a neutral non-partisan premier.

He hoped that the President would play an important role in restoring atmosphere of stability and mutual understanding among parties.

He will also decide on the appropriate strategy for the sale — whether to sell it to a

strategic investor or to offload it through the stock market.

Until the privatisation is completed, the government will continue the ongoing loan recovery efforts," the official said without elaborating.

The Bank Nationalisation Order will also be reviewed and, if necessary, will be amended to facilitate converting the banks into public companies," said a ministry source.

Meanwhile, a WB aid memo on the FSDP has placed importance on the Rupali Bank's privatisation since "the government lacks the experience to value enterprises and the past experience of de-nationalisation of Pubali and Uttara fails to inspire confidence."

The auditors, already appointed, will compute the net worth and arrive at the capital adequacy in the light of both the previous method of asset-based adequacy system and the newly introduced risk-based system capital adequacy system.

A financial advisor will be appointed soon to oversee the privatisation process, ministry sources said.

According to the World Bank's suggestion, the financial advisor will analyse the specifics of the bank including injection of new capital, organisational, financial and physical restructuring, and technology, access to markets and training.

He will also decide on the appropriate strategy for the sale — whether to sell it to a

programme will also be initiated to improve the quality of new loans and strategic directions will be given for lending during the interim period.

The Bank Nationalisation Order will also be reviewed and, if necessary, will be amended to facilitate converting the banks into public companies," said a ministry source.

About manpower adjustment, the working group will review the current manpower levels and recommend redundancy plan. It will also prepare a programme for early retirement and retraining for redundant bank staff. The manpower adjustment programme is expected to go into operation from July 1996.

About Janata and Agrami, the government has not yet decided whether to divest these two banks partially or fully. But they may be sold through the stock market or through a public subscription.

Janata has 896 branches including four overseas with a paid-up capital of Taka 259.4 crore. It earned a profit of Taka 1.07 crore and has 17950 officials and employees on its payroll.

Agrami, having 902 branches, made a profit of Taka 3.6 crore in 1994. Its paid-up capital is Taka 248.4 crore and it has 13870 employees and officials.

This will be done in two phases with corresponding private sector representation in the Board of Directors and Management," said a government position paper on the issue.

From Page 1

A delegation from the Bangladesh Muslim League (ML) called on President Abdur Rahman Biswas at Bangabhaban yesterday and handed over a memorandum to him, reports UNB.

The delegation, headed by party president Alhaj Abdul Kader, discussed with the President the latest political situation in the country, said a party press release.

During the meeting, party secretary general Muhammad Aymenuddin said the solution of the present political crisis lies only in resignation of Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia and appointment of a neutral non-partisan premier.

He hoped that the President would play an important role in restoring atmosphere of stability and mutual understanding among parties.

He will also decide on the appropriate strategy for the sale — whether to sell it to a

strategic investor or to offload it through the stock market.

Until the privatisation is completed, the government will continue the ongoing loan recovery efforts," the official said without elaborating.

The Bank Nationalisation Order will also be reviewed and, if necessary, will be amended to facilitate converting the banks into public companies," said a ministry source.

About manpower adjustment, the working group will review the current manpower levels and recommend redundancy plan. It will also prepare a programme for early retirement and retraining for redundant bank staff. The manpower adjustment programme is expected to go into operation from July 1996.

About Janata and Agrami, the government has not yet decided whether to divest these two banks partially or fully. But they may be sold through the stock market or through a public subscription.

Janata has 896 branches including four overseas with a paid-up capital of Taka 259.4 crore. It earned a profit of Taka 1.07 crore and has 17950 officials and employees on its payroll.

Agrami, having 902 branches, made a profit of Taka 3.6 crore in 1994. Its paid-up capital is Taka 248.4 crore and it has 13870 employees and officials.

This will be done in two phases with corresponding private sector representation in the Board of Directors and Management," said a government position paper on the issue.

From Page 1

A delegation from the Bangladesh Muslim League (ML) called on President Abdur Rahman Biswas at Bangabhaban yesterday and handed over a memorandum to him, reports UNB.

The delegation, headed by party president Alhaj Abdul Kader, discussed with the President the latest political situation in the country, said a party press release.

During the meeting, party secretary general Muhammad Aymenuddin said the solution of the present political crisis lies only in resignation of Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia and appointment of a neutral non-partisan premier.

He hoped that the President would play an important role in restoring atmosphere of stability and mutual understanding among parties.

He will also decide on the appropriate strategy for the sale — whether to sell it to a

strategic investor or to offload it through the stock market.

Until the privatisation is completed, the government will continue the ongoing loan recovery efforts," the official said without elaborating.

The Bank Nationalisation Order will also be reviewed and, if necessary, will be amended to facilitate converting the banks into public companies," said a ministry source.

About manpower adjustment, the working group will review the current manpower levels and recommend redundancy plan. It will also prepare a programme for early retirement and retraining for redundant bank staff. The manpower adjustment programme is expected to go into operation from July 1996.

About Janata and Agrami, the government has not yet decided whether to divest these two banks partially or fully. But they may be sold through the stock market or through a public subscription.

Janata has 896 branches including four overseas with a paid-up capital of Taka 259.4 crore. It earned a profit of Taka 1.07 crore and has 17950 officials and employees on its payroll.

Agrami, having 902 branches, made a profit of Taka 3.6 crore in 1994