

Laws to protect interests of consumers sought

Speakers at a discussion yesterday stressed the need for creating greater awareness among consumers about their rights and privileges and urged authorities concerned to enforce relevant laws to protect their interests, reports BSS.

They said teachers at primary and secondary levels could play a vital role in rearing up the young learners as a potential force who could later contribute enormously towards maintaining a balance in consumer market from their respective positions.

The discussion on 'Role of Teachers in Protecting Consumers' Interests-Bangladesh Perspective' was organised by the Consumers Association of Bangladesh (CAB) at the National Press Club. Eminent educationist Dr Abdullah Al-Mutti Sharifuddin was the chief guest.

Commerce Secretary Ali Mofazzal Karim, Dr Shakhawat Ali Khan of Dhaka University, Mrs Hamida Ali of Vigarun-nisa Noon School and College, Dr Salehuddin Ahmad of NGO Affairs Bureau, MA Mannan of Chief Adviser's secretariat, Mrs Ayesha Khanom of Mahila Parishad and president of National Press Club Reazuddin Ahmad were special guests on

the occasion. With CAB President and Executive Editor of the Daily Janakantha Borhan Ahmad in the chair, the discussion was conducted by CAB member and journalist Rosy Ferdous. Dr Sayed Rashidul Hasan of Dhaka University read out the main paper.

Dr Sayed Rashidul Hasan spelt out the present position in the consumers market in Bangladesh and observed that:

Sharjah

From Page 1

India went down to Pakistan in their Singer Cup league match to have a pre-tournament exit form the tourney.

Wasim Akram, the injured Pakistani skipper, will not play at Sharjah despite being one of the six players due to receive a benefit purse of 35,000 dollars each from the Cricketers Benefit Fund Series (CBFS), the organiser of the meet.

The other five beneficiaries are — former Test cricketers Hemu Adhikari, Chetan Chauhan and Yash Pal Sharma from India and Nasimul Ghani and Shafqat Rana from Pakistan.

Provisional budget

From Page 1
government's mandate for managing the economy.

"Reactivating the economy is important rather than giving piecemeal direct assistance which will not help business," said Dr Mahmud. To stabilise economy, monetary and fiscal measures will be taken in a way so that those effect no contraction in economy, but give enough incentive to re-generate business," he added.

The MCC put forward a set of suggestions which, it said, need to be implemented to reactivate the economy.

It suggested that more money be pumped into the rural economy, with credit being directed to affected sectors like poultry and hatchery for rehabilitation of the economy.

The MCC said a narrow monetary approach to curb inflation would harm the economy and stressed that a more practical approach for inflation control is through the fiscal side and fiscal deficit control.

The 10 per cent customs duty concession offered for

quick clearance of cargo stranded at Chittagong Port should be applicable to all cargo stranded at all customs points. The time limit for being eligible for the concession should be extended from March 31 to April 30, it suggested.

The government should allow release of capital goods, raw materials and packing materials, on payment of 50 per cent of customs duty. The importers should be allowed to provide bank guarantees for the rest 50 per cent duty, stipulating payment commencing after 12 months, the MCC went on.

Domestic and export-oriented industries should be exempted from payment of advance income tax of 0.5 per cent to help their cash flow.

It also said the central bank should encourage the banks to meet the working capital requirements of the industries and industries affected by the political stalemate should be given rescheduling of interest on overdue loans.

Later, they were handed over to the Cantonment Police.

Replies to a question, Salam Talukdar viewed the process of issuing voters' identity (ID) cards should continue and the voters' list should be published keeping in hand a reasonable time so that it could be revised and updated. He, however, felt that preparation of a fresh voters list was not possible before the coming general elections.

Condemning the killings during BNP's public meeting in Chittagong, Salam Talukdar said that the people might grow doubtful of the possibility of fair and peaceful elections if such occurrence was repeated.

After the killings, he added, there were reasons for the people of Chittagong to believe that such these incidents would block the way for peaceful polls.

Commenting on steps taken by the authorities as regards the Chittagong incident, he said, "The steps have failed to satisfy us. Police has not been as active as they ought to be."

Reewan demanded of the government to extend financial assistance to the garment factories before April 20. Each garment factory should be given working capital worth Tk 40 lakh for four months, he added.

Export performance benefit should be allowed as it was upto 1987, he suggested.

The outstanding project loan should be rescheduled with immediate effect as may be requested by individual factory and deduction of 0.25 per cent tax at source should be stopped, the BGMEA demanded.

"And the relationship will be a partnership in future," Edward said, adding that the proposal for raising import quota for Bangladeshi ready-made garments would be communicated to his government.

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