

WB report on Bangladesh Educating mothers key to increasing school attainment

From Govinda Shil

WASHINGTON, May 5: Educating mothers is the single most important factor in Bangladesh's school attainment, says a World Bank report.

The report on Education Achievements and School Efficiency in Rural Bangladesh said a one-year increase in a mother's education over the current average of one-year increases school participation of boys by 11 per cent and girls by 17 per cent. However, a one-year increase in a father's education from the existing three-year average increases boys' participation by 3 per cent and the girls by 4 per cent, the report revealed.

Prepared by Shahidur R. Khandker in March this year, the report, based on 'General Education Project (1990)' and the 'Female Secondary School Assistance Project (1992)', said the government might influence schooling outcomes by providing direct inputs to the school system and developing infrastructure in the rural area.

Terming the parents as key players in determining schooling outcomes it said improved water supply and sanitation facilities also have an indirect effect on a child's schooling outcomes. "The effect's especially important for girls, who are often responsible for the care of the family members who are ill," said the report.

Emphasising teachers' education that improves the school attainments, the report also suggested recruitment of more female teachers, better trained and educated teachers, better water and sanitation facilities, rural electrification and irrigation.

It said the mean value of household assets, according to a survey in 29 thanas of Dhaka, Khulna, Chittagong and Rajshahi regions, is around Tk one lakh for boys' families while Tk 96,000 for girls' families.

Indian troops fire on UN observers in Pakistan

ISLAMABAD, May 5: Indian troops along the contested Kashmir border fired on several UN observers in Pakistan, state-run media reported today, says AP.

The UN officials were not injured in the firing, but five civilians suffered minor wounds. The Associated Press of Pakistan reported.

Official from the United Nations Military Observers Group in India and Pakistan would not immediately comment.

According to the news report, the UN observers were in Kashmir investigating an alleged ceasefire violation near the disputed border. The report did not say when the incident took place.

The UN observers were fired on near Jabra Bridge, about 170 kilometers (100 miles) north of the Pakistani capital Islamabad, the report said.

Pakistan has filed thousands of complaints against Indian border troops, accusing them of firing indiscriminately across the Kashmir ceasefire line.

The report did not identify the UN officers, but said one was from Uruguay and the other from Finland.

Pakistan and India have fought two of three wars over Kashmir, which was divided between them shortly after the subcontinent won independence from British rule in 1947.

A spate of cross border firings earlier this year heightened tensions between the rival South Asia countries.

In February, Indian troops hit a Pakistani mosque with a Russian-made rocket, killing at least 19 people. A week of intensive border clashes followed that incident.

Outside observers, including the Central Intelligence Agency, say simmering hostilities in Kashmir have raised the risk of another confrontation in South Asia.

Polls in Kashmir a must for peace: Rao

JAMMU, India, May 5: Prime Minister PV Narasimha Rao of India vowed today to complete this month's elections from Jammu-Kashmir despite interference by Pakistan in the return of democratic rule to the northern state, reports AP.

It was the first visit by a prime minister to the state since the Muslim campaign for independence began in 1989. India and Pakistan have fought three wars over the Himalayan territory.

Winding up an election campaign in Jammu for this month's general elections, Rao said he did not rule out "more mischief by Pakistan in Jammu and Kashmir to thwart the poll."

Arrest warrant against filmstar Raj Babbar

LUCKNOW, May 5: A city court today issued arrest warrant against Samajwadi Party (SP) candidate from Lucknow "filmstar" Raj Babbar for allegedly assaulting the polling officer of Sultanpur-Madani polling booth in old Lucknow area on May two, reports PTI.

The duty magistrate also issued warrant against an SP activist, Dr Arvind Singh. Police said both the accused who were named in the FIR lodged with the Vazirganj police station, were absconding.

4 more killed in Lankan violence

COLOMBO, May 5: At least four people were killed in two separate confrontations between government troops and Tamil Tiger rebels, a military official said today, reports AP.

A soldier was killed and two others were injured when the guerrillas attacked Saturday a military outpost in Kodikam, a village in the northern peninsula that was recently captured by the military, said Major Tilak Dunuwille, a military spokesman.

Soldier fought back and repulsed the attack. Guerrilla casualties were not immediately known, he said.

The military launched a fresh offensive April 19, pushing toward the rebel-held Tenmarachi and Vadamarachi areas in the eastern section of the peninsula.

But the offensive has come to a standstill as soldiers struggle to cope with tens of thousands of civilians returning to their homes in Jaffna city.

Meanwhile, in eastern Sri Lanka, rebels attacked a police post in Toppur village in the Trincomalee district Saturday, killing one policeman and injuring another.

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 Kakrail, Dhaka-1000. Editorial, News & Commercial Offices: House No: 11, Road No: 3, Dhanmandi R/A, Dhaka-1205. PABX: 500092-4, Commercial: 500091 (Direct), Fax No: 88-02-863035, GPO Box No: 3257, Cable: DAILYSTAR, DHAKA.



Chechen women shout anti-Russian slogans holding the portrait of late Dzhokhar Dudayev, demanding the withdrawal of Russian troops from Chechnya during a rally in Meaker-Yurt, 15km from Grozny on May 4.

Law and order in city has improved: CEC

The Chief Election Commissioner (CEC), Mohammad Abu Hena, yesterday reiterated his call to all political parties to extend their whole-hearted cooperation to the Election Commission (EC) in holding the coming June 12 general elections in a free and fair atmosphere.

He, however, said there is no room for complacency in the Election Commission. As such, the government as well as the Election Commission had been taking necessary measures to hold the election in a free and fair atmosphere.

The CEC said the Election Commission would not hesitate to take any action to maintain the neutrality of the administration for conducting the elections. In this connection, he hoped that the government officials to be entrusted with the election duty would perform their duties freely and fairly in order to make the good use of the golden opportunity of holding a credible and meaningful election to raise the image of the country as well as to recover the losses.

Replying to a question, the CEC expressed his satisfaction over the substantial improvement of law and order situation, particularly in the Dhaka metropolitan area, with the recovery of unauthorised arms and arrest of armed terrorists.

He said the government had given stress on the recovery of unauthorised arms and arrest of maastans and terrorists in order to regain people's confidence for free and fair elections. He said a law and order committee headed by the Home Secretary was monitoring the progress of the



Fireman try to extinguish flames of the headquarters of the French bank Credit Lyonnais in a central Paris neighbourhood after a fire broke out early morning yesterday. — AFP photo

Jamaat for Islamic state

From Page 1

ensuring law by honest persons saying that the party had built up a group of honest people to establish truth and justice.

Steps would be taken so that everybody leads a religious life and say prayers. Minority communities would enjoy freedom to practise their respective religions, according to the polls manifesto.

Jobs would be ensured for women as per their qualification and they would be allowed to earn their living as per the "Shariah". Repression on women would be checked.

The party's foreign policy would reflect Islamic philosophy and the country would play a "strong role in saving the humanity from the clutches of imperialist countries."

Relations with Islamic countries would be "specially strengthened" and regional problems would be solved on the basis of justice, the manifesto said.

Armed forces would be strengthened and equipped with modern arms and all citizens of 18-40 age groups would be given "minimum defence training". Defence industrial units would be given priority so that the country becomes self-sufficient in production of defence equipment quickly.

The administration would be restructured in the light of Islamic laws and the police, Ansar and VDP would be strengthened to ensure their honesty.

According to the party's education policy, religious education would be emphasised and student's politics would be discouraged by encouraging development of their careers.

The Jamaat's polls manifesto said that the interest system would be terminated and import policy would be framed to help growth of local industries. "Tax burden would be relaxed and equitable distribution of wealth would be ensured," it said.

Jamaat would follow a policy of "guarded open market economy" and local industries would be protected.

Subsidy will be given to the agriculture sector and farmers will be provided with interest-free loans and "package incentives" to help improve their living standard.

Jamaat would also change the land tax structure and introduce Islamic laws under its land reform policy.

Under its industrial policy, Jamaat would continue privatisation of public sector industries but industries related with defence and public utility services would remain under government ownership.

Abbas Ali Khan, Motiur Rahman Nizami and other central leader of the party were also present at the press conference.

UNB adds: Replying to a question, Golam Azam said his party would not renew the 25-year treaty with India. Describing the treaty as "unequal" he said: "Some of the clauses of the treaty are detrimental to the interest of Bangladesh."

The Jamaat Ameer said his party was committed to realising the legitimate share of the Ganges water for Bangladesh.

He, however, rejected any package deal on the issue allowing India to enjoy railway transit facilities, use of Chittagong port and natural gas.

"We want corruption and interest-free NGOs," he told another questioner.

Asked which party Jamaat will choose in forming a possible coalition government after the election, the party chief said: "We put candidates to all 300 seats. We'll consider the matter when the situation arises."

When his attention was drawn to Awami League's programme for repealing the Vested Property Act, Golam Azam opined that necessary measures in this respect would be taken after proper examination without hampering anybody's interest. "All cases are not similar."

He was asked how he evaluates the killing of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. Golam Azam said: "We do not support the politics of killings. We are against any killing."

Replying to a question on monarchy system in the Gulf states, Azam said it is the duty of the peoples of those countries to establish democracy.

"We only can set an example by establishing an Islamic democratic republic in Bangladesh."

Replying to yet another question, he admitted the legality of the 13th constitution amendment, providing for a non-party caretaker government to hold election.

Red Cross Day tomorrow

The World Red Crescent and Red Cross Day will be observed in the country as elsewhere in the world tomorrow, reports UNB.

To mark the day, Bangladesh Red Crescent Society has drawn up an elaborate programme.

It will organise an art competition on 'Humanity' for the children age between 6 and 12 at the Red Crescent Nursing School at 10 pm on the day.

Eminent artists Quayum Chowdhury, Mostafa Monwar and Rafiqun Nabi will conduct the competition.

Gen Dastagir joins JP

By Staff Correspondent

Major General (Retd) Kazi Golam Dastagir joined the Jatiya Party last night. Earlier, he had a meeting with the party secretary general Anwar Hossain Manja at the party office in the city, according to press release issued last night.

Barrister Roushan Ali from BNP, the chief of Islami Biplobi Party along with his workers, former Governor of the Lions Club Fakir Ashraf, Giasuddin Ahmed, a businessman from Shariatpur district, also joined the JP yesterday. The press release added.

Poets are less depressed than writers!

LODNON, May 5: Poets are crazier than authors or playwrights, but less likely to become depressed or alcoholics, a British psychiatrist has reported, says Reuter.

It could be because of the way their imaginations work, Dr Felix Post, who wrote the study in the British Journal of Psychiatry.

Post examined the cases of 100 famous British and American writers and poets by looking at their biographies. Many good biographies, he said, provided enough detail to do an accurate psychiatric analysis.

"There've got to be really good biographies," Post, a retired psychiatric consultant, said in an interview.

He found in a previous study that writers, as a group, tended to have more mental and emotional problems than other people — politicians or scientists, for example.

But poets did not seem to follow the trend. "The poets were less unstable and had fewer depressions than the others."

Careful analysis confirmed this. The poets, including Edgar Allan Poe and Robert Graves, had more mood swings and manic depressions requiring hospitalisation.

But they were less likely than the writers, who included Ernest Hemingway and Jack London, to die young or be promiscuous. Only 31 per cent of the poets were alcoholics, compared to 54 per cent of playwrights.

It seems writing of any sort is linked to poor mental health. Psychosis or depression was evident in 80 per cent of poets, 80.5 per cent of novelists and 87.5 per cent of playwrights.

"I speculate that it is the imagination of novelists and playwrights, who are far more concerned with intimate human fate — they've got to identify and empathise with their characters," Post said. "They have greater stress in their writing."

As for the poets: "They don't deal with human fate. They just describe their religious feelings or their love."

Post said his study did not include women writers as women tend to have different patterns of mental illness from men and his study period, starting in 1840, had too few women writers.

AL candidates

From Page 1

were interviewed for 59 seats in 11 districts of Chittagong division, 61 for 19 seats in districts of Sylhet division and 492 for 90 seats in 17 districts of Dhaka division.

Interviews of 622 nomination seekers from 32 districts (132 seats) of Rajshahi, Khulna and Barisal divisions were held on Saturday.

AL chief Sheikh Hasina, president members Abdus Samad Azad, Abdul Mannan and Sajeda Chowdhury, general secretary Zillur Rahman and other leaders, Abdul Razzak, Begum Moti Chowdhury, Kader Siddique, Mozaffar Hussain Paltu, Mostafa Jalal Mohiuddin, Siddique Rouf Khan also faced interview yesterday. Some newcomers in the party including former Vice-President AKM Nurul Islam and former chief of army staff Mohammad Noor Uddin were also interviewed.

Sheikh Hasina sought nominations for four JS seats — Gopalganj-3, Rangpur-6, Bagherhat-1 and Bakerganj-1. Of these, she is the lone contender for party ticket from Gopalganj-3, her home constituency.

Other nomination seekers who are lone aspirants, from their respective constituencies are — Abdus Samad Azad (Sunamganj-3), Sheikh Fazul Karim Selim (Gopalganj-2), Suranjit Kumar (Sunamganj-2), Humayun Kabir Chowdhury (Sylhet-1), Abdul Rahman (Tangail-5), Shamsur Rahman Khan Sahajhan (Tangail-3), Md. Rahmat Ali (Gazipur-1), Sayed Abdul Hussain (Madaripur-3), Liton Chowdhury (Madaripur-1) and Dr HBM Iqbal (Dhaka-10).

The Midnight File

Ogata arrives in Zagreb

ZAGREB, May 5: The UN High Commissioner for Refugees Sadako Ogata arrived in Zagreb today at the start of a six-day mission to Croatia and Bosnia where her agency, the UNHCR, is starting its most complex repatriation programme yet, reports Reuter.

Dropping of clause from Code of Conduct

LDF's countrywide demonstration May 8

The Left Democratic Front (LDF) will stage countrywide demonstration on May 8 to protest the dropping from the election Code of Conduct the prohibition on vote campaign from religious institutions, reports UNB.

A rally will also be held at Nur Hossain Square in the capital on the day to demonstrate the protest and press for re-inclusion of the ban in the electoral code agreed upon in meetings of the Election Commission with political parties.

The LDF action programme, first since the caretaker government took office, was announced at a press conference at the Taher Auditorium in the city yesterday.

The Election Commission has surrendered to the fundamentalist forces in striking the rule (prohibition) off the Code of Conduct which was in the draft, the LDF said.

It alleged the provision was deleted as some anti-independence communal forces, including the Jamaat, raised their voice against it when the draft was published in newspapers.

Coordinator of the front and Convenor of Bangladesh Samajtantrik Dal (BSD) Khalequzzaman Bhuiyan read out a statement at the news conference.

Khalequzzaman said the EC which failed to formulate a fully democratic Code of Conduct would definitely fail to create a democratic atmosphere for the coming election.

The hope that sparked in people's mind at the formation of non-party caretaker government is turning into frustration due to the weaknesses of the Election Commission, he said.

The LDF leader said the much-orchestrated illegal arms recovery operation proved to be a "farce" and the failure in netting illegal arms could create a disastrous situation in the country any moment.

He alleged that major parties like the BNP and the Awami League were selling party tickets to some black money holders, business tycoons and retired civil and military bureaucrats.

Such double-dealing joining and buying of candidates unmasked the undemocratic image of these political parties, the LDF leader told newsmen.

The conference was attended by LDF leaders Nirmal Sen, Rashed Khan Menon, Bimal Biswas, Dilip Barua, Mainuddin Khan Badal, Sharif Nurul Ambia and Manjural Ahsan Khan.

The next parliament would become "a club of ex-officials and corrupt people" if this trend continues, observed Workers Party leader Rashed Khan Menon addressing the news conference.

The LDF further alleged that a section of businessmen was using their black money in election purpose violating the election Code of Conduct the way they "evade" government taxes.

It urged the people to raise their voice against the evil design of vitiating the atmosphere ahead of the election, set for June 12.

Democratic govts corrupt: Imran

LAHORE, May 5: Former Pakistan cricket hero turned politician, Imran Khan, hit out at the weekend saying he was being hounded by intelligence agents and the country was like a "dictatorship."

"I have my phone tapped... over the place," Imran said in an interview with AFP in his hometown Lahore, where he launched a reformist political movement on April 25.

Imran, who unveiled his Movement for Justice (Tehreek-e-Insaf) following a bomb blast April 14 at his charity cancer hospital that killed six people, condemned the running of a vast intelligence network at the expense of the taxpayers.

"There is a special branch, there is CID (Criminal Investigation Department), there is FIA (Federal Investigation Agency) and there is police IB (intelligence bureau)," Imran said.

"Is it a Stalinist dictatorship or is it a democracy?" he asked.

During the interview, at his office on Saturday, Imran blasted the prevailing "corrupt" system and the administration of Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto, vowing to wage a constitutional struggle for a change.

The biggest disaster in Pakistan is a complete lack of recognition of merit. Almost every department is headed by people who don't deserve (to be there). We have corrupt system which has made incompetent people sit on positions of great responsibility."

Imran contended that democratic governments in Pakistan, which has spent more than half of its 49-year life under military rule, have been "more corrupt" than the military governments.

Calling the Benazir administration a "supposedly democratic government," he said "Benazir people don't even have an attitude for democracy."

UN, Iraq resume oil-for-food talks

BAGHDAD, May 5: Iraq and the United Nations will resume their oil-for-food talks tomorrow Deputy Prime Minister Tariq Aziz told the official Iraqi News Agency today, reports AP.

The two sides had announced last month that the talks would resume in May, but no date was set at the time.

Aziz said the Iraqi delegation was instructed to head to New York in time for resumption of talks tomorrow.

The third round of the negotiations was suspended April 24, without agreement, after the United States and Britain objected to provisions in a tentative accord.

Aziz today reiterated that Iraq and the United Nations had reached "a good level of understanding" but the deal was done in by "American and British interference."

Two more bodies

From Page 1

When the Task Force completes its own probe into the particular case, it would send its report with recommendations to the EC and the EC will then take action as per the existing law, the EC sources added.

BNP interview

From Page 1

shoreganj, Jamalpur, Sherpur, Faridpur, Rajbari, Shariatpur, Gopalganj and Manikganj districts under Dhaka division.

Interviews of the nomination seekers for the remaining 31 seats in Dhaka district and the city, Gazipur, Narasingdi, Narayanganj and Munshiganj districts would be held after completion of interviews of the nomination aspirants from Sylhet and Barisal divisions at 4 pm today, he said.

All the nomination seekers of the Dhaka division was interviewed on the first day, Saturday, along with those from the Chittagong division. However, the interviews of those from five districts of the division were deferred to today.