

What is to be Done with the Chittagong Steel Mills Limited?

Prepared jointly by : Dr ASW Kurny (Professor), Dr. AKM Bazlur Rashid (Associate Professor), Dr. M Fakhrul Islam (Assistant Professor), SAM Tofail (Lecturer) and M Ohidul Alam (Lecturer) of the Department of Materials and Metallurgical Engineering, Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (BUET), Dhaka.

CHITTAGONG Steel Mills (CSM) Limited is the only steel producing unit in the public sector in Bangladesh. It is also the biggest steel producing unit in the country. Activities in this plant has almost stopped and concerns about its future are being expressed through the national media. Through one such report published very recently we came to know that the Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD) has prepared a report to initiate an open discussion on what is to be done with this public sector undertaking. The CPD report was prepared by Dr. Nazrul Islam and Mr. Ahmad F. Mujtahid. The Daily Star (June 06, 1997) has published a report on a seminar held at CIRDA on June 05, 1997 to discuss the report of CPD. Speaking at the seminar Mr. Kazi Fazlur Rahman (former Director of EPIDC) revealed that the major projects of the country, including the Chittagong Steel Mills Limited, financed by foreign governments "were not designed to be viable and there were no way to salvage those due to many loopholes at the implementation stage." Some of the speakers at the seminar emphatically called for immediate privatisation of the Chittagong Steel Mills Limited.

Being metallurgical engineers we were always emotionally involved and concerned with the state of affairs in the CSM. We always hoped that something positive would definitely be done with this national asset. Unfortunately this has not happened. It now seems that the CSM is dying and some people are rather eager to enhance its death. It also occurred to us that it is probably getting too late to express ourselves on the topic. It is under these circumstances that we were inspired to write and to prepare this article we have studied all

the available reports by various national and international consultants/experts on CSM Limited (although it was very difficult to get copies of some of these reports).

Chittagong Steel Mills Limited started production in February 1967. The plant was designed to produce 250,000 tons of liquid steel. However the highest output that could be achieved by CSM had been around 145,000 tons. Attempts to achieve still higher production revealed that the space in the pit-side of the melting shop was not adequate to handle a production of more than about 145,000 tons of liquid steel. The CSM was set up by Koba Steel Limited of Japan on a turn-key basis. While speaking at the seminar Mr. Kazi Fazlur Rahman (a Director of EPIDC when the project was being implemented) made it clear that the Chittagong Steel Mills Limited had built-in design deficiency and was, therefore, compelled to perform below its potential from the very beginning.

Even with this built-in design deficiency, during 1971-72 to 1988-89, the CSM earned profits for 11 financial years and was in the red for six financial years. From 1988-89 onwards taxes and duties on ship scraps were decreased continuously. As a result low cost reinforcing bars produced by direct re-rolling of ship scraps found its way in to the market. Even when concerns were expressed repeatedly on the quality of the reinforcing bars produced by direct re-rolling of ship scraps, no steps were taken by the government either to stop their en-

try in to the market or to take steps to ensure their quality. On the contrary, duties and taxes on the inputs of the Chittagong Steel Mills Limited were not decreased to enable CSM to make it products competitive in price. As a result, lower quality reinforcing rods produced by direct re-rolling of ship scraps pushed the better quality CSM products out of the local market.

In the mean time a number of technical studies were undertaken by foreign consultants like MECON (India) Ltd, Lengipromex (former USSR), Atkins Planning (UK) and Kobe Steel (Japan). It was made abundantly clear in all these reports that CSM has a built-in design deficiency which constrains it from operating at its rated capacity and the plant must be remodelled to be able to perform satisfactorily. The problems of the Chittagong Steel Mills Limited were also reviewed by a committee constituted by Bangladesh Steel and Engineering Corporation and a report was submitted in 1977. Based on the examination of the reports of the foreign consultants, the experience in running the Chittagong Steel Mills Limited and long technical discussions, this committee came up with two alternate suggestions to improve the performance of CSM. One of these included the purchase of a Continuous Casting Machine (CCM) to obviate the problem of space deficiency in the pit-side of the melting shop and to reduce the cost of production.

A long period of twenty years have since passed and no action

has yet been taken in this regard. As it stands today the financial losses of CSM have reached Tk. 434 crores as on 30.6.96. Overhead costs have increased due to the non-utilisation and under utilisation of capacity. Operational efficiency of the aging equipment has touched near bottom in the absence of any replacement or BMR (Balancing, modernisation, rehabilitation).

Various studies by foreign consultants and national committees has shown that the present state of affairs is the direct result of the built-in deficiency in design of the plant. Moreover, the Chittagong Steel Mills Limited was never allowed to manage her own affairs. The procurement of raw-materials, the price of the products or other decisions to run the plant were taken by the Corporation. At times lower quality raw-materials were procured, the prices of raw-materials were usually higher than the prevailing market price and the raw materials could not be procured in time as a result of which the products (particularly the corrugated galvanised iron sheet) could not be marketed during the peak time of their consumption. Even the Mill was, at times directed by the Corporation to sell its products on credit amount of Taka 30 crore of which could not yet be realised.

During the 20 years a number of studies on the problems of the CSM has been undertaken by foreign and local experts and a variety of recommendations made. Unfortunately, none of these recom-

mendations were implemented by the successive governments. Thus the policies and the actions or inaction of the Steel and Engineering Corporation and the Government of Bangladesh have virtually created the present situation of the CSM.

A solution to this problem is now being sought in privatisation or closing down the mill. To us the philosophy behind privatisation is that the Government should not be doing business; it will create and maintain an atmosphere wherein private individuals or groups feel encouraged to invest and run their own economic activities. Privatisation, therefore, must not mean that the liabilities created by the indifferent and inefficient officials of the Government will be transferred to private entrepreneurs. Why should we expect the private entrepreneurs to invest and get involved in something which the seller declares to be inherently faulty and not at all profitable? Moreover, why should only the Chittagong Steel Mills be closed down or privatised when inactions or actions of the important people in the Government and the Corporation are also responsible for the present state of affairs of the CSM? What will happen to those who were indifferent to their responsibilities and are responsible for these bad investments?

It must be remembered that production of steel is a complicated job and throughout the world the cost of producing steel is increasing. A number of countries, the price of this very important commodity is subsidised. The Chittagong Steel Mills Limited is capable of assuring quality. A healthy competition between the CSM and the private steel mills will improve the quality of steel products in Bangladesh. In view of the rapid growth of high rise buildings in the country, assurance of the quality of building materials, particularly that of the reinforcing materials, has to be taken seriously. Closure of CSM will make this job of ensuring the quality of steel products in Bangladesh extremely difficult.

We believe that the solutions of the problems of CSM lie in improving the quality of governance of the GOB rather than a policy of closing down valuable productive capacity in a resource constrained economy. The government should seriously commit itself to the salvage of this major national asset. It is indeed very heartening to note that the Honourable Minister for Industries has taken the matter seriously and the issue is likely to be discussed in the National Assembly. We do hope that something positive will come out.

The Chittagong Steel Mills Limited itself and a number of national/international consultants have put forward various suggestions for the modernisation and technical restructuring of the CSM. Most of the study reports on CSM iden-

tified the inadequate space in the pit-side of the melting shop as a major obstacle for achieving higher production. Serious consideration should therefore be given to the immediate installation of a Continuous Casting machine. Replacement of some of the aging equipment also needs serious consideration. It is heartening to note that the CSM has, in the meantime, been able to increase its technical efficiency and increase the yield of the Open Hearth Furnace by 6 per cent, reduce fuel expenses by about 20 per cent and the annual overhead expenses by about Taka 6 crore. The manpower has also been reduced from 3200 to 2051. Reduction in manpower has reduced the annual expenses by Taka 9 crore, further reduction of manpower to 1900 is underway. Should we ignore these achievements altogether?

CSM has also submitted a proposal for financial restructuring. Rescheduling of bank loans is not new in Bangladesh. A recent report in the Daily Sangbad (June 01, 1997) show that interest on bank loans to the tune of Taka five thousand crore were written off during the last 16 years. In view of the importance of steel in our national life, we urge upon the concerned authorities to consider the proposal for financial restructuring sympathetically and to give CSM one chance to become viable.

At the same time, CSM should be delinked from the administrative control of the Bangladesh Steel and Engineering Corporation (BSEC). It should have an independent Management Board which adequate power and authorities to run the plant. This management board should be allowed to procure the raw-materials, decide on the nature and the price of the products, determine pay package for the employees as may be necessary to attract the best possible hands to manage the plant. The Management Board should also have the power to enter into joint venture agreements/sub-contracting agreements with any national, regional and international enterprise.

Steps must also be taken to discourage the entry in to the local market of low quality reinforcing bars produced by direct re-rolling of ship scraps. This is important not only to save the Chittagong Steel Mills Limited but also to prevent any further disaster in the rapidly growing building sector. The ship breakers, who are rendering an important service to the society, need not be alarmed at this suggestion because many other economic, profitable and safe usage of ship-scrap do exist.

A high powered task-force comprising of local experts, technologists, entrepreneurs, economists and planners should be set up immediately to review not only the future of CSM but also that of the steel sector in general in Bangladesh. The nation cannot afford any further delay. In the meantime let the people who were in control of the affairs of the CSM and the BSEC explain their actions or inactions in public when the project was conceived and implemented.

Lionism and Bangladesh

by Lion Alhaj Mustafa Allahma

LIONS Clubs International has appeared today as a unique social service organisation in the world thriving to provide services to improve socio-economic conditions of the less developed and less advantaged people. Lions Clubs International is one of the principal organisations that are engaged in serving humanity globally. The main slogan of Lionism is 'we serve'.

Eighty years back on 7th June 1917, 'Melvin Jones' with his several friends established the association of Lions Clubs at Lasalle Hotel in Chicago, USA, with the aim of serving the distressed humanity. The first convention of the organisation was held in October, 1917, in Dallas, USA. Lionism was initiated with the objective of serving the disadvantaged and deprived people. From its inception, Lionism maintained that no club will try to bring economic benefits for its members and Lionism is maintaining the spirit till now.

In 1920, the first international branch of lions clubs was established in Canada and it attained the prestige of becoming Lions Clubs International. Now nearly 42000 Lions Clubs with 15 lakh male and female Lion members in 184 countries throughout the world are engaged in serving the distressed humanity. Lionism expanded widely in Asia, Africa and Europe during 1950s and 1960s. Lions Clubs International expedited its activities since that period. In 1925, the world renowned social worker Helen Keller launched her anti-blindness campaign in Lions Clubs International convention at Ohio, USA. In line with that campaign, US dollar 130 million 'Sight First' programme has been initiated in 1990 to combat blindness. Programmes include curing blindness, blood bank, eye bank, white stick for blinds and also dogs' services for the blinds.

The Lion day is observed in every year in coordination with the United Nations. The headquarters of Lions Clubs International has been established on 10 acres of land in Oak, Brook, Illinois, USA. To achieve the prestige of 'Melvin Jones Fellowship' (MJF) one has to donate from 1,000 to 60,000 US dollar to Lions Clubs International fund. The organisations have earned greater prestige as it is engaged in combating blindness, population control, poverty, eradication, mass literacy, environmental balance, women and child rights, rural development and anti-drug campaign etc. side by side with the governments in the third world countries.

In 1958, Lions Club of Dhaka and Lions Club of Chittagong were the first Lions Clubs established in the then East Pakistan, sponsored by Lions Club of Karachi with the objectives of reducing sufferings of distressed people. First, these clubs did not get the status of a Lions District as number of members was only a few. After independence Lions Clubs in Bangladesh were re-organised in 1972-73 with the initiatives of Lion M R Siddique and Lion M Khaled. Lions Clubs International first recognised Bangladesh as Lions District

315 in 1973 and Lions M R Siddique was first elected the Lions District governor in 1972-73. Bangladesh achieved the status of Lions Clubs International Multiple district in 1987. Lions Clubs International Regional Forum conference was held in Dhaka in 1989 in which thousands of representative and delegates participated from 57 countries. Bangladesh has multi faceted problems in areas of hunger, poverty, health, shelter, natural calamity, illiteracy etc. The government alone cannot bring solutions to these problems. Members of Lions families are playing their important roles as non-governmental organisations in implementing programmes in areas of eye camps, tree plantation, blood donation, eye donation, building shelter and houses, serving retarded persons, mass education, relief works in natural calamities.

Presently, six districts of Lions Clubs International in Bangladesh are carrying out their programmes. The districts include 315 A1, 315 A2, 315 B1, 315 B2, 315 B3. Another district is going to be added in Bangladesh when district 315 B4 will be installed in Chittagong on 1st July, 1997.

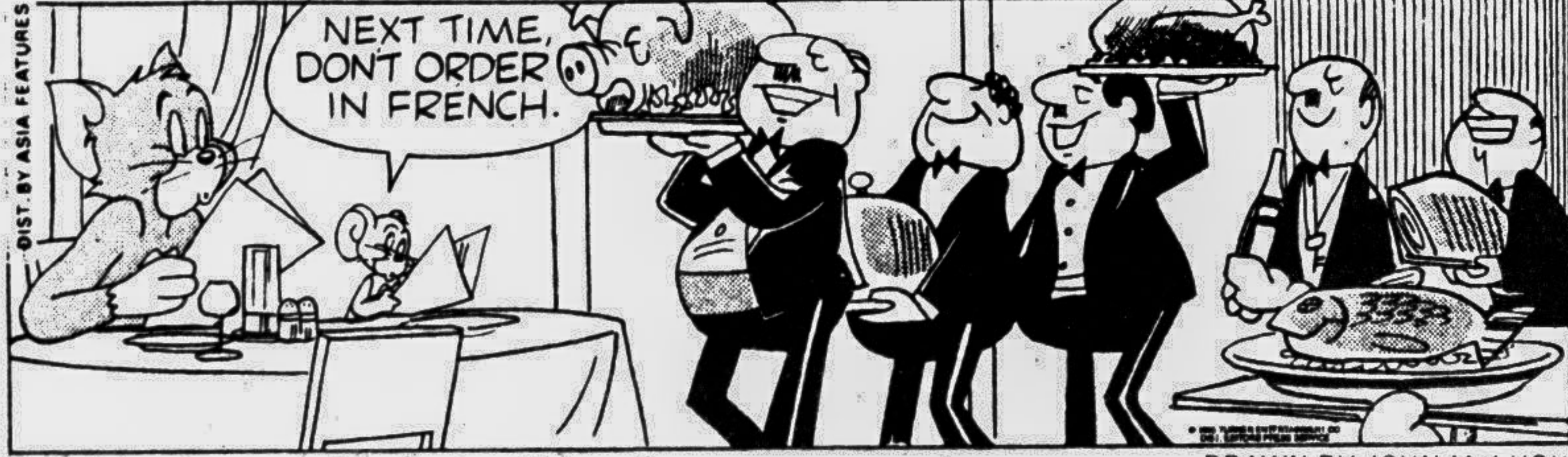
Lion M. Mostafiz Ali Khan is now elevated to the prestigious position of International Director at Lions Clubs International headquarters, Illinois, USA. Lions Clubs in Bangladesh have their headquarters in own building in Dhaka at Agargaon. Earlier, only richer people used to become members of Lions Clubs. Now, persons of all walks of life are showing interest to become members.

In Bangladesh, several hundreds of Lions Clubs with their nearly 10 thousand members and five thousand Leos are engaged in serving the distressed and poverty ridden people. Lion Zakir Ahmed is the Chairman of Bangladesh Lion Foundation. Bangladesh Lion Foundation carries its activities with the support and cooperation of its members. The 80-bed Lion Eye Hospital has been established at Agargaon, Dhaka. Nearly 30 thousand eye-cataract operations are performed each year free of cost. Another 120-bed Lion Eye Hospital in Chittagong and a Lion Child Hospital in Sylhet are also serving the people.

Members of the Lions families extend their helping hands responding quickly to people affected by flood, cyclone, tidal bores, tornado, fires etc. I feel it really from my experience gathered from Lionism that Lions Clubs International in Bangladesh will play more important roles in areas of social welfare services and in serving the distressed and disadvantaged people. We have our achievements and failures. Achievements would make us happy, failures will help us to learn and pave the way to work and success. Lions families in Bangladesh, hopefully, will contribute enormously in future to build and make the country prosperous and time, space, person, religion, race, sect will not be any barrier in the wave of journey towards serving the distressed humanity.

The writer is President, Lions Clubs of Dhaka Megacity

Tom and Jerry



IAN FLEMING'S James Bond DRAWN BY JOHN MCLUSK



Metropolitan

Weather

Moderate rain likely

Moderate rain or thundershowers with temporary gusty wind may occur at many places over Barisal, Chittagong and Sylhet and at a few places over Rajshahi, Khulna and Dhaka divisions during the next 12 hours till 6 pm today, reports UNB.

The Met office said no appreciable change in day temperature is expected over the country.

A little change is likely in the subsequent two days while in an outlook for another five days, weathermen forecast an increase in rainfall activities.

The country's highest temperature yesterday was recorded 37.2 degree Celsius at Jessore and the lowest 21.5 degrees at Sylhet.

The sun sets today at 6:47 pm and rises tomorrow at 5:11 am. Maximum and minimum temperatures and humidity recorded in some major cities and towns yesterday were:

City/Town	Temperature In Celsius	Humidity in Percentage		
	Max	Min	Morning	Evening
Dhaka	35.0	24.4	74	73
Chittagong	33.3	26.2	74	77
Rajshahi	33.8	25.8	81	73
Khulna	34.4	23.8	-	-
Barisal	34.2	23.8	73	85
Sylhet	31.3	21.5	87	80
Cox's Bazar	31.2	25.5	72	77

95 bottles of phensidyl seized

A squad of the Narcotics Control Directorate Wednesday seized 95 bottles of contraband phensidyl from Sukrabad area of the city, reports BSS.

A press release of the directorate said that the contraband made in India were seized during a sudden raid in the area.

Three persons were arrested in this connection, the press release added.

Mannan back home

State Minister for Labour and Manpower M A Mannan returned home yesterday after joining the 85th session of International Labour Organisation (ILO) in Geneva, an official handout said, reports BSS.

During his stay in Geneva from June 1 to June 11 besides joining the ILO session the state minister met the director general of ILO, director general of IMO, and the labour ministers from Malaysia, Saudi Arabia, South Korea and Iran.

Death anniversary

The 21st anniversary of death of LA Chowdhury, a renowned social worker and politician, will be observed today, says a press release.

LA Chowdhury was a close associate of Sher-e-Bangla A K Fazlul Huq. He was the general secretary of Jukta Front in 1954 and president of Krishak Samik Party, Chittagong branch.

A milad mahfil will be held today after Juma prayers at Naya Paltan Jame Masjid (VIP) Road in the city. Quirankhani and milad mahfil will also be held at the same time at the grave of Chowdhury at Kadam Mobarak, Chittagong.

Urs

The two-day annual urs of Hazrat Khwaja Syed Tamjuddin Ahmed Chishui (R) will be held on June 17-18 at Jitika Darbar Sharif under Harirampur thana, reports BSS.

CU holiday

CHITTAGONG, June 12: Classes of the Chittagong University will remain closed from July 1 to July 31 next on account of the rainy season vacation and Eid-e-Miladun Nabi, a university press release said today, reports BSS.

Membership fee for USIS Edn advising centre introduced

The United States Information Service (USIS) Educational Advising Centre at house No 110, Road No 27, Banani, will introduce membership charges for interested persons seeking information on education in the United States, reports BSS.

Effective from June 15, annual membership charges will be Tk 275 three-day memberships Tk 80 and one-day use Tk 40, according to a USIS press release.

Persons interested in an annual membership must apply with two passport size photographs. No photograph will be required for three-day and day-use memberships. Application forms for memberships cards are available at the USIS reception desk.

The student advising hours are from 10 am to 3 pm Sunday through Wednesday. Membership benefits include an extensive collection of information about US universities, access to the internet to research US universities and the opportunity to make appointments with the student advisor.

Free eye camp

Bangladesh Drishti Foundation (BDF) and Rotary Club of Shyamoli will jointly organise a free eye camp at BDF Hospital in the city soon, reports UNB.

Eye specialist Dr M Nazrul Islam will conduct the camp where selected eye patients will get free treatment including medicine, lens, accommodation and food.

Primary selection of the patients will be held at BDF Hospital in Mohammadpur and Edesh office in Savar from June 17-19 from 9 am to 4 pm, it added.

Nirmul concerned at recruitment of Bangladeshis to fight for Taliban

The Ghatak Dalal Nirmul Committee yesterday expressed concern over a press report that Jamaat-e-Islami has been sending Bangladeshis to fight in favour of Taliban, reports UNB.

The Nirmul Committee in its central committee meeting also blamed Pakistan High Commission in Dhaka for recruiting such people through Jamaat, destroying the image of Bangladesh.

It demanded of the government to make the issue clear through the Foreign Ministry and urged the MPs to formulate a law so that nobody can conduct such activities.

A resolution of the meeting in this context said all should remember that fighting in favour of Palestinians and Taliban is not the same.

The meeting condemned the recent speech of National Professor Syed Ali Ahsan regarding the role of Begum Sufia Kamal, Shawkat Osman, Kabir Chowdhury, Shamsur Rahman and Syed Shamsul Haq during the liberation war.

Nirmul Committee Convenor Shamim Akhter presided over the meeting, which was attended by Shahriar Kabir, Kazi Mukul, Muntasir Mamun, Fateh Ali Chowdhury, Zarina Rahman Khali, Salma Haq, Abul Barak Alvi, Shirin Banu Mitul, Meghna Guha Thakurta.

Jamal's painting show begins in US today

A two-week solo painting exhibition of young artist Jamal Ahmed begins at the Art Vivant Gallery of Charlotte NC in USA, reports UNB.

A total of 40 paintings will be put on display in the exhibition, said a press release Wednesday.

Jamal Ahmed, who has already received national and international awards, is an associate professor of the Dhaka University Fine Arts Institute.

Dhaka Stock Exchange EGM July 10

By Staff Correspondent

The Dhaka Stock Exchange (DSE) has called an Extra-General Meeting (EGM) on July 10 to decide the councilship of former chairman, Imtiyaz Hossain.

Though Imtiyaz Hossain was removed through a no-confidence motion at a council meeting last month, he is still a member of the 12 member council body of DSE.

Imtiyaz Hossain who says his removal is illegal, is threatening legal actions against his removal.

Meanwhile, some DSE members have submitted a letter to the DSE council demanding removal of Imtiyaz Hossain from the council body.

The new chairman of DSE, Abdul Huq Howlader said a requisition meeting is necessary because 10 per cent general members have been demanding for it.

He said, the EGM would decide whether or not Imtiyaz Hossain would remain as a member of the DSE council.

DWASA has earned Tk 58.12 lakh in 10 months

Dhaka Water Supply and Sewerage Authority (WASA) has earned a revenue income of Tk 58 crore 12 lakh 93 thousand during the first ten months of the current fiscal year, reports BSS.

According to a WASA press release here Wednesday the income during the period (July 1996 to April 1997) was Tk 12 crore 31 lakh 81 thousand higher than that of the corresponding period of the previous year.

The increase in revenue this year is nearly 27 per cent over the last year the press release said.

It said that WASA's present effort to raise revenue would be further intensified in the coming months.

15-member police team leaves for Zagreb

A 15-member delegation of Bangladesh police led by SP A B M Bazlur Rahman yesterday left Dhaka for Zagreb, Croatia. The team will replace the 15 UNIPF officers working there, reports BSS.

Inspector General of Police (IGP) M Azizul Haque gave a farewell to the team at police headquarters. He instructed the police officers for upholding the image of the country through performing duties sincerely.

AL rally held in city

By Staff Correspondent

Dhaka city unit of Awami League held a rally in the city yesterday in observance of the 'Voting Rights Day' commemorating the parliamentary elections on June 12, 1996.

The rally held in front of the central office of the AL at Bangabandhu Avenue was presided over by Dhaka City Corporation Mayor and AL president Mohammad Hanif.

Central party leaders, Abdul Jalil, Shamsur Rahman, Abdul Shahjahan, Azizur Rahman, Mozaffar Hussain Paltu, Abdul Mannan, were, among others, who addressed the rally, said a press release.

WB assures help in rehabilitation of cyclone victims

The World Bank resident representative Pierre Landell Mills yesterday assured his organization's all possible assistance in rehabilitation and reconstruction activities of the government following the May 19 cyclone which ravaged coastal areas of the country, reports BSS.

The assurance came when Mills called on Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at her office in the city Wednesday evening.

State Minister for Planning Dr Moshuddin Khan Alamgir, Principal Secretary to the Prime Minister Dr S A Samad and ERD Secretary Dr Moshirur Rahman were also present.

Diarrhoea claims 3 in cyclone-hit areas

Diarrhoea has claimed three lives as the water-borne disease attacked some 847 people in four cyclone-hit districts in 24 hours on Tuesday a bulletin of the Health Department said Wednesday, reports UNB.

Of the victims, two died in Noakhali sadar and one in Begumganj thana.

According to the bulletin, diarrhoea attacked more 490 people in Noakhali district, 276 in Chittagong, 70 in Cox's Bazar and 11 in Bhola district during the 24-hour period.

About 300 medical teams are working in the affected areas to contain the water-borne disease, the Health department bulletin said.

Alleged snatcher arrested

Motijheel thana police Wednesday arrested Farooq Hossain, 25, an alleged snatcher, from Kapasia area under Gazipur district and seized a baby taxi, reports BSS.

A DMP press release said, the baby taxi was used to snatch Taka one lakh from Shah Iran Patwari from Janata Bank premises in Dilkusha on Tuesday.

Nat'l Primary Education Week begins tomorrow

National Primary Education Week-97 will be observed from June 14, throughout the country, reports BSS.

On the first day of the week a tree plantation programme has been taken up in the primary schools across the country.

The Primary Education Week, to be organised by the Primary and Mass Education Division, will be inaugurated through tree plantation by education minister in Khustia and deputy minister for primary and mass education in Dhaka.

The programme will include holding of children's rally in Dhaka on June 15 and holding a workshop titled 'the role of the local people in increasing enrolment of students in the schools and reducing the dropouts.'

During the week, meetings of the primary education committee, school managing committee and compulsory ward education committees at district, thana and union levels will be held.

The concluding function of the week will be held at 10 am on June 18 in the Osmani Memorial Auditorium in the city.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina is expected to be present in the concluding function.

Diarrhoea claims 3 in cyclone-hit areas

Diarrhoea has claimed three lives as the water-borne disease attacked some 847 people in four cyclone-hit districts in 24 hours on Tuesday a bulletin of the Health Department said Wednesday, reports UNB.

Of the victims, two died in Noakhali sadar and one in Begumganj thana.

According to the bulletin, diarrhoea attacked more 490 people in Noakhali district, 276 in Chittagong, 70 in Cox's Bazar and 11 in Bhola district during the 24-hour period.

About 300 medical teams are working in the affected areas to contain the water-borne disease, the Health department bulletin said.

Alleged snatcher arrested

Motijheel thana police Wednesday arrested Farooq Hossain, 25, an alleged snatcher, from Kapasia area under Gazipur district and seized a baby taxi, reports BSS.

A DMP press release said, the baby taxi was used to snatch Taka one lakh from Shah Iran Patwari from Janata Bank premises in Dilkusha on Tuesday.

Nat'l Primary Education Week begins tomorrow

National Primary Education Week-97 will be observed from June 14, throughout the country, reports BSS.

On the first day of the week a tree plantation programme has been taken up in the primary schools across the country.

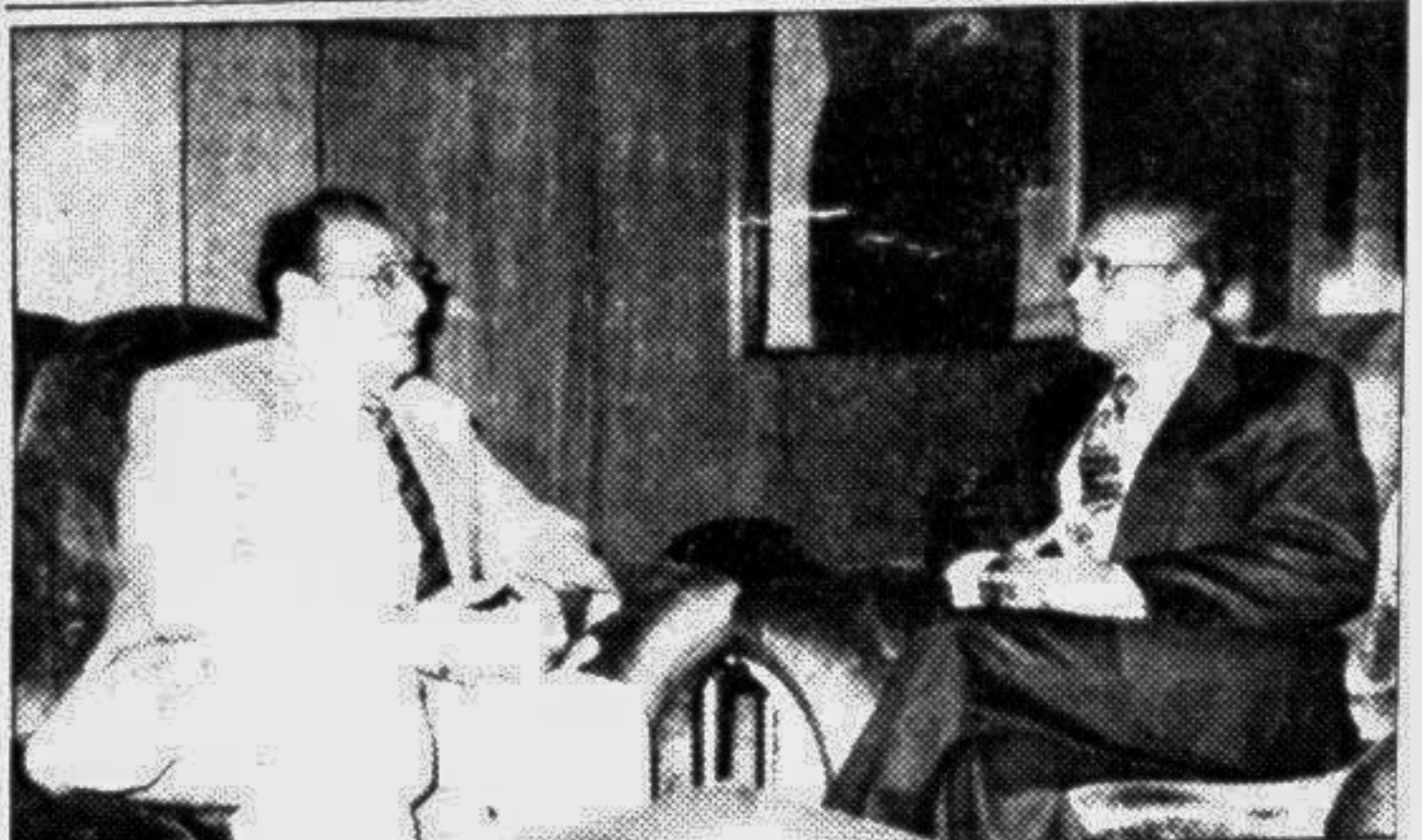
The Primary Education Week, to be organised by the Primary and Mass Education Division, will be inaugurated through tree plantation by education minister in Khustia and deputy minister for primary and mass education in Dhaka.

The programme will include holding of children's rally in Dhaka on June 15 and holding a workshop titled 'the role of the local people in increasing enrolment of students in the schools and reducing the dropouts.'

During the week, meetings of the primary education committee, school managing committee and compulsory ward education committees at district, thana and union levels will be held.

The concluding function of the week will be held at 10 am on June 18 in the Osmani Memorial Auditorium in the city.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina is expected to be present in the concluding function.



Hungarian Charge d'Affaires I B Buday called on Commerce and Industries Minister Tofael Ahmed at his office on Wednesday in the city. — PID photo