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## 'Bangabandhu was poet of politics'

The speakers at an international seminar held in Calcutta yesterday described Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman as a great revolutionary and visionary leader of South Asia, reports BSS.

The speakers — comprising veteran parliamentarians, cabinet members, intellectuals and academicians from both India and Bangladesh — urged all to follow the secular ideals, humanitarian and progressive thoughts of Bangabandhu to maintain and consolidate peace in the South Asian region.

The day-long seminar on the "Role of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman in the liberation struggle of Bangladesh — its significance in South Asia" was organised by Bharat-Bangladesh Maitri Samity, according to a message received in the city.

Lok Sabha Speaker P A Sangma of India inaugurated the seminar while Bangladesh Minister for Environment and Forest Syeda Sajeda Chowdhury was present as chief guest.

The seminar was presided over by president of Maitri Samity B B Dutta MP.

West Bengal Ministers Satyasadhan Chakrabarty, Nanda Gopal Bhattacharya, and B Mondal, Sheriff of Calcutta, were also present.

Cutia Dr Sunil Thakur, and Vice-Chancellor of Biswabarati Dilip Sinha addressed the seminar while from Bangladesh, Awami League president member Amir Hossain Amu, central leader Mukul Bose and JSD leader Kazi Aref Ahmed also spoke.

Speaking in the seminar, Sajeda Chowdhury said Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman is the greatest son of the soil. Emergence of Bangladesh was not possible without Bangabandhu, she added.

She said under the able leadership of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, Bangladeshi nation had achieved their national identity and Bangladesh emerged as an independent and sovereign nation in the world, which added new dimensions and philosophy among the people and politicians in South Asia.

Describing Bangabandhu as the poet of politics, the minister said, his rare personality and charisma enchanted the masses of South Asia. Bangabandhu's politics was based on non-communal and humanitarian ideals which was in favour of world peace, she added.

In his inaugural speech, Lok Sabha Speaker P A Sangma said, "The hero responsible for the transformation of East Pakistan into Bangladesh was, of course, the legendary leader Sheikh Mujibur Rahman."

## Extortionists attack bridal party: 15 hurt

From Our Correspondent

NARSINGDI, Oct 3: A bridal party came under attack by a gang of extortionists for refusal to pay toll at Gazirtek under Palash (thana on Dhaka-Danga road), witnesses and victims said.

Fifteen people, including two women were injured when the motorcade carrying the bridal party came under attack at about 4:00 pm.

As local people rushed to the spot to help the victims, the gang fled.

The injured were taken to a local hospital. None was arrested and a case in this regard was yet to be filed.

## Two bodies recovered

Police yesterday recovered bodies of two unidentified men in Demra and Mirpur thanas of the city, reports UNB.

Demra police found the body of a man, aged about 35, in front of Kadamtali Lal Masjid (mosque) on Biswa Road. The body bore marks of wound in head and other parts.

Police suspected that he had died after hit by a speeding vehicle on the road.

Mirpur police recovered the body of a young man, aged about 25, from the cross dam adjacent to Kotbari. It was suspected that he might have committed suicide by taking poison.

The two bodies were sent to Dhaka Medical College Hospital morgue for autopsy.

## Fire at residence Saudi Embassy official injured

By Staff Correspondent

An official of the Saudi Embassy was injured in a fire that broke out at his residence at Banani in the city yesterday morning.

Fire Brigade sources said Abdul Hasan Al Asnan received burn injuries in both hands in the fire that damaged some electrical appliances, carpet and furniture worth about Tk one lakh.

Fire fighters took Asnan to Metropolitan Hospital in Mohakhali area. Later, he was shifted to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital in the afternoon.

The origin of the fire could not be known. Fire fighters from Kurmitola put out the fire in about an hour. When contacted, Gulshan police said last night that an emergency team was sent to the spot but could not give any details about the incident.

## Puja Parishad's call to withdraw barricade programme

Bangladesh Puja Uddhayan Parishad yesterday called for withdrawal of rail-road barricade programme announced by some opposition political parties before Durga Puja, reports BSS.

In a statement, Parishad president Sudhir Chandra Das and general secretary Subrata Chowdhury said the Durga Puja, main religious festival of the Hindu community, begins on October 7. The blockade programme will hamper the festival's overall preparations, they pointed out and urged the opposition parties to call off the programme.

They also sought cooperation from the people irrespective of religion, caste and creed.

## 4 thieves held, 2 TV sets recovered

The city police arrested four thieves and recovered two colour television sets on Thursday, reports UNB.

Acting on a tip-off, a Detective Branch team caught the thieves from Stadium Market. These thieves in the guise of old-paper hawkers enter into houses and decamp with TV sets.

The arrested were identified as Jahangir, 33, Habib, 32, Alamgir, 26, and junior Jahangir, 25, said a press release yesterday.

## 7 JAGPA activists arrested

By Staff Correspondent

Anisur Rahman, secretary general of Jatiya Ganatantrik Party, along with six other party activists were arrested from their party office at Naya Paltan in the city yesterday, said police sources.

The Motijheel Police, when contacted, said that they were arrested under Section 54 of the Code of Criminal Procedure at around 8:30 pm from their party office. The arrested persons were kept in Motijheel thana custody, they added.

Meanwhile, Kazi Zafar Ahmed, co-chairman of Jatiya Party (Z-M), in a press statement late last night condemned the arrest and demanded their immediate release.

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## Down to Earth

# Why this hush-hush deal on lake development?

By A S M Nurunnabi

Lately a strong agitation has been reportedly building up over a proposed lake beautification project at Gulshan involving, among others, a massive number of housing units. It has been alleged that recently a deal was concluded with a foreign company in secret for Gulshan-Baridhara-Banani Lake development. The general public came to know about the project when a big advertisement appeared in some daily newspapers. The deal about the project was reportedly clinched without prior public knowledge, disclosure and any consultative process, with a large number of persons likely to be affected.

In this connection, quite a good number of questions have been raised. First, why in a hush-hush way the project deal was made in violation of the recognised principle that it is incumbent on the authorities concerned to conduct public affairs in an open manner. This imperative became all the more pronounced in this massive proposed development project in the most desirable housing location of the city. It has been felt that this new development proposal may change the whole face of Gulshan, Baridhara, and Banani, affecting every resident of these areas in a big way. It is also felt that all aspects of planning and development pro-

posed by the project and its impact should be clearly analysed and highlighted so that a consensus can be arrived at.

Another question raised is whether this project is part of the new DMDP (Dhaka Metropolitan Development Plan 1995-2015) prepared and published very recently and conforms to its goals and objectives.

The third important question is whether the land values for the project have been properly assessed. In the advertisement published by the lessee-company, it has been stated that the company will have 70 acres of land for the development of commercial and public utility projects. Another connected issue is, as raised by some quarters, why a particular developer has been given an exclusive right to undertake such a lucrative project to the exclusion of other qualified groups or persons. Another relevant question is: what is the time frame for start and completion of the project? According to observers, the whole thing deserves a close scrutiny.

For the residents of the areas covered by the project, the importance of the lake is enormous, particularly because it ensures drainage facilities, open air and healthy environment. They feel apprehensive that if in the name of development, the

process of filling up the lake is carried on, it may bring about environmental disaster. In this connection it has been pointed out that on both sides of the lake slums are coming up; the garbage from these slums find their way into the lake with rainfalls, severely polluting the lake water and also there is the fast spreading growth of water hyacinth. The grievance of the residents is that Rajuk does not take steps for necessary remedies, while the inevitability of the filling work for the lake looms large.

Another issue that has been raised is the one relating to a notice for eviction from "J" block of the area. The affected persons have been loud in their protests that unless the eviction notice is withdrawn or rehabilitation of the affected persons is made, it will open the flood gates of agitation and opposition. Recently, some notable persons in these areas met in a meeting and voiced their strong protests against the plan for filling up the lake for the purpose of carving out residential and commercial plots, thereby destroying the beauty and healthy environment of the place.

It behoves the authorities concerned to look into the points raised by the residents of the areas so that the agitation, already afoot, does not gain momentum.

## Congenial atmosphere for working women stressed

Law Minister Abdul Matin Khasru yesterday emphasised a supportive and congenial working atmosphere to ensure the rights of woman workers, reports UNB.

"Enactment of laws and their implementation are not sufficient; we must devise a mechanism for protecting the rights of woman workers," he said, inaugurating a seminar on Woman Workers' Right at local hotel in the evening.

Bangladesh Independent Garments Workers Union Federation (BIGUF) and Asia-American Free Labour Institute (AAFLI) jointly organised the seminar participated by lawyers and the leaders of garments workers.

The Law Minister said the atmosphere in which the garments labourers work is not congenial. "It is inhumane," he said, adding that a number of garments workers died in accidents recently due to lack of adequate facilities in the factories.

"A safety net would have to be built for them," he said.

Khasru said the government has already taken steps to improve the situation in the garments units. A Law Commission has been formed to reform and update the existing laws to meet the needs of time.

Referring to some unscrupulous elements in the trade unions, he said few CBAs, not

all, have failed to protect the rights of workers. There must be real trade unions where the real workers will take leadership."

The minister said equal pay for equal job for all workers is not ensured in many countries, including Bangladesh, not even in the developed countries in American and Asia. This is a gross violation of human rights."

Khasru said there are a lot of good laws in Bangladesh, but with some inadequacies and also complexities in implementing those. For this, it is difficult to protect the rights of the workers, he observed.

Dhaka Bar Association President advocate Rezaul Rahman, AAFLI Country Programme Director Max Gregory Schulze, BIGUF President Nazma Akter and Consultant Advocate Fawzia Karim Firoze also spoke at the inaugural session.

Nirmalendu Dhar, an advocate of the Supreme Court and the General Secretary of Labour Court Bar Association, Dhaka, presented the keynote paper on "Present Labour Laws — Whether Require Reforms."

Three other papers on — "Right to Form Association" by Mir Abul Hossain, "Access to Safe Working Conditions" by Advocate M Harunur Rashid and "Implementation of Minimum Wages" by Advocate Sarker Khurshid Alam — were also presented at the seminar.

## Zillur Rahman

From Page 1

BNP government had turned the country into a haven for terrorists and smugglers.

Zillur Rahman said the statement of Khaleda Zia at a jointing function at the official residence of the Leader of the Opposition on Thursday was fabricated, and based. He said when the government has been arresting terrorists with arms, Begum Zia is demanding their release claiming them as her party leaders and workers. In the pretext of this, BNP is bringing out processions, resorting to road barricades, damaging vehicles and beating pedestrians.

The Awami League General Secretary referred to the subversive foreign policy of the BNP government headed by Begum Zia and said it signed the joint communiqué with the then Prime Minister of India offering them the chance for push back. They even forgot to include Farakka issue in the communiqué, he added.

He pointed out the people are aware of the old techniques of the past autocratic rulers and said people will not be misguided by their deceptive political game. He urged the BNP leaders to pursue transparent and healthy politics discarding falsehood in the name of politics.

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## Ship movement in Karnaphuli now risky

From Staff Correspondent

CHITTAGONG, Oct 3: The Chittagong port authorities have advised ships, fishing trawlers and other vessels to be cautious during movement in the Karnaphuli river and the port channel because of the strong current, port sources said.

There has been strong current in the river for the last few days as huge quantity of water released from Kaptai Lake is flowing down the sea through it, the sources said.

As a result, movement of ships and other vessels has become risky in the area. Ships have been kept anchored at the jetties with this moorings tied strongly as advised by the port authorities.

## Appointments

From Page 1

Dilip Kumar Biswas, a retired Additional Secretary, has been appointed a Member of Tax Settlement Commission for one year on contract.

The service of Brig Mohammad Enayet Hossain Deputy Director General of Ansar and VDP Directorate, has been placed under the Defence Ministry for his return to Army. Col Sadik Hasan Rumi has been made the DDG of Ansar and VDP.

DDLG of Barisal Mohammad Abdul Hannan has been made a Deputy Secretary at the Industries Ministry.

Besides, Deputy Secretary of the Food Ministry Mohammad Ashraf Uddin has been transferred to the Health Ministry while Deputy Secretary of the Health Ministry Abdul Jabbar to the Food Ministry.

Abdul Khaleque, an OSD at the Establishment Ministry, has been appointed a Deputy Secretary at the Home Ministry.

## CBA in PDB

From Page 1

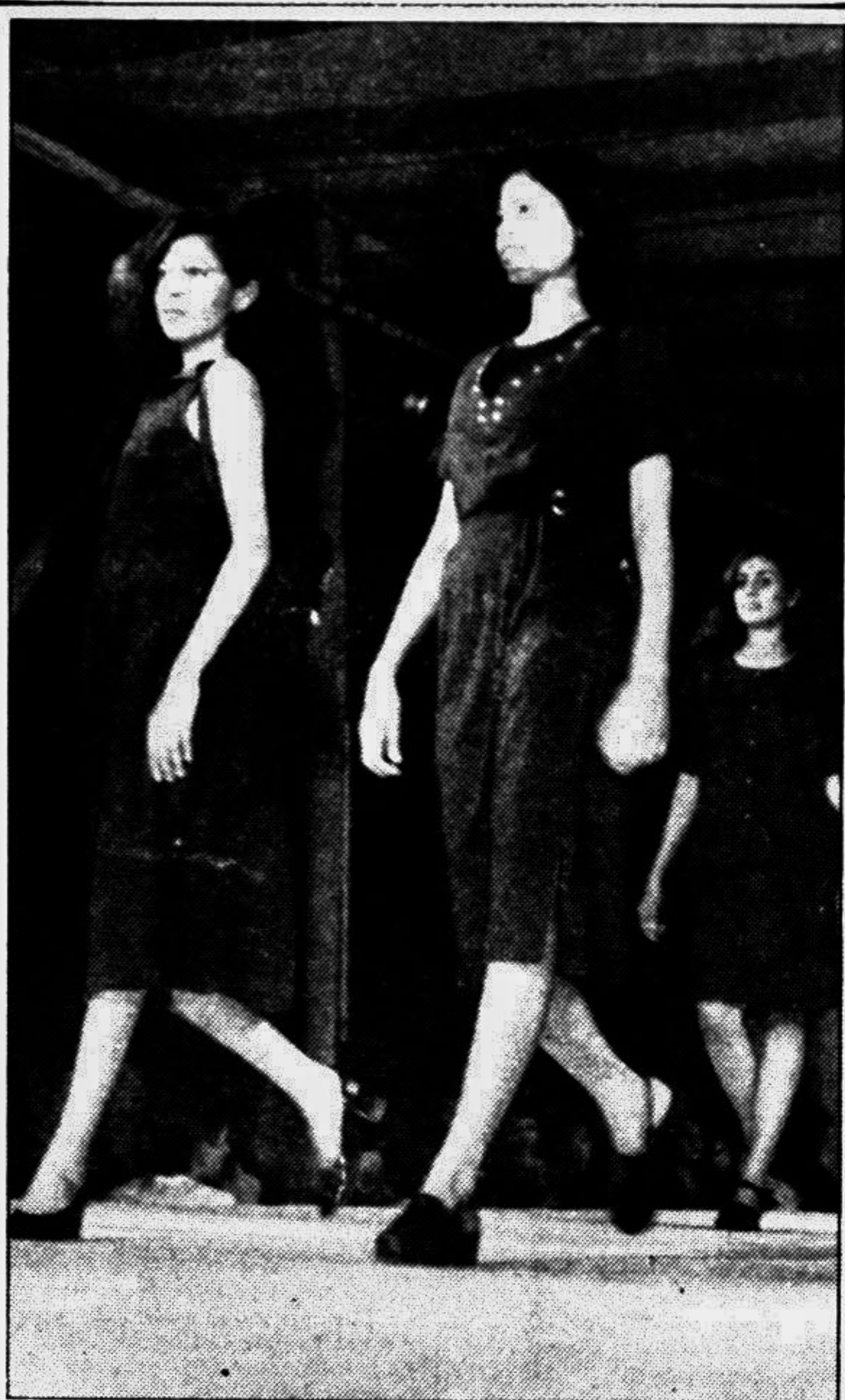
Last two years, some 5,000 employees had been punished each year for failing to reach their 'targets' while some 12,000 were rewarded by giving bonus salaries for attaining their 'targets'.

The revenue earning also increased to Tk 1560 crore in fiscal '95-'96 from Tk 1152 crore of '93-'94.

PDB's system loss was around 41.5 per cent in 1990-'91. Following the creation of DESA, the loss came down to 30 per cent in 1990-'91 and 23 per cent now. Of this, about 18 per cent is considered technical system loss incurred during power generation and transmission.

The remaining five per cent is considered theft by unscrupulous employees, specially metre readers and ledger writers. One per cent of the system loss causes a loss of Tk 20 crore.

"Since the management is keeping PDB employees away from the decision-making process and restoration of a healthy working environment, the employees are losing their sense of belonging. This means the system loss may go up again," the CBA leader said.



A fashion show was held at Hotel Sonargaon yesterday in connection with BATEXPO '97. —Star photo

## Youth bodies should have a say

From Page 1

"Youth groups need to interact effectively first among themselves to work out strategies," he said.

It is the right of the young people to be allowed to give opinions on the 'ways' of removing the problems they are suffering from. And the youth organisations have to have more effective interaction to find their own ways as to how the right is established at both social and state levels."

Bath said problems of the youths in Asia and some parts of Africa are similar, while those of Europe and America are different.

"Poverty, illiteracy and unemployment are the major problems for Asia and Africa, while drug addiction and diseases like AIDS are the issues that youths of America and some parts of Africa confront."

He also finds fundamentalism a serious impediment to the development of 'real democracy' in certain parts of Asia. Bath believes that special attention is needed to combat this sort of 'political calamity'. "Ideological struggle against fundamentalism is very important in these cases."

The WFDY leader does not believe that the differences in the nature of problems of the youths in different parts of the world are any obstacle to taking

a global approach towards the crises.

He, however, admitted that certain issues such as racism had a slightly different colour. "There are tendencies in the West European countries to fan up racism, which is, in other words, semi-fascism, especially against the people of Asian and African origin. And they do it in the name of safeguarding nationalisms," Bath said.

The WFDY leader called these semi-fascist trends "an isolated phenomenon". Because, as he said, the mainstream population of these countries refuse to buy the so-called justifications put forward by the smaller groups of national chauvinists. "Besides, the democratic youth organisations are there to promote and protect human rights — irrespective of race and religion, citizens and immigrants."

He said the democratic youths of the world should be in the forefront of the fight against all racist, fascist and fundamentalist tendencies both at social, political and cultural levels.

Replying to a query, Bath said the WFDY branches in the East European countries had faced setbacks in the wake of collapse of the 'socialist system' in the early Nineties. "But the problem is now over. Con-

fronted with the adverse impact of the changes, the youths of those parts of the planet have meanwhile reorganised themselves under different names, many retaining the original names, to combat the newly-developed problems."

Talking about the experience of the WFDY itself, the secretary general said that they had faced troubles in the wake of the collapse of 'socialism' in Hungary. "The government of Hungary wanted to stop operation of the WFDY in the country. The WFDY eventually survived the government attack."

"When we went to the Supreme Court to challenge the government move against an NGO like ours, an out-of-court settlement was reached. In the process, however, the WFDY lost some of its property to the government."

Speaking on separatist movements in different parts of the world, Bath, who hails from the Indian state of Punjab, where the fight for an independent Khalistan is still on, observed that such movements were no answer to the problems of the youths of their respective areas.

"What is most important is address the real problems of the affected people, and make sure that the fundamental rights of the citizens are established," the WFDY leader said.

## ADB-aided projects

From Page 1

mentation works, it remarked. Only 15 per cent of loan amount for the Secondary Water Supply and Sanitation project was disbursed against elapsed loan period of 60 per cent. The ADB is giving 30.66 million dollars.

The ERD noted that the executing agency needs to expedite award of contracts for rehabilitation works for the project.

Some 44 per cent of loan amount was disbursed against 78 per cent of elapsed loan period for the Higher Secondary Education project in which the ADB is providing 51.38 million dollars.

In case of the Bangladesh Open University project, 34 per cent of loan amount was disbursed against 75 per cent elapsed loan period. The ADB's contribution is 34.69 million dollars in the project.

The highest performing project in the category is the Secondary Health and Family

Planning Services project in which the Bank is giving 50.46 million dollars.

Some 52 per cent of loan amount has been disbursed against 92 per cent elapsed loan period. The executive agency must complete all activities by 1997.

The ERD identified delay in approval or revision of PP in the line ministries as well as in the Planning Commission as one of the major problems in timely implementing the projects.

Delay in preparation and evaluation of bids, appointment of consultants, releasing local currency funds, land acquisition and collection of vouchers from the fields and submission of reimbursement application were also identified as problems.

Frequent turnover of project directors, inadequate provision of local currency matching funds against project aid and poor supervision of project implementation were some other problems.

The ERD's solutions are increasing ministries' authority for approval of TAPP and revision of PP, increasing the authorised amount of procurement at all levels and increasing financial limit of all the approval authority for civil works, supply contracts and consultant services.

It also suggested simplification of the procedure of the release of local currency funds and a fully participatory Land Acquisition Action Plan to avoid delay in land acquisition.

## Probe into alleged torture of couple begins

From Staff Correspondent

BARISAL, October 3: Investigation into the alleged torture of a man and a woman and sexual abuse on her by police officer at Galachipa on August 25 is continuing.

The two-member enquiry committee comprising Deputy Secretary Wahab Sarker and Special Police Super of CID Fajlur Rahman started the investigation on Wednesday last.

It was alleged that Ashraf and Minara were tortured by police officer Abdul Rahim and that Minara was also sexually abused by the police officer at Galachipa on August 25 is continuing.

The enquiry committee talked to some local journalists and lawyers at the Patuakhali circuit house.

The committee members also went to Golachipa to interview some local people including Nargis, 9, daughter of Minara who was an eyewitness to the incident.

Abdur Rahim claimed that there was an allegation that Ashraf and Minara were living together although they had no legal marriage documents.

## BNP discusses

From Page 1

ment cannot be foisted through torture or oppression, he said. Bhuiyan also urged the people to make barricade programme a success ignoring government's repression, and other undemocratic measures.

The meeting was addressed, among others, by Abdullah Al Noman, Prof M A Mannan, Mirza Abbas, Selima Rahman, Haris Chowdhury, Sadek Hossain, Kola MP, Kurshid Jahan, Hara MP, Amanullah Aman MP, Barkatullah Bhulu MP, Mahbubul Alam Tara, Mofiqul Hasan Tripti, Rezi Ahmed, Khairul Kabir Khokon, Fazlul Haq Milon, Rezabuddin Chowdhury, Abu Sayed Khan Khokon, Habibunnabi Sohel and Nasiruddin Ahmed Pintu.

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## Cyclone deaths

From Page 1

identified as those of Akhtar Hossain, 7, of Charsuvi village, Jewel, 3, of South Joy Nagar and Abdur Rashid, 60, of Naldighi Baiktanpur under Daulat Khan thana, Monowar Begum, 35, of Parashang village, Zahara Kibon, 52, of Char Umed under Lalmohana thana, Fakir Rahman, 5, of Char Nurul Amin under Charfasion thana and Chan Meher, 50, of Char Zahiruddin under Tajumuddin thana.

The rest four bodies could not be identified.

With recovery of 12 bodies, the death toll from last Friday's cyclone rose to 42 in Bhola.

## Pharmacists

From Page 1

on September 17, 1997. About 30,000 shop owners and their nominees applied for registration since 1992. After scrutiny, 17,294 were qualified to sit for examination, sources in the PCB said.

The Accreditation and Education Committee of the PCB holds a three-hour examination with 200 questions for the grad 2B pharmacists. A candidate who can answer 50 per cent of the questions is considered successful and can get registration.

There are about 21,000 diploma pharmacists in the country who qualified from 1978 and 1985.