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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-

cesses will be affected. 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

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, reported 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 garment workers.

The Law Minister said the atmosphere in which the garment workers work is not congenial. "It is inhumane," he said, adding that a number of garment 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 garment 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

Zillur Rahman

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

Zillur Rahman said the statement of Khaleda Zia at a joining function at the official residence of the Leader of the Opposition on Thursday was fabricated, and baseless. He said when the government has been arresting terrorists with arms, Begum Zia is demanding their release claiming them as 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 subservient foreign policy of the BNP government headed by Begum Zia and said it signed the joint communique with the then Prime Minister of India offering them the chance 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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The Daily Star

'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 regions.

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 Samiti, 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 Samiti B. Duttar MP.

West Bengal Ministers Satyadasan Chakrabarty, Nanda Gopal Bhattacharya, and B. Mondal, Sheriff of Cal-

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

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 their moorings tied strongly as advised by the port authorities.

Appointments

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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 Mohamad 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 Rumy 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.

Police had raided the halls just after the Gopalganj faction captured the halls but failed to recover any arms. According to sources, the armed activists of the faction were inside the halls during the raid.

Shahidullah and Fazul Haq Halls of the university are considered strategically important for the toll collection as those are situated near the head office of the Dhaka City Corporation, the sources said.

BSS adds: The DU authority yesterday formed an eight-member probe body headed by Syndicate member Prof A T M Zahirul Haque to investigate into the indiscipline and undisciplined situation in the two halls.

The committee will find out the persons responsible for the incident and suggest measures as per rules of the university.

Prof A K Azad Chowdhury, Vice Chancellor of the university, asked the probe body to submit its report in a week.

CBA in PDB

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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 1,560 crore in fiscal '95-'96 from Tk 1,152 crore of '93-'94.

PDB's system loss was around 4.15 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.

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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

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.

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

—Star photo

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

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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.

Meanwhile, Bangladesh Textile Mills Association, in a statement last night, condemned the attack on Prime Group units by 'some known terrorists' and demanded stern action against them.

According to them, the owners had recently increased their wages but had sent their goons for the attack to resist the formation of CBA.

Some other workers, however, said the CBA was not required there but Palash was influencing the workers to form it.

Meanwhile, Bangladesh Textile Mills Association, in a statement last night, condemned the attack on Prime Group units by 'some known terrorists' and demanded stern action against them.

Jatiya Sramik League, in a statement, blamed the owners for the violence in the factories and said it a 'ploy to suppress the workers of various industries.'

Some workers of the Group told this correspondent that they wanted a CBA in the factories. They also said that Palash, who was helping them form a CBA, brought the situation under control when the mills were attacked.

According to them, the owners had recently increased their wages but had sent their goons for the attack to resist the formation of CBA.

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 foiled 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 Norman, Prof M A Mannan, Mirza Abbas, Selima Rahman, Haris Chowdhury, Sadek Hossein Khoka MP, Kursheed Jahan Haq MP, Amanullah Aman MP, Barkatullah Bhulu MP, Mahbubul Alam Tara, Mofiqul Hasan Tripty, Rezvi Ahmed, Khairul Kabir Khokon, Fazil Haq Milon, Rezabdullah Chowdhury, Abu Sayed Khan Khokon, Habibunabi Sohel and Nasiruddin Ahmed Pintu.

Cyclone deaths

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identified as those of Akhtar Hossein, 7, of Charsuvi village, Jewel, 3, of South Joy Nagar and Abdul Rashid, 60, of Nal-dug Balkantapur under Daulat Khan thana. Monowara Begum, 35, of Farashganj village, Zahura Khatun, 52, of Char Umed under Lalmohan thana, Fazir Rahman, 5, of Char Nurul Amin under Charfason 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 Bholia.

Aid pledge

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Another factor involved in this regard is the rising debt service liabilities (DSL), said a high official. "Depreciation of real exchange rate in recent time has raised the DSL. Unless this rising trend is offset with higher aid flows, a gap is likely to emerge in the balance sheet."

There are also difficulties in assessing the degree to which a government should rely on foreign resources to finance its budget deficit. Such assessment would require an evaluation of the country's ability to service and repay its external debt, as well as an examination of the likely terms at which foreign borrowing would be contracted," he said.

The Accreditation and Education Committee of the PCB holds a three-hour examination with 200 questions for the grade 'B' 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.

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.

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

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