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The Bhorer Kagoj, a vernacular daily, organised a Roundtable discussion on the education system at Hotel Sheraton yesterday.

Bhorer Kagoj Roundtable 16 major obstacles to development of edn

By Staff Correspondent

The atmosphere of creativity in education system has been systematically destroyed. You have to give the students an opportunity for 'thinking' habits for skill development. Creative thinking is completely absent today which is responsible for the decline in standard of education," said Dr Zafar Iqbal, a teacher of Sylhet Shahjalal University at a roundtable discussion organised by the Bengali Daily Bhorer Kagoj at a city hotel yesterday.

The discussants at the Roundtable on What Direction the Education System is Heading, while identifying various drawbacks in the existing education system, also made a number of recommendations to improve the system.

The Bhorer Kagoj in a paper presented at the Roundtable identified 16 major problems which, it said, were the main obstacles in the way of development of education system. The problems include lack of proper management in educational institutions, corruption and poor vigilance in the education system, deficiency in teachers' training and teachers' tendency of bunking, lack of basic facilities like furniture, apparatus and text books, poor allocation of funds for the education sector in the budget, existence of different methods of education system and lack of coordination among various departments of the education ministry.

Teachers should do politics for development of standard of education and refrain from being involved in party politics,"

said Dr Shahidul Islam of Rajshahi University.

Making comments on female education, a discussant said, "If a student fails in SSC or HSC examination the student has to wait for a whole year before appearing at the same examination next year. There should be a system, like in the West, in which a student failing in a particular subject can sit for examination only in that particular subject."

She said, "Introduction of such a system will help reduce the growing rate of drop-out of students."

Dr Anisuzzaman a teacher of Dhaka University, said teachers should be trained properly. For that, training facilities for various disciplines should also be developed, he said.

Dr Iqbal Mahmud, Vice-Chancellor of BUET, said, "In class room teaching really taking place properly? Today's education system has come down to its lowest standard. Today's education system is far below than what it was in the 1950s."

Milia Ali of World Bank observed that the government should give emphasis on skill-based training, look for new strategy and involve local governments at village level about overall for improvement of the standard of education.

She also said "teachers should not be transferred in at least three years."

Speaking on the occasion Education Minister ASHK Sadique said that the draft education policy, recently submitted to the government, will be made public by November 19.

Hasina: Terrorism

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League and being in the opposition now, it continued its terrorism and killing.

Mentioning the tragic tales of the family members of those killed, Hasina said the newspapers should project the true picture to stop terrorism and bloodshed. "We want to build a terrorism-free society."

Responding to the local problem, Hasina said the Muhuri-Mohura flood embankment project has been included in the Fifth Five year Plan at a cost of Tk 277 crore. The work of the project will start next year.

The Prime Minister today asked the law enforcing agencies to take stringent actions against the terrorists to ensure the safety and security of public life.

The terrorists, whoever they may be, will have to be controlled with strong hand," she said asking the law enforcers to take the measures that they feel

are needed to ensure peace and security.

Addressing a coordinating meeting at the local circuit house on law and order situation and the development activities, Hasina said, "the terrorists have no party... they 'ill have to be brought to book for the interest of the nation."

For a long time, she said, politics of capturing power was practised in the country and the youth forces were used by the political parties as tools for their political existence.

The Prime Minister said firearms were given to the youths and terrorist for political interest. After that, terrorism spread like a deadly disease in the country.

The Prime Minister said political stability is an imperative for the economic development of the nation and maintaining law and order is needed for political stability.

Earlier, at the circuit house, the Prime Minister met with the family members of those who were killed by the political opponents during the movement for caretaker government and in recent terrorist activities.

SAIC governing board meet begins in city today

A two-day long 12th meeting of the governing board of the SAARC Agricultural Information Centre (SAIC) will begin in the city today, said a press release, reports BSS.

Members of the SAIC governing board, including Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and representative from the SAARC will participate in the meeting.

Magurchhara Passenger train service may resume in Dec

From Staff Correspondent

SYLHET, Nov 15: Bangladesh Railway has been continuing trial operation of goods train on the repaired tracks passing through the Magurchhara Gas Field area without any trouble.

The trial operation on Srimongal Sylhet part of the Sylhet Akhaura section began on November 6.

However, the authority is yet to take final decision on resumption of passenger trains. A Railway official said adding "we are hopeful to resume the service of passenger train by the first week of December if everything goes well." The BR has been incurring a loss of Taka 15 lakh everyday since the gas field disaster on June 14, he informed.

The loss caused by the damage of rail tracks near the gas field stood at Taka two crore 10 lakh and the railway authority has repaired the tracks at a total cost of Taka one crore 42 lakh, he added.

Azizul Haq

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reports of 'several' irregularities in allocating plots in the city.

Moreover, another source said Khadem's multi-million dollar deal with Indus Valley to develop Gulshan and Banani lake areas landed him in a big 'problem'.

The government earlier formed a committee to probe into the Indus Valley deal following reports of massive irregularities in handing over the lake-side areas to Indus Valley, a Singapore-based developer.

The report of the committee was given to the Prime Minister on Thursday who immediately asked the Works Minister to take necessary steps against those responsible.

CHT talks

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iron out differences over certain issues that were proposed as amendments to the draft of an accord on which the two sides had agreed in their last meeting in Dhaka from September 14 to 17.

These amendments were "imposed" by PCJSS hardliners during its congress in Agartala, capital of Tripura, in early October, to wrest more concessions.

Shantu Larma had told newsmen after the sixth meeting in Dhaka that he accepted the draft agreement.

The proposed amendments include a regional council for the three hill districts to oversee the administration, police and land management. They also demanded rehabilitation of the armed cadres of the PCJSS into the security forces, including police.

To exert more pressure, Mriana Chakma, an adviser of PCJSS who operates under the banner of Humanity Protection Forum in Agartala went public on BBC on November 10.

He made an appeal to the Indian Prime Minister Inder Kumar Gujral to take up these demands and winding up of a strategic cantonment at Dighinala during his Gujral meeting with Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at the three-nation summit in Dhaka on November 23.

SEC wants institutional buyers to 'actively' take part in share market

The Securities and Exchange Commission has sent a letter to the authorities, urging them to ask the institutional buyers to "actively" participate in the market in order to salvage it from a critical state, reports UNB.

SEC officials said the letter has been sent to the Finance Ministry last week as the market was experiencing continuous downslide with extremely low turnovers in both volume and value.

The letter requested the ministry to take necessary measures so that the institutional buyers can actively participate in the capital market that remained bearish for weeks with no sign of recovery, they said.

However, the DSE All Share Price Index experienced a slight upturn during the last two days trading.

The Investment Corporation of Bangladesh (ICB), Bangladesh Shilpa Bank (BSB), Bangladesh Shilpa Rin Sangstha (BSRS) and Sadharan Bima Corporation (SBC) can extend their institutional support to the ailing market, the SEC sources said.

Presently, only the ICB, is operating in the share market, but their support is extremely inadequate compared to what the market needs at the moment, according to the market operators.

The three others - BSB, BSRS, SEC - are the members of the Dhaka Stock Exchange (DSE), but they are not operating in the trading floor due to various reasons, depriving the market from much-needed institutional support.

The SEC is also speeding up their efforts to give licences to eight establishments to operate as merchant banks in order to help the market to recover as early as possible, the SEC officials said.

If the merchant banks are created, they would buy shares to create their portfolios before launching their own mutual funds, a senior official of the SEC, the market watchdog, told UNB yesterday.

Digital phone exchange opens in Feni

FENI, Nov 15: Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina today said her government would soon declare a national telecommunication policy incorporating provisions for health competition between the public and the private sectors, reports BSS.

The Prime Minister was speaking as the chief guest at a function marking the formal inauguration of the newly constructed Tk nine-crore 2000-line digital telephone exchange here.

Earlier she opened the exchange through talking over phone to Telecommunication Minister Mohammad Nasim.

The function was also addressed, among others by local MP Joinal Abedin Hazi, T and T Secretary Mahbub Kabir and T and T Chairman M A Mannan Chowdhury.

The Prime Minister directed the Telecommunication Minister to increase the capacity of the new Feni exchange from 2000 to 4000 in phases. She also directed the authority concerned not to send the old analogue exchange outside the district. Rather, she suggested that this exchange should be installed in some upazilas of the district for development of telephone facility there.

Withdraw decision to cut pension money: DUTA

By DU Correspondent

The Dhaka University Teachers' Association (DUTA) has demanded withdrawal of the government's decision to cut the pension money of the teachers, officials and employees of the universities in the country.

The government has taken the decision following allegations that the university authorities have been making undue payments over the last 20 years violating the rules regarding payment of salaries and other allowances. The decision was implemented in October 1996.

Talking to The Daily Star, DUTA President Prof Mostafa Chowdhury said the DUTA had meetings with the Education Minister as well as the Finance Minister and urged them to cancel the decision.

DUTA also urged them to return the money that had already been deducted from the pension of the teachers, officials and employees. The ministers assured the DUTA officials that their demands would be properly considered, Prof Chowdhury said.

The officials of the Federation of the University Teachers' Association of Bangladesh would also meet the ministers with the same demand some time next week, he said.

"If the demands are not met through negotiations, we will go for a movement," Prof Chowdhury said.

He said that the allegations made by the Office of Comptroller and Auditor General were baseless adding that "the payments were made according to the rules regarding payments of the teachers, officials and employees."

IORARC meet from November 24

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ated with the objective of forging a new economic bloc of the littoral states of the Asia-Pacific region to provide a common platform to augment and diversify trade among the member states.

Bangladesh had always been keen on entering the new grouping formally launched in March this year.

Although there are 47 countries in the Indian Ocean Rim, Bangladesh, the third largest country in the region, was initially never considered for being included as a member. Besides Bangladesh, two other SAARC countries, Pakistan and the Maldives who are also littoral states, have not been included in the (IORARC) which was launched through a two-day meeting of foreign ministers in Mauritius on March 6 and 7.

During the formative stage of the organisation, initially known as the Indian Ocean Rim (IOR), the Indian government, in

Pak forces on high alert for visit of Albright

ISLAMABAD, Nov 15: Pakistani security forces are on high alert for the visit of US Secretary of State Madeleine Albright following Wednesday's murder of four Americans in Karachi, sources said today, reports AFP.

Albright, the first US Secretary of State to visit Pakistan since George Shultz in 1983, arrives here on Sunday and will leave on Tuesday for trips to India and Bangladesh in her tour of South Asia.

Authorities beefed up security arrangements for US diplomatic missions, cultural centres and American residents after four Houston-based auditors of oil company Union Texas were killed Wednesday in an ambush in Karachi.

Iraq urges Arabs to attack US, British interests

BAGHDAD, Nov 15: Iraq called on Arab nations today to attack US and British interests in the region to show their support for Baghdad in its continuing stand-off with the United Nations, reports AFP.

"All American and British interests in the region, whether embassies of the two countries or their warships, must become the target of armed attacks by Arab nationalist forces," said the official newspaper Babel, run by Iraqi President Saddam Hussein's son Uday.

Italian PM

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the trade and commerce ministers and senior officials from the PM's office, the Foreign Ministry and Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Italian PM's office said.

Businessmen will also be included, along with members of the press.

While in Dhaka, Prodi is expected to have talks with the Bangladesh government on bilateral issues as well as those relating to Italian assistance to Bangladesh through effective cooperation in the field of trade and commerce.

The Italian PMs visit reflects Italy's growing interest in Asia.

The visit should open up opportunities for both Bangladeshi entrepreneurs as well as their Italian counterparts looking for a place to invest in the emerging Asian market.



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AL-BNP clash in Ctg: 6 hurt

CHITTAGONG, Nov 15: Six people, including party leaders were injured in a clash between ruling Awami League and opposition BNP in the port city of Noor Ahmed road today, reports UNB.

Witnesses said the clash erupted when an AL procession was crossing the BNP city office at Nasim Bhaban on way to Laidighi Maidan at about 4:30 pm. Rival activists locked in the clash soon after some crackers blasted.

The Awami Leaguers were going to attend their scheduled rally at Laidighi Maidan as part of its week-long programme protesting killing, terrorism and anarchy. State Minister for Labour and Manpower, Abdul Mannan and City Mayor Alhaj ABM Mahiuddin Ahmed, among others, addressed there.

Also BNP had a scheduled meeting in front of its city office.

The injured included Bagmonir ward AL president Harun-ar-Rashid, general secretary Rabul Huq and Mahmodul Huq. They were admitted to a local clinic.

Jhalakati Poura chairman held

From Staff Correspondent

BARISAL, Nov 15: Police arrested Jhalakati Pourasabha Chairman Abdul Halim Gazi from his home this morning.

A case was filed by two boatmen Faruk Mirdha and Rahim Khan with the Jhalakati Thana. He was accused of theft, injury and attempt to murder.

Civil Surgeon of Barisal made OSD

From Staff Correspondent

BARISAL, Nov 15: Civil Surgeon of Barisal, Dr Khairul Alam has been ordered stand released following a message sent by fax from the Ministry of Health through the DC of Barisal today.

He was made an OSD at the Health Ministry following some allegations of irregularities against him.

UNICEF

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ties in cooperation with the private bodies.

Bellamy, now on a brief visit to Bangladesh, expressed her satisfaction over the UNICEF activities in Bangladesh having its second largest programme globally.

"Significant improvement has been made here in the meantime, but a lot of work is to be done," Bellamy told the press conference at the UNICEF local office.

Praising the UNICEF-ILO initiated MOU on child labour in the garment sector, she said it had reduced the number of child workers and provided educational opportunity to them.

Bellamy, who took over as the fourth Executive Director of UNICEF in May 1995, emphasised on more works in education, nutrition and sanitation programmes.

Replying to a question on child trafficking from Bangladesh, she called the issue a "subregional" one and said "there is no way to ignore the issue."

Rolf C Carriere, the UNICEF Resident Representative in Bangladesh, told the newsmen the UNICEF was assessing the current situation of child trafficking with the help of ILO and the government.

He said that taking the child trafficking issue seriously, the UNICEF was discussing with the lawyers, police and BDR to take further action in this regard.

This is the first visit of UNICEF executive director Carol Bellamy to Bangladesh. She met the Prime Minister, the Finance Minister and high government officials. She also had some field trips to see the UNICEF activities.

On behalf of UNICEF, Bellamy thanked Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina for her commitment towards improving the condition of child health, nutrition and education.

BNP, 6 parties meet

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tion" in Chittagong on Tuesday and said it is part of a government 'design to foil the opposition rallies'. It also protested filing of cases against the 7-party leaders after the Chittagong incidents. It demanded withdrawal of the cases and arrests and trial of the killers.

Earlier in the morning, BNP's National Standing Committee at a meeting reaffirmed the party's position not to return to the Jatiya Sangsad unless the government accepts its three-point demand which include withdrawal of cases against party lawmakers, meeting sources said.

The two other demands are withdrawal of the ban on street rally in the city and, cases against the party members in connection with BNP's recent street rallies.

Held at the Minto Road official residence of Begum Zia, the meeting was chaired by BNP Vice-Chairman, Prof AQM Badruddoza Choudhury.

Talking to newsmen later in the evening, BNP Secretary General Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan said his party demands fresh selection of meeting venues in the city. The road in front of the Jatiya Press Club and the Manik Mia Avenue should be in the fresh list, he said.

Replying to a question on home ministry's scrutiny of the list of political cases against the BNP lawmakers, leaders and workers, Mannan Bhuiyan said political cases were filed against 22 to 24 party

AL conveys

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sides, as far as the ban on street rallies is concerned, we welcome any proposal from the BNP suggesting more venues for holding rallies in the city, but not on the streets," Nasim said.

He also noted that if not all, some parliamentary standing committees would be formed today, the scheduled day of prorogation of the current session of the Jatiya Sangsad. He, however, added that posts for BNP lawmakers in the standing committees would be kept vacant.

Earlier, talking to The Daily Star, the BNP Secretary General reiterated his party's position that for a meaningful dialogue the government should come forward in realising his party's three conditions. He expressed the view that the formation of the parliamentary committees will not help resolve the crisis in any way.

Dacoits kill 2

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months passed.

Police investigation found that the gang broke the ventilator and entered into the grocery store, about 200 yards from Raipura thana. Then they tied the manager and the assistant who were sleeping inside.

The gang took away Tk 2.50 lakh in cash, and valuables including gold rings worth about Tk 25,000.

Meanwhile, police sent the bodies to Narsingdi Sadar Hospital for autopsy.

Shop owner Abul Fazal lodged a case with Raipura thana in this regard.

However, none was arrested in connection with the killing till filing of this report.

Gazipur EPZ

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setting up an EPZ in Comilla as there would not be any problem in getting adequate land there.

He noted that they had been facing difficulties in acquiring 500 acres of land at Mauna in Gazipur.

The money which had been allocated for Gazipur EPZ would not be spent of Comilla EPZ. Initially, the government had allocated Tk 70 crore for development of 200 acres out of a total of 500 acres of land for preparing industrial plots at Gazipur EPZ.

The main difficulty faced in acquisition of land at Mauna was the dispute over fixation of price of the land. The inhabitants of the area were not willing to give the land at government-fixed rates. Moazzem Hossain said "we cannot give more money than government rule allows us."

The proposed Comilla EPZ will be set up on 450 acres of land, beside Dhaka-Chittagong highway about 60 miles from the capital. BEPZA officials said the site is suitable for the project because it is khas land and there would not be any necessity of eviction of people. The site, now under the Civil Aviation Authority, will be easily available to BEPZA officials.

The BEPZA Board of Governors also decided to set up a central treatment plant for industrial waste at the Dhaka EPZ and to accelerate land acquisition activities for another two EPZs at Mongla and Ishwardi.

"We would start development work for proposed Mongla EPZ as soon as the Mongla Port Authority hands over 200 acres of land and Moazzem Hossain said. He hoped that the land would be available in two months. Besides, the process of acquiring about 300 acres of land for Ishwardi EPZ is going on, he said.

Question paper

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being taken from the police station, it was alleged.

Some officials of National University have gone to Daulatpur to investigate the matter.

Economics second paper examination is scheduled to be held on November 24.

Bankruptcy Act

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ciary and government bodies, charity and religious organisations, statutory bodies and autonomous organisations from its purview.

However, the district judge courts have been empowered to deal with the cases under the Bankruptcy Act. The district judge can delegate his power to the additional district judge.

But the cases under the law have not been given priority in the district or additional district judge courts and no time frame has been mentioned to dispose of the cases, Janata Bank's legal wing observed.

This will lead to unusual prolongation of cases, they said.

"Unless these shortcomings are removed, our bad loans cannot be recovered," said the Managing Director of a private bank. Previously, the cases against the loan defaulters got stuck with the courts for years. Our expectation was that the new law would expedite the process which it has not done."

Editor : Mahfuz Anam

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