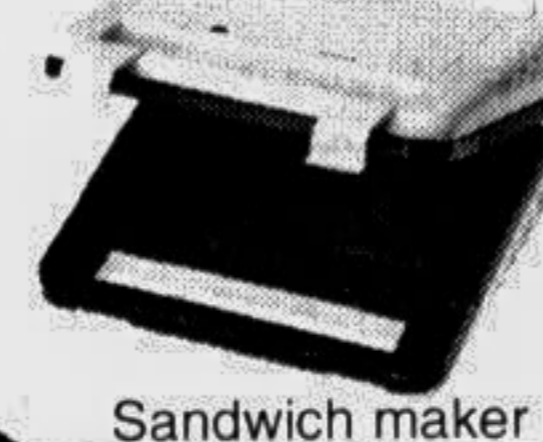
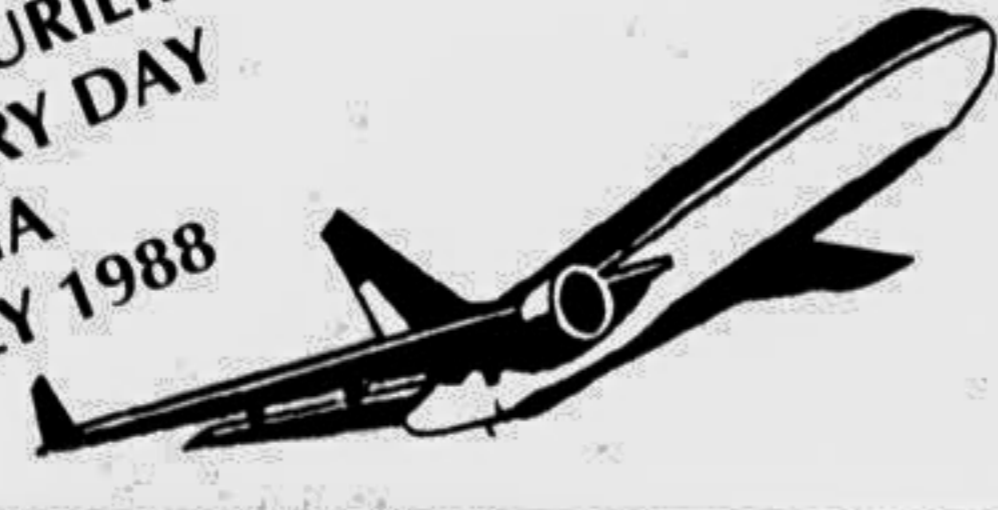


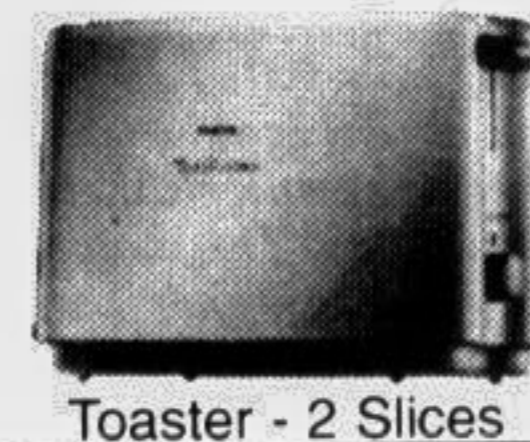
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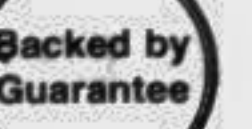
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PHILIPS

## Economists warn at seminar in city

# Liberalisation without fulfilling prior conditions may invite debacle

By Staff Correspondent

All developing countries should learn some lessons from the current economic crisis in many Southeast Asian countries, speakers said on the second day yesterday of the international seminar on the reform experience in South Asia.

They said that there should be a close cooperation between the government and financial sectors so that the economy does not go beyond control.

They identified a number of reasons which led to the economic debacle in Southeast Asian countries. The reasons, they said, include rising current account deficit, huge short term loan by international organisations, weak banking system and lack of government controls over the economy.

They pointed out that too much liberalisation before fulfilling other requirements might bring similar type of crisis in many developing countries.

They emphasised on effective regulatory and supervisory framework for establishing a sound financial system.

Six papers evaluating the reform programmes in South Asian countries were presented yesterday at the four working sessions of the seminar on "Adjustment and Beyond: The Reform Experience in South Asia."

The papers were presented by Wahiduddin Mahmud, K K Gurungharana, Nadimul Haque and M Dailami, Prabhat Patnaik, R S Osmani, Frances Stewart, Azizul Islam and John Williamson.

Among the discussants, former finance ministers M Saifur Rahman and M A Muhiit, executive director of Centre for Policy Dialogue Prof Rehman Sobhan, Mohammad Yunus, Koichi Hamada, Deepak Lal, John Toye, Meghnad Desai, Amiya Banerji, Anisur Rahman, Abhijeet Sen and Arjun Sen-

gupta were prominent.

Bangladesh Economic Association is organising the three-day seminar in collaboration with the International Economic Association at Sonargaon Hotel. Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina inaugurated the seminar on Monday.

Wahiduddin Mahmud in his keynote paper underscored the need for good governance for facing the future challenges in implementation of macroeconomic reform in Bangladesh.

In his paper titled "Bangladesh: Structural Adjustment and Beyond," Mahmud said that good governance was the major factor for creation of an enabling environment for private investment.

"Even with considerable success in domestic resource mobilisation in the early 90s, an acceleration in economic growth did not take place mainly because of a feeble response of private sector investment," he said.



Jute and Textile workers demonstrating at Shyampur near the city yesterday as part of their countrywide road-rail barricade programme.

## Barricade

From Page 1

at Oxygen Crossing. At one stage when the agitated strikers put up barricade at Ataturk Depot they locked in clash with police. Police resorted to lathicharge as the strikers hurled bricks at them.

The clashes in two places left at least 20 persons injured, police informed.

The striking jute mills and textiles workers also put up barricades at Kalurghat industrial belt, Alankar Cinema Crossing, Sitakundu and Barabkundu points disrupting the rail and road communication between Chittagong and other parts of the country, police and railway sources said.

All kinds of transports and trains bound for Chittagong were stranded at Barabkundu, Sitakundu and Kumira points, police said.

A train driver was assaulted by angry workers at Sitakundu, railway sources said. Two platoons of BDR were deployed at Kumira and Sitakundu points.

Some garments factories at Sagarika road and Nasirabad also came under attacks during the strike, police said.

## PM asks DCs

# Perform duties with commitment to people

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday said the government is committed to parliamentary democracy and wants to establish skilled, transparent, accountable and democratic administration, reports UNB.

Addressing the three-day conference of the deputy commissioners (DCs) at the International Conference Centre (ICC) in the afternoon, Hasina said developments of the districts depend mostly on the activities of the DCs.

She called upon the district officials to perform their duties with responsibility and commitment to the people.

The main objective of the conference is to make the field level administration more dynamic through exchange of views.

One DC from each of the six divisions, the DC of Dhaka and the commissioner of Chittagong division also addressed the inaugural session, attended by ministers, state ministers, secretaries, divisional commissioners and high government officials.

Prime Minister said the deputy commissioners have an excellent scope to interact with the people and they can easily motivate the people to involve them in the development activities of the government.

Referring to terrorism, extortion and repression on women, she said the government is pledge-bound to establish a terrorism and violence

free society and taking stern action against such crimes.

She said the government is going to introduce more stringent laws against women repression. "It is you who can ensure neutral and strict application of these laws."

## Ban on rallies

From Page 1

would take a little more time to finish scrutiny of the alleged 'framed charges' against some of the BNP leaders and activists. According to the agreement, the government was supposed to withdraw the 'framed charges' by March 31.

The Ministry has already identified more than two hundred cases that can be withdrawn in the first phase. The Home Minister will show the list to the Prime Minister within a couple of days before handing it over to the BNP, a ruling party member attending the meeting said.

There was no progress in formation of parliamentary standing committees accommodating all the 113 BNP legislators as the BNP handed over its 'specific suggestions' about it to the ruling party just last night.

According to meeting sources, the BNP had demanded four members each in ten committees, three each in 23 committees and two each in two committees.

The ruling party will take necessary steps to fulfil this part of the agreement very soon, a Treasury Bench Whip told The Daily Star.

Speaking on 'objective' tele-cast of parliament proceedings by the state-run electronic media, another point of the AL-BNP accord, the minister said earlier in the House: As per previous understanding, Speaker Humayun Rashid Chowdhury will find out a mechanism in consultation with the Chief Whip of the Jatiya Sangsad and the Chief Whip of the Opposition.

## Indemnity

From Page 1

elected following the withdrawal of martial law.

He contended that the act of repeal of the Indemnity Ordinance by simple majority in Parliament in 1996 was valid as there was no embargo on repealing it.

Before the court rose for the day, Justice Mustafa Kamal asked the Attorney General to satisfy the bench as to the legal consequences in case all the martial law proclamations are invalidated.

"What is the fate of the Fifth Amendment (Constitution)? What will be the status of the subsequent governments, questioned the learned judge.

Referring to the opinions of the *amicus curiae* which were largely reflected in the High Court decision in this case, the learned judge observed: "It (original writ) was not their baby."

The Attorney General will resume his arguments tomorrow morning.

## Khaleda

From Page 1

said BNP had got barely three years to work for the nation as Awami League created obstacles.

She said, "We have increased the annual development budget to Tk 12,000 crore from Tk 5,000 crore. We have succeeded in financing 45 per cent of the total ADP from our own resources."

# Experts suggest steps to fight arsenic pollution

By Staff Correspondent

Experts at a workshop yesterday adopted a number of recommendations for elimination of arsenic from groundwater.

Some of the recommendations for safe drinking water in field level include strengthening of existing water testing laboratories and raising their testing capacity, making available 'standard' field kits, setting up a central computer database, forming a core training group for training of trainers and establishing a database on all hand-pumped tubewells.

As mitigation strategies, the experts suggested supplying piped water from surface water source after treatment, use of ponds and filters, exploring arsenic free pockets of groundwater and use of rainwater.

According to statistics, more than 2000 patients so far have been identified with symptoms of severe melanosis and keratosis — two of the characteristics of arsenic poisoning. Initial test results show a large number of hand-pumped tubewells are affected by presence of arsenic

in water more than the WHO recommended permissible level of 0.05 mg per litre.

At the day-long workshop, jointly organised by DPHE, UNDP, World Bank, EPH, ICDDR, B and GARNET, a number of technical papers were presented.

Those who presented the technical papers were Md Mustafizur Rahman of Department of Public Health Engineering Kazi Matin Ahmed of Dhaka University, Md Zakaria of BRAC and Bilquis Amin of ICDDR, B.

## PM: Allowance

From Page 1

through the Ministry of Youth and Sports. She said arrangements have been made to disburse Tk 102.95 till the current fiscal year.

Responding to a question Hasina told the House that at the moment the government has no plan to construct railway line from Aricha to Dhaka.

## Army deployed

From Page 1

Meanwhile, State Minister for Power, Energy and Mineral Resources Rafiqul Islam yesterday said that stern action would be taken against any non-cooperation and failure in achieving the desired target of power generation in the country.

The minister said this at a meeting with the chiefs and high officials of different organisations of the ministry in its conference room in the city, according to BSS.

The state minister said power distribution system and customer services will have to be developed by cutting off illegal connections.

The minister stressed the need for coordination among the DESA, REB and Petrobangla in this regard.

# IFRCRCS seeks funds for repatriated tribal families

The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRCRCS) has appealed for Swiss Fr 1.99 million to assist 175,000 members of tribal families of Chittagong Hill Tracts, reports UNB.

The funds will be used to help 55,000 returnees who had lived in the Indian State of Tripura for 15 years. Of them, more than 11,000 families will be provided with supplementary food, said a press release yesterday.

Another 120,000 people will be benefited from various community service programmes. In addition, disaster preparedness and health programmes will reach a large part of the total CHT population of one million.

## BUETTA

From Page 1

ties of the BUET.

The BUETTA expressed concern over the incidents of alleged threat on life of some BUET teachers over telephone. The meeting said that Majharul Islam, Rabul Hossain, Iqbal and the fifteen teachers would be responsible if the security of the BUET teachers was threatened in any way.

The meeting also resolved that BUET teachers would resist any attempt to set up an Architecture Institute under BUET. "The teachers, however, do not have any objection in setting up an independent Architecture Institute," the press release added.

The BUETTA also demanded withdrawal of a circular issued by the Education Ministry on March 24. It is against the rules and the University Ordinance and is a "naked attack" on the autonomy of the university, the meeting observed.

## Rescued children

From Page 1

Bangladeshi children, detained by Indian police when they were being smuggled out of India to the Gulf states to work as camel jockeys. They were brought back home last month by BJMAS.

The latest batch of children's plight was highlighted by a Star TV reporter who took their interviews in jail in Bangalore recently.

Subsequently Salma Ali, president of the BJMAS on a visit to India contacted Bangladesh High Commission in Delhi. M Rafiqul Alam Khan, Minister (Consular) visited the children and the women at prison to gather their details and help organise their repatriation.

Ms Ali has agreed to pay for their repatriation and take care of them at a shelter she runs in Dhaka, her aides said.

Last night only the names of 16 children were available. They are: Murshed Alam, 6, S/o Abul Kalam of Lakhapur; Babu, 7, S/o Babul, Lakhapur; Saheed, 7, S/o Abul Karim, Comilla; Munir, 7, S/o Masud Bhuiyan, Narayanganj; Khokan, 6, Keraniganj; Sujun, 5, Keraniganj; Farukh, 7, S/o Khurshed Alam, Brahmanbaria; Sobel, 6, S/o Badal Hossain, Munshiganj; Alauddin, 8, S/o Abdul Malek Patwary, Chandpur; Alamin, 5, S/o Abdul Malek Patwary, Chandpur; Jonny, 7, and Hriday, 2, S/o Rahman Amir, Keraniganj; Jamal, 7, S/o Liton, Comilla; Sarif, 7, S/o Giasuddin, Brahmanbaria; and Jewel, 5, S/o Badal Hossain, Brahmanbaria.

# BNP stages walkout of JS

From Page 1

members and sending a slip to the Chair through the Chief Whip.

In response, the Speaker said that neither the PM gave him any indication, nor he saw any such thing. He made repeated efforts to clarify the statement he made earlier and again told the House that he made a list of persons who drew his attention for putting supplementary questions.

As Mosharrar read out rule 56 of the Rules of Procedure to say that the Chair had violated the rule, the Speaker charged the BNP MP for misquoting the rule.

At this stage, Tofael Ahmed rose to refute the Opposition's allegation that the PM had given "an indication" to the Chair. He said that it was the government of Sheikh Hasina that introduced the PM's Question Time to prove transparency of her government.

He also accused the BNP of conspiring to make the JS ineffective and making untrue statements in the House to mislead the people.

To end the chaos, the Leader of the House then stood up to explain the method of selecting questions for the PM according to serial.

Referring a decision of choosing only five questions for the PM a week, she told the House that for this week, the

number of questions was raised to six and then to seven to accommodate Opposition's questions. In this regard, she mentioned that many questions were neither proper nor on national issues and said the questioners abused their right by raising irrelevant matters while putting supplementaries.

She noted that it was her government which created a new precedence of accountability of the government by introducing the PM's Question Time which was not done by the BNP government.

The Leader of the House was critical of the BNP members for their absence during her Question Time.

Referring to the continued absence of the Leader of the Opposition since BNP returned to the House after six months, Hasina urged the Opposition leader to attend the session and ask her questions.

"I'm ready to reply any question she (opposition leader) wants to ask. What is her weakness? I don't suffer from political bankruptcy which the Opposition Leader may have," he said.

The PM asked the Opposition Leader to attend parliamentary session "instead of making speeches outside to mislead the people."

Getting the floor, Dr Mosharrar accused Leader of the House Sheikh Hasina of urging the Speaker not to allow supplementaries from BNP

Before closing the question-hour, the Speaker said, "I didn't say that I'll not give them (chance to put supplementaries) what I said is in the record." He said, a number of members drew his attention and he wanted to give them the floor first.

The BNP members returned to the House at about 12.05 pm under the leadership of M. Saifur Rahman who requested the Chair to allow Dr. Mosharrar to speak since he was not present during the uproar.

As Mosharrar read out rule 56 of the Rules of Procedure to say that the Chair had violated the rule, the Speaker charged the BNP MP for misquoting the rule.

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# 'Why is there no security for my daughter?' 'Who will provide security for my child?'

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# PM: Bill to be placed soon

From Page 1

have also been taken by a special cell to stop torture on women and children, provide counselling by experienced magistrates and lawyers for family reunion, extend legal aid for the litigating women and realisation of maintenance allowance and 'denmohar' for the divorcees. Besides, there are centres in each divisional headquarters for rehabilitation of the distressed women, she added.

The Prime Minister said that 10 special courts have been set up in 10 district towns for

the trial of such crimes while resistance committees against repression on women and children have been formed up to district, thana and union levels.

The Prime Minister said despite all these measures to stop such crimes some offenders were escaping punishment taking advantage of the lapses and lacunas of Women and Children Repression Act, 1995. She said some innocent people are being harassed taking advantage of some of the provisions of this act. In the proposed special attention has been given to stop such harassment of innocent persons.

The government is determined to try the accused and to prevent such crimes, she said.

Hasina said inter-country gangs are engaged in child trafficking. To prevent it, cooperation of other countries, specially of the neighbouring ones, is essential.

The Prime Minister said that to hold a regional convention on "Combating the Crime of Trafficking in Women and Children" is in the drafting stage.

Hasina said apart from the legal aspects, steps have also been taken to create mass awareness against repression on women and trafficking in children.

But government initiative alone is not enough, she said and called for building up a social resistance movement against the menace.

## HSC students

From Page 1

disperse the students, witnesses added.

Then the agitating students started damaging vehicles and ran towards Segunbagicha.

Police, however, denied to have charged baton on students. Ramna police were preparing to file a case in connection with the incident.

## Bangabandhu

From Page 1

Musa Majumdar in the incident was being detected. "But later I applied for relieving them of the case as their involvement was not proved," he said.

The cross-examination will continue today when the court resumes in the morning.

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Quiz 4	14 May, '98	27 May, '98	27 May, '98	28 May, '98
Quiz 5	28 May, '98	10 June, '98	10 June, '98	11 June, '98
Quiz 6	11 June, '98	17 June, '98	17 June, '98	18 June, '98
Quiz 7	18 June, '98	24 June, '98	24 June, '98	25 June, '98
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