

Metropolitan

Speakers at a seminar Bangladesh should have integrated energy policy

Speakers at a seminar yesterday opined that Bangladesh should have an integrated energy policy to explore and utilise its energy resources, reports UNB.

Addressing a working session of the seminar on "Investment in South Asia," leader of US-Bangladesh Business Council Joseph J Sutton said a policy was needed to establish guidelines for downstream gas utilisation and gas export.

The policy should also establish a reserve and the guidelines should be specific enough for the stakeholders to know what the rules are, he said.

Sutton proposed to form a policy preparation committee comprising government planners, private sector upstream producers, private sector gas transportation and distribution, private sector downstream infrastructure and major investors.

Stressing the need for developing an infrastructure for energy, he also underlined the options. He, however, preferred

pipelines instead of establishing LNG plants.

Sutton felt as Bangladesh's potential markets are eastern India, North/Central India to Nepal, and Southern India, pipeline would be the best option.

To develop a durable value addition product, export to neighbouring country would be the choice, he said.

He added that Bangladesh's gas sale to India and Nepal would increase the foreign exchange remarkably, reduce current account deficit, enable double use of the pipeline both internally and externally, and facilitate funds for additional social programmes.

Later, taking part in the discussion, renowned economist Prof Wahiduddin Mahmud also opined that a regulatory body should be established soon to monitor the implementation of the Production Sharing Contracts (PSCs).

He said: "It might not be that we are not in the right track but as we don't still know the options we can't comment on it."

He hoped the options that are being thought of by the government for the gas sector should be made available for the public so that they can judge it.

Prof Mahmud said there are concerns whether "we are getting the best possible contracts." "There are also questions whether we should go for our own investment or explore the sector through joint-venture collaboration."

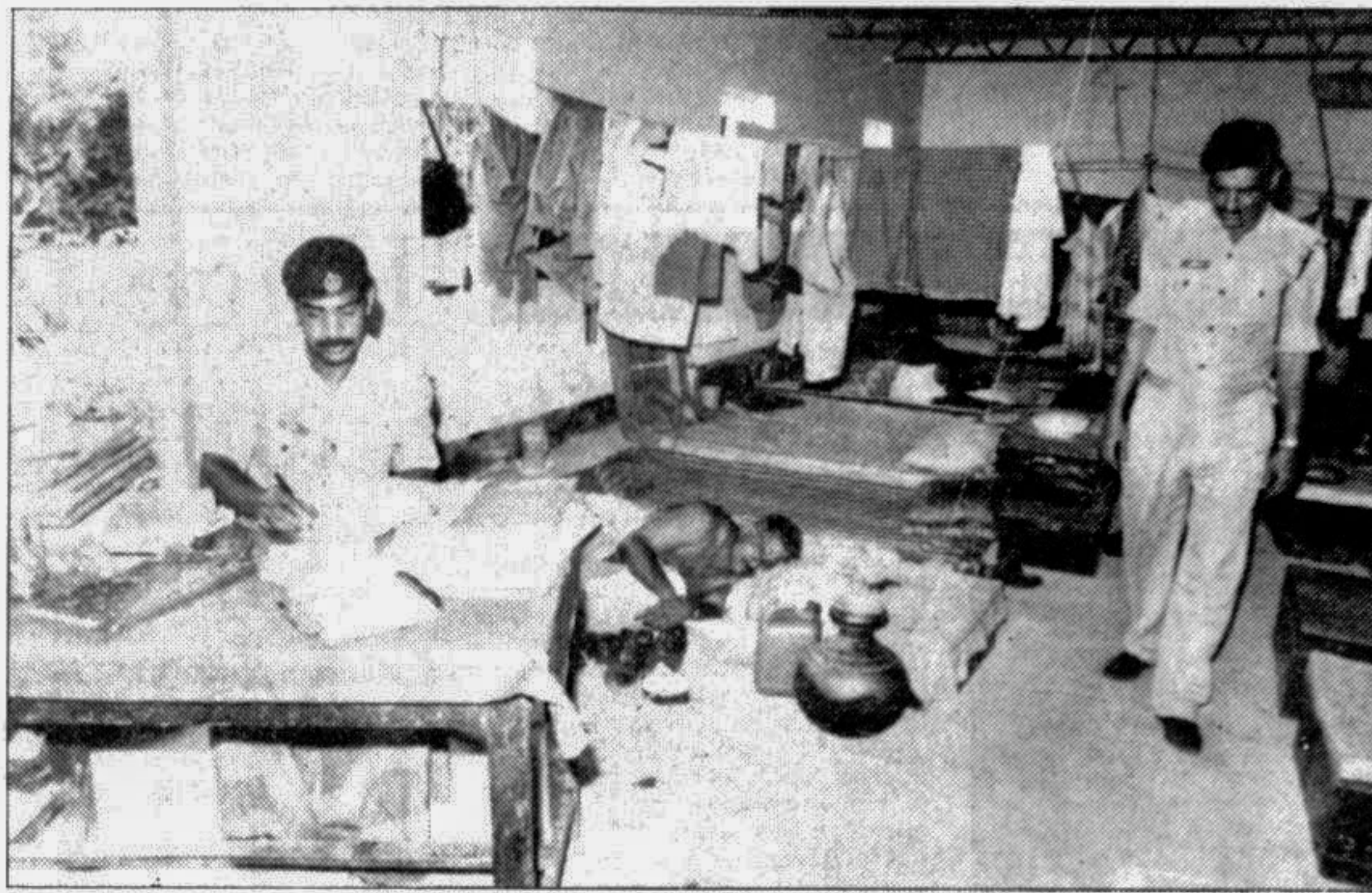
But, he added, it is true that compared to other countries Bangladesh shares are less.

"However, it might have happened because of Bangladesh's image and market potentialities," said Prof Mahmud adding: "It is a fact that our domestic market is very limited."

Additional Secretary of the Energy Ministry Syed Tanveer Hussain presented a separate keynote paper at the working session on "Developing Energy Sector in Bangladesh - National and Regional Prospects."



A SCARED PASSENGER: Little Khadija Khatoon of Demra, hardly disturbed by the floods, takes a boatride along with her pet.



SHELTER FOR POLICE: Members of Badda police outpost under Gulshan thana have taken refuge in a shop as their office has gone under water.

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Gateway

Advertisement for Gyas Development Corporation (গ্যাস ডেভেলপমেন্ট কোম্পানী লিমিটেড) regarding a tender for a gas pipeline project. Includes details about the project location, budget, and contact information.

Advertisement for the Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, Office of the Executive Engineer. It contains a "Tender Notice" for Rural Infrastructure Maintenance Programme, detailing project description, budget, and submission requirements.

Ministers continue relief distribution Call for united efforts to aid flood victims

Ministers and State Ministers yesterday called for united efforts to mitigate the sufferings of the flood-affected people of the country, reports agencies.

The ministers while distributing relief materials at different flood-affected areas of the country yesterday reiterated that the government has taken adequate measures to ensure supply of food and medicines to the flood victims.

LGRD and Cooperatives Minister Zillur Rahman yesterday visited flood affected areas of Netrokona district and distributed rice, lentils, dry foods, saline and medicines among the flood victims of Khaliujari, Madon, Mohanganj and Sadar thana flood shelters.

Fazlur Rahman Khan MP, Jalaluddin Talukder MP and local Awami League leaders accompanied the minister.

Environment and Forest Minister Syeda Sajeda Chowdhury visited Soarighat and Kamrangirchar areas under Lalbagh thana in the city.

The minister distributed relief materials including rice, salt and hilsa fish among the flood victims at Chhampali Primary School shelter.

Shahidnagar embankment, Sullanganj and Ashrafabad.

The Environment Minister also visited a pure drinking water supply centre at Lalbagh embankment, operated by Bangladesh Army. Some 2,000 gallons of water are being supplied to the victims every day from the centre.

Local MP Haji Mohammad Selim and local Awami League leaders were present.

Health and Family Welfare Minister Salahuddin Yusuf visited Kapashia thana of Gazipur district and distributed rice, sarees, lungis and medicine among the flood affected people.

He also visited the flood-threatened Ekorla embankment and sluice gates, and directed the local administration to monitor the situation round the clock.

Water Resources Minister Abdur Razzak visited Balbhadra Bazar and Nayarhat Bazar of Savar thana and distributed cash money, sarees, lungis and oral saline among the victims.

Deputy Commissioner of Dhaka district Mobarak Hossain and local Awami League leaders accompanied the minister.

Food and Agriculture Minister Matia Chowdhury visited different areas of Nakala and Nalitabari thanas of Sherpur district and distributed relief goods.

Civil Aviation and Tourism Minister Mosharraf Hossain visited different areas of Gulshan thana in the city and distributed relief among the flood victims of Satarkul and Duman unions.

State Minister for Fisheries and Livestock Satish Chandra Roy visited Biral, Birganj and Kaharol areas of Dinajpur district and distributed relief.

State Minister for Youth and Sports Obaidul Quader visited Balucha, Ichhapur, Basail and Latandi unions of Sirajdikhan in Munshiganj district and distributed rice, lentils and cash money.

State Minister for Planning Dr Mohiuddin Khan Alamgir visited city's Rajarbagh area and distributed relief.

State Minister for Textile AKM Zahangir Hossain visited flood-hit Goran under Sabujbagh thana in the city and distributed relief.

Seminar on investment in South Asia opens Necessary reform measures in key sectors stressed

Participants at a regional seminar in the city yesterday strongly pleaded for solid political leadership in South Asian countries to help the region face the challenges and take the advantages of the present globalisation process, reports BSS.

They also stressed the need for necessary reform measures in key sectors of these countries and removing all bureaucratic barriers as the region must face the burden of globalisation in its own interest.

The participants including minister, former minister, chamber leaders, businessmen and leading economists of home and abroad were giving their opinion in favour of the South Asia region to accept globalisation at the first session of the seminar.

The seminar on investment in South Asia was inaugurated by Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in the morning. The first session on "Globalisation and South Asian Economies: Problems and Prospects" was presided over by Minister for Commerce and Industries Toifal Ahmed.

Former commerce secretary of India AV Ganesan presented the key-note paper while former finance minister Saifur Rahman, MP, FICCI president AKM Shamsuddin and Dr KAS Murshed of BIDS, among others, took part in the discussion. The FBCCI president, Yusuf Abdullah Haroon, gave the vote of thanks.

Toifal Ahmed said Bangladesh had accepted the globalisation as a challenge as well as an opportunity and he urged all countries of the region to integrate their economies with the globalisation process in the greater interest of the people of South Asia.

"Now the question arises how best the South Asian economies can jointly integrate themselves with the global trade and investment," he mentioned while saying, there are problems in core labour standards, coordination in formulation of strategies, diversification of export baskets and market access.

Speaking in favour of market access of the developing countries to the developed world, Toifal Ahmed called for ensuring compensatory measures for the developing economies.

On the other hand, there should be an in-built confidence among countries of South Asia, he observed but regretted that India and Pakistan were to give zero-tariff facilities to Bangladesh on non-reciprocity basis but they did not comply it.

He also said that tariff concession given by India to Bangladesh could not be utilised only because of high percentage of local value addition so far. "Bangladesh government withdrew tariff and non-tariff barriers and also withdrew quantitative restrictions on 386 items out of the total 436," he said.

Toifal Ahmed described India as a big player in the South Asian region and said this

country was taking advantages of the present globalisation process. "We all should try together to benefit ourselves from the on-going globalisation process through ensuring our access to the world market," he said.

Former finance minister Saifur Rahman emphatically said that the ongoing globalisation could be balanced with the South Asian economies by converting the inward looking economy of the region into outward looking economy.

In this respect, he suggested thorough liberalisation as well as macro-balances side by side reforms of key sectors in the south Asian economies to cope with the present globalisation process.

"The government which is in favour of foreign investment is more courageous in carrying out reform here than other countries of the region," he said adding, "although the government gave all facilities to foreign investment it is not coming upto the expectation due to hurdles in the bureaucratic system."

Saifur Rahman urged the politicians as a whole to be more and more courageous in their mission to fight poverty and to deal effectively with reform measures to meet the need of the hour.

He also urged the governments in the region to work in an integrated manner to attract more and more foreign investment in the region.

President of Foreign Investors' Chambers of Commerce and Industries (FICCI) AKM Shamsuddin pleaded for strong political will in the South Asian countries with both parties in power and parties in opposition working in close cooperation for the common interest of the people as a whole.

In this respect, he referred to various social impediments including violence, corruption, smuggling and many other evils which should be eradicated for ever by the influence of strong political will from the region.

Speaking in favour of reform in the key sectors, Shamsuddin said governments in South Asia should give proper attention to enhancement of efficiency level as it was now a very big factor in the development of economy.

AV Ganesan in his paper said the South Asian economies, despite their physical and human resource endowments

were left as marginal players in international trade and investment due to their excessive and prolonged reliance on inward looking and non-competitive economic and industrial development strategies.

"As a result the share of the South Asian economies in international trade and investment is disappointingly low," he said adding that still none of the South Asian countries were among top 15 recipients of foreign direct investment among the developing countries.

The former Indian commerce secretary said the basic challenge before the South Asian economies in the emerging global economic order was how they would raise efficiency and international competitiveness of their economies for integration with the global economy.

Ganesan in support of his proposition to integrate the South Asian economies with the global order said that regional and sub-regional cooperation could be a valuable instrument not only to promote economic growth of the countries concerned but also to cope with the challenges of emerging international economic environment and even for influencing the international rules and disciplines.

Prof Noman's death anniversary

A *milad mahfil* will be held today to mark the second anniversary of death of Prof Mohammad Noman, a noted educationist and former vice-chancellor of Jahangirnagar University, reports BSS.

The *milad mahfil* will be held after Asr prayers at 1/C, Paribagh WAPDA Colony, residence of late Prof Noman's younger brother.

Meanwhile, "Prof Noman Smriti Foundation" will organise a discussion to mark the occasion.

The foundation which is planning to publish a commemorative book on the life and activities of Prof Noman is in progress.

Prof Noman was associated with Dhaka College for a long period.

Tk 3.6 cr more US aid for relief work

The United States will provide an additional Tk 3.6 crore (approximately 766,000 US dollars) to CARE Bangladesh to conduct relief operation among the flood victims, reports UNB.

The US Agency for International Development (USAID) in the city on Thursday announced that with the fund, CARE Bangladesh will continue relief activities in flood affected Tangail, Munshiganj, Narayanganj, Madaripur, Shariatpur, Manikganj, Kurigram, Gaibandha and Narshingdi districts and Dhaka city.

This grant is in addition to Tk 2.58 crore previously supplied to CARE to purchase emergency food rations for families in flood affected areas. With this the total amount of US flood relief assistance stands at over Tk 177.77 crore (33.57 million dollars), said an USIS release.

Khaleeda visits flood-hit Chandpur areas today

BNP Chairperson and Leader of the Opposition in Parliament Khaleeda Zia will visit the flood affected areas in Chandpur district today, reports UNB.

She will also distribute relief goods among the flood-victims of the affected areas.

Khaleeda will go to Chandpur by launch and return to Dhaka on the same day.

Death anniversary of Dr Ibrahim today

Bangladesh Diabetic Samity will observe the ninth death anniversary of Professor Dr Md Ibrahim today.

The Fifty-first conference of the World Health Organisation (WHO) regional committee for South-East Asia which will be held in New Delhi from 7-12 this month.

Delegations from Bangladesh, Bhutan, Indonesia, Myanmar, the Maldives, Nepal, Thailand, Sri Lanka, North Korea and host India will participate in the conference.

Prof Syed Modasser Ali, Director, National Institute of Ophthalmology, Chairman and President, Bangladesh Medical Research Council (BMRC) and Alternate member of Executive Board of WHO will lead the three member Bangladesh team. The other two members of the team are Dr A S M Mashur Rahman, Director (Planning), Directorate of Health Services and Prof Khurshida Khanom head of the department of Health Education, NIPSON.

In the city the main religious congregations were held at Nardankanan Buddhist Temple, Katalganj Nabapandit Vihar, Purnachar International Buddhist Monastery, Sarbanjan Boudhha Vihar at Momin Road and Bishwa Motry Boudhha Vihar at Agrabad.

Special prayers were also held in all monasteries seeking peace and progress of the nation as well as global peace.

Confce of WHO regional body for South East Asia from Sept 7

By DMC Correspondent

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Madhu Purnima celebrated in Ctg

CHITTAGONG, Sept 5: Members of the Buddhist community today celebrated one of their major religious festivals 'Madhu Purnima' in the city and elsewhere in the district with traditional enthusiasm and due religious fervour, reports BSS.

The Buddhists celebrate the day in commemoration of honey offering by a monkey and huge services, rendered by an elephant to Lord Buddha in Parileya forest.

The Purnima was celebrated in all monasteries and offices of the religious organisations through day long programmes.

The day's programmes began with hoisting of the national and religious flags atop all monasteries and chanting of the sacred verses from the holy Tripitaka.

Breaking of fasting by the Buddhist monks, *shilgrahan*, *sangadan*, discussion meetings, honey donation, *pradip puja* and mass prayers were also included in the programme.

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Death anniversary of Abdul Hamid Chowdhury

Thirtieth anniversary of death of Abdul Hamid Chowdhury, Deputy President of undivided Bengal Legislative Council and Speaker of erstwhile provincial assembly was observed on September 4, says a press release.

In this connection *Quran Khawant* and *milad mahfil* was held beside his *mazar* at Nagbari, Tangail.

Advertisement for "Eating Out" featuring Vintage Restaurant, Sajina An Exclusive Restaurant, and Shohel. Includes details about cuisine, location, and contact information.