



Workers Party brought out a procession in the city yesterday protesting rise in the price of essentials and the anti-people budget. — Star photo

Speakers at seminar on Rice & Media

Crop production has to be almost doubled

By Staff Correspondent

The country should formulate policies regarding agricultural production keeping in the mind that as many as 60 million people will add to its 130 million population within next thirty years.

The speakers noted that crop production capacity has to be almost doubled using the same or even lesser amount of land and water to feed the new mouths in an already over populated country.

It is big challenge for such a small country 90 per cent arable land of which has already come under cultivation and there is hardly any chance of land expansion.

This was viewed at a seminar yesterday at the Bangladesh Rice Research Institute (BRRI) at Gazipur. Forum for Information Dissemination on Agriculture (FIDA) organised the seminar on 'Rice and Media' in collaboration of BRRI and International Rice Research Institute (IRRI).

FIDA, a new forum of agro-journalists and experts, was also launched yesterday with the holding of its first programme, the 'Rice and Media' seminar.

Interim Deputy Director General for Research of IRRI, Dr Mahabub Hossain chaired the seminar while Dr Kwanchai A Gomez, Executive Officer of Asia Rice Foundation and Dr Z Karim, Executive Chairman of Bangladesh Agricultural Research Council (BARC) spoke as special guests.

Five research papers were presented by Dr Farhad Jameel, BRRI Director (Research), Dr Mahiul Haque, Head of BRRI plant breeding division, and Dr

NH Chowdhury, BRRI Director (Administration), Dr Sadiqul Islam Bhuiyan, Bangladesh Representative of IRRI and Dr M Golam Rahman, the FIDA convener.

Earlier, Director General of the BRRI M A Hamid Miah delivered welcome address while senior BRRI scientists, representatives from different agricultural organisations and journalists from leading newspapers and news agencies took part in the day-long seminar prior to a round-trip to BRRI laboratory and research facilities.

Potentials of available technologies and HYVs (high yielding varieties) had already been exhausted substantially, said they, adding that new initiatives were needed for frontier researches to catch up with challenges of the new millennium.

Both DR Mahabub and Dr Z Karim spoke of providing the resource-poor farmers with more price supports and observed that a biosafety guidelines needed to be promulgated for the sake of advance level agricultural researches.

In this backdrop the speak-

Female ward commissioners call on Zillur

A delegation of elected female ward commissioners of greater Mymensingh district on Sunday called on LGRD and Cooperatives Minister Zillur Rahman at his residence, reports BSS.

ers emphasised on free flow of information regarding every development in the agriculture sector particularly in rice production.

The also underscored the need for diversification of crop cultivation because rice was not an income generating crop. For diversification of agricultural production the rice cultivated land would have to be reduced without lessening the current level of rice production. Almost 80 per cent of agri land are devoted to rice production, they observed.

BRRI Director General informed the seminar that BRRI was at an advanced stage of developing a hybrid variety of rice and once it is released, potentials of rice cultivation would augur.

Renowned agriculture economist Mahbub Hossain said that Bangladesh achieved tremendous success in increasing food production over the last few decades. The food production increased to over 20 million tonnes now from a mere 11 million tonnes immediate after the country's independence during the year 1971.

But challenge is big as the country's population is growing by 1.7 per cent annually. To feed this additional mouths the country will have to grow over 35 million tonnes of food every year, he said.

Dr Kwanchai A Gomez of Asia Rice Foundation told the seminar that all of the extra rice would have to be produced with lesser land and lesser water availability for irrigation. Urbanisation and industrialisation would take away their shares of land and water.

Home, Post and Tele-communication Minister Mohammad Nasim and State Minister for Religious Affairs Maulana Nurul Islam will be present on the occasion as chief guest and special guest respectively.

Prof Chowdhury said that universities all over the world are now giving much priority to vocational education to fulfill the demands of time. Deviating

Aptech opens new centre at Eskaton

APTECH Computer Education, the flagship brand of Aptech Ltd, yesterday opened a new centre at Eskaton in city to expand its network for marketing the latest mode of learning, reports UNB.

The information technology centre was opened in joint collaboration with their business partner, Flora Systems Limited.

Addressing a press conference on the occasion, Mustafa Rafiqul Islam, Managing Director of Flora, said: "APTECH is set to revolutionise the field of IT in Bangladesh by offering a comprehensive and highly flexible range of computer courses."

He said that the new set-up would make computer education an exciting and rewarding experience for students and professionals.

Mustafa Nurul Islam, Chairman of Flora Systems, said the government had declared IT industry as a thirst sector and a lot of people were needed for this field.

We did not get any financial help from the government and we do not want either, he said, "but we expect that the government would not be a barrier."

APTECH has ten centres operational in Dhaka and Chittagong and eleven more would be set up in all major parts of the country by the end 1999, they said.

Like the other centres, the new one will offer career-oriented programmes in software engineering, spanning over six months to three years and worth Tk 110 per hour.

The conference was also addressed, among others, by Tarun Mitra, Country Operations Head of APTECH, and Rizwan Bin Farouq, Executive Director of Axiom Technologies.

Rathjatra of Dhamrai begins tomorrow

The famous Rathjatra festival of the historic Sri Sri Jashomadhava of Dhamrai begins tomorrow, reports BSS.

Home, Post and Tele-communication Minister Mohammad Nasim and State Minister for Religious Affairs Maulana Nurul Islam will be present on the occasion as chief guest and special guest respectively.

Srimanth Swami Akharanandaji Maharaja will inaugurate the festival while Major General (Retd) C R Dutta, Bir Uttam, will preside over the function.

Joya Pati and Thakur Gopal Banik, president and general secretary of Sri Sri Jashomadhava Mandir Management Committee, have invited all devotees and people irrespective of religion, caste and creed to attend the festival.

DUTA expresses concern

Dhaka University Teachers' Association (DUTA) has expressed deep concern over the incident of dacoity at the house of Dr Ershadul Bar, Dean of Law Faculty, reports UNB.

A DUTA executive committee meeting on Sunday chaired by its president Dr AFM Yusuf Haider has urged the authorities to take necessary security measures on the campus.

DUTA also expressed concern over the threat on the life of sculptor and Professor of the Institute of Fine Arts, Shamsul Sikder, and urged the university authorities and the government to take steps for her security.

Addressing a rally organised by the Dhaka City unit of the Communist Party of Bangladesh on the concluding day of their "demand week" at party office premises in the afternoon.

Presided over by city unit general secretary Ruhin Hasan Prince, the rally was addressed others by Advocate Sohel Ahmed, Dilip Bepari and Mahbul Haq Ripon.

The CPB president asked the government to build trade unions in the country by upholding the interest of industry

and its workers.

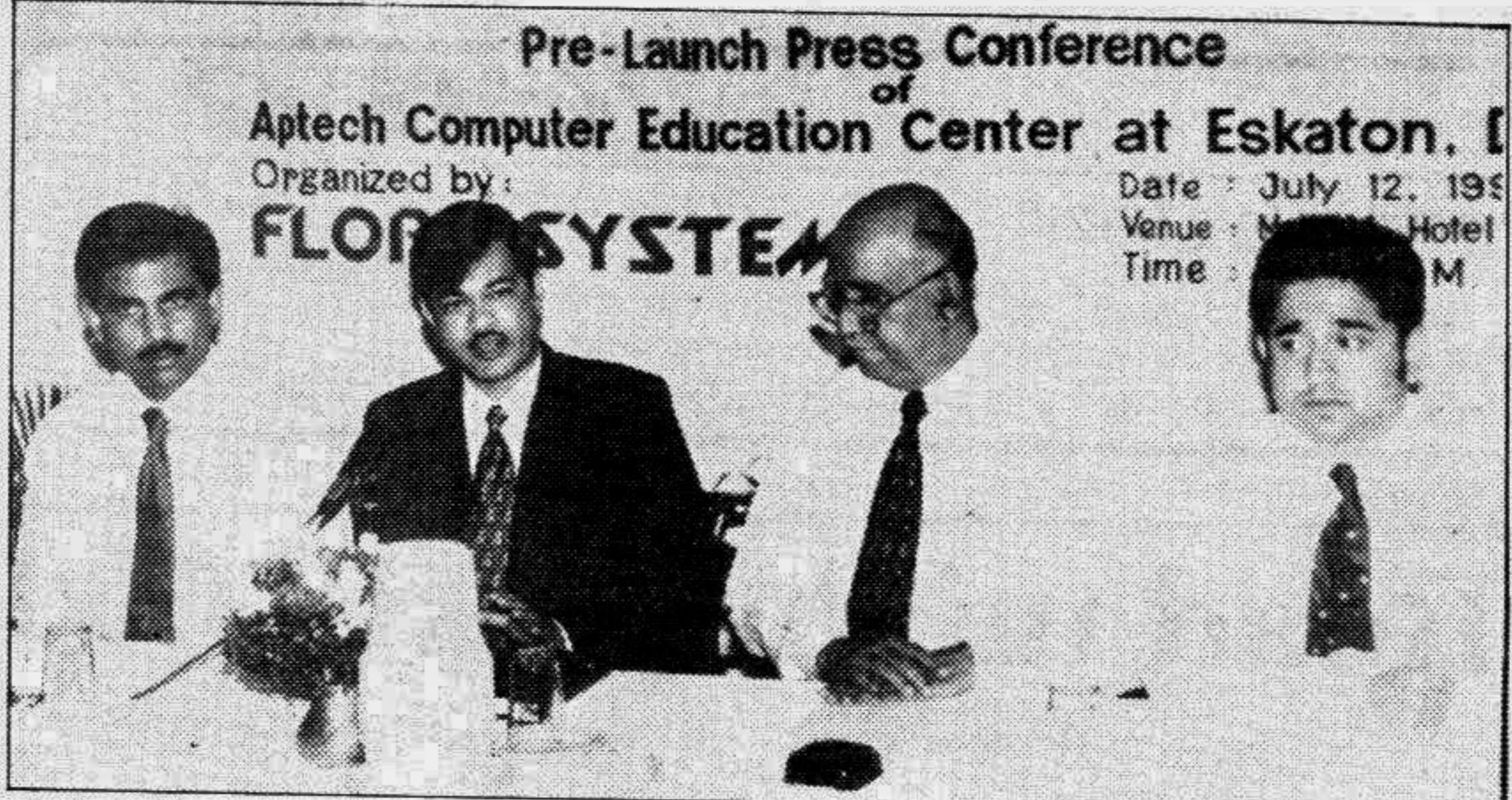
He also demanded that the government evict the looters and godfathers from their palatial house rather than the poor slum dwellers. He said the government should give priority on village development programmes and special facilities for implementation of housing projects for the slum people.

The purpose of these visits was not to certify anything it was a kind of vacationing for Petrobangla officials, he claimed.

However, as they could not make up their minds who would be making these trips, they did not go to Dubai or Singapore. Meanwhile, Cain brought in the rig. This did not violate the agreement, Cain chose not to wait as there was no legal compulsion to do so.

"We have been able to eliminate terrorism from the campus but the financial limitation is yet to be solved," he added.

The VC however admitted that the proposed budget was



Aptech Computer Education yesterday held a press conference at a city hotel yesterday to mark the opening of a new centre at Eskaton.

DU convocation on Aug 10 likely

'Modernisation of edn system needed to keep pace with times'

By DU Correspondent

from the previous rigid structure, the VC said that the universities are now preferring education on a flexible line in its curriculum to meet the demands of the age.

The VC told the Senate that the DU authorities took various programmes to modernise its curriculum.

He said integration in academic field has reached such a level that in some universities there was no traditional department but they run their activities with some highly specialised laboratories. If anyone is interested to be an expert on Cognitive Neuroscience he should have a vast knowledge on linguistics, expression style, computer literacy, composition of human brain and electronics.

He further told that an academic audit system would be introduced and academic calendar would be reintroduced to assure the accountability of teachers, researchers, officers and employees of the university. "Ground work for making a code of conduct for them has already started."

"We are working for the convocation and expect that we will be able to hold it on August 10," the VC said while replying to a question of Advocate Syed Ahmed. Prof Azad said that Amartya Sen had been invited as special guest of honour.

Taking part in the discussion, the Senate members stressed the need for immediate holding of DUCSU and hall union elections to bolster cultural activities of the university.

Among others, pro-VC Prof Shahad Ali, Syed Badruddin Hossain, Advocate Sayed Ahmad, prof M Akhteruzzaman, prof Abdul Mannan Chowdhury, Prof Khandakar Bazul Haq, prof AKM Sirajul Islam Khan, prof Ali MP, Prof Mostafa Chowdhury, prof Sultan Shahi and Prof Yusuf Haider took part at the discussion.

very limited to carry out the education support activities in the university.

Responding to a question, the VC informed the Senate that the first ever convocation of DU after the independence would be held on August 10 and Nobel Laureate Amartya Sen was expected to attend the ceremony as special guest of honour.

"We are working for the convocation and expect that we will be able to hold it on August 10," the VC said while replying to a question of Advocate Syed Ahmed. Prof Azad said that Amartya Sen had been invited to attend the function.

Taking part in the discussion, the Senate members stressed the need for immediate holding of DUCSU and hall union elections to bolster cultural activities of the university.

Students studying in medical colleges, BUET, universities and different colleges at graduate and post-graduate levels will be given one-time scholarship. Interested students have been asked to collect scholarship forms from 60/D, Gulshan (South), Road No-131, Dhaka-1212 or contact phone number 60104 by July 30. The last date of submitting the scholarship form is August 10.

The decision in this regard was taken at a meeting of the executive committee of samity with the President Engineer Sayed Mosharriff Hossain.

The meeting was addressed among others by Mosleh Alam Chowdhury, Principal Mujibur Rahman, Lutfur Rahman and Sheikh Abdus Salam.

'Fake' candidates caught at JU

By JU Correspondent Some 21 fake candidates were caught red handed during the written test for admission into the Honours classes of Jahangirnagar University during the session 1998-99.

The 'fake' candidates were barred from taking part in the test and the candidates for whom they appeared in the examinations, will be punished, officials said.

Written tests in Geological sciences, Mathematics and Physics will be held in two shifts today.

Jhalakathi Foundation inaugurated

JHALAKATHI, July 12: Awami League Presidium Member Amir Hossain Amu today said his party believes in the welfare of people and the country, reports BSS.

"Whether AL is in the power or not, the party will not be refrained from doing well-being of the people," he said while inaugurating the Jhalakathi Foundation — a socio-welfare organisation of the area.

Presided over by Jhalakathi Deputy Commissioner Bimal Kumar Kundu, the inaugural function was addressed, among others, by acting president of the district Awami League Belayet Hossain, General Secretary Advocate Faizul Huq, principal of the local government college Rustam Ali, local press club president Shamsul Islam Chand and the local Police super.

Shibchar Thana Samity to award scholarship

SHIBCHAR Thana Samity in its recent meeting has decided to award scholarships to meritorious students of the thana now studying at different educational institutions in the city, says a press release.

Students studying in medical colleges, BUET, universities and different colleges at graduate and post-graduate levels will be given one-time scholarship. Interested students have been asked to collect scholarship forms from 60/D, Gulshan (South), Road No-131, Dhaka-1212 or contact phone number 60104 by July 30. The last date of submitting the scholarship form is August 10.

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HDI: Bangladesh

From page 12

The 56th position, tops the list. It is followed by Thailand — 67th, Sri Lanka — 90th, the Maldives — 93rd, Indonesia — 105th, Vietnam — 110th, India — 132nd, Pakistan — 138th, Nepal — 144th and Bhutan — 145th position. China was ranked at the 98th position.

Canada with 16,525 US Dollars per capita GDP topped the human development list, followed by Norway with 27,620 dollars, the United States with 21,541 dollars, Japan with 25,084 dollars and Belgium with 16,809 dollars. Other rich countries on top of the list are Sweden — sixth, Australia — 7th, the Netherlands — 8th, Iceland — 9th, United Kingdom — 10th, France — 11th and Switzerland — 12th, the report said.

Regarding the allegation that Cain spent huge resources behind a lobbyist to obtain government's approval of transfer of its operatorship, the Shell official categorically denied bribery by any oil company concerned at any stage.

"Shell will never bribe anyone for any purpose. It strictly follows the principle of honesty and integrity. If any employee or contractor of Shell is involved in bribery, Shell will him or them."

"Shell was pursuing the transfer of operatorship for the last three months. So far my knowledge goes, Cain did not bribe any one or provide funds to its lobbyist to bribe anyone," the official said.

Road march

From Page 1

The planned road march, which will cover Mymensingh, Kishoreganj, Netrokona, Jamalpur, Narayanganj, also aims at mobilising public support for the opposition cause. Jatiya Party, Jamaat-e-Islami and Islamic Oikya Jote, key partners in the BNP-led alliance, are also due to organise similar marches.

But they are yet to finalise details.

Besides the listed ones, other leaders and supporters of the main opposition party can also participate in the road march with their own transport and arrangement, according to a circular issued yesterday by BNP.

The participants in the campaign have been instructed to arrange food and transports. They have to enlist their names with BNP joint secretary general Abdullah Al Noman and give registration numbers of their vehicles to the same by July 20. Details of the road march will be announced later, the circular added.

To make the road march a success, BNP has constituted a number of sub-committees with party secretary general Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan as chief coordinator. Selina Rahman, a joint secretary of the party, will act as assistant coordinator. Mirza Abbas, Sadek Hossain Khoka, Amanullah Aman, ZA Khan and Hafizuddin Ahmed have been assigned to coordinate the three-day road march, chalk out route, site for roadside rallies, formation of convoy and other activities.

The report stressed on a code of conduct for multinational corporations, establishment of independent Legal Aid Center and Ombudsman, international public program to fund the development of bio, information and communication technologies.

The report suggested establishing mechanisms in every country to coordinate policy on globalisation and a complete overhaul in governance.

CPB denounces US envoy's comments

By Staff Correspondent

CPB president Monjurul Ahamed Khan on Saturday demanded that the government declare the US Ambassador in Dhaka persona non grata for his interference in Bangladesh internal affairs.

"We cannot accept this uninvited interference of the ambassador. The US imperialism wants to tie us down on all sides," he said and strongly condemned the United States' interference on trade unions in the country.

Addressing a rally organised by the Dhaka City unit of the Communist Party of Bangladesh on the concluding day of their "demand week" at party office premises in the afternoon.

Presided over by city unit general secretary Ruhin Hasan Prince, the rally was addressed others by Advocate Sohel Ahmed, Dilip Bepari and Mahbul Haq Ripon.

The CPB president asked the government to build trade unions in the country by upholding the interest of industry