

Model PSC to undermine country's interest

Say energy experts

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a seminar yesterday said provisions in the model production sharing contract (MPSC) 2008, including cost recovery, compensation, export and arbitration, will undermine the country's interest.

Speakers urged the government to identify sea area of the country before floating bidding for oil and gas exploration in offshore blocks.

Titled 'Salient features of Model PSC 2008', the seminar was organised by the Bangladesh Geological Society at the auditorium of Geology Department of Dhaka University.

Speakers urged the government to review the provisions keeping the country's interest at the top.

They criticised the government for not discussing with the concerned professionals before unveiling the MPSC.

The interim caretaker government does not have any right to prepare such contract, they added.

Responding to speakers, Petrobangla Chairman Jalal Ahmed said they will try to get rid of the weaknesses of MPSC and improve it.

The government on February 6

unveiled the MPSC for the third round bidding for offshore blocks with a provision to realise compensation for any accidents in gasfields.

Third round block bidding has become very important as Petrobangla's forecast shows a grim picture of gas supply shortfall beginning from 2011. With energy demand rapidly increasing, the country has no option but to tap all its potentials immediately.

The bidding will offer eight shallow water blocks and 20 deep sea blocks -- each having exploration area between 3,000 square km and 7,000 square km.

Petrobangla Director (mines and minerals) Maqbul-e-Elahi presented the keynote paper on MPSC-2008.

Addressing the seminar, Petrobangla chairman said tender for offshore bidding will be opened on May 7 and the date will not be extended. He hoped that major companies will participate in the bidding.

Talking to reporters, he said prices of gas supplied by Petrobangla should be adjusted.

It would not be possible for Petrobangla to run in this way -- selling gas at a reduced level.

Responding to criticism by the speakers, Petrobangla chairman

said, "We will try to improve the MPSC, specially on the provisions of tax, arbitration by taking your suggestion into consideration."

Petrobangla chairman gave assurance that he will pursue the government so that energy experts could be involved with MPSC.

He observed that the amount of government subsidy will be increased more if the government signs oil and gas exploration treaties under the MPSC-2008.

He urged the government to fix sea area of the country before floating bidding for oil and gas exploration in offshore blocks.

The students filed the writ after they were disqualified for taking part in the examination.

There is a provision that if any student does not take part in one or two subjects or fails in one or two subjects in the test examination, he or she will be given permission for taking part in the final examination.

But the college authorities did not give permission to 25 students to fill up their forms.

Advocate Helal Uddin Mollah moved the writ petition on behalf of the students.

DUTTAPARA DEGREE COLLEGE HC allows 25 students to take part in HSC exams

COURT CORRESPONDENT

The High Court (HC) yesterday directed Comilla Education Board chairman and its secretary to give permission to 25 students of Duttapara Degree College in Laxmipur for taking part in the forthcoming HSC examination.

The bench comprising Justice Mohammad Iman Ali and Justice Mohammad Emdadul Haque passed the order following a writ petition filed by Mohammad Mahbubur Rahman and 24 others challenging the legality of the decision of the college authorities.

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Soroptimist int'l confce Aug 15-16

A two-day Soroptimist South Asian International Conference will be held on August 15-16 to mark the 25th year of the club's charter, says a press release.

SI Club Dhaka President Dr Arifa Rahman said this at the 25th annual general meeting (AGM) at a city hotel on Saturday.

Arifa said a variety of activities were planned to mark the 25th year of the club's charter. All the activities evinced human rights and the status of women and girls in the country.

SI Club Dhaka Secretary Hasina Zaman presented her annual report of the activities and ongoing projects of the club, while Treasurer Nargis Mannan presented her report.

Vice President of Soroptimist Club of Chittagong Ferdousi and Federation Councillor from Bangladesh Khaleda Awwal took part in the AGM.

Soroptimist International Club of Dhaka has been involved in community welfare activities since receiving the charter from the federation club, Soroptimist International Club of Great Britain and Ireland (SIGBI) in 1981.

The Literacy Centre in Nayatola, Moga bazar, TB Follow-up Programme in collaboration with Shishu Hospital and Pre-primary Education Programme of "Nijera Shikhi" for the less privileged children at Shyamoli, Adabbar are some of SI Club, Dhaka's activities.

Death anniversary

Today is the 28th death anniversary of Nurul Islam Shams, former chief national commissioner of Bangladesh Scouts, says a press release.

On the occasion, a milad mahfil and discussion will be held at 5:00pm at National Headquarters of Bangladesh Scouts.

Underprivileged students of three co-operative schools took part in the programmes.

Research and Development Collective with the help of Oxfam organised a roundtable on 'Ethnic Education' at YWCA in the capital where Special Assistant to the Chief Adviser Raja Debashish Roy said

especial opportunity should be provided to the disadvantaged group like ethnic children.

Different organisations observed the week in a befitting manner. They brought out rallies and colourful processions, held discussion, seminar and view exchange meeting.

Speakers at the programmes said millions of people have missed out quality education for various reasons.

They also said some do not have access to education because of disability, while others are excluded because of poverty, their ethnicity, gender, conflict, geographical location or become victims of orphan hood or child labour.

UNESCO National Commission and Dhaka UNICEF yesterday jointly organised a discussion and a cultural programme at Lalbagh in the city.

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Janaza held

The namaz-e-janaza of Md Noor Alam Talukdar, UN peacekeeper of Bangladesh Army, was held at Dhaka Cantonment yesterday, says an ISPR press release.

Chief of Army Staff Gen Moeen U Ahmed, Chief of Naval Staff Vice Admiral Sarwar Jahan Nizam, Chief of Air Staff Air Marshal S M Ziaur Rahman, senior army officials and relatives of the deceased attended the namaz-e-janaza.

He will be buried at his village home in Jhalakati with full military honour.

Noor Alam died on April 17 at Level III Hospital, Abidjan, Ivory Coast due to leukaemia.

UNB, Dhaka

The government has cancelled licenses of 24 travel agencies for not renewing those timely.

The Ministry for Civil Aviation and Tourism has taken the decision as the agency authorities did not renew their licenses on time even after serving notices to them several times, a handout said yesterday.

The agencies are M/s Arab Bangla Traveling Agency (certificate no 1927), M/s Bengal Aviation Services Ltd (no-12343), M/s Bari Tours and Travels (no-2389), M/s Al Rabeta International (no-2462), M/s Basem Trade International (no-2644), M/s Expert Aviation (no-2772), M/s Barkat Dynamic Travels and Tours (no-2456), M/s Bangladesh Travels and Tours (no-9567), M/s Azad Aviation Tours and Travels (no-2186), M/s Brothers Tours and Travels (no-2235), M/s Al Aksa Air Services Ltd (no-8242), M/s Al Din International Travels (no-1946), M/s Al Foyasal Travels Agency (no-1309), M/s AN Travels International (no-9783), M/s Air Jannat Aviation (no-2210), M/s Ashraf Tours and Travels (no-2092), M/s Embassy Tours and Travels (pvt) Ltd (no-7243), M/s A&A Travels Ltd (no-11381), M/s Bithi Air Travels (pvt) Ltd (no-10670), M/s Akai Overseas (no-1312), M/s Baladil Amin Travels and Traders (no-11831), M/s Ektak Air Travels (pvt) Ltd (no-7908), M/s Al Ittehad Travels and Tours (no-2332) and M/s AM Travels International (no-2087).

Simon Adhikary

YMCA president

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

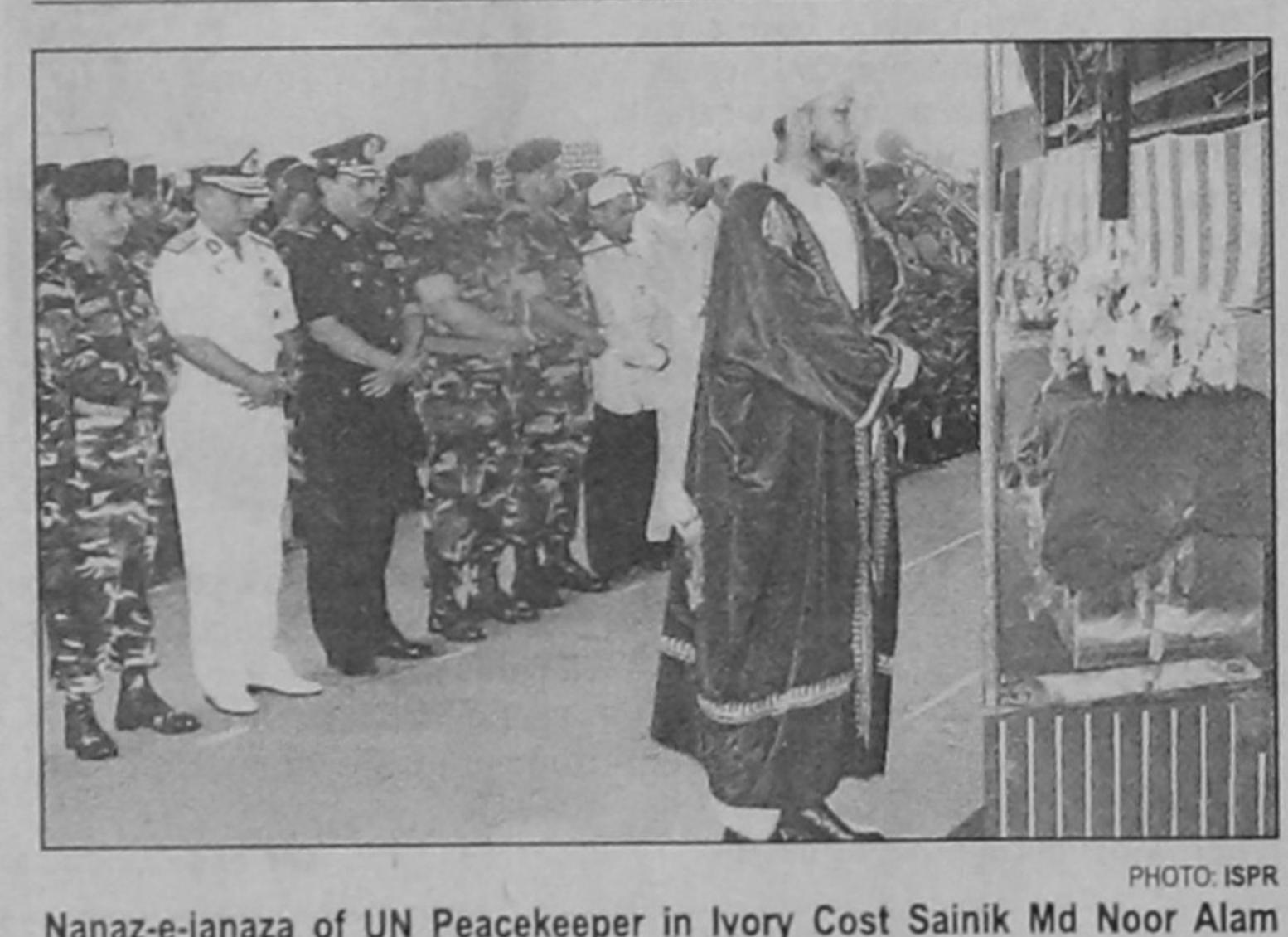
Simon P Adhikary has been elected president of National Council of Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA) of Bangladesh.

Patrick Sarkar and Raymond Areng have been elected vice presidents while DR Nirvoj Das has been elected treasurer.

The election of YMCA National Council was held after its 30th annual general meeting at YMCA's training institute at Savar on April 25 with Simon P Adhikary in the chair, says a press release.

The newly elected office was accorded a reception on that day where World Alliance of YMCA delegation William Hart was present as the chief guest while Bangladesh Christian Association Secretary General Nirmal Rozario and Christian leader Stephen Baroi were present as special guests.

World Alliance of YMCA's former director Babu Marcos Gomes also spoke at the programme attended by over 200 observes, including 50 delegates of regional YMCAs.



Nanaz-e-janaza of UN Peacekeeper in Ivory Coast Sainik Md Noor Alam Talukdar of Bangladesh Army was held at Chooper's Den (Dhaka Cantonment) in the city yesterday.



Rain likely

UNB, Dhaka

Weather is likely to remain mainly dry with temporary partly cloudy sky over the country in the next 12 hours until 6:00pm today.

Rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty or squally wind is also likely at one or two places over Rajshahi, Dhaka and Sylhet divisions and the regions of Jessor, Kushtia and Comilla, Met Office said predicting nearly unchanged day temperature over the country.

Highest temperature 38.3 degrees Celsius was recorded yesterday at Rajshahi and lowest 23.7 degrees Celsius at Teknaf.

The sun sets in the capital at 6:26pm today and rises at 5:25am tomorrow.

Highest and lowest temperature and humidity recorded in some major cities and towns yesterday were:

| City/Town | Temperature in Celsius | | Humidity in percentage | |
|-------------|------------------------|------|------------------------|---------|
| | Max | Min | Morning | Evening |
| Dhaka | 34.3 | 26.8 | 71 | 55 |
| Chittagong | 31.5 | 26.0 | 77 | 74 |
| Rajshahi | 38.3 | 25.5 | 69 | 43 |
| Khulna | 34.5 | 27.0 | 76 | 61 |
| Barisal | 33.2 | 26.5 | 78 | 71 |
| Sylhet | 34.6 | 25.5 | 75 | 52 |
| Cox's Bazar | 34.1 | 25.5 | 65 | 69 |

Workshop

Oxfam GB and PRIP Trust jointly organise a national workshop on 'Women's economic empowerment in the light of PRSP'. Venue: CIRDAP Auditorium. Time: 9:30am.

Seminar

Bangladesh Occupational Safety, Health and Environment Foundation organises a seminar to mark the World Occupational Health and Safety Day. Venue: National Press Club. Time: 9:30am.

Review body failed to pinpoint

between the women development policy and the Quran," he said, noting that checking women's progress by misinterpreting the Quran is against the teachings of Islam.

The Quran has made equal social rights of both men and women the basis for their inheritance rights and it never says that women as human beings cannot have rights as men, he said.

"Rather, women can own properties than men," Ziaur said, adding that Hazrat Muhammad's (SM) wife Hazrat Khadija (SM) had more properties than the prophet himself.

The Quran rule ensuring women's rights to inheritance was revolutionary at the time when women did not have any dignity in the then Arab society and a man's status was determined by the number of his wives and maids.

"So, it is proved that the Quran is progressive in establishing women's rights. Although it said that a woman will inherit half of what her brother does, there is no bar in the Quran to women getting properties more than that," Ziaur said.

Increase of share of inheritance for women therefore does not directly contradict the Quran, he observed.

"There is no contradiction



Family members of Sher-e-Bangla AK Fazlul Huq offer fateha after placing wreaths at his mazar on the occasion of his 46th death anniversary in the city yesterday.

Tribute paid to Sher-e-Bangla

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The 46th death anniversary of Sher-e-Bangla AK Fazlul Huq was observed yesterday with due solemnity.

Paying tribute to the great leader Sher-e-Bangla Jatiya Smriti Sangshad, Bangladesh National Personality Research Centre and World Bengali Conference jointly placed wreaths at his graveyard and prayed for his departed soul.

Sher-e-Bangla Jatiya Smriti Sangshad organised a discussion and awarded Sher-e-Bangla

National Award to language veteran literature Dr Mohammad Shahjahan Kabir, artiste Gouranga Biswas, Nur un Nahar Meri and President of Nilphamari Chamber of Commerce Sohel Parvez also received the award.

Speakers at the discussion demanded the government for establishing a university at Barisal and to name the Padma multipurpose bridge after the name of Sher-e-Bangla.

Bangabandhu Sangskritik Jote and Bangladesh Kallyan Party also paid tribute to the great leader.

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