

DELIMITATION OF MARITIME BOUNDARIES

Permanent solution with India, Myanmar stressed

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Speakers at a seminar here yesterday emphasised the need for bilateral negotiations for a maritime agreement for permanent solution to delimitation problems of the maritime boundaries of Bangladesh with India and Myanmar.

"Since the sea areas of Bangladesh are rich in hydrocarbon and mineral deposits, maritime zones should clearly be established for protection, conservation and rational exploitation of marine resources to accelerate the country's economic development," they said.

The speakers at the seminar also observed that provisional measures such as joint development agreements and judicial means of settlement could also serve as the solution to the maritime boundary delimitation problems.

Law Faculty of Chittagong University (CU) organised the seminar titled 'the problems of delimitation of Bangladesh maritime boundaries with India and Myanmar' at Social Science Faculty auditorium with Law Faculty Dean Prof Mohammad Zakir Hossain in the chair.

CU Vice Chancellor Prof Abu Yusuf was

present as the chief guest at the seminar organised under a project financed by the University Grants Commission.

Project Coordinator and Bangladesh Law Commission Member Prof M Shah Alam, Joint Coordinator and Law Department Chairman Dr Abdullah Al Faruk and Research Associate Commander Yadul Islam prepared a keynote paper following a research they conducted under the project.

CU Prof Emeritus Dr Jamal Nazrul Islam, Additional Secretary to Foreign Ministry Commodore M Khurshid Alam, Bangladesh Navy Commodore Commanding Chittagong MM Rajib, Marine Fisheries Academy Commandant ATGM Sarkar, Hydrographic and Oceanographic Centre Director Commander MNG Muktadir, CU Institute of Marine Sciences and Fisheries Director Dr Mohammad Rashed-Ulnabi presided the seminar.

Dr Abdullah and Yadul in their keynote paper said Bay of Bengal has huge living and non-living resources.

India and Myanmar discovered 100 trillion cubic feet (TCF) and seven TCF gas respectively inside their respective water territories, while Bangladesh could

not conduct exploration due to demarcation problems, they observed.

The total sea area of Bangladesh would be 2,07,000 square kilometres which is 1.4 times greater than its total land area, if the maritime boundaries are delimited under the Sea Convention law, they said, adding that exploration of oil and gas is essential for ensuring the country's economic security as well as its overall development.

India and Myanmar have already filed their claims to the United Nations and Bangladesh has file the claim by August 27, 2011 and a high-powered committee is working on it.

India and Myanmar want delimitation of maritime boundaries on the basis of equidistance principles but Bangladesh seeks to delimit on the basis of equitable principles. The equidistance principles would result in significant encroachment of sea area of Bangladesh, they said.

They further said that Bangladesh needs to modify 1974 act in order to make it consistent with the Convention of the Law of the Sea 1982 that provides legal framework and principles of maritime delimitation. All the three neighbouring countries have ratified the convention.



(From left) M Azizur Rahman, Prof Khan Sarwar Murshid, Dr Sadeka Halim, Manjurul Ahsan Bulbul and Zakir Hossain hold copies of a book titled 'Our Rights Our Information' at its launching ceremony at the National Press Club in the city yesterday.



Girls with disabilities are being readied prior to a programme for them at Shawkat Osman Auditorium on the Public Library premises in the city yesterday. Protibandhi Forum organised the event to mark the Child Rights Week-2009.

Govt programmes ease life in greater Rangpur

BSS, Rangpur

The poorer people in the poverty-prone greater Rangpur have been facing the current seasonal lean period of monga (near famine situation) very successfully following various effective steps of the government this year.

The day and farm labourers as well as other distressed people are now leading almost a normal life this year without any bite of seasonal monga that repeated every year in the past during the months of Aswin and Kartik, officials said.

Launching of the Employment Generation Programme for the Ultra-Poor from October 15 by the government would further ease the situation and over four lakh distressed people, including farm and day labourers, would earn Tk 100 per day as wages.

The programme would be launched simultaneously in Kurigram, Gaibandha, Lalmonirhat and Nilphamari districts in greater Rangpur like other parts of the country from the same date, the government officials told BSS.

The upcoming employment generation programmes would assist the poor during this lean period when the distressed people, including the river-eroded hapless ones, would earn Tk 100 as wages per day to fight the seasonal monga this year.

Public representatives, deputy commissioners, UNOs and government officials would formally launch the programme at various places at all unions of all upazilas in these districts on October 15 like elsewhere in the country.

The programme would help the targeted people, especially in the poverty-prone char areas, to overcome this lean period and also help them in earning their livelihoods in all unions of Rangpur, Kurigram, Lalmonirhat, Nilphamari and Gaibandha districts.

Besides, the banks of Padma river at Mawa-Jajira point are badly affected by erosion, they said at a press conference at Gono Sangskriti Mancha at Shahbagh in the

cleaning of weeds, preparing thousands of compost fertiliser heaps using water hyacinths and other works would be conducted, officials said.

Like in the other adjoining districts, the government completed distribution of 3,942 tonnes of rice among 1,97,100 distressed families under its VGF programme. 347.48 tonnes rice among mandaps and distressed freedom fighters last month in Rangpur.

The next allocation of more VGF rice is now being awaited by the administration for each of these five districts in greater Rangpur, the DRRO said.

The situation started further easing following huge harvest of the short duration BRRRI Dhan-33 and other such

paddies, cultivated in over 55,680 hectares land in greater Rangpur from last week, now continues in full swing, under the government initiatives.

Talking to BSS, Ostomin Char Union Chairman Sobhrab Hossain and Prof Abdul Kasem of Ramna Model Union in poverty-prone Chilmari upazila of Kurigram said there is no bite of monga this year due to the various government programmes.

Nurul Amin Sarker, editor of the weekly Janopran of Chilmari upazila town, said the distressed, river-eroded and poorer section people of the upazila are living better without any monga bite for the first time this year as monga starts disappearing.

Call to change site for Padma Bridge

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Leaders of Deshpremik Jonoguner Mancha, a citizens' platform, yesterday demanded that the selected Mawa-Jajira site for the Padma Bridge be cancelled and Dohar-Char Bhadrasan site be selected for the bridge instead.

They also said construction of two bridges at Mawa-Jajira point and at Paturia-Daulatdia point, as proposed by the previous BNP government, would not be economically viable.

Besides, the banks of Padma river at Mawa-Jajira point are badly affected by erosion, they said at a press conference at Gono Sangskriti Mancha at Shahbagh in the

city. "We propose that Padma Bridge be built at Dohar-Char Bhadrasan point. A bridge at this point will save \$1200-1500 million as there will be no need to construct a second bridge and it will cover all traffic from south and southwestern Bangladesh," said Engineer M Enamul Haque, president of the organisation.

He also said the Dohar-Char Bhadrasan point has hard soil bank and has bank protection work at Hajiganj in Char Bhadrasan.

Other leaders of the organisation Abdul Wahid Majumder, Golam Khandaker Elias, Golam Kibria Dipu, Shahriar Murad and Shahidul Islam Palash also spoke.

Rajshahi Board set to enter digital era

BSS, Rajshahi

The Rajshahi Education Board is going to enter a digital era through making the registration process online.

Chairman of the Board of Intermediate and Secondary Education, Rajshahi Prof Depakendra Nath Das told BSS yesterday that a total of 15 colleges would be brought under the online registration process only for the next HSC examination on a pilot basis.

He, however, said the total registration process for SSC and HSC examinations would be brought under the online system this year.

The 15 colleges that will be brought under the online registration process this year are New Government Degree College, Government City College and Rajshahi Cadet College in Rajshahi, Naogaon Government College in Naogaon, Chapainawabganj Government College and Adina Government Fazlul Haque College in Chapainawabganj, Rani Bhabani Government Women's College and Kadirabad Cantonment College in Natore, Pabna Cadet College and Pabna Government Women's College in Pabna, Rashida Zohra Government Women's College in Sirajganj, Bogra Cantonment Public School and College and Government SR Women's College Bogra and Joypurhat Girls' Cadet College and Joypurhat Government Women's College in Joypurhat.

The assurance came when Japanese Ambassador Tamotsu Shinotsuka called on Water Resources Minister Ramesh Chandra Sen at his

Japan assures support for capital dredging of rivers

UNB, Dhaka

Japan would provide all sorts of assistance for capital dredging of rivers in Bangladesh as the government has planned a mega-scheme for clearing huge deposits of silts from the rivers.

The assurance came when Japanese Ambassador Tamotsu Shinotsuka called on Water Resources Minister Ramesh Chandra Sen at his

office yesterday.

During the meeting, the minister and the envoy discussed various issues, including use of the experiences of the two countries in management of water resource with the technical help of engineers.

Ramesh told the envoy about the capital dredging of rivers in Bangladesh, a great plan for river training, and sought Japanese cooperation in implementation of the plan.

Tamotsu Shinotsuka lauded the plan and assured Ramesh of Japanese assistance in this regard.

Mentioning the negative impacts of climate change on Bangladesh, the minister also sought cooperation "in tackling climate change".

The Japanese envoy also expressed his government's keenness in establishing cyclone centres in coastal areas of Bangladesh.

Dr Carmen Lamagna reappointed AIUB VC

METRO DESK

President Zillur Rahman, who is also the chancellor of the universities, has reappointed Dr Carmen Z Lamagna as the vice chancellor of American International University - Bangladesh (AIUB) for another four years, says a press release.

Dr Carmen is associated with AIUB from its inception and because of her leadership AIUB now has academic exchange programmes with more than 30 renowned universities of the world.

She is also the president of Association of Universities of Asia and the Pacific (AUAP) and treasurer (elect) of International Association of University Presidents (IAUP).

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PHOTO: COURTESY
University of Liberal Arts (ULAB) Vice Chancellor Prof Rafiqul Islam addresses the students at the ULAB Freshers Orientation Fall 2009 on its campus in the city recently. Pro-Vice Chancellor Prof Imran Rahman, Vice President of the Board of Governors Dr Kazi Anis Ahmed, Dr Mohit Ul Alam, Dr Jude Genilo, Dr Mohammad Sharif Uddin, Dr AHM Asadul Huq and Registrar Khaled Khan were also present on the occasion.