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Near East & South Asia

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REGIONAL

PLO Official Discusses Contacts With Syrians, Government in Exile

44040103a London AL-TADAMUN in Arabic 30 Jan 88 pp 26-27

[Interview with Salim al-Za'nun, alias Abu-al-Adib, Palestine National Council Deputy Chairman, by Husayn Karim in Riyadh; Date not Given; "Abu-al-Adib: Conditions Are Not Ripe Yet for Declaring Government in Exile; Our People Will Continue To Stage Uprising After Uprising"]

[Text] The occupied territories' uprising has rekindled world interest in the Palestinian issue and has perplexed the Israeli government which has been unable so far to confront this new phenomenon in the Palestinian response to the numerous attempts made to obliterate Palestinian rights. On the uprising, its dimensions and its objectives, AL-TADAMUN has interviewed Salim al-Za'nun, alias Abu-al-Adib, the Palestine National Council deputy chairman who was on a visit to Saudi Arabia to deliver a message from the Palestinian leadership to Saudi officials. Following is the text of the interview:

[Question] A few days ago, the GCC's eighth summit, held in Riyadh last December, adopted a unanimous position of support for the Palestinian uprising. In his opening address, King Fahd called for supporting this uprising with all possible means. What is your assessment of this position?

[Answer] The Palestinian leadership, meeting in Baghdad, adopted a number of resolutions, the most significant of which is that it will allocate funds to cover whatever material and moral responsibilities emanate from this blessed uprising. It also adopted a resolution to send delegations to a number of Arab countries. It was my lot and that of brother Mahmud 'Abbas, alias Abu-Mazin, to come to the Gulf area. We have visited Qatar and Bahrain and brother Abu Mazin has gone to the UAE to meet with Shaykh Zayid in his capacity as the ex-president of the GCC Supreme Council. I have been instructed to visit the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and meet its officials, considering that the chairmanship will be transferred to the custodian of the two holy mosques, and to deliver a message connected with the uprising. I can say that barely an hour after my arrival, I saw and heard King Fahd speak about the uprising with pride and appreciation as a first item in his honorable address. This is not surprising from the custodian of the two holy mosques because the third mosque is awaiting us to liberate it so that we may regain control of all our holy mosques. King Fahd also reflected brother Abu-'Ammar's and the Palestinian leadership's feelings that this uprising cannot be supported with words alone.

[Question] There is no doubt that the uprising has stirred numerous issues in the area. As a Palestinian leader, how do you deal with the uprising and what are the steps you have taken to achieve the uprising's desired objectives?

[Answer] The uprising, whose reverberations we continue to experience is being staged by a generation that has grown up under the 1967 occupation. The oldest of those engaged in the uprising were born in 1967 and the youngest are 10 years of age. Yet they have risen in rebellion and have equated life with death because they have become fully convinced that the Israelis are gradually killing their moral. Consequently, martyrdom is much better than the death of their moral. Some people may think that these youths have rebelled because of a truck which killed 4 persons or that they were instructed to demonstrate and rebel on 1 January 1988 so that the revolution may better celebrate the anniversary of its inception. But the truth is different. The truth is that these youths have reached the point of despair. Despair either pushes the desperate to commit suicide or capitulate to what is demanded of him or motivates him to embark on confrontation and to pursue this confrontation, heedless of death. These brothers have not chosen the first course but have opted to equate life with death and to fight their enemies with all the means available to them. This is why they face the sword with a stick and machineguns with young bodies.

Therefore, the rebellion staged by these youths was like the eruption of water kept under pressure for a long time. For 20 years, these youths have been hearing of resolution 242 but have not seen it implemented. They have been hearing numerous promises but have not seen them fulfilled. Half of their doctors and their engineers are unemployed. But they still believe in the attachement to the land. They are content with the minimun that the PLO sends the Palestinian doctor and engineer so that they may not abandon the land. They heard of the Jordanian-Palestinian accord and found that through this accord, the Palestinian revolution was able to move closer to them and to make up for the separation which had occurred when this revolution was ousted from Lebanon. They also saw how the military operations multiplied. But Israel was quickly alerted to this fact and it sent its aircraft flying over thousands of miles to strike Hammam al-Shatt [in Tunisia] to wipe out Yasir 'Arafat and his leadership. Were he not fated to live longer, Yasir 'Arafat would have been one of those martyred in that strike. In the wake of this operation, we realized that Israel was watching Yasir 'Arafat from the air. It is no secret that he travelled on a regular plane to make his latest visit to Saudi Arabia because it has become dangerous for him to fly on a special plane. Israel's operation against Hammam al-Shatt shook all the Arabs. But what was more serious is that the operation was tantamount to an immediate message to Jordan to oust fedayeen action from Jordan's territories, lest it be the target of the next blow.

Let me return to the uprising and its causes. Shamir issued secret instructions to the occupied territories'

military governors telling them that they were lax in implementing the emergency laws which were issued during the British mandate in 1946 and which are similar to South Africa's laws. These laws violate all the well-known international covenants and the Israelis continue to apply them because we are the victims. These laws permit deporation of the Palestinian from his country, something that is unprecendented in this world. They also permit administrative detention without any charges, something to which Faysal 'Abd-al-Qadir al-Husayni is subjected at present. These laws permit, furthermore, the expulsion of native inhabitants, which is banned by international laws.

Uprising Has Succeeded in Upsetting Israel

Shamir tells the governors that they are lax in implementing these laws because he wants to vacate the land, expelling its inhabitants through the bridges. Consequently, the governors began to act oppressively but without making their action public. Because Palestinian youths were the ones who received the blows, they rose in rebellion to counter this Israeli violence, knowing full well that they would confront the sword with a stick and the machinegun with rocks. Thank God, this uprising has succeeded in upsetting Israel internally and has succeeded in exposing it abroad.

This is why an Israeli general has said: We learned at military college how to shoot down a MiG plane and how to hit an Arab tank. But we did not learn how to face the "devils who emerge from alleys and streets who confront us face to face. We don't know whether to shoot them or not." This is why we find the Israelis reexamining their army's policies in the occupied territories. But there will be no end to this flood until Israel acknowledges the rights it continues to usurp from us to this moment. If this acknowledgement does not materialize, our Palestinian people will continue to stage uprising after uprising until they bring about Israel's withdrawal from the occupied territories and until they establish their independent state on their land, with Jerusalem as the capital of this state.

[Question] Al-Karamah battle was a turning point in the Palestinian struggle, considering that it gave the Palestinian cause the impetus it needed at the Arab and international levels. Don't you think that the current uprising may provide the Palestinian people with a historic opportunity to rekindle world interest in their cause?

[Answer] Yes, there are numerous similarities between the climate surrounding the al-Karamah battle in 1968 and the climate surrounding the current uprising. In 1968, the Arabs were suffering from the defeat that had just been inflicted. Consequently, even the Arab regimes were happy to see a small group defeat the Israeli army which had crossed Arab borders and advanced to al-Karamah village. Moreover, the Jordanian army participated in that battle in a manner which offered the lesson that if the regular armies play a role complementing the fedayeen action's role, Palestine wil soon be restored.

As for the current uprising, there is an Arab bitterness of which all the Arab citizens from the Gulf to the ocean and most Arab regimes are aware. This bitterness emanates from the fact that the world community has insisted throughout the past 20 years that the Palestinian issue can be solved by peaceful means and by way of the Security Council and that the international conference that was agreed upon in Geneva in 1974 in the wake of the limited battle staged by Egypt and Syria must be the means embraced to restore Arab rights. But the Arab people and most of the rulers began to feel that they had been lured into a major trap with resolution 242. Goldberg, the Jewish U.S. delegate to the United Nations who was the author of the resolution, and Lord Carradon, who phrased the resolution, met in 1967 with the Arab missions at the Jordanian mission's offices in New York and asked the Arabs to approve resolution 242 without dwelling on the missing definitive article "the" which made the phrase read withdrawal from "occupied territories," not from "the occupied territories." They asked the Arab missions not to create a problem on account of this point. The Arab group, the Soviet delegate and the French delegate were assured that interest dictated approval of the resolution in its present form because the important thing was not how the resolution was phrased but the U.S. assurances that Israel would withdraw from the occupied Arab territories within 6 months. Consequently, Mahmud Riyad, Egypt's delegate, and 'Abd-al-Mun'im al-Rifa'i, Jordan's delegate, approved the resolution whereas George Tu'mah, Syria's delegate, expressed his reservation. Ultimately, the resolution was approved unanimously. But when Israel became certain of resolution 242 and after it was agreed that Gunnar Jarring would implement the resolution, the world and the Arabs were surprised by the Israeli conditions which increased day after day and which the "silent" Jarring transmitted to the Arab countries. The gist of those conditions was that the Israelis were demanding different kinds of peace which existed in no jurisprudence books taught in the world. They demanded a petroleum peace that would give them the opportunity to participate in producing the Arab world's oil, a maritime peace that would permit their ships to cross Bab el Mandeb without harassment and a trade peace that would permit the Israeli to shop in Cairo and return to Israel, which is what happened in the wake of the Camp David treaty. These conditions were made one after the other so that Jarring's negotiations would end up in total despair. Another serious point is that Israel began to say that resolution 242 does not have the mainstays of a U.N. resolution but that it is just an agenda that dictates that Israel meet and negotiate with the Arab countries separately to reach a solution. This means that the Israelis have abolished resoslution 242.

Theory of Changing Circumstances

Another trick employed was a promise to the effect that if the Palestinians joined the negotiations as part of a Jordanian-Palestinian delegation, then the United States would bring about withdrawal from the occupied Arab territories for King Husayn. Even though the PLO did not believe this promise, it agreed to be a part of a Jordanian-Palestinian delegation and nominated Palestinians who had no organizational connection with the PLO to the delegation (Fayiz Abu-Rahmah and Hanna Sinyurah). But the tricks continued and this approach failed. It is regrettable that Jordan terminated its coordination with the Palestinian leadership and accused it of dishonesty. Jordan believed that we wasted an opportunity to regain our rights, considering that the United States had said that it would pressure Israel to return the [West] Bank and Gaza Strip to Jordanian sovereignty. But as I have already said, the Arabs must not bury their heads in the sand and they must believe that international law contains a thoery called the "theory of changing circumstances." This theory means that if the premises on which a certain resolution is based have changed, then the resolution adopted at a certain phase must be reexamined. I believe that the U.S. position approving resolution 242—an approval given with the understanding that the Israelis would withdraw from the occupied Arab territories, with slight border changes agreed to by both sides—changed into something different under Reagan's administration and ended up fully embracing the Israeli position. Add to this the fact that when Murphy met with (Polyakev) in Geneva in 1987, the Soviet Union said that the international conference must convene on the basis of the sound concept of resolution 242, namely withdrawal from all the territories. Meanwhile, the U.S. administration, speaking through Murphy, said that resolution 242 is just an agenda, that it requires direct negotiations between Israel and each Arab country separately and that such negotiations would culminate in an international conference to bless the agreements Israel reaches with each Arab country.

This means that the U.S. position has changed fundamentally. Add to this the fact that the United States cited the changing circumstances theory in the latest Security Council consultations whereas Jordan has refused to respond to us insofar as this theory is concerned. When the U.S. delegate was asked why his administration opposes the issuance of resolutions condemning the brutal acts committed by Israel whereas the administration had condemned such acts years earlier, he responded: The circumstances have changed and every situation has its dictates. Moreover, Reagan, who refuses to use the phrase "Palestinian people," contradicts everything Carter said about the Palestinian people's right to establish their state. Carter called the Palestinian people by name and did not call them the " inhabitants of the occupied territories," as Reagan does.

[Question] We hear every now and then that there are Palestinian-Syrian contacts and that progress has been achieved in restoring normal relations between the PLO and Damascus. What is truly happening at this level?

[Answer] Before we convened our Central Council on 5 October 1987, a number of brother businessmen told us that they had partially succeeded in their mediation with Damascus, that President Hafiz al-Asad had met with some of them and that they had understood from him that he had no veto against anybody in the PLO and that he supported the PLO's unity. We considered this to be considerable progress that had to be put to good use. But the businessmen also said that a prominent official sent with them a number of questions to the PLO leadership and that we would succeed or fail in light of our answers to the questions. We rejected this approach and responded to our brothers in Syria with an 11-page memorandum in which we expounded the essence of our political thinking and literature. General secretaries and prominent people who attended the Central Council's meeting in Tunisia took part in drafting this memorandum. The memorandum deals with all the questions indirectly and defines the bases on which the new relationship with Syria can be founded. Our brothers took back this memorandum which Syrian officials received with satisfaction. But these officials said that they were preoccupied with preparations for the Amman emergency summit and that they would resume the dialogue after the summit. We continue to await the resumption of this dialogue.

[Question] What about the government in exile? A lot is being said about such a government at present. What are the objectives behind raising this issue at this time?

[Answer] Certain sisterly countries and some friends have advised the PLO to declare a government in exile, saying that they have information to the effect that Israel has grown tired of Gaza Strip in particular, that the uprising may lead to Israel's withdrawal from this territory, that the PLO cannot take over this territory and that the PLO has to have a government, as the Algerians did when they formed a provisional government. The Executive Committee has examined this issue and our view on it is that a government in exile will be formed when the circumstances become so ripe that a handover and takeover process becomes imminent. We don't believe that Israel will give up as easily as some people say. We need a second, third and fourth uprising. We also need to increase our operations in the occupied territories. We believe that the idea of a government in exile remains extant and that it has its justifications. But the time is not opportune.

[Question] What do you mean by "the conditions are not ripe?"

[Answer] For example, if the superpowers compel Israel to withdraw from Gaza Strip and the West Bank in implementation of the U.N. resolution, then this would dictate the formation of a government to take over these territories.

08494

ALGERIA

Natural Gas Contract Concluded With Greece

45000020 Algiers Domestic Service in Arabic 1830 GMT 4 Feb 88

[Text] Today in Algiers the national company Sonatrach and the Greek company (Deep) reached an agreement on the sale of 12 billion cubic meters of Algerian natural gas to Greece over 21 years, starting in 1991. The period of the contract and the quantities can be increased by mutual agreement. The price of the liquid natural gas will be determined on delivery by applying a formula linked to the development of the crude oil prices on a competitive basis. The contract between Sonatrach and the state-owned Greek company also includes regular revision to adapt the price formula to the energy situation. The signing ceremony was attended by Mr Belkacem Nabi, minister of energy and chemical and petrochemical industries; and Peponis, Greek minister of industry, energy and technology.

/9738

EGYPT

Soviets Offer To Build Nuclear Power Stations

45040068b London AL-HAWADITH in Arabic 5 Feb 88 p 10

[Text] The Soviet Union has offered to build 5 nuclear power stations for Egypt to reduce its dependence on hydroelectric power generators.

This is the first large-size industrial project the Soviets have offered Egypt since diplomatic relations were severed during Anwar al-Sadat's administration.

Informed sources say that Egypt is trying to obtain nuclear reactors from either France or West Germany.

08494

Egyptian Reaction to Palestinian Uprising Detailed

45040054b London AL-TADAMUN in Arabic 16 Jan 88 pp 22-23

[Article by 'Abd-al-Qadir Shahib: "Cold War Between Cairo and Tel Aviv"]

[Text] The atmosphere in Egypt now is similar to that of 1982, during the Israeli invasion of Lebanon and the Israeli forces' storming of the Lebanese capital of Beirut.

Student and popular demonstrations protesting Israel's repressive measures against the Palestinians in the occupied territories and supporting the Palestinians' on-going uprising against Israeli occupation have broken out at several Egyptian universities. In fact, there have even been student and popular demonstrations inside the American University of Cairo, which, for the first time since the Israeli invasion of Lebanon, saw a boycott of classes which lasted more than 1 hour in which Egyptian and foreign male and female students, including American students, took part.

The demonstrations were not limited to students only; members of other Egyptian popular groups took part. The biggest popular demonstration was the one which originated at al-Azhar University right after the first Friday prayers of the new year, and the women's demonstration at the leftist NPUG Party's headquarters in the heart of Cairo. In addition, several professional unions in Egypt, chiefly the doctors', merchants' and lawyers' unions, held major conferences in solidarity with the Palestinian people, and the lawyers' union also called for organizing a march in support of the Palestinian uprising.

The Egyptian opposition parties held joint meetings which resulted in the issuance of a statement of strong support for the Palestinian uprising. !! The statement also included numerous demands that the Egyptian government withdraw the Egyptian ambassador from Tel Aviv, expel the Israeli ambassador from Cairo, close the Egyptian-Israeli borders to prevent the deportation of any Palestinian from the occupied territories—as the Israeli authorities were determined to do—and freeze the normalization process between Egypt and Israel. Some people also demanded that the 1979 Camp David agreements be abrogated.

However, it was not only the opposition parties which protested Israeli repression of Palestinians in the occupied territories; the ruling party and the government also took part. The Egyptian People's Assembly, which has a majority from the ruling party, issued a statement affirming "its denunciation of and strong indignation at Israel's abuse of the Palestinian people of the West Bank, an area which has been protected by international agreements throughout the occupation period."

The statement implied a veiled threat to Israel when it said, "The assembly will not accept the peace treaty with Israel as a separate solution, but as a part of a comprehensive peace."

This statement was followed by another issued by the Consultative Assembly, a majority of whose members also come from the ruling NDP.

In addition, the Egyptian government officially denounced Israel's repressive measures. This criticism was accompanied by strong warnings issued by more than one official speaking for the Egyptian government. Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Dr 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid issued the most recent such warning to

Israel's leaders, cautioning them not to carry out their threats to deport Palestinians from their land, be it the West Bank or the Gaza Strip.

However, the most serious statements came from Ambassador Taha al-Farnawani, director of the Palestine Department of the Egyptian Foreign Ministry, who frankly accused Israel of violating the Camp David agreements through its repressive measures in the occupied territories, and said that Egypt is no longer obliged to adhere to these agreements. A statement by the Egyptian People's Assembly corroborates this interpretation, as it hints that the assembly will not accept these agreements if Israel is determined to make them into a separate solution.

Although Egyptian security forces confronted the demonstrations which broke out at the Egyptian universities in support of the Palestinian uprising, and forcibly prevented these marches outside the various universities and unions, the public prosecutor's office immediately released the demonstrators, members of the religious trend and leftists alike, and did not allow them to be detained for more than a few hours.

At the same time, the Egyptian authorities complied with some of the popular demands adopted by the opposition parties by recalling the Egyptian ambassador for a few days' consultations in protest and by freezing normalization with Israel. The Egyptian authorities also responded to the Palestinian demand to close Egypt's borders with Israel in order to obstruct Israeli plans to deport a number of Palestinians from the occupied territories. Jordan did likewise.

However, the Egyptian government was unable to respond to the other popular demands, particularly the demands for expelling the Israeli ambassador to Cairo and recalling the Egyptian ambassador from Tel Aviv, because the United States stepped in to prevent the Egyptian government from taking such measures as these—an intervention which was revealed by Israeli press sources. In official Egyptian circles, it is said that Egypt told America that it would not go along with this demand in return for America's not using its veto against the Security Council resolution condemning Israel.

However, even though America stepped in to mediate with Cairo, Egyptian-Israeli relations are still so tense that foreign diplomats have begun to describe the atmosphere of these relations as having gone beyond the "cold peace" stage to the "cold war" stage.

8559

Preparations To Produce New Missile Systems Reported

45040068c London AL-HAWADITH in Arabic
5 Feb 88 p 11

[Text] The Egyptian military experts' successes in designing and building missile systems and in producing an American-designed tank in Egypt have been met with a wide reaction in the appropriate international circles. Egyptian military experts have designed and built 15 new missile systems that are expected to be suitable for various tactical purposes. One of these systems comprises 12 80-mm missiles with varied warheads. This system meets the needs of flexible and rapid-moving shock troops and paratroop forces.

AL-HAWADITH reported a few weeks ago that the American-designed M1.A1 tank, which is the latest heavy tank in the world and is known by the name of Abrams, will be produced in Egypt. The construction of an Egyptian plant to produce these tanks has already begun. This plant will also carry out maintenance and repair work for the M-60 and M-88 tanks which are in service in Egypt.

The plant site covers an area of 660 feddans. The main tank complex will occupy an area of nearly 80,000 square meters and will be nearly 600 meters long. It will thus be the longest building in Europe, Asia and Africa.

08494

Solutions for Investment Company Crisis Discussed

45040055b London AL-TADAMUN in Arabic
16 Jan 88 p 40

[Interview with former Egyptian Supply Minister Dr Fu'ad Mursi, by 'Abd-al-Qadir Shuhayb: in Cairo, date not specified]

[Text] The damage which investment companies have done to the Egyptian economy is no secret to anyone in Egypt. These companies have been speculating in foreign currency, exchange rates for the Egyptian pound, and vital and strategic commodities, from fodder to gold, the prices of which have flared up and gone mad. They are trying to monopolize several of the principal activities of the Egyptian economy. They have also deprived the economy of much of the people's savings, by collecting the money of the Egyptian citizens and, instead of investing it in new investment projects, transferring it out of the country in order to use it for speculating in foreign currency and precious metals. Meanwhile, Egypt's supply of foreign currency has run low, and it has been forced to ask for new loans.

Above all, immediate dangers imperil those who deposit their money with these companies in search of a big profit higher than the banks' interest rates. The biggest risk is that the owners of these companies might flee the country after smuggling out the money they have accumulated.

So far, thousands of Egyptian citizens have been thus burned. Before the end of last year, the owner of one of the six largest investment companies in Egypt fled the country after collecting US$150 million from the citizens. Even so, many people have cautioned the Egyptian

government against taking any administrative or economic measures against these companies and their owners, so as to avert a rebellion by the depositors at these companies. Estimates of the number of such depositors varies between 1 and 4 million, each of whom represents an entire family. The feeling is that the Egyptian government is in a real bind; it is hurting from the dangers posed by these companies, but it is unable to do anything to ward off these perils.

Is this the truth?

AL-TADAMUN asked this question of a prominent Egyptian economic expert, Dr Fu'ad Mursi, who is not only a former Egyptian supply minister but who has also had prior experience in confronting this kind of problem in 1972, when he had to deal with persons who were selling smuggled imports.

[Question] Is there any solution to the investment company crisis into which the Egyptian government has fallen?

[Answer] The solution to this crisis must begin with some basic facts about these companies.

First of all, in the Egyptian economy, vast amounts of money are held by people who do not deal with the official banking system, or else deal with it very cautiously. These savings must be mobilized, provided that there are channels for their mobilization, and there must be a satisfactory return on this money, in view of the fact that inflation has caused the official interest rate paid by the banks to drop. Under the best of circumstances, the interest rate is 13 percent, while prices are rising by 30 percent to 40 percent. Therefore, this savings base is endangered.

Second, these companies have created innovative channels which seem to follow the lead of investment according to the Islamic Shari'ah, but which actually use a method which is essentially a modern capitalistic approach—converting material assets to financial assets and using them to speculate in currency, gold, precious metals, and some basic commodities.

Through such operations, these companies participate on the world capitalistic market, because by speculating on this particular market they can realize higher profits, and can thus provide sources of investment offering extraordinarily high returns for Egyptian savers.

Third, within the Egyptian economy, these investment companies constitute a new banking system parallel to the official, legal banking system. It is more efficient, in that it can attract savings and expand the scope of activity for the holders of those savings. This system is also better able to mobilize these savings than the official system.

Fourth, Egyptian savers have become attached to this parallel banking system because of the yields it offers, which are at least double the official interest rate paid by the official banking system. The danger of this is that with this new banking system, Egyptian savers have become bound up by a narrow, alarming ribbon. For such savers, this system represents a source of additional monthly income which never drops below a certain level, and which contributes to the standard of living to which they have become accustomed. Thus families and Egyptian homes have become firmly tied to the investment companies by a bond which is hard to break.

In view of these facts, we must quickly come up with a solution to this problem.

[Question] What solution do you suggest?

[Answer] There is more than one solution, although the best solution is the first one, which consists of legitimizing this new banking system, requiring it to follow banking practices, and allowing it the rights of the regular banking system.

In short, this solution calls for transforming the investment companies into banks, not joint-stock companies, which will be required to maintain a minimum amount of capital. All of their funds will be transformed into deposits, and they will be able to function as commercial or business banks. They must also be subject to Central Bank control, their activities must be audited, and they will be required to have boards of directors and general assemblies.

This solution would guarantee complete protection of the rights of the savers, and also would not shake up existing companies. At the same time, the bank would be entitled to set up companies and invest the deposits it holds, even in speculation, just as is the case now with several Egyptian banks such as the Faysal Islamic Bank and the Egypt-Iran Bank.

[Question] And the other solution?

[Answer] The second solution has many inherent dangers. In general, it calls for establishing savings channels at existing banks which would compete with the investment companies and pay higher interest than those companies, in some other, non-monetary form, such as housing, commercial, or industrial projects in which depositors would invest. Obvious advantages would be gained from such shareholding.

The advantages from the housing system would be that expatriate Egyptians could acquire flats or high-yield bonds.

In short, there must be obvious advantages, similar to the advantages offered by the investment companies. This would ensure an influx of funds into Egypt and their utilization in investment projects.

[Question] But some people feel that administrative steps must also be taken to counter the excesses of the investment companies and the owners' deviant practices.

[Answer] I closed down al-Shawaribi Street using economic measures, not security or administrative measures. The security measure proved useless when Former Ministers 'Abdallah Marzaban and Hamdi 'Ashur used it. The solution I offered was an economic solution; I legalized the al-Shawaribi Street merchants (the ones who were selling smuggled goods) and gave them 3 months, until May 1972, to stop selling smuggled goods. Whatever goods were left the Supply Ministry bought from them at prices set by the Chamber of Commerce. After this, the merchants started selling only Egyptian goods.

Therefore, we must deal with the investment companies in an economic sense, not by fiat, and we must not disregard the interests of all the parties.

Here I will not go into the history behind the company owners' money, which they got from smuggling, black market currency dealing, or even drug dealing. I am dealing with the current situation. The interests represented by these companies must be acknowledged, and they must be made legal. This is the only way to solve this problem.

[Question] What about the government's solution—changing these companies into joint-stock companies?

[Answer] These companies deal in money, and therefore they should become banks. If they were to establish companies, these companies would be holding companies, and those who put up money would be shareholders.

I am against changing investment companies into joint-stock companies, because that is not their role. Furthermore, they will never stop speculating in order to earn high profits for the deposit-holders, because, quite simply, there is no economic activity which yields as high rates as speculation.

[Question] But some people oppose the idea of changing them into banks, fearing that this would strike a blow to the current official banking system.

[Answer] On the contrary, changing them into banks would guarantee a certain degree of control over their activities. This solution would legitimize them; it would give them the same rights as banks have, and would also impose obligations on them and provide control over them.

[Question] What about the money which these companies have accumulated and have actually transferred overseas? Some people estimate it at about $7 billion, while others estimate it at $12 billion.

[Answer] In any case, whatever solution is applied will never ensure this money's return. It will only ensure that no more Egyptian savings will be transferred overseas.

8559

Commentary Criticizes Mubarak's View of Democracy

45040068a Cairo AL-WAFD in Arabic 3 Feb 88 pp 1, 6

[Article by Mustafa Shardi]

[Text] Based on some of what the press has published, I understand that during his tour in Europe and the United States, President Mubarak talked repeatedly about democracy and the free opposition press in Egypt. I have read that while talking about democracy, the president said specifically: "We are determined to add to this edifice daily. We don't believe that we have completed the trip yet. A long stretch lies ahead of us and we will continue the march."

I have also read that the president talked to the members of the U.S. Congress about the free Egyptian press, saying verbatim: "We have a free press that criticizes the Egyptian administration itself, not just Israel." The president said this in response to some members of Congress who want us to sing the praises of the state of gangsters which is being protected by the United States while it continues to massacre our children, displace our people, occupy our lands, and threaten our national security.

The president is entitled to boast and to be proud of the fact that his country has democracy and a free press, because public liberties are the greatest accomplishment with which the world and history can crown a ruler, and because freedom means political stability. Consequently, rather essentially, freedom means economic prosperity, and such prosperity insures that the nation will move safely in the right direction.

However, I believe that the U.S. Congressmen listened to President Mubarak's address while wondering among themselves: If democracy, or even the beginnings of democracy, exists in the country, then why does the president boycott his country's opposition parties? If a strong opposition press exists in Egypt, then why don't we see its representatives amidst the hordes of government journalists who are covering the president's visit and talks, talks which concern Egypt's entire situation and future and the future of its generations, and which are not confined to American relations with the NDP—may God preserve it?

This does not mean that the Congressmen in Washington did not believe—God forbid—President Mubarak's words about democracy and the free press. What it means is that embarrassing questions could have been

posed to the president who would not have had convincing answers to such questions. We would not like to see Egypt's president in such a predicament while he is on an official tour outside the country.

I am well aware that talking about President Mubarak's disregard for his country's opposition parties annoys the chairmen of all parties, because people may think that they aspire earnestly to meet the president. This is an inaccurate belief. What is true is that the parties' chairmen see dangerous days looming on the horizon. They do not want the presidential institution to wait until danger takes it by surprise and those dangerous days descend upon it before it turns to the parties' chairmen for opinion and advice because nobody—neither the president nor the parties—will then find a common dialogue language through which to reach an understanding on the pressing issues. What is more, the presidential institution may not even find any bridges of communication because such bridges will have cracked and collapsed as a result of prolonged neglect and constant estrangement.

The difficulty and ferocity of the coming days will be compounded by the fact that the Egyptian opposition parties will be very far from any meeting point with the ruling party's chairman and members who will have to face the momentous events alone. This, in my opinion, will be very difficult, rather impossible.

When a government paper recently kicked a storm against the opposition papers, Mustafa Amin, a prominent journalist, warned against the attempts to slaughter the opposition press and the plots to stab the partisan press. In his article, the giant of the Arab press said that the opposition papers now provide the best coverage on the Egyptian economy.

What Mustafa Amin has said accurately and eloquently reflects the existing facts, to which those who plan and plot to assassinate the opposition papers, particularly AL-WAFD, pay no attention.

President Mubarak is well aware of this state of affairs, as evidenced by the fact that he has flown the banner of democracy and his country's free opposition press throughout his tour in Western Europe and the United States, because most of the attention and discussions during the tour focused on the Arab situations, bilateral relations, and economic cooperation between Egypt and these countries.

President Mubarak flew the banner of democracy and the free opposition press while holding purely economic talks. Why?

Because he realizes that democracy and a free press in his country are tantamount to a dazzling asset that offers the strongest assurance that there is stability and that the chances of economic prosperity are strong. There can be no prosperity and no economy altogether if democracy is absent and freedom is buried. To prove this, the president said that the opposition papers criticize the Egyptian administration itself. In the United States, the word "administration" means all the state institutions, including the presidential institution.

Despite our reservations on the type of existing democracy and on the horrors to which the government agencies—especially the security agencies—subject the opposition press (particularly AL-WAFD), we say that many in President Mubarak's administration, his regime's institutions, and the press controlled by his party's government are not even close to being aware of or understanding what President Mubarak understands or uses intelligently.

For example, what would the Congressmen say if they learned the details of the attacks, fabrications, criminal plots, and information and propaganda blockade to which the opposition press is subjected?

For example, what would they say if they learned that within the framework of a free opposition press, the presidential institution refuses to let any opposition journalist approach it and that it asks some groups, even non-Egyptian diplomatic groups, not to allow the the opposition press' chief editors to be present at any function or occasion so that their presence may not annoy the president?

What would they say if they learned that in its press review, the Egyptian television confines this review to the government papers, to some obscure provincial papers and even to some Arab Gulf papers while totally disregarding the daily AL-WAFD and the other weekly opposition papers?

Finally, what would the Congressmen say if they learned that President Mubarak discusses with them fateful issues concerning Egypt and refuses to discuss these issues with the chairmen of his country's parties, even though they are partners in the national responsibility and are, moreover, citizens and owners of this country, just like he is.

08494

LEBANON

Parliamentarian Discusses Situation in South

44040110 London AL-HAWADITH in Arabic
5 Feb 88 pp 16, 18

[Interview with Tyre Deputy Dr 'Ali al-Khalil: " 'Ali al-Khalil to AL-HAWADITH: Lebanon Will Not Be Ruled by President Who Does Not Work for Liberation From Israeli Occupation"]

[Text] In an interview with AL-HAWADITH, Tyre Deputy Dr 'Ali al-Khalil focused on the need to support the national resistance in the South because it is the

fundamental and primary element in liberating the South, especially since the United States has used veto after veto to obstruct U.N. resolutions on South Lebanon calling for condemnation of Israel and forcing it to withdraw completely and unconditionally.

[Question] The South has regained prominence in Lebanese military and political developments. There is extensive talk about constant security explosions in the South and about artillery exchanges between the national resistance and Israel. In your opinion, will Israel launch a new invasion of the South similar to the 1982 invasion?

[Answer] I believe that the national resistance's heroic operations must continue as long as direct and indirect Israeli occupation and the so-called security belt, established in a precious part of the country, continue to exist. Nobody at home or abroad denies that the main credit goes to the national resistance for Israel's withdrawal from most of the territories it occupied in 1982. This same resistance will be able to force Israel to withdraw from the remaining occupied Lebanese territories. As a result of the 1982 experience, Israel will not try to occupy Lebanese territories again because it realizes that there is a difference between military invasion and occupation. What I mean is that the enemy forces which used this military machine to occupy a large part of the Lebanese territories realize that they cannot use this machine to perpetuate their presence on Lebanon's soil as long as the people reject such occupation. This rejection is what created the resistance against the occupier and this resistance worked in turn to oust the occupying army. We should keep in mind, however, that Israel may resort to limited strikes against certain sites.

[Question] Some people believe [the election] of a Lebanese president is related to an aniticpated Israeli invasion. Do you think Israel will be able to impose a certain candidate as president or to obstruct any candidate from becoming president?

[Answer] Israel will not be able to impose any presidential candidate on the Lebanese people. Neither will it be able to obstruct any candidate from gaining the presidency if he is unanimously accepted by the Lebanese. This is because any candidate or even any future president not proceeding from the fundamental principle of "liberating the country's soil from the Israeli occupation" will not be able to rule Lebanon. This means that the president must take the position of hostility to the Israeli occupation.

[Question] Every time Israel raids Lebanon, the Lebanese government submits a complaint to the Security Council and every time the result is the same, namely a U.S. veto of the condemnation because Washington believes that the solution lies, as its ambassador in Beirut says, in security arrangements between Lebanon and Israel. How do you view this issue?

[Answer] The United States' greatest mistake lies in its Mideast policy which supports Israel's persistent aggression against Arab territories. This mistake is very costly to the U.S. people because the adopted policy leads to a big loss for U.S. interests. We realize that the Zionist movement in the United States and Zionist influence over the U.S. elections impose this bitter and painful reality on the U.S. candidates and, consequently, on U.S. officials who are forced to support Israeli violations of Arab rights. As a result, the United States uses its veto against the Security Council resolutions concerning repeated Israeli attacks on South Lebanon, as it did in the case of the latest resolution concerning a Lebanese complaint.

As for the security arrangements, the Lebanese public and official position on settling the situation emanating from the Israeli occupation of South Lebanon is one of adherence to Security Council resolutions 427, 508 and 509, i.e. a position of no security arrangements between Lebanon and Israel beyond the framework of the stipulations of these resolutions.

[Question] Raymond Iddih says that he is prepared to offer the United States, not Israel, security arrangements. In your opinion, can the United States pressure Israel to withdraw from South Lebanon?

[Answer] I don't know what security arrangements Iddih is talking about. But according to my information, I believe that the his concept of security arrangements is confined to a truce with Israel—an agreement that has been in existence since Israel's creation—and to the deployment of U.N. forces along the Lebanese-Palestinian borders.

As for U.S. pressure on Israel, I believe that the Iddih is right because regardless of how great the Zionist influence is in the United States, the United States can, when it sees that it is in its interest, impose its policy on Israel.

[Question] The U.N. forces in the South have become like a biased witness. They cannot defend even themselves. Do you think that the Security Council will renew their current mandate or will the Council expand their powers with the advent of a new administration?

[Answer] I personally prefer to see the Security Council expand the powers of these forces so that they may be able to implement the resolutions they came to implement. But experience has taught us that the Council extends their mandate routinely, without expanding their powers or fortifying them with men and equipment. When we demand renewal of mandate of U.N. forces, we do not do so out of the desire for a routine extension but make the demand so that these forces may carry out the tasks for which they have come and that they may imnplement U.N. resolutions concerning Lebanon's rights, including the resolution on a comprehensive and complete Israeli withdrawal from all Lebanese territories. The routine extension of these forces'

mandate without enabling them to implement the tasks for which they have come reflects the Security Council's inability to implement its resolutions. Therefore, we must ceaselessly demand that the mission of these forces be developed and we must make the Security Council realize that we have not forgotten what we want and demand of it insofar as Lebanon is concerned. We must also ask the permanent Security Council members, led by the United States and the Soviet Union, to make a political decision that enables these forces to implement Council resolutions. Meanwhile, we must stress that Lebanese territories have been liberated and continue to be liberated from the Israeli occupation as a result of the valiant heroic resistance which constitutes the primary and fundamental element in the liberation process. But we must also use all the other available means to bolster the liberation process from within.

[Question] But it has become customary for Israel not to yield to either the Security Council or to the United States regarding the Middle East question. The proof of this is Israel's failure to implement the resolutions concerning Lebanon and the latest resolution concerning the West Bank and Gaza Strip. How will the United States be able to pressure Israel in this area?

[Answer] Herein lies the main problem insofar as the U.S. role in the Middle East is concerned. If the United States constantly supports Israel, then it is our duty and the duty of the world community to continue to pressure the United States politically so that we may achieve our diplomatic and political goals. We must also continue to pressure Israel militarily to force it to withdraw and to persuade the United States that it is time for it to change its Middle East policy.

[Question] Many people wager that the uprising on the West Bank and Gaza Strip will culminate in something positive for the Palestinian cause, especially with regard to self-rule for the Bank and the Strip. Do you think that this is likely to happen?

[Answer] I believe that if this uprising persists, and it apparently will, then the Israeli occupation army will have no alternative but to accept reality. Israel will be unable to do anything except to offer further concessions. I don't know what these concessions will be or how long the uprising will be able to continue to make gains. But I can say that we support this uprising because it seeks to liberate the land in every sense of the word.

[Question] Do you think Israel will offer the concessions you are talking about through direct negotiations with the Palestinians or through an international conference?

[Answer] I personally am not one of those who say that it is possible to hold an international conference, at least not in the foreseeable future. The international conference will not be held. If it is held, it will make no decisions. If it makes decisions, it will not be able to translate them into action and a new reality on the ground. However, there is no harm in continuing to raise the international conference issue because this is an indication of international detente, especially between the two superpowers. This detente may have a positive impact on international policy in the Middle East. As soon as the United States and the Soviet Union agree to hold an international conference under U.N. auspices and in the presence of all the parties connected with the Middle East crisis, then I believe that this agreement will constitute an extremely positive opportunity that must not be wasted. As long as the conference is held under U.N. auspices, then this means that the conference's point of departure will be the resolutions adopted by the Security Council and the delcarations issued by the U.N. General Assembly and the General Secretariat on settling the Middle East crisis. These resolutions condemn Israel strongly and guarantee Arab and Lebanese rights.

It must be mentioned in this context that both Israeli parties reject the idea of convening an international conference, and that the stated acceptance on the part of the Labor Party is in actuality, rejection. Labor's position is in agreement with the position of its political opponent, the Likud Party, only on the domestic level but not on the level of basic issues which concern Israel's survival, its continued existence and its strategy.

I believe that it is better to solve the South Lebanon issue before an international conference is held. The Arab brothers should contribute to this approach, even though the South issue is connected to the Palestinian issue, so that only the Palestinian issue may be presented at the international conference and so that Israel may not try to preoccupy the Arabs with other issues, including the South Lebanon issue, because such preoccupation will affect the success of the conference as a whole, Arab solidarity within the conference and even the Palestinian issue itself.

08494

LIBYA

Tripoli Real Estate Chief Calls For Adherence to Property Laws

45040059a Tripoli AL-SHATT22 Dec 87 p 3

[Interview with Mukhtar Mahfuz, chairman of Socialist Real Property Registration Department, Tripoli Municipality: "An Appeal to our Brother Citizens To Record and Document Their Real Properties"]

[Text] In a press interview which AL-SHATT carried out, Mr Mukhtar Mahfuz, chairman of the Socialist Real Property Registration Department of Tripoli municipality, talked about a number of important issues which concern Libyan Arab citizens, especially since these issues, which were presented in this conversation, are related to a number of sensitive considerations which have a connection to the life, future and family of the citizen.

The Fire Did Not Arise from a Vacuum

The chairman of the Socialist Real Property Registration Department in Tripoli municipality said that the burning of the real property registry records did not arise from a vacuum, but was a cultural revolution against an old inherited culture based on the principle of the free economy, reciprocal freedom and individual relations, because real property registration previously documented individual properties and feudal properties, and this was the motive for their being burnt. One should bear in mind that the incident of the fire and the process of getting rid of this sick cultural debris is something which the requirement of the transformation has imposed, since the systems and cultures which had been prevalent in the framework of the old society were a reflection of the free economic principle, in which individual ownership and the means of production were considered, indeed, the productive power in the entire society was mobilized for the individual owner. However, the new socialist society, where the watchword is "the house belongs to the person who resides in it," and the land is no one's property, caused this view not to be in keeping with the prevalent legal systems. In order for the existing situation, which reflects a transitional stage between the old and the new, to be realized, it was necessary to carry out a development process by eliminating the worn-out cultures and legal systems which were incapable of keeping up with the course of progress, the course of the era of the masses.

Therefore, the notion of burning this worn-out culture, represented by real property registration, came about as one of the elements and is an important, necessary matter.

Resumption of the Documentation of Real Estate Properties

Mr Mukhtar Mahfuz went on to say, "On 6 May 1986, General People's Committee Decree 282 was issued concerning the resumption by the real property registration and documentation agencies of the documentation of real properties. After that, Decree 194 for 1986 of the former General People's Justice Committee was issued on 16 June bearing on the opening of doors of the registration offices to citizens' visits for the sake of recording their real properties. As soon as registration was opened to the citizens, we faced the problem of a conflict between what was new and old, since we found ourselves bound to the need to carry out a rapid process of developing the real estate registration services, especially in terms of the legislation regulating them.

"In order for this legislation to be in keeping with the new orientations of the new society, which is dominated by the principle 'The house belongs to the person who lives in it,' 'Partners not wage-earners,' and 'The land is the property of no one,' we began the process of comprehensive review of all the legal statutes in effect in order to implant the foundations of a legal system which would be in keeping with the new orientation and would be a sound reflection of the orientation of the age of the masses, especially since the stipulations cited in the old real property registration law had come to constitute a heavy burden on the transformation process. In the society of the era of the masses, the principle of leasing has no being, because this principle is based on fraud, deceit and exploitation. Since the stipulations of the old law strengthen these unjust principles, indeed protect them, eliminating them was therefore a pressing requirement so that the new system of socialist real property registration, in keeping with the new socialist orientation, could take their place."

The New Conception

The chairman of the Socialist Real Property Registration Department in the municipality of Tripoli went on to say:

"We presented a memorandum containing a new conception and also the draft of a law for presentation to the basic people's conferences in their coming session, and in it we took care to adopt the criterion of assets and the criterion of form. Through it we strengthened the housing booklet and we also recommended the documents which had to be presented upon registration and investigation of ownership upon submission by the citizen. They were presented to the General People's Planning Committee, where they were authorized and applied in general to the municipalities in the great Jamahiriyah. In them we devoted attention to the resolutions of the people's conferences concerning the operation and facilitation of measures.

The House Belongs to the Person Living in It

AL-SHATT: How far has application of the statement "The house belongs to the person living in it?" got?

The secretary of Socialist Real Property Registration for Tripoli municipality: On the basis of this immortal statement, and by virtue of the provisions of the law for 1986, which considers every resident an owner, on condition that entry into the house be in keeping with Islamic law and the legality of the entry be proved by a rental receipt from the former owner, which is considered a justification for entry, the statement "The house belongs to the person living in it" is applied to its owner. One should bear in mind that the matter of the former owner does not concern us and we are not addressing ourselves to him in the new documentation, because the precept is the person who resides, not the person who owns.

Inheritance

AL-SHATT: Let us assume that the father of the family has died and has left a house in which one of his children lives, and he has other children who live outside the house of the family. Does this mean that the ownership of the house will revert to the son who is resident only, on grounds that the house belongs to the person who lives in it, or is the ownership of this house or any other real property transferred immediately upon death from the person bequeathing the inheritance to the heirs, and this transfer is realized by force of law directly after

death? If it is otherwise, the real property will remain without an owner until the legal declaration is presented by the heirs. That is, inheritance is among the exceptional cases in which legislation on the registry of assets makes it permissible not to make a resolution of it contingent on the performance of registration.

Law Six

Mr Mukhtar Mahfuz, chairman of the Socialist Real Property Registration Department in the municipality of Tripoli, went on to say:

"As to what is stated in Law Six for 1986, that every citizen has the right to own a dwelling, on the condition of residence and attainment of adulthood, that does not conflict with or negate the right of the heirs to transfer the right of their inheritance, because the condition of inheritance is an exceptional one which transfers ownership to the heirs by the force of law, even if an heir has not reached adulthood, for the child of today is the man of tomorrow. Acquiring ownership through inheritance is a legitimate right and attainment of the legal age stipulated in Law Six for 1986 is not a condition regarding that, because the revolutionary and socialist laws have come about to preserve the Libyan Arab citizen's right and look after him, and its noble laws have embodied the humanity of the individual, which has strengthened the notions of humanity and the love of what is best for the society.

"However, if the heirs are of adult age and one of them, that is, the person among them who is residing in the real property, wants the statement to be applied, that does not prejudice the rights of the others for compensation for their rights, each according to his share, because Law Six for 1986 stipulates that no one to whom the statement is applied must deal with the house in any manner until after full payment of the price to the heirs after the price of the house is appraised."

AL-SHATT: Does the citizen have the right to register more than one house with socialist real property registration?

The chairman of the Socialist Real Property Registration Department of the municipality of Tripoli: Law Six for 1986 came about to guarantee the codification of the statement "The house belongs to the person who lives in it," since the law gives the citizen one piece of property only, either a single suitable residence or a parcel of land prepared for construction. Except for that, ownership of it reverts to Libyan society for redistribution to those who are entitled to it.

AL-SHATT: Does this also apply to a citizen married to more than one wife?

Brother Mukhtar Mahfuz, chairman of the Socialist Real Property Registration Department of the municipality of Tripoli: People who have two wives can own only one piece of real property, whatever the circumstances and reasons might be. If they are treated otherwise, that will be considered in violation of Law Six for 1986, which is considered part of the general system, and therefore if any measure besides that is applied, that is in violation and absolutely void.

AL-SHATT: What is with respect to the case of divorced women?

Our brother the chairman of the Real Property Registration Department: As regards divorced women, if they are nursing they have the right to own the property of the person divorcing them, if he has any. What is meant here by divorced women is divorced wives of owners of property who are not married and at the same time are nursing or looking after their children.

AL-SHATT: Are the registrations attributed to land ones which are attributed to the rights of persons or rights of use?

The secretary of the Real Property Registration Department: The provisions of Law Seven for 1986 have given all Libyans the right to use land in work, farming and pasturage, for themselves and their heirs after them. This means that the right of use is the right of full ownership for the people using it. That is, the law has permitted the beneficiaries to impose this right on all rights of subordination which are attributed to them, such as the right of mortgage and other rights.

Ownership of More Than One Plot Prepared for Building

AL-SHATT: Does a citizen have the right to own more than one plot of land prepared for building?

The chairman of the Socialist Real Property Registration Department in the municipality of Tripoli: Of course not, because a plot of land prepared for building is in the final judgment housing, and ownership of it is sacred. As for agricultural land, ownership of that is ownership of use.

[Question] And what about tribal land?

The chairman of the Real Property Registration Department: Tribal land does not exist, since all types of various categories of tribal or group fanaticism and abuse of the land are absent in the new socialist society.

Religious Endowments

AL-SHATT: What about religious endowment real properties and land?

The chairman of the Socialist Real Property Registration Department in the municipality of Tripoli, Mr Mukhtar Mahfuz, said, regarding this question:

"As we said previously, the individual in the mass society does not have the right to a proliferation of properties, so how can he endow to a pious or other entity what he himself does not own? If the justification in the past for the existence of the system of religious endowments was the absence of social equality, now

then, with the existence of the happy society, what is called a religious endowment now has no justification for being, especially after the implanting of the protection of social insurance for all the citizens of the great Jamahiriyah. Therefore what the entity of the philanthropic endowment did of old, all social insurance agencies are doing now, following the issuance of Law 13 for 1980.

"There is another observation, which is that by a simple interpretation of Law 124 for 1972 regarding the provisions of religious endowments, we find that Article 295 stipulates that ownership of the assets, properties or money of a religious endowment or the acquisition of any right to assets of it are not permitted, and this of course conflicts with the statement 'The house belongs to the person who resides in it,' since there are many Libyans residing in dwellings belonging to a religious endowment. This is something which is contrary in a society dominated by the absence of wages and wage-earners."

The Difficulty in Ownership

AL-SHATT: Through the paper's frequent visit to the Tripoli Housing Office, it has observed the existence of some administrative difficulties which the red tape of the Tripoli Housing Office presents when a citizen wants to own his house or more correctly when he wants to apply the statement "The house belongs to the person who resides in it." What is the practical, simplified solution in your view whereby the citizen can get ownership of his house without disregarding this process for the reasons I mentioned to you?

Second, what administrative connection ties the Real Property Registration Office to the Tripoli Real Estate Office?

Mr Mukhtar Mahfuz, chairman of the Socialist Real Property Registration Department in the municipality of Tripoli: In reality, we have propounded the notion of harmonization of the Real Property Registration Office and the Housing Office, since the housing booklet is produced in accordance with a real estate certificate and when this harmonization occurs, the obstructive administrative measures will certainly be abridged.

Mukhtar went on to say, "In order to guarantee that there are not a number of residences, we have propounded the notion of harmonization, and also in order to create a real estate booklet for each real property and a booklet for each citizen or family, so that the criterion of assets will be realized by the presence of a booklet for the real property registration of every property, in addition to its boundaries and contents, and every individual will have a residential booklet specifying his residential status. Here we will be applying the personal standard, and we consider the housing booklet an argument for all in establishing a sacred real property ownership.

11887

Status of Social Insurance Fund Reviewed

45040059c Tripoli AL-MUWAZZAF31 Dec 87 p 3

[Article: "From the Social Insurance Fund Report"]

[Text] The Social Insurance Fund report for 1987, which is being presented at the third ordinary session of the Basic People's Conferences for 1987, has contained recommendations and results which the newspaper AL-MUWAZZAF is publishing so that the masses of the People's Conferences will be able to read them. The following appeared in the recommendations:

1. In view of the increase in public treasury debts on behalf of the Insurance Fund and the financial crisis it is suffering from, which affects the disbursement of sums in their material form and the form of assets and the performance of investment projects, the situation requires adoption of the following measures:

A. Coverage of basic pension expenses in accordance with the basic pension law which the basic people's conferences have approved, since the fund cannot keep going bearing this financial burden by proxy for the public treasury, which is bound by law to cover basic pensions.

B. Obligation of the treasury secretariats in the municipalities to transfer insurance dues bearing on insured persons, whose salaries the treasury in the municipality is in charge of disbursing monthly, in accordance with the provisions of Social Insurance Law 13 for 1980 and the bills and decrees issued in its regard.

C. Formation of a specialized committee with jurisdiction to tabulate the debts of the public treasury and the secretariats of the treasury in the municipalities up to 21 December 1987 and adoption of the measures to program payment of this debt in accordance with the law on the public debt.

2. In view of the difficulties the fund is facing with respect to opening branches for itself in all municipalities, whether these difficulties are in terms of financial allocations for these branches or areas of specialization, since there is duplication in areas of specialization between them and the social insurance secretariats in the municipalities:

Therefore the situation arises for a renewal of discussion of this subject again by the basic people's conferences, which make the decisions, and adoption of the right decision regarding the establishment of these branches or their nonestablishment, in light of the difficulties mentioned above.

3. The grant to the Social Insurance Fund of powers to oversee collection and inspection of the insured persons' money. The subordination of people working in the fund's inspection and audit agency will be directly from the technical standpoint.

4. Permission to the Social Insurance Fund to appoint the necessary number of inspectors and auditors, in support of the process of collection, inspection and oversight of the disbursement of social insurance funds.

5. Empowerment of the Social Insurance Fund to carry out the proposed investment plan by working to pay the fund's current commitments in the form of delayed projects out of debts with the general treasury to make possible the execution of its new projects.

Table of Revenues Collected from Insurance Dues in the Period 1 January 1987-30 September 1987

Municipality	Amount in Dinars
Social Insurance Secretariat in Tripoli	49,792,905
Social Insurance Secretariat in Benghazi	15,224,474
Social Insurance Secretariat in Sabha	2,854,435
Social Insurance Secretariat in al-Zawiyah	2,203,766
Social Insurance Secretariat in al-Jabal al-Gharbi	3,250,993
Social Insurance Secretariat in al-Marqab	2,887,876
Social Insurance Secretariat in the Gulf of Sirt	5,655,015
Social Insurance Secretariat in al-Jabal al-Akhdar	3,472,955
Social Insurance Secretariat in the Five Points	1,512,884
Social Insurance Secretariat in al-Batnan	826,075
Social Insurance Secretariat in al-Kufrah	768,172
Social Insurance Secretariat in Murzuq	318,824
Social Insurance Secretariat in Wadi al-Hayat	299,662
Total	89,068,086

Do You Know?

Some treasury secretariats in the municipalities have not paid social insurance dues in full from 1 June 1981, the date of the start of application of Social Insurance Law 13 for 1980, for insured persons in the people's agencies in the municipalities, which are considered legally responsible for payment of the insured persons' shares, the share of the work entity and the share of the treasury in the municipalities. Other municipalities have paid insurance dues for some years and have halted payment in recent years. The remaining treasury secretariats are paying insurance dues for intermittent periods for some of the people working in them.

11887

Foreign Involvement in Contraband Liquor Production Disclosed

45040059b Tripoli AL-SHATT22 Dec 87 p 4

[Article: "Discovery of a Liquor Plant"]

[Text] More than once we have given warning on the devious role and naked games the foreign companies operating in the great Jamahiriyah are playing. This role and these games are embodied in the purchase of people's integrity, the corruption of people's consciences and the spread of poisons, whether they be liquor or narcotics, especially among the circles of the young.

More than once and on more than one occasion these foreign companies' games have been discovered, whether in the form of offering bribes and buying people's consciences, manufacturing liquor and trafficking in it, or smuggling hard currency out of the great Jamahiriyah.

Through vigilant and sincere men, last week the security men in the local people's security branch in the al-Sina'i section managed to discover a plant for distilling liquor in the headquarters of a foreign company operating in Tripoli. This plant was run by electricity, by the use of tanks which were buried underground. This plant was prepared in a careful way, in a location which it was not easy to get to, since it was placed inside heaps of scrap materials and old water tanks. However, the innate intelligence of the security men stood up to this company's designs of spreading the poisons and trafficking in the liquor.

Through the arrest of the accused persons running this plant and through investigation, a large quantity of liquor prepared for consumption and other quantities being fabricated were seized. The investigation is still underway and the accused will be handed over to the area of the judiciary to receive their deterrent punishment.

11887

Public's Problems in Dealing with Airlines Reviewed

45040059d Tripoli AL-MUNTIJUN12 Dec 87 p 7

[Article: "Mutual Cooperation among Various Agencies Is Desired: The Citizen Must Accept His State of Affairs and Circumstances"]

[Text] Does Libyan Arab Airlines alone bear the responsibility for what happens to the citizen inside and outside the Jamahiriyah? Is it fair that Libyan Airlines be blamed for the presence of a tremendous number of citizens abroad seeking a way to return?

Our brother Hasan al-Kunyali (member of the company's management committee) says: "I believe that the responsibility is mutual. The citizen, before going to Tripoli International Airport, will have completed a series of measures which are related to his trip, and it is clear that the traveler knows well the circumstances the Libyan Arab Airlines is going through and its resources at the present time. The bodies which have made a travel opportunity easy for him also have a similar amount of such information, through what the citizen coming back from Istanbul or Damascus, for example, keeps saying.

"The company has specific flights and each flight has a number of seats and a specific volume of weight which it cannot exceed. Therefore, it will not be able to provide additional seats on its return from these capitals. In spite of that, the company has not stood with its hands tied in the face of this problem. Rather, it has given the power of transfer to foreign offices and has organized additional daily flights to areas which are suffering from the problem. Efforts are still constantly being made on behalf of realizing better opportunities for the return of all citizens at the soonest possible time.

"However, the problem will be repeated if all bodies starting with the citizen and ending with the Passport [Department], the Central Bank of Libya and Libyan Arab Airlines do not cooperate.

What is these bodies' responsibility?

For example, how can the Passport Department venture to grant 25,000 visas to Damascus, when Libyan Airlines' capacity does not exceed 10,000 passengers?

How can Libyan Airlines return with double the number of passengers, which is the group that insists on returning a day or two after its arrival in Damascus or Istanbul?

Citizens leave the Jamahiriyah without baggage and all of them bring a tremendous number of suitcases on returning, which exceeds the load capacity of the airplane.

Citizens get to Jiddah, Istanbul and Damascus via other capitals then demand to return through these areas, which suffer from the problem of congestion.

The solutions?

Coordination must take place between the Passport Department and Libyan Airlines in granting the citizens passports in accordance with the Libyan Airlines' resources.

2. The citizen must organize his trip, set his period of stay abroad and obtain a confirmed reservation coming and going.

3. He must have an understanding of the load bearing capabilities of the plane and not make the company responsible for transporting a tremendous number of bags and suitcases, in excess of the legally permitted weight.

Finally:

Al-Kunyali says: "It is not an exaggeration to say that Libyan Airlines is working with unparalleled capability. In spite of the boycott imposed on it by the hostile countries, in spite of the harsh obstacles placed around it and in spite of the complaints, it is proceeding most firmly, carrying out its programs with giant determination and realizing its goals in a manner which has amazed similar airlines. It is not a form of exaggeration for me to point out that another airline could not work in the light of the circumstances this company is going through, while breathing with one lung, but it derives its strength from a society which does not know suffocation and the nation of Jabal 'Ali, battling the most intractable challenges."

11887

SUDAN

Equatoria Deputy Commissioner Rejects Ugandan Claims

Khartoum AL-AYYAM in Arabic 2 Feb 88 p 1

[Text] Maj Gen Peter Serillo (Retired), commissioner of Equatoria Province, recently discussed the security situation and the living conditions of the tens of thousands of Ugandan refugees who are living within Sudanese borders after their migration from their Ugandan homeland for various reasons with a number of senior Ugandan officials.

Maurice Lauya, deputy commissioner of Equatoria Province, said—in reply to a question from AL-AYYAM about the Ugandan Government's charges that the Equatoria Provincial Government had provided support and aid to the Ugandan rebels fighting against Yoweri Museveni's government—that these charges had come in the wake of a major influx of Ugandan refugees caused by the internal strife there. He said that some services had to provided for them as stipulated by treaty, the protocols of the UN organizations and humane behavior in general.

He stated that Sudan had for many years continued to accept hundreds of thousands of refugees coming in from most of the neighboring countries, which were suffering from internal armed struggles at a time of increasing serious drought and desertification. He said that all of this was determined by Sudan's announced and well known position toward the refugees and the necessity of dealing with them from a purely humanitarian standpoint.

The deputy commissioner indicated that Maj Gen Serillo's meeting with the Ugandan officials was open and frank, that all the details of the recent charges had been countered to the extent that their untruth was clear and that they had not been based on correct information.

He explained that the official organs in Uganda, particularly the security agencies, were completely cognizant of the government's humanitarian stance on the refugees and that this had no connection with any anti-Ugandan Government activity which some quarters fighting against President Yoweri Museveni's regime might be carrying out.

Government Debt, Deficit for 1986-87 Reported

JN131205 Khartoum SUNA in English
0930 GMT 13 Feb 88

[Text] Khartoum Feb 13 (SUNA)—The government debtness from the banking system for the fiscal 86-1987 amounts to 8,941 billion Sudanese pounds while the deficit in the budget for the same period is 2,860 billion Sudanese pounds, the daily TELEGRAPH issued here today reported. The daily attributes the rise of the debtness and the deficit of the budget to the amounting increase in the expenditures of the government's budget, the weakness of the government financial resources and the international increase in the prices of essential commodities, in addition to the increase and the difficulties of drought and desertification.

TUNISIA

Foreign Ministry Official on Ties With Neighbors

JN250843 Cairo AL-MUSAWWAR in Arabic
22 Jan 88 pp 20-21

[Interview with Taieb Sahbani, secretary of state attached to the Tunisian Foreign Ministry, by Sana' al-Sa'id in Cairo on 19 January]

[Excerpts] [Passage omitted] [Al-Sa'id] Following the announcement of the restoration of relations between Tunisia and Libya, have the apprehensions that existed between the two states in the past completely disappeared?

[Sahbani] There is no need to talk anew about the reasons that led to the severance of relations between Tunisia and Libya. It later transpired that our brothers in Libya were quite prepared to improve relations with Tunisia and were inclined to normalize relations. We responded in view of Tunisia's pressing desire to have good relations with everyone, particularly with its neighbors. Because there were disputes between the two countries we stipulated that normalization of relations should be the result of resolving such disputes. If we were to wait for resolving all the existing disputes—which are big and protracted—we would have had to wait for many years. Thus, when the readiness of the brothers in Libya to resolve the disputes was confirmed to us—particularly as they had actually begun to settle some of the outstanding issues—we announced the resumption of relations and we became optimistic about the future. We are following developments with the necessary precision, vigilence, and sense of responsibility.

[Al-Sa'id] In view of your desire to strengthen the ties of friendship with the countries neighboring Tunisia in particular, and with other states in general, to what extent does Algerian policy influence Tunisia?

[Sahbani] Algerian policy has no influence on Tunisia. As I have said, Tunisia is a country that is fully independent in its decisionmaking and in acting in accordance with its sovereign interests. Relations between us and Algeria are fraternal and close. They are based on mutual understanding, consultation, and the furtherance of our common interests.

We have made great strides in that regard. We have gone a long way during which we established joint projects. We also want to strengthen human relations, particularly in border areas. We have set up joint projects that bring together inhabitants of the two states in such areas. These are the types of relations that exist between us and our Algerian brothers. There is no other type of relations as your question may suggest. [passage omitted] [Al-Sa'id] There is a call to strengthen ties of cooperation among the Maghreb countries on the basis of the treaty of fraternity and cooperation signed in 1983 between Tunisia, Algeria, and Mauritania. In order to achieve this cooperation, can this treaty include all the Greater Arab Maghreb states as a whole?

[Sahbani] We in Tunisia believe neither in a pivotal nor in a divided Maghreb. We believe that the Greater Arab Maghreb should be comprehensive—for all states. All Maghreb people share this feeling with us.

[Al-Sa'id] Does this mean that the Maghreb countries will form one entity?

[Sahbani] The meaning of unity has changed now. Today we think of unity as a group of individual states linked together by treaties and relations of coordination, consolidation, and integration.

[Al-Sa'id] Is the road now paved for Libya to join the treaty of fraternity and cooperation?

[Sahbani] The treaty of fraternity and cooperation gathers Tunisia, Algeria, and Mauritania. One country cannot decide whether or not Libya is ready to join this treaty. The three countries together make such a decision. On the other hand, Libya did not ask to join this treaty.

[Al-Sa'id] Some parties believe that you have a strong desire to separate the question of Western Sahara from other issues which concern the Greater Arab Maghreb, particularly since the issue of Polisario is controversial among the Maghreb states. Do you believe that this issue should be moved out of the way at the present time to achieve a strong stand by the Maghreb countries?

[Sahbani] The question of Western Sahara is the stumbling block to achieving the aspired Arab Maghreb. Algeria has a certain viewpoint on the issue and Morocco has another viewpoint. Although Tunisia is not directly concerned with this issue, yet it is concerned in terms of its results. I believe that as long as the issue of Western Sahara still exists the greater Arab Maghreb cannot be achieved. As long as the issue of the Sahara is not solved yet we cannot achieve this dream sought by everybody in our region. However, there is call for optimism on the horizon. We hope that God will help all concerned parties achieve this goal.

[Al-Sa'id] Some western observers have made remarks against Tunisia's policy; namely, that the existing parliament represents only the ruling Destourian Party. They say that excluding other parties from parliament will not guarantee security for the government. Since the new government in Tunisia promised to be democratic and to allow a multi-party system, I wonder whether Tunisia will keep this promise while the Destourian Party alone still holds power?

[Sahbani] The Destourians are in power not because they wanted it, but because the Party has a historical legitimacy obtained before independence and which continued after it. The Destourians did not monopolize power; they were not the ruling party; they were a party in the government. If anyone has the right to judge this experience, he should judge the choice of the Tunisians which they made over the 30 years. In the elections, the Tunisian people authorized the Destourian Socialist Party to assume power in Tunisia.

The question of democracy and a multi-party system was raised a long time ago inside the Destourian Socialist Party. The government recognised other parties even before 7 November. There are the Democratic Party, the Communist Party, and the Popular Unity Party. There are other trends which are not legalized because they contradict the laws which governed political parties in the past.

Now, by the decision and will of the president, we are entering the multi-party system from a new door. We are giving a freer and more honest chance to all existing trends in the country. We are now holding parliamentary by-elections. The Destourian Socialist Party, the Communist Party, and many independents are taking part. They are all equally free. They all have the chance to appear on television, speak on the radio, and organize public campaigns. We will wait until 24 January to hear the verdict of the people. [passage omitted]

[Al-Sa'id] Apart from widening the political base in Tunisia, the way for achieving considerable sucess depends on winning the economic round. What steps are you taking in this regard?

[Sahbani] Since 7 November, President Zine el-Abidine Ben Ali has made very important decisions to stimulate economic, social, and cultural life. As far as the economy is concerned, there are major decisions on cutting taxes, delaying due repayments by farmers to banks, encouraging private sector investment, and giving the private sector opportunity to operate some projects more effectively and successfully. As far as social life is concerned, we are attracting the labor force to participate effectively in decisionmaking.

[Al-Sa'id] What about the debt problem and your efforts to overcome this problem?

[Sahbani] We are of course following the debt problem. No doubt the Tunisian economy and financial resources are affected by this problem which faces the Third World at large. However, I would like to stress that Tunisia, by virtue of the wisdom of its sons and the correctness of its financial performance has not yet asked for postponing a single debt repayment. It repays all its debts on time.

[Al-Sa'id] Does this mean that you do not have any problems with the IMF?

[Sahbani] None at all. We have preceded the IMF and chosen the best ways to maintain the soundness of our economy and activate our capabilities. [passage omitted]

BANGLADESH

President Discusses Internal, External Problems

46040007a Cairo AL-AHRAM7 Jan 88 p 5

[Interview with President Husayn Ershad by Angie Rushdi]

[Text] The atmosphere in the reception room allocated to President Husayn Muhammad Ershad, the president of the Republic of Bangladesh, was calm and pleasant. His young son was playing with him, jumping around him and rummaging through my handbag. The father was scolding his son, and the son was not listening to the president of Bangladesh.

The discussion began with a question on Husayn Muhammad Ershad the poet, and how he reconciled this with his capacity as a military man.

The president of Bangladesh laughed and said, "I was writing poetry when I was a young man, before I joined the military college and before I became an officer. Now I feel an extreme longing to go back to writing poetry. As a human being, I have the right to express my feelings and emotions and what is going on inside myself. I do not see that there is any contradiction between being a poet and a military man. The military man's craft is not killing. He first of all sets his life and future as a sacrifice to his country. They are all extremely delicate, pure feelings."

[Question] How can you describe relations between Egypt and Bangladesh? What are their dimensions and what is their scope?

[Answer] They are more than excellent. We are two fraternal Islamic countries which support one another concerning political relations as a whole, and we have good commercial relations and also cultural ones. We have signed an agreement with the Radio and Broadcasting Federation and a shipping agreement. We will form a joint committee on the ministerial level to discuss the possibility of increasing and intensifying trade between the two countries. The volume of trade so far has been about 10 million, and we want to increase it. We will export jute and tea to Egypt in exchange for phosphate and aluminum. We are setting our sights on at least doubling the volume of trade at the present time.

[Question] Bangladesh is a member of the Islamic Conference Organization. In the face of the events of the Bank and the Gaza Strip, what movement has the organization made so far?

A Solution to the Middle East Problem Is Possible

[Answer] There is a meeting of the foreign ministers of the Islamic countries now being held in Morocco, and many points are being set out for discussion. You know that President Mubarak has requested the holding of an international conference on the Middle East, and you have support from America, provided that it be held under the supervision of the United Nations.

[Question] But the details of the international conference, as the United States sees it, are not compatible from many standpoints with Egypt's view, foremost among them the representation of the Palestine Liberation Organization.

[Answer] The situation has changed. Reagan personally has given his agreement to the conference. The only one who opposes it now is Shamir, the premier of Israel. The others, whether the Soviet Union, the socialist countries or the European Community [as published].

Nonetheless, I would like to tell you that I personally am in favor of independent representation for the Palestine Liberation Organization. As long as we agree to the proposal, the differences over details can be discussed when we meet. Here we can find a solution to the Middle East problem.

[Question] But what is your personal opinion regarding a solution to the Palestine problem?

[Answer] My position is clear and frank. First of all, it is necessary to apply the United Nations resolutions. Secondly, the Palestinians must have their nation and self-determination.

[Question] But what are the practical steps through which it is possible to act?

[Answer] We have discussed this subject often, and constantly. I believe that a conference under the supervision of the United Nations will arrive at a solution. If President Mubarak's proposal is agreed to, we will be able to discuss this situation extensively.

The Domestic Situation in Bangladesh

[Question] You in Dhaka have a serious problem, which is the opposition's position regarding you. After the dissolution of the current parliament, you declared that the elections would take place next 28 February. From its standpoint, the opposition has declared that it will not take part in these elections. What in your view are the implications and developments of the situation? Don't you believe that the reestablishment of parliament in these circumstances will escalate the situation, not cure it?

[Answer] It is not an escalation at all. The situation is as follows: we had elections 2 years ago in which 28 parties took part. These elections were followed by the presidential elections, after which I came in as president of Bangladesh.

In my speech to parliament, I recommended seven amendments, the most important of which was the elimination of the state of emergency, and that was in 1986. Parliament continued to debate my speech for a period of 200 hours, and the parliament met for a period of three sessions.

Now, after three sessions in which the parties belonging to parliament participated, after a year and a half, suddenly one of the opposition parties has asked me to resign without expressing any reasons, and there is no answer to the people's question: Why do you want the president's resignation?

After that came their statement that the elections were rigged. The problem is that the party which articulated this charge has 74 seats in parliament, a figure which they never obtained in any previous elections. My party obtained 153 seats, in addition to 30 seats occupied by women whom I chose, in addition to 39 seats for a party which joined me. That is, I have 212 seats in parliament, and I need 220 votes for the amendments I proposed to the constitution to be passed.

My answer is that if I really had rigged the elections, couldn't I have given myself the 220 seats that I need to amend the constitution, since two-thirds of parliament is needed for that?

The lady who accuses me of fraud had 53,000 votes in her district and was able to obtain 51,000 votes in half an hour. How is that possible, in practice? Isn't that the height of fraud? When she kept on making the accusation, I decided to dissolve the parliament in which I have 213 [as published] seats. I declared to them, "How would you like the coming elections? What form and what manner? Do you want an increase in the number of members of the election committee which is responsible for the elections, from A to Z? I am at your command. If you want foreign observers, so be it."

Of course, in accordance with the constitution I have the right to dissolve parliament and form the election supervision committee, which is the committee that must set the date for carrying them out within 90 days of the dissolution of the parliament. It is this committee which chose the date of 28 February. In my opinion, it is everyone's duty to take part in these elections, and if they insist on not participating, that is their decision.

Participating in the elections is everyone's right, and not participating is their responsibility. We have more than 93 parties and do not set restrictions on the formation of parties. Anyone who wants to establish a party has a right to do so. By the way, the population of Bangladesh is 200 million.

Therefore, if the parties refuse participation, does that mean that elections should not be held? First there should be a parliament.

I dissolved parliament a year and a half after it was established, and I had the majority. It was a great sacrifice on my part to take this measure, which distressed the members of parliament from my party. Nonetheless, I did it to satisfy everyone. If they believe that the elections, by their allegations, are rigged, so be it. The previous parliament could have gone on 3 and a half years, and nonetheless....

We Are No Longer the Poorest Country in the World

He fell silent for a while, then went on to say:

[Answer] Our economy is good and the rate of growth now comes to 4.6 percent, in spite of all the the difficulties that have befallen my country, from the floods to storms in which we lost 3 million tons of wheat. We are no longer at the bottom nor the poorest country in the world. We have numerous joint projects, a pharmaceuticals industry and projects the Western world appreciates, and in addition we have applied the restriction of agricultural property-holding.

Then what do they want? There is no answer, and the people are wondering. Their words and criticisms are all on paper and in the newspapers. The ones who criticize and have weight consist of just two parties. One of them like me believes in God and the other is secular.

[Question] But they declared the general strike, and it was successful and general!

[Answer] That is not true. They declared the strike and went about throwing bombs in the streets. People were afraid and did not go out, but all the government employees went to their jobs and the departments and companies were working in a normal, organized fashion. The declaration of the strike came through the BBC, and people gave credence to it. Nonetheless, the following strike was weak and lacked severity, and the people did not honor it.

Begum Zia-al-Haq called for a meeting which only 2,000 citizens attended, and it is clear that they have no support from the people. Why should the people support them, when they see an improvement in their conditions? Why do they want the president and the government to go?

Who is behind these movements? They are not a spontaneous political movement. There is something beyond this!

[Question] What are Bangladesh's social and economic problems, what is the magnitude of your country's debts, and what steps are you taking to solve these problems?

[Answer] The debts are not many. We are servicing them within the recognized limits, that is, 20 percent of national product. As to the problems, they are many. We have illiteracy, poverty, and a massive increase in the

birth rate which totalled 3.4 percent, although the rate has dropped to 2.3 percent now, and we are working for it to reach 1.7 percent in 1999. We also have a deficit in food. We are dealing with these problems in a good fashion. For example, we have come close to having self-sufficiency in food.

[Question] There is a problem of refugees between you and India. Has it been solved?

[Answer] We will talk with India on this problem, a long, deep-rooted problem which began in the days when we were part of Pakistan. We are also working to solve it through an agreement with the region which is the basis of the problem; we are talking to them and exchanging views.

[Question] What about the Gulf War?

[Answer] I am a member of the committee of mediation for peace in the Gulf, and I have attended a number of meetings. We have produced recommendations and have presented them to both parties. Iraq has agreed to all of them. Iran has refused even to talk with us or to receive the chairman of the committee in their country.

As long as the Iranians have not changed this position of theirs, I do not see that there will be a solution, and the war will continue. At the last Islamic conference, held in Kuwait, we talked about this war, and the question was, if one of the two parties has not agreed to talk with us, or to engage in discussion, how can one arrive at a solution for stopping the war?

[Question] But now there is Resolution 598 issued by the Security Council, and there is talk of penalties to be applied to Iran for its refusal to apply this resolution.

[Answer] Whatever the matter might be, it is necessary to do something, because this war must be stopped and the great countries must find a resolution to it.

I believe that with the meeting of the GCC, they have studied all possibilities, but the Arab countries must become united so that it will be possible to keep the war from coming to the Arab countries. You must reach mutual understanding and work on behalf of that. Otherwise, the danger will be at your own gates.

11887

Papers Report on Election Developments in Chittagong

Press Note on Killings

46001262 Dhaka THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER in English 25 Jan 88 pp 1, 8

[Text] The Ministry of Home Affairs on Sunday night issued the following Press Note on the incident in which five persons were killed and 14 others were seriously injured at different places in Chittagong on Sunday, reports BSS.

The Press Note said, "Some leaders of the Eight-Party Alliance today, January 24, 1988, went to Chittagong and defying emergency orders, tried to hold a public meeting at the Laldighi Maidan. They tried to hold the meeting inspite of repeated requests from the law enforcing agencies not to hold the meeting. When they were not allowed to hold the meeting an unruly mob assaulted police on duty and threw hand grenades and brick-bats, etc. on them. The unruly mob also used fire arms. To disperse the unruly mob police resorted to tear gas firing and lathi charge. One passer-by, two policemen and a BDR sepoy were seriously injured, when bombs thrown by the unruly mob exploded. The injured passer-by was reported to have died at the Chittagong Medical College Hospital where he was sent for treatment.

"The Eight-party leaders later met local lawyers at the Bar Library. The unruly mob, meanwhile, breaking into small processions, created serious law and other situation and started widespread damage of public and private property. A section of the mob set fire to a BDR pick-up near Cinema Palace. Moreover, the mob surrounded the police on duty there and violently attacked them with deadly weapons like daggers, bombs and crackers. As a result, some police and BDR personnel were injured. On self defence and to defend public and private property, police was compelled to open fire. Another section of the unruly mob gathered at the premises of the court building, attacked the police on duty there and tried to snatch away prisoners by breaking open the court hajat. To bring the situation under control, police had to fire several rounds.

"Another section of the unruly mob attacked the Police Club at Nandan Kanan, severely damaged the club house and set fire to two police motor cycles. Almost at the same time the unruly mob launched an attack on police on duty with deadly weapons at Grand hotel and at other places of the city. Police on self defence and to save government property and life, had to resort to lathi charge and tear gas firing. When the mob was not dispersed inspite of the measures, police had to open several rounds of fires. At the Kadamtali Railway Crossing, the unruly mob set fire to a railway passenger compartment and goods train. The situation was brought under control due to prompt police action, the mob also damaged a government transport at station road by setting it to fire."

Fifteen police and BDR personnel and some of the militant crowd were injured in the clashes, exchanges of five and bomb explosions. They were taken to hospital for treatment. Hospital sources said, four of the injured died and some others with serious injuries were under treatment. Police arrested some persons from the spot. Police patrol has been strengthened and the situation is under control now."

Chittagong Office adds:—Over 100 persons were injured when police opened fire on angry mob at different places in the port city today in connection with the visit of Eight-Party Alliance leader Sheikh Hasina for addressing the scheduled public meeting at Laldighi Maidan.

Sheikh Hasina, however, could not address the meeting as the Laldighi Maidan was cordoned by police with the plea that the holding of public meetings are prohibited under the emergency.

The mob set ablaze a BDR vehicle, and a police van near New Market Square. Four BDR personnel aboard the vehicle were also injured. The mob set on fire two railway coaches at Kadamtali. The local leaders of three Alliances called 6 a.m. to 12 noon action programme tomorrow (Monday) in the port city protesting the police excesses. The police opened several rounds of gun shots in various places of the city, resorted to lathicharge and teargas to disperse the mob.

After the incident at Court Road, the whole area around the court building and Laldighirpar, New Market, K.C. Dey Road and Reazuddin Bazar areas turned virtually into a battlefield. The shops were closed down. The Laldighi Maidan where Sheikh Hasina was earlier scheduled to address a public meeting was surrounded by the police. A section of mob then suddenly went on rampage and ransacked Jatiya Party office and adjacent Police Club. The unruly mob also set fire to two police vehicles and damaged two others.

The furniture of the JP office were also taken out on the road and set ablaze. In the wake of the clashes several shops were damaged in and around K.C. Dey Road. Mr. Nazimuddin Mastan, Staff Reporter of Dainik Ittefaque was also beaten by the police at the Court Road. Fifty persons including some leaders were rounded up from the road.

The Urmi Aruna inter-city train in which Sheikh Hasina was scheduled to leave Chittagong this (Monday) morning has been withdrawn. Sheikh Hasina is expected to leave Chittagong after the programme.

Sheikh Hasina did not go to address the meeting of the professionals at the University Club. Sajeda Chowdhury and Abdur Razzaque addressed the processionees.

More on Clashes

46001262 Dhaka THE NEW NATION in English 25 Jan 88 pp 1, 8

[Text] Chittagong, Jan 24: Seven persons were killed in police firing and nearly 300 others including 15 policemen and two BDR personnel were injured in violent clashes lasting over four hours here today.

Awami League Chief Sheikh Hasina, however, put the death toll in the firing at 11.

Three of the killed were identified. They are Ramesh Baidda (30) of Khet Major Party, Mohjuddin Shamim (26) President of Sitakundu College unit of Chhatra League (SR) and GK Chowdhury (25), a member of the same student organisation.

Identity of the remaining four victims could not be known. Two bodies were carried away by the processionists from Amtala. Police admitted that there were casualties but avoided confirming the number of deaths.

In all 53 persons were admitted to different hospitals in the city and the condition of two of them was stated to be critical. Attending physicians said they could succumb to their injuries any moment. Seven others suffered serious limb injuries.

During the incidents, police damaged 10 motorbikes and six minibuses of the entourage of Awami League chief and leader of the Eight-Party Alliance Sheikh Hasina who arrived here this morning. Later, the mob set on fire a BDR truck, a police jeep and a police motorbike.

The mob also set fire to two trains and fishplates at Chittagong railway station. They also damaged railway signals at Kadamtali and Dewanhat. Police arrested over one hundred people from different spots.

The clash erupted when a procession of about ten thousand people led by Sheikh Hasina in a truck was intercepted by at least one hundred armed policemen in front of Bangladesh Bank at downtown Chittagong.

The processionists were heading towards Laldighi Maidan the venue of the scheduled public meeting of the Eight-Party Alliance after Sheikh Hasina addressed fifteen gatherings at different points on her way from Patenga airport. The Laldighi meeting could not be held due to the police intervention.

As the processionists arrived in front of Bangladesh Bank at 2.10 pm police suddenly fired several shots and teargas shells. The people got panicky and bewildered at the sudden action of the police and ran for safety. Many fell into a roadside pucca drain. Police also resorted to lathicharge indiscriminately.

At this stage, Sheikh Hasina asked the police over a loud speaker from her truck to stop its attack on the innocent people immediately and the police calmed down within a few minutes. In the meantime, the lawyers of Chittagong came to the spot in a procession from the hill-top court building protesting the action.

The police then allowed only the truck carrying Sheikh Hasina and other leaders of the Eight-Party Alliance including Begum Sajeda Chowdhury, Abdur Razzak, Saifuddin Ahmed Manik, Tofael Ahmed, Pankaj Bhattacharya, Amir Hossain Amu, Abdul Jalil, Dilip Barua and Nurul Alam to move to the court building.

Addressing the lawyers at the court building, Sheikh Hasina said the police repression would not be able to stop the current democratic movement. She called upon the lawyers to continue the movement for bringing about

the fall of the autocratic government. In her 40-minute speech here, she said no farcical election would be allowed to be held under the present government.

At about 3.30 p.m., a big procession coming through station road locked in clashes again with the police. The clash flared up at Nandan Kanan, Reazuddin bazar, Station Road and all around the two square mile surrounding Chittagong court building. Police blocked court building area and the Eight-Party Alliance leaders including Sheikh Hasina were not allowed to come out of the building till 5.30 pm.

Later, Sheikh Hasina and other leaders of the Alliance came out of the hill-top court building and proceeded towards the residence of Mr Akhtaruzzaman Chowdhury former MP and president of Bangladesh Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry.

Meanwhile police cordoned the entire troubled area and went into action. In the meantime many shops were looted. Police sources said that bombs and bricks were thrown on police from the processions before it swang into action.

Addressing a hurriedly-called press conference at the residence of Mr Akhtaruzzaman Chowdhury in the evening, Sheikh Hasina alleged that police shot dead eleven persons and injured over 100 in Chittagong today. Sheikh Hasina denied police allegations that bombs were thrown from the processions. She said is was "pre-calculated.

Sheikh Hasina who flew in here at 8.30 a.m. from Dhaka took five hours to cross a sixteen-kilometer way to Chittagong court building from Patenga. She addressed fifteen wayside gatherings before the clash broke out with the police in front of Bangladesh Bank shortly after 2 p.m.

Meanwhile, tension has gripped the entire port city after a series of severe clashes between the police and angry crowd. Heavy police contingents have been deployed to guard different places in the city. It may be mentioned that police had encircled the entire Laldighi Maidan right from morning apparently to prevent holding of any public meeting there.

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Reportage on Ershad January Visit to Egypt

Banquet Speech Summarized

46001252 Dhaka THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER in English 6 Jan 88 pp 1, 8

[Excerpts] Cairo, Jan. 5:—President Hussain Muhammad Ershad last night stressed the importance on the unity and solidarity of the Islamic world and said development of close fraternal relations with all Islamic countries is a corner-stone of Bangladesh foreign policy, reports BSS.

Speaking at a banquet in his honour by host President Hosni Mubarak at the Presidential Palace here, the President mentioned the Middle East problem and the Gulf War and reiterated Bangladesh's firm stand for establishment of an independent and sovereign state of the Palestinians under the leadership of PLO and early resolution of the Iran-Iraq conflict.

He said, "Bangladesh looks upon every Muslim and Arab cause as its own", he said, adding: "We are firmly committed to restoring Al-Quds Al-Sharif to Islamic sovereignty".

President Ershad regretted the recent Israeli atrocities on unarmed civilians in the West Bank and said, the situation once again underlined the urgency of resolving the Middle East crisis without any delay.

He strongly advocated the holding of proposed international conference on Middle East for forward movement in search of peace with the participation of PLO on equal footing with other parties directly concerned.

In this context, the President lauded the role of President Hosni Mubarak and said it was highly acclaimed by the world community. He said the desire in the international community to see Egypt in the mainstream of Arab, Islamic and international life has been manifested once again in the recently concluded Arab League summit in Amman.

President Ershad spoke of Bangladesh's individual and collective efforts to end the Gulf War which poses the greatest threat to the solidarity of Islamic Ummah and said, "We must make renewed efforts for a just and honourable solution to end this senseless conflict".

He also spoke of Bangladesh's steadfast support to the struggle of the African people against colonialism, racial discrimination and apartheid and withdrawal of all foreign forces from Afghanistan and Kampuchea.

INF Treaty

The President welcomed the signing of the Intermediate-range Nuclear Forces treaty and said, "As a developing country, Bangladesh strongly believes that substantial disarmament agreements are needed in the interest of development, security and peace in the world."

President Hosni Mubarak of Egypt said last night that the excellent relations between Bangladesh, Egypt and their people have become an example to be emulated by nations tied together by the belief in the sublime spiritual ethics and noble moral principles.

The Egyptian President was speaking at the banquet hosted by him and Madam Zusuzan Mubarak at the Presidential Palace here in honour of visiting Bangladesh President Hussain Muhammad Ershad and Begum Raushan Ershad.

President Hosni Mubarak commended the contribution made by President Ershad towards fostering the bonds of friendship and cooperation between "our two brotherly countries" as well as his keenness to coordinate efforts in various international forums and groupings.

World Economy

Turning to world economy which continues to travel on a difficult course and said, unless reversed, this will hold bleak prospects. Declining commodity prices have continued to adversely affect our terms of trade, he said, adding: volatility of exchange rates and the heavy debt service burdens continue to result in net outflow of resources from the developing countries.

He said, such disparities cause frustration and pose threat to peace and stability. A new international economic order can remove these ills and create a congenial atmosphere for peaceful coexistence, he asserted.

Stressing effective cooperation among the developing countries, the President said, in our immediate environs, a new era has dawned in the creation of SAARC. The nations of the region can now confidently look forward to a period of fruitful cooperation amongst them for the benefit of almost a fifth of the human race, he pointed out.

Turning to the bilateral ties, President Ershad said we are heirs to very rich civilizations and have abiding ties stretching over many centuries. Our adherence to OIC and Non-Aligned Movement has given us a common political identity and perception for economic growth, he said, adding: "We sincerely believe that our shared heritage together with our concern and endeavour for improving the quality of life of our peoples constitute a firm basis for closer understanding and cooperation between our two countries."

"On homefront", the President said, "We also are seeking to bring about a qualitative change in the life style of our people through far-reaching reforms in various sectors including economic field".

Ershad, Mubarak Talks

46001252 Dhaka THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER in English 6 Jan 88 pp 1, 8

[Text] Cairo, Jan 5:—Bangladesh and Egypt have agreed to further diversify the patterns of trade, economic and other exchanges to fully reflect the spirit of excellent relations existing between the two countries, reports BSS.

The agreement was reached at the formal talks between Bangladesh and Egyptian delegations held at the Presidential Palace here this morning.

President Hussain Muhammad Ershad and Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak met exclusively for nearly two hours while the Bangladesh delegation led by Religious Affairs Minister Maulana M.A. Mannan and Egyptian delegation led by Prime Minister Atef Sedki met at a formal session separately. The two presidents late rejoined their respective sides.

Briefing BSS, Foreign Secretary Nazrul Islam said during the talks the whole gamut of bilateral relations was discussed in a spirit of friendship, understanding and goodwill.

Both the sides expressed complete satisfaction at the excellent relations existing between the two brotherly countries. They decided to conclude agreements and reach understanding on a number of important matters like increased trade, shipping services, television protocol as well as education and cultural exchanges.

Reviewing regional and international situation, the two sides expressed happiness at the identity of perceptions and positions of issues of concern and interest to both the countries.

The two delegations examined the existing international economic situation and noted that greater efforts must be made to bolster South-South cooperation as a sine qua non for a new international economic order.

President Hosni Mubarak invited President Ershad to visit Egypt for a longer duration in the near future and said the existing friendly relations and cooperation between Bangladesh and Egypt would continue to grow in the coming days.

President Ershad said that it would be a matter of great delight for him and the people of Bangladesh to receive President Hosni Mubarak in the near future on a state visit to Bangladesh.

In the talks, Bangladesh side was aided by Jute Minister Zafar Imam, Deputy Minister for Commerce H.M.A. Gaffar, Foreign Secretary Nazrul Islam, Shipping Secretary Enam Ahmed Chowdhury, Bangladesh Ambassador to Egypt Mohammad Siddiqur Rahman and senior officials.

The Egyptian side was aided by Foreign Minister Ismat Abdel Migid, Industries Minister Abdul Wahab Mohammad, Economic Minister Yusry Mustafa, Information Minister Safwat El-Sharif, Minister for Maritime Transport Soliman Mitwaly, Minister for Foreign Trade Sultan Abu Ali and high officials.

Egyptian Jute Purchase

46001252 Dhaka THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER in English 7 Jan 88 p 1

[Text] Cairo, Jan. 6:—Bangladesh and Egypt signed a Memorendum Of Understanding (MOU) here last night providing supply 20 thousand tons of raw jute to Egypt by Bangladesh annually initially for a period of five years, reports BSS.

The MOU was signed by Jute Minister Zafar Imam and Egyptian Industries Minister Abdul Wahad discussed technical cooperation in jute sector between the two countries, joint venture projects in jute goods manufacturing and issues relating to diversification of jute products.

The two sides agreed to have further discussion at expert levels on these subjects.

Bangladesh official sources said the two sides agreed in principal to sign another Memorendum Of Understanding for supply of 25 thousand tons of jute goods to Egypt by Bangladesh annually initially for a period of five years.

Meanwhile, Bangladesh and Egypt also signed a protocol on television here last evening under the existing Bangladesh-Egypt cultural agreement of 1974.

The protocol was signed by Foreign Secretary Nazrul Islam and Chairman of Egyptian National Broadcasting and Television Organisation Hossain Enam on behalf of their respective countries.

The three year long protocol provides for exchange of technology, experts, programmes and news cast.

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Dhaka Vice Chancellor Speaks to Student Gathering

46001258 Dhaka THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER in English 17 Jan 88 pp 1, 8

[Text] Prof. Abdul Mannan, Vice-Chancellor of the Dhaka University has said that he was ready to shed his last drop of blood to resist any attempt to close down the university again. He held the higher authorities responsible for a series of unscheduled closures. The Vice-Chancellor cautioned that any conspiracy against the varsity from the vested quarters would not be tolerated.

Prof. Mannan was addressing a joint rally of teachers, students and employees at the foot of Aparajeya Bangla on Saturday, the day university reopened after long 50 days of unscheduled closure.

The Vice-Chancellor said that according to the 1973 Ordinance the Syndicate was the only authority to take decision about the university's internal atmosphere. He regretted that again and again the university was closed by the vested groups violating the varsity autonomy. He said that the 1973 Ordinance was passed in the then national parliament and thus it was a holy document of the nation. He stressed that the ordinance could be changed in the Parliament by the people's representatives but it could not be violated.

Prof. Mannan stated that frequent and unexpected closures hampered normal academic activities in the university and created session jam which was robbing of three to four years extra times from a student's life.

Commenting on this issue the Vice-Chancellor said that the nation was going to lose a generation. "We cannot pass out students in time due to the closures though only ten per cent of the nation's students were fortunate to get themselves admitted in the university, the Vice-Chancellor stated.

Prof. Mannan stated that the university was property of the nation and it had a long glorious tradition. He said it was run by the taxpayers' money and that's why any particular person or group had not the right to curb the national interest. The V-C said, "we cannot allow this precious institution to destroy itself and lives of those who are studying here."

Closure for 4 Years, Six Months

He said, from 1980 to January 1988, a period of seven years six months and ten days, the Dhaka University remained closed for more than four years six months in all. He said the university was closed for a total of nine months by Government order and five months for strikes by the teachers and students at different times.

Prof. Mannan said that destroying the highest seats of learning meant to crippling the entire nation. Referring to menace of armed hoodlums on the campus last few days, the Vice-Chancellor cautioned that there was no room for terrorists in the Dhaka University campus and vowed to resist them any means.

The Vice-Chancellor reiterated that the principal of the Education Environment Council would be followed strictly to maintain congenial academic atmosphere in the university. He called upon all to resist any 'conspiracy' to close down the university and uphold the 1973 order. He said, the Syndicate was the only legitimate source of authority to look after the day to day administration and academic activities of the university and no one else.

Prof. Abdul Mannan made a clarion call to the Government and leaders of the political parties to take actions against those responsible for campus violence. "We have submitted a list of armed vandals on the campus to the Government," he added.

The Vice-Chancellor demanded immediate release of the student detenus and said that those were arrested were the brilliant products of the university. To maintain a peaceful academic atmosphere in the university Prof. Mannan put forward a four-point proposal to smoothly run the university, suggesting not to close university by any order contrary to the university autonomy, to maintain a peaceful academic atmosphere on the campus, to resist violence by any means and remove session jam by taking extra classes.

Arranged by the Education Environment Council the rally was conducted by the Proctor of the University. It was attended by the Pro-Vice Chancellor, members of Senate, Syndicate, Deans, Provosts, Chairmen and Directors of different departments and institutes, officers employees.

On the first day of reopening the university apparently wore a normal look. A number of classes were held peacefully and the presence of students was satisfactory. A number of processions were brought out by the various student organisations.

Twenty two student organisations in a joint statement congratulated the Vice-Chancellor of Dhaka University for his timely addresses. They expressed their full support towards the steps to be taken by the University authority for maintaining peace on the campus.

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Meetings of Awami League Working Committee

7 Jan Meeting

46001267 Dhaka THE NEW NATION in English 8 Jan 88 pp 1, 8

[Text] An emergency meeting of the Central Working Committee of Awami League held in the city yesterday with its chief Sheikh Hasina in the chair warned the Government of an impending danger of bloodshed if it tried to stick to power by holding farcical elections instead of resignation.

A political resolution adopted in the meeting reminded the Government and all concerned quarters that the consequences of playing ducks and drakes with the fate of the poor people of the country were bound to be bitter and awful.

It observed that the refusal of the Government to step down in the face of widespread demonstration and resistance by all sections of the people was pushing the country into a monstrous crisis.

The resolution emphatically said that any sort of game with the licking fire was dangerous and it did not deliver goods to anybody. The Working Committee of Awami League called for the government to demonstrate good senses by quitting power before time ran out.

It advised the Government to pave the way for a meaningful free and fair election by transferring power to a caretaker government headed by a neutral and non-partisan person acceptable to all opposition alliances and parties involved in the movement. Otherwise, the Government would have to court its inevitable downfall in the face of a mass upsurge, it added.

It said that President Ershad had gone abroad by leaving the country in an all-engulfing crisis and dangling the lure of elections as if nothing had happened in the country.

It was also observed in the resolution that no conscientious and patriotic citizen had given support to this "dishonest" and "corrupt" Government. Only a handful of politically ambitious sycophants had cast their lot with this government, it added.

The meeting pointed out that it was not beyond knowledge of the people that which powerful country had given green signal to this Government to initiate its last battle against the people.

It said that the fall of this Government was just a matter of time as a government, however mighty it was, could not stay in power by ignoring the people.

It said that the so-called Sammilito Birodhi Dal comprising non-entities would have no appeal to the people despite patronisation and blessing from the power structure.

The Awami League Working Committee made it clear that those who would participate in any farcical election defying the public opinion wouldnot be spared by the people as collaborators of this "anti-people government."

16 Jan Meeting

46001267 Dhaka THE NEW NATION in English 17 Jan 88 pp 1, 8

[Text] An emergency meeting of the Awami League Central Working Committee held yesterday its Presidium member Abdus Samad Azad expressed firm determination to remove the government by scuttling the attempts to cling to power through a new round of farcical election.

Reviewing the latest political situation the meeting noted with concern that this "autocratic" government was pushing the country towards a point of desperation and a state of confrontation by refusing to step down and transferring power to a neutral and non-partisan government in spite of the national demand and intensive mass movement to realise it.

In a resolution of the meeting it was observed all sections of the people including different professional groups had repeatedly given their verdict through the surging wave of current mass movement that they did not want any more election under this government which had forcibly grabbed power at gunpoint. Rather the resignation of the Government would lead to restoration of peace and stability of the country through holding of free and fair elections under a neutral government, it added.

It further said that a new schedule of election had been announced by this government to create in the minds of the people and thus mislead the movement when the entire nation had forged a solid on the issue of its resignation.

The resolution said that those would associate themselves with the process of constituting a farcical parliament by dissalving a parliament would be identified as traitors.

It called upon the people to build resistance to these identified individuals, quarters and so-called parties through gherao and other forms of actions from today in accordance with the programme announced earlier by the Eight-party and Seven-party and Five-party alliances.

The working committee of Awami League also called upon the people to make a success the opposition action programme for January 20 and 21 all over the country.

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Communist Party Central Committee Meets, Other Activities

Officials Elected

46001253 Dhaka THE NEW NATION in English 6 Jan 88 pp 1, 8

[Text] Mr. Saifuddin AHmed Manik was unanimously elected general secretary of Communist Party of Bangladesh when its two-day central committee meeting began in Dhaka yesterday with Mr. Barin Dutta in the chair, reports BSS.

Comrade Mokhlesur Rahman of Bogra was elected Member of the party's central committee.

The meeting also elected Rezaul Karim, Mozahar Hossain, Rathin Chakrabarty, Anwar Zahid, Mukul Chowdhury and Motaharuddin as organisers of the central committee.

The meeting, in a resolution, demanded withdrawal of the state of emergency, release of CPB and other political workers from jails and lifting of the ban on a number of weeklies.

It declared its support for different demands of workers, peasants students, womenfolk, lawyers, doctors, engineers and agriculturists, besides demands of people from other classes and professions.

Outcome of Meeting

46001253 Dhaka THE NEW NATION in English 7 Jan 88 pp 1, 8

[Text] A two-day meeting of the central committee of Communist Party of Bangladesh (CPB) concluded yesterday in the city calling for intensification of the current movement to realise the public demands and further the potential of social revolution.

Newly-elected General Secretary of the party Saifuddin Ahmed Manik placed a political report at the meeting while an organisational report came from Nurul Islam, one of its secretaries.

Following deliberations over the political report a resolution was adopted at the meeting analysing the current situation and specifying the movement.

Rejecting the election schedule the resolution said that the government was pushing the country towards confrontation, crisis and disaster by refusing to resign and transfer power to a personality acceptable to the three major opposition alliances for holding free and fair elections.

It accused the government of hatching a conspiracy to perpetuate the policy of severe repression and the unconstitutional process with a view to banishing the spirit of independence through mobilization of the reactionary and fundamentalist forces.

The meeting observed a so-called 70-Party Sammilita Birodhi Dal had been launched as per an election scheme of the government and there was a campaign for partyless elections as well. Beneath these activities efforts were underway to further the process of depoliticization, it added.

It denounced in strong terms the government for the disinvestment and amelioration of the strength of bureaucracy.

The resolution stressed the importance of a widespread movement further strengthening the unity of all forces determined to restore the spirit of the war of liberation, consolidating the unity of the Liaison Committee of the three alliances and cementing of the democracy-loving and progressive forces.

It said that the party had realised the necessity of firm and increased role of the leftist forces in the current situation.

It said US imperialism and reactionary states had taken position in favour of this government and were interfering in the internal affairs of the country. It called upon the people to remain alert against foreign interference in national politics and to intensify the movement until a 'meaningful election' was ensured under a neutral and non-partisan caretaker government.

General Secretary's Address

46001253 Dhaka THE NEW NATION in English 9 Jan 88 p 3

[Text] General Secretary of the Communist Party of Bangladesh Saifuddin Ahmed Manik has outright rejected the parliamentary polls scheduled for February 28, reports ENA.

Addressing a congregation of the secretaries of the party's district units at the CPB central office Thursday, he urged the party workers to step up movement to compel President Ershad to step down.

Renewing the party's demand for resignation of President Ershad, hereiterated the call for holding election under a neutral interim government.

He stressed the need for strengthening the united and simultaneous movement of the three opposition alliances through the liaison committee.

He called upon all patriotic forces believing in democracy and ideals of the war of independence to intensify the on-going movement.

Mr Saifuddin also called upon the people from all walks of life to make the opposition programme on January 20 and 21 a success.

Presided over by senior communist leader Mokhlesur Rahman, the meeting was also addressed by Abdul Halim, Harunur Rasheed, Ameerul Islam, Hedyet Ullah, Ismail Hossain, Azharul Islam, Arzu, Shamsuzzaman Selim, Hirendra Datta, Abdul Malek and Maniul Haq.

Secretary of the central committee Nurul Islam spoke on organisational matters.

General Secretary's Press Conference

46001253 Dhaka THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER in English 10 Jan 88 p 8

[Text] Mr. Saifuddin Ahmed Manik, General Secretary of the Communist Party of Bangladesh (CPB) said that the resignation of the present Government was the only way out to resolve the current political crisis.

Addressing a Press conference at the Central Office of the party on Saturday Mr. Manik demanded cancellation of the polls date, withdrawal of emergency and curfew and unconditional release of the political prisoners. He reiterated the demand of the Eight-party, Seven-party and Five-party Alliances for transfer of power to an acceptable neutral person and holding of election under a neutral government formed by him.

Rejecting the polls announced by the Government, the General Secretary of CPB said that it was proved from the past experience that election under President Ershad would not be free and fair. Therefore, resignation of President Ershad had become inevitable, he added.

Referring to the plan to hold election Mr. Saifuddin Ahmed Manik said that stability in the national politics would be far cry under the plan now being pursued by the government. He warned that any unconstitutional move would further deepen the crisis. He cautioned the people against the conspiracy of the government.

Mr. Manik said that the government had resorted to intrigues to sabotage the current mass movement and was moving ahead with the blue print by sheer of muscle strength. He condemned the statement of the US Embassy in Bangladesh for its uncalled for advice to the political parties to cooperate with President Ershad. Protesting the statement Mr. Manik termed it as brazen interference in the internal politics of the country.

Mr. Saifuddin Manik, who has been elected General Secretary recently following after the death of Mr. Mohammed Farhad, addressing his first Press conference stressed the need for rock-solid unity of all the democratic forces to accelerate the pace of the movement.

Replying to a question Mr. Manik dismissed the notion that the movement of the Opposition alliances was losing intensity. He told a questioner that the Communist Party of Bangladesh had no plan to initiate a violent movement to unseat the Government. The party, he said, would pursue constitutional movement only. He also said that the CPB had no plan to resist the Union Parishad election.

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INDIA

Soviet Scientific-Technical Delegation Visits India

Areas for Cooperation

46001282 Calcutta THE STATESMAN in English 26 Jan 88 p 9

[Text] New Delhi, Jan. 25—The thrust areas for joint Indo-Soviet research and development between the Soviet Union and India were identified today at a meeting between the visiting Soviet State Committee for Science and Technology (GKNT) delegation led by Mr L. N. Sumarokov, Deputy Chairman, and members of the Confederation of Engineering Industry.

These areas are energy management and conservation, electronics computers and communications, including informatics, new materials, engineering plastics, oil and gas equipment and services, pollution control equipment, and machine tools.

Mr Ranjit Puri, member, Executive Council, CEI, suggested that, as a starting point, the focus of joint working in research and development could be two or three of the above noted areas. The first requirement in order to increase scientific and technological collaboration will be for both sides to gain knowledge about research and development activities in the respective countries.

The USSR exhibition "Soviet science and technology for peace and progress" being inaugurated today is a good first step in this direction. This would provide an opportunity for Indian scientists to see first-hand the level of research being carried out in the Soviet Union. The proposed CEI Indian Engineering Trade Fair to be held in Moscow in July, 1988, would not only be a showpiece of Indian industrial goods but also reflect the status of technological development in India, he said.

Mr Puri proposed that this could be followed by a series of meetings held in both countries where Indian and Soviet research and development in specified sectors, this would not only help in bridging the information gap but also lead to the identification of concrete research and development projects.

Mr Sumarokov, addressing CEI members, said that starting January, 1988, 60 percent of the USSR's industry is working under a new system. There has been a drastic change in external economic relationships and several factories have been permitted to deal directly with India. There is a new approach in the science and technology field which would facilitate greater cooperation.

Mr Sumarokov, referring to the joint CEI-GKNT working group on science and technology collaboration, said that GKNT had deputed three senior officers to serve full-time on this working group. He said that they will be responsible for implementing the memorandum of understanding signed between GKNT and CEI. This would include acting as a catalyst to identify Soviet partners for interested Indian industries and the exchange of relevant scientific and technical information. Referring to the developments in computers, data transmission, and bio-technology in India, he said that they were remarkable and comparable to the best in the world.

Exploration of Sea Shelf

46001282 Bombay THE TIMES OF INDIA in English 28 Jan 88 p 3

[Text] Bombay, Jan. 27 (UNI). Indian and Soviet experts will come together on a survey of the sea shelf off the Bombay coast and the study of the soil moisture content in the Thar desert.

The survey will be carried out with the help of Soviet specialised research ships while the soil study will be investigated by specially-equipped AN-2 planes, according to the USSR Academy of Sciences vice-president, Mr Alexander Yahshin.

A conference for diversifying Indo-Soviet scientific cooperation will be held in late March and Mr Yahshin is currently holding prior discussions with regard to this.

A specialist in Geology, Mr Yahshin is of the view that the study of the movement of the Indian crystalline plate towards the Himalayas is important to India.

It was specifically important to consider whether its motion was uniform or not and also to know the rate of its movement, he felt.

According to Mr Yahshin, these studies would determine the seismic activity on the Indian territory. This was necessary as due to compression and deformation, blocks of the earth's crust in the region crack and begin moving in jerks causing earthquakes, he said.

This calls for determining the site of the quake and its magnitude which will help choose the locations for highrise buildings, power plants, dams and other structures.

The information would also be useful to incorporate adjustments and reinforces-elements into their design, he observed.

Mr Yahshin said the experience gained by Soviet scientists would stand in good stead in the Indian circumstances as seen in the case of the Tehri Hydro plant here. Soviet expertise in building hydel stations in areas of high seismic activity like the Nurek Hydel station on the river Vaksh (which can withstand earthquakes of high magnitude) will be of great advantage.

The use of space mission data to compile a seismic map of the country was another technique that Indian scientists can obtain from their Soviet counterparts, he added.

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Papers Report on Gandhi's Visit to Sweden

Prime Ministers' Talks

46001280 Madras THE HINDU in English 23 Jan 88 p 1

[Article by K. K. Katyal, passages in boldface as published: "Indo-Swedish Ties To Be Kept Up"]

[Text] Stockholm, Jan. 22. In what is seen as a conscious bid to take the Indo-Swedish relationship out of the controversial Bofors zone, the two Prime Ministers, Mr. Rajiv Gandhi and Mr. Ingvar Carlsson, today addressed themselves to ways to strengthen bilateral cooperation.

This did not prove a difficult task. In the last two days, they have established a good personal rapport within the framework of the six-nation initiative and glided into the bilateral area as the character of Mr. Gandhi's visit changed, in protocol terms, and it became official from this afternoon onward. For Sweden, the bilateral round,

lasting over two hours, was doubly significant because of the promise of continued friendship in the post-Olof Palme period. Early last year, Stockholm had yet to attend to ways to preserve the old cordiality after the traumatic experience of the murder of the Prime Minister of the day, when it was caught in the convulsions caused by the disclosures of suspected bribes by the Bofors company in its gun deal with India.

Perceptible satisfaction: None of the two camps said so, but there was perceptible satisfaction that the worst in the controversy was over and its potential for disturbing Indo-Swedish ties had weakened. This was so even though the identity of the recipients of the bribes had yet to be established. Whether the two Prime Ministers discussed the Bofors issue is not clear but for public purposes, India's position remains as was explained by Mr. Gandhi at a press conference yesterday—that he could not talk about a matter, of which the Joint Parliamentary Committee was seized of, and he did not want to violate Parliamentary Privilege.

Beneficial ties: The relationship between the two countries had been excellent since India's independence, there being no bilateral problem. Sweden, taking pride in its neutrality, had held in high esteem India's policy of nonalignment and its democratic experiment. There was commonality of views on issues like East-West relationship, disarmament, international economic order and North-South dialogue. This like-mindedness stood out in today's talks, apart from being reflected in the speeches at the banquet hosted by Mr. Carlsson in Mr. Gandhi's honour. Mr. Gandhi particularly referred to Indo-Swedish industrial cooperation, which had a long history and had expanded in recent years. This beneficial relationship, he said, needed to be strengthened, as the potential was vast.

Sharing vision of peace: In their particular ways, the two countries, according to Mr. Gandhi, "had refused to be drawn into the confronting military camps of the post-war world. We have remained true to the spirit of the U.N. Charter. India has consistently pointed out that the world can survive and develop only through coexistence and cooperation. We were one of the earliest prepondents of nonalignment. We and Sweden share a vision of peace. This vision finds expression in the six-nation five-continent initiative which has found warm response in the hearts of people all over the world." Also, he referred to their shared concern over the policies of the racist regime of South Africa.

South Asian Affairs Discussed

46001280 Madras THE HINDU in English
23 Jan 88 p 9

[Article by K. K. Katyal, passages in boldface as published: "PM Feels Colombo Can Go Ahead With Poll"]

[Text] Stockholm, Jan. 22. The Prime Minister, Mr. Rajiv Gandhi, feels the Sri Lankan Government could go ahead with elections to the Provincial Councils now that the island's President, Mr. J. R. Jayewardene, has announced the merger of the Northern and Eastern Provinces.

Mr. Gandhi made this point during discussions with his Swedish opposite number, Mr. Ingvar Carlsson, when Sri Lanka figured prominently, along with other topical issues—Afghanistan, Kampuchea, East-West relations and the international economic order. Mr. Gandhi explained at length the circumstances in which the Indo-Sri Lanka Agreement was signed and the difficulties that arose later.

LTTE attitude: The two leaders addressed themselves to such details as the attitude of the LTTE towards the elections, with Mr. Gandhi saying the rank and file was bound to welcome it. India, he repeated, supported the unitary character of Sri Lanka, while pleading for the autonomy in the Tamil majority areas. Sweden, according to Mr. Carlsson, had always extended support to a peaceful solution of the Sri Lanka problem.

Mr. Gandhi and Mr. Carlsson met without aides for 25 minutes and along with their delegations for an hour and a half. The Indian delegation included the two Ministers of State, Mr. Natwar Singh and Mr. Eduardo Faleiro and senior officials.

Problems in Afghanistan: On Afghanistan, Mr. Natwar Singh gave his assessment of the situation based on his talks with the Afghan President, Dr. Najibullah (during the latter's recent transit visit to Delhi) and representatives of other groups. A new Government, according to him, would be possible if both Washington and Moscow showed the necessary political will. Reference was made to India's apprehension that Pakistan might interfere in Afghanistan because of its interest in the continuity of U.S. aid (which it is now getting on the plea of its being the frontline state in view of the soviet presence in Afghanistan).

According to the Swedish side, the Afghanistan episode, like Vietnam in the past, had shown that big powers could not take on small countries.

Kampuchea figures: Mr. Natwar Singh also gave an account of the latest moves to resolve the Kampuchean tangle. Here he based himself on the talks with the exiled Kampuchean monarch, Prince Sihanouk, who, it was pointed out, was keen on a settlement. He was neither optimistic nor pessimistic, said Mr. Natwar Singh, thus emphasising the fluid character of the efforts for a solution.

As regards East-West relations, Mr. Carlsson acquainted the Indian representatives with his discussions with the Soviet Prime Minister, Mr. Ryzhkov, during his recent visit to Stockholm. The two briefly surveyed public opinions and governmental attitudes in Europe on the consequences of the INF agreement. Also figuring in the discussions were the

separate moves for peace zones of Nordic countries and in the Balkan region. India was known to be lukewarm to the idea of a piecemeal approach to the problem posed by nuclear and other threats.

Need for peaceful concepts: Dealing with the discussion of the six-nation initiative, the two Prime Ministers agreed to keep in mind recent decisions while entering into bilateral arrangements with other countries. They also agreed to keep each other informed in such situations. They stressed the need for developing peaceful concepts as alternatives to doctrines of deterrence lest the military establishments staged a comeback. The discussions began on an amiable note, with each side making effusive references to the other.

Remarks Before Departure

46001280 New Delhi PATRIOT in English
24 Jan 88 p 1

[Text] Stockholm, Jan 23 (PTI)—Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi today said that there was no reference to the Bofors gun controversy during his bilateral talks with Swedish Prime Minister Ingvar Carlsson.

Mr Gandhi was talking to newsmen before boarding the plane for New Delhi after attending the six-nation summit and completing his two-day official visit to Sweden.

In reply to a question, he categorically stated that there was no reference at all to the Bofors controversy. He said, "India and Sweden would continue to collaborate and cooperate in the industrial fields".

In reply to another question on the six-nation summit, Mr Gandhi said "we have made some major achievements in the six-nation initiative which will help in the disarmament process".

The exchange of views during his talks with the Swedish Prime Minister on the international situation, Mr Gandhi said, would help in forming attitudes on various problems of the world.

Earlier in the morning, Mr Gandhi spent an hour with children at a nursery-cum-leisure centre, called 'Gribby Gard' in Tabby, about 60 km north of Stockholm.

The Prime Minister saw children engaged in various activities like stitching, carpentry, model making, painting, solving mathematical problems and computer handling.

Later Mr Gandhi went to 'electrum', Centre for Electronic Research Education and Training, organised by the 'kista' electronic centre foundation. The centre is doing major research in telecommunication projects.

Mr Gandhi also visited the most modern industrial unit of 'Ericsson' telephone manufacturing company of Sweden which is engaged in the task of modernising Indian telephone network.

Press Conference on Plane

46001280 Madras THE HINDU in English
25 Jan 88 p 9

[Article by K. K. Katyal, passage in boldface as published: "PM Hails Colombo Decision"]

[Text] New Delhi, Jan. 24. The Prime Minister, Mr. Rajiv Gandhi hailed as a major step the Sri Lankan President, Mr. J. R. Jayewardene's announcement on linking the Northern and Eastern Provinces, but could not indicate a time-frame for the stay of the Indian Peace-Keeping Force there.

Talking to presspersons late last night during his return journey from Stockholm, he said. "The IPKF's stay would depend very much on President Jayewardene as also on the situation and how things normalise.

A number of things have to be done—it is all in the Indo-Sri Lanka Agreement—going toward the devolution of powers, having elections and then the local administration. All that has to be done now. Time frames have to be drawn up. Details have to be worked out. It is easy to talk about elections but you have to go to the details of each process of election and analyse it to see the problems that would come up because of the local situation, because of the refugees outside the area and all other complications. All that must be studied now.

Did he have in mind a time-frame for the elections to the Provincial Councils? "We do not have. It is for the Sri Lankan Government to work out."

India, said the Prime Minister, had an open mind on Mr. Jayewardene's proposal for a treaty. "He has been talking in public about it but has not officially talked to us. So we do not know any details. Unless we know what he has in mind it is difficult for me to comment. We keep an open mind on it. We do not shut doors on this question."

The Prime Minister gave a general reply to a query—on whether Mr. Jayewardene wanted reciprocity which perhaps he did not find in the letters exchanged by them at the time of the signing of the Indo-Sri Lankan Agreement. Said Mr. Gandhi: "The letters are there. There is no change in the letters."

As regards Punjab, he approved of the suggestion by a questioner that an all-party conference be called in an effort to evolve consensus on the solution to the State's problem. "It is a good suggestion," he said but did not want to elaborate till he had discussed it with others in the Cabinet.

He was not happy, he told another questioner, with the handling of the Darjeeling situation by the West Bengal Government. Oftentimes if a sensitive problem was handled crudely it got accentuated. He was asked whether the Centre would do anything in a situation in which all Gorkhas were branded anti-nationals. The

Prime Minister replied: "Certain things are covered by the State subjects. And unless things reached such a point where we feel the need to take action it is better to leave it to the States."

There were two aspects to the Darjeeling problem, according to him—one, relating to the Centre, the other to the West Bengal Government. "We have clarified our position. We have very minor things to satisfy in regard to the questions that have been raised. The real problem is with West Bengal and the State Government has to handle it in a manner that it does not go out of control."

Why was Mr. Joshi removed in Rajasthan? "He wanted to resign and I let him. It has nothing to do with Sariska (reference to reported strong words used by the Prime Minister in his conversation with Mr. Joshi on the eve of the Cabinet meeting at Sariska). The reports were exaggerated. Will not the reinstatement of Mr. Shiv Charan Mathur, removed because of a killing episode, have an adverse fall-out for the congress in the Hindi belt? At that time (at the time of the episode) the election was near and the various issues could not be examined fully, said the Prime Minister. Subsequent reports showed that he was not involved. "In any case, we did whatever our MLAs wanted," he said.

Why were the meetings of the Planning Commission postponed? Was there a deeper meaning behind it? The Prime Minister discounted the suggestion and utilised the opportunity to counter reports of his having run it down. "That is not true at all. The task the Planning Commission is doing is good but I feel it must take up a bigger task and must look beyond what they are looking at now. I am not going to change this part of their role but would like to add one more chapter on the things they should do.

"It does not mean restructuring—the same group of people can handle it. If they feel the need for strengthening it is for them to suggest and we will definitely strengthen them. The role I want them to play is to be much more definitive about planning, to have a proper perspective plan. Today unfortunately in many ways the Planning Commission has become subservient to the ministries—what the ministries want goes to the Commission which has become a balancing body.

The first balancing is done by the Finance Ministry and then by other ministries. It is necessary for the Commission to draw up a plan of minimum development and put that into action. We cannot be limited by dividing the funds by old methods. We must have better technology, better methodology, better administration, less red-tape to get more out of every bit of our investment. That aspect has not been settled by the Commission. This is the area I want them to go into."

People's reaction: Was he surprised by the negative American reaction to the Stockholm declaration and did it create a new situation? Mr. Gandhi smiled saying that they had been consistent. He added: "What is important is not the reaction of the Governments but of the people. That is what we are really targeting—to build an awareness among the people specially in the nuclear weapon countries."

His attention was drawn to the points made by the discussion of the six nations with a group of eminent persons after the summit that the INF agreement had altered the situation in regard to the nuclear non-proliferation treaty. Had the time come for India to modify its stand? Mr. Gandhi replied that there was "no question of signing the NPT in its present form. We feel its form today is discriminatory and the major nuclear weapon countries are not fulfilling their obligations under it. Unless these two things are changed, we are not going to sign the NPT."

In reply to questions on Pakistan, Mr. Gandhi said that its nuclear ambitions were not specifically discussed at the summit. They were generally concerned about the countries that were likely to become nuclear in the future and were keen to devise ways to wean them away from the nuclear path.

As regards Afghanistan and Kampuchea, he referred to the initiatives taken by India but said: "It is much too soon to say how things will turn out but in neither case is the situation easy. I am optimistic that a solution can be found out."

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'Patriot' Interviews Soviet Economic Expert

46001274 New Delhi PATRIOT in English
24 Jan 88 p 9

[Article by O. P. Sabherwal: "Cutting Red Tape in Indo-Soviet Economic Ties"]

[Text] New forms of economic cooperation between India and the Soviet Union are indispensable, besides the time tested patterns, in order to assure continued steady growth of these ties, Soviet specialist on economic relations with Asian countries Prof Granovsky, currently on a visit to India? said in an interview to Patriot.

In this context, he visualised a many-sided stimulating impact on Indo-Soviet economic and trade relations flowing from Perestroika—Soviet economic restructuring.

In the first place, direct relationships between the relevant Soviet and Indian enterprises will be established circumventing the bureaucracy and cutting the red tape.

"Indian bureaucracy is a tough customer and Soviet bureaucracy is not a bit less", Prof Granovsky admitted. But the bureaucratic red tape had to be done away with, if Indo-Soviet economic ties are to grow rapidly and obtain new content.

An important fall-out of Perestroika on Indo-Soviet ties will be specially emphasis on increase in the hi-tech content. There was urgent need to upgrade technology in Indian industry which needed intensive growth since it had a sizable capital base.

Steel industry for instance needed induction of new processes using more advanced technologies to give greater economies, as against the existing steel-making processes which needed to be upgraded in view of their rising costs.

The Bokaro and Bhilai expansions would be appropriate for upgrading technology and modernisation. Both the steel plants could be expanded to the capacity of 5.5 to 6 million tonnes each in the final round of expansion, he felt.

The hi-tech content in Indo-Soviet economic ties would grow inevitably in such fields as electronics, atomic energy, computers, computer software, and new materials, with both countries helping each other with the most advanced experiences.

Prof Granovsky said that over 100 projects had been sorted out for joint research in frontier technologies, pertaining both to fundamental research as well as areas of immediate application. Cooperation in these projects would push up the level and sophistication of technological cooperation between India and the Soviet Union.

Work on these projects had already been initiated, with Indian students being admitted to the most advanced Soviet scientific institutions in which no foreign students were so far being admitted. As a consequence, both the span and pace of scientific cooperation between the two countries would be greatly increased.

Another fall-out of Perestroika on Indo-Soviet ties was the expected large-scale expansion of relations between the Indian private sector enterprises and their Soviet counter-parts.

He disclosed that there was intense debate on this subject inside the Soviet Union. Admittedly, there were many who were opposed to large-scale Soviet relationship with Indian private sector enterprises, as they felt that it is the public sector in India which was of key importance for Indian economy. There was, however, a visible and definite shift in favour of Soviet cooperation with all sectors of Indian economy. This was necessary to correct the sectoral imbalance in Indo-Soviet trade.

A third dimension of the fall-out of Perestroika on Indo-Soviet ties was to stigulate joint venture in both countries and in third countries.

For the first time, three hotel projects had been launched in the Soviet cities of Tashkent, Samarkand and Bukhara, whose construction was being undertaken by Indian enterprises on a turn-key basis. Even part of the labour force being deployed was Indian. One of the hotels was being constructed by the Indian enterprise, Larsen and Toubro.

Prof Granovsky said, there was tremendous scope for Indian public and private sector concerns to undertake construction of zinc, copper and other plants in key areas suitable for India in Soviet Union as joint ventures.

He disclosed that on its part, Soviet crew was already participating in some of the Air India flights between New Delhi and Moscow. Soviet participation in ventures in India would be increased.

Likewise, the two countries need to expand jointly undertaking ventures in third countries. While India was being invited by the Soviet Union for participation in steel, textile and synthetic fabric plant construction in countries where Soviet Union was the main contractor, India could likewise have Soviet sub-contracting and technical participation in areas such as West Asian countries for fertiliser, oil, steel and other projects.

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CPI Central Executive Meets 23-24 Jan

CPI Condemns Centre's Claims of Success

46001283 New Delhi PATRIOT in English
26 Jan 88 p 2

[Text] The CPI has condemned as "bankrupt and counterproductive" the Centre's claims of success in its approach to terrorism as merely a law and order problem and its refusal to make a move for a political solution until terrorism is put down.

In a resolution, passed at its two-day Central Executive Committee meeting 23-24 January, the CPI said the barbarian violence by the terrorists which was claiming lives of innocent women and children, and their anti-national propaganda underlined both the drift of the Centre and the appeasement of the extremists by the United Akali Dal.

Expressing concern at the situation, the CPI said the opportunistic course followed by UAD, led by Mr Parkash Singh Badal, of wooing the Khalistani terrorists, instead of joining hands with forces opposing them, was only leading to strengthening the forces of separatism and violence. These forces were also holding out threats to some UAD leaders themselves.

Demanding that the Centre end its policy of "drift and dithering" and take immediate political initiative to help improve situation in the State, the CPI said release of innocents among the Jodhpur jail detenus, punishment to culprits of the November 1984 riots, and rehabilitation of the sufferers must not be delayed any more.

It called upon all political parties and forces who stand for communal amity and national integrity to build up a joint mass political campaign against the terrorists and involve masses in the movement.

Along with more effective action by the police and security forces, mass cooperation and mobilisation was an essential condition for curbing these anti-national forces, the CPI said.

The resolution also urged the Prime Minister to call an all-party meeting at national level and make a determined bid for a national consensus on urgent steps for a political solution to Punjab tangle.

Delegation to PRC

46001283 New Delhi PATRIOT in English 28 Jan 88 p 1

[Text] The CPI has decided to establish fraternal relations with the Communist Party of China.

It will send a four-member delegation led by party general secretary C. Rajeswara Rao to China in the last week of March on the invitation of the CPC.

This was decided by the party's central executive committee (CEC) which met here on 23 and 24 January to review political developments in the country.

The other members of the delegation are national council Secretaries M. Farooqi and A. B. Bardhan and national council member Perim Romesh Chandra.

The CPI's decision to open communication with the CPC comes after a 15-year old freeze following the Chinese invasion of 1962. In fact, the CPI contends that the Chinese aggression was the primary factor behind the split of the undivided Communist Party of India into the CPI and CPI-M. The CPI-M, however, holds that the primary reason holds that the primary reason for the split was the decade-long ideological struggle within the party on the line to be adopted towards the ruling class in India.

Briefing correspondents on the CEC meeting, Mr C. Rajeswara Rao said that the party's demand for the resignation of Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N. T. Rama Rao would not affect its relations with its allies.

The CPI-M opposes the demand for Mr Rama Rao's resignation on the ground that the charges are politically motivated and should first have been examined by an enquiry commission as per convention.

The party's representatives attended the Telugu Desam's recent celebration in Hyderabad on the completion of five years in office. The CPI stayed away, demanding that NTR be replaced by a new leader elected by the Telugu Desam Legislature Party to prevent the Congress from staging a comeback in the State.

Mr Rao said that CPI workers in the State, demanding NTR's resignation because of his Government's "rampant corruption", were implicated in false cases.

He said that NTR had become a "liability" for the Opposition parties which are demanding the resignation of the Rajiv Gandhi Government for corruption in high places.

The CPI leader also said that his party would launch independent campaigns against the policies of the Central government. These campaigns would supplement joint efforts with other Left and democratic parties against the Congress government. He, however, emphasised that a Left and democratic alternative "would not emerge tomorrow but out of struggles and movements".

Concluding that the internal situation in the country is very grim, the CEC remarked that the economic policies were leading to a huge budgetary deficit, an adverse balance of payments position and that the country was fast getting embroiled in a massive debt.

Mr Rao estimated that the servicing of external and internal debts alone takes up almost 25 per cent of the Budget. He expected the Budget deficit to touch Rs 10,000 crore this year.

The country's economic conditions were further aggravated by the penetration of multinational companies into strategic sectors. This "dangerous portent" has come about because of the Government's policy of liberalisation of imports, Mr Rao said.

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Results of Kerala Local Elections Told

46001281 Bombay THE TIMES OF INDIA in English 26 Jan 88 pp 1, 9

[Text] Trivandrum, January 25. While the ruling Left Democratic Front (LDF) has gained control of more panchayats than the Congress-led United Democratic Front (UDF) in Saturday's local bodies poll, the latter has captured a majority of the municipal councils.

The Marxist-led alliance has established its supremacy in the municipal corporations of Kozhikode and Cochin. In the third corporation of Trivandrum, neither of the two coalitions has a clear majority.

Of the 43 municipal councils, the UDF has bagged 25 and the Left Front, 15. There is a tie in three councils.

The Left Front has captured 469 of the 980 panchayats, the results of which have been announced so far.

It is followed closely by the UDF, with 455 panchayats. In 72 panchayats, the two alliances have shared the seats equally. The results in respect of 19 panchayats are awaited.

The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) which had drawn a blank in the assembly poll in March, has gained absolute majority in three panchayats in Kasargod district.

It has also won some seats in urban areas, including Trivandrum (six), Cochin (one), Kozhikode (one), Kasargod (seven) and Palghat (eight).

A BJP spokesman said the party, which had fielded about 5,000 candidates, had won around 100 seats.

The leaders of the UDF expressed satisfaction with the results, especially in the southern districts like Trivandrum, Quilon, Alleppey, Pathanamthitta and Kottayam, where it had fared rather badly in the assembly poll.

The UDF has captured all four municipal councils in the Muslim-majority Malappuram district.

Of the 49 seats in the Cochin municipal corporation, for which polling was held, the Left Front bagged 30 and the UDF, 17. While the BJP got one seat, another was won by an independent.

In Kozhikode city, the ruling alliance captured 31 seats and the UDF, 18. The remaining seat went to the BJP.

In Trivandrum, neither of the alliances has a clear majority though the Left Front captured 25 of the 50 seats. The UDF got 18 and the BJP, six. One seat was won by an independent.

In the last elections held in 1979, the Left Front (which then included the Antony group of the congress, the Mani faction of the Kerala Congress, and the erstwhile All-India Muslim League) had gained control of all three municipal corporations and a majority of the municipal councils and panchayats.

Meanwhile, the state secretariat of the CPM described the outcome of the elections as a "heavy blow to the opportunistic alliance forged by the Congress, with parties representing communalism and various casteist parties." It reflected the "same political maturity displayed by the people of Kerala in the assembly poll in March."

The secretariat released a statement to the effect that the Left Front had gained a majority in most of the panchayats and corporations. The Congress, it added, had "gained little beyond enabling the RSS-BHP-Hindu Munnani combine to get some seats, apart from communal parties like the Muslim League."

The party, however, noted that the alliance led by the Congress had made "some temporary gains in certain zones where it had not been possible to make concerted efforts to check the dangerous return of the Congress and its communal allies."

It said the verdict also represented the defeat of the "evil moves by the Congress at the state and the Centre to create financial difficulties for the Left Front regime and turn the people against it." It showed that the people approved the policies adopted by the regime during the past ten months.

However, the Pradesh Congress president, Mr A. K. Antony, thanked the people of Kerala who had come forward to give a "shock treatment" to the Marxist-led regime by registering their protest against the "violation of its poll pledges and the growing politics of violence."

In a statement Mr Antony said the election results showed that a section of those who had backed the Left Front in the assembly poll was already "disillusioned" with it.

He urged workers of the Congress and other UDF partners to work among the people with humility and sincerity and "improve the pro-UDF atmosphere emerging once again in Kerala."

He alleged that the Marxist party in particular, and the Left Front in general, had indulged in various irregularities during the elections. There was allegations about UDF workers being threatened in many areas. There were not adequate security arrangements in many areas. There was also a complaint about the use of voters' ink that could be easily removed.

According to a PTI report, sporadic violence claimed at least one life and left about 20 injured yesterday as counting in the poll was in progress in different centres.

Incidents of stabbing and clashes before counting stations, involving supporters of the LDF and the UDF were reported from several places.

A college student, a CPM supporter was stabbed to death and several others were injured in a clash between CPM and INTUC workers in front of the government high school at Kottayam.

Miss Sri Latha, the Congress candidate elected from kalliyur panchayat was injured when her victory procession was attacked allegedly by a group of people led by a candidate of the LDF, elected from a nearby panchayat.

The local unit of the BJP clarified today that Mr Manikkam Pillai, the BJP candidate who was declared elected to the Trivandrum corporation council, was not stabbed as reported yesterday, says UNI.

It was Mr Pillai's brother who was stabbed outside the corporation office last night, it said. He has been admitted to a hospital.

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Papers Report Yearend, Current State of Economy

Bangladesh Bank Annual Report

46001249 Dhaka THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER in English 30 Dec 87 pp 1, 8

[Text] The growth target of the Third Five-Year Plan, which was launched two and a half years back, is likely to be revised downward in view of the lower growth of Gross Domestic Products (GDP) due to internal and external unfavourable economic climate.

The economic growth during the year 1985-86 and 1986-87 was 4 and 4.4 per cent respectively against the annual growth target of 5.4 per cent.

The Annual Report of the Bangladesh Bank for the year 1986-87, which was released to the Press on Tuesday, stated that the growth rate would suffer due to unfavourable climatic condition during the first three months of the current fiscal year. The flood caused colossal damage to our economy during the first quarter of the fiscal year 1987-88.

The report did not mention the damage to our economy due to current political unrest. The economists apprehend that the growth may be alarmingly low this year due to devastating floods and lingering political unrest since November 10.

The report noted with satisfaction the comparatively lower money supply and expansion of credit during the year under review having a favourable trend in our economy. The money supply grew by 16.6 per cent to Taka 14,353.10 crore. The money supply was 17.1 per cent in the preceeding year.

Expansion of Internal Credit Much Less

The report stated that the expansion of internal credit was much less than the growth of liquidity in the economy. The credit expansion remained confined to 7.8 per cent when the money supply grew by 16.6 per cent. The internal credit expanded by 16.6 per cent in 1985-86. The credit contracted during the year under review mainly due to squeezing of economic activities in the rural areas.

The purchasing power of the rural people shrunk due to downward revision of the Annual Development Programme and lower prices of jute. The demand contraction of the rural people reduced the demand for credit in the industrial sector which resulted in lower expansion of credit.

The Bangladesh Bank reduced the Bank Rate from 11.25 per cent to 10.75 per cent in 1986. This step was taken by the Bank to encourage the commercial banks to provide credit to the productive sectors at a lower interest rate to accelerate the growth in the economy.

The Bangladesh Bank has taken a number of steps to reduce interest rate for the certain productive sectors and also reduced the rate of margin for opening letters of credit. The steps had aimed at simplification of export trade and growth of small industries contributed to the growth of the external trade and investment in small industries.

12.6 per cent Rise in Foodgrains Price

The annual report revealed that the inflation rate during the year under review was 10.4 per cent against 9.9 per cent in the previous year. During the same period the price rate of foodgrains registered a rise by 12.6 per cent and the prices of all other commodities grew at 6.8 per cent on an average. The prices of other commodities increased by 8.7 per cent last year.

The export earning was one billion dollars in the year 1986-87. There was balance in favour of Bangladesh to the tune of 9.5 crore dollars in external trade during the year under review which was 4.9 crore dollars higher compared to last year. The major portion of this earnings was from the traditional commodities and also from export of readymade garments.

Bank Credit Expands

460001249 Dhaka THE NEW NATION in English 29 Dec 87 pp 1, 8

[Quotation marks as published]

[Text] Bank credit during the first five and a half months of the fiscal 1987-88 expanded by about four per cent.

The enhanced level of statutory cash reserve requirement for the commercial banks with Bangladesh Bank as the country's central bank had a restrictive effect on credit expansion. The limit for such reserve requirement was raised from five per cent to ten per cent of total bank deposits in October last. Bangladesh Bank had drawn to its vault an extra amount of about Taka 650 crore from the banking system by the use of cash reserve ratio for the first time in a major way as a monetary and credit control instrument.

The excess liquidity, available earlier with the banks particularly those in the public sector, was in large part wiped out by the enhanced limit for statutory cash reserve. The additional cash reserve requirement, coupled with a depressing state of trade and industrial operations particularly because of the dislocations since November, brought about a decelerating trend in credit expansion.

Banking circles told THE NEW NATION that even after the enhancement of cash reserve requirement, some of the public sector banks had still some excess liquidity. This excess liquidity is repressed by their holding of excess cash or other liquid assets like treasury bills, debentures, etc to cover up the gap between deposits and

credits after accounting for the statutory reserve (cash and other liquid assets) now at a total of 25 per cent of their total deposits. The banks in the private sector had initially some problems—for covering up their new cash reserve requirement with Bangladesh Bank. But most of them have adjusted by now this shortfall through sale of extra liquid assets held earlier by them.

Official sources said that the additional cash reserve requirement to the extent of five per cent was enforced to put necessary restraint on monetary and credit expansion and also to overcome the lingering problem of excess liquidity in the banking sector with its inflationary potentials. Private trade and industry quarters are however, critical of 'tight money policy' for its "adverse" effects on productive operations in the economy. Such quarters have long been pleading for downward adjustments in interest rate structure to facilitate productive operations with a lower burden of interest for bank funds.

Under the new statutory (both cash and other liquid assets) requirement for the commercial banks, the limit for holding of liquid assets such as treasury bills, debentures of autonomous bodies and other similar instruments remains unchanged at 15 per cent. Only the cash reserve requirement has been raised from five per cent to ten per cent. This arrangement for an unchanged limit for liquid asset holding as part of total statutory reserve requirement, according to related banking sources, is aimed at keeping the credit expansion in the government sector within limits as well.

Money Supply

Meanwhile, the net expansion in money supply in its broad sense was recorded at the level of over Taka 1200 crore during the first five and a half months of current fiscal year. This represented a growth of about 7.9 per cent. The components of broad money supply include demand and time deposits with the banking system and also the currency notes in circulation. The money supply stood at about Taka 164 billion in mid-December,'87 compared to Taka 152 billion in June last. The outstanding amount of domestic bank credit rose from Taka 117.80 billion in June last to Taka 122.70 billion in mid-December,'87. The volume of investments (at book value) by the scheduled banks declined from Taka 24.22 billion to Taka 20.08 billion during the period under report.

Profitability of Banks

Banking circles meanwhile told THE NEW NATION that the overall profitability of the commercial banks would suffer under the impact of additional statutory cash reserve requirement with Bangladesh Bank. The additional cash reserves to the extent of five per cent of total deposits will entitle the banks to annual interest earnings from the central bank at the rate of only two and a half per cent but the average cost of funds in terms of interest payments to the depositors with the banks is about eight per cent per annum, they pointed out. The commercial banks will thus have to incur "substantial losses" on account of this extra cash, reserve requirement. Such losses, the banking circles observed, would be difficult to meet through credit operations with the rest of the available funds in view of the 'tight economic situation' in trade and industry over the last two months.

The revenue earnings of the government in the form of income taxes, paid by the commercial banks out of their profits, and also the contributions to the public exchequer by the 'nationalised banks' out of their operational surpluses will be lower in case of a reduced level of profits for them.

Bangladesh Bank will also be incurring additional charges on account of payment of interest at the rate of two and a half per cent on funds withdrawn from the banking system as additional statutory cash reserves. The central bank, to note here, has been a major contributor to the public exchequer out of its huge operational surpluses over the recent years.

Export Volume Up

46001249 Dhaka THE NEW NATION in English 27 Dec 87 p 3

[Text] Country's export during July-October of the current fiscal year stood at Taka 1088.51 crore or 354.91 million dollars, Commerce Minister M.A. Munim said in Dhaka yesterday, reports BSS.

Addressing the 16th meeting of the Export Council, the minister said the volume was 23.26 per cent more in terms of taka and 20.77 per cent in terms of dollar compared to the corresponding period of the previous year. The total export target for 1987-88 is Taka 3440 crore or 1100 million in dollars.

Mr. Munim said compared to the average earnings of the current year's target, the export earnings during the period was 5.07 per cent less in terms of taka and 3.21 per cent less in terms of dollar. The export earnings during the period was, however, more compared to the trend required for attaining the current year's target, he said.

The minister said during the period under review, a downward trend was noticed in the export of non-traditional items because of fall in the prices. He said although the price of raw jute increased 33 per cent unit during the last four months the price of jute goods and tea fell by six and four per cent respectively.

Commerce Secretary A.B.M. Ghulam Mustafa and representatives of the different chambers of commerce and industries also spoke on the occasion.

The Commerce Minister said the export earnings of the country had increased over the last few years. An encouraging trend was also noticed in the beginning of the current year but it was hindered due to situation arising out of the floods, he said.

Mr. Munim said an alarming situation was created due to the current disturbances which had left a negative impact on the production of exportable commodities, internal transportation system and on the shipment. As a result, he said, the shipment of export slowed down and it was presumed that during the months of November and December the country suffered an export loss of Taka 250 crore.

He said if the situation does not improve the export trade would suffer more in the future.

The minister expressed the hope that through united efforts by all concerned a healthy and peaceful atmosphere would be brought back and the country would be able to play a firm role in the path of progress towards production and export.

Mr. Munim said considering all factors in the last meeting of the Export Development Bureau, the export target for the current year was re-fixed at 1200 million dollars, envisaging a 12 per cent growth in the export trade which was very minimal compared to 31 per cent growth attained in the previous year.

The minister expressed the hope through concerted efforts of all concerned and inspite of unfavourable situation the export target of 1200 million dollars, could be achieved at the end of the year.

Mr Munim called upon the exporters to diversify their products and put in increased efforts to explore new markets. He hoped that the exporters would also continue their efforts increasing the export through availing themselves of the package of facilities provided by the government in this regard.

He further told the meeting that a number of steps had already been taken for implementation of the measures taken by the government for boosting the export trade.

Later, the Commerce Secretary presented his report on mid-term review of the export policy for 1987-88.

Leaders of various chambers of commerce and industry took part in the deliberations of the review meeting and suggested various measures for implementing the current years export policy and thereby attain the target.

Bleak Foreign Investment Outlook

46001249 Dhaka THE NEW NATION in English 3 Jan 88 pp 1, 8

[Article by Moazzem Hossain: "Foreign Investment Prospects Bleak"]

[Text] The prospects of increased flow of direct foreign investments in the country are bleaker now than before. The Second Investors Forum, held in Dhaka in January last year, has so far not yielded any encouraging result.

In all, 95 Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) were signed between local sponsors and foreign investors following the Investors Forum till June last. But, the MOUs have contributed only a little to augment actual investment flows. Hardly a dozen MOUs have so far taken the shape of concrete project proposals. Lack of back up operations, loss of interest by potential investors and unstable situation have all led to an unsatisfactory outcome of the forum over the last one year.

A total of 185 project profiles were placed before the Forum for possible investments of over 300 million US dollars in the form of joint ventures between local sponsors and foreign investors.

Meanwhile, the visit of a 12-member US businessmen's mission, earlier scheduled for the first week of December last, to explore investment opportunities in Bangladesh has now been postponed because of an uncertain political situation. No date has yet been firmed up for the visit, the first ever by a US team of such nature. Another programme of the European Economic Community for holding an Investors Forum in Dhaka in the first quarter of 1988 with participation of European investors in it is also likely to be postponed. The idea for holding a similar Investors Forum with the support of Canada was talked about in mid-1987 but nothing concrete has yet emerged.

OPIC

OPIC (Overseas Private Investment Corporation) officials at their office in Washington told this correspondent during a recent visit to the States, prior to the postponement of the US trade mission's visit, that the members of the team were a "very serious set of people" drawn from various US industrial sectors including electronics, food processing, furniture-manufacturing-energy etc. OPIC, a constituent part of the US International Development Agency, provides assistance through political risk insurance, direct loans, and loan-guarantees to qualified US private investors to support their investments in less developed countries, besides offering pre-investment counselling.

Ms. Edie Stancioff, manager of investment missions department at OPIC, assessed investment opportunities in Bangladesh with an optimistic note in the context of the policy changes of the government "to attract foreign investment by offering generous incentives to potential

overseas investors." As she said, most of the potential US investors do not know about the "existing investment opportunities and facilities" in Bangladesh. The visit by the US trade mission, she felt, will provide an excellent opportunity to the members of the team to get a first-hand knowledge about the investment climate in Bangladesh.

With the postponement of the visit of the US trade mission, one opportunity for attracting direct US investment in Bangladesh is lost now. It is to be noted here that 19 US companies representing textile, food processing, energy related products and services, electronic and aquaculture sectors took part in the Investors Forum in Dhaka last year and discussed possible investments and trading opportunities. The Forum led to the signing of two MOUs with one US company involving 300,000 million dollars for grinding wheels and 400,000 dollars for mathematical instruments.

US Investment

So far, US private sector in Bangladesh has largely been limited to four joint venture projects, represented by Pfizer Pharmaceuticals, Squibb Pharmaceuticals, International Oil Mills Limited (operating tank terminals to store edible oils) and the Singer Co. This compared oddly with total direct US investments in other parts of the world and also with 17 joint venture projects in Bangladesh by the United Kingdom, seven by Hongkong and seven by Singapore. In Asia, private US investment has been the biggest source of total foreign investments in Singapore. It has so far been the single largest recipient of direct US private investments, totalling over 7.55 billion dollars in 1986.

Foreign Investment

Foreign direct investments in Bangladesh have so far been of a very modest scale. Such investments, a rough reckoning suggests, contribute less than one per cent of value-added in the country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP), in Sri Lanka, the relevant share is over 35 per cent, in India, about 13 per cent and in Pakistan, about eight per cent.

Foreign investment sanctions in Bangladesh, now routed through the National Committee for Industrial Development (NCID), involved in 1986-87 a sum of about Taka 240 crores including a foreign exchange component of Taka 106 crore for about 20 proposals. The major project out of these proposals is that of a five-star hotel of international standard in Dhaka, accounting for the lion's part of the sanction during the year under report. In 1985-86, foreign investment sanctions, covering eleven proposals, totaled over Taka 60 crore including about Taka 40 crore as foreign exchange component. During the current fiscal year, the NCID in its last meeting on December 8 approved five investment proposals for a total amount of Taka 71.41 crore including a foreign exchange component of Taka 44.51 crore.

However, actual investments against the foreign investment sanctions so far during the last two and a half years have been of a very small quantum, unofficially estimated at not over 25 per cent of the sanctioned amount.

Consumer Price Rise

46001249 Dhaka THE NEW NATION in English 1 Jan 88 pp 1, 8

[Text] The year 1987 ended with a 27.49 per cent increase in prices of consumer items.

The index of 25 essential food items including rice, ata, pulse, edible oil, vegetables, sugar and spices showed this phenomenal increase.

Prepared by the Consumers Association of Bangladesh the index showed prices of rice increased by about 21 per cent during the period from January 1 to December 31. Prices of onion rose by 166.67 per cent, garlic 100 per cent, dry chili 100 per cent, edible oil 20.24 per cent and sugar by 22.22 per cent during the period.

Prices of three items out of 25 however recorded a fall. Price on December 31 showed of moog dal a fall of 5.26 per cent compared to that of January 1. Gram price fell by 9 per cent and mustard oil by 4.76 per cent.

The index showed no change in prices of mutton, beef, egg, potato and brinjal.

The Consumers Association based in Dhaka city has observed that the price of essentials are continuing to increase causing hardships to the commonman. It called for taking appropriate measures to arrest the upward trend in prices.

/09599

Speeches of Main Opposition Leaders Reported

Khaleda Zia in Chittagong

46001256 Dhaka THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER in English 14 Jan 88 pp 1, 8

[Text] Chittagong, Jan. 13:—Begum Khaleda Zia, Chairman of Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) and leader of Seven-party Alliance, today reiterated her call to the people to resist the forthcoming 'farcical' polls aimed at the Government's clinging to power.

Addressing a series of meetings in Chittagong on her mass contact tour, Begum Zia said that the forthcoming election is nothing but a ploy of the present Government to perpetuate its illegal rule under a well-planned blue print.

The BNP Chairman emphasised the need for united movement of all.

Opposition political forces to thwart the "undemocratic moves of the present autocratic government".

Begum Khaleda Zia declared that the 30 to 40 persons who fell prey to the bullets of the present regime during the current movement would in no way go in vain. She said that these great sons of the soil sacrificed their lives at the alter of democratic movement to see the achievement of their cherished goal of the peoples government.

Begum Zia reiterated her demand to hold the Parliament election under a non-political interim government. We will unequivocally accept whatever the verdict of the people through polls under a neutral government, she added.

Turning towards the present Government clamour for democracy, Begum Zia said that President Ershad and his Jatiyo Party just shed the crocodile tears for democracy to befool the commonman. She called to carry forward the present mass movement to force the Government to resign. The BNP chief vehemently contradicted the Government parties contention of constitutional rule adding that these are all lofty talks. She said that President Ershad and his cronies dethroned an elected Government defying the Constitution of the country.

The BNP Chairman demanded the immediate release of arrested all lawyers and other detenus for unfettered democracy in the country.

Begum Zia blamed the Government for hatching a conspiracy to keep all the Universities of the country closed for his political ends. She demanded immediate reopening of the Chittagong University. She called upon all and sundry to work unitedly to restore normalcy in the Universities so that the students can pursue their education in a congenial atmosphere.

The Seven-party Alliance leader expressed her satisfaction for the support of professional bodies towards the present mass movement. She addressed the members of Sammilito Peshajibi Parishad at Chittagong University Club, Bar Council members at court building, party workers and supporters at Muslim Institute and a public meeting at Steel Mill market.

Among others who spoke on the occasion were Prof. Abdul Mannan, president of Chittagong University Teachers Association, Advocate Saleh Zahur Chowdhury, president of Chittagong Bar Council, Advocates Rana Das Gupta and Shamsul Hossain.

Addresses Lawyers

BSS adds:—Addressing the members of Chittagong District Bar Association at the Bar Library, Begum Zia said that her party and the alliance were never afraid of election but they wanted free and fair election under a neutral government to restore democracy.

Begum Zia said that no emergency or arrest of lawyers, political leaders, workers and others would be able to stop the democratic movement.

She said, in the name of decentralisation of judiciary the Government had promoted corruption and people had been made helpless because of absence of rule of law.

She added that the government had also failed to check price hike of essential commodities.

She said that due to the Government's weakness Bangladesh now lacked an effective foreign policy.

She said, that an elected Government was toppled in 1982 by self-seekers.

Begum Zia reiterated that the Seven-party Alliance would not participate in February 28 election as, she alleged, "free and fair election could not be held under the present government."

Khaleda Zia in Khulna

46001256 Dhaka THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER in English 19 Jan 88 pp 1, 8

[Text] Khulna, Jan. 18:—Begum Khaleda Zia, Chairman of the BNP and leader of the Seven-party Alliance reaffirmed her belief in the unity among all section of Opposition parties and said that she would not hesitate to come on the same platform on minimum programmes for the restoration of democracy in the country.

"We met and issued a joint statement with the leaders of a major Opposition party on a common demand for the resignation of President Ershad which has fully reflected in our desire for forging unity among all sections of Opposition parties for the restoration of the democratic rights in the country," she asserted.

Exchanging views on the present political situation with the representatives of different professional groups at the residence of a local BNP leader on Sunday night, the BNP chief made it clear that his party stood for the restoration of democracy and will not compromise with anyone without achieving this goal. She said that the present Government has undermined the prestige of different institutions including judiciary and newspaper, by using them to perpetuate its rule. As a result, the people had lost faith in these institutions. We must restore democracy and get back the lost prestige and confidence in these institutions so that can serve without fear and favour. In a truly democratic country, no institution whatsoever can interfere with the affairs of the country. She said.

She called upon the members of the professional organisation in the country to uphold the cause of democracy and carry forward the movement for the ousting of this undemocratic Government which wants to remain in power by any means.

Mr. Abu Mohammad Ferdaus, Mr. Harunur Rashid ex-MP Mr. Ansaruddin Helal of Eight-party Alliance, Awami League and Jamaat-e-Islam respectively, Mr. Feroz Ahmed of a labour organisation, Dr. Mahabubur Rahman President Bangladesh Medical Association, Khulna, Mr. A.T.M. Rafique, President, Khulna Press Club, Mr. Farid Ahmed, Secretary, Lekhak Shibir, Prof. Majeda Ali and a representative of 22-student organisations part participated in the discussion.

Mr. K.M. Obaidur Rahman, Secretary-General BNP barrester Abdus Salam, Mr. S. Razzaque Ali and Syed Isa President and General Secretary of Khulna District BNP respectively also took part in the discussion.

Sheikh Hasina 13 Jan Speeches

46001256 Dhaka THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER in English 14 Jan 88 p 1

[Text] Rajshahi, Jan. 13:—Awami League Chief Sheikh Hasina today called upon the democratic forces to unitedly carry forward the current Opposition movement till its objectives were achieved, reports BSS.

Addressing a gathering at the Rajshahi Government College Shaheed Minar premises here, she said the Government was trying to mislead the people in the name of elections.

Presided over by Dr. Mohammad Alauddin, President Rajshahi city unit of Awami League, the meeting was addressed by Eight-Party Alliance leaders Saifuddin Ahmed Manik, Pankaj Bhattacharya, Amir Hossain Amu and Tofael Ahmed. Sheikh Hasina said they wanted elections but that must be held under a neutral and caretaker Government.

She alleged that the general elections held in May 1986 was rigged in favour of the Jatiya Party.

Therefore, she said the coming election could not be free and fair.

The Awami League chief appealed to the people to participate in the current movement to intensify it for the resignation of the present Government.

She said in the education sector, a state of anarchy was prevailing due to forced closure of the institutions. Earlier, on her way from Kushtia to Rajshahi the Awami League chief addressed a series of gathering at Ishurdi and Natore.

Incredibility Proved

Our Pabna Correspondent reports: By media coup on May 7, 1986 President Ershad had allegedly snatched away two-third of the Parliament seats which were actually won by 15-party Alliance and therefore he had proved that he could not be relied upon in connection with any elections under him. He had also proved his incredibility in presidential election boycotted by the opposition parties and also by the people. Hence we demand immediate resignation of the present government for ensuring free and fair parliament elections. This was stated by Sheikh Hasina while addressing a large public meeting organised by Eight-Party Alliance at Ishurdi.

Sheikh Hasina, stressing the need for unity of all progressive and pro-liberation forces for restoring democracy called upon the people to boycott any election under present government and observe programme on January 20 and 21.

The meeting was also addressed by Pankaj Bhattacharya, Abdur Razzak, Saifuddin Ahmed Manik, Tofael Ahmed and Nurul Alam, all leaders of Eight-party Alliance. Mr. Shamsur Rahman Sharif Dilu, President, Ishurdi Upazila Awami League presided.

/09599

INDIA

Army Activity on Disputed Border With PRC Described

46001279 Bombay THE TIMES OF INDIA in English 25 Jan 88 pp 1, 9

[Article by Vidyadhar Date, The Times of India News Service: "Indian Army Build-Up in Arunachal"]

[Text] Along (Arunachal Pradesh), Jan. 24. The Indian forces appear to be well entrenched on the disputed border with China. Arunachal Pradesh, the sensitive, remote, north-eastern state, has a 950-km. border with China and a visit to parts of this state suggests massive preparations in the border areas.

Last week, a huge helicopter, Karakoram, carried tanks, soldiers and trucks from the airport in Along in Central Arunachal Pradesh to the Chinese border. A large crowd watched the loading and take-off.

The Soviet helicopter MI 26, with a 20-tonne capacity, is considered the biggest in the world and can carry over 100 soldiers and a great deal of equipment. This is for the first time that the helicopter was used in the area.

A top official said that the Indian and Chinese forces were stationed eye-ball to eye-ball in the border areas. The Indian army had built several helipads in the areas and stepped up its activity following the Chinese intrusion in the Samdurang Chu valley.

China has not only disputed the McMahon line but also claimed the entire Arunachal Pradesh as part of its own territory. It had strongly protested when Arunachal was granted statehood last February.

Seven districts of Arunachal have a border with China. They are, Tawang, West Kameng, Lower Subansiri, Upper Subansiri, West Kameng, Dibang Valley and Lohit.

The Indian forces are also maintaining vigil in Tirap district of Arunachal, bordering Burma where there has been considerable insurgency.

Mr Raj Kumar, speaker of the Arunachal legislative assembly who has been elected from the border district, said insurgents controlled large chunks of land in the Burmese territory. They ran some schools, had a fine intelligence network and survived in the worst mosquito-infested jungles.

There has also been some tension in this state because of the continuing presence of the Chakma refugees. In the last few years, their number has grown and there is fear that after some time they and other people from outside may outnumber the local people who are only about 800,000.

The Arunachal Pradesh Students' Union has launched an agitation on the issue.

Unlike in some other north-eastern states, the Indian government has no problem of national integration in Arunachal. The people are extremely friendly and most of the tribal people know Hindi. One often finds a tribal greeting the visitor with "Jai Hind."

The people, isolated from each other for centuries because of hill ranges, thick jungles and rivers, and from the rest of India by the Brahmaputra, speak 20 different dialects.

However, the medium of instruction in schools is Hindi and English and this has greatly facilitated the process of integration with the rest of the country.

In the civil administration, Assamese is used apart from Hindi and English.

Nearly 80 per cent of the government servants are from other states. Twenty years ago it was compulsory for them to learn a local dialect to facilitate communication with the tribals who had little education. However, though Hindi is now widely known, literacy is still only 20 per cent.

No Interference

In view of the sensitive region, the government is not interfering with the life and property of the tribal people. No land revenue records are kept and most of the land, including hillocks and forests, belong to individuals or communities.

Polygamy is prevalent in some parts and a Nocte tribe chief, who attended the inauguration of a Bal Bhavan in Khonsa district town last week, is reputed to have 38 wives. The Bal Bhavan, named Mekhala Hum, in view of the contribution to the cause of children made by Mrs Mekhala Jha, wife of Mr L. K. Jha, was inaugurated by the state governor, Mr Ram Pradhan, who is well-known in Maharashtra where he functioned as chief secretary before taking over as union home secretary.

He knows this region well and has been working for its development and to make it more familiar to the outside world which has only a hazy notion of its geography and its people.

Following the recent Chinese intrusions, the Border Roads Task Force has stepped up its work and is now building several roads upto the Chinese border and one to the Burma border.

Commandant B. N. Panjiar, superintendent of the Force, feels the state government ought to concentrate on building more and better roads.

The government has given high priority for road construction but the existing network is so poor and the costs so high that the task is quite challenging. In this extremely beautiful but difficult terrain, construction costs are also heavy.

The network of radio, television and airlines too is very inadequate. The Vayudoot services operate in a few towns but their functioning is very irregular. The state administration depends for its communications with districts mainly on the wireless system of the Central Reserve Police Force. The force also helps in the policing of the state.

Large parts of the state are inaccessible and often state government servants have to walk for 15 days to reach some locations. Many areas receive their food supply from helicopters.

Anini, a district headquarter, is not connected by road and the collector (called the deputy commissioner in Arunachal) has to function from a town called Roeing. The collector here is Mr G. S. Jaya, a Sikh with an M.B.B.S. degree.

The deputy commissioner of Along, Mr Dabom Bam, belongs to the local Adi tribe and is only the second direct recruit to the Indian Administrative Service from Arunachal. Two years ago, he was collector of Daman.

Mr Bam said six Tibetans were in police lock-up in the district for several months on the charge of spying for the Chinese. However, so far no charge had been proved against them.

/09599

PAKISTAN

Britain To Increase Aid

46000091a Lahore THE PAKISTAN TIMES in English 11 Feb 88 p 14

[Excerpts] Islamabad, February 9—Mr Tim Eggar, Minister in the British Foreign and Commonwealth Office, has greatly appreciated the efforts of the people and Government of Pakistan for the eradication of drug menace.

Britain, he said, had a major aid programme in Pakistan, which would approximately incur an expenditure of 22 million pounds during the current financial year. He also announced the provision of an additional 5.7 pounds million for water and health projects. He expressed the hope to make another announcement for more British aid to Pakistan during his visit to Karachi tomorrow.

He announced three new British aid projects. Under the first, Britain has offered to meet the costs of consultancies to assist the Karachi Water and Sewerage Board in their effort to improve the water supply and sanitation of Karachi. British consultants, Sir Malcolm Macdonald and partners and Balfours will undertake this work at a cost of L1.5 million (Rs 4.5 crore). Mr Eggar also announced that Britain was prepared to provide a further $34.5 million (Rs 103.5 crore) of mixed credits to implement the consultants' recommendations.

Britain is to provide a grant of L2.3 million (Rs 6.9 crore) to the United Nations Fund for Population Activities (UNFPA) for its work in Pakistan. This aid is part of Britain's long-term assistance to the Population Welfare Department in its efforts to improve health care advice to families in Pakistan. So far Britain has provided L4.8 million (Rs 14.4 crore) for the work of the Department, he said.

Thirdly, Mr Eggar announced a further British grant of L 1.9 million (Rs 5.7 crore) for the rehabilitation of the Sukkur barrage. This is in addition to the grant of L9.4 million (Rs 29.2 crore) which Britain has already been providing since 1984 for the rehabilitation of the barrage gates, he added.

Mr Tim Eggar said that Britain had contributed over L 50 million to assist the refugees, mainly through the UNHCR. But the scale of what Pakistan had done for the refugees, he added, was clearly far greater—APP.

07310

MRD Leader Says Government Usurps Fundamental Rights

46000091b Karachi DAWN in English 6 Feb 88 p 4

[Text] February 5—Describing the recent golden jubilee celebrations of the Punjab Assembly as "a farce," Malik Mohammad Qasim, President of a faction of the Pakistan Muslim League and MRD Secretary-General, said on Friday that the claim of the Assembly being a democratic institution stood exposed when the Chief of the Army Staff was invited to address it.

He was speaking at a news conference. Referring to President Zia and Prime Minister Junejo's commitment to Islam in their speeches, Malik Qasim said that they had done nothing but exploited the sacred name of Islam in order to prolong their rule and to continue persuing "anti-people" policies. "Particularly Gen Zia has done disservice to Islam," he asserted.

The MRD convener was particularly critical of the President who, he said, had only divided the nation on regional, provincial, sectarian, ethnic, and linguistic lines.

He said that the present government of Mr Junejo was a continuation of Martial Law that had usurped the fundamental rights bestowed by Allah which no human being could suspend since Gen Zia had suspended these rights, he should not utter the name of Islam, he added.

Malik Qasim said that the regime had been doing injustices in the name of Islam, in the fields of judiciary, legislation, the media, administration and the armed forces.

He said that the official Muslim League was formed at a meeting which was also attended by Gen Zia and Pir Pagaro was on record having stated that he was stepping down and nominating Mr Junejo under the instructions of the President Zia-ul-Haq.

Malik Qasim stated that the ruling party was founded by the Martial Law regime and millions from the national exchequer were being spent on its organisation. He claimed that the recent allocation of Rs 500 million, of which Rs 230 million had already been distributed at the rate of Rs 2 million for each MPA for opening 100 offices of primary league in his constituency, was mis-use of the public money.

He particularly criticised the Punjab Government for introducing the law which replaced secret ballot by show of hands, and which empowered the Chief Minister to forcibly retire after ten years or allow out of turn promotion to any public servant.

He said it was the duty of the armed forces to safeguard the geographical frontiers and defend the motherland and not to protect "an obsolete general." He advocated the need for a strong army for the defence of the country. He also criticised indemnification of the "black laws and deeds" of the Martial Law which denied the political workers, who were convicted by military courts, the right of a judicial review.

07310

Kalabagh Dam Called 'Conspiracy Against Sind'

46000090e Karachi DAWN in English 10 Feb 88 p 5

[Text] Dadu, Feb 9: Mr Mumtaz Ali Bhutto, Convener, Sindhi Baluch-Pakhtun Front, has said the Kalabagh Dam project is a conspiracy against the people of Sind.

Speaking at a reception hosted for him by a local leader of the front, Mr Najibullah Bhutto, at Mehar on Monday, said a sense of deprivation had developed among the people of Sind and that they will not tolerate excesses any more.

Talking about the success of Muslim League in the recent local bodies elections, he said the Muslim League was "not a political party but a department of the Government".

He said the people were now looking toward nationalist organisations and that was why workers of Pakistan People's party were leaving their party and joining the Front.

Later Mr Mumtaz Bhutto addressed a public meeting near Sita Road.—PPI

/06662

Negligence of Libraries Called 'Inexcusable'

46000090b Karachi DAWN in English 6 Feb 88 p 7

[Text] The Sind Governor was right in emphasising, the other day, the importance of libraries in creating a reading habit among people and disseminating knowledge. Books play vital role in the mental and intellectual development of children and adults alike. But what is not fully realised in our official and intellectual circles is that mere availability of books is not enough—a more vital task is to make them easily accessible to the reading pubic. This is where libraries come in as an indispensable channel in making reading material accessible to the public. Had the significance of these institutions in mass communication been fully realised, the state of the libraries in Pakistan would not have been as dismal as it has all along been. Not only is their number small but their stocks are limited and the number of users of this service is poor. By one estimate, there are barely 400 or so libraries of any significance in the country having just about five million books, of which only a quarter are in circulation at any given time. This paucity of libraries has had a deleterious effect on educational standards, literacy levels and reading habits of people as well as on the publishing industry which has been deprived of an expanding market which more libraries could provide.

The official negligence in this respect is inexcusable, especially because it reflects a wide gap between precept and example. From time to time ambitious plans have been drawn up and experts appointed to explore the possibilities of expanding the library network. But when it comes to taking concrete action, all plans and proposals are invariably shelved, or conveniently deferred or quietly dropped. For instance, the Education Policy of 1972 provided for the establishment of 50,000 people's libraries all over the country. These never materialised. The report of a technical working group appointed in 1982 has yet to be made public, let alone implemented. This apathetic attitude must yield to a more purposive approach and a concerted effort to expand the library facilities. The crucial need is to set up a network of small libraries and reading rooms at the community level so that they are easily accessible to the common reader. Admittedly, prestigious institutions and research libraries serve a useful purpose but they are designed to fulfill the needs of a small intellectual class of specialists and scholars only. Considerations of equity and benefit for the maximum number require that resources are so allocated that every neighbourhood has a small library for the people living there. It is also important that steps be taken to set up libraries in all institutions where 50 or more literate people normally get together. This would include not only all educational institutions—many of which do not provide even a modicum of library facilities for their students—but also offices and factories. If every work place were to make a fairly good and varied collection of books and other reading material available for its employees, it would make an important contribution towards the promotion of reading habit and spread of enlightenment.

All this can be done only if there is a high-powered machinery entrusted with the responsibility of library development. At present the Department of Libraries in the Ministry of Education, headed by a Director, has concentrated its efforts mainly on the planning and development of the National Library. Its resources and powers are limited. It would be advisable for the government to consider creating a Libraries Division headed by a Secretary or an Additional Secretary who must be expected to give full attention to the planning and development of a wide network of libraries of various types. Also needed is a legislative framework making it obligatory for the federal and provincial governments to operate library services and lay down guidelines for establishing new libraries. Unless we take up the issue more seriously and promote concrete steps and initiatives towards providing better and more extensive reading facilities for the people, we will continue to languish in an intellectually impoverished situation.

/06662

Education Bewailed as 'Neglected by Government'

46000090c Karachi DAWN in English 9 Feb 88 p 6

[Article by A. Rashid: "What Ails Our Education System"]

[Text] It is a sad reality that Pakistan figures as the least literate nation in Southeast Asia; the other example is that of Afghanistan. Though the official claim puts the rate of literacy at 26 per cent but the actual position shows that only 10 per cent of our people are really literate.

In fact the government have never given any special priority to education which it deserves. It has traditionally been neglected, perhaps, for the only reason that education means enlightenment and independence of thought which automatically lead towards better understanding of one's civil rights.

But in most Third World countries, where governments are usually not representative and rule the citizens with their repressive and arbitrary methods, the awareness of civil rights is consider dangerous, therefore, threatening to the existence of such governments.

When one says that standard of education in Pakistan is on decline, one must bear it in mind that the country's economic growth rate is one of the main factors for this downward trend, because education and economy go side by side.

To understand this factor, one has to look at the unbelievable progress which Japan has made in a very short span of time, and of course, one can't forget that Japan was the country which was devastated by the first nuclear bomb.

Actually Japan's economic growth is the result of this nation's seriousness about education. Japanese are perhaps the best educated people in the world. When we compare the standard of education in Japan with that of the West, we realise that Japan has the best schooling system in the world. And it is internationally recognised that students in that country are more hard working than in any other part of the world. This hard work results in better skilled work force, which causes high production rate in economic field.

The problem with our education system is not just that it has been given low priority by policy makers but also that our policy makers are not clear as to what kind of education they want to give to the youth. This muddleheadedness of the policy makers has resulted in more serious muddleheadedness of the students. They really don't have the idea what kind of education they are after. They are confused about their real orientation. Saving oneself from disappointment one should avoid asking student a simple question like why is he studying political science or economics? Because the student would never come out with a clear answer.

It is said that "one real object of education is to leave one in a condition of continually asking questions." But in a conservative society like ours, this is perhaps the most dangerous aim of education. Therefore our education system is being run on such lines which never allow for any kind of inquisitiveness. Usually, that student who would ask no question and have ready made answers is considered the best. This attitude kills the very essence of education.

Another unique problem with our education system is that even after 40 years of independence, we still do not have an agreed upon medium of instruction. In official rhetoric, Urdu is considered the national language but no decent job can be acquired without the knowledge of English. It would be foolish to offer any argument against English at this stage of the country's development. And it would be equally foolish to stress the need of Urdu as the only national language as our country comprises four provinces, each with its own distinct language.

What is needed is a national consensus on the importance of all these languages. For example, English has the status of an international language. Therefore, it is imperative to have this language for acquiring modern scientific knowledge without which we cannot make progress in any field of life.

The importance of Urdu as a lingua franca is also to be recognised as this is the only language in which people of different provinces can communicate with each other. And then come national languages of the four provinces. It is proven fact that a child can best learn in his mother tongue. So for our national integrity and better education pupils should be taught in their own mother tongues.

If and when all these factors are taken into consideration, with an open and cool mind there is no reason that the standard of education in our institutions would not go up. Through literacy rate will certainly need extra efforts to rise because it needs solid material resources.

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Scholars State Demands

46000090f Karachi DAWN in English 9 Feb 88 p 3

[Text] Hyderabad, Feb 8—Over 250 scholars, educationists and intellectuals including Vice Chancellor, Sind University, Mr. Mazharul Siddiqui, Shaikh Ayaz, Rashid Bhatti, Dr. Tanvir Abbasi, Dr. Ghulam Mustafa Qasmi, Dr. Qamar Wahid, Mrs. Mehtab Akbar Rashdi and others, have expressed their full support to the eight-point charter of demands announced by the 12 parties "Sindhi Awam Jo Qaumi Ittehad".

They issued a signed statement here on Monday expressing solidarity with the alliance in furtherance of its objectives.

The charter includes end of Kalabagh Dam project and the construction of Pannu Aqil and other cantonments in Sind, official status for Sindhi language in Sind and introduction of Sindhi as medium of instructions in all the schools of the province.

The parties and organisations which have so far joined the alliance are, Awamiu National Party (Sind), Pakistan National Party (Sind), Sindhiani Tehreek, Servants of

Sind Society, Sindhi Hari Tehreek, Sind Hari Committee, Sind Friends Forum, Sindhi Mazdoor Tehreek, Sind Cultural Academy, Sindhi Shagird Tehreek, Democratic STudents Federation and Sind Intellectual Forum.

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Students Want Ban on Unions Lifted

Students Urge Revival of Unions

46000090d Karachi DAWN in English 10 Feb 88 p 3

[Text] February 9—Nine defunct student organisations held protest rallies here on tuesday to demand the immediate revival of their unions, banned four years ago this day through a Martial Law order.

Eight student organisations, which held a rally at the MAO College here, set up a joint Rabita Council to map out a strategy to press the Government to restore the students' democratic rights. They appealed to other organisations to join hands to attain common objectives.

The organisations which held the rally were: The National Students Federation, the Amimia Students Organisation, the Muslim Students Federation, the Anjuman Talaba-i-Islam, the Black Eagles Students Federation and the Quaid-i-Azam Students Federation.

The Islami Jamiat-i-Talaba held a rally at the Punjab University old campus. Nawabzada Nasrullah Khan, president, Pakistan Democratic Party, and Prof. Ghafoor Naib Amir, Jamaat-i-Islami, addressed the rally.

The rally at the M.A.O. College also issued a declaration outlining measures for peaceful coexistence among student organisations. It also warned the Government that if it failed to restore the democratic rights of the students and did not lift the ban on the unions, the heads of the banned organisations would announce a programme of protect campaign all over the country.

Student Leaders' Plea for Unity

46000090d Karachi DAWN in English 10 Feb 88 p 8

[Text] Karachi, Feb 9—Leaders of Islami Jamiat Talaba and National Students Federation have urged the masses to unite in the face of the government's policy of "divide and rule".

Mr Mairaj-ul-Huda Siddiqui, Nazim, IJT Karachi; Osma Khan, Nazim, IJT Karachi University; Safdar Rasheed President, NSF Karachi; and Hassan Ailba, General Secretary NSF Karachi, in a joint press conference at Dow Medical College on Tuesday expressed solidarity with the people of Karachi in their movement, against what they called the apathy shown by the administration, to resolve their genuine problems.

They claimed that during the past four years of ban on students unions, at least 61 students were killed, 5,874 injured and 3,474 arrested. During this period various students bodies organised over 700 demonstration and rallies in the country and at least 638 students were rusticated from various institutions.

They also said that other students factions were being contacted to chalk out a comprehensive joint strategy for the restoration of students unions. Leading political leaders could also be approached for their advice in this regard, they said.

Authorities had failed in uprooting students organisations from campuses as they had been effectively working to solve the problem of the students despite ban on student unions, they added.

They also claimed that heads of academic institutions still seek help of these bodies.

They concluded with reiterating their demand for lifting of ban from students unions and immediate holding of election for the same.—PPI

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Commentary Criticizes 'Waste of Resources' in Medical Field

46000090a Karachi DAWN in English 2 Feb 88 p 8

[Text] A recent decision by the Sind Government to drastically reduce seats in the five medical colleges of the province seems, at first glance, to be quite arbitrary and unwise.

When one looks at Pakistan's poor health care infrastructure this indiscretion seems all the more glaring. In Sind, the most densely populated province of the country, there is one doctor for 57,964 inhabitants; one nurse for 568,050 patients and 8,754 hospital beds (18 per cent) available to a population of 60 million. Pakistan spends 0.9 per cent of its GNP on health.

Though the above figures are much better for urban areas, the total health cover to the population is about 45 per cent.

Under the circumstances, it is argued: don't we need more hospitals, more doctors, more nurses? How can cuts in medical education be justified?

The Sind Government has embarked upon a plan to cut down admissions to medical colleges by almost 100 per cent in a period of five years, so that the province has 1,000 medical graduates, in each batch annually. This has been done, official handout says, to improve the quality of medical education which has truly deteriorated over the years.

What the handout does not say, however, is that there is a glut of doctors in the medical market, barely enough house jobs for all and fewer employment opportunities. There are an estimated 10,000 unemployed doctors in the country at present, according to government figures.

This is, certainly, incredible waste of educational and health resources. The problem stems from the fact that the health-care infrastructure is urban-based and cannot absorb so many new doctors. Few of them are willing to work outside the high-tech hospitals and spread out to cover health-care of the city slums or remote villages. Not only is there less financial reward if they do so, but also, their training does not qualify them to handle simple rural emergencies like snake-bite and so on.

What the majority of the population needs in Pakistan and other poor countries is not so much urban doctor/hospital based medical cover but basic health care workers selected and trained from within the community. Such workers would impart basic health information on hygiene, communicable disease, preventive measures, correct diet, maternal and child care and even endemic psychology.

A trend to divert scarce government resources (or allocation) to community medicine has started in several undeveloped countries today. This trend emphasises strict limiting of annual admissions of medical students; straight grading system; postponing the opening of new medical schools (as was the provincial government's decision to stall the opening of Baqai Hospital;/college in Karachi). Certain countries are even closing down some existing medical colleges. Others advocate a compulsory retirement age for doctors.

The medical decision needs to be seen in this light and should not only be commended but watched over so that alternate medical practices are put into effect. This is in the best interest of the rural poor and the urban outer-city slum dwellers, which is, after all, the majority of the people.—SC

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