

# Khaleda invites Advani

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Indian opposition leader paid a courtesy call on at her Maurya Sheraton Hotel suit yesterday morning.

During their meeting, Advani expressed his concern over the "massive illegal immigration to India, anti-India insurgency camps and rise of fundamentalism in Bangladesh".

Emerging from the meeting, Advani told journalists that though the Indo-Bangladesh relations are normal and cordial, India has mainly two concerns with Bangladesh massive illegal immigration and insurgency.

Referring to "official figures", he said there are at least 172 camps of Northeastern insurgents that are operating against India with protection from Bangladesh.

Advani said along with others, Bangladeshi people were involved in recent blasts, including those in Benaras and Bangalore in India.

The former Indian deputy prime minister said Bangladesh should take immediate steps to tackle insurgents and fundamentalism and remove Indian concerns.

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia categorically denied the Indian opposition leader's allegation of illegal migration, promotion of anti-Indian insurgency on its soil, Bangladeshi citizens' involvement in terrorism in India and rise of fundamentalism in Bangladesh.

She told Advani that there is no reason for illegal migration from Bangladesh to India, as sufficient development in all spheres has been taking

place in the country.

On the allegation of fundamentalism, Khaleda Zia said Bangladesh is a country where complete religious harmony has been prevailing and people of all faiths are performing their religious activities peacefully.

Citing communal disturbances in many countries, she said no such violence has taken place in Bangladesh.

Later Foreign Secretary Hemayetuddin told reporters that Advani expressed happiness over Khaleda Zia's visit to India. Both Khaleda and Advani stressed the need for continued dialogue between the two countries to address all the issues for mutual benefit, he said.

Replying to a question about Advani's remarks to journalists after his meeting with Khaleda Zia that there are 172 insurgent camps in Bangladesh, Hemayetuddin dismissed the allegation and said if they can provide any evidence, the Bangladesh government will take legal action.

Bangladesh will not allow its territory for any kind of terrorism and insurgency, the foreign secretary said.

Rather there is information about anti-Bangladesh camps and hardcore criminals in India, he said.

Despite allegations and denials, the Bangladesh prime minister and Indian leader of the opposition, however, expressed hope that relations between the two countries will further improve through the visit.

Khaleda Zia said her visit is aimed at developing relations and partnership through cooperation for the

benefit of the people of both the countries.

Advani suggested a comprehensive dialogue between India and Bangladesh on all key issues following the pattern that exists between India and Pakistan.

## MEETING WITH MIZORAM CHIEF MINISTER

Mizoram Chief Minister Zoram Thanga, who called on Prime Minister Khaleda Zia at her hotel suit yesterday morning, expressed keen interest to import quality Bangladesh products that are cheap as well.

He said there should be close economic cooperation between Bangladesh and Indian state of Mizoram.

Zoram Thanga suggested setting up paper mills and bamboo processing industry under the joint venture of the Indian state and Bangladesh.

His state and Chittagong Hill Tracts in Bangladesh that produce huge bamboo can exchange seeds and technology, he said.

The Mizoram chief minister told Khaleda Zia that they would soon send a delegation to Bangladesh to further discuss the matters.

Welcoming the Mizoram chief minister's proposal, Khaleda Zia invited him to visit Bangladesh.

# President, PM greet Pakistani counterparts

UNB, Dhaka

President Iajuddin Ahmed and Prime Minister Khaleda Zia yesterday greeted their Pakistani counterparts on the occasion of the National Day of the country.

In a message to Pakistani President General Pervez Musharaf, Iajuddin said Bangladesh and Pakistan enjoy cordial relations that are characterised by the spirit of understanding and cooperation.

Khaleda, in her message to Pakistani Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz, expressed her hope that the brotherly relations existing between the two countries would be further strengthened.

"I believe that through sustained efforts we will be able to take our relations to new heights in the days ahead," she added.

Iajuddin and Khaleda wished good health and happiness of their counterparts and for the continued progress and well being of the people of Pakistan.

