

Shab-e-Barat observed

The Holy Shab-e-Barat was observed - Saturday night - throughout the country, reports BSS.

Religious people spent most of the night in prayer seeking divine blessings for their well-being and the country.

The government declared Sunday holiday.

The Islamic Foundation and other religious organisations including Dewanbag Darbar Sharif and Islamic Dawat Sangtha held waz and doa mahfils on the occasion.

The city branch of Bangladesh Awami League held a milad mahfil at the party's Bangabandhu Avenue office on the occasion.

Distribution of sweets and foods and visiting graveyards to offer fatcha for the peace of the departed souls were other highlights of the occasion.

Razzak

From Page 1 Col 8

December 6.

He said that if the BNP opted for parliamentary form of government his party would render all our support. Emphasising the need for continuation of constitutional rule, Abdur Razzak said that the constitutional rule would not be strengthened unless there was a parliamentary form of government.

He said that there were many leaders in the BNP who favoured the parliamentary form of government because they understood that there was possibility of instability in the existing presidential form of government.

Abdur Razzak is one of the four candidate who own from more than one seats—one from Shariatpur and the other from Madaripur. The other Baksal leader who came out successful in the recent parliamentary elections were Mohiuddin Ahmed from Matbaria, Md Ishaq from Moheshkhali and Abdur Rahim from Dinajpur.

BNP PP

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Begum Zia sought the cooperation of all to steer the country towards prosperity, Ahmed Nazir BNP Press Secretary told the press after the meeting.

The BNP chairperson said her party was true to its word during the nine-year movement and this is one of the reasons why the people have made BNP victorious in the elections, she added.

Thanking the people for voting in favour of her party she said the elections proved that BNP was the largest and the most popular party in Bangladesh.

Begum Zia cautioned Members of Parliament of her party saying the task of rebuilding the country would be difficult since the autocratic government of former President Ershad had shattered the economy and destroyed the administration.

'We will have to work with honesty by rising above lust and greed to tide over difficulties' she said adding 'We will overcome all obstacles with honesty, patriotism and the support of the people'.

She said that the people want to live in peace and have two square meals a day. She asked BNP MPs to help strengthen the economic infrastructure by constructing bridges and culverts in keeping with people's demand. The people have elected you for this', she said.

Begum Zia emphasised the need for hard labour to solve the problems facing the country. She said it was due to the hard labour of Shaheed Zia and the people that there was no scarcity of goods in 1979 despite a severe drought.

She said BNP workers have achieved victory by their honesty, devotion to duty, patriotism, sincerity, and adherence to ideals. After the promulgation of Martial Law cynics had said that BNP would never be back in power, she said adding some of them had left the party.

Begum Zia said that BNP would have won the election by a greater margin if the voters' list had been error free.

BNP Secretary General Barrister Abdus Salam Talukdar recalled the repression that BNP leaders and workers were subjected to during the nine-year movement.

He thanked the Election Commission and the news media for their efforts to make the elections free and fair.

Ershad's trial

From Page 1 Col 2

man of the Special Tribunal.

Aminul Haque said there was no bar to try the former president, as the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court vacated the stay order on the trial.

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Special prayers being offered for the welfare of the Muslim Ummah on the occasion of Shab-e-Barat Saturday night. — Star photo

Wijeratne assassinated

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and 50 injured.

The blast occurred at 8.30 am as people were rushing to work.

Normally at this time this part of the road is full of cars with people going to work and children going to school.

The day being a Saturday, traffic was comparatively thin, otherwise the casualties would have been much higher, a police officer at the scene said.

Police sealed off the road as ambulances rushed the injured to hospitals in the city.

The blast was so powerful that parts of bodies were scattered several yards away and the hood of one car rested on overhead electricity wires about 35 feet (12 metres) above the road.

AP adds: the bomb that killed Wijeratne and others was most likely exploded by Tamil rebels who planned the attack for a long time, police said Sunday.

Right now 90 per cent of our suspicion is that the attack was carried out by the (guerrillas). The balance 10 per cent will cover the minister's

the government's ongoing of other enemies," a senior police official said.

Police said about 50 kilograms (120 pounds) of explosives were planted in a parked car and detonated by remote control when the minister's car passed on way to his office.

We figure the whole attack was planned during a long period of time and the persons involved would have moved into the area during this time, the official said.

He said a massive investigation, one of the largest ever conducted in the country, has been launched. He refused to give details.

Scores of people have been detained for questioning but no one has been arrested, he said.

No one has claimed responsibility but police said the type of explosives used was similar to that used by the dominant Tamil militia, the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam. The group has been fighting since 1983 to set up a separate nation in Sri Lanka's north and the east.

Wijeratne, 60, was leading a fence in the north and the east against the Tamil Tigers.

A Tiger spokesman, Sathasivam Krishnakumar, however, said Saturday he does not know if his group was responsible.

Residents in areas 10 kilometers (6 miles) from the blast site said they heard the explosion. Objects in houses 2 kilometers (1 mile) away were rocked by the blast, other residents said.

Abbas

From Page 1 Col 8

According to the wishes of the people.

He said, 'We have accepted the people's verdict and this the democratic spirit in real terms'.

Congratulating those who had voted for Jamaat candidates, the Acting Jamaat Amir said his party believed that the votes cast in favour of Jamaat were not wasted although only a few candidates succeeded.

Allies, Iraq agree Transfer of power

From Page 1 Col 7

Cross, with a "symbolic release" on both sides immediately, the US commander said, adding that mine-clearing activities will also begin immediately.

There was little immediate information about the members of the Iraqi delegation.

Schwarzkopf said both sides were prepared to meet again to discuss truce terms but that he did not anticipate another meeting would be necessary.

Before the meeting, he said, "I'm not here to give them anything, I'm here to tell them exactly what we expect them to do."

Iraq's official media made no mention of the military meeting early Sunday, and instead focused on attempts to restore electricity, transport, and radio and television broadcast throughout the war-devastated country.

Earlier report adds: Iraqi and Allied generals met at an occupied air base inside Iraq Sunday to work out details of a Gulf war ceasefire, the

American network CNN said in a live report.

Two unidentified Iraqi Generals sat across a wooden table in an olive-green tent opposite US General Norman Schwarzkopf and Saudi Lieutenant-General Prince Khalid bin Sultan.

Armoured vehicles and tanks flying the American stars and stripes and carrying inscriptions such as "Mrs. Death" on their gun barrels threw a ring of steel round the talks. Fully-armed helicopters patrolled overhead.

Before the talks Schwarzkopf, a Vietnam war veteran, ordered that nothing should be done to humiliate the Iraqis.

"I don't want to embarrass anyone. I don't want to humiliate them," the burly American General told one of his planning officers as they walked in bright morning sunshine to the talks from the helicopter that took them to the air base.

In another development, the United States and its Allies pledged Sunday to pull out of Iraq once a Gulf war ceasefire had been signed and hailed battlefield talks with Iraqi Generals as a major step on the road to peace.

Another report says: US forces are in no hurry to leave the huge area they occupy in southern Iraq, a senior US military source said on Sunday.

Why would we leave if there's a ceasefire and we own it? I mean eventually we will (leave). But I'm not sure we're in that great a hurry to get out and I'm sure he's (Iraqis) not in a position to dictate when we should," the source told reporters.

At the United Nations meanwhile the Security Council on Saturday overwhelmingly passed a resolution adopting Allied demands that Iraq must meet before a formal ceasefire in the Gulf war.

Following are the main provisions of Security Council Resolution 686 adopted late on Saturday that dictates terms to Iraq for a permanent ceasefire.

The Resolution demands Iraq: Rescind its order annexing Kuwait, accept in principle liability for loss, damage or injury arising out of its invasion and occupation of Kuwait, arrange for immediate release of all prisoners of war, release all Kuwaiti and third-country nationals and return the remains of any deceased. Immediately begin to return all Kuwaiti property, stop any military action, including missile attacks and combat flights, identify the location of Iraqi mines, booby traps and provide information on any chemical and biological weapons and material in Kuwait and areas of Iraq where Allied troops are stationed temporarily.

JS session

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ready elected as their leader and that she should be regarded as the member of parliament who would be able to command the support of majority of the members of Parliament when fully constituted.

The Acting President said that the Council of Ministers might be formed within a week, but summoning the Parliament will not be possible before election of the 30 women members. According to the opinion of the Election Commission this can not be completed before the April 4. In these circumstances the

Acting President will summon the Parliament for its first meeting on April 5.

The Acting President also reiterated his commitment that after the first meeting of the Parliament he would leave his present position according to constitutional provision.

BNP leaders: Prof. A.Q.M. Badrudduza Chowdhury, Lt. Col. (Rtd) Mustafizur Rahman, Mr. Saifur Rahman, Barrister Abdus Salam Talukdar, Mr. M.K. Anwar, Barrister Nazmul Huda, Justice Maksumul Hakim, Mr. Afazuddin Fakir, Barrister Jamiruddin Sarkar and Barrister Rafiqul Islam Mia were present in the meeting.

UNO, 34 others hurt

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stituency-14, was suspended due to violence. The main contestants of the area are Advocate Kabir Chowdhury of BNP and Akhtaruzzaman of AL.

In another incident, about 12 persons were injured when supporters of BNP and AL clashed at South Hattishahar in Chittagong. The injured were given treatment at medical centres.

The clash started when Russel, a member of Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal, was allegedly stabbed by some workers of Bangladesh Chhatra League on Saturday night.

Two local businessmen, Saber Ahmed and Mohammad Haroon, were also injured when they tried to rescue Russel.

On receiving news of the clash police rushed to the spot and brought the situation under control.

At least ten people were injured, five of them seriously in a clash between BNP and Awami League supporters at Nakhia Upazila Bazar Saturday evening, police said, reports UNB.

Of the injured five were admitted to Nakhia Upazila Health Complex. They are Idris Ali (50), Khorshed (25), Hazrat Ali (30), all activists of BNP while Faroque (24) and Forkan (27) belongs to Awami League. Condition of Idris Ali was stated to be critical.

According to Awami League sources, the clash erupted while BNP workers attacked their victory procession.

Two separate cases were filed with Sherpur police.

Another report from Feni adds: The members of a family split into BNP and Awami League supporters clashed at a village Sunday, leaving 10 including three female injured.

Begum Zia PM

From Page 1 Col 7

President on Saturday and asserted that her party emerged as the single largest one in the election (BNP) enjoys the support of the majority members, party sources said.

The existing Constitution provides for presidential system of government and therefore, Justice Shahabuddin Ahmed will continue as chief executive until the presidential election is held or the Constitution is amended to provide for parliamentary form of government. Khaleda Zia and the cabinet will be responsible to the President constitutionally. But political analysts strongly feel that BNP earned the moral right through the election to govern the country and Khaleda will exercise real power even under the existing Constitution as Prime Minister. A constitutional pundit described the scenario as BNP ruling the country under a caretaker Acting President.

Meanwhile, the Election Commission is likely to announce the official results on March 6. The Members of the Parliament may take oath on March 7. The cabinet will be formed after the MPs take oath.

The Election Commission has also started delimitation of the constituencies for 30 women members to be elected from reserved seats. Ten constituencies will form one unit from where one member will be elected. The 300 members of the parliament, who will constitute the electoral college, will vote in secret ballots to elect the women members.

The candidates who won in more than one seat shall have to resign from all the seats retaining only one within 30 days from the date of announcement of official results. If any member fails to relinquish within the stipulated time, the elections to all the seats will be cancelled.

BNP chief Begum Khaleda Zia, ousted president H.M. Ershad won five seats each. Awami League leader Tofael Ahmed and Baksal leader Abdur Razzak won two seats.

France unblocks Kuwaiti assets

PARIS, Mar 3: France on Sunday became the first country to unblock Kuwaiti holdings frozen in August at the start of the Gulf crisis. The Finance Ministry said the order frees an estimated 7.5 billion francs (1.5 billion dollars) of Kuwaiti capital in French banks as well as shares in French concerns, reports AP.

China expels high official

BEIJING, Mar 3: China's former top representative in Hong Kong has been expelled from the Communist Party one year after he fled to the United States, the official Xinhua News Agency said Sunday. Xu Jiatun is the highest level party member to flee China in the wake of the crackdown on the 1989 pro-democracy movement, and the most senior person to be expelled from the party, reports AP.

Tremor rocks western Turkey

ISTANBUL, Mar 3: A medium-strength earthquake rocked western Turkey on Sunday, causing no casualties or damage, the Kandilli Observatory reported. It said the tremor at 10.40 a.m. (0840 GMT) measured 4.6 on the Richter Scale and lasted a few seconds, reports AP.

The Midnight File

Saddam sought asylum in India

NEW DELHI, Mar 3: President Saddam Hussein had wanted to seek asylum in India, but the government rejected two "secret overtures" last month, a newspaper reported Sunday.

Saddam's half-brother Barzan Ibrahim had been in touch with Indian Commerce Minister Subramaniam Swamy for the asylum, the newspaper said quoting unnamed sources in the Indian government.

Swamy was not available for comment, reports AP.

Boat with 650 Somalis capsizes

NAIROBI, Mar 3: More than 100 Somali refugees are believed dead after their boat capsized in Kenya's Indian Ocean coast last night, reports the Kenya news agency yesterday. The boat with about 650 Somali refugees capsized on its way from Somalia's southern port town of Kisumu to Mombasa, southeastern Kenya, when it hit a rock, reports Xinhua.

Seven killed in copter crash

BRISBANE, Mar 3: A helicopter crashed Sunday on a beach near Brisbane, killing all seven people on board, police said. It was the second fatal helicopter crash in Queensland state over the weekend, reports AP.

Bomb blast in Manila

MANILA, Mar 3: A bomb exploded outside a Jewish temple in a Manila suburb before dawn Sunday, shattering windows but causing no injuries, police said. The blast occurred at 2.05 a.m. near a temple in Suburban Makati which holds services for the Jewish Association of the Philippines, said Patrolman Gerry Dino, reports AP.

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Overseas employees

From Page 1 Col 7

August of the current fiscal year, official remittances from Kuwait stood at eight million dollars.

About the return of the Bangladeshis to Kuwait and getting back their jobs, the Kuwait Ambassador said the decision by his government would be taken as soon as the situation became normal. "Now the Emirate is under martial law to help restore normalcy after a seven-month-long Iraqi occupation and want on destruction and loot, and only the foreign diplomats in Kuwait have resumed their work", he added.

Emergency teams are working to assess the needs of the war-ravaged Kuwait, concentrating on the urgent first aid for its shattered economy including 650 oil wells which are on fire. News agency reports from Kuwait said the 90-day emergency programme financed by the Emirate's government will cost at least 50 billion dollars. According to Kuwait's Central Bank Government Sheikh Salam Al-Sabah, reconstruction of the war-ravaged economy would in-

volve 500 billion dollars if the private sector losses are included.

Kuwait has already signed rebuilding contracts with about 150 companies all over the world.

While the reconstruction and rehabilitation programme gets off in Kuwait, the labour-scarce Emirate will be looking forward to more manpower support for the same. The labour-surplus poor Asian economies will be competing for a larger share in new employment opportunities for their respective nationals.

About the new opportunities in Kuwait, business circles in Dhaka suggest the need for a well-coordinated strategy at the government level to secure a favourable deal for Bangladesh in view of country's positive and consistent support for liberating Kuwait from Iraqi occupation.

The Gulf crisis landed several punches on the fragile Bangladesh economy by raising oil prices, slashing worker remittances, causing repatriation cost of about 36 million dollars for bringing the stranded Bangladeshis and in-

creasing unemployment as thousands returned from Kuwait and Iraq without jobs.

The crisis also entailed a heavy export loss because of the enforcement of the UN sanctions against Baghdad. Kuwait and Iraq accounted for about 12 per cent of Bangladesh's 116 million dollar exports to the Middle-East in 1989-90.

Kuwait has been the major market for Bangladeshi frozen food and vegetable exports to the Middle-East. Weekly export consignments of vegetables alone stood at about 32 tons worth about 72,000 dollars. Both frozen food and vegetables exports were made on consignment basis. Export bills worth over two lakh dollars could not be collected because of sudden market disruptions in Kuwait following the Gulf crisis.

The Gulf crisis caused a heavy drag on meagre financial resources of Bangladesh, including the cost of participation in the multi-national forces in the Gulf.

Besides, country's national airlines, travel and recruiting agencies, international hotels and tourism were the hardest hit sectors because of the Gulf crisis. The amount of loss shot up in a more pronounced way after the war broke out in the middle of January.

Transfer of power

From Page 1 Col 5

press conference at his party office in the city. Menon said the most urgent task was to summon the parliament after the announcement of official results of the polls. The parliament would solve all the problems the nation is now confronted with, including the form of government, he added.

Menon is the alone candidate of the Five-Party alliance to get elected in the polls.

The Workers Party leader reiterated the 'election pledges' of the three mainstream political alliances before the polls saying that they had wanted to change the existing presidential form of government to a parliamentary one. Such a government will annul the undemocratic clauses of the Constitution, repeal the Special Powers Act and the

Printing and Publications Act, meet the demands of various groups and pay heed to the national consensus as demonstrated through the mass upsurge in 1990.

To achieve the goals, Menon called upon the leader of the major parliamentary party, BNP, to initiate ways for upholding the unity of the three alliances. Other parties must come forward forgetting their partisan attitude to fulfill the commitments made

earlier, he added.

The Workers Party leader, replying to a question, said he had talks with the BNP leadership and added that they were not opposed to parliamentary democracy on principle.

Having the single majority, BNP needs no coalition and can form government alone unless 151 members of the parliament oppose it, he said answering to another question.

Menon criticised Awami League chief Sheikh Hasina for her pre-election speeches and accused her party of creating communal division in the country. He said AL was rewarded befittingly for its politics.

Suranjit

UNB adds: Ganatantri Party leader Suranjit Sen Gupta urged the caretaker government to transfer power to the majority party in parliament on the basis of political modality enunciated by democratic forces.

Tofael

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port parliamentary form of government to remove the present constitutional obstacles.

Col Rashid

From Page 1 Col 8

Awami League, Freedom Party, took it as a challenge for the existence of nationalist forces. Whereas AL sought people's verdict in favour of their pre-August 75 atrocities.

The people categorically rejected them as the nightmares of AL era, still rankle in their minds, he added.

He claimed that late president Zia and his party BNP and later Ershad and Jatiya Party enjoyed the fruits of our August-15 sacrifice.

Replying to a question whether BNP should acknowledge their sacrifice he said that "politicians of our country are not so broad minded".

AL

From Page 1 Col 7

sovereign parliament and a real representative government. In fact, the vital issue of our struggle was the establishment of a sovereign parliament to which the interim government would transfer power and the government would be accountable to the parliament', a resolution adopted at the meeting said.

The resolution said the parliamentary election of February 27 was held in the backdrop of the Joint Declaration. It called upon the members of the newly-elected Jatiya Sangsad to implement the pledge incorporated in the Joint Declaration to hasten the progress of transfer of power by the interim government. Otherwise, the 'unholy' presidential system would continue, the resolution said and urged the people to maintain vigil on this issue.

JP to accord Ershad reception

By Staff Correspondent

Jatiya Party has decided to accord a reception to the party Chairman Hussein Muhammad Ershad on his victory in all the five constituencies.