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The Daily Star

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Khaleda addresses plenary session of OIC summit

Islamic ummah must face challenges of new era



Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia at the opening session of the sixth OIC summit in Dakar, Senegal on Monday. —PID photo

DAKAR (Senegal), Dec 10: Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia today made a call to the Muslim Ummah to respond to the challenges posed by unprecedented political, economic and social changes throughout the world with solidarity, commitment, imagination and innovation, reports BSS.

Making a statement at the plenary session of the sixth Islamic summit here, Begum Zia stressed the importance of safeguarding the individual and collective interests of Islamic community on the threshold of the new era. She expressed her belief that the Muslim Ummah would prove equal to the challenges posed by these developments.

The Prime Minister reiterated Bangladesh's commitment to the cause of the Islamic Ummah and pledged to make its own modest contribution to common objectives.

Begum Zia said, "Our fun- See Page 12 Col. 7

Cars burnt : 7 held : Journalist hurt

Police, BCL workers clash in city

By DU Correspondent

At least seven Chhatra League (S-A) activists and a photo journalist were injured, one critically, during clashes with police yesterday.

The clashes ensued in the afternoon when a BCL (S-A) processionist was hit by a police vehicle in Bangabandhu Avenue.

Seven BCL (S-A) activists including Quamruzzaman Ansari, General Secretary of its DU unit, Tabul Chowdhury, Rafik Ahmed Dollar, Abdul Mannan, Tofeel Ahmed, Sajjad Hossain and Ripon were also arrested from the area. They were in custody in Motijheel Thana.

BCL activists, protesting the police action and the arrest of its leaders set at least four vehicles afire and damaged several others in the city. Several gun shots were also fired on the Dhaka University campus during the agitation.

Critically injured Mohammed Babul, who received a fracture in his leg was taken to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital immediately.

According to witnesses the incidents fuelled up when a BCL procession, after a rally in front of the National Press Club, tried to march towards the Bangabandhu Avenue despite repeated obstruction by the police.

Police resorted to lathicharge to disperse it and at one stage a vehicle hit a processionist intensifying the agitation caused by the arrest of BCL leader Masum Ahmed Masum, one of the accused in the Mahbub murder case.

The situation aggravated soon and a series of chases and counter chases took place between the police and the BCL activists.

Police lobbed several teargas shells and the BCL activists pelted stones in response.

The agitation, however, spread on the Dhaka University campus and the BCL activists damaged several vehicles in and around it.

They set afire a jeep and a private car in front of the British Council at Fuller Road and a motor cycle on the road adjacent to Jagannath Hall at noon.

Earlier in the morning they set afire a minibus at Sonargaon Road near Zahurul Huq Hall protesting the arrest of Masum on Monday.

Two shots were also fired in the British Council area while they were setting fire to the jeep and the private car, sources said.

Meanwhile, the BCL (S-A) at a press conference Tuesday evening at the National Press Club announced a programme of demonstration in front of the Ministry of Home Affairs December 12 protesting Tuesday's police action.

It will also submit a memorandum to the ministry in this regard.

The press conference attended by BCL leaders See Page 12 Col. 3

111 Rohingya Muslims held for trial

Star Report

Myanmar's (Burma) military government has detained at least 111 Rohingya Muslims for trial in a crackdown against what it said "unscrupulous economic activities in the border areas" near Bangladesh, according to an Amnesty International report received in Dhaka on Tuesday.

This figure is based on what the government had said. But the report quoted Myanmar's opposition sources as saying that as many as 466 Muslims had been arrested for opposing the military junta.

The 55-page report that dealt with the arrests and trials of political prisoners in Myanmar during Jan-July period this year was released See Page 12 Col. 5

Consensus on Indemnity Bill yet to emerge

By Mostafa Kamal Majumder

The government and the opposition Awami League may continue to be at loggerheads over the Indemnity (Repeal) Bill also during the winter session of Parliament, as a consensus on it is yet to emerge.

Awami League leaders are accusing the government of not calling meetings of the Parliamentary Special Committee on the bill, even though 40 out of 70 days sought to compile a report are by now over.

Reliable sources within the government say on the other hand that it is primarily a private member's bill brought by the Chief Whip of the Opposition Mohammad Nasim. The initiative primarily lies with him, they add.

The winter session of Parliament is expected to begin January 2, because under the amended Constitution the gap between two sessions should not exceed 60 days. Since January 3 is a Friday, and normally sessions are not held on Saturday the likely date of the inauguration of the winter session is Thursday (January 2).

So far three meetings of the Special Committee on the Indemnity (Repeal) Bill have taken place. Discussions that have taken place so far, says Mohammad Nasim are of a preliminary nature. The government should take a political decision to pass the bill and pave the way for the trial of the August 15, 1975 killers.

The Indemnity Ordinance of 1975, which the Indemnity (Repeal) Bill seeks to neutralize, protects the killers from trial.

The bill was referred to the Parliamentary Special Committee August 4, the day it was put into the agenda of the House. Law Minister Mirza Golam Hafiz is the chairman of the 15-member Committee.

Government sources say, they did not obstruct the introduction of the bill, but rather paved the way for the formation of a committee to create a better atmosphere for negotiations.

This was needed for mutual understanding of the problem to, in the words of Law and Justice Minister Mirza Golam Hafiz, 'untie the knots'.

Interviews with government sources and Awami League leaders suggest that they differ on certain points. The government side has the impression that the AL wants the Committee to declare the 1975 Ordinance illegal. This, they say, can be the verdict of a Court and not the Committee, or so to say the Parliament. The Parliament can only pass a new law making the Indemnity Ordinance ineffective.

Awami League leaders say See Page 12 Col. 6

AL presses for repeal of Indemnity Ordinance tomorrow

By Staff Correspondent

The Awami League will hold meetings and rallies throughout the country tomorrow for repeal of the Indemnity Ordinance and in protest against terrorism, political arrests and rising prices of essentials.

Party General Secretary Begum Sejida Chowdhury, MP, See Page 12 Col. 6

Stranded Pak nationals to be taken back : Sharif

DAKAR, Dec 10: Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif of Pakistan today said that stranded Pakistanis living in Bangladesh would be gradually taken back to Pakistan, reports BSS.

He told this to Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia when he made a courtesy call on her at her hotel suite here this morning.

Nawaz Sharif, leading his See Page 12 Col. 7

Ataur Rahman Khan buried

By Staff Correspondent

Ataur Rahman Khan, octogenarian politician and former Prime Minister was laid to eternal rest Tuesday evening at the National Graveyard at Sher-e-Bangla Nagar.

His Namaz-e-Janaza was held five times, once at the Baitul Mukarram Mosque after the Asr prayers, once in the Supreme Court compound and once each at Balla, his village home, Kalampur and Dhamrai of Mankiganj district.

People from all walks of life including ministers, Jatiya Sangsad members, political leaders and intellectuals were present at the burial site.

Among them were Food Minister Shamsul Islam. See Page 12 Col. 1



Police arresting BCL leader Kamruzzaman Ansari from a procession near Gulistan cinema in the city yesterday. —Star photo

BCL's violent campaign for today's hartal in Chittagong

From Staff Correspondent

CHITTAGONG, Dec 10: At least 20 vehicles and a number of offices were damaged in Chittagong on Tuesday as the Awami League-backed Bangladesh Chhatra League workers went on rampage during the observance of demonstration day protesting Hathazari killings and in support of Wednesday's half-day hartal.

Chittagong Commerce College unit of BCL brought out a procession at Agrabad area and allegedly attacked the Chamber building at around noon.

The business establishments of BNP, MP, Shahnewas See Page 12 Col. 6

Workers' issues: 5-party offers mediation

Five-party alliance yesterday proposed a dialogue with the government on December 19 to resolve the problems of the Jute, textile and garments workers, reports UNB.

The idea for the talks was mooted at a news conference here Tuesday after jute and textile workers called for a 72-hour countrywide blockade from December 22 to press for higher wages.

"We still believe that a solution to all problems is possible through peaceful negotiation," said Five-party alliance leader Hasanul Haq Inu at JSD (Inu) office.

In a written statement, he said, it will be a mistake by the government and the owners if they seek solution through repressive measures.

The press conference was attended by Rashed Khan Menon, MP, Nirnal Sen, Khalequzzaman, Arif Ahmed, Sharif Nurul Ambia, Binal Biswas, Tipu Biswas, Naim Jahangir, Abdullah Sarker and Haider Akbar Khan Rono.

Defending the demands of jute, textile and garment factory workers, the alliance said no wage commission was yet formed for the industrial workers although the government employees were already See Page 12 Col. 2

Fresh autopsy of Mukhter done

By Staff Correspondent

Fresh autopsy of the body of Hafez Mukhter Hossain was completed at Sir Salmullah Medical College Hospital (SSMCH) Tuesday.

Before the autopsy, the body was exhumed from Aliganj graveyard, Narayanganj, in presence of a Dhaka Metropolitan Magistrate, Fatullah Upazila Magistrate and investigating officer (IO) of the unnatural death (UD) case. Later the body was taken to SSMCH from Aliganj.

Our SSMCH Correspondent See Page 12 Col. 4

Wrangle over rooms at ME talks

WASHINGTON, Dec 10: Arab, Palestinian and Israeli negotiators met Tuesday for a second round of Mideast peace talks, with the bickering that long delayed the negotiations continuing right up to the start, reports UNB.

Delegations representing Israel, Syria, Lebanon, Jordan and the Palestinians arrived separately for the talks, whose historic significance was upstaged by the protracted haggling that preceded them. Each delegation entered the State Department through separate entrances.

With the format and agenda at issue, the heads of the Jordanian, Israeli and Palestinian delegations conferred privately. As they did their delegations waited together in a single room.

"We hope this will be the breakthrough for understanding, accommodation and peace," said Ben Ahron, spokesman for the Israeli delegation, said as he arrived.

The disagreements extended right up to the start Tuesday, when the two sides were at odds over the rooms. Israel insisted on starting out in one room with the joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation, and breaking into smaller groups later; the Palestinians and Jordanians wanted two rooms to start.

Syrian delegation head Muwaffak Allaf said as he arrived, "we are offering peace for the territory occupied by Israel."

"We came to discuss all substantive issues and the Golan Heights is one of the most substantive issues in our world," he said.

One Palestinian delegate, as his group left its hotel for the talks, insisted the Palestinians must meet separately with the Israelis and expressed pessimism that the Israelis were serious about peace.

The talks were begun Oct. 30 at a mostly symbolic opening round in Madrid, Spain

Gorbachev won't resign, says spokesman

MOSCOW, Dec 10: Mikhail S Gorbachev's spokesman denied a report Tuesday that the Soviet President would resign, reports AP.

"Today he didn't think about it. As far as yesterday is concerned, you had better ask him," spokesman Andrei Gerasimov told a news conference.

Gerasimov, speaking in English, was commenting on a remark by a Gorbachev aide that the Soviet leader might step down in the near future because of the agreement by Russia, Byelorussia and Ukraine to form a Slavic commonwealth without a central government.

Troops cordon Suu Kyi's house as students hold rally

BANGKOK, Dec 10: Hundreds of Burmese students rallied against the military government Tuesday, the same day that the Nobel Peace Prize was to be awarded in Norway to Burmese opposition leader Aung San Suu Kyi, reports AP.

Soldiers surrounded Rangoon University in response to the protest, residents of the capital said. No gunshots were heard but the situation appeared tense, they said.

A Western resident of Rangoon, reached by telephone from Bangkok, said the demonstration began shortly before noon when several hundred students at the university began making anti-government speeches.

Several hundred soldiers surrounded the campus but did not enter it, said the resident, who spoke on condition of anonymity. They closed all its gates and did not let anyone out.

As many as 4,000 students were sealed inside the campus, he said.

"The peacock flag were very much in evidence," he added, referring to the symbol of defiance dating back to the colonial struggle against Britain.

The symbol was prominent in the 1988 pro-democracy

uprising brutally suppressed by the military.

A Japanese Foreign Ministry official in Tokyo, citing reports from Japan's embassy in Rangoon, confirmed that students were protesting and said around 2,000 people gathered near the university in the afternoon in response to the protest on the campus.

Mrs Suu Kyi has been under house arrest since July 1989. Her dissident movement won national elections last year but the ruling junta has refused to recognize the results.

Her husband, Briton Michael Aris, and their sons

accepted the Nobel Peace Prize on her behalf Tuesday in Oslo, Norway.

Troops placed barbed wire barricades to slow traffic in the streets near the house where Mrs Suu Kyi is being detained, said the Western resident of Rangoon.

He added that about 200-300 troops in full battle gear and "on full alert" were deployed near the opposition leader's home.

He said this was part of a heightened military presence in Rangoon on Tuesday.

Another Rangoon resident reached from Bangkok said the

protest by 400-500 students was confined to the main campus of the university.

The resident, also speaking anonymously, said there had been no violence and no arrests.

Meanwhile, in Bangkok, Thailand, 10 Burmese Buddhist monks and students briefly demonstrated outside their country's embassy, raising posters condemning the junta and demanding Mrs Suu Kyi's release.

"The Nobel Prize may help keep burning the dying candle of democracy," said one statement distributed by the

demonstrators. "It is a major psychological boost to the Burmese people who have been trodden flat under military boots for nearly 30 years."

Thongbai Thongpao, winner of the 1984 Magsaysay Award — Asia's version of the Nobel — for public service, urged an afternoon rally in Bangkok of about 100 students and activists to keep pressuring Burma's military government to turn over power and free Mrs Suu Kyi.

The Thai lawyer said public pressure could topple the Burmese junta, even though it is strong and has long been in power.

Call to free Suu Kyi

By Staff Correspondent

Bangladesh Mahila Parishad on Tuesday demanded immediate and unconditional release of Burmese opposition leader Aung San Suu Kyi who was awarded Nobel Peace Prize this year.

At a rally in front of the National Press Club the parishad also urged the Burmese military junta to hand over power to the elected representatives of National League for Democracy, the party which won general elections in Myanmar in May last year. See Page 12 Col. 8

Anderson leaves for home

FRANKFURT, Dec 10: Terry Anderson, the last American hostage to be freed in Lebanon, left for home Tuesday to spend his first Christmas in seven years with relatives and friends.