The Midnight File

OIC asks its members to

send troops to Bosnia

Conference has urged its 51 members to send troops to pro-

tect 'safe havens' in Bosnia-Herzegovina, OIC sources said to-

day. Secretary General Hamid Algabid send messages to OIC

member countries asking them to "contribute in one way or

another to reinforce" the UN Protection Force (UNPROFOR)

which is to control Muslim 'safe havens' in Bosnia, reports

India, Oman sign three accords

cords to boost oil, petrochemical and trade ties during a visit

here by Prime Minister P V Narasimha Rao which ended to-

MUSCAT, June 16: India and Oman have signed three ac-

JEDDAH, June 16: The Organisation of the Islamic

ROK youths to volunteer services in development

Bangladesh and South Korea signed here yesterday notes of exchange on Korea Youth Volunteers programme administered by Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA), reports BSS.

The ambassador of the Republic of Korea to Bangladesh, Sung oh Shin and the joint chief, Economic Relations Division of the Ministry of Finance, ABM Siddique, singed the notes on behalf of their respective governments.

Under the newly singed agreement, a six-member team of Korean volunteers will arrive in Bangladesh at the invitation of Bangladesh government some time in September this year.

The team comprises five women volunteers and one man volunteer who will impart instructions in the fields of agriculture, food processing, water analysing, animal husbandry and dress making. They have already been made familiar with the historical and cultural backgrounds of Bangladesh including the Bengali language by a Bangladeshi scholar. The next year, Bangladesh is

likely to receive over a dozen Korean youths for voluntary services under KOICA's annual volunteers programme which will continue as long as Bangladesh desires to receive the agency's cooperation.

The Korean government formed Korea Youth Volunteers (KYV) in 1989 and since then 150 youths from Korea have been sent to many developing countries in Asia such as Nepal, Shri Lanka, Thailand and Indonesia as a gesture of friendship and goodwill for rendering social services.

At present, around 133 members of Korea Youth Volunteers are actively participating in the socio-economic development in Fiji, Indonesia, Mongolia, Nepal, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Shri Lanka and Thailand.

The range of the Korea Youth Volunteers activities includes cooperation in the fields of technical cooperation, agriculture, forestry and fishery, education, community development, health and nursing and youth and sports.



Police seizing a basket of mangoes while evicting pavement hawkers from the city's busy Motiheel Commercial Area yester -Star photo

Commentary: History

From Page 1 Col 7 struggle?

Is it because the two crore figure was given during Awami League government? So it has to be 'debunked' regardless of the fact that it belittles our struggle, hurts the sentiments of millions of families who lost their near and dear ones and brings into question the most important reason for wanting independence - namely, the committing of genocide against our civilian people?

We have told the world, more importantly ourselves, that a genocide had been committed against our people. Yes, there were political, economic, social and cultural arguments behind our wanting to go our separate ways from Pakistan. But the single most important factor that turned a constitutional and non-violent, non-cooperation mass movement into an armed struggle was the fact that the army of the country to which we belonged, an army that was maintained with our tax money. launched an attack against us. The military was waging war against the people. It was the genocide that made each and every Bengali into a freedom

In 1971, a conservative estimate of our population was 7.5 crore. The number of 30 lakh martyrs amounts to 4 per cent of the population. Take the fact of a Pakistani army of nearly one lakh, well-armed troops with all the machines of human butchery at their command; add to that a huge number of paramilitary force and then, add further the auxiliary forces like Al-Badrs, Al-Shams, Razakars and the like. Then the figure of 30 lakh martyrs does not seem improbable. Remember, we were 'not good Muslims' and 'racially inferior'! When a regular army is given such motivation they can commit any atrocity - see what Serbian soldiers are doing to Muslims in Bosnia. The Pakistan army had a similar motivation — land. race and religion.

It is not my intention to suggest that historical facts should

From Page 1 Col 8

when Shudhanghsu Shekhar

Halder of the AL drew the at-

tention of the chair to Akbar's

remarks and demanded the

figure 'invented' by the BNP

been an established fact, both

nationally and internationally,

that at least 30 lakh people

were killed by the Pakistani

army during the nation's

As soon as Halder was fin-

He told the House that not

more than three lakh families

were granted shaheed

(martyrs) family allowances

and the figure was indicative of

the number of martyrs in the

Liberation War. Akbar also said

that the number of martyrs

was put at three million (30

lakh) by Sheikh Mujibur

Rahman in an interview with

David Frost, a British journal-

ever, believed that the differ-

ence in the figure of the peo-

ple killed did not really make

any difference in the degree of

feelings for the sacrifice the

nation made for its indepen-

dom fighter and was awarded a

'Bir Pratik' (a war gallantry

medal) for his role in the war.

Akbar himself was a free-

The BNP law-maker, how-

ished, Akbar took the floor to

defend his contention.

Halder argued that it had

MP be expunged.

Liberation War.

ist, in 1972.

dence.

Akbar's figure debated

Yesterday's debate began of the opposition in parliament

not undergo scrutiny. By all means. But is Col Akbar doing so? Is he qualified, either as a historian or as a researcher, to question such an important and

tragic event of our history? Every family in Bangladesh lost somebody during the Liberation War. My brother's father in-law, a renowned physician in Bogra, was taken from his house and killed. My childhood neighbour and friend died as a Mukti Bahini. Several of my university teachers were butchered just before our victory.

All these tragic but inspirational stories are there to give us a sense of honour and dignity in ourselves and build a strong sense of nationhood.

The Liberation War, in which Col Akbar participated, is our greatest source of pride and it sets us apart as people who actually took up arms to gain independence. To say today that it was three lakh and not 30 lakh, who laid down their lives to free this country is to humiliate our war heroes.

The nameless, faceless millions who fought for our independence in every nook and corner of this country, in every lane and back alley of our cities. in every bazar and bamboo bush in our villages deserve our highest respect. The unknown soldiers of freedom who regained, inch by inch, this beloved land and saved us from the genocide; but for whose sacrifice this Parliament from where Col Akbar made his arrogant claim, could as well be running in the Urdu language should not be subjected to ridicule through instant history, that too mixed with a budget speech. (I am still groping to see

the link.) Col Akbar's unfounded and unsubstantiated claim is an insult to our martyrs and an example of a very disturbing attitude, on the part of some names need not be mentioned — of trivialising of the memories of our Liberation War.

Please, leave the martyrs alone, and go on with the task of developing the country.

At this point, acting leader

Abdus Samad Azad took the

floor to express resentment at

not clear to him as to why the

to create a controversy over

"It is beyond any contro-

versy that a total of 30 lakh

people were brutally killed by

the Pakistani army", the oppo-

sition leader said, adding that

late Ziaur Rahman himself had

never raised any question over

one should be cautious about

implications while making

such statements on sensitive

Akbar's statement on the is-

The opposition leader

sue virtually undermined the

Liberation War, Samad Azad

urged the chair to switch over

to the budget discussion and

said that there should be a day-

long debate on the issue, in

case the treasury bench was

really interested in challenging

the accepted figure relating to

the number of martyrs in the

however, stood to back Akbar

Hossain and Humayun Khan

Panni, the Deputy Speaker,

picked up the order of the day.

No treasury bench MP,

war of independence.

Samad Azad also felt that

*treasury bench had attempted

the number of martyrs.

Samad Azad said that it was

Akbar's remark.

the figure.

Soweto Day observed

By Staff Correspondent

The International Solidarity Day with the people of South Africa, popularly known as the "Soweto Day", was observed in the city yesterday with a call for establishing peace and racial harmony

The United Nations Association of Bangladesh (UNAB), in conjunction with the United Nations Information Centre (UNIC), organised a symposium in the city to mark the day.

The speakers at the symposium, describing white rule over blacks as "A classic case of repression", said that blacks were slowly getting their democratic rights in South Africa as a result of growing pressure of the international community and the United Nations.

The symposium was chaired by Salahuddin Ahmed while acting Resident Representative of UNDP W Fischer and Prof Nurul Momen of the Dhaka University were present as guest speakers. Economist Prof Muzaffar Ahmed was the main speaker. Secretary General of UNAB S Ahmed Hossain and Prof Rashiduddin Ahmed also

Cut in duty on powder milk slated

By Staff Correspondent

The dairy farm owners of Dhaka district termed the reduction of import duties on powder milk from 45 per cent to 30 per cent as an "evil conspiracy" to destroy the country's dairy industry.

In a press statement issued by the president of the Dhaka Zila Dugdha Khamar Samity Shahe Alam, dairy owners said that dairy farming had emerged as a profitable venture after the present government increased import duties on powder milk from 28 per cent to 45 per cent in 1991-'92.

The country had spent nearly Tk 450 crore in '89-'90 for importing powder milk. The present government, by enhancing the duties, succeeded in limiting import expenses for milk to about 250 crore in '91-

The samity said, "Hundreds of dairy farmers will be deprived of the actual price of milk if the proposed duty reduction is implemented. Many farmers will shut down their farms as a consequence."

Radio artistes call off strike

The staff artistes of Radio Bangladesh yesterday called off their planned two -hour work stoppage every day till July 14, reports UNB.

Ershad to get his salary as MP By Staff Correspondent

Hussain Mohammad Ershad, former President and a member of the present Parliament, could be paid his monthly remuneration from the day he was voted to the Jatiya Sangsad. This was observed by the

Parliamentary Standing Committee on the special privilege of the law makers, yester-

Ershad, who is now serving jail terms on corruption charges, will also get the facility of his discretionary grants for the current fiscal year.

According to the Privilege Committee report, released Wednesday evening in the Jatiya Sangsad, the Parliament secretariat will take all neces sary steps so that Ershad can properly send his list of grants from the discretionary fund

The government abstained from paying the monthly remuneration to Ershad as an MP from the beginning.

Advocate Fazle Rabbi of the Jatiya Party (JP) submitted a notice on March 4 this year on the non-payment of the remuneration and observed that it was a violation of the privileges Ershad was entitled to as a Parliament member.

Speaker Shaikh Razzak Ali sent the notice to the Privilege Committee on March 9 and the committee, following discussions, came out with the report yesterday evening.

Chief Whip Khandaker Delwar Hossain placed the report in the House.

The report said the committee, in its 21st meeting, made in overall review of the issue and fund that after his election as a member of the Jatiya Sangsad, Ershad had not drawn any remuneration and allowances and that Ershad could not attend any session of the Fifth Parliament as he was in jail following his conviction.

The committee examined the legal and other aspects of the issue and came to the conclusion that Ershad could be given monthly remuneration for the time being.

It, however, said there has been some legal complications with regard to the payment of his monthly remuneration and other allowances since Ershad is in jail after conviction. The matter deserved further examination, the report said.

Headed by Speaker Shaikh Razzak Ali, the committee members include deputy leader of the House Dr. Badruddoza Chowdhury, Chief Whip Kh. Delwar Hossain, State Minister Aminul Huq, Tofael Ahmed,

Shahjahan Siraj, Matiur Rahman Nizami and Abu Yusuf Mohammad Khalilur Rahman. sented in the committee meet-

Concern over impasse at BIDS

By Staff Correspondent

nior Fellows of the Bangladesh Institute of Development Stuthe institute.

"It is our moral obligation to support the BIDS research staff in their efforts to protect this environment where independence is cherished and efforts rewarded," the statement said.

was acclaimed nationally and internationally for its contributions to socio-economic re-

clamation for its vanguard role in research for the last three decades," they said, adding that it had also succeeded in attracting the brightest talents in economics and related social sciences by offering an environment that rewarded independent and objective re-

recognised as a unique institution for the development of expertise," the senior fellows

They, however, hoped that the concerned authorities would seek out the truth without being influenced by preconceptions or malicious propaganda and take necessary steps to resolve the crisis for continuing the BIDS's heritage of high quality.

Gen Stackpole arrives

He is accompanied by a staff

other senior military officers.

Bangladesh, William B Milam and other US embassy officials were also present at the air port to greet Lt. Gen. Stackpole.

desh. General Stackpole will pay a courtesy call on Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia. He will also meet ministers, chiefs of Staff of the three Services and other dignitaries.

Top-level changes

By Staff Correspondent The transfers and appoint ments of several government of ficials were announced yester day, says a PID handout.

Officer on special duty

(Secretary) of the Ministry of Establishment Syed Alamgir Faruk Chowdhury has been appointed project coordinator of the General Education Project under the Ministry of Edu-Director General Joint Sec-

retary) of the Mass Communication Department Fariduddin Ahmed has been transferred to the Ministry of Information as Joint Secretary. Officer on special duty under

the Ministry of Establishment Md Ashraf Ali has been transferred to the Department of Rural Development and Cooperatives on deputation.

The transfer order of the secretary of the Chittagong WASA Md Yakub Ali to the post of Dhaka Divisional Joint Registrar has been cancelled.

Report on Hare Road bldg to be placed in JS, says Minister

Works Minister Barrister Rafiqul Islam Miah yesterday informed the House that report on the building at 30, Hare Road would be brought before the Sangsad after the fourteenth meeting of House Standing Committee on the Ministry of Works to be held on June 20, reports BSS.

BJP leaders L K Advani, A B

Vajpayee and Murli Manohar

pendent enquiry into the entire

and Janata Dal leader Madhu

Dandavate said the Prime

Minister should resign and

Mehta would have to corrobo-

rate his allegations before the

Joint Parliamentary Committee

Vitthal Gadgil, told reporters

Resources Minister Vidya

Charan Shukla said the allega-

tion was an insidious and deep-

rooted conspiracy, while the

Gujarat Chief Minister

Chimanbhai Patel said it was

an attempt to destabilise the

central government.

The Congress-I spokesman

(JPC).

Minister.

The former Union minister

He was received at the Zia

International Airport by

envoy meets PM today

in Dhaka yesterday on a two-UNB.

have contained matters relating to problems facing the Muslim Ummah, particularly the genocide in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Abu Hasan is scheduled to meet his Bangladesh counterpart M K Anwar before leaving for home today.

Tax lawyers

the government to consider repeal of Section 120, 84-A and sub-clauses 21 and 22 of

Assembly and sacked Sharif on April 18, an action reversed by

Pak SC rejects Punjab govt appeal

controlled by Sharif's rivals, wanted to appeal against the Lahore High Court's June 9 interim order which suspended the Punjab assembly's dissolution by Governor Chaudhury Altaf Hussain.

Appeal for subsidy

which, he said, is in bad taste

and give an ugly look to edu-

cational institutions and public

(Jamaat) criticised the Finance

Minister Saifur Rahman for

failing with all his five budgets

in improving the lot of the peo-

ple. The number of slum

dwwllers increased, unemploy-

ment rose and farmers became

She said farmers will lose in-

terest in growing foodgrains in

the absence of fair price for

paddy. She called for allocations

for rehabilitation of slum

dwellers and prostitutes, and

for interest-free loans to the un-

The lady member of Jamaat,

wearing 'burqa' (veil) thought

that the free economy policy

seriously affected the domestic

industry and foreign goods had

gained the market. She put em-

phasis on religious education

and recruitment of honest peo-

was highly critical of the gov-

ernment for withdrawing sub-

sidy on agricultural inputs. He

accused the government of toe-

ing the line of World Bank and

IMF and protecting the interest

He regretted imposition of

VAT on common items like

chilly and onion while slashing

duty on ghee and butter. This

budget is bound to make the

so-called golden handshake

has so far rendered 25,000 em-

ployees jobless and one lakh

more will be retrenched under

the programme. Questioning

the wisdom of the measure, he

said he failed to understand

how it will generate employ-

only the efficient and skilled

hands left the job under the

golden handshake programme

affecting the public sector ad-

After eight hours in two sit-

tings the House was adjourned

for the night till 10 am today.

Ban on rickshaw

From Page 1 Col 8

cence to rickshaw-pullers. It

also decided to take effective

steps for eviction of footpath

and roadside hawkers from the

busiest parts of Dhaka city

immediately and impose fine

increase the rate of fine from

Tk 200 to Tk 5000 for emis-

sion of polluted black smoke

from vehicles and total ban on

the use of hydrolic horns im-

ration Mirza Abbas, MP, State

Minister for Communications

Md Fazlur Rahman, Wing Co-

mmander (Retd) M Hami-

dullah Khan, MP, Home Secre-

tary, IG of Police were among

those present in the meeting.

HSC exams

From Page 1 Col 7

Association and the Bangladesh

Government College Lecturers'

Association have suspended

their programmes of abstaining

from work in view of the HSC

examinations and after assur-

ances from Education Minister

Barrister Jamiruddin Sircar to

requested all government col-

lege teachers to discharge their

duties in the examination halls

for holding the HSC examina-

tions in a peaceful manner.

The two associations have

consider their demands.

Mayor of Dhaka City Corpo-

The meeting also advised to

for wrong parking.

mediately.

The JP member further said

ment.

ministration.

Rabbi, a vocal member, said

nation poorer, he added.

Advocate Fazle Rabbi (JP)

ple in the administration.

of the affluent class.

employed for self-employment.

Hafeza Asma Khatun

and private buildings.

poorer over the years.

From Page 1 Col 7

day, officials said, reports AFP.

The Treasury Bench members however said, the national economy was being better managed under the able leadership

of the present government. This, they said was proved by the mobilisation of increasing domestic resources for development programmes, which had been calculated at 33.33 per cent for the next financial year's ADP outlay.

The budget proposed to enhance contribution from domestic resources to 33.33 per cent from 25 per cent in two years of BNP government, they said adding that only two per cent was contributed during the Ershad rule

Maulana Shamsuddin Ahmed (BNP) hatled the budget and noted with satisfaction that 33 per cent of the development expenditure will be met out of domestic resources showing reduction in dependence on foreign aid

He said the government has been spending lot of money on primary education without due return. He suggested appointment of adequate teachers in rural areas.

The ruling party member ex pressed satisfaction at the relief given to income tax payers but called for strict enforcement of rules in realising tax.

Maulana Shamsuddin suggested legal measures against those responsible for painting graffiti and slogans on the walls

Mahathir's special A special envoy of Prime

Minister Mahathir Bin Muhamad of Malaysia arrived day visit to Bangladesh, reports

Omar, the Malaysian Minister for Domestic Trade and Consumer Affairs, will call on Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia today to deliver a letter from Mahthir to her.

From Page 1 Col 5

The association also urged

dent of the Bangladesh Tax Lawyers' Association M A Salam Talukdar, it was attended, among others, by Shamsur Rahman, SM Zaman, Zinnat Ali, SM Chowdhury, Abdul Halim Sarder, Kamrul Alam Chowdhury and Mosharraf Hossain.

From Page 1 Col 7

the Supreme Court on May 26. Sharif would need opposition support to pass a constitutional reform bill, for which a twothirds majority in parliament is required.

LAHORE, June 16: Pakistan's Supreme Court refused here today a Punjab provincial government request to file an appeal against a Lahore High Court interim order, court sources said, reports AFP.

The decision was seen as a setback to the provincial supthat Mehta's claims were aimed porters of President Ghulam at creating political instability Ishaq Khan in his ongoing and denied the allegation of power struggle with Prime Min-Mehta meeting the Prime ister Nawaz Sharif, observers Meanwhile, the Union Water said.

The provincial government,

small but significant lower risk of child infection. However, Peckham warned that the HIV-preventive benefits

of performing Caesarians do not justify unnecessary and costly operations. There are several possible interventions to reduce the risk of vertical transmission. These in-

ral therapy, and passive immunisation. "Active immunisation is the hope for the future and phase trials have just been launched

cluded vaginal lavage with anti-

septics or viricides, anti-retrovi-

However, in the absence of universal HIV testing, the impact of interventions would be

limited, Peckham said. "The prevention of HIV infection remains the most important approach and should be our top priority," she suggested.

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From Page 1 Col 5 Narasimha Rao, the honourable Prime Minister of India, at his Race Course Road residence in the forenoon of November 4 in

a suitcase ...," Jethmalani said. He said it was paid in two batches of 6.7 million rupees (213,333 dollars) and 3.3 million rupees (106,666 dollars) days before Rao's crucial 1991 by- election.

An Indian government spokesman in New Delhi had no immediate comment about the allegations. Mehta, once India's biggest

personal tax payer, has been charged with bribery, fraud and currency violations in the scandal, which was exposed in April 1992. He had been seeking im-

munity from prosecution in return for becoming state witness to testify about his alleged pay-offs. Jethmalanti implied further

revelations could be made.

all the cards on the table to- cials was the chief cause of the He said Mehta, who is out years ago. on bail after 110 days in fail,

was making the revelations without any promise or guarantee of protection. "He is deeply conscious that from today onward the heat will be turned on him. "He deeply considered over

this in the past few days and decided to make the revelation," his lawyer added. The pay-off accusation could trigger a crisis in the ruling

Congress Party.

Rao's two chief rivals for power within the Congress Party, Human Resources Minister Arjun Sigh and former Defence Minister Shard Pawar, had both endorsed Mehta's request for immunity.

"We are in the Bofors era again," a Cong-I Party leader said, referring to the Swedish arms firm whose alleged payoffs

party's defeat in elections four Joshi also demanded an inde-The needle of suspicion then pointed to Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi.

Rao accused of taking bribe

"We do not propose to put to Indian politicians and offi-

dock.

Although the amount Mehta allegedly paid to Rao is only 333,333 dollars compared to the 50 million dollars involved in the Bofors scandal, the government is once again in the

Meanwhile, the opposition

parties today asked Narasimha

Rao to clear himself of charges or quit, but the Congress (1) said the charge would have no effect on the stability of the government. The Communist Party of India (Marxist) said the Prime Minister had no moral right to

himself of the charge. The BJP demanded that the Prime Minister resign. In a statement the three top

remain in office unless he clears

The Prime Minister was repreings by Agriculture Minister Maj. Gen (Retd) Majid-Ul-Huq while the leader of the opposi tion was represented by Rahmat

Ten current and former Sedies (BIDS), in a statement Wednesday, expressed grave concern at the impasse arising out of the recent appointment of the new Director General of

They said the BIDS, which

search, is a national institution. "The BIDS has received ac-

"The BIDS is therefore

The statement was signed by Dr Ainun Nishat of Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (BUET), Prof Sirajul Islam Chowdhury of Dhaka University, AKM Ahsan, retired civil servant, Jahanara Huq, Principal of Mirpur Bangla College, Syed Manzur Elahi, Fazle Hasan Abed of BRAC, Dr Kazi Kholiquzzaman Ahmed and Profs Anisuzzaman, Muzaffar Ahmed and Nazrul Islam of the Dhaka University.

US Marine Lieutenan General Henry C Stackpole, Commander of Marine Forces Pacific and Commanding General, Fleet Marine Forces Pacific, arrived in Dhaka yesterday on a four-day goodwill visit to Bangladesh, reports

Principal Staff officers and The US Ambassador to

During his stay in Bangla-

Dato Abu Haji Abu Hasan Bin

The letter is understood to

from financial institutions, will create 'an unusual situation' in economic transactions.

Section 19 of the Income Tax Ordinance. Presided over by the presi-

Sharif's govt

who dissolved the National

AIDS intection From Page 1 Col 4 tions are associated with a

in the US.