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NEWS BRIEFS

Saifur leaves for Istanbul

Finance Minister M Saifur Rahman left for Istanbul yesterday evening on a week-long official visit to Turkey and Germany. He is leading a five-member Bangladesh delegation at the 9th meeting of the Organisation of Islamic Conference for Commercial and Economic Cooperation (COM-CEC) among the OIC member countries scheduled for Istanbul September 2-4. On the second leg of his tour, Saifur Rahman will leave Istanbul for Bonn on September 5 for a 3-day official visit at the invitation of the German government, reports UNB.

SPGRC appeal to foreign guests

The Stranded Pakistanis General Repatriation Committee (Ejaz) yesterday urged the foreign dignitaries attending the current council session of the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) to visit their camps to see their condition, reports BSS.

Two-day fourth BNP national council begins

Khaleda urges all to bury hatchet, work for nat'l development

By Staff Correspondent

Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia yesterday appealed to all political parties and groups to bury the hatchet on differences and work united for the welfare and 'real' benefit of the people and the nation.

"Let us make democracy really meaningful, the democracy that we have achieved at the price of the sacred blood of hundreds of thousands of martyrs," she urged in a conciliatory tone. "Let us resolve all our differences and crises, whatever these (may) be, through discussions in Parliament."

The Prime Minister also called on the opposition parties to help bring an end to terrorism, corruption and anarchy by establishing rule of law and freeing the country from the

curse of external dependence.

Criticising those who incite communalism for personal or political gains, Begum Zia said they should be identified and dealt with firmly. "Com-

Khaleda's tribute to Sk Mujib earns applause

By Staff Correspondent

Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia yesterday paid tribute to Sheikh Mujibur Rahman amidst cheers and clapping from thousands of her party activists at the inaugural session of the BNP's fourth national council in the city.

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munalism is against democracy," she pointed out.

People of this country are god-fearing but never fanatic; peace and harmony have always prevailed here, she said.

"I would like to categorically state that this country belongs only to its 120 million people."

"Bangladesh is neither the sole property nor exclusive inheritance of anyone," she declared.

Begum Zia was addressing a huge gathering of party workers, councillors and central leaders at the inaugural session of the 2-day national council of ruling Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) at the wide Manik Mia Avenue.

The BNP chairperson urged her party members to build re-

sistance against all intrigues, corruption and terrorism and asked them to reach out to the grassroots level to supplement government efforts in meeting the basic human needs.

Calling for forging a solid unity based on Bangladeshi nationalism, Begum Zia also urged all to uphold the politics of consensus initiated by Shaheed President Ziaur Rahman.

The inaugural session was also attended by 25 foreign dignitaries from China, Germany, Indonesia, India, Iran, Japan, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and representative from the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO). A large number of diplomats were also present.

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Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia addressing the opening function of the fourth national council of the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) at the Manik Mia Avenue in the city yesterday. Party Secretary General and LGRD Minister Barrister Abdus Salam Talukder, Agriculture and Irrigation Minister M Majid ul-Huq are seen on her right while Law Minister Mirza Golam Hafiz and Deputy Leader of Jatiya Sangsad Prof Badruddoza Chowdhury are on her left. — Star photo

Dhaka awaits Delhi's positive response on water sharing: PM

By Staff Correspondent

lows the fundamental principle of friendship towards all and malice towards none.

"Our relations with the superpowers have improved; our ties with the Islamic world have become closer and we have done our utmost to maintain good ties with our neighbours," she said at the Manik Mia Avenue.

Asghar Khan condemns Pak atrocities in '71

By Star Correspondent

Pakistani politician Air Vice Marshal (rtd) Asghar Khan Wednesday strongly condemned the atrocities wrought upon the people of Bangladesh in 1971 and termed it as an act of "autocratic stupidity."

"I raised my voice 20 years ago against the autocratic stupidity that has caused you pain and suffering which you will have to bear," he said.

She pointed out that her government's diplomatic achieve-

ment was a success.

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BNP delegates demand full-time Secy Gen

By Staff Correspondent

A number of councillors demanded a full-time secretary general for the party, free from ministerial pre-occupations so that he could give a big thrust to organisational activities.

The councillors were taking part in discussions at the closed-door second session of the fourth national council of the party at the Sugandha office of the Prime Minister and party chairperson Begum Khaleda Zia. The session began at 4:30 pm yesterday and was adjourned at 9:30 pm to resume at 9 am today.

A total of 35 councillors took part in the discussions in presence of Begum Zia after Secretary General Abdus Salam Talukder placed his annual report before some 2000 councilors.

Some of them pointed out the lack of coordination between the central leaders and branch-level workers.

Meeting sources said the councillors expressed disappointment at the factionalism in

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India will not do anything in the sharing of Ganges water which will cause unnecessary hardship to Bangladesh," he was quoted by Begum Zia as having said during a meeting between the two leaders.

"So far we have received no practical proposal in this regard and the people of Bangladesh are patiently awaiting a positive response from India," Begum Zia, who is also the chairperson of the Bangladesh Nationalist Party, said during the inaugural session of her party's two-day national council.

"India will not do anything in the sharing of Ganges water which will cause unnecessary hardship to Bangladesh," he was quoted by Begum Zia as having said during a meeting between the two leaders.

In the 71-minute speech Begum Zia said Bangladesh has been striving hard to strengthen ties with all countries on the basis of mutual respect and friendship.

She said her government fol-

had to cope with the serious consequence of the Gulf war, this devastating cyclone of 1991, the influx of the Rohingya refugees and forced eviction of their own citizens from India to Bangladesh on the pretext of expelling so-called illegal immigrants during the past two and a half years."

She said Bangladesh had made significant headway in resolving the Rohingya refugee problem by directly involving the United Nations and also held important discussions and signed an agreement with India on the Chakma refugee issue.

The Prime Minister reiterated "We have left open the door for dialogue on sharing of river waters and solution of the issues without jeopardising the interest of Bangladesh," as this problem is related to the very existence of the people of this country.

"I raised my voice 20 years ago against the autocratic stupidity that has caused you pain and suffering which you will have to bear," he said.

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ment was a success.

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Bosnian peace talks collapse

By Mate Boban

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The Muslim leader had criticized the partition plan as rewarding Serb and Croat aggression.

Bakir Izetbegovic specified that the Muslims wanted a wider corridor linking eastern enclaves of Gorazde, Zepa and Srebrenica with the Muslim state and the Serbs return of the northern town of Prijedor. From the Croats the Muslims demanded a land corridor leading to the strategic Neum resort on the Adriatic sea.

A source close to the talks said Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadzic agreed to a three-kilometer-wide corridor in eastern Bosnia, but refused to hand over Prijedor.

Reuter says, Bosnia's Serbs came under fresh pressure today to cede pockets of conquered territory to win Muslim backing for a final peace settlement, delegates said.

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WB to help augment power generation

By Special Correspondent

Although its ban on new lending to the power sector in Bangladesh is still effective, the World Bank (WB) will assist PDB to rehabilitate two hydroelectric units at Kapta and to augment the Ishurdi 230-KV sub-station.

The PDB has an installed capacity of generating 2,500 MW of electricity. At present nearly a third of this capacity is out of commission owing to lack of maintenance.

Rehabilitation of Kapta and augmentation of the Ishurdi sub-station were originally planned as part of a WB financed power rehabilitation project. This project was negotiated in April 1990 but the WB refused to go ahead with credit approval in view of PDB's poor operating performance.

The Power Rehabilitation Project has been in the cold storage since then. Even though the project

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Miladunnabi observed

Holy Eid-e-Miladunnabi was observed throughout the country Tuesday offering special prayers for the continued peace, progress and prosperity of the country and greater unity and fraternity of the Muslim Ummah, reports UNB.

Various political, social, cultural and religious organisations held Quran Khwan, Milad Mahfil and discussions on the occasion of the birth and death anniversary of Prophet Hazrat Muhammad (SM).

Speakers at the seminar and symposia on the significance of the day called for practising teachings and ideals of the Prophet (SM) in individual, social and public life to build a decent and exploitation-free society and for salvation in the material world and the world here after.

The capital city wore a festive look as main thoroughfares

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AL to submit memos to DCs, TNOs on Sept 8

By Nurul Kabir

The Awami League (AL) yesterday decided that all the district and thana level units of the party would hand over an identical memorandum to the concerned Deputy Commissioners (DCs) and Thana Nirbahi Officers (TNOs) on its Peasants Day scheduled for September 8.

A meeting of the party's Central Working Committee, held last evening, approved the text of the memorandum containing problems and demands of the country's peasant community.

According to the meeting sources, the memorandum, addressed to the Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia, will be signed by all the leaders of the Opposition in Parliament Sheikh Hasina.

The meeting also decided that the party's central body members would go to their respective localities on September 6 to make the Peasants Day programmes a success.

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News Analysis

Shifting away from political rhetoric

by Mahfuz Anam

If the inaugural speech of Prime Minister Khaleda Zia yesterday is any indication, then the fourth council session of the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) is likely to opt for continuity in the area of party policies, and concentrate its full energy on party organisation.

The organisational momentum that has been generated in preparing for this council session is likely to be further accelerated, with the idea of consolidating and strengthening party organisation at the grassroots level.

In strengthening the organisation, there is little likelihood of a major shake-up at the central level. Changes, if any