

Neglect of LDCs to heighten global peril: Mostafiz

Foreign Minister A S M Mostafizur Rahman has said the hopes for a better life in a post cold war situation remained unrealised for the vast majority of the least developed countries (LDCs), reports UNB.

The Bangladesh Foreign Minister was presiding over the ministerial level consultations of the LDCs held at the UN headquarters in New York on Thursday, according to a delayed message received in Dhaka yesterday.

Mostafiz, in his opening statement, said that due to unfavourable global circumstances, the condition of the LDCs had deteriorated.

Referring to the decline in resource flows to the LDCs, he pointed out that claimants to scarce resources had increased and made greater demands. He cautioned that neglect of LDCs would only increase global peril.

The meeting, held in pursuance to the decision of the Dhaka Declaration of February 1990, was mainly to assess socio-economic situation of the LDCs, review progress in implementation of the Programme of Action for the LDCs for the 1990s and make recommendations to chart future course of action.

A large number of delegations, including foreign ministers, took part in the general discussion.

The speakers highly praised the role of Bangladesh in coordinating the position of the LDCs on various issues of common concern and also for promoting the interests of the group in various UN fora.

Expressing deep concern at the continued deterioration of the economic situation of the LDCs, the speakers stressed the need for international support particularly increased financial flows, wider market access and reduction of the debt burden of the LDCs.

They drew attention of the

international community to the critical development problems of the LDCs.

The ministers highlighted the policy reforms and adjustments which the LDCs have been undertaking notably through a favourable macro-economic environment, promoting private initiatives, encouraging private investment and encouraging people's participation in the development process.

They emphasised that full implementation of the donors' commitments would greatly contribute to sustainability of the reform efforts earnestly implemented by the LDCs.

The ministers considered the draft declaration of the meeting of the LDCs and adopted it unanimously.

The Declaration took note of the economic constraints of the LDCs particularly the decline in ODA flows to the LDCs, their increasing debt burden, limited market access, growing environmental and ecological problems and natural disasters, and high population growth rate which frustrate the development efforts of the LDCs.

It called for urgent attention of the international community to these serious problems facing the LDCs. The need for adequate and thorough preparation for a comprehensive and substantive mid-term review of the Programme of Action was emphasised by the ministers.

Dhaka offer help for quake victims

Bangladesh offers all possible help and assistance to the victims of the disastrous earthquake in India.

For this, Bangladesh High Commissioner in New Delhi has been asked to contact Indian authorities to determine the nature of help and assistance they immediately need, a foreign office source told UNB over telephone last night.

The Prime Minister urged the international community to help in this regard for the interest of establishing human rights, protecting the rights to natural resources and ensuring the process of development.

"Something must be done urgently to end this inhuman treatment towards the people of Bangladesh," she said.

The Prime Minister said India did not fulfil the pledges. It had made at the time of commissioning of the Farakka Barrage.

The Ganges water sharing agreement was signed on November 5, 1977 and it provided Bangladesh 80 per cent guarantee of the total Ganges water flow.

But India deleted the 80 per cent guarantee clause while signing the memorandum of understanding (MOU) on the Ganges in 1982.

An MOU was signed in 1985 on the Ganges for three years with directives to complete a joint study in 12 months. The MOU expired in 1988 and since then there is no agreement on sharing of the Ganges water.

Dhaka for lifting sanctions on South Africa

NEW YORK, Oct 2: Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia has said her government was taking necessary steps regarding the lifting of economic sanctions imposed on South Africa on the basis of a call, made by Nelson Mandela in the 48th session of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) yesterday, reports BSS.

The Prime Minister said this while making her statement at the session of the UNGA yesterday. She said Bangladesh remained steadfast in its support for the struggle of the people of South Africa for achieving their cherished goal of equal rights and the majority's rule.

6 injured in London blasts

LONDON, Oct 2: Police searched for clues amid the wreckage left by three bombs that rocked northwest London early Saturday frightening late-night pedestrians and showering them with glass, reports AP.

Six people were wounded by shards of flying glass and treated at a hospital, police said.

There was no immediate claim of responsibility for the attack.



A woman and her son walking through the rubble of completely destroyed homes in one of the worst-hit villages, a day after a powerful earthquake devastated a vast area in Maharashtra, India. — AFP photo

Khaleda at General Assembly

From Page 1 Col 2 states should be the only recognised norm." Begum Zia said sovereignty of the smaller states was imperative to ensure a future free from war and conflict. She called upon the United Nations to take effective measures to ensure security of the small and weak states.

In this context Begum Zia identified the priority areas as: a river water convention, law of the sea, environmental protection and status of refugees, economic immigrants and displaced persons.

Democracy

Describing democracy as the best political system to build a prosperous society, the Prime Minister said the nurturing of the emerging democratic spirit in the Third World countries called for sincere cooperation from the developed and industrialised countries. In this context she referred to the yawning gap between the developed countries of the North and the developing nations of the South in the fields of economy and culture.

Bosnian Muslims

Begum Zia told the General Assembly that despite hopes for a new peaceful international order following the end of the Cold War, forces of communalism, racialism and regional hegemony are raising heads in different areas of the world. She said the blatant violation of the national and human rights of the Bosnian Muslims at the hands of armed Serbian aggressors was a matter of great shame for the whole of mankind. The oppression and genocide, unleashed against unarmed civilians in the name of the abhorrent ethnic cleansing by the Serbs, is a source of agony for all conscious people, she said.

Begum Zia said the unabated perpetration of this genocide naturally focuses attention on the unequal application of the concept of human rights.

The Prime Minister's 30-minute speech in Bangla was preceded by the speech of the Malaysian Prime Minister Dr Mahathir Mohammad.

Begum Zia called upon the United Nations and powerful states of the world to take definite steps to preserve the independence and sovereignty of the people of Bosnia-Herzegovina.

After the announcement requesting the Bangladesh Prime Minister to address the 48th session of UNGA, the chief of the protocol of the United Nations escorted Begum Khaleda Zia towards the rostrum from where she spoke. The Prime Minister addressed the UN session, standing on the rostrum under the high domed cap of the General Assembly Hall with a giant UN seal projecting the world in the back-

Flow of technology

Begum Zia emphasised that every nation has a claim to equal share of world resources and prosperity. The great disparity that exists in the field of technology must be removed, she said.

Calling for a free flow of technology, she said the exclusivity of "intellectual rights is a great hindrance, frustrating the transfer of technology."

The Prime Minister also emphasised the need for free flow of information throughout the globe to establish a well-balanced world community.

Ecological balance

Begum Zia called for maintaining ecological balance of the planet, which is now being disrupted. She refuted the blame being conveniently shifted for this to the developing countries and said the industrially developed countries are in many ways responsible for environmental pollution. She said the major responsibility for prevention of environmental pollution lies with the industrially developed countries who pollute the environment while catering to their demands for high living.

The Prime Minister said Bangladesh is conscious about protecting the environment and the country's industrial sector only marginally contributes towards environmental pollution.

On jute

Bangladesh jute industries and jute products are acceptable in environmental terms compared to various chemical and synthetic products which pollute the environment. She made a strong plea for stopping production of synthetic fibre in the interest of the environment as well as the millions of people toiling in the jute sector. The

ground. UN Secretary General Boutros Boutros-Ghali was on the raised podium behind Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia. The delegates of different member countries of the UN, who were seated before Begum Zia, applauded the Bangladesh Prime Minister through clapping.

PLO-Israel accord

The Prime Minister welcomed the recent historic accord between PLO and Israel as a positive first step towards establishment of peace in the Middle East. She hoped that Israeli withdrawal from all occupied Arab — including Jerusalem — territories and establishment of an independent Palestinian state will be the final objective of these efforts.

UN peace-keeping role

Referring to the role of Bangladesh for world peace, the Prime Minister said her country made active participation in UN peace keeping operations in Namibia, Kuwait, Cambodia, Somalia and Mozambique.

Chakma refugees

The Prime Minister said Bangladesh believed in the policy of friendship, cooperation and peaceful co-existence with all countries of the world. She said congenial conditions have been created for the return of the tribal refugees, who left their homes in Chittagong hill districts and have been staying in India for a long time. This was possible following a bilateral understanding that was reached with India last May, she said.

Rohingya refugees

Begum Zia said despite obvious economic, social and environmental difficulties, Bangladesh had given shelter to 250,000 refugees from Myanmar, without sending back a single refugee. She said that after constructive negotiations with all parties concerned including Myanmar and the UNHCR, a congenial atmosphere had been created for the safe and voluntary repatriation of refugees. "We hope this will lead to a permanent solution of the problem," she said.

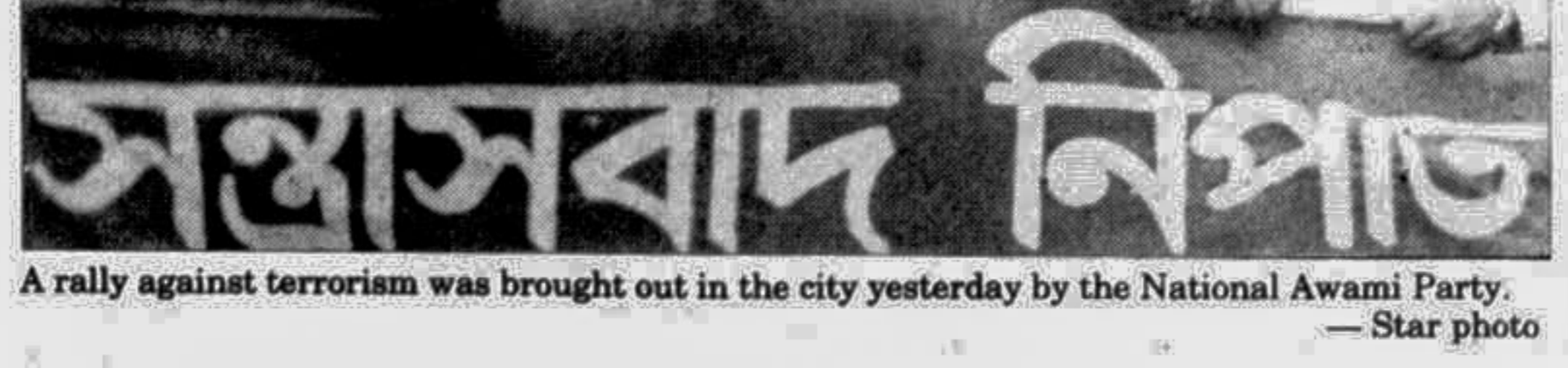
The members of the Bangladesh delegation to the UN, the entourage and a number of Bangladeshis living in New York listened to Begum Khaleda Zia's speech at the Plenary Hall of the imposing UN headquarters.

DMCH interneers observe strike

By DMCH Correspondent

Internee doctors at the Dhaka Medical College Hospital observed a 12-hour token strike yesterday in protest of the assault on one of their colleagues.

The doctors refrained from work protesting Wednesday's attack on Dr Khalifa Mahud Tariq allegedly by the Dhaka University students at the Outdoor Department of the hospital.



A rally against terrorism was brought out in the city yesterday by the National Awami Party. — Star photo

The Midnight File

Two Hamas activists killed

JERUSALEM, Oct 2: Two Palestinian members of the Islamic Resistance Movement (Hamas) were killed during a massive Israeli army search operation in the Gaza Strip today, Israeli military sources said. They said the two men were fighters in Ezzedin A-Qassem, the armed wing of Hamas, and one of them had been sought by the army for more than a year. They were hiding in a cellar which Israeli soldiers blew up with high explosives during the eleven-hour operation, the sources said, reports AFP.

Lightning kills 4 soccer players in Malaysia

KUALA LUMPUR, Oct 2: Four soccer players were killed and two others injured when a bolt of lightning struck during a match, newspapers reported Saturday. The other sixteen players, referee and two linesmen suffered from minor shock in the incident Thursday evening in Sungkai, 250 kilometers (150 miles) north of the capital, the Star and other dailies reported. One of the injured players, Nasaruddin Harun, 25, reported seeing a flash of light and being thrown to the ground. When he got up, his chest and leg ached and he saw the other players and officials lying on the field.

Perak state assemblyman S. Veera Singam, who was watching the match between the Tiger Berantani team and Son of Sekinchan team, said lightning struck an iron fence post and sent a streak of light down the field, reports AP.

Water treaty with India to be ratified: Nepalese Speaker

By Staff Correspondent

A joint parliamentary committee in Nepal is working to review and ratify the Tanakpur Agreement with India over water sharing, Speaker of the Nepalese Parliament said in Dhaka yesterday.

"A joint parliamentary committee is working on the matter, and I will not comment on it before the committee completes its report," Daman Nath Dhungana said at a talk on "Parliamentary Democracy in Contemporary Nepal" at the auditorium of the Bangladesh Institute of International and Strategic Studies (BISS).

He said "As the Speaker of Parliament I should not go deep into the agreement, but as a citizen of Nepal I can say that ratification shall be done in compliance with the country's constitution."

The government of Prime Minister Girija Prasad Koirala early last year signed a memorandum of understanding with the Indian government over sharing of waters of common rivers, which the Nepalese Supreme Court last December ruled was a treaty — widely known as the Tanakpur Treaty.

Dhungana headed an 11-member parliamentary delegation which leaves Dhaka today ending a week-long visit. Speaker Shaikh Razzak Ali invited the delegation to visit Bangladesh.

He said that the Nepalese parliament is not absolutely sovereign like that of Britain.

The discussion was chaired by BISS Chairman Barrister A K H Morshed, Nepalese Ambassador to Bangladesh Lok Bahadur Shrestha was also present.

The Nepalese Speaker said the decisions of the Nepalese parliament can be challenged in court. The King is also a part of the law-making process although he does not rule the country, he added.

Nepal has a bicameral parliament with two Houses of 205 seats and 66 seats respectively that came into being after a long democratic struggle nearly two years ago. The Nepalese Congress Party which has 110 seats in the Upper House formed the government.

The Speaker, who has a chequered political career, said that new-born democracy is working well in Nepal as well as in Bangladesh.

Dhungana said an environment of consensus now prevails in Nepal on major national issues.

Owner of Janata Housing Ltd held

Owner of the Janata Housing Ltd Abdul Kabir was arrested yesterday by the Special Branch of police, reports UNB.

Kabir was taken into custody on charge of fraudulently taking more than Tk 100 crore from people in the name of allotting plots under 9 different housing projects since 1978.

After 3 days' frantic efforts, the special squad led by ASP Khalilur Rahman and Inspector Sirajullah Bhuiyan has been able to arrest him from the Shaheed Minar Road in Shyamol yesterday morning.

Police said Kabir is under interrogation.

Produce Aurungo in court tomorrow, judge tells jailers

Additional District and Sessions Judge Zinat Ara ordered the Mymensingh Jail Superintendent to explain why accused Hemayetullah Aurungo was not produced before the court yesterday, reports UNB.

The jail authorities were also directed to produce the Awami League MP, charged with murdering an army intelligence man in January 1980, before the court on October 4 positively along with the explanation.

The court also rejected a petition filed on behalf of the accused for shifting him to the PG Hospital on the ground of illness as the custody warrant did not show that he was ill.

Yesterday was fixed for recording evidence of a prosecution witness, Golam Kibria Tipu, but this could not be done because the Mymensingh Jail authorities failed to produce Aurungo in court.

PM greets Kohl

Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia has greeted German Chancellor Dr Helmut Kohl on the occasion of his Unification Day today (October 3). In a message Begum Zia extended sincere greetings and warmest felicitations to the government and the people of the Federal Republic of Germany on the happy occasion on the day.

Sylhet rally calls for arrest of Taslima Nasrin

From Our Correspondent

SYLHET, Oct 2: Sabaha Sainik Parishad, a Madrassah-based organisation, has called upon the government to arrest novelist Taslima Nasrin within October 7. Otherwise they would call a half-day hartal on October 9.

The organisation, at a meeting held at the local Bar Association premises yesterday, stated that Taslima Nasrin was engaged in hurting the sentiments of the people of different faiths. The government instead of taking any steps against her, was patronising her, the speakers noted.

Speakers also called upon the government for immediate arrest of Begum Suifa Kamal, Ahmed Sharif, Kabir Chowdhury and Dr Sayedur Rahman, who, they alleged, have also been engaged in hurting the religious sentiments of a majority of the people of the country.

FBUTA defers sit-in

By Staff Correspondent

Federation of Bangladesh University Teachers Association (FBUTA) has deferred its sit-in demonstration programme in front of the Prime Minister's office to October 12.

The other action programmes will, however, remain unchanged, an FBUTA press release said.

The FBUTA will observe a three-day strike commencing on October 10.

Environmentally safe leather processing stressed

By Staff Correspondent

Speakers at a workshop on 'Future Trends in Leather Technology' yesterday stressed the need for bringing changes in the leather processing system keeping in mind the environmental aspects of the industry.

The workshop organised jointly by the ICI Bangladesh Limited and the Stahl GB UK Ltd held at the Hotel Sonargaon was addressed by two British leather experts Tim Amos and Ian Tate, Managing Director of ICI Anis Ltd Dowlah and Marketing Manager Salim Akbar. Tim Amos said a large number of shoe manufacturers are advertising "Green Shoes" made using environmentally friendly raw materials and systems and recyclable components.

"We at Stahl are prepared to meet this change and whilst developments are still on at a brisk pace, we are equipped to meet the ecological challenge, with basecoats and lacquers designed to work on roller-coaters and waterbased spray systems to cut down solvent

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