

DPRK refuses IAEA access to key N-centre

VIENNA, Mar 16: North Korea refused IAEA inspectors access to a key nuclear centre suspected of producing weapons-grade Plutonium, the International Atomic Energy Agency said today, reports AFP.

"Important measures which had been agreed were refused at the radio-chemical laboratory in Yongbyon," the IAEA said in a statement issued after a March 3-15 trip to North Korea by IAEA inspectors.

"As a result of this rejection... the agency was not in a position to verify that there had been no diversion of nuclear material at the facility where the relevant measures were rejected," it added.

IAEA spokesman Hans Meyer said earlier that the matter could possibly be referred to the UN Security Council.

Yongbyon, called a 'radio-

chemical laboratory' by North Korea, is one of seven sites that Pyongyang agreed could be inspected by the IAEA after months of stalling. The IAEA suspects it is used to produce weapons-grade Plutonium.

The statement was issued after nuclear inspectors briefed IAEA chief Hans Blix on their less than successful trip.

The briefing was followed by a meeting of IAEA ambassadors who considered the findings of the seven-man team, prevented by North Korean officials from fully carrying out inspections at seven nuclear sites.

Meyer earlier also confirmed reports that North Korea blocked the inspectors from visiting some nuclear sites, but refused to name them.

Two killed, 4 injured in separate incidents

By DMCH Correspondent

At least one person was murdered, another committed suicide and four others were injured in separate incidents in the city during the Eid holidays.

On the Eid-day morning one Khalil, 28, was stabbed to death allegedly by his creditor Tareq at a 'chatpoti' stand at Goran.

According to witnesses and police, Tareq approached Khalil and demanded Tk 1200 which the latter had earlier borrowed from him. Enraged by Khalil's refusal Tareq broke a porcelain plate and plunged the sharp edge into the victim's belly.

He was immediately rushed to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) where the doctors declared him dead. Police were looking for the alleged murderer Tareq.

On Tuesday night, one Yaqub Ali reportedly committed suicide at Khazi Dewan Lane in the old part of the city. Lalbagh police recovered the body yesterday and sent it to the DMCH morgue for autopsy.

Meanwhile, two photo-journalists were assaulted by muggers at Dilkusha on the Eid evening. The lensmen Azizur Rahim Pae of The Daily Ittefaq

and Asaduzzaman Asad of The New Nation came under attack of the muggers near the BSB Bhaban. They received first aid at the DMCH but details of the mugging incident were not available.

At Bara Maghbazar, a group of unidentified youngmen stormed the house of Mohammad Shah Alam, 20 and stabbed him. Tuesday morning, reportedly as a sequel to prior enmity. The victim was admitted to the DMCH in a critical condition.

A class-nine student, Rajib, was stabbed at Goran on Sunday evening. Rajib received severe stab injuries in a fight with his rivals that left him hospitalised.

Starving tiger kills TV cameraman

LISBON, Portugal, Mar 16: A starving tiger broke free from its zoo cage in Angola's war-torn capital and mauled a South African television cameraman to death, news reports said Wednesday, reports AP.

The cameraman, identified by the British Broadcasting Corp. as Rick Lomba, was filming the transfer Tuesday of 29 animals from Luanda's zoo to South Africa.

FFW programmes

From Page 1 Col 7 and union levels has been fixed at 166,600 tonnes of wheat. This allocation includes special sanctions by the ministry for specific projects in different areas.

Besides, the revised budget incorporates 130,000 tonnes for the FFW schemes under the Water Development Board (WDB) and sanctions for other projects.

Meanwhile, the government has adopted a new policy for the FFW under which the minimum allocation for a scheme has been fixed at 10 tonnes of wheat. The policy has already been given effect from this year. Under this policy, many unions were barred from having any scheme this year as the wheat sanction for the thana concerned was not adequate.

Abdur Rauf, MP from Nilphamari-1 said 136 tonnes of wheat were allocated for two thanas of his constituency — Domar and Dimla. "These two thanas comprise 20 unions. So by no means will it be possible to take up schemes for all the unions with a minimum wheat

allocation of 10 tonnes," he said adding that during the last fiscal year, all the unions were brought under FFW programme as there was no restriction on the allocation of wheat.

Shamsuddoha, MP from Nilphamari-2 consisting of Sadar thana is facing similar problems. His constituency has 16 unions, but only 84 tonnes have been sanctioned to implement the FFW schemes. "We can undertake only eight schemes if we comply with the new policy guidelines," he said mentioning that eight unions of his constituency will be left out of the FFW programme.

When contacted, an official of the Relief Ministry justified the new policy of "minimum wheat allocation saying this will ensure tangible development work in the rural areas."

"A scheme having the allocation of minimum 10 tonnes of wheat can be tangible and effective," he said. The official, however, mentioned that the government is trying to provide more wheat for the FFW programme.

Stranded Pakistanis

From Page 1 Col 7 A senior government official involved in the repatriation process said that they have not received any response from the Pakistani government "which appeared to have forgotten the citizens stuck in Bangladesh". The officials declined to be named.

"We still hope that the process will start shortly, because construction of the refugee's quarters in Pakistan have been completed," he said.

Foreign Secretary Mufleh Rahman Osmany, while briefing newsmen on March 10 in Dhaka, however, said that the Pakistanis would soon be ferried home.

Efforts have been made to start the process again, he said. However, the Secretary did not elaborate on the time schedule and number of people to be ferried.

The first group of the 'Biharis' went home after a joint declaration by the then Pakistan Prime Minister Mian Nawaz Sharif and his Bangla-

deshi counterpart Begum Khaleda Zia during the latter's visit to Islamabad in 1992.

A move to repatriate an unspecified number of Pakistani refugees in the second group failed in July due to Pakistan's internal political strife.

Two earlier initiatives to resume the repatriation also failed because of natural calamities in Pakistan in April and June last year.

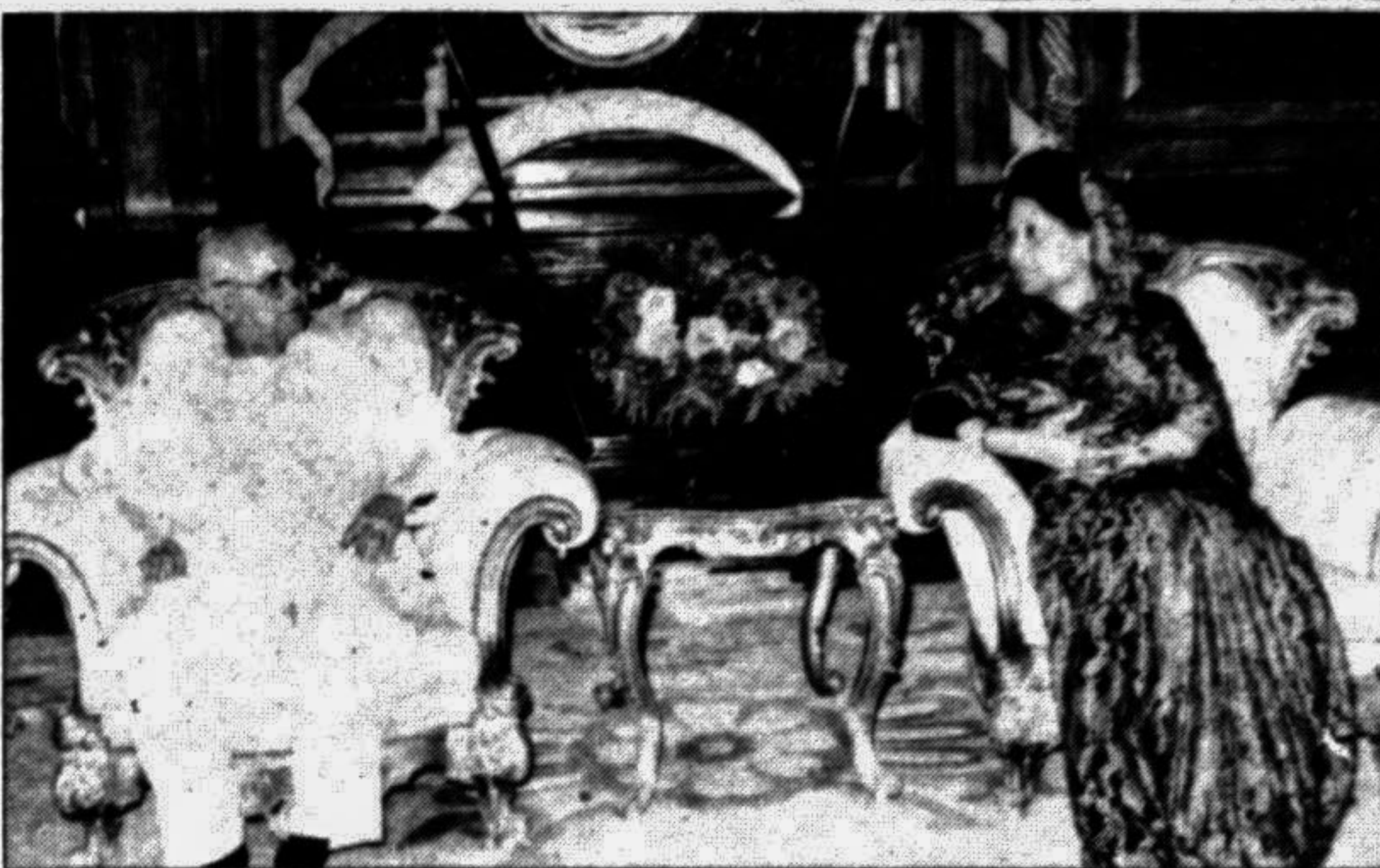
The last round of talks between Bangladesh and Pakistan on the 'Bihari issue' were held during the SAARC ministerial meeting in Dhaka in April '93. No positive development on the issue was however, achieved in that meeting.

Leaders of the Stranded Pakistanis General Repatriation Committee (SPGRC) expressed their dismay over the delay in the return of the Pakistani refugees.

They promised to launch a 'tough agitation' if their return was not resumed within this year.

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Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia called on President Abdur Rahman Biswas at Bangabhaban in the city on Eid Day Monday. — PID photo

Nirmul's Mar 26 programmes

Ghatat-Dalal Nirmul Samannay Committee will make public on March 26 the findings of its 'Gano Tadanta (public enquiry) Commission' against eight people accused of anti-liberation role in 1971, reports UNB.

The Commission, formed by the Nirmul Committee last year, gathered information from various sources across the country and its findings would be made public on the Independence Day, said the committee's member-secretary Prof Abdul Mannan Chowdhury.

The Nirmul Committee will release the summary of the findings at a grand rally at Suhrawardy Uddyan at 3pm on March 26. The rally will be organised to celebrate the second anniversary of "Gano-Adalat" (people's court).

Activists of the committee will assemble at the Central Shahid Minar at 11 pm on March 25 and light candles in memory of the martyrs of the independence war.

To make its March 25 and 26 programmes successful, the committee will hold meetings in all the 15 thanas of the capital beginning Friday.

Convener of the Samannay Committee Jahanara Imam told UNB by phone that they would announce fresh programme from the March 26 rally and sought cooperation from all pro-liberation forces to make the March 25-26 programme's a success.

Hasina

From Page 1 Col 4 created the miseries of commonman.

Hasina feared that the ruling party might rig the March 20 parliamentary byelection in Magura-2 and asked the people to unitedly resist any irregularities, including rigging. "Awami League will not tolerate any rigged election," she warned.

Presided over by Mohammadpur thana AL president Golam Rabbani, the meeting was also addressed by Begum Sajeda Chowdhury MP, Salauddin Yusuf MP, Abdur Rouf MP, Mansur Ahmed MP and Awami League nominee for the byelection, Shafiquzzaman Bachchu.

Begum Sajeda Chowdhury, in her speech, alleged that the ruling party was trying to influence the byelection through intimidation, temptation and bribery.

BNP ministers and MPs are sanctioning grants for different institutions, including mosques and schools, ahead of the polls in utter disregard to the election rules, she said.

Sajeda also alleged that minority voters in different areas of the constituency were being intimidated to vote for the BNP candidate.

Earlier, Hasina addressed at least 20 wayside election rallies at Baro Shelai, Amuria, Kullia, Gabtala, Gorigati, Pulom, Gangarampur, Choto Joka, Goalbain, Shatruijtipur, Bethulia and Dhoail in Mohammadpur, Shalikhanda and Magura sadar thanas.

20 garments shops gutted in N'ganj

NARAYANGANJ, Mar 16: About 20 tin shedded garments shops were gutted in a fire which broke out at Deobhog Ali Ahmed Chunka Sarak Market on Monday morning, reports BSS.

All these shops were closed when the fire broke out as it was a Eid ul-Fitr day. The extent of damage is yet to be ascertained.

According to fire brigade sources, the fire originated from a shop and engulfed the adjacent shops within minutes. The cause of the fire could not be known.

The fire brigade personnel from Narayanganj, Hajiganj and Postogola brought the fire under control after two hours of fighting.

Several bale of cotton yarn cuttings, overlook machinery and sewing machines were damaged in the fire, besides, readymade garments, the source said.

Eid celebrated

From Page 1 Col 8 at the National Eidgah under the vast canopy adjacent to the High Court building.

At the end of the Eid prayer, the President exchanged greetings with other attendants with warm traditional embraces.

The Eid prayers were also held at different mosques, Eidgahs, open spaces and educational institution premises. Three congregations were held at the city's biggest Baitul Mukarram mosque.

After a month of self-restraint the sighting of the Shawal moon Tuesday night ensured the holding of the Eid as well as the end of the holy Ramadan. Last minute shopping and the preparation of sweet dishes followed the news of the sighting of the moon.

President Abdur Rahman Biswas, Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia and Leader of the opposition Sheikh Hasina on the eve of the Eid day greeted the countrymen with call to brave the crises of the suffering humanity in the true spirit of Islam.

On the Eid day, they exchanged greetings with their guests.

The three-day national holiday on the occasion of the Eid, gave a chance to the city dwellers for a brief visit to their homes outside Dhaka. The usual hustle and bustle in the capital were absent during the last three days.

Important private and public buildings were illuminated. Colourful flags fluttered atop polls at the city road islands.

Special programmes were put up by the television and the radio. Improved diets were served at jails, hospitals, orphanages, vagrant centres, and hostels of the academic institutions on the day.

In an unusual mood of festivity, a colourful procession led by the city Mayor Mohammad Hanif and participated by thousands of people in spectacular attire, masks and caps paraded the streets of the old city.

The marchers, with their drums and bugles, also drew attention to the city problems like mosquito menace, street mugging and violence, water and gas crisis, and lack of other civic amenities.

The procession ended at the

Suritola Primary School at around 4:30 pm. The Commissioner of Ward 69 Nazir Hossein Nazir was the convener of the procession organising committee. The last such procession dates back to 1952.

In the evening of the Eid-day President Abdur Rahman Biswas hosted a reception for the elites of the city at the Bangabhaban.

The reception was attended by the members of the cabinet, judges of the Supreme Court, Mayor of the Dhaka city, chiefs of the three services, members of the parliament, political leaders, high civil and military officials and senior journalists.

The reception, given by the Prime Minister was held at the Sugandha, was also attended by the city elites.

Leader of the Opposition Sheikh Hasina hosted a reception at her official residence at Minto Road.

Hasina and her husband Dr Abdul Wazed Mia received the guests that included party leaders, MPs, professionals and diplomats.

The Eid-ul-Fitr was also observed with due solemnity outside the capital. Eid congregations and cultural programmes were organised in different parts of the country.

Iran accuses S Arabia of slashing Hajj quota

RIYADH, Mar 16: Saudi Arabia on Wednesday accused Iran of engaging in a rabid propaganda campaign by alleging that Riyadh was slashing the quota for Iranians on the annual pilgrimage to Mecca, reports AP.

In a statement carried by news media here, Saudi Arabia warned Iran against "the continuation of this pattern, which does not serve the interests of Islam."

It noted that Iranian President Hashemi Rafsanjani was sending messages and envoys to improve ties, while other Iranian leaders were issuing broadsides against Riyadh.

The Saudi statement said it was in "utmost amazement at the contradictions we face from the Iranian leaders."

50 injured in Sirajganj clash

SIRAJGANJ, Mar 16: Some 50 people were injured, 10 seriously, in a clash over land between the supporters of two neighbours at a village in Shahjapur thana today, reports UNB.

The clash erupted following a dispute allegedly between Parjana Union Chairman Badiuzzaman and Babar Ali this morning in a sequel to Monday's (Eid Day) incident which left five people injured. On Eid day, five supporters of Badiuzzaman were allegedly assaulted when they trespassed on the rival's land.

Of the injured, Babar Ali, 40, Afzal, 39, Abdul Majid, 48, Khan Bahadur 30, Abdus Satter, 36, Abdul Malek 30, Habibur Rahman, 42, Jastimuddin, 30, Afsar Ali, 35, and Sonabahan, wife of Akkas Ali, were admitted to Sirajganj General Hospital.

Both the feuding parties accused each other of conducting attacks.

Arafat urges Clinton to save peace process

TUNIS, Mar 16: PLO leader Yasser Arafat called on US President Bill Clinton, who was meeting Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin today, to save the Middle East peace process, stalled by the Hebron massacre, reports Reuters.

Arafat made the appeal in a letter sent to Clinton on Tuesday, the Palestinian news agency Wafa said today.

"Abu Ammar (Arafat) demanded in his letter to President Clinton, considering the fact that the (PLO-Israel) accord was signed under his sponsorship... and that the United States is a co-sponsor, to act by deploying efforts and using his influence to save the peace process from the impasse reached after this savage slaughter," Wafa said.

Road accidents

From Page 1 Col 3 admitted to the Chittagong Medical Hospital.

Two passengers were killed and 40 others wounded when a minibus skidded off the road and plunged into a ditch near Shaturia on the Dhaka-Aricha highway Tuesday. The Aricha-bound minibus met the accident when its driver stepped hard on the brake ahead of a speed-breaker.

One of the dead was identified as Minhajuddin, 20. The injured passengers were admitted to the Manikganj Sadar hospital.

In another accident on the same highway, two people were killed and ten others injured near Pirampur, Dhanrai yesterday morning.

Witnesses said, a Dhaka-bound bus fell from a bridge when the driver lost control of his vehicle.

The injured were admitted to the Dhamrai Thana Health Complex.

A 60-year-old man died after a bus ran over him near the Jurain rail crossing in the capital at 6:30 am yesterday.

One Jasim, 17, died after his motor-bike hit a traffic island at Nakhla para Tuesday.

Our Natore Correspondent adds: A minor girl, Papiya, was killed when she was run over by a Natore-bound bus at Matlapara, 12 kilometres from the town, Tuesday morning. She was the daughter of one Nawsher Ali of village, Chowgachhi of Natore Sadar Thana. The bus was coming from Rajshahi.

Oldest man

From Page 1 Col 4 ups and downs through the two centuries, was bed-ridden for the last three years. He breathed his last at about 1:30 am.

The news of his death spread fast and cast a pall of gloom in the locality. "The oldest man is no more," announced his admirers through loudspeakers at the district headquarters.

Thousands of people from the town and neighbouring villages rushed to Plassey to pay their last respects.

Johar Munshi was born in a farmer's family in 1842 and served as the Imam of a local mosque for 87 years from 1874 to 1961.

The grand old man came to limelight after Bangladesh Television carried a programme on him about a month ago.

Some 20,000 people reportedly attended his namaz-e-janaza held in Plassey village. His two sons, about 200 grand and great-grand-sons and a large number of relatives and admirers attended the janaza, local people said. He was buried at his family graveyard.

Earlier, various socio-cultural organisations placed wreaths on his coffin.

His family members have demanded the government construct a tomb on his grave. The local people suggested that Munshi's walking stick, cap and clothes be kept at the National Museum.

Zhirinovsky invites Saddam to attend party congress

MOSCOW, Mar 16: Russian ultranationalist Vladimir Zhirinovsky said Wednesday he has sent Saddam Hussein an invitation to attend his party's congress in Moscow next month. Zhirinovsky, whose Liberal Democratic Party scored big in parliamentary elections in December, told reporters he had invited the Iraqi President to the congress opening April 2.

"We have invited all the people with whom we maintain relations, from Iraq and Serbia, from North and South Korea, and other countries," the ITAR-Tass news agency quoted Zhirinovsky as saying, reports AP.

Moldova joins NATO's partnership programme

BRUSSELS, Mar 16: The former Soviet republic of Moldova enrolled Wednesday in NATO's new partnership programme and immediately called on Russia to pull its troops out of the breakaway region of Trans-Dniester. Mircea Snegur, president of the newly independent nation, praised the alliance's new 'Partnership for Peace' programme as a way to help bring stability to the European continent, reports AP.

Escaped convicts free hostages in Brazil

RIO DE JANEIRO (Brazil), Mar 16: Inmates who abducted a Roman Catholic cardinal and human rights activists and escaped from a prison in northeastern Brazil freed their hostages early Wednesday and were surrounded by police, reports AP.

The kidnappers were allowed to leave the prison Tuesday in an armoured car after taking hostage at knife-point Cardinal Aloisio Lorscheider and activists who had come to investigate prison conditions.

The 14 hostages were released in groups beginning at about 6 am (0900 GMT) in the town of Quixada, about 150 kms (100 miles) from Fortaleza, capital of Ceara state in northeastern Brazil.

Two inmates died in a shootout during the hostage-taking Tuesday, and at least two police officers and a prison guard were wounded, authorities said.

PM's tour

From Page 1 Col 8 businessmen and industrialists are expected to participate to acquaint themselves about the investment climate in Bangladesh.

The seventh meeting of the Japan-Bangladesh Joint Committee for Commercial and Economic Cooperation will also be held in Tokyo on March 30 in the morning.

The nearly 70-member entourage will include Foreign Minister A S M Mostafizur Rahman, Finance Minister Saifur Rahman, Special Envoy of the Prime Minister M Morshed Khan, State Minister for Social Welfare Fazlur Rahman, four MPs and three Secretaries. The senior civil servants are Commerce Secretary Mufazzal Karim, Energy Secretary Faizur Razzak and Industries Secretary Hasnat Abdul Hye.

The PM's entourage also includes a 12-member media team. Journalists who will accompany the Prime Minister are Mahfuz Anam, editor of The Daily Star, Chowdhury Muhammad Faruque, editor of The Daily Maillat, Moazzam Hossain, editor of The Financial Express, Hasnat Karim, an assistant editor of The Inqilab, Golam Sarwar, News editor of The Daily Ittefaq, Zahurul Huq, chief reporter of The Dainik Bangla, Mahmud Shafiq, chief reporter of weekly Bichitra, two journalists from BSS and three from BTV.

Begum Zia's itinerary includes an audience with Emperor Akihito, to be followed by a lunch.

Japanese Prime Minister Morihiro Hosokawa will also host a dinner in honour of Begum Zia.

8 killed in Karachi gunbattles

KARACHI, Mar 16: Pakistani authorities clamped an army-supervised curfew in a part of Karachi after eight people were killed in gunbattles today, officials said, reports Reuters.

The indefinite curfew was imposed in western Karachi's Baldia town area to maintain law and order, one government official said.

Seven security officers — an army captain, four policemen and two paramilitary personnel — were killed by gunfire from civilians as they tried to stop a clash between two rival political groups in Baldia town, police officials said.

The eighth man killed was a civilian. At least seven people including four security men were seriously wounded.

The clash began with scuffles at a tea shop between student followers of Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto and supporters of the ethnic Mahajir National Movement (MQM).

Security men went to the area's Turk Bazaar to arrest the gunmen and seize their weapons, a government spokesman said.

Witnesses said more than 20 people had been arrested after the violence.

After 12 hours of tense negotiations, police provide weapons and a getaway car and turn off the lights outside the prison in exchange for the release of most of the hostages, including Cardinal Aloisio Lorscheider.

The 11 inmates left only one hostage — the wounded guard — behind when they departed the Paulo Sarasate prison, 15 miles (25 kms) outside Fortaleza.

Gunfire was heard inside the prison 20 minutes after the armoured car escaped. Globo TV said police were trying to put down another prison uprising.

Rutskoi for single 'great power' state

MOSCOW, Mar 16: A leader of last year's rebellion against President Boris Yeltsin urged the peoples of the former Soviet Union on Wednesday to reunite and rebuild a single 'great power' state, reports AP.

Former Vice President Alexander Rutskoi, in a message faxed to news organizations, called the decision by the leaders of three Slav republics to dissolve the Soviet Union 'irresponsible and light-minded.'

Talks on Kashmir

From Page 1 Col 3 month. The Prime Minister has defended the decision in the face of a bitter opposition attack at home, saying the objective of focusing world attention on the issue had been achieved.

Talks between the two countries here in January made no progress towards a settlement of the 46-year-old dispute. Additional talks have not been scheduled.

Pakistan accuses India of committing 'repression' against Kashmiris, while New Delhi blames Islamabad for training and arming militants waging a struggle against Indian rule in the southern two-thirds of Kashmir.

Islamabad, which controls the northern third of the disputed territory, denies the Indian charge, but pledges moral and political support for the Kashmiri campaign, calling it a legitimate struggle for self-determination.

More than 8,000 people have died in Indian-administered Kashmir since 1989 in violence linked to the separatist drive.

The two countries have also fought two wars over Kashmir since their independence in 1947.

Bangabandhu

From Page 1 Col 5 Celebration Council has organised a two-day programme on the occasion at Tungipara from today. The programme to be presided over by Poet Suфия Kamal, will be attended by Awami League chief Sheikh Hasina as the chief guest.

The programmes of the Bangabandhu Parishad include laying wreaths at the mazar of Bangabandhu at Tungipara at 9 am and children's painting show, children's rally and cultural function at Bangabandhu Bhaban in Dhaka.

Chairperson of the Parishad Begum Suфия Kamal will inaugurate the painting show at 10 am and preside over the children's rally at 4 pm today. Awami League chief Sheikh Hasina will attend the rally as the chief guest.

The Gopalganj district unit of the Parishad will place wreaths at the mazar at 10 am. UNB adds: Bangabandhu Shishu Kishore Mela will observe 'First Child-Juvenile Day' today (Thursday).

Sheikh Rehana will inaugurate the day-long programme at the Shishu Academy premises at 10 am.

Day's programme includes rally of children and juvenile, drawing competition, drawing exhibition, science exhibition, book exhibition on War of Liberation, set-speech, audio and video exhibition on Sheikh Mujib's speeches and cultural function.