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PM's trip to usher in new era of partnership: FM

By Staff Correspondent

Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia's five-day state visit to Japan that ended Friday will usher in a new era of economic partnership between the two countries.

Describing the trip as very successful, Foreign Minister Mostafizur Rahman told newsmen yesterday that the Prime Minister talks with government leaders, investors and business leaders of Japan mainly focussed on the concept of Partnership in Progress.

Mostafiz said that the visit had initiated a process of interaction by Japanese businessmen and industrialists which should bring rich dividends. A process for industrialisation has been started.

The attractive opportunities available to Japanese investors in Bangladesh were highlighted, Mostafiz said. The government of Japan was urged to specially encourage Japanese investors to make investments in Bangladesh.

During the trip the Prime Minister proposed setting up of a separate investment zone and relocating Japanese sunset industries in Bangladesh. The Prime Minister also offered to provide special incentives to choose Bangladesh over her neighbours in South Asia as a convenient location for making export-oriented investments.

There were encouraging indications, Mostafiz said, that as a result of the visit, Japan will further strengthen its co-

operation for development of infrastructure in Bangladesh to facilitate the flow of Japanese investment.

The Foreign Minister stated that the entourage of the Prime Minister included 30 business leaders, including three chamber chiefs, and that eight Bangladeshi businessmen had stayed back in Japan to facilitate follow-up of progress made during the Prime Minister's stay.

The visit has given a boost to our economic diplomacy, the Foreign Minister emphasised.

Mostafiz said Begum Zia had been able to project a new image of Bangladesh to the government, business community
 See Page 12 Col 8



Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia talking to journalists aboard the Biman aircraft on way back home after concluding a 5-day state visit to Japan Friday. — PID photo

Mostafiz plays coy

By Staff Correspondent

Foreign Minister Mostafizur Rahman yesterday refused to comment on the ruling party's position regarding the renewal of the Indo-Bangladesh Friendship Treaty while responding to newsmen's questions during his press briefing yesterday.

When his attention was drawn to a report that Awami League chief Sheikh Hasina was against renewal of the 25-year treaty, Mostafiz replied: "She is saying this for other reasons."

Pressed further, Mostafiz said, "We still have time. We will think over it."

Asked if the Indo-Bangladesh Treaty was still operative, the FM replied: "No comment." The treaty, which expires on March 18, 1996 was signed on March 19, 1972 between the then Prime Ministers Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and Indira Gandhi in Dhaka.

Major cabinet reshuffle expected anyday

By Afzal H Khan

Following the return of Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia from Japan Friday night talk of an imminent cabinet reshuffle regained currency in political circles yesterday.

According to political observers, a reshuffle of the cabinet as well as the ruling BNP party hierarchy may be announced anyday.

Whisperings about the reshuffles, which followed the BNP's poor showing in last January's city corporation polls, became increasingly louder over the past couple of months. But the Prime Minister's trip to Japan towards the end of March appeared to have put a temporary pause in the hectic politicking and lobbying by ruling party leaders to either retain their positions in the cabinet and party or to have themselves included.

According to one source close to the corridors of power, who requested anonymity, Begum Zia may first announce some major changes in the make-up of her party machinery in a day or two. This could include the naming of a new party Secretary General replacing Abdus Salam Talukder. The most mentioned name as of yesterday was that of Professor Badruddoza Chowdhury, who had once held the key post.

Meanwhile, it is also learnt that Chowdhury Tanbir Ahmed Siddiki, who played a major role during the party's national conference last September, has been making a serious bid to land the coveted post. Besides, some new members may be included in the na-

See Page 12 Col 4

Landslide, lightning kill 6 in Ctg

From Staff Correspondent

CHITTAGONG, April 2: At least six persons were killed in a landslide and lightning here and in Paliya last night. Another two persons are reported missing.

Doublemooing police recovered the bodies of Delwara Begum (35) and her seven-year-old daughter Kulsum. Both were washed away by flood waters after a landslide at the Lalkhan Bazar slum area. Those missing were identified as Amirunnesa (80) and a baby, Sujon (2).

The landslide also caused ten houses at Lakhon Bazar Devarpur to collapse. Delwara and Kulsum were identified as the wife and daughter of a rickshaw puller, Md Ali.

According to sources, See Page 12 Col 4

Zahir murder

Akhtaruzzaman, 6 others charged

By Staff Correspondent

Seven persons including Akhtaruzzaman Chowdhury Babu, MP were indicted by the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate, Dhaka yesterday for murdering Humayun Zahir, a businessman last year.

The Detective Branch of DMP, the investigating agency, charge-sheeted the seven almost one year after the murder.

Zahir, 48, a sponsor-director and vice president of the United Commercial Bank Limited (UCBL), was shot dead at his Dhanmondi residence in the morning on April 8 last year.

One of the alleged assailants — Fazlur Rahman Tomoy, 20 — was arrested with a revolver while he was allegedly running away after shooting Zahir. See Page 12 Col 3

PM calls for positivism in politics

Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia has called for positivism in politics to enable the nation achieve the cherished goals of economic development and progress, reports BSS.

"Much depends on the atmosphere," Begum Zia said while talking to newsmen on board the Biman aircraft shortly before landing at the Zia International Airport in the early hours Saturday, ending a five-day official visit to Japan.

Together, she said, all should keep the atmosphere correct.

"It was good," she said when asked to describe her visit to Japan in terms of achievement of objectives.

In Japan, she added, the trip helped create a better image of Bangladesh. See Page 12 Col 6

Efforts on for BNP-AL dialogue before Apr 7

By Nurul Kabir

Top leaders of the ruling Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) are considering opening a dialogue with their counterparts in the Awami League ahead of the AL's proposed siege of the Secretariat on April 7.

The BNP high command will, however, review the political situation of the country before taking any decision on a dialogue. According to sources, Prime Minister Khaleda Zia will have talks on the political situation with the party leaders this evening.

Public Works Minister and Joint Secretary General of the BNP told this correspondent yesterday afternoon that the ruling party strongly believed in a dialogue with the Opposition on various issues. See Page 12 Col 7

News Analysis PM's Japan visit: Setting of the stage

By Mahfuz Anam

The first thing one needs to understand about political, and especially economic relations with Japan, is that nothing is an event, and everything is a process. It is as a critical mover of the process of strengthening Bangladesh-Japan relations that the just concluded visit of the Prime Minister Khaleda Zia will have to be judged. It is not that the process got started by her visit. But that it got a serious boost as a result of it.

Frankly, till this visit, Bangladesh has not paid sufficient attention and devoted the requisite energy in strengthening its relations with Japan. As the highest bilateral donor, and given its role as an economic superpower, Japan deserved far more attention from us, than we had hitherto given it.

It has been more than three years that a democratic government has been elected in Bangladesh, and it was the first time that our PM was visiting Japan. The records of our foreign and finance ministers are better, but only slightly.

Well, better late than never. And though late, it was a well organised trip. It gave all the

right signals to the Japanese. There were two distinct audiences for the trip. In both instances, Begum Zia got heard at the highest levels.

First, the political audience. Prime Minister Hosokawa's whole cabinet turned out for the welcoming ceremony at the Akasaka Palace. According to the Japanese Ambassador to Bangladesh, Mr Takenaka, it was a very rare occurrence. Very seldom the whole cabinet turns out to welcome any leader, and that also from a developing country. This set the tone for the rest of the visit, and the Japanese began to take due note of it.

The audience with His Majesty the Emperor, and the luncheon by the Royal Family with the presence of the Crown Prince and his wife, the Deputy PM and Foreign Minister Tsutomu Hata, and other high-level cabinet ministers being in the queue, further confirmed the high profile the Japanese were giving to this visit.

Being fully aware of the fact that the current opposition LDP was the ruling party of Japan throughout the post-Second World War period,

Begum Zia very rightly met the leaders of the opposition Liberal Democratic Party. The opposition party echoed the same sentiments as that of the ruling coalition, about increased economic cooperation with Bangladesh. This puts Bangladesh's economic relations on a bipartisan footing.

Bangladesh played its political card extremely well by offering to support Japan's bid to become a permanent member of the United Nations Security Council. Given Japan's current economic power and the global peacekeeping and other roles that it has been carrying out, not to mention the financial burden of the UN that it bears, Japan's aspiration for a seat in the Security Council is not only legitimate but one that should be supported by all UN members. Bangladesh's backing, therefore, is not out of a bilateral consideration alone, but based on a fair judgement of Japan's current role and future potentials.

Making this commitment, at this stage of the event, and making it through the person of the Prime Minister, did earn for Bangladesh considerable credit. See Page 12 Col 1

BCL's hunger strike at DU

By Staff Correspondent

The Awami League-backed Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) yesterday morning observed a token hunger strike in front of the Dhaka University Vice Chancellor's office demanding his resignation.

The strike, observed from 10 am to 12:30 pm, also demanded ouster of terrorists from the campus and ensuring peaceful environment for all the students' organisations.

VC Professor Emajuddin Ahmed was absent from his office during the strike.

Meanwhile, the Jatityabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) handed over a memorandum to the VC at his residence in the afternoon yesterday demanding a fresh schedule for the DUCSU elections.

The JCD also held a rally near the Aparajeyo Bangla statue at around 11 am.

CHEHLUM

On the occasion of Chehlum of our beloved founder-Chairman Late Hamidur Rahman Sinha, a Milad Mahfil has been arranged at his village home Dohuri, Kalma union, Lauhajang P.S., Munshiganj on Tuesday the 5th April, 1994 at 11 a.m.

All his relatives, friends and admirers are requested to kindly attend the said Milad and to pray for the departed soul.

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Quiz 4	1 May '94	10 May '94	13 May '94	14 May '94
Quiz 5	11 May '94	20 May '94	23 May '94	24 May '94
Quiz 6	21 May '94	20 June '94	23 June '94	24 June '94

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