

Opposition confusing people, says Khaleda

Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia yesterday spurned Opposition allegations and asserted that her government was continuing to work for fulfilling people's aspirations for a prosperous country, reports UNB.

"The Opposition is confusing the people with misleading statements and hindering the development process initiated by the BNP government," she told some leaders and workers of different political parties of Uttara, Gulshan and Dhaka Cantonment areas who joined the BNP last night at her Hare Road office.

About 5,000 workers and leaders of the Awami League and its front organisations, the Jatiya Party and the JSD joined the BNP expressing their allegiance to the ruling party leadership for its 'politics of development'.

Presided over by Maj (Retd) Kamruddin Islam, MP, the function was also addressed by Food Minister and city BNP president Maj Gen (Retd) Mir Shakwak Ali and general secretary Mohammad Salauddin Ahmed MP.

The Prime Minister re-

minded them that the post-liberation government had failed to fulfill the aspirations of the people. "General Zia formed the BNP with a 19-point development programme to meet the people's demand, including the five basic needs," she said.

BCCI executive gets 3-yr jail

LONDON, Aug 3: A senior executive of the collapsed Bank of Credit and Commerce International was ordered imprisoned for three years today despite testimony on his behalf from US authorities, reports AP.

Lawyers from the Federal Reserve in Washington and the New York District Attorney's office said that Imran Imam was instrumental in their investigations.

Imam's revelations led to several prosecutions in the United States and to the recovery of 750 million dollars that will eventually go to help creditors who lost more than 10 billion dollars in the world's biggest banking collapse in July 1991.

Taslima gets bail

From Page 1 Col 5

her in court.

Making the submission for bail, Barrister Islam quoted the provisions under Section 497 of the CrPC that allowed bail for children, women and the old accused under Section 295 (a).

Attorney General Aminul Haq, appearing for the State, concurred and did not raise any objection to the granting of the bail. The Attorney General also assured the court of providing adequate protection to her.

After the bail order was read out in court, the normally outspoken writer seemed to have restrained her emotions and failed to react visibly as her lawyers and relatives rejoiced around her.

Nasreen was then driven off in a private car, escorted by a police van, straight to her Shantinagar apartment where her mother has been staying. She was accompanied by her brother Kamaluddin, sister-in-law and another of her lawyers, Barrister Sarah Fossain.

It took nearly half an hour for the police and her lawyers to move her from the first-floor court-room to the porch downstairs as a large number of curious onlookers blocked the way. However, no untoward incidents occurred during this period as police tried to disperse the crowd.

Later, Barrister Islam expressed his satisfaction at the progress of the day's court proceedings.

"This has been a very wonderful precedence as the court exercised its inherent discretion," he told The Daily Star immediately after the order.

Asked how his client was doing, he said she appeared to be very scared, perturbed and was looking frail. "I am really concerned about her health."

When pressed, he claimed he hadn't a clue to her whereabouts until she appeared before the court.

Giving his reactions, Attorney General Aminul Haq

Indian business team

From Page 1 Col 7

response is that Indian businessmen can invest here and take our investment facilities as foreign investors. This will reduce the trade gap."

"Our second proposition is Bangladesh can be used as a distribution point for Indian goods to its north-eastern states. This would also develop our transport business."

During the meeting, the Indian side had raised the transit issue several times, saying this was vital for developing co-operation.

Meanwhile, the joint statement of the meeting said the Indian side had proposed new investments in Bangladesh and invited aggressive marketing efforts of Bangladeshi goods in India.

The proposed Indian investment areas are: Composite textiles, pesticides, power generation, electronic appliances, food and fish processing, shrimp, rubber, leather, cement, sponge iron plant, basic chemicals, etc.

Mahbubur Rahman said, "We also talked about co-operation among the two countries in marketing our common goods like jute and tea in the world market".

The leader of the Indian delegation, PD Patodia said, "We are quite interested to set up joint sector industries here."

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Leaders of the main opposition Bharatiya Janata Party marching to the presidential palace in New Delhi yesterday to hand over a letter to President Shankar Dayal Sharma, protesting the government's denial of responsibility in the country's biggest ever financial scandal. The 1.3 billion dollars bank scam has returned corruption to India's political centrestage.

— AFP photo

US, DPRK may set up liaison offices

TOKYO, Aug 3: North Korea and the United States might agree to set up liaison offices in each other's country when they resume high-level talks in Geneva Friday on the nuclear stand-off, it was reported here Wednesday, reports AFP.

The Japanese economic newspaper Nihon Keizai carried the report citing North Korean diplomatic sources in Washington. But it said the same sources said Pyongyang was opposed to a US-proposed transfer of spent nuclear fuel from North Korea to a third country.

The establishment of liaison offices could be a major step in improving ties between the United States and North Korea which were still locked in Cold War confrontation dating to the 1950-1953 Korean War.

Serbs reject peace plan again

PALI, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Aug 3: Bosnian Serb leaders again rejected an international peace plan on Wednesday, defying their patrons in Serbia and setting the stage for further warfare, reports AP.

The self-styled Bosnian Serb assembly was expected to follow the recommendation of its leaders in a meeting later Wednesday to vote on the proposal to end the war in Bosnia.

A statement issued from the Serbs' self-declared capital in Pale and distributed by the Bosnian Serb news agency SRNA said the plan "has been deliberately compiled in such a way as to be unacceptable for the Serb side."

10 shot in Sylhet clash

From Our Correspondent

SYLHET, Aug 3: At least ten persons received bullet wounds in a clash between rival groups of youngmen at Kumpur area of Sylhet town last night.

About 20 rounds of gunshot were fired during the half-an-hour-long encounter.

3 die in Pabna road accidents

PABNA, Aug 3: Three people were killed in three road accidents in Pabna district today, reports UNB.

Gohor Sarder, 55, died on the spot when a Dhaka-bound coach ran over him on the Pabna-Nagarbari highway at Madhupur at 9:30 am.

An unidentified five-year-old boy died instantly when a truck knocked him down on the highway at Ranigram at about 11 am.

Jotsna Khatun, 60, died on way to hospital after she was run over by a truck while crossing road at Kalikapur on the Panba-Ishurdi road at 4 pm.

Three cases were lodged with Pabna Sadar, Sathia and Ishurdi police. The killer trucks and the coach sped away.

Transport strike in Sylhet from today

From Our Correspondent

SYLHET, Aug 3: Bus, minibus and microbus owners and transport workers of Sylhet have called a strike for an indefinite period throughout the district from tomorrow.

They have called the strike to press home their demand for punitive measures against the persons who reportedly misbehaved with transport owners and workers during a negotiation meeting at the office of the Deputy Commissioner, Sunamganj on July 30.

An indefinite strike has been continuing on different routes of Sunamganj district since July 27.

Singh threatens to quit

From Page 1 Col 5

The committee's December findings criticised several senior ministers. Singh, among those criticised, offered his resignation to Rao at the time only to have it rejected.

The finance minister, architect of India's dramatic economic reforms, was not available for comment on Wednesday.

"If he quits, it will be a disaster for the Congress," a government minister told Reuters.

Singh's Congress party critics say he authored the



Manmohan Singh

government's response to the JPC, which was produced by the Finance Ministry and rejected several key findings.

Politicians said Rao, preparing for important regional elections later this year, was worried about the potentially damaging fallout from the opposition boycott.

"I would call this a grandfather of all scams," communist lawmaker Indrajit Gupta said

— AP photo

Five Frenchmen gunned down in Algeria

From Staff Correspondent

CHITTAGONG, Aug 3: The Emir of the United Arab Emirates (UAE) Sheikh Zayed Bin Sultan Al-Nahyan is expected to build a palace in Betagi union under Rangunia thana, 30 miles from here. The palace will be built on 110 acres of land allotted to him by the Bangladesh government.

The attack raised to 56 the number of foreigners killed since September, when militants began killing expatriates in an effort to topple the military-backed government.

One other person was wounded in the attack that Algerians security forces said the occurred in southwest Algiers while the French were returning to their embassy compound.

The group was attacked in Ain Allah, a guarded residential area, said security forces on customary anonymity.

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A subsidiary of the Bangladesh Steel and Engineering Corporation (BSEC), the Chittagong Drydock built the digester with indigenous raw materials and local expertise and technology, reports UNB.

Chittagong Drydock began to build the digester in March with steel produced by another BSEC subsidiary, Chittagong Steel Mills, and other locally available raw materials.

The BSEC, which runs the state-owned engineering industries, so far received four orders for digesters from the Bangladesh Chemical Industries Corporation (BCIC). Of this, another digester will be built by Chittagong Drydock while the other two by Khulna Shipyard, also a BSEC subsidiary.

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Each locally built digester will cost Tk 1.25 crore while its

import price is around Tk 5 crore.

The four digesters will be used by four BCIC subsidiaries — the Karnaphuli Paper Mills, North Bengal Paper Mills, Khulna Paper Mills and Karnaphuli Rayon Mills.

Industries Minister A M Zahiruddin Khan, who asked the BCIC to find alternative raw materials and patronise the idea of using green jute for producing pulp, will formally hand over the digester to the Karnaphuli Paper Mills tomorrow.

According to the BCIC sources, the paper mills will produce some 25,000 tons of pulp using green jute during the first year of production. The corporation has already started purchasing green jute from the growers.

The globe-shaped five-metre dia digester weighs about 20 tons and has a holding capacity of 65 tons.

Drydock sources said the work on the second digester will be completed in September next.

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