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BNP to play positive role in JS: Khaleda

Leader of the Opposition Begum Khaleda Zia said her party would continue its effort to institutionalise democracy by playing responsible role in Parliament, reports UNB.

despite pressure from people, her party would not launch any agitation programme at this moment. "We do not want to create any sufferings of the people."

"BNP wants to give parliamentary democracy a permanent shape through positive politics, not by any negative means like movement without any reason," she told the leaders of party's Chittagong (North) unit when they called on her at her Mirza Road official residence in the evening.

The BNP chairperson told her party members to strengthen BNP through organisational activities, meetings, rallies and mass contacts at their respective areas.

Begum Zia reiterated that

"We must live together side by side, as cousins, brothers, friends and neighbours," Arafaat said.

President and general secretary of Chittagong (North) BNP Golam Akbar Khandakar and Shahjahan Siraj, along with other members of the 101-member committee, were present.

Party secretary general Abdul Mannan Bhuiya MP, Abdullah Al Noman, Morshed Khan MP and Wahidul Alam MP were also present on the occasion.

The former prime minister and Leader of the Opposition in Parliament made the unscheduled visit during her day-long trip to Sylhet.

Meanwhile, a discussion meeting was organised at the BNP central office on the occasion of the 2nd death anniversary of Sraniak Dal leader AKM Nazrul Islam.

On her way back to Sylhet town, the BNP Chairperson addressed two roadside meetings of Gururaj Bazar and Sarker Bazar in these meetings, Begum Zia charged the Awami League with snatching the people's voting rights as a first step towards killing democracy. This is not a people's government, this is a party government," she said.

The Israeli President told reporters the violence "cannot happen again."

She further said the people throughout the country are now feeling insecure as the government has failed to ensure their safety. She criticised the government's plan to import electricity from India and provide transit facilities to that country sacrificing the interest of Bangladesh.

"We call on more for the attaining of peace, not by violence but by dialogue. When people talk they do not shoot," Weizman said.

The BNP Secretary General alleged that the ruling party has a keen interest to give India the transit facilities on condition of importing power from the neighbouring country.

The meeting, held after invitation by Weizman, came after the worst Israeli-Palestinian clashes in 30 years which left over 80 dead late last month.

The people have already started movement against the conspiracy as they are ready to frustrate the attempts to sell out the country's resources," he said.

The third meeting of the committee that lasted over three hours was held yesterday at the chamber of the Secretary of the Ministry of Law and Justice Amanullah. Amanullah presided.

Commenting on the outcome of the three meetings held till yesterday, the sources said that the members were likely to come out with an unanimous decision on the findings of the committee.

The committee was formed on September 30 to examine the legality of the Indemnity Ordinance and to draft a Bill, if necessary, for placing it before the Jatiya Sangsad.

Those who attended yesterday's meeting included secretary Law Reforms Commission Kazi Habibul Awal, joint secretary, Ministry of Law and Justice Mustafaizur Rahman, deputy secretary of the ministry Anwarul Haq and Director, Judicial Training Institute, Iktidar Ahmed.

Referring to the Security Council reform, he said the interest of smaller and more vulnerable states should not be overlooked in any restructuring of the Council.

Azad suggested establishment of a Committee composed in the shape of General Committee of the General Assembly which the Secretary General could consult formally or informally on important administrative and political issues.

Expressing concern over the recent developments in the Middle-East, Azad urged all concerned to honour their commitment made under the Peace Accord to find a comprehensive and durable peace in the Middle East which will allow the emergence of a Palestinian State with Jerusalem as its capital.

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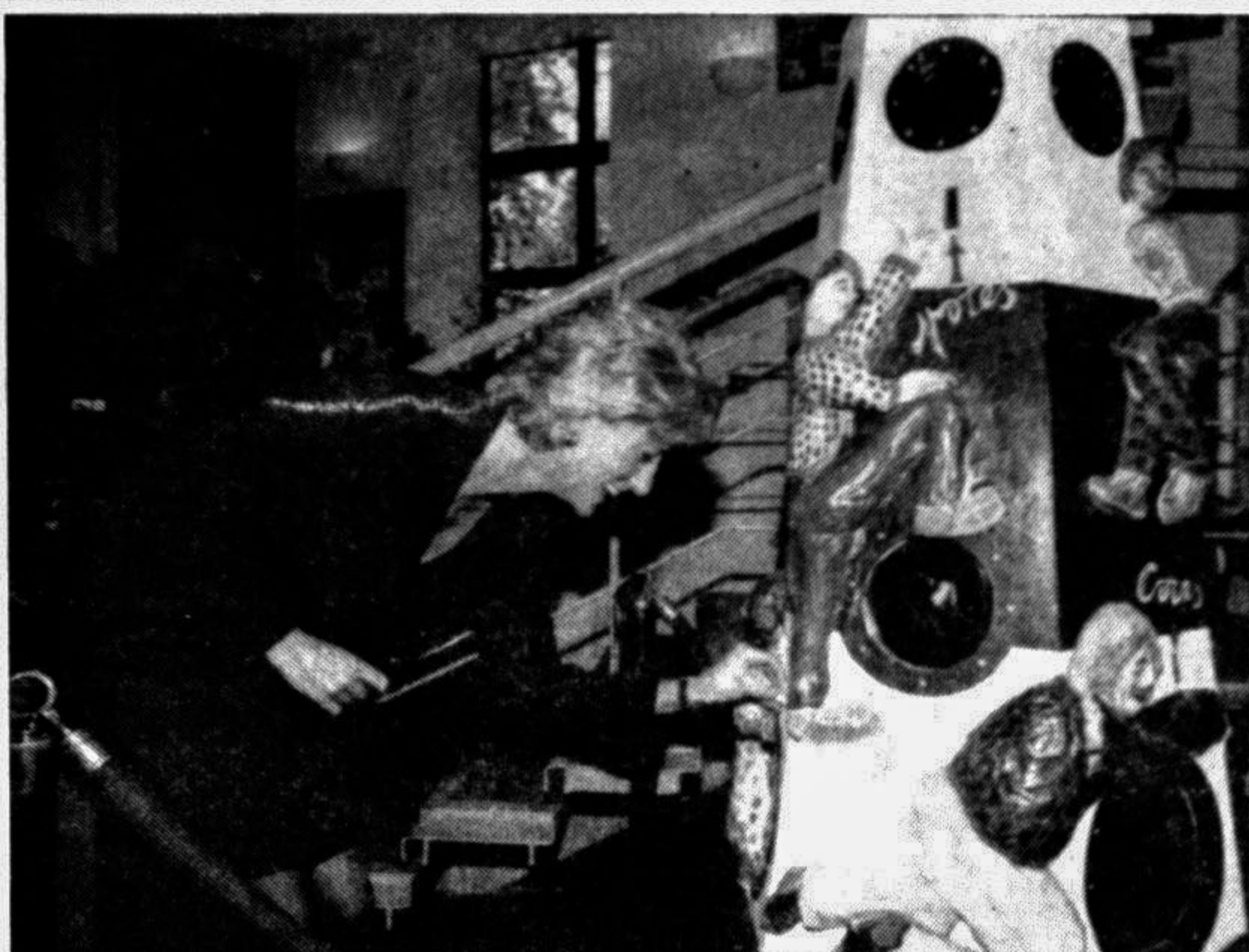
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Diana, Princess of Wales, during her visit to the London Lighthouse yesterday. The Princess was visiting the HIV/AIDS charity to help launch its 1.5 million capital appeal. — AFP/UNB photo

Shahabuddin's oath

From Page 1
from party. But he ceases to be partyman after being elected. He becomes a neutral person. And I am neutral from previous period. So I am far better, stronger.

Life-sketch

Born on February 1, 1930 at village Pemoi in Kendua thana of Netrakona district, Shahabuddin obtained graduation in Economics from Dhaka University in 1951. He did his masters in International Relations in the following year.

He joined the then Civil Service of Pakistan in 1954. He was sub-divisional officer in Gopalganj and Natore. During his tenure, Natore was elected one of the best administrative sub-divisions in erstwhile East Pakistan.

He was a member of the joint court of enquiry appointed by the then martial law administrator in 1960. The court was formed to investigate activities of a naval officer in civil work.

Shahabuddin Ahmed joined the Judiciary Department of Pakistan Civil Service in June 1960 and worked as district and sessions judge in Dhaka, Barisal, Chittagong and Comilla. He became the Registrar of Dhaka High Court in 1967.

A man of strict principle and honesty, Shahabuddin was appointed judge of Bangladesh High Court on January 20 in 1972.

Besides being a judge of the Supreme Court, Shahabuddin discharged additional responsibility of the Chairman of Bangladesh Red Cross Society from August 1978 to April '82.

Shahabuddin Ahmed was Chairman of the Investigation Commission formed to probe the mid-February 1983 incident of student revolt.

He was also Chairman of the National Pay Commission formed in 1984 and following his report an upgraded pay scale was introduced.

At the pinnacle of his chequered career, Justice Shahabuddin, father of three daughters and a son, was appointed Chief Justice of Bangladesh Supreme Court in January in 1990. In the same year on December 6, he became Acting President of the country.

He discharged the duties of President until his successor Abdur Rahman Biswas took over on October 9, 1991. During his tenure as a post-mass upsurge head of the state, he and his caretaker government conducted the free and fair parliamentary election of February 1991.

Later, he returned to the court and went on retirement on January 31 in 1995 completing his 34-year glorious but simple official life.

Ruling Awami League nominated him as presidential candidate as a symbol of national consensus. He was elected unopposed on July 23 this year. Despite being a nominee of a political party he is believed to be the most acceptable person among the countrymen.

After his election, he told newsmen that he had always been a neutral person and would continue to be so in discharging the duties of President in next five years.

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Mirpur fire

From Page 1
extent of damage could not be known immediately. However, the local people said, the blaze might have originated from an electrical short circuit.

Fire fighters from different city stations took around two hours to bring the blaze under control, fire service sources said. One water carrying vehicle of WASA was also taken to the affected area.

The single-room houses with a space of about one hundred square feet each were occupied by the people from the low income group, said an officer of Pallabi thana. There were about 1,200 such shanties.

Of the 700 affected houses, around one hundred were used by weavers, said fire service sources quoting the chairman of the camp, Abdul Gafur.

However, no casualty was reported till the filing of this report last night.

CID interrogates

From Page 1
Following the change of August 15, four Awami League stalwarts — Tajuddin Ahmed, Syed Nazrul Islam, Kamruzzaman and Mansur Ali — were killed inside the prison cell at the Dhaka Central Jail on the night of November 3.

The Awami League government has revived the jail killing case after a lapse of 21 years. The case in this connection was lodged with Lalbagh thana by the then DIG (Prison) Abdul Awal.

The CID has already interrogated Col (ret'd) Farooq Rahman and Col (ret'd) Shahriar Rashid Khan both arrested earlier and implicated in the jail killing case. Major (ret'd) Khairuzzaman, also arrested in this connection, was placed on remand for the second time on October 5, following the end of his seven-day remand.

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Dhaka urges UN

From Page 1
linked with efficient water management. Azad told the UN.

The Foreign Minister said water is not new to the global agenda and since the Mar del Plata conference in 1977, there have been international programmes on water related issues. It has not, however, in our view, received the priority that it deserves."

Azad referred to the Mar del Plata Action Plan and the strategy paper of the Committee on Natural Resources, saying that the paper suggests an international convention on fresh water resources, similar to the convention that already exist on bio-diversity, ozone layer depletion and climate change.

The Foreign Minister called for ensuring world peace to combat the scourges of poverty, hunger, disease, illiteracy and unemployment which threaten a large proportion of mankind.

Azad said it is the age of interdependence and no nation can reach its fullest development alone. He said the UN system can play a constructive role in this respect.

About the country's foreign policy, he said Bangladesh believes in principles of peaceful co-existence and friendship towards all.

Calling for a stronger and more effective UN, the foreign minister said the UN's areas of responsibility should clearly cover problems or issues between States, especially those issues that are pandemic in range and global in their consequences.

He said environmental degradation, human rights, population, situation of women and children, drugs, migration, international terrorism and corruption in international business, in addition to international peace and security and development be topical objects of UN policies and actions.

Referring to the Security Council reform, he said the interest of smaller and more vulnerable states should not be overlooked in any restructuring of the Council.

Azad suggested establishment of a Committee composed in the shape of General Committee of the General Assembly which the Secretary General could consult formally or informally on important administrative and political issues.

Expressing concern over the recent developments in the Middle-East, Azad urged all concerned to honour their commitment made under the Peace Accord to find a comprehensive and durable peace in the Middle East which will allow the emergence of a Palestinian State with Jerusalem as its capital.

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Gold haul

From Page 1
tola, from the baggage of two foreign nationals who arrived in Dhaka from Bangkok by a Thai Airways flight on their way to India Monday.

The were arrested by police and two cases were lodged with Cantonment thana in this connection. The cases were filed under Sections 16 of the Customs Act of 1969, 3(1) of the Export Import Act of 1960, 8(1) of the Foreign Currency Regulation Act of 1947 and Section 25(B) of the Special Powers Act of 1974, police said. The DB took over the case for investigation from Cantonment police Monday evening, police added.

The two foreign nationals had confessed to the customs authority that an Indian citizen had given them the gold to deliver at a destination in India in exchange for one thousand US dollar.

On September 21, smuggled gold worth about Tk seven crore was seized at the Zia.

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Arafat meets Israeli President

CAESAREA, Israel, Oct 8: Palestinian President Yasser Arafat and his Israeli counterpart Ezer Weizman issued a message of peace in an unprecedented meeting here today, two weeks after violence rocked the peace process, reports AFP.

"We must live together side by side, as cousins, brothers, friends and neighbours," Arafaat said.

"Violence is not our policy or strategy. When we signed agreements with Israel we excluded violence and we opened a new chapter of peace in all the Middle East," he said.

The Israeli President told reporters the violence "cannot happen again."

"We call on more for the attaining of peace, not by violence but by dialogue. When people talk they do not shoot," Weizman said.

The two leaders spoke from a terrace at Weizman's private house overlooking the Mediterranean Sea in Caesarea, where Arafat arrived earlier in an Israeli army helicopter.

The meeting, held after invitation by Weizman, came after the worst Israeli-Palestinian clashes in 30 years which left over 80 dead late last month.

The people have already started movement against the conspiracy as they are ready to frustrate the attempts to sell out the country's resources," he said.

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EU team at joint meeting told Dhaka needs more aid to achieve GDP target

Bangladesh has sought increased quantum of assistance from the European Union in view of its expanding development needs and priorities, reports UNB.