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President Shahabuddin Ahmed (top) and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina (bottom) placing wreaths at the Martyred Intellectuals Memorial at Mirpur in the city yesterday.

-Star photo

## FM briefs foreign envoys on PM's visit

Foreign Minister Abdus Samad Azad yesterday briefed the heads of diplomatic missions and international agencies in Dhaka on Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's recent visit to India, reports UNB.

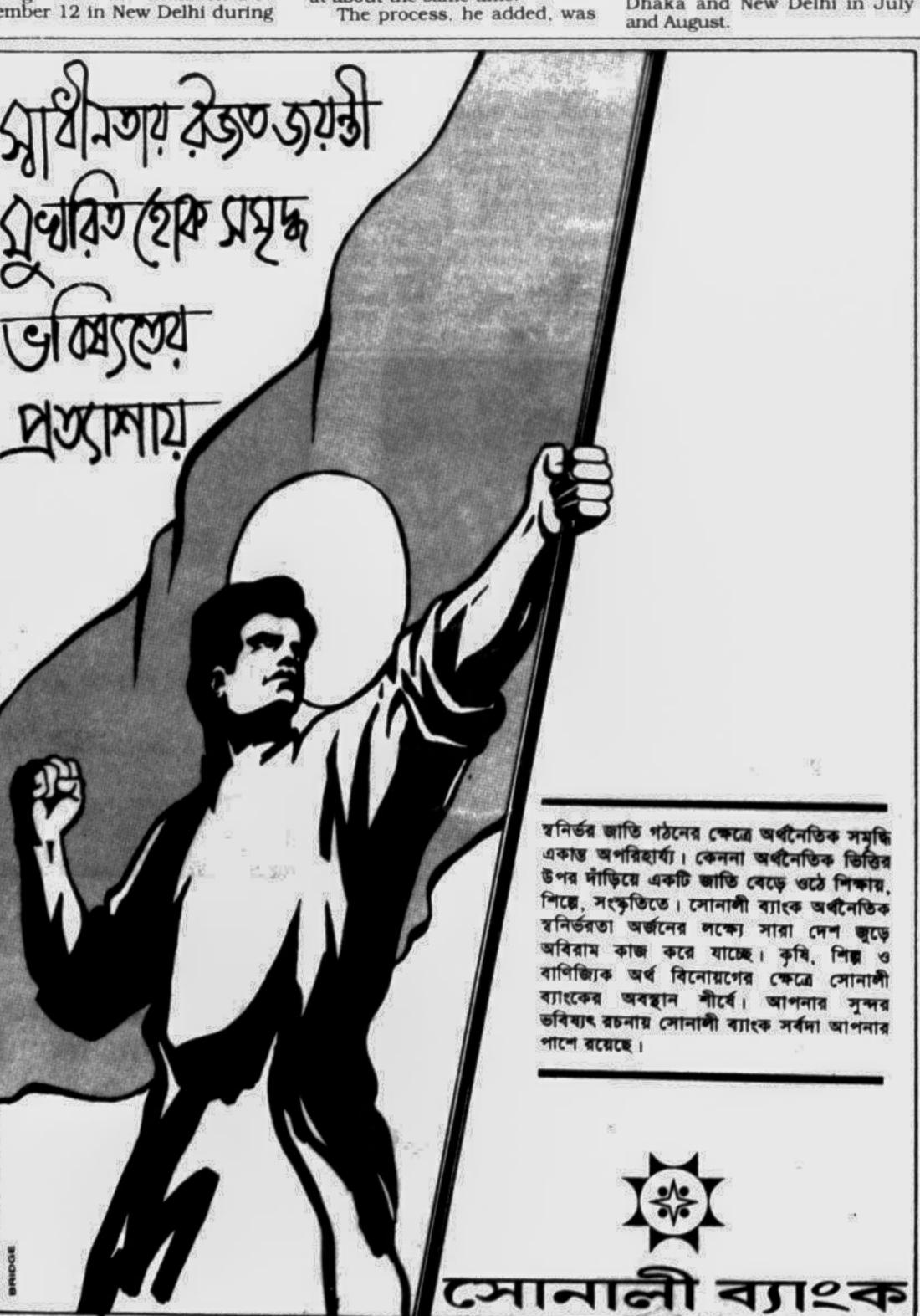
Addressing the envoys at the Foreign Office, Azad spoke on the major features of the Ganges water sharing treaty signed by the Prime Ministers of Bangladesh and India on December 12 in New Delhi during

Sheikh Hasina's visit. He said the signing of the historic treaty on the sharing of the Ganges water marked the fruitful culmination of the process of contacts and negotiations, set in motion six months ago, soon after the elected governments of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina of Bangladesh

and Prime Minister Deve Gowda of India assumed office at about the same time.

initiated at the directives of the two prime ministers to further strengthen the friendship and cooperative relations between the two neighbouring countries by addressing the major outstanding bilateral issues with a constructive and positive approach.

The foreign minister told the envoys that the process of negotiations began with talks at the foreign secretary level in Dhaka and New Delhi in July



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## Silver Jubilee of victory

the portrait of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman at the Bangabandhu Memorial Museum in the city at 6 am and then at the National Memorial. The Awami League will bring out a Victory Day procession from the Zero Point at 2 pm. It will hold discussion meetings and cultural functions at the outer stadium at 3 pm on De-

cember 17, 18 and 19. BNP's programme will begin through hoisting of the National Flag and the party flag at party offices in the morning. Leaders and workers of BNP and its front organisations will assemble in front of the party's central office at 7 am to visit the National Memorial at 7.30 am. They will later place wreaths at the mazar of party's founder late president Ziaur Rahman at 9 pm.

BNP will bring out a procession from the party central office and hold a musical soirce at the same venue later in the evening.

## Hasina

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ordinating the scheme to build the memorial. The Public Works Department will execute the project already approved by the Planning Commission.

Work will begin by end of February or early March. Obaidul Quader told The Daily Star last night

He said the memorial will have a complex with a library. museum and sculpture of Bangabandhu.

signs for the memorial has been formed headed by the Principal Secretary to Prime Minister. It will soon invite designs, he Quader said the complex

A committee to finalise de-

may cover a large chunk of the Shishu Park. But care would be taken harmonise it with the surrounding green of the Suhrawardy Uddayan.

"We want it to be a landmark of Dhaka just like the Arch d Triumph or Eiffel Tower in Paris, or Jefferson Memorial in Washington," Quader said.

The proposed memorial may cost Tk 26 to 27 crore or more. he said adding some money has already been made available to lay the foundation stone.

Jatiya Party's programme includes a bus procession from its central office at 6.30 am. placing of wreaths at the National Memorial at 9 am. In the evening, a cultural programme will be staged at the premises of

the party office in the city. A discussion meeting on the memory of the martyrs of the Liberation War will be held at 10 am. It will be presided over by Vice-Chancelor of DU Prof A K Azad Choud

On Monday, teachers and students of the Dhaka University will assemble at the foot of Aparajeyo Bangla and place wreaths at the National Memorial at 6.45 am. Milad mahfil and special prayers will be held at the University central mosque after asr prayers.

Association of Development Agencies in Bangladesh will place wreaths at the National Memorial and bring out a victory procession from Manik Mia Avenue at 1 pm.

Bandhan, a voluntary blood donation organisation, will launch a member-collection drive at the Central Shaheed Minar at 3 pm.

#### Kofi Annan

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the 15-member council agreed by acclamation on Annan as the successor to Boutros Boutros-Ghali of Egypt, whose attempt to serve a second term was vetoed last month by the United States.

The council, which made its decision after France dropped its opposition to the 58-yearold Annan, reached agreement on a new secretary-general Friday morning and then convened again Friday evening to formalise the decision.

His name will be referred to the 185-member General Assembly for ratification, probably Tuesday. Ratification is merely a formality. Annan's five-year term will begin Jan 1.

in a statement after the evening vote, Annan said the United Nations must embark "upon a time of healing to restore confidence between governments and this institution in order to help replenish its fi-nancial strength and its politi-cal and moral authority."

## **BNP**: Water treaty

when it is desired by the people." He also alleged that the Awami League government was giving confusing figures as regards the water accord. The BNP leader refused the government's claim that the lowest quantum of water provided under the new treaty was more than that of the 1977 accord. "The '77 treaty fixed the lowest quantum at 34,500 cusecs while the '96 accord has reduced it to 27,633 cusecs," he said.

He claimed that the 1977 accord had guaranteed 33,31,323 cusecs during March-May against 31.64.604 cusecs provided by the 1996 treaty.

Citing a clause in the treaty which said that the two sides would meet on an emergency basis if the flow at the Farakka point is below 50,000 cusecs, he remarked. The lean season may expire before the two countries work out the way out."

Besides, he expressed his doubt whether India would at all go by the accord. Earlier, the BNP secretary

## President

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to take lesson from the past. It should not be fair to criticise others digging the bitterness of the past ... we have to look forward to making our future beautiful," he said.

The country has many problems with a huge population but its resource is limited, the President said underlining the need for "national unity, solidarity, consensus and true patriotism" to solve the country's major problems.

Focusing on the country's liberation, he noted that the role of Bengalee Muslims in the religion-based Pakistan movement was the strongest, but only religion, in disregard of language, culture and territorial proximity, is not enough for the stability of a state.

President Ahmed recalled the glorious memory of the independence martyrs and prayed for salvation of the departed general presented a written statement on the Ganges watersharing accord.

In his statement, he blamed the ruling party for not consulting the Opposition before signing the accord. He termed the treaty 'self-contradictory", "full of ifs and buts", "based on confusing figures" and "one-sided" and said Bangladesh has stepped into a death trap through this treaty.

We expected that this government would get more water because of Awami Leagues' special relations with India. But they have frustrated the nation", he remarked.

He also blamed the government for not taking into considerations the changed national context while signing the accord and demanded a fresh treaty by involving Nepal.

Some central leaders of the party including Abdus Salam Talukdar, Abdul Matin Choudhury. Mirza Abbas. Mahbubul Alam Tara and Goyeshwar Roy were present at the press conference.

#### Memorial

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of the memorial to the martyred intellectuals, the Prime Minister said history can't be obliterated and one should take lessons from it. "Otherwise you can't proceed," she said.

The memorial, she said, is being constructed for the sake of the history of the country. The Public Works Department has started the construction work of the memorial, which will cost Tk 6.68 crore.

Designed by architect Farid Uddin Ahmed and Jami-al-Safi of the Design Centre, the memorial will be completed in two years.

Hasina said her government was utilising every moment for the development and well-being of the country and people and called upon the countrymen to work hard to materialise the dream of Bangabandhu by building a Sonar Bangla where all will have food, clothings, shelter, education and health.

# Fertiliser shortage

From Page 1

but found few plots where potato seeds were sown.

At Sonarong village, we found a dejected Abdul Motaleb shuffling a mixture of urea, SSP and potash for his 21 decimal plot of land.

Motaleb said he managed to buy urea at Tk 265 per 50 kg bag against its officials retail price of Taka 186.25 but it is in short supply, he complained. Single Super Phosphate cost him Tk 345 a bag although its official price in Tk 215. Potash cost him Tk 350 a bag. Motaleb said he was using SSP and potash to

not available. But he was not certain of the quality of the SSP which he called dust. The bag had 'Made in Bangladesh' marking but Motaleb said it not the real stuff. "It is either adulterated or from across the border," he

substitute TSP because TSP is

At nearby Baligaon Bazar, there is only one fertiliser dealer. There are seven such dealers in Tongibari thana and 31 in Munshiganj district, said

the dealer, Alauddin Sheikh. He said the dealers left their

quota of urea from the Gho-

rashal Urea Fertiliser Factory once every month. He lifted his last quota on October 31. Alauddin said he bought urea at 186.25 per 50 kg bag at the mill gate and retailed it at Tk 230-235. His quota of urea was sold in two days because of heavy demand.

He got a quota of 4220 bags of urea, 500 bags of TSP and 720 bags or SSP, fixed by local union parishad chairman, Haji Mohammad Julhas. When contacted, Julhas said the Deputy Commissioner had fixed the price and the fertiliser was distributed through his offices. But the demand is high, he said. Aliuddin said he is now sell-

ing Egyptian origin SSP at Tk 272 per bag, Russian potash at Tk 340 and Australian SSP at Tk 292. He said he does not deal in smuggled Indian SSP.

The price of a 40 kg bag of seed potato which was Tk 100 at the beginning of the season has now come to Tk 800-850, he

Jasimuddin, another farmer told us at Kalma Bazar that farmers were not only facing the problem of short supply of fertiliser. The quality of seed was also poor this year, he said.





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## 90 under trial prisoners released

The government has re-leased 90 under-trial prisoners and also exempted punishment to some extent of other convicts in different jails of the country on the occasion of the Victory Day, said an official handout yesterday, reports UNB.

Few categories of convicted prisoners were given two months additional exemption in addition to normal remissions for each year of their jail

However, the prisoners convicted for murder, dacoity, rape. women and child repression, and anti-state activities will not be entitled to special remission or pardon.

The government hoped that the released prisoners would lead their life as good citizens and contribute to the socio-economic development of the country, the release added

#### Intellectuals

From Page 1 6 68 crore would be completed in two years.

The Prime Minister, at a simple ceremony at the Ganabhaban, also released a set of 16 commemorative postage stamps of Tk two denomination each on 16 martyred intellectuals, issued by Bangladesh

Central leaders of Awami League who placed wreaths at the Mirpur memorial included Foreign Minister Abdus Samad Azad, Water Resources Minister Abdur Razzak, LGRD and Cooperatives Minister and AL General Secretary Zillur Rahman. Sajeda Chowdhury, Mayor Mohammad Hanif, State Minister for Information Abu Sayeed, Dr Mostafa Jalal Mohiuddin and Akhtaruzzaman.

Central leaders of the main opposition party BNP led by party Secretary General Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan placed wreath at the Martyred Intellectuals Memorial. BNP also held a discussion in front of its central office in the afternoon.

Jatiya Party leaders led by its Secretary General and Minister for Communication Anwar Hussain Manju placed Besides, leaders of other po-

litical parties including left Democratic Front (LDF), Workers Party. Communist Party of Bangladesh, Gono Forum, JSD (Inu), JSD (Rob), National Awami Party and BSD placed wreaths in tribute to the martyred intellectuals.

Radio and Television put up special programmes highlighting the significance of the Day while national news dailies brought out special supplements on the occasion.

The Bangla Academy, Shilpakala Academy, Nazrul Institute and Shishu Academy organised separate programmes including discussions and cultural functions.

## SAARC FMs' meet in Delhi

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is due to inaugurate the conference at the Viggyan Bhaban on December 19. It is expected to be participated by all member na-

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The Bangladesh Foreign Minister is due to arrive in Delhi on December 18, it is learnt Besides, discussion on make

SAPTA more operative through expansion of the visit of items. a decision on appointment of trade and information is likely to be taken. Discussions on the existing

12 areas of cooperation and the SAARC International Programme of Action (IPA) shall also take place. Diplomatic sources here said

that the conference would also review the MOUs and the components of agreements between SAARC and international or ganisations like ESCAP. UNCTAD, UNICEF and UNDP.

SAARC is expected to sign a new agreement with other or ganisations like CIDA, the

sources added The foreign ministers shall also review the SAARC and the European Union (EU), cooperation agreement signed recently and review the SAARC Japan

special fund.

The budget of the SAARC Secretariat with around 9 lakh USD and expansion of its in Kathmandu are also likely to be reviewed.

Meanwhile, the meeting of the programming committee will be followed by the meet of the standing committee of foreign secretaries due to begin on December 16. Indian External Affairs secretary Salman Haider would preside over the meeting of the standing com-

Bangladesh Foreign Secretary Faruk Sobhan is due to be present on the three day meet of the standing committee.

The Nepalese government will give a proposal to hold the 10th SAARC summit in Kathmandu in November, 1998

### Special prayers today

A special munajat and prayer will be held in all mosques, mandirs, pagodas and other places of worships seeking peace, happiness and progress of the nation on the occasion of the Silver Jubilee of Independence and Victory Day. reports BSS.



Our tribute to the valiant freedom fighters on the Silver Jubilee occasion of our Victory Day



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