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Uphold true history of liberation war, urges Shahabuddin

MUJIBNAGAR (Meherpur), Apr 20. President Justice Shahabuddin Ahmed has urged researchers, historians and intellectuals to uphold the "real history" of the country's liberation war, reports BSS.

"It is pertinent to highlight this creditable and glorious event of our national life impartially and factually," the President said while inaugurating the state-level programme of the Historic Mujibnagar Day here on Thursday.

He formally hoisted the national flag as the last post was played in bugle in front of the huge monument built in memory of the formation of the Mujibnagar Government.

The President cautioned the political leadership against "narrow and petty partisan" politics which obstructs the national unity and progress and

Bangabandhu murder: Court to examine witnesses from today

By Staff Correspondent

The examination of prosecution witnesses in the Bangabandhu murder case is scheduled to start today in the Court of District and Session's Judge, Dhaka.

After the framing of charges against 20 accused in this case earlier on April 8, the District and Session's Judge, Kazi Golam Rasul, had fixed the date for hearing of prosecution witnesses on April 21.

Charges framed against the accused include criminal conspiracy, murder with common intention and destruction of evidence following the murder.

Of the 20 accused in the Bangabandhu murder case lodged with the Dharmadip Police Station last October, six

Hasina returns today

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina returned to Dhaka from Saudi Arabia this morning after performing Hajj, reports UNB.

She will be back by the first Biman flight carrying returnee Hajj pilgrims at 7.30 am.

Sheikh Hasina went to Saudi Arabia on April 14 to perform Hajj.

Meanwhile, Prime Minister Hasina on Saturday visited the shrines of Prophet Hazrat Mohammad (SM) at Madina after completing Hajj rituals.

She arrived at Madina on completion of the last formal Hajj ritual — 'Vidayee Towaf' — from Makkah.

At Madina, Sheikh Hasina offered *fateha* at the mazar of Hazrat Mohammad (SM) and said her prayers at Masjid-e-Nabawi. PM's office said.

Another report says, Hasina had a meeting with Prince Sultan Bin Abdul Aziz Al-Soud at his place in Mina on Thursday.

Both the leaders exchanged greetings of Eid and discussed matters of mutual interest, according to an official message received in Dhaka.

Article

Local Government and Bureaucracy: Meaningful Interface
by Hossain Zillur Rahman
Page 4

Focus
SSC question leakage: Genesis of the problem
Page 5

International
Selection of Gujral as head of govt: Media fear more political turmoil
Page 8

Business
Paris Club meets tomorrow: Pakistan seeks \$2.26b in aid pledges
Week opens on positive note at DSE
Pages 6, 7

Gujral takes oath as Indian prime minister today

NEW DELHI, Apr 20: Inder Kumar Gujral, the new United Front coalition leader, was appointed today as India's next prime minister, ending three weeks of chaotic political maneuvering, report agencies.

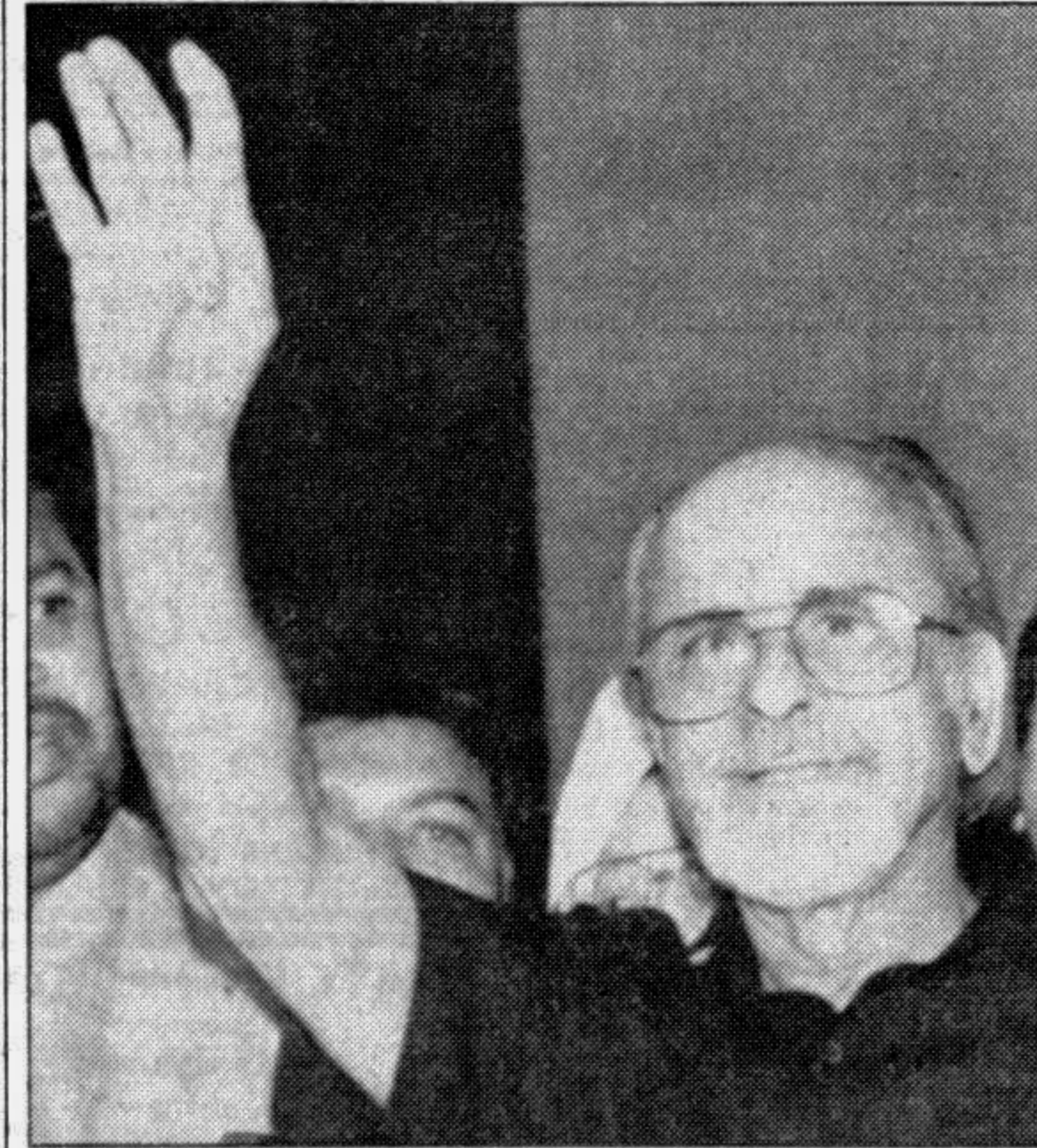
Gujral and his Cabinet will be sworn in at 10 am (0430 GMT) tomorrow by President Shankar Dayal Sharma. Press Trust of India and United News of India news agencies reported. A vote of confidence will be held

on April 22.

Gujral, 77, would be the third prime minister India has had since elections last year left no party with a clear parliamentary majority.

He succeeds Prime Minister H D Deve Gowda who lost a confidence vote last month as a feuding ally, Congress Party, withdrew support to his government.

Sharma's invitation came after both the Front and the



Inder Kumar Gujral waves after he was voted leader of the United Front coalition succeeding caretaker Prime Minister HD Deve Gowda on Saturday in New Delhi.

Congress assured him that the new government would be stable.

The Congress and the UF today agreed upon a 10-member coordination committee for ensuring smooth working of the new government for which the Congress will provide outside support.

Front convener Chandrababu Naidu and Congress President Sitaram Kesri are meeting the President to convey to him the agreement between

Editorial on Page 4
Gujral's profile Page 8

them for working out the coordination mechanism.

Karnataka Chief Minister J H Patil said there will be five members from each side on the committee to consider any grievances.

In case of differences, the Prime Minister and the Congress president would meet to resolve them.

Gujral said he along with the Congress president will work

Samad Azad felicitates Gujral

Dhaka noted with happiness the developments in New Delhi, facilitating Foreign Minister Inder Kumar Gujral to become Prime Minister of India, reports UNB.

Foreign Minister and acting president of Awami League, Abdus Samad Azad yesterday felicitated Inder Kumar Gujral on his election as the leader of the United Front in India.

Azad wished him all success in his new responsibility in the service to his nation and the country.

He also wished for good health and well being of Gujral.

Eid-ul-Azha celebrated

By Staff Correspondent

The holy Eid-ul-Azha, one of the greatest religious festivals of the Muslims, was celebrated in the country on Friday with due religious fervour.

Muslims across the country joined Eid congregations and prayed for continuous progress of the nation as well as of the Muslim Ummah. People sacrificed animals in a symbolic remembrance of Prophet Ibrahim's (AS) sacrifice for gratification of Almighty Allah. People also exchanged greetings and visited friends relatives and wellwishers on the Eid day.

In the capital, the main Eid congregation was held at the Jatiya Eidgah at 7:30 am where President Shahabuddin Ahmed offered his prayer. Judges of the Supreme Court, ministers, MPs, city Mayor, leaders of different political parties, senior officials and elite of the city also offered their Eid prayer at the Eidgah.

Four congregations were held at the Baitul Mokarram notional mosque. The biggest Eid congregation was held at

See Page 12 Col 1

Nine murdered in city during Eid vacation

At least nine people were murdered in the city in four days since Thursday when the Eid vacation began, reports UNB.

According to hospital sources, the victims were a railway police, an activist of opposition BNP, a juvenile, a disabled beggar, a grocer and four young men.

Police found a disabled beggar, Kabir, 25, with several stab injuries on his body on the Harjabagh cross-dam in Lalbagh thana at about 7 am yesterday.

Critically injured Kabir was rushed to Dhaka Medical College Hospital where he succumbed to his wounds at 12:15 pm.

Armed miscreants stabbed Zakir Hossain, 30, the owner of a grocery at Maghbazar, in the

small hours on Thursday as he refused them toll.

After giving treatment at a city clinic, the extortionists asked him not to go for any further treatment nor to lodge any complaint against them to police.

As his condition deteriorated on Saturday afternoon, Zakir's family members rushed him to Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) where attending doctors declared him dead.

Zakir, son of one Abdur Rashid Sheikh, was a resident of 12/T Baro Maghbazar Wireless Colony.

A gang of dacoits stabbed a hawilder of railway police, Ferz, 45, while coming from Gafargaon in Mymensingh district by Balaka Express train on

See Page 12 Col 7

Dhaka, Bangkok sign accord to avoid double taxation

Bangladesh and Thailand have agreed to expand economic cooperation under joint venture in new areas including fisheries, poultry, composite textile, dyeing and chemicals, reports UNB.

The newly identified areas also covered food processing, agro-based industries, leather, footwear, plastic and rubber, and tourism.

The agreement was reached at an official meeting between the two countries in the city yesterday afternoon.

Details will be worked out at the next meeting of Bangladesh-Thailand Joint Commission to be held in Bangkok at the earliest.

The meeting was followed by the signing of an agreement on avoidance of double taxation between the two countries.

State Minister for Foreign Affairs Abul Hasan Chowdhury and Thai Deputy Foreign Minister Pitak Intrauthyanant signed the accord.

3 murdered in N'ganj

From Our Correspondent
NARAYANGANJ, Apr 20: Three persons were murdered in separate incidents and the body of an unidentified man was recovered from Shitalakhya river in the town during the last four days, police and hospital sources said.

Abdul Bari, 55, a sub-assistant engineer and a resident of New Khanpur Bank Colony, was stabbed to death by an alleged mugger at Salimullah Road on Thursday night when he was returning home with his 11-year old daughter after shopping, police said. Bari was rushed to Narayanganj Sadar Hospital where doctors declared him dead.

When Bari was attacked, his daughter started screaming. People came in, caught the mugger, beat him and handed him over to Sadar thana police. He was later sent to jail custody by court, police said. Police identified the alleged mugger as Jewel and said there were other cases

See Page 12 Col 8

Muggers clash with police in city: 3 hurt

Two policemen and a mugger were injured in an encounter at Harjabagh in Lalbagh thana yesterday, hospital sources said, reports UNB.

The clash began when police arrested an alleged mugger from the area at about 5:30 am and his associates attacked the law-enforcers to snatch him.

The muggers exploded several handmade bombs leaving two cops injured and the arrested mugger snatched from them.

One of the muggers, however, was wounded in the encounter and police arrested him.

The wounded policemen — Idris Ali and Abul Hossain — and arrested snatcher Khokon, 20, were admitted to Dhaka Medical College Hospital.

Dialogue only if Ershad withdraws expulsion order: 3 rebel leaders

By Staff Correspondent

The three rebel leaders of the Jatiya Party (JP) have agreed to hold a discussion with party chief HM Ershad provided the expulsion order on Kazi Zafar Ahmed was withdrawn, said Shah Moazzem Hossain last night.

Mizanur Rahman Chowdhury, Kazi Zafar and Shah Moazzem, the three senior leaders of JP, staged a rebellion against party chief Ershad challenging his leadership on the party. Of the three, Kazi Zafar was expelled on grounds of anti-party activities.

Talking to The Daily Star, Shah Moazzem said that the three leaders had held a discussion among themselves yesterday morning that lasted for about two hours.

"There is a possibility of holding a discussion with party chief HM Ershad," said Moazzem adding, the expulsion order against Zafar has to be withdrawn before the dialogue takes place."

The rebellion of the three JP stalwarts was first reported on April 9. They had been demanding resignation of HM Ershad from the chairmanship of the

DU student drowns in Barisal

BARISAL, Apr 20: One Mohammad Naser, a final year student of Dhaka University, drowned at Shikarpur ferry ghat in the district on April 16. He was coming home from Dhaka to celebrate Eid-ul-Azha, reports BSS.

His body was recovered on April 18 from the river near the ferry ghat, police sources said. He was buried on the same day.

Holiday mood prevails

The capital city appeared in the grip of a holiday mood yesterday, the first working day after a three-day Eid vacation, reports UNB.

Hundreds of thousands of people left the densely populated Dhaka city to celebrate Eid-ul-Azha with their near and dear ones in villages and towns as the holiday began on April 17.

On the reopening day yesterday, attendance in general was very thin in the Secretariat, the headquarters of all ministries and offices of the Republic. However, attendance of senior officials were almost normal.

Attendance in other government offices in the capital was more or less the same.

Only about 25 per cent of the staff turned up and stayed in their respective offices for barely a couple of hours.

Secretariat sources said virtually no business was done in the offices. No visitor was seen crowding the Secretariat gates on the first working day after the 3-day holiday.

Turnouts of officers and employees in banks and commercial establishments were also thin. However, transaction in banks were not affected.

The Dhaka Stock Exchange swung back to business yesterday, as trading resumed following the Eid vacation. But the

Unika Devi for UN role in peace talks

From Nurul Alam
CHITTAGONG, Apr 20: Rajkumari Unika Devi, now seeking government's recognition to become the tribal chief of Mong Circle in the country's insurgency-torn southeastern Khagrachhari Hill District, pleaded for involving the United Nations (UN) and local tribal chiefs in the peace talks.

Talking to a group of visiting journalists at her palace at Manikchhari of Khagrachhari district, 60 km off the city, on the occasion of tribals' main festival 'biju', the would-be tribal queen Unika alleged that some foreign powers were involved in keeping the Chittagong Hill Tracts problem alive.

"So, to tackle these foreign powers including a big neighbour of Bangladesh, involvement of UN in the peace negotiations is essential," she said.

Unika observed that both government and Parbatya Chhattagram Jana Sanghati Samity (PCJSS), the parent organisation of Shantibahini, should come down to be flexible point from their rigid stands to find out a solution to CHT problem.

See Page 12 Col 1

See Page 12 Col 2

BCL activist killed in Ctg

From Staff Correspondent
CHITTAGONG, Apr 20: An activist of Bangladesh Chhatra League, Mamun, 25, was gunned down by some unidentified assailants this evening at Chawkbazar area, police said.

The assailants came in a motor-cycle, shot him dead while he was standing beside the Chawkbazar road and fled away, police said. Mamun died on the spot.

Police said the attack was sequel to an internal feud. None was arrested in this connection.

BGP activist shot dead

JHENIDAH, Apr 20: An activists of outlawed Biplobi Communist Party (BCP) was shot dead by unknown assailants at Bazar Gopalpur in Sadar thana on the Eid day, reports UNB.

Police said Rezaul Islam alias Babul, 28, of the same area came under attack at 9 pm while he along with co-worker Harun was returning home from the bazar.

Babul died on the spot. Harun was reported injured. Police suspected that Rezaul might have been killed by their rival party members.

A case was filed with Sadar police.

Road accidents kill 26 in four days

By Staff Correspondent

Twenty-six people were killed and 91 others injured in road accidents in Feni, Dhaka, Comilla Sirajganj, Rajshahi and Natore districts during the last four days.

At least 10 persons were killed and 27 others injured in a road accident at Lalpul under Sadar Thana of Feni district in the early hours of Thursday, according to BSS.

Of the dead, three were identified. They are: Md Sirajul Islam, son of the late Bashir Uddin Khan, Agarjami, Sirajganj, Selim, son of Md Yunus, Bara-arhat, Badar Awlia Mazar, Chittagong and Taslima Begum, daughter of Akhteruzzaman, Balladi, Nakla, Sherpur.

Police said, a Dhaka-bound bus of Rajib Enterprise met with the accident at 1 am at Lalpul, three kilometers from Feni on the Dhaka-Chittagong highway when it hit a road-side tree. Some of the passengers died on the spot. Others died on way to the hospital.

The injured were taken to the Feni Sadar Hospital and the Feni Medical College Hospital.

Seven people were killed and 20 others wounded in a road accident at Islamabad in Sarail thana of Brahmanbaria district

South Asia Development Triangle

Tremendous scope for reaching benefits to people: Kibria

Finance Minister Shah AMS Kibria yesterday said the South Asia Development Triangle, encompassing Bangladesh, Bhutan, Nepal and Eastern and north-eastern parts of India, had tremendous opportunities for reaching benefits to the people of the region, reports BSS.

The Finance Minister was speaking at the inaugural session of the preparatory meeting on South Asia Development Triangle initiated by the World Bank.

The finance minister said the opportunities, particularly in the fields of energy, trade, transport and environment sectors, were just waiting to be harnessed in the region.

Kibria said, "We have to remain cautious in not mixing up emotional issues with purely economic issues to reach the objective of ultimately bringing about benefits for the country's poverty-stricken people."

The World Bank Resident Mission chief Pierre Landell-Mills, Director General of SAARC in the Foreign Office Humayun A Kamal and Chief of Asia Environment Division of

the World Bank Maritta Koch-Weser also spoke at the inaugural session.

The World Bank Resident Mission Chief said the South Asian development Triangle initiative (SADT) region, home of about 500 million people, had the largest concentration of poverty.

But the concentrations of potential are so tremendous that there is no reason for the region to remain poor if the resources are tapped through joint efforts, he said.

Landell-Mills said the future of the nature of transboundary cooperation in the region would largely depend on the political solution, not on technical aspects, but the people from all groups of profession could help the political leaders to understand the opportunities existing in the region.

The South Asia Development Triangle initiative is an effort to help promote a vision of regional development opportunities that combines coherent strategic investment plans, supportive policy measures and greater synergy of local action

programmes across borders.

The initiative has met with some interest in the region in the new climate of closer cooperation and economic liberalisation, said an official hand-out.

Koch-Weser gave a brief resume on the SADT's concept, areas of possible cooperation and future of the region.

Koch-Weser said the World Bank would work as facilitator or catalyst to support country-based studies, analysis and action under SADT.

QK Ahmed of Bangladesh Unnayan Parishad, BG Verghese of the Centre for Policy Research, New Delhi, and Rehman Sobhan of the Centre for Policy Dialogue, also took part in the discussions highlighting the potentials of SADT.

They also discussed formulation of themes on the possible ways of cooperation in water resources, energy trade transport and environment sectors.

In the open floor discussions, former state minister Moyoee Khan, former diplomat Rezaul Karim and former minister

See Page 12 Col 8

See Page 12 Col 5