

Hasina-Sharif
official talks
today

Pakistan Prime Minister Mohammad Nawaz Sharif will hold official talks with Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina today, reports UNB.

After the talks, an agreement on cultural programme will be signed between the two countries.

Nawaz Sharif will also call on President Shahabuddin Ahmed at Bangabhaban, place wreaths at the National Memorial at Savar and say the Jumma prayers at Baitul Mukarram Mosque today.

The Pakistan Prime Minister will attend a banquet in the evening at Bangabhaban.

On Saturday, the Pakistan Prime Minister will have a trip to the Sundarbans. He will leave for Islamabad in the afternoon after concluding his three-day state visit.

Khaleda tells Gujral
Smuggling, trade
imbalance
causing concern

By Staff Correspondent

Leader of the Opposition in Jatiya Sangsad Begum Khaleda Zia yesterday conveyed her concerns to the visiting Indian Prime Minister IK Gujral over the "increased and institutionalised" smuggling of Indian goods into Bangladesh, causing an adverse impact on the country's industries.

The former prime minister and BNP chairperson called on the Indian Prime Minister at the Sonargaon hotel yesterday.

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Chetia's extradition
Dhaka to consider
request, says
Indian FS

Indian Foreign Secretary K Raghunath said here yesterday Bangladesh has assured that it would consider the Indian request to extradite arrested ULFA leader Anup Chetia to India, reports UNB.

Briefing newsmen on the bilateral talks between Indian Prime Minister IK Gujral and Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, he said, "We have taken up the matter with the Bangladesh government ... we want that this man be handed over to India."

Replies to a question, Raghunath said Foreign Minister Abdus Samad Azad has

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**Pak govt should
apologise for
war crimes in
'71: Nari Samaj**

By Staff Correspondent

Sammilito Nari Samaj (SNS) has demanded that the government of Pakistan seek apology for the crimes committed by the Pakistani armed forces during the liberation war of Bangladesh in 1971.

A delegation from the Nari Samaj submitted a memorandum containing the demand to the High Commission of Pakistan in Dhaka yesterday, says a press release.

The delegation included Shahin Anam, Helen Rahman, Shirin Akter, Sultana Akter Rubi and Natasha Ahmad.

In the memorandum, Nari

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Supplement

One page supplement
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Minister Newaz Sharif
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Sehri, Iftar timings

Ramadan	Jan	Sehri	Iftar
16	16	5-21	5-37
17	17	5-20	5-37
18	18	5-20	5-38

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**Indo-Pak
talks to
resume**

By Staff Correspondent

Indian Prime Minister IK Gujral and Pakistan Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif agreed to resume foreign secretary level talks to resolve the outstanding problems between the two countries, according to diplomatic sources.

The two premiers held nearly an hour-long meeting assisted by ministers and se-

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Fresh pledge for free trade area by 2001

By Staff Correspondent

Bangladesh, Pakistan and India have reiterated their commitment to establish a free trade area in South Asia by the year 2001 for ensuring economic emancipation of over one billion people living in the city last night.

The Declaration, a 15-page document, contained the genesis of the understanding reached at the first ever Three-Nation Summit.

They also emphasised the need for progressively reducing tariffs, quantitative restrictions, non-tariff and para-tariff barriers and other structural impediments to trade to achieve this goal.

This was stated in the joint

declaration adopted at the concluding session of the Three-Nation Business Summit in the city last night.

The Declaration, a 15-page document, contained the genesis of the understanding reached at the first ever Three-Nation Summit.

The Dhaka Declaration was read out by Bangladesh Foreign Secretary Mustafizur Rahman in presence of the prime ministers of the three countries.

At the outset of the session Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina

thanked Indian Prime Ministers IK Gujral, Pakistan Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif and the businessmen of the three countries for making the Summit

"I am convinced that the Dhaka Declaration will be a milestone in our road to prosperity," Hasina said.

The Declaration recognised

the importance of private sector and reaffirmed the intention to encourage private sector to contribute increasingly in the areas of trade, investment and finance.

The three heads of government noted the inadequacy of communication facilities and said "It was a major hindrance to closer economic cooperation."

The Declaration stressed the importance of developing infrastructure and adequate communication network for reinforcing and accelerating the process of economic cooperation.

Noting that there was considerable scope for promoting investment through mutual co-

operation, it stated that there were opportunities for setting up joint ventures for serving both domestic and export markets.

It underscored the need for arrangements for investment promotion and protection, avoidance of double taxation and a mechanism for settling commercial disputes.

The heads of government agreed on the need for harmonisation of relevant laws, rules and regulations of the three countries for promoting foreign

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'Time for pursuing common interests, burying bitterness'

Star Business Report

Invoking the ancient ties of the three countries shared for centuries, the Prime Ministers of Bangladesh, India and Pakistan yesterday told a unique conference of what they called captains of trade and industry that it was time for them to pursue common interests together forgetting the days of bitterness in their modern history.

Dubbed Business Summit, the first of its kind in South Asia, the conference in Dhaka brought together top government and industry leaders who highlighted a pro-cooperation agenda to fight poverty in the region, home to a fifth of humankind.

They spoke of the countries' strategic locations, vast markets, huge human labour, cheaper skills and resources as their comparative advantages which could help these nations compete in the new global economic regime.

Globalisation, they said, was posing a new threat to this underdeveloped region, once prosperous but whose growth, as IK Gujral of India put it, "was stunted by colonialisation".

While they resolved to work unitedly, they also identified the problems. Lack of commun-

ication networks, poor infrastructure and energy shortage were among the key barriers for the countries to move ahead, they said.

One point was loud and clear: cooperation among the countries would be the key.

"We can overcome our poverty and bring prosperity to our region if we can forge strong economic links among ourselves," said Bangladesh's Sheikh Hasina, who conceived

Texts of speeches by summit leaders on pages 6-7

the summit about a year ago. "We must work together."

"We will carefully study the ideas and proposals that emerge from this important meeting so that these can be given practical shape," Mohammad Nawaz Sharif of Pakistan said.

Gujral, senior to his two counterparts by almost a generation, quoted from the Rig Veda, the oldest of the treatises of the subcontinent, to underline his commitment. "May we walk in step together. / May we speak in one voice..."

The three leaders also referred to specific issues and put

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Crucial tie for Pakistan today

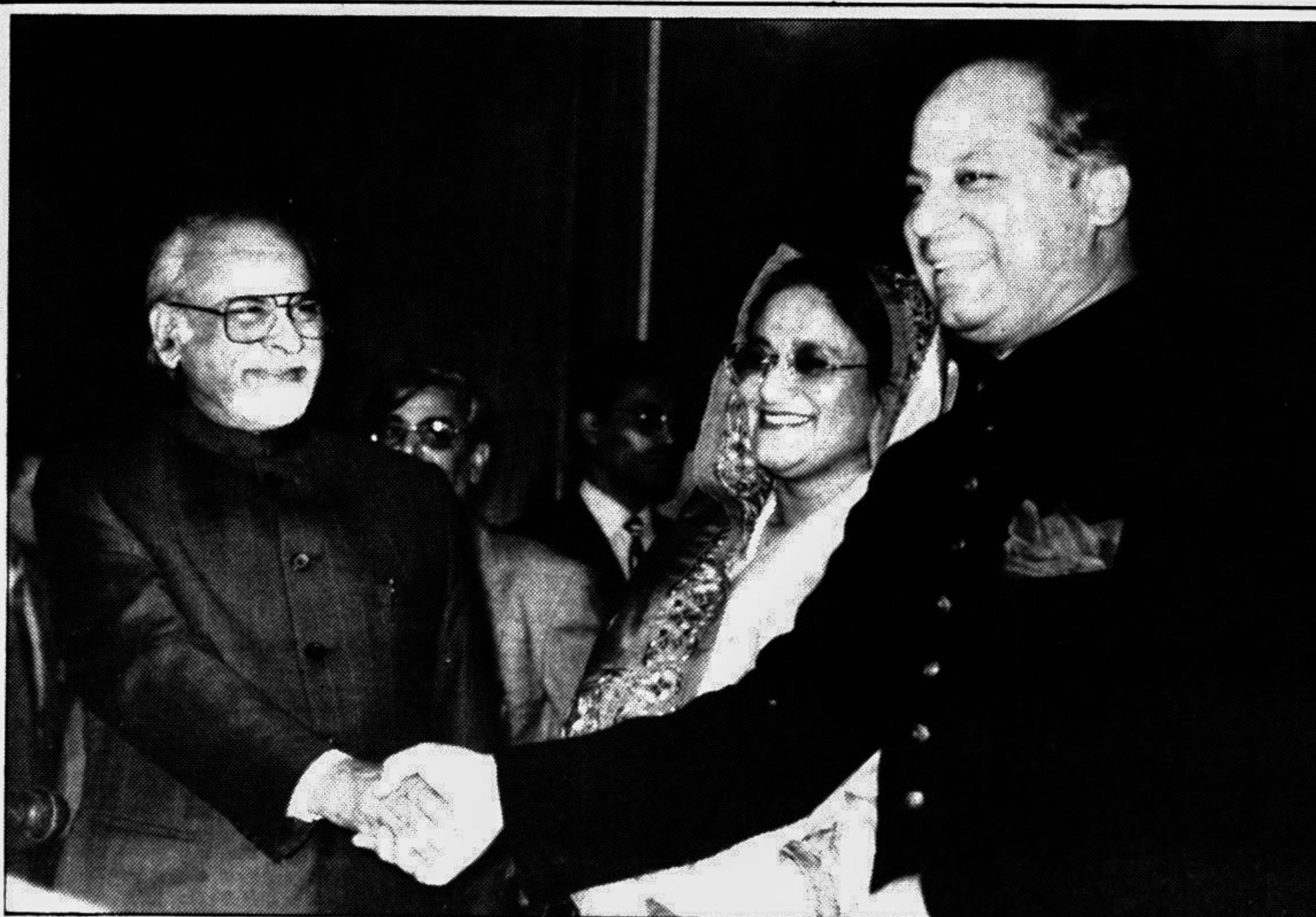
Arch rivals India and Pakistan will meet in the second final of the Coca-Cola Independence Cup Cricket at the Dhaka National Stadium today, reports UNB.

India is already one up in the three-match series after winning the first final by an emphatic eight wickets.

Pakistan must win the match today to keep in contention for the trophy. But Sachin Tendulkar, the prolific scorer of the tournament, may again turn to be the main headache for Pakistan, experts observe.

Both the Pakistani manager

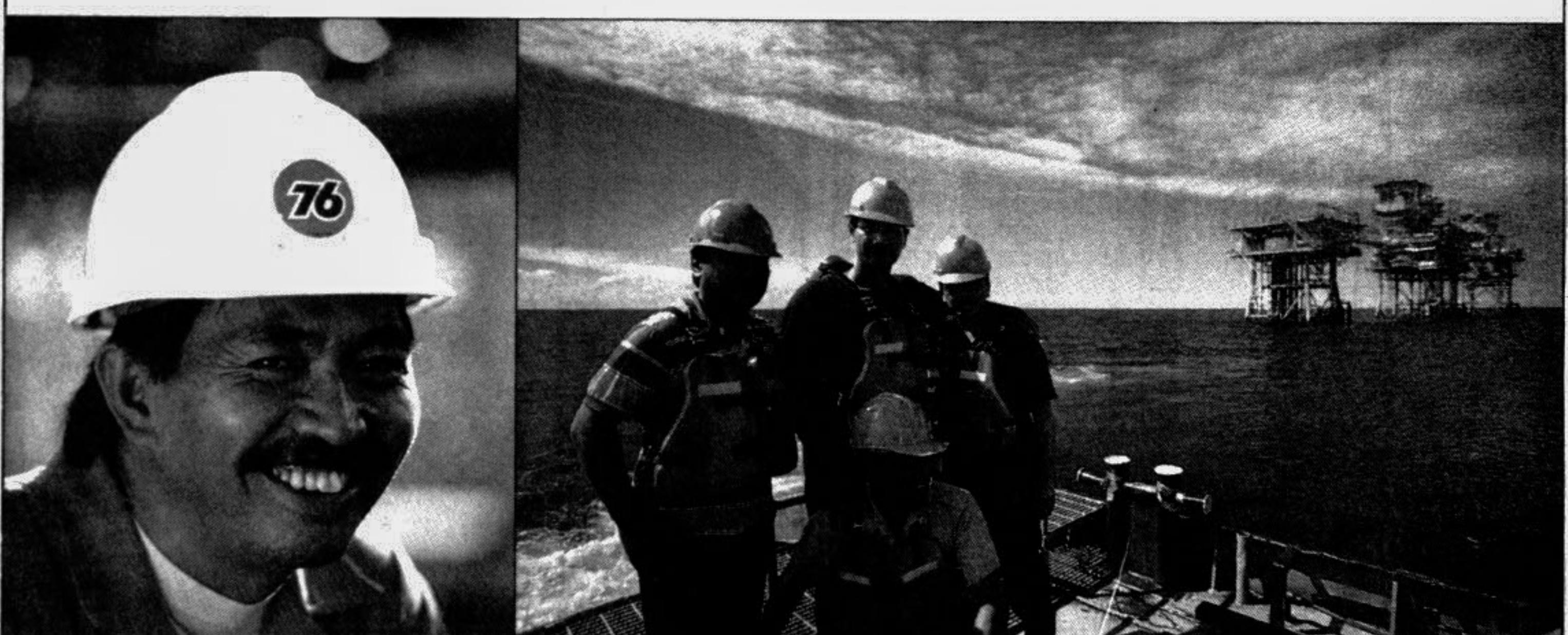
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Indian Prime Minister IK Gujral and Pakistan Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif shaking hands after the joint declaration was adopted at the concluding session of three-nation Business Summit at Hotel Sonargaon in the city yesterday. Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina looks on.

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Make papers on Bofors scam public, demands Sonia

five of them from the opposition, but "the complete truth" was yet to come out.

Sonia Gandhi's remarks at the rally were the first she has made about allegations Rajiv Gandhi took kickbacks from the Swedish arms manufacturer, Bofors, when India bought artillery guns in 1986.

"I will be the happiest person the day the Bofors papers are made public," said Sonia Gandhi, who has emerged from closely guarded privacy to try to revive her husband's once powerful Congress.

Congress leaders have stalled the release of a govern-

ment report on Bofors.

Congress, weakened by corruption scandals and infighting, is expected to lose more ground to the rival Bharatiya Janata Party in February-March elections.

The Hindu nationalist Bharatiya Janata has threatened to resurrect the Bofors scandal that led to the 1989 election defeat of Rajiv Gandhi, who was assassinated in 1991.

Huge cardboard cutouts of the Gandhis towered over Sonia Gandhi at the rally. She also confronted Bharatiya Janata accusations that she wasn't a

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