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The Daily Star

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VOL. VIII NO. 3 REGD. NO. DA 781

MAGH 3 1404 BS.

DHAKA FRIDAY, JANUARY 16, 1998

RAMADAN 16, 1418 HIJRI

12 PAGES PLUS MAGAZINE PRICE TAKA 9.00

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 agree-
ment 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 Memo-
rial at Savar and say the
Jumma prayers at Baitul
Muqarram Mosque today.

The Pakistan Prime Minis-
ter 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 af-
ternoon 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 I K Gujral over
the "increased and institution-
alised" smuggling of Indian
goods into Bangladesh, causing
an adverse impact on the coun-
try's industries.

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

See Page 12 Col 4

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 re-
quest to extradite arrested
ULFA leader Bipin Chetia to
India, reports UNB.

Briefing newsmen on the bi-
lateral talks between Indian
Prime Minister I K 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."

Replying to a question,
Raghunath said Foreign Minis-
ter Abdul Samad Azad has
See Page 12 Col 2

Pak govt should apologise for war crimes in

'71: Nari Samaj

By Staff Correspondent

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

A delegation from the Nari
Samaj submitted a memoran-
dum containing the demand to
the High Commission of Pakis-
tan 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
See Page 12 Col 3

Inside Today

Article

From Despair to Hope: A Bleak Journey for the Rural Poor

Column: Do I Dare
by AZM Obaidullah
Khan
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International

UNSC backs arms
inspectors, deplores
Iraqi action
Page 5

Supplement

One page supplement
on "The visit of
Pakistan Prime
Minister Nawaz Sharif
to Bangladesh"
Page 8

Sehri, Ifar timings

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

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 eco-
nomic emancipation of over
one billion people living in the
region.

They also emphasised the
need for progressively reducing
tariffs, quantitative restric-
tions, 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 con-
cluding session of the Three-
Nation Business Summit in the
city last night.

The Declaration, a 15-para
document, contained the gene-
sis 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 minis-
ters of the three countries.

At the outset of the session
Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina

thanked Indian Prime Minis-
ters I K Gujral, Pakistan Prime
Minister Nawaz Sharif and the
businessmen of the three coun-
tries for making the Summit

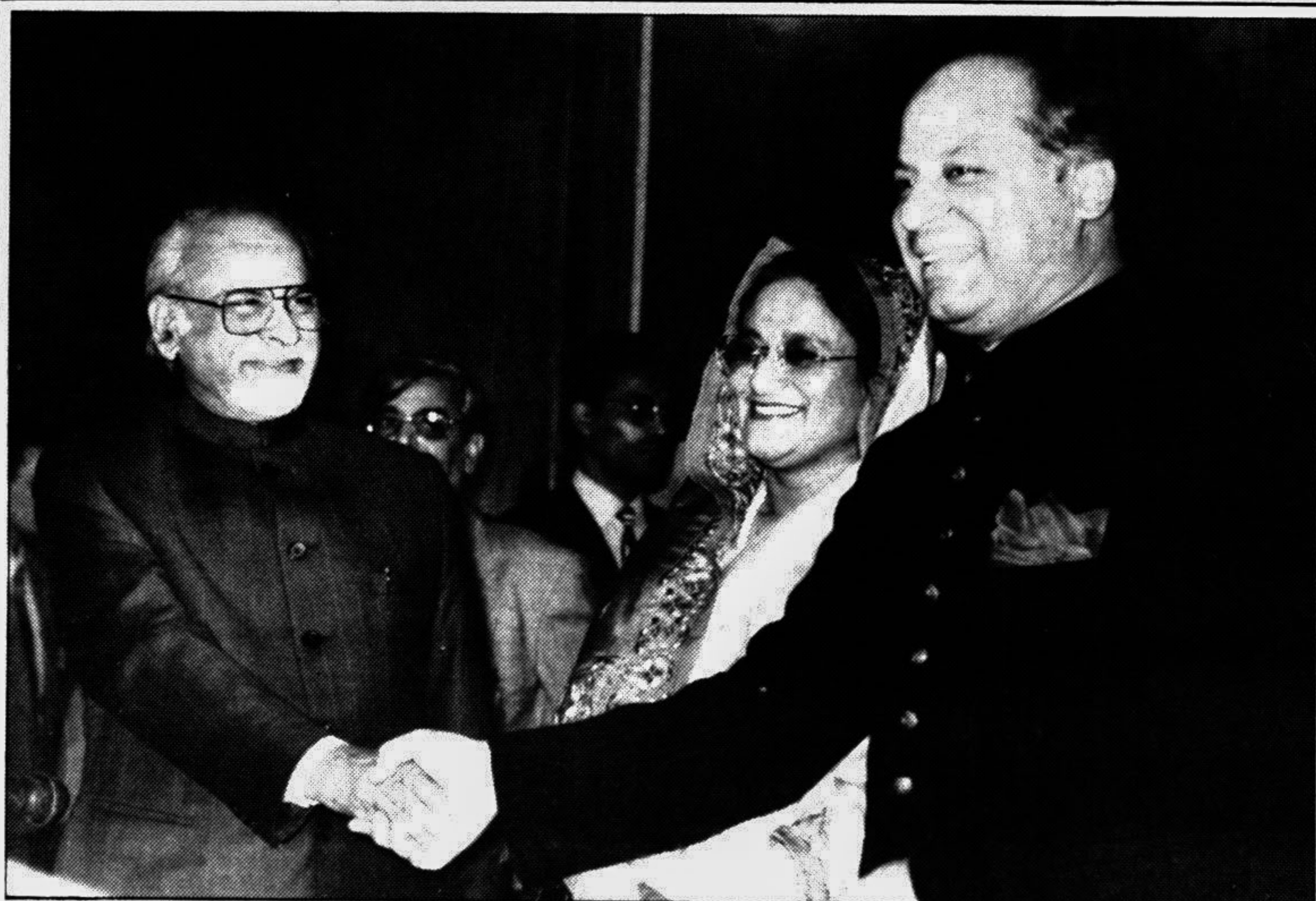
"I am convinced that the
Dhaka Declaration will be a
milestone in our road to pros-
perity," Hasina said.

The Declaration recognised

Dhaka Declaration adopted

success.
She urged all to realise that
the future of our prosperity lies
in collective endeavour to im-
prove the living standards of
our people."

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



Indian Prime Minister I K 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. —Star photo

'Time for pursuing common interests, burying bitterness'

Star Business Report

Invoking the ancient ties be-
tween the three countries shared for
centuries, the Prime Ministers of
Bangladesh, India and Pakis-
tan yesterday told a unique
conference of what they called
captains of trade and industry
that it was time for them to pur-
sue 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 govern-
ment and industry leaders who
highlighted a pro-cooperation
agenda to fight poverty in the
region, home to a fifth of hu-
mankind.

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

Globalisation, they said, was
posing a new threat to this un-
derdeveloped region, once pros-
perous but whose growth, as I K
Gujral of India put it, "was
stunted by colonialisation".

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

nication networks, poor infras-
tructure 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 our-
selves," 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 gen-
eration, quoted from the Rig
Veda, the oldest of the treatises
of the subcontinent, to under-
line his commitment. "May we
walk in step together. / May we
speak in one voice ..."

The three leaders also re-
ferred to specific issues and put
See Page 12 Col 2

Indo-Pak talks to resume

By Staff Correspondent

Indian Prime Minister I K
Gujral and Pakistan Prime
Minister Nawaz Sharif agreed
to resume foreign secretary
level talks to resolve the out-
standing problems between the
two countries, according to
diplomatic sources.

The two premiers held
nearly an hour-long meeting
assisted by ministers and se-
See Page 12 Col 1



Crucial tie for Pakistan today

Arch rivals India and Pak-
istan will meet in the second fi-
nal of the Coca-Cola Indepen-
dence Cup Cricket at the Dhaka
National Stadium today, re-
ports UNB.

India is already one up in the
three-match series after win-
ning the first final by an em-
phatic eight wickets.
Pakistan must win the
match today to keep in con-
tention 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
See Page 12 Col 7

Shantibahini begins arms surrender Feb 9

By Shehab Ahmed

Shantibahini, armed wing
of Parbatia Chattagram Jana
Sanghati Samity (PCJSS), will
formally lay down arms at a
ceremony at Khagrachhari sta-
dium on February 9.

Jyotirindriya Bodhipriya
Lama alias Shantu Lama,
Chairman of the PCJSS, will
lead the first batch of 600 Shan-
tibahini guerrillas, including
400 'regulars' at the surrender
ceremony.

This was disclosed by Abul
Hasnat Abdullah MP, Convenor
of the National Committee on
Chittagong Hill Tracts
(NCHT), after three and half
hours of talks with a PCJSS
delegation led by Shantu Lama
at Khagrachhari Circuit House

yesterday, our Khagrachhari
Correspondent Shuvra Jyoti
Chakma reported.

Abdullah told newsmen that
after the first batch, the second
batch will surrender at
Baghaichhari Pilot High
School ground at Baghaichhari
in Rangamati on February 16,
the third group at Dighinala
Baradom High School ground
February 22 and the last batch
at Dudukchhara in Panchhari
thana on February 28.

But Abdullah did not say
how many regular and irregu-
lar members of Shantibahini
will surrender. Nor Shantu
Lama would disclose anything
in this regard.

The meeting which took

place under tight security began
at 12-15 pm after arrival of the
PCJSS delegation, flown from
Dudukchhara by a military he-
licopter. They returned to their
temporary headquarters at
about 5 pm.

The meeting also discussed
other details of the December 2
CHT accord which stipulated
that Shantibahini will submit
rolls of their armed cadres and
complete inventory of their
weaponry within 45 days of the
agreement, which ended yester-
day.

It will be followed by a gen-
eral amnesty to allow the for-
mer rebels to return to normal
life. They will be provided with
See Page 12 Col 5

BNP yet to decide on going back to JS

By Staff Correspondent

The BNP Parliamentary
Party (BNPPP) yesterday con-
tinued to discuss the issue of
the party's return to Jatiya
Sangsad.

"We'll decide on the matter
after hearing all the party legis-
lators. For this, we need some
more time", BNP chief and
Leader of the Opposition in
Parliament Begum Khaleda Zia
told the waiting newsmen at the
end of yesterday's discussion.

"How can we finalise on the
issue unless all of our MPs give
their opinion?", she asked re-
sponding to a query if her party
was going back to the House.

In yesterday's two-and-half-
hour discussion commencing at
7 pm, all but one of the speakers
suggested that the party should
go back to the House to register
their protests against the gov-

ernment, in addition to con-
tinuing the agitation outside.
Col (Retd) Akbar Hossain,
Abul Hossain, Kabir Hossain,
Akhtar Hamid Siddiqi and
Mozahar Hossain spoke in
favour of the BNP's joining the
parliament sessions while
Salahuddin Quader Chowdhury
opposed such a move.

With them, the main oppo-
sition party in the parliament
heard 35 out of its 113 lawmak-
ers in the staggered discussions
over the last three days.

Adjourned at 9:30 pm, the
BNP Parliamentary Party
meeting will resume at 3:30 pm
on Saturday. Party chief Begum
Zia was in the chair at the meet-
ing held at the ninth floor con-
ference room of the opposition
in the Sangsad Bhaban.

See Page 12 Col 5

Poor run rate is the spoiler

Sports Reporter

Bangladesh recorded a sen-
sational three-wicket win over
England in the MTN World
Youth Cup in Pretoria, South
Africa yesterday.

With this win, their second
in three group league matches,
Bangladesh finished at par with
England and New Zealand. But
they failed to make it to the
eight-team Cup final because of
poor run-rate.

Bangladesh recorded a hard-
fought four-wicket win against
a lowly-rated Namibia in their
inaugural match on Tuesday be-
fore losing badly to New
Zealand, who won the match by
93 runs.

According to a faxed mes-
sage received here last night,
Bangladesh, chasing an Eng-
land total of 223 all out in 49.3
overs failed to make it in 38
overs.

They scored 225 for seven in
See Page 12 Col 6

Make papers on Bofors scam public, demands Sonia

BANGALORE, Jan 15: Sonia
Gandhi today asked the gov-
ernment to make public papers
relating to alleged kickbacks in
the Bofors gun deal, name the
persons involved and take ac-
tion against them, report agen-
cies.

"My husband was a victim of
a malicious and slanderous ac-
cusation in the Bofors case," Raj-
iv Gandhi's widow told a public
meeting kicking off the Con-
gress campaign in Karnataka
for the Lok Sabha polls.

Breaking her silence over
the alleged Bofors kickbacks is-
sue, she said six governments
had come and gone since then,

five of them from the opposi-
tion, 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 manufac-
turer, 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 pow-
erful Congress.

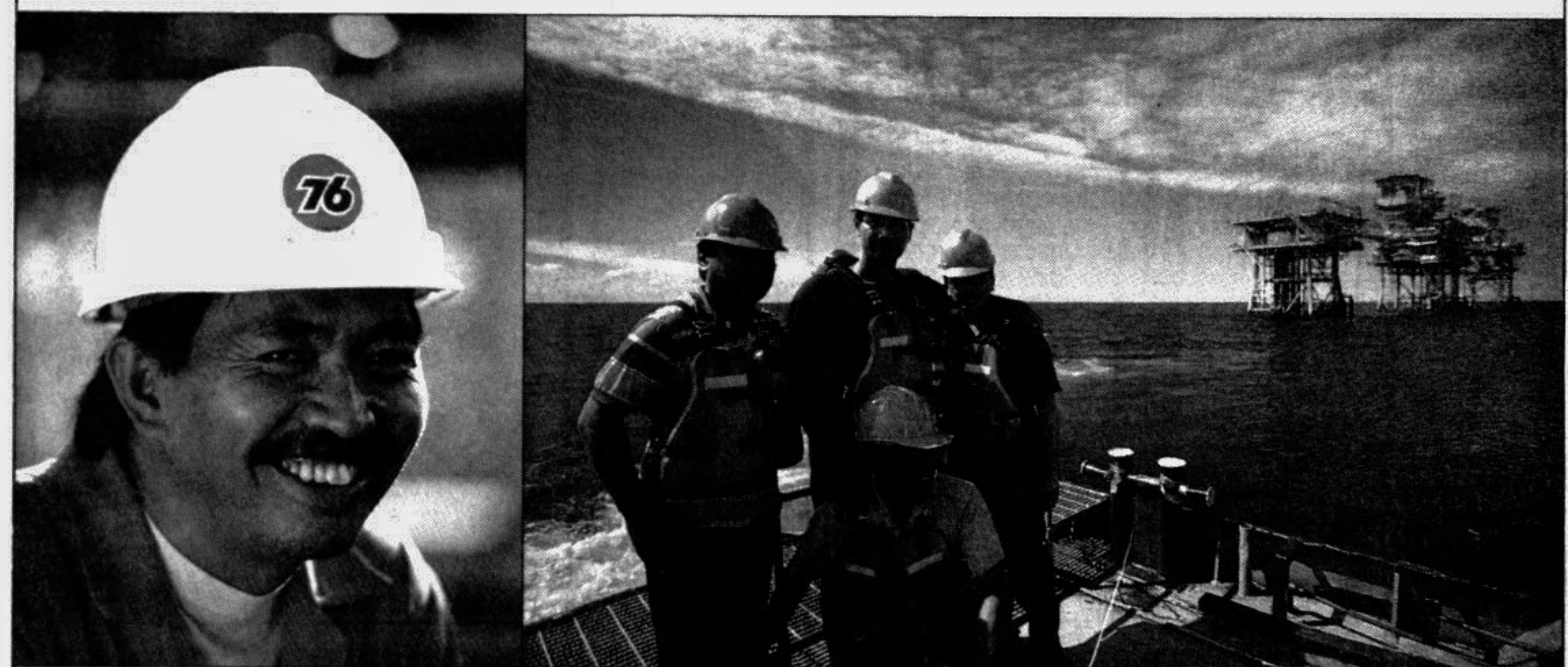
Congress leaders have
stalled the release of a govern-

ment report on Bofors.
Congress, weakened by cor-
ruption scandals and inflight-
ing, is expected to lose more
ground to the rival Bharatiya
Janata Party in February-
March elections.

The Hindu nationalist
Bharatiya Janata has threat-
ened 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
See Page 12 Col 6

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