

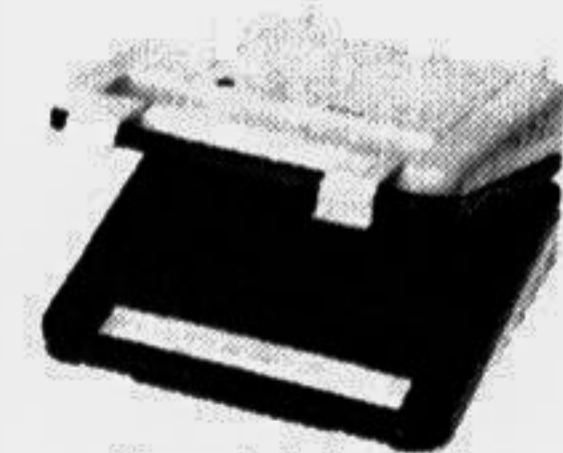
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## Heavy traffic jam in city

The city witnessed a heavy traffic congestion that caused untold suffering to the dwellers, reports UNB.

The traffic jam virtually paralysed the central Dhaka twice - at noon and in the evening.

All roads in Malibagh, Mouchak, Shantinagar, Kakrail, Maghbazar, Paltan, Motijheel, Tikatuli, Bangla Motor, SAARC Fountain, New Market, Elephant Road and other areas were jammed with vehicles. The jam continued for about two hours.

A senior traffic officials attributed the jam to various reasons, including Eid shopping spree and the weekend holiday. The congestion took a serious turn when some roads were blocked by police to facilitate the movement of VIPs attending the three-nation business summit held at Hotel Sonargaon.

Police said the Dhaka city is already overcrowded with vehicles while the strength of the traffic police is too inadequate to control the situation.

## One shot dead in Jhenidah

JHENIDAH, Jan 15: One person was shot dead in the district on Wednesday, reports UNB.

Police and family sources said a group of armed miscreants, allegedly members of outlawed party, raided the house of Saidul Islam Liton, 25, a deed writer, at Bhagabannagar village in sadar thana at 9:30 pm.

The attackers shot him dead on the spot and left the place.

## DUTA will always welcome presence of govt official at any programme

By DU Correspondent

The Dhaka University Teachers' Association (DUTA) will always welcome the presence of any state and government official at any programme for education, research, housing and development projects for the teachers of the university.

The decision was taken at a meeting of the DUTA executive committee held Tuesday with its president Prof AYM Yusuf Haider in the chair, says a press release.

The meeting discussed the "indecent comment" made by the leaders of BNP-backed Jatiyatabad Chhatra Dal (JCD) after newspaper reports that the Prime Minister would visit the university on the occasion of inaugurating a 14-storey residential building for the teachers of the university.

The meeting also decided to convene a general meeting for working out a plan regarding pay-scale, marginal benefits and other interests of the teachers of the university if the general members of DUTA agree, the release said.

## Indo-Pak talks

From page 1

Senior officials. They also had nearly 20 minutes of one-to-one meeting.

The Pakistan Premier was assisted at the bilateral talks by Foreign Minister Gauhar Ayub Khan and State Minister for Foreign Affairs Siddiq Kanju. The Indian premier was assisted by State Minister for Commerce B B Ramaiya.

Yesterday's exclusive meeting between Gujral and Sharif was the fourth between the two prime ministers. Earlier they met at Male, New York and Edinburgh.

The foreign secretaries of the two countries, as a follow-up of the Gujral-Sharif talks, also met briefly immediately afterwards.

They briefed newsmen separately about the Gujral-Sharif meeting and also about their talks.

Both the foreign secretaries said that the talks concentrated on reviving the dialogue between India and Pakistan, which has been stalled for several months.

Indian Foreign Secretary K Raghunath said that the two sides decided to continue the Secretary-level talks. A date for the talks would be fixed shortly, he said.

Pakistan Foreign Secretary Shamsad Ahmed said, "Today also I discussed with my Indian counterpart and discussed ways of operationalising a dialogue." He added, "Of course there is no disagreement about this dialogue. It is only a matter of procedure. We did exchange views but given the complexities of the issues, one has to be patient."

Pakistan and India decided to hold Secretary-level dialogue when the two sides met in March last year. Kashmir issue is one of the main items on the agenda of Indo-Pakistan dialogue.

About the bilateral talks between Pakistan and India, sources said that issues like visa facilities, trade liberalisation and creation of more opportunities for boosting business were discussed.

The two sides expressed their strong desire to bridge the gap between SAPTA and SAFTA.



Leader of the Opposition in Jatiya Sangsad Begum Khaleda Zia called on Indian Prime Minister IK Gujral at his hotel suite in the city yesterday. —Star photo

## Sharif praises Dhaka's success in achieving higher growth rate

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina met with Pakistan Prime Minister Miah Mohammad Nawaz Sharif at his hotel suite in the city yesterday afternoon and discussed matters of mutual interest, reports UNB.

Nawaz Sharif thanked Sheikh Hasina for hosting the first ever three nation business summit and said whatever decisions will be taken in the summit should be implemented.

He said the exchange of ideas and cooperation between the private sectors of the three countries will bring about sustainable improvement in their economies.

Nawaz Sharif praised Hasina for her leadership and the success of Bangladesh in achieving higher growth rate.

Sheikh Hasina said the business summit will help a lot

in bringing about improvements in the condition of the peoples of the three South Asian countries.

The Prime Minister said she will direct the ministries concerned to help implement the decisions of the business summit.

She said, "the business community should not only look into their own interests, but also the interests of the common people as a whole to improve their living condition."

"We must do something for the common people of the region so that they can have a better life," she said and added: "We must induce our business community to do so."

Sheikh Hasina referred to the recently held local body elections in the country, which generated much enthusiasm among the rural people, particularly the womenfolk who directly took part in the elections.

## Ershad calls on Gujral

Jatiya Party Chairman HM Ershad made a courtesy call on visiting Indian Prime Minister IK Gujral at his hotel suite yesterday, reports UNB.

During the meeting, they discussed matters relating to mutual interests, said a party press release.

The Indian Premier was learnt to have expressed keen interest about the present political situation of Bangladesh, particularly the role of Jatiya Party.

JP Presidium member and its Foreign Affairs Committee Chairman Major Gen (ret'd) Kazi Golam Dastagir was present.

## Extradition

From page 1  
stated that the Bangladesh government would look into the matter.

Asked whether the questions of buying natural gas from Bangladesh and transit facility to India came up during the talks, he said all these matters, including development of infrastructure, transport and communications, were discussed.

"We want improvement of economic conditions of the two countries... the talks focussed on the economic cooperation, trade and investment in a good atmosphere for mutual benefit," the Indian Foreign Secretary said.

## Time for pursuing common interests

From page 1  
forward their ideas.

Hasina suggested a three-nation task force made up of both government and business representatives and a mid-year meeting of economic ministers to follow up on the Dhaka Summit deliberations.

She also spoke of an Asian energy grid, which could "eventually extend all the way from Turkmenistan to Singapore."

On cooperation in the energy sector, Gujral proposed a SAARC study on the possibility of a regional electricity grid.

Sharif recommended a market study for increased trade and called for "transparency in the trading practices of the regional countries."

He also suggested setting up of a mechanism for quick disposal of commercial disputes, a point also made by the two others.

The non-sensory speeches from the heads of government came in a simple 100-minute opening ceremony officiated by host Prime Minister Hasina.

They were joined by the chiefs of the three national chambers who also delivered statements.

Later, the chamber delegates and senior ministers from the three countries sat for a two-hour "business session", chaired by Bangladesh Foreign Minister Abdus Samad Azad.

trade, and the Indians came up with plans to improve the energy scene.

The three prime ministers also outlined their agenda to promote intra-regional trade and investment and bring in capital from outside the region.

They referred to regional blocs like the EU, NAFTA and ASEAN which could be emulated under the framework of SAARC.

The Indian prime minister focused on a faster trade liberalisation process under the framework of SAARC Preferential Trading Arrangement or SAPTA.

"The goal of achieving a Free Trade Area in South Asia has been accepted, and the time frame for achieving it advanced to the year 2001. Let us, today, reaffirm our commitment to work jointly to achieve this goal, Gujral said.

In line with his statement, Gujral offered to lift "quantitative restrictions on agreed items of interest for Bangladesh and other Least Developed SAARC Countries."

Another common emphasis from the three prime ministers fell on attracting foreign capital.

Said Sharif: "In the emerging international economic environment our hope of socio-economic prospect lies in our ability to attract foreign investment. We need to focus attention on creating an environment which would inspire the confidence of investors and businessmen."

## Khaleda

From page 1

According to a BNP press release, Khaleda Zia also mentioned the existing huge trade imbalance between the two countries and urged Gujral to look into the matter and take necessary measures to rectify the situation.

The press release, signed by the party's assistant office secretary Enamul Hossain, said the Indian Premier agreed that "trade imbalance and smuggling are the two difficult problems that need to be tackled."

"As Bangladesh has plenty of natural resources, it can export value added products to India, such as fertiliser, petrochemicals and electricity etc. produced out of natural gas," it further quoted Gujral as telling Begum Zia.

In response, the BNP chief said that the total quantum of available gas in the country was yet to be determined and that export of these finished products, which will take time, could be made only after meeting the domestic requirement.

Begum Zia further stated that it is in the general interest of all people to expand mutually beneficial trade ties and that is why she was one who concluded the SAPTA agreement within the framework of SAARC during her regime.

The two leaders also held one-on-one talks for 20 minutes during the 40-minute meeting. In the talks, N N Vohra, principal secretary to the Indian Premier, K Raghunath, the Indian Foreign Secretary, and Dev Mukharjee, Indian High Commissioner to Bangladesh, were with Gujral while Begum Zia was aided by the BNP Secretary General Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan and former ambassador M M Rezaul Karim.

The memorandum pointed out that the women's movement and other progressive people in Pakistan have also started to express concern in national, regional and international forums and "consider the violence committed against women of Bangladesh by Pakistani armed forces a shameful testimony in the history of their nation."

Violence against women in war and situation of armed conflict has been recognised as war crimes in different international conferences, Nari Samaj said, adding "The 1995 Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing made clear in the Platform of Action that violence against women during war and armed conflict constitutes a war crime."

Continued silence over the 'genocide of unarmed people and rape of women of Bangladesh would make a mockery of the principles of democracy and human rights.'

That your people, including yourself are trying so hard to achieve," the memorandum said.

Hospital sources said the injured were identified as Md Asraf, 25, and Fayem, 18. They were admitted to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital.

A gang of about eight young men led by Lutfar Samrat went to the shop of one Abdul and demanded Tk 50 thousand as toll at about 2:30 pm, sources added.

## Razzak briefs Gujral about necessity of Ganges Barrage

Water Resources Minister Abdur Razzak called on the visiting Indian Prime Minister, IK Gujral, at his hotel suite yesterday, reports UNB.

They discussed matters relating to mutual interest and exchanged views on the development of water sector in Bangladesh.

Abdur Razzak briefed the Indian prime minister about the necessity and importance of the construction of the Ganges barrage in Bangladesh.

He requested personal intervention of the Indian Premier so that the Indian government attend the international seminar on the proposed Ganges Barrage project to be held in Dhaka on March 8-9 this year.

The Indian Prime Minister said his country would extend all-out support and cooperation in this regard.

## 3 die after drinking spirit in Jessore

JESSORE, Jan 15: Three persons died after drinking poisonous spirit at Manirampur here last night, reports BSS.

The dead were identified as Ghoronath, 40, Osman 40, and Motiur, 45. And three more were hospitalised. All of them took spirit at a homeopathic shop.

Meanwhile, the bodies of a kidnapped youth was recovered from Belpara area of the town today. Belpara, 23, was kidnapped by a gang of 4-5 miscreants yesterday.

## BNPPP

From page 1

Meanwhile, the BNP National Executive Committee (BNPEC) is scheduled to meet, after a long span of one year, on Sunday to discuss the party's return to parliament. Party MPs, members of its standing committee, members of the party chief's council of advisers and presidents of the district committees have been invited to attend the meeting.

The BNPEC meeting is seen as very crucial as it is expected to involve the party leaders of different tiers before finalising on the issue.

BNP has been abstaining from attending parliament sessions since August 30 last year to press home its 14-point charter of demands including more places in the parliamentary standing committee on various ministries and more time to speak on the floor of the House.

## Arms surrender

From page 1

Tk 50,000 each as grant to restart civilian life. Further details were not given. It is likely that Prime Minister Hasina will attend the surrender ceremony, according to hill sources.

After the surrender of arms by about 2500 'regulars' of Shantabahini, the government will form the Regional Council which will oversee administration, law and order and development in the three CHT districts. The council will be formed with nominated members, initially by the three districts.

Separate bills in these regard will be placed before parliament during its current session.

accompanied by parallel efforts to do away with non-tariff barriers that impede and distort trade.

"Our failure to do so will only accentuate the prevalent imbalances to the detriment of our region, it must be ensured that economic cooperation is on the basis of a level playing field, mutuality of interest and transparency."

In her turn, Hasina renewed Bangladesh's plea for "zero tariff access to exports" from four South Asian LDCs into India. She made a similar, but milder, request to Pakistan.

As they talked business, all three leaders put the spotlight on the common culture and heritage that gave the countries an edge, geographical proximity aside.

Gujral, who called the first-ever such meeting a "truly historic occasion", said: "From the sophisticated urban design of Mohenjo Daro and Harappa, and the technological wizardry of the Ashokan Pillars, to the amazing fineness of the Dhaka Muslims, our peoples, our peoples have been known through much of human history for their creativity and productive skills."

"Our growth, however, was stunted by colonisation, which left us impoverished, even as Europe and North America were making the transition to industrialised societies. Today, we have a unique opportunity to work together to overcome poverty and accelerate economic growth for the shared benefit of our people."

## Gujral assures Hasina

## Delhi to remove barriers to full implementation of water treaty

India has assured Bangladesh of removing all barriers to full implementation of the Ganges water sharing treaty signed between the two countries on December 12, 1996, reports UNB.

Indian Prime Minister IK Gujral gave the assurance when Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina called on him at his hotel suite here yesterday afternoon.

Gujral, who was in the city to attend the three-nation Business Summit, said his country will remove all impediments to the implementation of the water treaty and maintaining transparency in the water flow.

Sheikh Hasina thanked the Indian Prime Minister for giving surplus water this season.

saying that this will further consolidate the Indo-Bangla relations.

She informed Gujral of the international seminar on the proposed Ganges Barrage to be held in Dhaka in March and said the barrage will also be beneficial to India.

The Prime minister referred to the CHT peace agreement and said development programmes will start in the region soon.

Referring to the business summit, she said businessmen should not only try to improve their own condition, they should also strive to ameliorate the lot of the common people.

Foreign Secretary Mustafizur Rahman was present during the meeting.

## Tofael tells working session

## 'People want closer ties, ministers should do so'

By Staff Correspondent

The people of Bangladesh, India and Pakistan want to come closer for their own benefits, but it's we the politicians who had not let it happen so far," Commerce and Industries Minister Tofael Ahmed said at the working session of the Business Summit yesterday.

"If we ministers sit together, we can find out solutions to all our mutual issues," he said. Tofael said that India should do something about reducing the trade gap by opening up new avenues. "Till now, Bangladesh could not even take their buses to India although it has initiated the process for quite some time," he said, adding that India should allow Pakistan transit to Bangladesh.

Pakistani Finance Minister Sartaz Aziz, focusing on the energy sharing issue, said that the idea was sound but it needed some economic studies before any serious discussion. He mentioned that power tariff in India and Pakistan varied greatly and, therefore, it

needed an economic analysis before any technical analysis.

Indian State Minister for Commerce, Ramaiya, underscored the need for utilisation of surplus resources of each country within the SAARC boundary.

"Bangladesh's surplus gas can easily be transmitted to other places where it has high demand," Ramaiya said adding that for proper use of resources, combined efforts should be made.

Joint venture industries could be set up in different sectors including power, gas, food processing and service sectors, he said.

The Indian minister also underscored the need for conducting a feasibility study on how these countries could cooperate with each other in all economic fields.

Ramaiya emphasised sharing of knowledge and technology to alleviate acute poverty prevailing among the people of the region.

## Bofors scam

From page 1

true Indian. Born in Italy, she took Indian citizenship after her marriage to Rajiv in 1988.

"It was from my mother-in-law and husband that I learnt to love and understand India. Their commitment and sacrifice instilled in me the devotion I have for our country," she told a crowd of about 50,000 people.

Rajiv Gandhi's mother Indira Gandhi and grandfather Jawaharlal Nehru were also Indian prime ministers. All told, the three governed India for 38 of its 50 years of independence.

As a reminder of the party's glory days, Sonia Gandhi could swing votes away from the "right-wing" Bharatiya Janata, which opinion polls have given the edge in general elections scheduled for February and March. She is not running for office herself.

## Poor run rate

From page 1

44 overs, evaporating their hopes for a passage to final.

Mehrab Hossain was top-scorer with 62 while skipper Al Shahrar hammered a breezy 48 off 45 balls.

## Avalanche kills 32 in Iran

DUBAI, Jan 15: Thirty-two people were killed and 40 injured as an avalanche buried a passing bus and two other vehicles in Iran even as rescuers struggled to retrieve people still trapped under snow, reports BSS.

The three heads of government were of the view that greater consultations among the delegations of the three countries in international fora on issues of common concern would be in the interest of all.

Adoption of a coordinated approach on investment, labour standards, environment and technical barriers to trade in the WTO would be particularly important, the declaration noted.

Later, Foreign Minister Abdus Samad Azad said at a brief press conference that the Summit would be followed up by the meetings of finance and commerce ministers and the business leaders of the three countries.

Crucial tie

From page 1

and captain expressed their determination to win the two remaining finals.

"We've a brilliant batting line-up and two world famous spinners (Saqlain Mushtaq and Mushtaq Ahmed)... so, why not the come back," said Harunur Rashid, the Pakistani team manager.

Skipper Rashid Latif said, "We must do well in batting" to stage a comeback Friday.

Indian coach Anshuman Gaekwad and captain Mohammad Azharuddin were firmly optimistic about winning the trophy.

(See details on page 11)



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