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**Khaleda to call on Clinton, talk political and other issues**

By Rezaul Karim  
BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia will meet President Bill Clinton at the presidential suite of the Sonargaon Hotel late this afternoon.  
A top BNP leader told the Daily Star yesterday that the talks between the US president and the former prime minister will be at 6 p.m.  
About five to six BNP leaders, including Deputy Leader of the Opposition Prof AQM

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## Inside Today

### Article

**Greetings to President William Jefferson Clinton**

by Harun ur Rashid  
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### Supplement

Today's issue of The Daily Star contains an eight-page special supplement on Clinton's visit  
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| Mar | Sun Rises | Sun Sets |
|-----|-----------|----------|
| 20  | -         | 6:10pm   |
| 21  | 6:01am    | -        |

### Prayer Timings

March 20

|         | Azan | Jamaat |
|---------|------|--------|
| Fajr    | 5:20 | 5:50   |
| Zohr    | 1:00 | 1:30   |
| Asr     | 4:45 | 5:00   |
| Maghrib | 6:10 | 6:15   |
| Esha    | 7:45 | 8:15   |

Source: Islamic Foundation

## US-Bangla relation reaches new heights

# Warm welcome to President Clinton

By M Anwarul Haq



President William J Clinton

US President Bill Clinton arrives here today to a rousing reception on the first leg of his three-nation South Asian tour.

The Air Force One carrying the President and his entourage for a day-long visit to Bangladesh is scheduled to touch down at the Zia International Airport at 10.15 am.

The country will have the unique honour to receive an American President in its 29 years of independence. Not many American Presidents have visited many countries in the Third World or in Asia.

The trip by a US President is also a moment of reflection and vindication for Bangladesh because despite lack of official US support, its people earned independence in 1971 through an armed struggle.

Bill Clinton's arrival will be heralded by a 21-gun salute. Red carpet will be rolled out at ZIA to welcome the distinguished guest. US and Bangladesh National anthems will be played by the band. President Justice Shahabuddin Ahmed and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina will receive the US President who will then inspect an honour guard drawn from the three services.

Clinton will be accompanied by Secretary of State Madeleine Albright and Commerce Secretary William Daley. His only daughter Chelsea and mother-in-law are also accompanying him. Hillary Clinton who had earlier visited Bangladesh in 1995 is staying back in New York. She is preoccupied as she is running for the Senate.

The US President is expected to make brief remarks to waiting newsmen at the airport. He will then be whisked off by a posse of US Secret Servicemen, hundreds of whom have already arrived in Bangladesh to ensure his security. The US Congress has given the highest mandate to the US Secret Service to protect the President what ever the cost may be. In fact the concern for the protection of the US President have pushed local security agencies including the elite SSF to the second position.

The entire itinerary of Clinton is being kept under wraps. However, it was learnt that he would be flown by US helicopter Marine One to old Tejgaon Airport from where he will go to the International Conference Centre for official talks with the Prime Minister.

He will be chopper-riden to Savar Cantonment from where he will go to the Savar Martyrs' Memorial and place a wreath to pay tributes to the Liberation War heroes and plant a sapling. He will then visit Gramen Bank's micro-credit programme at the adjoining Joytura village.

Clinton will move in Dhaka in his bullet-proof Presidential limousines that have already been flown to Bangladesh. Besides

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## US, India may sign 3 accords

NEW DELHI, Mar 19: American President Bill Clinton flew into New Delhi today on a tour of three South Asian nations, hoping to improve Indo-US relations, boost trade with Bangladesh and nudge Pakistan's military administration into restoring democracy, reports AP.

Clinton's Boeing 747 jetliner, Air Force One, landed at 8:08 pm at an Indian air force station that is part of the Indira Gandhi International Airport amid the tightest security mounted in India's capital. It was the first visit by an

American president to India in 22 years; the earlier one was in 1978 by Jimmy Carter. The president was accompanied by his daughter, Chelsea, a student at Stanford University, and his mother-in-law, Dorothy Rodham. His wife, Hillary, stayed in the United

States to campaign for a US Senate seat in New York.

The president walked down the stairs of blue-and-white jet waving, with Chelsea holding his arm. He was greeted by Foreign Minister Jaswant Singh and his deputy, Ajit Panja, and

See page 11 col 1

## Signing of PSCs hits snag

By Sharier Khan

Plans to sign three production sharing contracts with US companies in presence of President Clinton hit a snag yesterday after the White House said it hadn't agreed to the schedule.

Petrobangla had instructed representatives from Pangaea, Unocal and Tullow-Chevron

Texaco to be at the Prime Minister's office this morning for the signing ceremony.

However, Petrobangla asked the representatives last night to be at the Petrocentre, Karwan Bazar, early this morning. They were told the schedule to sign the contracts would be

fixed at the last minute.

Despite the uncertainty surrounding Clinton's presence, at least two production sharing contracts will be signed with Pangaea and Unocal for oil and gas exploration in Block 8 and Block 7 respectively.

See page 11 col 8

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## An appeal to President Bill Clinton on the occasion of his august visit to Bangladesh

Mr. President,

We have the pleasure to echo in print the warm welcome that the people of Bangladesh have in reserve for you. Our people are gratified that you in person, as the head of the world's most powerful nation, paid to this poor country of ours some attention. We are also grateful for the food-aid Bangladesh received at times of calamity from the USA and also for your liberal immigration policy that allows many Bangladeshis to seek opportunities in the USA for betterment of their lives.

Allow us now, Mr. President, to express ourselves on a matter that afflicts us, not materially but morally. When we hear, as British Labour Member of Parliament George Galloway disclosed the other day, that 7000 Iraqi children are dying every month for want of proper food and medicine due to UN sanctions, we feel distressed about it. When we hear that the food-for-oil deal under the sanctions is insufficient, in the opinion of leading members of the UN humanitarian mission there, to provide for adequate nutrition and healthcare for the ordinary men and women of Iraq, our hearts bleed.

Mr. President, you are aware that the people of Bangladesh are deeply religious and adherents of the Sufi tradition of humanity, compassion and tolerance as the ramparts of their faiths. Bangladesh people feel a particular sympathy for the people of Iraq as they belong to the land of the great Sufi Saint Hajrat Abdul Quader Jilani (R.A.). We feel distressed that innocent people in that land are suffering for no fault of theirs individually.

Mr. President, we do not presume to comment on your policy in relation to Iraq, but we want to simply express the common sense judgement of our people that if UN embargo on Iraq did not achieve its intended purpose in a length of nearly ten years now, it is unlikely to do any good by lengthening the sufferings of the innocent people of Iraq any further. The quality of mercy is not strained, we beseech you, Mr. President, we believe, in your farsightedness and human compassion, you may find it fit to decide that it is time to lift the UN sanctions on Iraq, and engage Iraq otherwise by vigorous diplomacy to achieve desired check and balance. Mr. President, we feel it is high time that humanity lends its ears to the mute wailing of Iraqi mothers and the groans of the sick and old in Iraq who do not get the nutrition and medicare they need. A whole generation of Iraqi children are growing up malnourished and in depressed conditions that can be changed. We have faith in you, Mr. President, that in the changed atmosphere of globalisation and peace processes that you so skillfully steered, you will not hesitate to take a historic step by lifting UN sanctions against Iraq and initiating a process of peace, cooperation and better understanding in the Gulf region as well. For such an initiative and act of human consideration, our prayers will be with you and history will certainly add another feather to your cap of world leadership.

A. M. M. BAHAUDDIN

PRESIDENT

BANGLADESH-IRAQ FRIENDSHIP SOCIETY



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