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## Govt unhappy with FM?

By Special Correspondent

The government is unhappy with Foreign Minister Abdus Samad Azad over the way he handled the visit of US President Bill Clinton, sources said.

"Some unguarded statements by the senior minister have reportedly irked the prime minister," a source said. Azad had said that Bangladesh should seek apology from the US for its role in 1971. Later, following cancellation of the trip to Savar he said "we are hurt by the decision over the cancellation," and told some select reporters that he was conveying the prime minister's opinion.

Azad irked certain circles when he said a threat "from outside the country," forced the cancellation, thereby specifically implicating a neighbouring country.

The foreign minister has been asked "to be careful in his comments" and keep away from the press unless told, the source said.

Samad Azad had to call off a scheduled press conference on March 22. Later Foreign Secretary Shafi Sami conducted the press briefing. Even a vital press briefing of foreign envoys on the outcome of Clinton's visit was conducted by the foreign secretary on Thursday, which the foreign minister was scheduled to brief.

## Our new numbers

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Mar	Sun Rises	Sun Sets
25	-	6.12 pm
26	5.57 am	-

## Prayer Timings

### March 25

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

Source: Islamic Foundation

# War over Kashmir to bankrupt Pak govt

Clinton carrying a message of 'hard realities' for Gen Musharraf

JAIPUR, (India) Mar 24: US President Bill Clinton will tell military-ruled Pakistan it is "a country that is in trouble" and should not waste its energy in a dangerous confrontation with nuclear neighbour India, reports AP.

Clinton will carry a message of "hard realities" for Pakistan's military ruler, said White House national security adviser Sandy Berger.

During a six-hour trip to Islamabad tomorrow, Clinton will tell Gen Pervez Musharraf his is "a country that is in trouble" and that continuing to confront his nuclear neighbour in Kashmir could bankrupt his government, Berger suggested.

Musharraf, who seized

power in a bloodless coup in October, has yet to set a date for national elections. On Thursday, he announced local elections in 2001 that he said would pave the way for national elections.

The White House welcomed the announcement but said it wasn't enough.

"What we're looking for is a roadmap for national elections and a restoration of democracy in Pakistan," White House press secretary Joe Lockhart said.

Clinton is expected to call for a quick restoration of Pakistan's democracy and civilian rule, and to press Islamabad to roll back its nuclear programme and sign the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty.

Clinton made a similar appeal on the nuclear issues in India, without much success. Nor was he likely to be successful in Islamabad.

Musharraf has said he will tell Clinton that "there can be no peace" in South Asia until India and Pakistan — both nuclear powers — resolve their dispute over the border region of Kashmir.

Winding up a five-day visit to India, Clinton will fly to Islamabad tomorrow. After meeting with Musharraf, the president is to make a live television address to the people of Pakistan.

Clinton will tell the people of Pakistan that "we care about

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## Uneasy calm in Sylhet as Humayun stages hunger strike tomorrow

From Staff Correspondent

SYLHET, Mar 24: An uneasy calm is prevailing in Sylhet with only a day remaining before noted writer Humayun Ahmed goes on a hunger strike on March 26 in support of the naming of different halls and buildings of Shahjalal University.

Both the groups, supporting and opposing the naming, have announced programmes for tomorrow and the day after in the town as well as in the vicinity areas.

Humayun Ahmed and his family are scheduled to reach Sylhet sometime tomorrow or the following morning. They will sit for the strike at the main gate of the university on Sunday morning. A good number of noted personalities including cultural activists and teachers from the capital and Sylhet have also expressed their willingness to join the strike.

A meeting of different politi-



Humayun Ahmed

cal and cultural organisations was held and a 501-member committee formed to make the hunger strike programme a success. Commander of Sylhet district unit of Muktijoddha

Sangsad Enam Ahmed Chowdhury has been made the convener of the committee. Central secretary general of Ganatantri Party Barrister Arash Ali, district general secretary of Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal Lokman Ahmed, district Jubo Union president Mainuddin Jalal and leaders of some other cultural and political organisations attended the meeting.

On the other hand, some activists backed by the forum agitating against the naming announced last night a daylong poetry reciting session at the main gate of the university on the Independence Day.

Besides, mother of Belal who was shot dead on December 25 in BDR firing during the agitation in Sylhet has also announced to stage a hunger strike at the main gate the same day demanding trial of the killing.

Earlier, the All Party Action Committee (Opposition) announced

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Artists put final touches on paintings in the city depicting the victorious moments of March 26, 1971 ahead of the Independence Day celebrations tomorrow. —Star photo

## Political situation may heat up again in early April

By Nazmul Ashraf

After a lull of nearly one month, the political situation is poised for a warm-up as the ruling Awami League and the BNP-led opposition parties are preparing to launch fresh programmes to counter each other.

The usual heat on the political front is absent in the current month as several events including SSC examinations and US President's visit to the country pushed the political parties, especially the opposition ones, out of the streets.

AL and BNP have meantime discussed the possible programmes they are going to take up as a run-up to preparations for the next general elections.

But chances are slim that the parties, specially the Opposition, will begin any programme before March 31 till when the SSC examinations will continue, sources hinted. Besides, the Independence Day is on March 26.

Opposition sources spoke of early next month for launching their next round of street agitations, which they expect to be a 'tougher' one to compel the government to go for early general elections. The programmes may include a hartal on April 6. The top Opposition leaders are also expected to tour Chittagong and other cities from April 4. Naturally, the ruling party will also launch programmes to counter the Opposition agitation.

According to political sources, both the leading parties badly feel the necessity of strengthening party units across the country to gear up street campaign against each other.

Intra-party feuds, inaction of activists and lack of solid organisational base are the common problems facing both the sides.

Ruling party units are almost inactive in many parts of

the country due to 'conflicts of interest' while the BNP-led movement is failing to get momentum due to 'weak network' and 'lack of enthusiasm' among its 'field workers'.

A BNP source hinted at changes in different tiers of the party and its front organisations to expedite the anti-government agitation which may include hartals and road marches in the next round.

The ruling party is readying itself to start a cross-country tour by its central leaders, ministers and MPs soon, party sources said. Party chief and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina gave an instruction to this effect in her two recent meetings with top party leaders.

The planned tour aims at resolving intra-party conflicts, reactivating party units, boosting campaign to highlight government's achievements

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## The horrific memory of holocaust

By Staff Correspondent

The black night of March 25 is back again with the memory of holocaust unleashed by the then Pakistani forces 29 years ago to silence the voice of freedom loving people of the country.

Unmasking their barbarous agenda, veiled under a mock dialogue, the Pakistani military junta had resorted to a mass killing in Dhaka city, provincial capital of the then East Pakistan, to negate an election mandate.

The Pakistani occupation army had cracked down on the then East Pakistan Rifles (EPR) headquarters at Pilkhana, Dhaka University, police headquarters at Razarbagh and all other areas of the city. The city turned into an infernal slaughter-house with students, EPR jawans, policemen and people including women and children being massacred by the occupa-

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## PM to visit US twice this year

By Diplomatic Correspondent

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina is scheduled to visit the United States at least twice this year, Foreign Ministry sources said.

Her first trip will take her to the US early next month. She will be leaving for a two-week visit, departing Dhaka on April 3.

The major part of the trip will comprise an official visit to attend programmes in Washington, Harvard and Virginia till April 10. Later, she will spend three days in visiting her daughter at Florida, concerned sources said yesterday.

The programmes of her current trip will include a lecture at Harvard, receiving the prestigious Pearl S. Buck Award and formal opening of the Bangladesh's own embassy premises at Washington, D.C.

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## Clinton's visit

Incompetence of AL govt exposed again: Khaleda

By Staff Correspondent

BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia said yesterday the incompetence of the Awami League government was exposed again as it failed to take the US president to the National Memorial at Savar.

She said the US President could not pay respect to the martyrs of the Independence War on security ground.

"The government is solely responsible for the failure and the nation will never forgive the Awami League for this," said Khaleda who is also the leader of the opposition in parliament. She added that the US president is going everywhere in India.

Addressing the newly-elected office-bearers of Barisal, Jhalakati and Protopur district bar associations at her 29 Minto Road official residence, she said the people firmly believe that this

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## One killed as mob, BDR clash in C'nawabganj

From Our Correspondent

RAJSHAHI, Mar 24: One person was killed and four others were injured in a clash between BDR personnel and local people near Monakosha Bazar in Shibganj thana of Chapainawabganj district yesterday afternoon.

The dead was identified as Fazlur Rahman, son of Wajed Ali of Monakosha. Abdus Salam and Gunam of Houshnagar were admitted to the local thana health complex in critical condition.

Two BDR personnel were also injured, BDR sources claimed.

The clash ensued over a dispute when the BDR personnel seized a few bags of lentils of Hazrat Ali and Saber Ali at Monakosha on allegation that those were smuggled in from India. The owners however claimed that those were produced in their land. At one stage

of the altercation BDR personnel opened fire to disperse the agitated mob.

The BDR men took shelter at the house of the local UP chairman. Agitated people chased them and kept them under siege up to 11 pm.

Later, more BDR and police personnel rushed to the spot and rescued them.

A tense situation was prevailing in the area.

### Joypurhat

UNB from Joypurhat adds: At least 15 people, including a woman, were injured in an alleged attack by the jawans of 5-Rifle battalion at Gulshan crossing in the town today.

Of the injured Sakina Bibi, 43, Farazuddin, 55, Moksed Ali, 37, Saiful Islam, 31, Rabiul Islam, 27, Dulal, 14, Shahidul Islam and Nazmul Islam were

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## Darkness grips streets of N'ganj after dusk

All sodium bulbs out of order

From Faisal Parag

NARAYANGANJ, Mar 24: Darkness grips the streets of the town after sunset as the handicapped municipality can not purchase a hydraulic ladder to repair streetlights despite having funds.

All the 469 sodium bulbs installed in the river port town in 1988 at a cost of Tk one crore is out of order for over four years now, causing immense sufferings to the pedestrians and road accidents at night.

The municipality has

enough funds to purchase a ladder worth Tk. 50 lakh, but the LGRD ministry does not give permission to procure or hire one. Its Executive Engineer Nazrul Islam told The Daily Star.

Other sources said the municipality had bought some spares to repair the sodium bulbs but those could not be utilised due to lack of a ladder.

The municipal authorities have fixed some 100-watt bulbs on the sidewalks, but these help little in ensuring visibility.

Motor vehicles on streets virtually depend on their own headlights while rickshaws and pedestrians make their way with light from roadside shops, making it a hard task for traffic police to control movement of vehicles.

A complete blackout prevails during load shedding, making the areas muggers' paradise.

RAJUK repaired the out-of-order sodium lamps once in 1995 at a cost of Tk. 25 lakh and handed over their maintenance to the municipality. Since then, most of the town streets are in darkness.

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## Announcement

The Daily Star in cooperation with

the Bangladesh Scouts will hold a

**SEMINAR** Today on

**The Building Construction Act of 1952.**

Time : 10 AM to 4 PM.

Venue : Scouts Bhaban, Kakrail, Dhaka.

Purpose : To examine how to make Dhaka a better metropolis.

Participants : DCC, RAJUK, WASA, DESA and experts from BUET and other relevant bodies.

Interested citizens are invited to attend.