

Load shedding was 350 MW yesterday

By Staff Correspondent

Shortage of power continued for the third day yesterday as the country experienced nearly 350 MW of load shedding although the day was a weekly holiday.

PDB yesterday generated 2322 MW of power against the countrywide requirement of more than 2650 MW.

Many parts of the city yesterday faced frequent power disruption throughout the day. DESA control room said load shedding in areas under DESA, including the metropolis, was nearly 140 MW.

Due to tripping of a circuit in the Ashuganj-Ghorasal 230-KV grid line Wednesday, areas under Dhaka, Khulna, Rajshahi, Barisal divisions went without power for several hours followed by more than 450 MW of load shedding on Thursday.

Meanwhile, PDB yesterday suspended four of its staff for negligence of duty in connection with the Ashuganj-Ghorasal 230-KV grid failure on Wednesday.

Meanwhile, 12 out of country's 63 power generating units, including two 210 MW units in Ghorasal, remained shut yesterday. They are: Sylhet Gas, Shahjibajar-3, Panchuganj GT 1.2 and Steam, Khulna Barge Mounted Power Plant-1, Khulna 110 MW, Haripur Gas Turbine GT-3, Siddhirganj 50 MW, Ghorasal-3 and 6 and West Mont-1 in Baghabari.

Alleged activist of Harkatul Jihad handed over to police in Khulna

From Staff Correspondent

KHULNA, Sept 15: Hafez Abul Hossain Shikder, 45, a teacher of Pather Bazar Secondary School under Digholia upazila of Khulna district was handed over to police on Thursday morning by some local youngsters branding him as an activist of Harkatul Jihad.

Earlier he was roughed up by the youngsters for speaking in favour of Mufti Abdul Hannan, an accused in Kotalipara bomb planting case.

Hafez Abul Hossain was produced in court at noon after filing a general diary with Digholia thana.

He was sent to district jail with severe injuries in the afternoon.

We have no evidence that Hafez Abul Hossain is an activist of Harkatul Jihad, said a See page 12 col 4

200 ULFA guerillas surrender

GUWAHATI, India, Sept 15: Two hundred guerillas fighting Indian rule in the northeastern state of Assam surrendered to the government today, a government spokesman said, reports Reuters.

The guerillas were all members of the United Liberation Front of Assam which has been fighting for an independent homeland.

They gave up arms following differences with the ULFA leadership. Government spokesman Manoj Kumar Deb told Reuters from the eastern town of Nagaon where the surrender took place.

Inside Today

Article

Democracy, Autocracy and PM's Statement in UN

Column: Currents and Crosscurrents
By M M Rezaul Karim
Page 4

Supplement

One page supplement on 'International Ozone Day' on Page 8

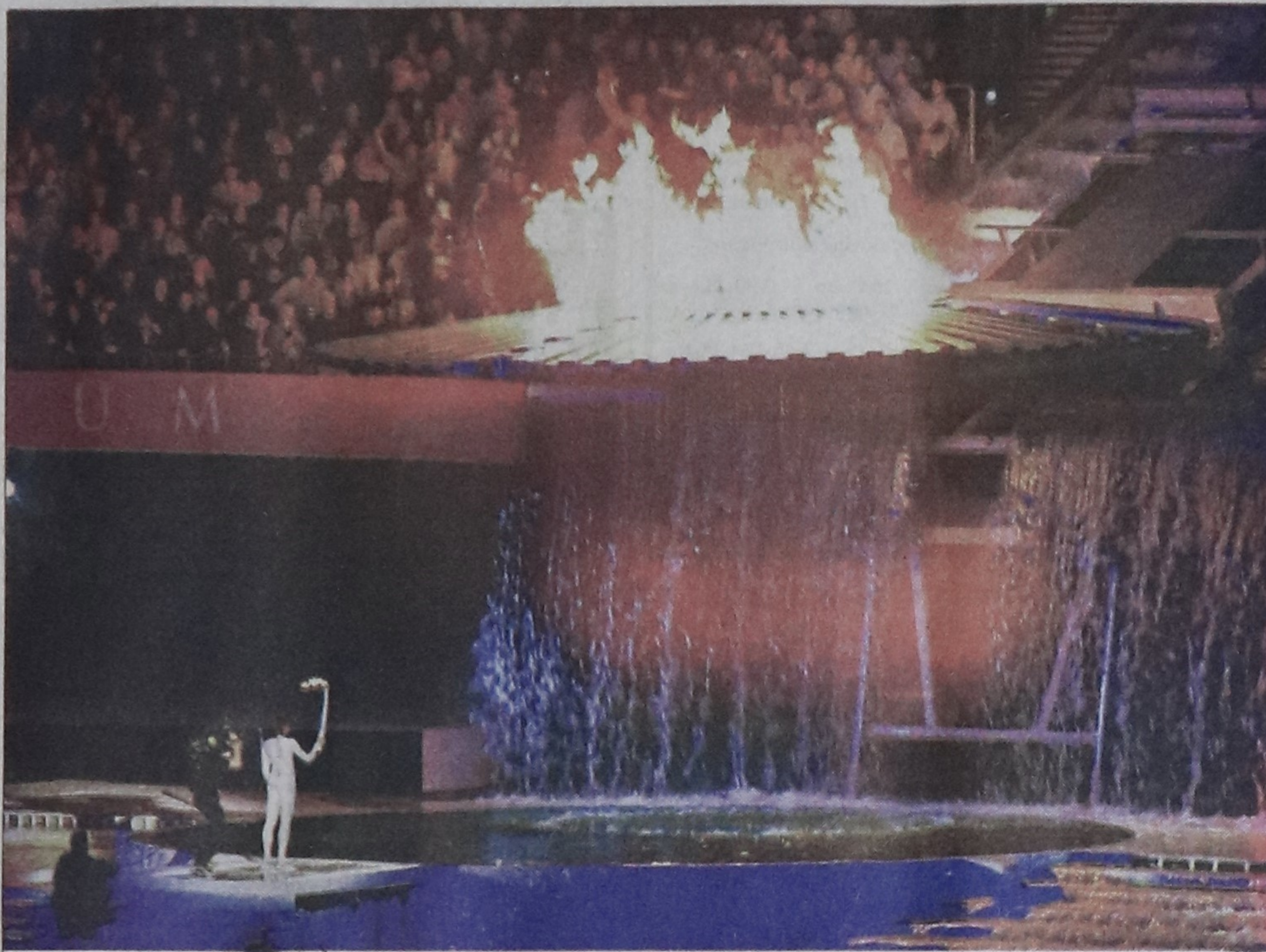
	Sun Rises	Sun Sets
Sept 16		6-01 pm
Sept 17	5-46 am	

Prayer Timings

	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	4-45	5-15
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	4-30	4-45
Maghrib	6-08	6-13
Esha	7-45	8-15

Source: Islamic Foundation

Millennium Games open



The blazing cauldron slowly ascends a ramp leading to its final position high above the stadium yesterday. Australia's 27-year-old sporting icon Cathy Freeman (L) as the final bearer of the Olympic torch, ignited the 27th Olympiad of the modern era, and the first of the new millennium.

- AFP photo

SYDNEY, Sept 15: Sydney launched the Millennium Games today with a moving gesture of national reconciliation, picking Aboriginal running star Cathy Freeman to light the Olympic flame, reports Reuters.

It was the emotional climax of a spectacular opening ceremony that bid "G'Day" to the world at the first Olympics of the 21st century.

Freeman, the world 400 metres champion, 1996 Olympic silver medalist and Australia's sporting heroine, lit the cauldron in the heart of a cascading waterfall.

The flame rose on a giant pedestal that encircled the athlete, who so forcefully embodies Australia's battle to bury the ghosts of the past.

It then rose slowly to the top of the stadium like a giant flying saucer as fireworks erupted over the harbour city.

"G'Day Sydney, G'Day Australia. Yes, the Olympic Games are back Down Under," Olympic chief Juan Antonio Samaranch told 110,000 cheering spectators at the four-hour ceremony.

He called Australia a "great country" and paid a special tribute to its Aborigines, fighting for equal rights in a land still haunted by its legacy of white injustice.

Freeman was clearly moved at being given the ultimate honour of lighting the flame.

She was the last of six Australian Olympic heroines to carry the torch in the stadium at the end of its journey across Australia. The choices were a tribute to the 100th anniversary of women's participation in the modern Olympics.

The Sydney Games, staged at a cost of \$5.26 billion (\$1.4 billion), were officially opened by Australian Governor-General Sir William Deane.

Their opening gave Australia a chance to heal its divisions and showcase its diversity.

See page 11 col 4

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Hasina meddled in Pakistan's internal affairs: Musharraf

By Staff Correspondent

RAKOWALI, Sept 15: Pakistan's military ruler General Pervez Musharraf said today he had refused to meet Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at the UN because she had meddled in the country's internal affairs, reports AFP.

"I was polite, she was hostile, when we were sitting on one table during a function at the UN," he said.

Some of the statements of the Bangladesh prime minister at the United Nations were a direct interference in our internal affairs," Musharraf told a news conference on his return from the UN Millennium Summit in New York.

Sheikh Hasina on Thursday called for the trial of those Pakistanis allegedly involved in war crimes against Bangladesh in the 1971 independence war.

Ties between the two countries have been strained after Musharraf postponed his scheduled meeting with the

Bangladesh leader following a speech she gave to the UN which criticised military regimes.

"I have spoken about my ideals and people are the source of all power, not weapons," she said, adding she did not mention Pakistan by name.

Musharraf described his visit to the UN summit, his first major diplomatic foray since seizing power in October last year, as highly successful.

The military ruler is under pressure from the West to hold national elections to promote an early return to civilian rule.

In May, the country's Supreme Court validated the military takeover and gave Musharraf until October 12, 2002 to complete his reform agenda and hold elections, a timeframe he has promised to honour.

See page 12 col 1

AL opens election office

Next polls will be free, fair, says Hasina

By Staff Correspondent

Prime Minister and Awami League chief Sheikh Hasina opened the election office of her party in the city yesterday saying she wants the people to prepare for now for the coming general elections although her government's tenure expires on July 13 next year.

In her bid to justify the early preparations for the elections, Hasina said the people also need to keep themselves aware of 'conspiracies' against the elections and the process of democracy. "But, I believe firmly that the next elections will be held freely and fairly."

Earlier, the AL chief hinted at early elections at a meeting of party lawmakers on Thursday. She said she may go for elections anytime considering a favourable atmosphere.

Hasina was addressing a gathering in front of the Bangabandhu Museum at Dharmamandi after opening the AL election office at a house on Road 12/A in the area yesterday afternoon.

The podium was designed in the shape of a boat, the party's election symbol. Only a select gathering was allowed to attend the programme. Top leaders of

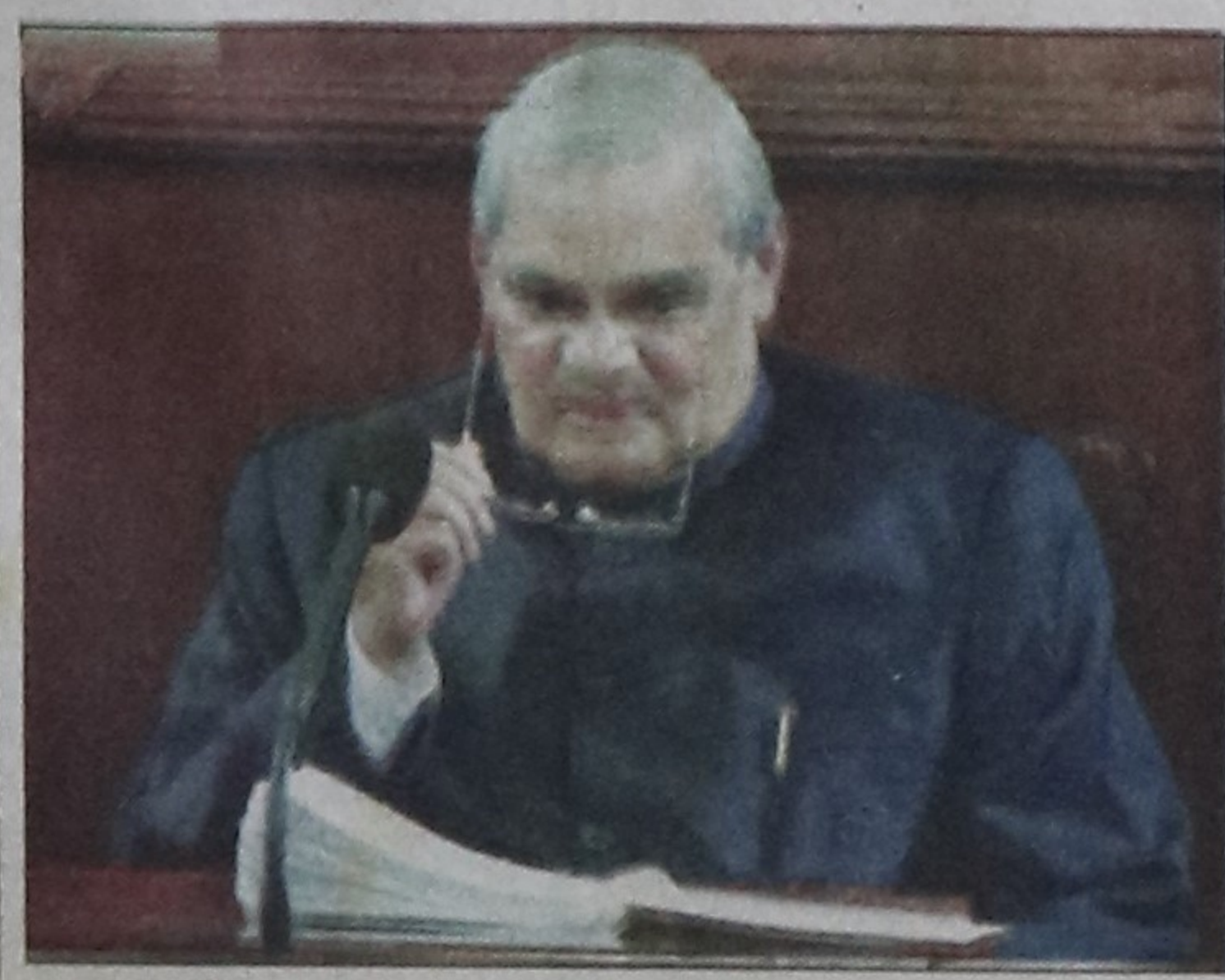
the ruling party, pro-AL intellectuals and professionals and well wishers of the party were mainly present.

Finance Minister SAMS Kibria, coordinator of AL's election activities, Foreign Minister Abdus Samad Azad and party General Secretary Zillur Rahman also spoke on the occasion.

The AL chief hoped that her party would also win the next elections as it has 'implemented most of its pledges' made before the last elections. She asked the partymen to start preparing

See page 12 col 2

Vajpayee urges US to 'remove shadow of hesitation' in ties with India



Indian Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee addressing a joint session of the US Congress on Thursday. - AFP photo

WASHINGTON, Sept 15: Indian Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee yesterday mounted a vigorous defence of New Delhi's nuclear weapons programme as he hailed a "historic" moment in Indo-US ties in an address to Congress, reports AFP.

Vajpayee told a joint session of senators and representatives that differences over security had "cast a shadow" over recent relations between the world's lone superpower and its most populous democracy.

"India understands your concerns. We do not wish to unravel your non-proliferation efforts. We wish you to understand our security concerns."

"We have much in common and no clash of interests," Vajpayee said in the speech punctuated by frequent applause, which he delivered seated at a dais in the well of the House of Representatives.

Alarmed at the prospect of a nuclear arms race on the Sub-

continent, the United States imposed economic sanctions on India after it conducted nuclear arms tests in 1998 which triggered a tit-for-tat response from Pakistan.

Many of those sanctions still remain, as Washington presses the Indian government to join the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty -- a pact which India rejects as weighted in favour of established nuclear powers.

In an apparent veiled reference to the those sanctions, seen by India as an impediment to better relations, Vajpayee urged the US government to "remove the shadow of hesitation that lies between us."

But Vajpayee, who was following in the footsteps of political giants such as Winston Churchill and Nelson Mandela by addressing Congress, said that despite its nascent nuclear arsenal, India was committed to

See page 11 col 7

See page 11 col 7

Akhter expelled: BNP to ask Speaker to declare his seat vacant

By Staff Correspondent

BNP has expelled its dissident lawmaker Maj (Retd) Akhteruzzaman from the party as his reply to the show cause notice issued on him for violating party discipline was not "satisfactory and acceptable".

A BNP press release said yesterday Akhter was expelled with retrospective effect from September 14 as per a directive from party Chairperson Khaleida Zia, now on a 10-day visit to Saudi Arabia.

The party served the show cause notice on September 11 asking Akhter to explain within three days why he should not be expelled from the party for 'anti-party activities'.

Earlier on September 5, the main opposition party's Standing Committee at an emergency meeting suspended his primary membership of the party for making statement against the party position on the issue of joining parliament session.

But ignoring the suspension and a show-cause notice issued on him on that day, the dissident BNP legislator joined the just concluded parliament ses-

sion. In his reply to the show cause notice on Wednesday,

Akhter defended his joining the parliament session and urged Khaleida Zia to withdraw the suspension order on him.

He also wrote a letter to the party chief earlier suggesting that BNP should return to parliament.

See page 11 col 7

See page 11 col 7

See page 11 col 7

See page 11 col 7

See page 11 col 7

See page 11 col 7

See page 11 col 7

See page 11 col 7

See page 11 col 7

See page 11 col 7

See page 11 col 7

See page 11 col 7

See page 11 col 7

See page 11 col 7

See page 11 col 7

See page 11 col 7

See page 11 col 7

See page 11 col 7

See page 11 col 7

See page 11 col 7

See page 11 col 7

Hundreds of DCC spray men exposed to insecticide poisoning

By Staff Correspondent

Insecticide poisoning has caused serious health problems among hundreds of spray men of Dhaka City Corporation (DCC) who were exposed to DCC 2.5, a residual insecticide classified as 'highly hazardous' for humans, sources concerned said.

DCC sprayed over 30,000 litres of this 'hazardous' insecticide in different areas of the capital recently in the wake of reports of dengue infection.

Officials of different zones of the DCC said that in the last two months, most of their field level fogging machine operators fell sick. Many of them complained of chest pain, cough and vomiting. Some even lost weight.

The number of other people falling sick due to the exposure was not known but sources at Dhaka Medical College Hospital said dozens of students were hospitalised last month due to insecticide poisoning.

One source said ICON-2.5 is never suitable for 'space spray' which means that due to its hazardous nature, it could be sprayed on walls or objects and not in the air.

In its drive to eradicate Aedes mosquitoes which carry dengue virus, DCC reportedly bought ICON 2.5 when its stock of SICOFLYING ran out recently. Spraying of ICON was abandoned by DCC's Mosquito Control Committee after Bangladesh Rifles reported that it was causing irritation, breathing problems and vomiting among BDR personnel at its headquarters at Peelkhana.

But when spread of dengue fever was reported, DCC could not buy SICOFLYING from the

See page 12 col 7

See page 12 col 7

See page 12 col 7

See page 12 col 7

See page 12 col 7

See page 12 col 7

See page 12 col 7

See page 12 col 7

See page 12 col 7

See page 12 col 7

See page 12 col 7

See page 12 col 7

See page 12 col 7

See page 12 col 7

See page 12 col 7

See page 12 col 7

See page 12 col 7

See page 12 col 7

See page 12 col 7

See page 12 col 7

See page 12 col 7

See page 12 col 7

See page 12 col 7

See page 12 col 7

See page 12 col 7

See page 12 col 7

See page 12 col 7

See page 12 col 7

See page 12 col 7

See page 12 col 7

See page 12 col 7

See page 12 col 7

See page 12 col 7

See page 12 col 7

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

Customs, Excise & VAT Commissionerate, Dhaka (North), Dhaka

House No 20/A, Road # 2, Sector # 3

Uttara Model Town, Dhaka-1230

Notice

Subject: Regarding payment of Value Added Tax by retailer and wholesaler traders

This is for information of all concerned that a provision has been made for imposing value added tax at the rate of 2% in case of selling goods by the retailers and wholesaler traders in all value added taxable goods in the areas of all city corporations and pourashavas during 2000-2001 fiscal year. In order to pay tax at the rate of 2% all retailer and wholesaler traders of value added tax payable goods will initially -

- Procure Value Added Tax registration from office of concerned assistant/deputy commissioner (Customs, Excise and VAT);
 - Will be aware of the system of payment of value added tax from that office and
 - Will contact directly the Assistant/Deputy Commission in case of any problem.
- 2) Valued retailer and wholesaler traders will note that -
- Value Added Tax system is an indirect tax method.
 - Buyer will pay tax in value added tax system.
 - Wholesaler and retailer traders will realise tax at the rate of 2% from the buyer and will deposit it to the government exchequer.
 - So in this system the value added tax is not being paid by the seller. A seller is only realising tax on behalf of government.
 - Your earnest cooperation in realising tax will be an important contribution in the development of the country.

DFP-22023-11/9
G-1612

Ali Ahmad
Commissioner