

Progressive forces should unite to save democracy

Foreign minister says while briefing newsmen

UNB, Dhaka

Foreign Minister Abdus Samad Azad yesterday said it is crucial for the nation to stand united against sinking partisan outlook against fanatics and communal elements to save democracy.

"All progressive political forces, even those in BNP and Jatiya Party, should unite at this hour to protect democracy from destructive acts of fundamentalist terrorists," he told diplomatic correspondents of national dailies and news agencies at State Guest-house Padma.

Giving a hint that there might be instigation from external terrorists forces behind the on-slaughts by Islamic zealots, Azad said these religious extremists must be isolated politically. The

entire nation irrespective of party affiliation should unite on one side leaving out fundamentalist communal elements on the other.

"If anyone steps in any wrong way, he or she should return to the path of democracy and peace," the Foreign Minister said in a veiled observation on the current political hullabaloo.

Making a flashback on his long political career and experience since 1938, Azad said people of this country never made any mistake at the crucial junctures in the turbulent course of national history.

He explained how the people got united under the leadership of Bangabandhu and won independence. "Fanatics and communal politics never gained ground in this country."

The Foreign Minister deplored that the fanatics today are using mosques and madrassahs as arsenals, depositing bombs and weapons, and killing police.

Recalling the planting of bombs at Kotalipara in a bid to kill Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, he said 15 days ahead of the un-

earthing of bombs, IOJ leader Mufti Amine had held a meeting there with a call for Taliban revolution in the country.

New Foreign Secretary Syed Muazzem Ali and senior officials of the Foreign Ministry were present.

MBA Association seminar on foreign investment today

Bangladesh MBA Association will hold a seminar on "Prospects of Foreign Investment in Bangladesh" at 4:00 pm today at Hotel Purbani International, says a press release.

Minister for Local Government Md Zillur Rahman will be present at the seminar as chief guest.

Sirajuddin Ahmed, executive chairman of BOI will be the keynote speaker.

The discussants include Waliur Rahman Bhuiyan, President of Foreign Chamber of Commerce and Mohammad Abdul Majid Director of Board of Investment.



The four-party Opposition Alliance brought out a mourning procession in the city yesterday demanding immediate resignation of the government.

'System should be developed to handle man-made disasters'

BSS, Dhaka

Delegates attending the three-day Pacific Rim Director of Air Operations Conference have stressed the need for developing a system to handle the man-made disasters side by side the natural disasters in the greater interest of the people.

In the concluding session of the conference on Thursday, they rather suggested that this matter should be included as an agenda in the future conference.

The conference is an annual event attended by Director of Air Operations from majority of the Pacific Rim nations, an ISPR press release said yesterday.

The delegates in their recommendations also laid emphasis on inclusion of civilians from other organisations, which were involved in disaster management operation, in handling both man-made and natural disasters as well as decision making process in this regard.

They also suggested regular exercise between countries to streamline the process of handling disasters, accelerate the process of getting quick help and quickening

the assessment of exact requirement to get the right kind of assistance from the friendly countries on such occasions.

The purpose of this conference is to improve relations and cooperation through building trust and confidence and ensuring stability throughout the Asia-Pacific region.

Spl prayer at Sirajganj for Tawfiq Aziz Khan's early recovery

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Sirajganj

A special prayer was held yesterday after Juma prayers at Soyogobinda Jam-E-Mosque in Sirajganj town seeking early recovery of renowned journalist and Executive Editor of the Daily Star Tawfiq Aziz Khan.

Moulvi Abdur Rahman, Imam of the mosque conducted the prayer. Hundreds of devotees and some local journalists attended the prayer session and *milad*. He is suffering from lung cancer.

Tawfiq Aziz Khan hails from greater Pabna district.

Erratum

In our photo feature yesterday on page 19 (bottom row) Mr CK Hyder, Secretary General of MCCI was inadvertently identified as Prof AQM Badruddoza Chowdhury. The mistake is regretted.

EID-HOLIDAY PACKAGES (2-10 March 2001)

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Rotary News

North West meeting

The regular weekly meeting of the Rotary Club of Dhaka North West will be held today (Saturday) at the Dhaka Club Ltd., Ramna, at 5:30 pm. Members have been requested to attend the meeting on time, says a press release.

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08:00 Hrs : Arrival at Pagla VIP jetty and board on vessel
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13:00 Hrs : Return cruise and lunch followed by live cultural programme and raffle draw. Afternoon tea before return to jetty.

17:00 Hrs: Arrival at Pagla and return to Dhaka City.

Price per person: Tk.1200/-, Child Tk. 700/- (under 5 years)

Booking deadline:
14th & 15th February 2001 respectively till 20:00 hrs

: Please Contact:

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