



Prime Minister Khaleda Zia with a delegation of the Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce and Industry at her office yesterday.

# India must allay suspicion for forging regional ties, says Saifur

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Finance and Planning Minister M Saifur Rahman yesterday said bigger nations in South Asia have to come forward with meaningful efforts and remove 'suspicions' from the psyche of smaller states for a significant cooperation in the region.

He said the smaller nations are suffering from 'historical inherent suspicion' about India, which is the most powerful and the biggest state in the region.

"India has to make a big stride towards removing this suspicion from the minds of its small neighbours for a meaningful regional cooperation," Saifur told a gathering of civil society representatives of South Asian nations in the city.

He was chief guest at the inaugural session of a two-day 'Policy Dialogue on South Asian Cooperation' at the BRAC Centre.

The South Asia Centre for Policy Studies (SACEPS), an institutional collaboration of leading think-tanks and academic institutions of South Asia, organised the dialogue in association with the Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD). The two-day programme is an effort by the scholars of the region to focus on crucial areas of cooperation.

SACEPS was floated in February 1998 and publicly launched on January 14, 2001 in Dhaka with the aim to set up a facility for institutionalising civil society initiatives for strengthening regional cooperation.

Chairman of SACEPS Prof. Arjun K Sengupta presided over the inaugural session. Minister for Planning and National Development of the Maldives Ibrahim Hussain Zaki, Executive Director of SACEPS Prof. Rehman S

SEE PAGE 11 COL 7

## Arms recovered in Fatikchhari

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Police recovered three firearms, including a sophisticated submachine gun, and ammunition in a predawn raid on a terrorists' hideout at South Rangamati under Fatikchhari upazila yesterday.

A 150-strong police contingent led by Additional Police Super of Chittagong (north) Aurangzeb Mahboob raided the hideout of the crime cartel led by Osman who defected to the Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal from the Tayeb group of the Bangladesh Chhatra League.

The seven-hour raid that started at around 5.30am recovered one

SEE PAGE 11 COL 5

	Sun Rises	Sun Sets
Mar 31		6-13 pm
Apr 1	5-51 am	

Prayer Timings		
Mar 31		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	5-00	5-35
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	5-00	5-15
Maghrib	6-20	6-25
Esha	7-45	8-15
Source: Islamic Foundation		

## Listed criminal shot dead

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A listed criminal was gunned down allegedly by his rivals in the city's Mohammadpur area yesterday.

Witnesses said a gang of miscreants called Quiyum Sikder alias Paban, 22, out of his house at Babar Road at about noon and shot him. He was rushed to the chest diseases hospital where doctors declared him dead.

Paban was an accused in three cases filed with Mohammadpur thana for murder, extortion and bomb explosion. He was released on bail a few days ago after about four months' detention in Dhaka Central Jail.

Police suspected that he was killed following a feud over sharing of mugged money.

Some sources said the victim was a member of Nata Rubel group, a crime ring based in Mohammadpur area. He quit the gang about two months ago. This angered the gang leaders and that might have led to the killing.

## JS session

BSS, Dhaka

Two bills are expected to be tabled in the House when the second session of the 8th Jatiya Sangsad resumes at 4.45 pm today. The Bills are The Jatiya Muktiyoddha Council Bill, 2002 and Money Laundering (Prevention) Bill, 2002.

# BOI to be recast for attracting FDI

RAFIQ HASAN

The government yesterday took a number of decisions to re-organise the board of investment (BOI) to make it dynamic for attracting foreign direct investment (FDI) in the country.

The government also decided to hold an international conference on investment in the second week of next month to attract FDI.

The two-day international seminar on investment will be held with financial support from the World Bank and DFID, UK.

The decisions were taken at the board meeting of BOI held at the Prime Minister's Office. Prime Minister Khaleda Zia presided over the nearly three-hour meeting, which was attended by a number of Cabinet ministers, state ministers, secretaries, BOI executive chairman, BOI members and high officials.

A committee headed by Industry Minister MK Anwar was also formed at the meeting to formulate an investment policy to attract foreign as well as local investment.

The committee would submit its draft report within 15 days.

SEE PAGE 11 COL 1

## PM tells injured FFs Monuments to 7 Birshrestha to be built

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia yesterday reiterated her government's commitment to ensure a dignified living for the war-wounded freedom fighters who had put in their mite for winning the 1971 Liberation War and mentioned steps being taken to that end.

Speaking to the freedom fighters injured in the Independence War who met the Prime Minister at the International Conference Centre, she said they would be rehabilitated,

SEE PAGE 11 COL 4

## 552 Thai, Myanmar nationals on hunger strike in Bandarban jail

UNB, Bandarban

A total of 552 Thai and Myanmar nationals detained in the district jail even after expiry of their prison terms went on hunger strike demanding repatriation.

The agitated prisoners, who began fast-unto-death from Friday night, refused to eat or hold any discussion with the administration.

Of the prisoners, 79 are Thai while 473 Myanmar nationals who were jailed on various charges.

"The administration has taken all-out measures by tightening security and deploying police reinforcements to check any possible demonstrations or indiscipline

SEE PAGE 11 COL 3

## Dialogue: No AL reply yet

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Awami League (AL) is yet to give any formal reply to the ruling coalition's proposal for a dialogue to resolve some contentious political issues.

BNP Secretary General Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan phoned AL General Secretary Thursday to invite the latter's party to the proposed dialogue.

SEE PAGE 11 COL 3



PHOTO: STAR

Awami League President and Leader of the Opposition in the Jatiya Sangsad addresses a rally in front of the party central office at Bangabandhu Avenue yesterday.

# People now know how to pull down tyrant govt: Hasina

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Main opposition Awami League (AL) President Sheikh Hasina yesterday vowed to end "misrule and tyranny" by the BNP-led coalition government.

"The BNP is scared of the people who pulled it down from power on this day in 1996. Had it got the people's mandate in the October 1 general election it would not have been afraid of them.

"The Janatar Mancha (a people's dais that sponsored the 1996 popular movement) still haunts them and so, they are trying to suppress the people's growing anger against the misrule," Hasina told a huge gather-

ing in the capital.

"This time, we don't need any Janatar Mancha because the people know it well when and how to topple the tyrant government. They cannot continue in office with the Hitler-style rule," she said.

The opposition leader was addressing several thousand people leading a procession from the AL central office at Bangabandhu Avenue in the afternoon.

The mass procession was organised in celebration of the Independence Day that was on March 26 as, according to Hasina, the government did not permit her party to hold any programme to mark the day earlier.

The day also coincided with the resignation of the previous government of Khaleda Zia in the teeth of massive protests spearheaded by the AL on March 30, 1996.

With the police content to keep a watchful eye on them this time round, the opposition activists danced and sang with senior party leaders on a makeshift dais encouraging.

Hasina, the immediate-past prime minister, accused her successor of continuing an "AL cleansing drive" across the country by using police and terrorists so misrule could be continued unabated.

"All the autocrats before and

SEE PAGE 11 COL 7

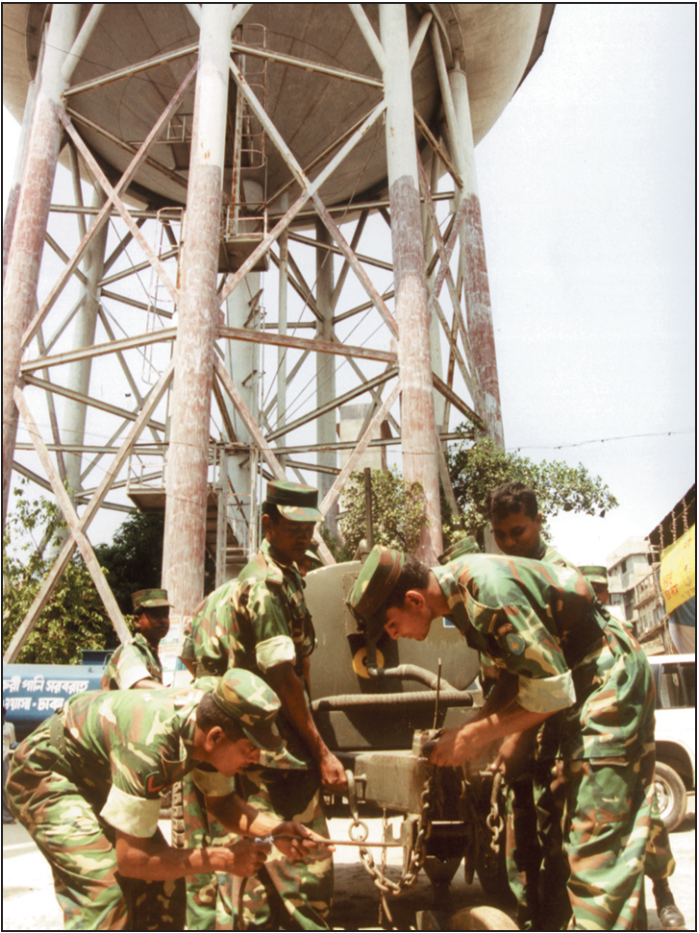


PHOTO: STAR

Deployed at six zonal offices of WASA in the wake of acute water crisis, army personnel work on a water tank at Fakirerpool pump house yesterday to ensure smooth supply of water for city dwellers.

# Army deployed in WASA offices

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Army personnel were deployed in all six zonal offices of WASA and at its system control unit yesterday for smooth operation of its pump houses and augmenting water supply in different city areas.

Army personnel will assist WASA employees in smooth operation of its 391 pump houses in the city, BBC reported last night quoting its Managing Director Azharul Haq.

He told BBC that army deployment followed allegations that local hoodlums "take control" of pump houses at night in many areas and compel the operators to supply water at their will. This disturbs operation of pumps and supply of water.

When contacted, WASA Chief Engineer Kazi Mohammad said the authorities have a plan to keep the army deployed during the current summer to oversee operation of pump houses. Deployment of army greatly improved water supply situation during the last three summer seasons, he said.

SEE PAGE 11 COL 8