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Khaleda returns home

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Ending a nearly one month's stay in the USA, Prime Minister Khaleda Zia returned home yesterday to a rousing reception accorded to her at the Zia International Airport.

Thousands of cheerful activists of ruling BNP gathered at the airport to welcome the prime minister back home after her 27-day stay in New York.

Khaleda left Dhaka on May 6 to attend a special session of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) on child rights. Following the end of the three-day session on May 10, she stayed on in New York to undergo a surgical operation on her knee at a local hospital on May 16.

This was her first visit to the USA since she returned to power seven months ago.

In a message issued later, the

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NEC meets today to finalise ADP

BSS, Dhaka

The National Economic Council (NEC) will meet today to finalise the size of the Annual Development Programme (ADP) for fiscal 2002-2003, official sources said.

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia, chairperson the NEC, will preside over the meeting to be attended by cabinet ministers, secretaries, members of the Planning Commission and senior officials of the ministries, representatives of autonomous bodies and other government agencies concerned.

The NEC is expected to finalise the size of the ADP at Tk 19,500 crore, the sources said.

The revised ADP for the current fiscal has been fixed at Tk 16,000 crore and the proposed ADP for the next fiscal is going to be higher by Tk 3,500 crore.

Of the total ADP outlay for 2002-2003, Tk 10,286 crore is expected to come from the revenue budget.

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Norge studying economics of gas reserve

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A team of Norwegian energy experts has recently begun an economic analysis of existing Bangladesh gas reserves, sources said.

The analysis will bring forward a mid-term gas demand forecast for Bangladesh.

As part of a cooperation agreement with Bangladesh, Norway Petroleum Department along with the Hydrocarbon Cell of the Energy Ministry of Bangladesh had previously made an assessment of Bangladesh gas reserve.

The economic analysis is a follow up of this cooperation, the sources added.

The Norwegian experts recently

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We, those who are to die young, salute you

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Nightmare at noon in coal mine

2 killed as part of roof caves in at Barapukuria

STAR DESK

At least two miners were killed and about a dozen others injured when a part of the roof of the Barapukuria coal mine in Dinajpur collapsed yesterday afternoon.

The victims were identified as Mohammed Quamruzzaman and Nirmal Mandi, two Parbatipur locals.

Some 50 miners were working at the site at the time. According to Parbatipur police, a huge chunk of cave suddenly came down inside the roadway of the mine some 1250 feet below ground level killing the two instantly at 3:20pm.

Panic gripped the miners as the alarm blared through the narrow and dark tunnels and workers scrambled for safety. There was chaos all around.

Later, mine workers organised themselves and started looking for their missing colleagues. In the gleam of floodlights, they removed the boulders and found the badly smashed bodies.

The bodies were later sent to Dinajpur Sadar Hospital.

After the accident, the locals got angry and created a law and order situation at the mining site. Local police contingents rushed to the spot and later brought the

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PHOTO: STAR

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia walks on the red carpet after flying back from New York yesterday. Senior cabinet members including Finance Minister M Saifur Rahman (3rd-R) and LGRD Minister Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan (2nd-R) are also seen.

Budget aims at transparency

INAM AHMED

The budget for fiscal 2002-2003 will aim at making earnings and expenditures of autonomous bodies and public sector units (PSUs) transparent.

Moreover, it will keep some cushioning provision to meet exigencies in different sectors like exports and for unforeseen events like natural calamities. This cushioning fund and other sectoral allocations will be made in such a way that they may be reallocated to other sectors in case of emergencies and other priorities.

This is a reason why the mid-term review of the

budget, as promised by the finance minister, would become crucial, sources said.

They said the expenditures and earnings of the PSUs used to be reflected in the budget document on a netting-out basis. This bred ambiguity and people often did not know which organisation is guzzling how much fund and giving what in return.

But under the new system, it would be clearly shown who is taking how much fund and what earnings they make. Loans, both foreign and domestic, taken by the PSUs and the interest accrued on them would also be

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Tell-tale signs of torture on Sohel

Forensic experts rule out BDR claim of death from falling off roof

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Forensic experts at the Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) have found signs of torture on fish trader Sohel, who was beaten to death allegedly by the paramilitary Bangladesh Rifles (BDR).

During an autopsy today, they found marks of injury inflicted by sharp weapons on Sohel's knees and back of his palm. But they felt that chemical tests need to be done to know the actual cause of the victim's death. Tissues from the body of Sohel have already been sent for chemical test.

After the autopsy, Sohel's body was handed over to his family in the afternoon.

A three-member forensic team led by Associate Professor of the forensic

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Ex-DCC ward commissioner shot

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Two persons, one of them a former ward commissioner of the Dhaka City Corporation, were shot in separate incidents in the city yesterday.

Abul Kashem, 45, former commissioner of ward No. 51, was shot in front of his Sobhanbagh residence.

An armed youth shot him in the chest and back, when he was taking a morning walk at about 6:30am.

Critically injured, Kashem had been admitted to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH), said family members.

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Playing political cards close to the chest

NAZMUL ASHRAF

As the ruling BNP is keeping cards close to its chest, the Awami League is also unwilling to lay its on the table about joining the parliament.

The vagueness of the decision of the Business Advisory Committee of the parliament on the length of the budget session has made the AL to keep its fingers crossed. Because, if the session ends within 33 days a time after which the AL will lose its seats due to absence for 90 consecutive days in the House the party needs not worry. Otherwise, the AL runs the risk of losing membership.

In that case, the party has to join the session if it

wants to have a footing in the parliament.

It has not convened the meeting of its AL Parliamentary Party (ALPP) till yesterday although the budget session begins today, and sources hinted that it would wait and see how the BNP handles the session and whether it is prolonged.

Deputy Leader of the Opposition Abdul Hamid had earlier said that the AL Parliamentary Party (ALPP) and Central Working Committee (ALCWC) would meet jointly or separately on the proposal for a dialogue with the government or going to the parliament.

Chief Whip of the Opposition Abus Shahid also said so when he recently talked to The Daily Star.

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Brazil blues spared

AGENCIES, Ulsan, South Korea

A late Rivaldo penalty and a goal by Ronaldo saw Brazil get their World Cup campaign off to a winning start with a come-from-behind 2-1 win over Turkey, who had two players sent off in their opening match.

Rivaldo's 86th-minute spot-kick was perfectly placed beyond diving goalkeeper Rustu Recber after Turkey defender Alpay Ozalan seemed to pull back substitute Luizao as he raced towards goal to concede the penalty on the edge of the 18-metre box and was sent off in the 86th minute.

Turkey were incensed at the decision by South Korean referee Kim Young-joo -- the incident clearly started outside the penalty area -- but Rivaldo coolly converted from the spot in the most entertaining of the 10 World Cup matches played so far.

Ronaldo had got Brazil back in the game from one-nil down at the break when he scored his first goal in a competitive international for nearly three years five minutes after halftime to cancel out Hasan Sas's goal just before the interval.

Seconds before the final whistle Hakan Unsal was shown the red card -- the third at the finals so far -- for kicking the ball at Rivaldo as he prepared to take a corner.

The Barcelona player collapsed theatrically clutching his head, but the ball had hit his legs.

Relieved Brazil coach Luiz Felipe Scolari said he was relieved to have won and said his side could now look forward to reaching the second round.

"To win your first game puts you in a solid position -- if we can get six points then we'd be virtually through," said Scolari, whose side face China on Saturday in their next game. Their final game is against Costa Rica.

"I wasn't particularly pleased with how we started in the first half,"

Scolari added, referring to a lacklustre opening spell when the Brazilians had struggled to get a shot on goal.

Penalty hero Rivaldo said the side was disappointed not to have wrapped up victory earlier. "I regret that we couldn't seal it in the first half. I am relieved that we came from behind to win."

"When they went 1-0 up I was a bit worried. But we had the belief to win," the former world footballer of the year added.

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PHOTO: AFP

Brazil's Ronaldo (No. 9) scores a 50th minute equaliser against Turkey in Ulsan's Munsu Football Stadium in South Korea during Group C action against in the World Cup yesterday.

Stylish start for Italians

AFP, Sapporo, Japan

Striker Christian Vieri scored twice as Italy opened their World Cup challenge with a 2-0 win over Ecuador at the Sapporo Dome yesterday.

Italy, one of the pre-tournament favourites, settled the match in the first half an hour with the South Americans looking overawed as Vieri and playmaker Francesco Totti ran rings around the World Cup debutants.

In the second half, as Italy eased up, Ecuador were a more potent force and showed that they could yet prove a handful for their other Group G opponents Croatia and Mexico.

Vieri was off the mark after just seven minutes. Totti crossed from the left for the Australian-raised forward to side-foot the ball beyond Ecuador goalkeeper Jose Cevallos' despairing dive.

The powerfully built Vieri, who scored five goals during the 1998 finals in France, was a constant menace and 20 minutes later a long pass was lofted

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DHL

	Sun Rises	Sun Sets
June 4		6-43 pm
June 5	5-11 am	

Prayer Timings		
June 4		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	4-15	4-45
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	5-00	5-15
Maghrib	6-46	6-50
Esha	8-15	8-45

Source: Islamic Foundation