

Saifur off to US for WB, IMF meet

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
Finance Minister M Saifur Rahman left Dhaka yesterday for the US on a week-long visit with a mission to secure more aid from the World Bank (WB) and International Monetary Fund (IMF) and persuade them to relax the conditions tagged with aids.
Saifur will also try to restore Bangladesh's image dented by the recent countrywide bomb blasts, to ensure that the country's export does not suffer. He will highlight the government's various reform programmes as suggested by the donor agencies.
The minister will attend the high level plenary meeting on Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) at the UN Headquarters to be held from September 14-16.
He will also attend the annual
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World leaders meet in historic summit at UN Sept 14

REZAUL KARIM

World leaders will arrive in historic numbers at the United Nations for the three-day Summit beginning September 14, to reach major decisions on ending poverty, promoting human rights, fighting terrorism and helping countries recover from deadly conflicts.
The 2005 World Summit will also focus on an overhaul of the organisation itself, in order to make it more effective and efficient in its work throughout the world. More than 170

heads of State and Government have signaled their intention to attend, making it almost certain to be the largest gathering ever of world leaders.
On the eve of the summit, UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan said, "A successful outcome at the Summit will be a success for all and failure would be a lost opportunity for us all. The stakes are high...very high."
Prime Minister Khaleda Zia, who will leave here for New York on September 12 (Monday) to attend

the Summit as well as the regular session of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA), will lead the Bangladesh delegation.
She is due to address the High Level Plenary Meeting on the first day of the Summit on September 14 and will make country statement at the general debate of UNGA on September 17.
Bangladesh will make statements and participate in negotiations on a wide range of issues, including Iraq and Palestine; the
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Cops rescue 3 kidnapped kids, nab 7 abductors

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Police and Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) rescued three kidnapped children and arrested seven abductors from Motijheel and Badda in the capital and Sadarghat in Barisal on Friday.
The rescued children are two years and four months-old Mitu, daughter of Shahid of Gulbagh in Motijheel, Rifat, 8, son of Aminul Islam of Bhatara under Badda and Rashedul Islam, 12, son of Mostafizur Rahman of Barisal.
Criminals kidnapped Mitu from her house when her father went to office and mother took her son to school in the morning on September 8.
On information, Motijheel police arrested Shirin alias Jasmin, 20
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The usually busy road in Motijheel in the capital looks almost deserted yesterday, the second day of the weekly holiday.

SERIAL BLASTS B Chy terms PM's speech 'mere rhetoric'

UNB, Dhaka
Bikalpa Dhara Bangladesh (BDB) President Prof Badruddoza Chowdhury yesterday said the prime minister's speech in parliament on the August 17 bomb blasts has frustrated the nation as a whole.
"Her (PM's) speech was mere rhetoric...Parliament is not the right place to deliver such harangues," the former president said.
He was addressing a function arranged at the KC Memorial Clinic to welcome the activists from different political parties, who joined the Bikalpa Dhara.
B Chowdhury said the prime minister should have spoken about the measures to unveil the mystery of the Aug 17 terror attacks, but she did not say anything about the steps taken by the government.
"There should have been guidelines in her speech about security of the people," he said, adding that the prime minister would come up with positive statements in future to ensure security of the people.



A van tumbles in mud on Satarkul Road in North Badda in the capital yesterday. The muddy road remains almost inaccessible to vehicles for days.

BSF pushes in 8 Indians thru' Panchagarh border

UNB, Panchagarh

Indian Border Security Force (BSF) pushed eight Bangla-speaking Indians, including three children, into Bangladesh through Panchagarh border early yesterday, official sources said.
On information, police arrested the Indians named Borhan Matbar, 30, his wife Parveen, 28, their three children--Salma, Setara, and Mariam--and Layek Sheikh, Babul, and Lokman.
Police and the detainees said they were living in a rented house in a slum area near a mosque in Delhi.
One of the eight told police that Delhi police detained them some days ago and handed them over to the Indian border guards.
He said the Border Security Force (BSF) brought them to the frontier and pushed them into Bangladesh through different points.

Business frets over impact as city finds a quiet Saturday

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

While government officials were holidaying yesterday, leaders of export-oriented industries and other trade bodies spent a worrisome Saturday apprehending the impact of the newly introduced two-day off in a week as it keeps closed their transactions with rest of the world for three days in total.
Declaring Friday and Saturday weekly holidays at a time when the country's industries are facing fierce competition in the changed global situation is a serious threat to their survival, business people observed.
Yesterday was the first weekend after the government on September 5 declared the two-day weekly holiday on Friday and Saturday to cushion the effects of increased energy price on the country's economy. It means Bangladesh's busi-

nesses remain isolated from the rest of the world for three days, including one day extra on Sunday, which is observed as weekly holiday in most parts of the world.
Foreign buyers at a meeting with the leaders of Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA) yesterday urged the government to reconsider the week holiday schedule.
Industries and other economic activities should continue on Fridays, while Saturdays and Sundays can be made weekly holidays, the foreign buyers said at the meeting chaired by BGMEA President Annisul Huq.
They urged the BGMEA leaders to convey their message to the government, adding that the August 17 blasts across the country have already been a big blow to the
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Six killed in road crashes

UNB, Dhaka
Six people died and 45 others were injured in road accidents in Narsingdi and Comilla yesterday.
In Narsingdi, three people died and 20 were injured when a bus collided with a truck on the
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Grim search for the dead drags on in New Orleans

Death toll could be much lower than feared earlier, floodwaters recede

AFP, New Orleans

Police in New Orleans continued the grisly search yesterday for those killed in Hurricane Katrina as the army said pumping the city's putrid waters would be finished sooner than first thought.
The good news came after officials said that the number of bodies recovered as the floodwaters receded suggested earlier estimates that as many as 10,000

people may have perished in the city looked likely to be excessive.
New Orleans itself is expected to be drained by October 2, while the worst-hit part of town, the still entirely-submerged St. Bernard Parish, is expected to be drained by October 8, the US Army Corps of Engineers said.
Officials and even the US Army engineers themselves said last week that the city could take

between 80 and 90 days to be drained following the devastating flooding that hit the city after Hurricane Katrina struck on August 29.
But the engineers said that a network of pumps that were ratcheting up their output of foul water from the city, combined with an unseasonal lack of rainfall since Katrina hit, and strong winds were
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Cop injured in gunfight with criminals

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kushiya

A police sub-inspector (SI) sustained bullet injuries during a gunfight with outlaws at village Dhala in Gangni upazila of Meherpur on Friday night.
Meherpur police said they were informed that a group of outlaws would cross Dhola area at midnight. SI Mahir Uddin, in-charge of Dhola police camp, rushed to Dhola with his forces and laid a trap at Natni on Dhala-Mujibnagar road.
When the policemen asked the identity of some people who were passing the area, they opened fire. A gunfight ensued when the police
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2 criminals killed in 'crossfire'

STAR REPORT

Two criminals -- a local gang leader and a robber leader -- were killed in "crossfire" during shootouts between Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) and the criminals in Faridpur and Chittagong yesterday.
Our Kushiya correspondent reports: Ujjal Hossain, 30, leader of a local gang and accused in nine cases including two for murder, was killed in "crossfire" at Ambikapur village under sadar upazila in Faridpur.
According to Rab sources, a team of Rab-3 arrested Ujjal alias Sadhu, who had left Faridpur several months ago to evade arrest, at

Kalabagan in Dhaka on Friday.
During an interrogation at the Rab office in Dhaka, Ujjal confessed to his involvement in criminal activities and having firearms hidden at different places in Faridpur.
Ujjal was handed over to Faridpur Rab, who took him to Ambikapur village to nab his accomplices and retrieve the hidden firearms. As the elite force reached the area, Ujjal's accomplices opened fire on them prompting the Rab to fire back.
Ujjal got caught in the crossfire while trying to escape from the Rab van and died on the spot.
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Indian police send back 14 Bangladeshis after arrest

BDNEWS, Sylhet

The Indian police sent back 14 Bangladeshi nationals after capturing them for entering Indian territory illegally.
They handed the Bangladeshis over to Tamabil Customs Immigration Authorities at about 4:30pm on Friday.
The customs immigration authorities handed the 14 over to two influential businessmen, Moku Mia and Jubayer Ahmed, instead of producing them before the court.
Immigration officer Sirajul Islam
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A file photo shows the debris of the Twin Towers destroyed in terrorist attacks in New York in the US on September 11, 2001.

Americans mark 9/11 with questions on vulnerability

AFP, Washington

Americans mark the fourth anniversary of the September 11, 2001 terror attacks today nagged by new burning questions about their readiness to confront a major disaster after the debacle of Hurricane Katrina.
Scenes of anarchy and neglect in the flooded southern city of New Orleans, where survivors spent hellish days waiting for troops and relief supplies, have revived a sense of vulnerability not felt here since 9-11.
Both critics and supporters of President George W. Bush are wondering what happened to the billions of dollars spent on civil defence since al-Qaeda flew hijacked airliners into the World Trade Centre and Pentagon.
"If our system did such a poor job when there was no enemy, how would the federal, state and local governments have coped with a terrorist attack that provided no advance warning?" asked

Republican Senator Susan Collins.
Four years after the assaults that left nearly 3,000 people dead and the world's superpower reeling, September 11 remains the defining moment for the United States in the new millennium.
It triggered wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, saddled US politicians with new criteria of toughness and fostered a "with-me-or-against-me" mentality that reshaped the diplomatic landscape and strained alliances worldwide.
The rituals for New York will observe the now-familiar rituals Sunday: the minute of silence at 8:46 a.m. (1246 GMT) when the first plane struck the trade centre's North Tower, the solemn reading of the names of the dead.
The only new wrinkle will be a Pentagon-sponsored "Freedom Walk" in Washington to honour US troops in Iraq in what critics called a blatant piece of political propaganda by the Bush administration.
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