

Hindu militants rally outside Babri Masjid

AYODHYA, Oct 30: Thousands of militant Hindus armed with daggers, tridents and knuckle dusters converged on a disputed north Indian shrine today for a ceremony marked by tension and fiery speeches, reports Reuters.

Hundreds of armed policemen watched the ceremony to mark the anniversary of the storming of the 16th century mosque when frenzied Hindus planted saffron flags atop its three domes.

"Thank God nothing happened," said police inspector Ramadhar Yadav standing barefoot inside the shrine beside statues of Rama, the legendary warrior king whose birthplace, Hindus say, lies under the mosque.

"We were told nothing would happen, but you can never tell," Yadav said as the 3,000 strong crowd, most wearing the saffron colour of martyrdom, began to disperse.

Last year, police defending the mosque opened fire on Hindu mobs who surged through their lines to try to tear down the building.

Sixteen people were killed in the most dramatic event of a campaign to build a temple to Rama on the site and that gave rise to Hindu-Muslim riots in which 2,000 people have died in the past two years.

Many in today's crowd were prepared for violence.

Anil Kumar Chauhan, 21, showed off an eight-inch (20 cm) dagger strapped to his side. Another young man pulled a steel knuckle duster from under his belt.

"If we get an opportunity, we will storm the mosque," said the bearded Chauhan, a saffron headband tied round his flowing hair.

Some militants carried

steel tridents, symbol of the Hindu god Shiva. Others smeared vermilion paste on their foreheads to signify they were going to battle.

The police were prepared for trouble. Mounted police guarded approaches to the shrine bristling with steel barriers and doorframe metal detectors. A bomb disposal squad stood by.

Senior priests raised three triangular saffron flags about 100 yards from the disputed white-domed structure, which Hindus say was built after the first Moghul emperor razed a temple to Rama.

Muslims say there is no proof a temple ever stood there and the dispute is subject to dozens of legal cases the militant Hindus say are irrelevant to a religious issue.

Deafening roars of 'Jai Shri Rama,' or victory to Lord Rama, drowned the rhythmic clash of cymbals and religious music coming from inside the disputed shrine, where court decisions allow Hindus to pray but bar Muslims.

In the streets of Ayodhya, a holy temple town in the state of Uttar Pradesh, loudspeakers blared Hindu devotional songs and shopkeepers sold marigold garlands, bananas and sweets that are given as offerings to the gods.

The temple campaign has been a prime factor in the fall of two governments and carried the Hindu revivalist Bharatiya Janata Party to national political prominence and to power in Uttar Pradesh.

It has made many Muslims, a 100 million-strong minority in an overwhelmingly Hindu population of 850 million, fearful of their future in India as Hindu chauvinism strengthens.



A JCD meeting in the city yesterday to mourn the deaths on DU campus last Sunday. — Star photo

Palestinian self-rule

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with Shamir: "Now is the ideal moment for the Arab states to demonstrate that attitudes have changed."

Referring emotionally to the decades of war and terrorism in the Middle East, he said: "We have seen too many generations of children whose haunted eyes show only fear, too many funerals for the brothers and sisters, the mothers and fathers who died too soon, too much hatred, too little love."

"If we cannot summon the courage to lay down the past for ourselves let us resolve to do it for the children."

Bush, who later left for Washington, stressed that only face-to-face talks between Israel and Arab states could bring peace. Neither the Madrid conference nor the Madrid conference could impose or veto a solution, he said.

His insistence on territorial compromise and reference to UN Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338—which call on Israel to withdraw from land it occupied in the 1967 Middle East peace settlement to take.

He wore a giant black-and-white chequered keffiyeh (Arab headdress) over his shoulders, the symbol of the four-year-old Palestinian uprising against Israeli rule in the occupied territories.

The 12-nation European Community went further than either Bush or Gorbachev in spelling out the shape it wanted a Middle East peace settlement to take.

Van den Broek called for a halt to Israeli settlements, renunciation of the Arab economic boycott of Israel and the right of self-determination for the Palestinian people.

Gorbachev said the world required Middle East peace because the region was so heavily armed with nuclear and unconventional weapons.

Israel is believed to have a large nuclear arsenal and Iraq, which has used chemical weapons, was building a nuclear capability before its Gulf war defeat. Israel and most of its Arab neighbours is also believed to have chemical arsenals.

The team invited the Prime Minister to inaugurate a national seminar on climate change to be organised next year by the Climate Institute and other environmental organisations in private and public sector.

The IPCC team included Director of Global Environment Programme of the Climate Institute Dr Ata Qureshi, Dr A Barrie Pittock of Institute of Natural Resources and Environment of Melbourne, Australia, Dhaka University Vice Chancellor Prof Moniruzzaman Miah, Dr Toufik Siddiqui of East West Centre, Hawaii and Dr Ashuzzaman of BIDS.

The team, on a month-long briefing tour to inform key decision makers including heads of state, ministers and heads of organisations both in public and private sectors regarding climate change and its impact on their respective countries, are now on a five-day tour of Bangladesh.

The team earlier visited Pakistan and Nepal and is expected to go to Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia, Vietnam, South Korea and Philippines to present the findings of the IPCC concerning scientific implications, possible impacts and potential response strategies on global climate change.

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Environmentalists brief PM on climate change

International environmentalists have stressed the need for global action and support towards national programmes of different countries to check global environmental degradation.

This was expressed by members of Inter-governmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) and Washington-based Climate Institute when Secretariat office on Wednesday afternoon.

The team briefed the Prime Minister of the implications for Bangladesh and the region of expected changes from global climate change.

The Prime Minister apprised the delegation of national programmes including tree plantation for a balanced environment.

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The Midnight F

Gorbachev in France on a brief visit

BIARRITZ (France), Oct 30: Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev arrived Wednesday in southwestern France on his way home from Madrid for a short visit with French President Francois Mitterrand. Gorbachev and his wife, Raisa, greeted by Mitterrand at this beachside resort in Laitche, the Spanish border. They quickly left for the nearby home of the French leader, where they were to spend the night, reports AP.

China, Iran pledge closer ties

TEHRAN, Oct 30: Chinese President Yang Shangkun and his Iranian counterpart pledged today that their countries would forge closer ties on the first official visit by a Chinese head of state since the 1979 Islamic Revolution. "I came to Iran to meet old friends and make new ones on the one hand, and develop bilateral relations on the other," said Yang, who began a four-day visit to Iran, report AFP.

Saudi fund for Afghan reconstruction

ISLAMABAD, Oct 30: King Fahd of Saudi Arabia has established a multi-million dollar fund for the reconstruction of Afghanistan, Saudi Arabian Ambassador Yusuf Motabbakani announced here today at a news conference. King Fahd had allocated one billion riyals (About 40 million dollars) as an initial grant towards the fund. Afghan Mujahideen government chief Sibghatullah Mojaddedi and others were present, report AFP.

Typhoon Ruth claims 44 lives

BAGUIO (Philippines), Oct 30: The death toll from Typhoon Ruth rose to 44 today, as rescue workers dug 14 more bodies from landslides which buried entire homes in this mountain resort. Ruth struck the northern Philippines overnight Sunday, and this city has accounted for 36 reported fatalities so far, rescuers said, report AFP.

DPRK speeds up N-arms development

SEOUL, Oct 30: North Korea is accelerating nuclear arms development because of a drastic cut this year in the supply of Soviet weapons, a Seoul newspaper reported Wednesday. The Joong-Ang Daily News quoted government sources as saying North Korea's army has been "in great confusion" since Moscow opened diplomatic ties with Seoul last September, report AP.

Jute PDB refuses to buy electric poles from Indian company

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have been opened during the current fiscal year.

Of the total, 140 centres have been set up by Bangladesh Jute Centre (BJC) and the rest 47 by Bangladesh Jute Mills Corporation (BJMC).

The minister told a questioner that the government would not be able to open new centres due to lack of fund.

In reply to Rahmat Ali of Awami League the Jute Minister said the country's nationalised jute industries incurred a loss of Tk.1083.38 crore in 10 years since 1980-81.

He said the jute industry was not given subsidies from 1980-81 to 1984-85 but, the government provided EXPB facilities amounting to Tk.158.74 crore from 1985-86 to 1988-89 to the industry.

The government has been providing subsidy to the export of jute goods since July 1989 and the amount of subsidy from July 1989 to June 1990 stood at Tk.157.01 crore.

Local officials apprehended that if the farmers fail to protect aman from the 'brown fly', the ongoing relief operation will have to be extended at least for three months until the harvest of aus. Many farmers have already cleared the damaged aman fields and started sowing aus.

Pest attack

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earlier, it would be difficult for them to sustain till the aus which will be sown after harvesting of aman. It will take at least one month for completion of aman harvest, the BRAC official said.

The Agricultural Extension Department is trying to aware the people about the insect. They have distributed leaflets among the people and advised them to use mipson, ripcord, norgome, tribon and other insecticides and harvest of paddy before ripening. But the leaflet was useless because most of the farmers do not know how to read and they do not have the capacity to buy insecticide.

Additional District Magistrate, Abdus Salek who is now in charge of 11 petty Commission of Rangpur was contacted told this correspondent that the Agriculture Extension Department has launched a campaign and is providing insecticide at a subsidised rate. He said out of 380000 acres of land, 250000 acres have been covered by spraying insecticide to fight the 'brown fly'.

But the farmers said even after the spraying in different areas, the insect is still surviving. Observers feel that immediate steps should be taken to take necessary measures to protect the aman crop from being damaged by menace of insect.

Meanwhile farmer, Mattur Rahman of Nabindesh Union of Gangachara Upazila told this correspondent that spraying of tobacco dust has been able to remove the insect from field. He could not say if they died flew away. Tobacco dust is selling at Taka 10 to 15 per bag in tobacco factories. Rangpur town and few farms could afford, he said.

Quorum

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Bangladesh Space Research and Remote Sensing Organisation Bill, 1991 was continuing. It was then drizzling outside.

Lack of quorum requiring presence of 60 out of 330 members was pointed out by Sharif Khasruzzaman of AL. The Speaker took a pause, probably counted the heads, and announced the adjournment. The number of members present in the House was however, not pronounced.

Immediately after the Speaker adjourned the House till 4-30 pm Thursday, Chief Whip Khandaker Delwar Hossain and some Treasury Bench members rushed in.

Earlier, the National Local Government Institute Bill, 1991 and the Comptroller and Auditor General (Remuneration and Privileges) (Amendment) Bill 1991 were introduced by State Minister for LGRD Abdul Hye and State Minister for Finance Mujibur Rahman respectively.

Khaleda

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arms holder and terrorists to law enforcing agencies, expel identified terrorists from their respective parties, stop outsiders from entering all educational institutions, not to harbour those expelled from any party for terrorist activities and refrain from giving dirty slogans.

The leaders present on the occasion were Shaifur Rahman Badshah, of CPB, Fazle Hossain Badshah of United Communist League, Majibul Huq Baku of JSD (Inu), Rafiquddin of Awami League, Abdur Rab Manik of NAP, RUCSU VP Rizvi Ahmed, RUCSU GS Ruhul Kabir Babu, Kamrul and Munir of BNP.

Rajshahi city MP, State Minister for Land Kabir Hossain, and Rajshahi city Mayor Mizanur Rahman Minu were also present.

Flood action plan

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porting activities aimed at integrating, economic, socio-cultural, environmental and other aspects.

The 26 components have in the meantime been expanded. For instance component number eight had been expanded to 8 A and 8 B, and number nine to 9 A and 9 B. Already final report of the 8 B study on Dhaka Integrated Town Protection Project has been submitted.

So far interim reports of six other studies have also been submitted. They are study no one on Brahmaputra Right Embankment Strengthening, 8 A on Greater Dhaka Protection Project, 12th study on flood control drainage, irrigation and agricultural review, 13th on organization and management study, and the 15th on land acquisition and resettlement study.

The review committee of FAP headed by an additional secretary of the Ministry of Irrigation, Water Development and Flood Control, looks into the progress of work of the different components. But the committee chairman cannot give his undivided attention because he is also the chairman in charge of the Water Development Board besides his being an additional secretary in the ministry.

FAP activities are thus in effect being coordinated by a seven-member panel of experts who are also consultants. Thus a close look into the FAP activities show that the existence of a government clearly specifying its priorities is not felt at all. Three FAP studies are yet to be started.

What's more, the FAP activities have not yet been of any use to the government even though two years have passed since FAP was launched in December 1989. FAP studies were of no use during the floods of this year, says an expert.

Again even though the FAP is meant for evolving an approach to a long-term solution of the flood problem, allocations continue to be made for old fashioned projects of the Water Development Board which did more harm than good. And the projects are being implemented without raising a question.

The only thing that has been taken care of in the FAP is the integration of a number of WDB activities which were taken up long before. The five regional studies of FAP are based on the regions into which the country was divided by the Master Plan Organization of WDB, the Brahmaputra Right Embankment Strengthening Study was also taken up by WDB before.

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Chhatra League (S-A) procession with the body of Mizan, a victim of Sunday's gunbattle, who died in DMCH yesterday morning. — Star photo

Hasina : Parliament

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said that in all these incidents, it was clear that BCL and other student organisations fell victim to attack of JCD.

She said that after Sunday's incident at the Dhaka University, S M Hall was searched by police, but surprisingly, some other halls known as strongholds of JCD were spared.

She alleged that the government was protecting the terrorists and failed to apply law impartially.

Referring to Sunday's gunbattle in Dhaka University campus, Hasina said that it was the outcome of JCD's internal conflict and there was attempt to shift the blame on Chhatra League to confuse the people.

She refuted the charges that her party had given shelter to the killers of Dr Milton and asked why the law enforcing agencies were not arresting the killers.

A heated debate followed Hasina's remarks against the ruling party which created uproar in the House for quite some time.

Taking part in the discussion, Deputy Leader of the House Prof Badruddoza Chowdhury said that a high-powered committee was formed to suggest means for elimination of terrorism from the campus. He expressed the hope that the committee would come out with meaningful recommendations. He maintained that generation of heat in the House would not help stop campus violence rather it would disrupt the functioning of the Committee.

Referring to Hasina's announcement for suspension of BCL's activities in Dhaka University, Prof Chowdhury said that the killers of Dr Milton should be expelled if they were sheltered by any organisation. He agreed that terrorism could be eliminated within two hours, but said that a consensus was essential for such an action.

Earlier, Home Minister Abdul Matin Chowdhury took

the floor and said that the terrorism would never come to an end if the terrorists expelled from one organisation were given shelter by others.

The Minister referred to his meeting with Sheikh Hasina and other leaders and said that a joint statement by the Leader of the House and Leader of the Opposition and other leaders in identifying the terrorists could help curb terrorism in the campus.

Information Minister Nazmul Huda said that terrorism on the campus could be stopped in an hour if the leader of the Opposition desires.

The Minister held the opposition leader responsible for the campus violence and made some remarks in this context which was later expunged by the Speaker.

The Minister mentioned about the absence of AL MP Aurango from the House for a long time and alleged that he had been given a special task on terrorism.

Jatiya Party leader Moudud Ahmed, AL MP Tofael Ahmed, Opposition Chief Whip Mohammed Nasim also took part in the discussion on campus situation.

Schaffer

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US food and commodity aids, grants and assistance to Bangladesh for rural developments.

She is expected to call on Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia, besides meeting with Foreign Minister ASM Mostafizur Rahman and Finance Minister M Saifur Rahman.

Schaffer is also likely to meet Awami League Chief and Leader of the Opposition in Parliament Sheikh Hasina.

This is the first visit to Bangladesh by a senior State Department official since installation of the democratic government in the country.

Schaffer is due to leave here for New Delhi on Friday.

Another victim

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Mohiuddin and BCL leaders.

Later, Hasina took with her Mizan's sister Nurul Islam, mother, father and brothers to her Dhanmondi residence where she passed sometime with them to console them.

Mizan was the third issue of Nurul Islam's five sons and only daughter. Nurul Islam is an official of the Adamjee Jute Mills.

The BCL (S-A) leaders and workers of different levels gathered near the DMCH morgue wearing black badges. Some of them broke down in tears to see the body of Mizan.

Before bringing out a procession with Mizan's body at 1.45 pm, the BCL (S-A) leaders had a heated exchange of words with policeman over taking the body to the DU campus. The BCL (S-A) leaders were determined to lead the procession to the campus and hold his 'namaj-e-janaza' at the DU Central Mosque while the police officials on duty repeatedly asked them not to go there. At one stage, an Awami League leader told the policemen that the procession must go to the campus.

The procession of about 200 BCL (S-A) members marched up the 'Aparajeyo Bangla' in front of the Arts Faculty Building guarded by heavy contingents of riot police.

The processionists raised various slogans demanding arrest and execution of Mizan's killers, accusing the government of patronising terrorism and warning their rival JCD.

A heart-rending scene was created when Mizan's mother arrived there and started wailing over the body of her son.

The BCL (S-A) workers along with the grief stricken family members of Mizan then started marching towards the National Press Club where they held a rally.

The body was later taken to the AL central office at the Bangabandhu Avenue.