Over 100 injured: Temples damaged

Ctg tense as police, mobs clash

From Our Staff Correspondent

CHITTAGONG, Dec 7: Police in the port city fought sporadic street battles with mobs late Sunday night following reports of the demolition of the Babri Mosque in India.

At least 100 persons including 25 policemen were injured in the clashes. Tension is prevailing in the city.

The biggest Hindu temple at Kaibalyadham in the outskirts of the city was burnt, fire brigade sources said.

Five other temples, a slum and a cotton godown were also torched, the sources added.

The trouble began after 11 pm Sunday as news of the attack on the Babri Mosque in Ayodhya spread.

Police and witness said that thousands of people took to the city streets here to protest the attack on the mosque shouting slogans condemning the act of the Indian Hindu militants.

At one stage violence erupted at different places of the city despite some precautionary measures by the local authorities. Hundreds of unruly people attacked and damaged a few Hindu temples located in the city.

Police and witnesses also said that the violence was marked by arson, brick-batting, cocktail blasts and ransacking of shops around the temple sites and city markets

Street battles with the mob occurred when police swung into action to contain the vioPolice fired some blank-

shots to disperse the mob. Inspite of that, police sources said, when the situation went beyond control, the BDR was called in at around half-past twelve to tackle the

situation. In the face of stiff resistance both by police and BDR the agitators abandoned the streets and the situation came under control at around 3 am Monday, police control room

However, most of the city residents here passed a sleepless night because of the trouble, sources said.

Meanwhile, talking to this correspondent the Commissioner of Chittagong Metropolitan Police Abdus Salam said that a large police force, most of it in riot gear, along with several platoons of BDR has been deployed today at various points in the city to thwart any fresh outbreak of

Besides, all other precautionary measures have been taken to maintain peace and tranquility in the city, Salam said adding that even announcements over megaphones had been made urging the people not to make any unnecessary gatherings in any place of the city.

Apart from these measures, peace processions have also been brought out here by people belonging to different political groups calling for restraint and social amity.

Over 200 killed

From Page 1 Col 6 square-feet (110- squaremeter brick platform, installed a metal idol of a popular deity, Rama, and built a canopy of bamboo and orange cloth over it.

Hindus believe Rama was born at the site and that 16th century Muslim invaders destroyed a Rama temple on the site to build the Babri Masjid with the rubble.

Policemen were forcing the Hindu pilgrims to leave Ayodhya, but progress was

The sacking of the mosque provoked an angry reaction from the Islamic government of Pakistan, India's traditional enemy. Anti-Hindu violence was reported in Pakistan, Bangladesh, Afghanistan and Britain.

Both houses of Parliament were adjourned to protest the government's failure to contain the crisis.

The lower house later reconvened, but Prime Minister Rao was prevented from speaking by legislators screaming for him to resign. It quickly adjourned again.

The mosque dispute already had exploded in 1990, when about 1,000 people died in riots after Hindus unsuccessfully stormed the

building. That unrest brought down a previous government.

On Monday, hundreds of journalists demonstrated outside the BJP office in New Delhi to protest against attacks on Indian and foreign reporters in Ayodhya.

Among those who were wounded were Peter Heinlein of the Voice of America, Bob Drogin of the Los Angeles Times and Edward Gargan of nt on Monday.

PTI from Lucknow adds: Over one lakh Kar Sevaks left for their respective destinations from Ayodhya by special trains this evening, a railway spokesman claimed.

Nirmul hartal

From Page 1 Col 8 the mosque by Hindu militants.

This was disclosed by Committee Convenor Jahanara Imam while addressing a hurriedly called news conference at the Jatiya Press Club yesterday evening.

The four-point demands include the trial of Jamaat leader Golam Azam for war crimes, withdrawal of cases against 24 sponsors of Azam's public trial and ban on fundamentalist political parties including the Jamaat.

contacted by phone, com-

mented praising the steps

taken by the Bangladesh gov-

ernment to contain the reper-

way your Prime Minister and

Shri Lanka, Bernard Tilakra-

government are scheduled to

lysts say that if things do not

turn worse in India, where

Prime Minister Narasimha Rao

is being singled out for failing

to take pre-emptive steps to

avoid the incidents, the likeli-

hood of Rao's not coming is

in politics and diplomacy", said

a senior Indian journalist now

in Dhaka to cover the summit

suggesting that an improve-

ment in the situation was not

tant Editor of the India's

prestigious daily The Hindu,

was critical of Narasimha Rao

Bharat bandh

From Page 1 Col 2

If the marchers are pre-

The Naib Imam said the all

vented by the police, the

Muslims will court arrest in a

India Babri Masjid Action

Committee (IABMAC) decided

to observe bandh after a meet-

ing of AlBMAC held at the

ter a meeting of the coordina-

tion committee of the national

front-left front combine said,

Babri Masjid should be rebuilt

and restored forthwith to its

A joint statement issued af-

Jama Masjid this morning.

for the developments.

peaceful way, he said.

pristine glory.

PS Survanarayan, an Assis-

unlikely.

morning.

"Four days are a lot of time

"I am very impressed the

The Foreign Secretary of

The six heads of state and

Some observers and ana-

cussions of the Indian event.

the government acted."

tne, refused to comment.

fly into Dhaka Friday.

From Page 1 Col 7 not in a position to comment at the moment," Rahman told reporters who began his briefing acknowledging that "the situation in India has overtaken all our attention". The Bangladesh Foreign Secretary also emphasised on the "unpredictability" of the situa-

But he spoke of "continuing work in a normal fashion" referring to the on-going three-day meeting of the Standing Committee that prepares the agenda for the sum-

The Secretary General of SAARC, Ibrahim Zaki, also confirmed that the preparations for the summit would con-

"At this stage we can't say anything ... but we have decided to continue the meetings of the Standing Committee", Zaki, a former Foreign Secretary of the Maldives, told

The Daily Star last night. He said that whatever we decide would be decided collectively, depending on the

"Events in India do not affect our commitment to SAARC", said an evasive Indian

Foreign Secretary. Asked if he saw any possibility of a postponement JN Dixit, contacted by phone

last night, said, "I never comment on speculations." Violence in Dhaka forced the organisers to defer the scheduled Bangladesh-India cricket match yesterday, lead-

ing to rumours that the visitors . would leave for home today. "I'm not in a position to comment", the Nepalese Foreign Secretary had said initially, "I'm trying to contact

Kathmandu". "As far as the incidents are concerned, its very unfortunate", the Nepalese diplomat,

the New York Times, according to Gargan's accou-

Parties blast Mosque demolition A number of political parties, socio-cultural organisations and human rights organisations yesterday strongly condemned the demolition of the historical Babri Mosque by the Hindu fundamentalists and called upon the people to maintain communal harmony,

reports BSS. In separate statements, they cautioned the people against trouble-makers who would be out to disturb the existing communal atmosphere taking advantage of the Babri Mosque incident.

The chief adviser of Bangladesh Muktijoddha Sangsad's central command council Lt Col (Retd) Akbar Hussain, MP. strongly condemned the demolition of Babri Mosque by the aggressive Hindu fundamentalists.

He urged the freedom fighters to maintain vigil against any effort of communal disharmony so that the traditional amity among religious believers was maintained in Bangladesh.

Col Akbar also issued a stern warning against those elements who would try to create disturbance in the society by using religion. SC orders contempt

Some violent elements set fire to Communist Party office in the city yesterday. - Star photo

Police lobbing teargas shells on a violent crowd at Elephant Road in the city yesterday.

proceedings against Advani, Kalyan Singh

NEW DELIII, Dec 7: India's Supreme Court has ordered contempt proceedings against leaders of a pro-Hindu party for defying its directives and allowing Hindu fanatics to destroy a mosque in northern Uttar Pradesh state, reports

Justice MN Venkatachalliah and Justice AN Ray said today that the Bharatiya Janata Party's(BJP) leader in parliament Lal Krishna Advani and former Uttar Pradesh chief minister Kalyan Singh will be tried for defying court orders.

If convicted they could be imprisoned.

marchers also looted books

from the nearby pavement

stalls. Police swung into action

sionists stormed the Indian

Airlines office at Motifheel and

sacked the Indian High

Commission Library at

Motifheel at about 3.10 in the

ers broke into the library,

located on the first floor of a

four-storey building, tossed

books down and set them on

tacks were aimed at different

shops including Maranchand

Sweetmeats, Desh Bandhu Sw-

eetmeats, Jal Khabar Sweet-

meats and Motilal Sweetmeats

newly set up restaurant -

Shoshi Restaurant at Motijheel.

Comilla adds: Atleast 100

people were injured when the

demonstrators attacked Hindu

temples, shops, restaurants

and houses in the town pro-

testing the attack on Babri

Islami Chhatra Shibir, Is-

The mob also stormed a

Our Correspondent from

Besides, Monday's mob at-

The slogan-chanting march-

At about 2.20 pm, proces-

to disperse them.

set it ablaze.

the blaze.

afternoon.

expressed condemnation at the attack on the Babri Mosque. He said such an attack on the holy Mosque had hurt the religious sentiment of all believers. Ahmed also condemned the Indian government for failing to take timely action to stop the incident. Condemning the demolition of the historical Mosque, Ge-

President of Sammilita

Sangskritik Jote Faiz Ahmed

neral Secretary of the Bangladesh-Bharat Moitree Samity Ismail Muhammad urged the concerned quarters to ensure communal harmony in Bangladesh. Chairman of Bangladesh

Human Rights Commission Justice KM Sobhan expressed his grave concern over the demolition of Babri Mosque.

Bangladesh Jatiya Hindu Parishad and Bangladesh Hindu League have condemned the demolition of the Babri Mosque by the BJP and Biswa Hindu Parishad and demanded immediate trial of the people responsible for the damage.

- Star photo Remain alert against rumour mongers: Home

Ministry The government yesterday urged the people to remain vigilant against rumour mongers exploiting the religious sentiments of the masses, reports BSS.

An announcement of the Home Ministry last night said that a section of vested quarter was spreading rumour and disinformation relating to the demolition of Babri Mosque.

The government made a fervent appeal to the people to preserve and maintain communal harmony and fraternity, the announcement added.

Cabinet

From Page 1 Col 3

The razing of the historic Mosque to build a temple in its site was an outrageous act of desecration unprecedented in the annals of the civilised history.

The cabinet strongly felt that the only way to restore order, peace and stability was for the government of India to take immediate measures to rebuild and restore the Mosque on its original site.

While recognising the outraged emotional feelings of Muslims throughout the world, the cabinet called upon the people of Bangladesh to exercise maximum restraints in the larger interest of the Muslim community in India and also, in keeping with the religious tolerance enshrined in Islam.

Maintain harmony urges 5-party

By Staff Correspondent

The Five-Party Alliance Monday urged the people to exercise maximum tolerance and maintain communal harmony with the spirit of 1971.

The appeal was made at a Press Conference at the Samajbadi Dal Office following the situation arising out of the demolition of Babri Mosque in

The Midnight File

Benazir for OIC session on Babri Mosque issue

KARACHI, Dec 7: Pakistani opposition leader Benazir Bhutto today urged the government to call for an emergency session of the Organisation of Islamic Conference to discuss the demolition of the Babri Mosque in India. Bhutto told a news conference it was time for Muslims to speak with one voice and "back it up with sanctions." She also called for a nationwide strike in Pakistan on Tuesday, following an earlier decision by Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif for a day of mourning on the same day, reports AFP.

India expels Pak HC official

NEW DELHI, Dec 7: India today asked a Pakistan High Commission official to leave the country, accusing him of being a spy, a government official here said. Mohammad Ashfaq, an assistant in the commission's education and cultural department, was asked to return home within a week after New Delhi lodged a protest with the Pakistani mission here on the alleged spying, a Ministry of External Affairs spokesman said,

CBI warned Rao

From Page 1 Col 7 action except to inform the BJP-run Uttar Pradesh government through Home Minister SV Chavan to take "appropriate measures" to save the shrine.

The dismissal of the UP government came after the militants made it.

The smashing of the mosque at the temple town of Ayodhya has much stunned India as Mahatma Gandhi's assassination did. There is the same feeling of remorse and of being let down. And once again, the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangha (RSS), a Hindu fundamentalist organisation, has been found guilty as was when Gandhi was murdered.

National newspapers have frontpaged their editorials, regretting the damage the demolition has caused to the country's image and its secular polity. There is anger and dismay in their tone and they have mentioned the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and the Opposition leader L K Advant by name for blame.

It turns out that the paramilitary forces were not deployed between the mosque and the place where the construction of the temple was to begin but at a distance, from where they took their own time to reach.

New Delhi's Rapid Action Force was still in the premises of Ayodhya when the mosque had been practically razed to the ground. One police officer has said that they had 'no clue' as to what to do.

Even after the demolition of the mosque, no action was initiated to clear the site. The fundamentalists levelled the ground where the mosque stood. Despite the curfew,imposed belatedly, there was no policemen in sight.

The Muslims blame the ruling Congress party for negligence. Many of them feel that the Narasimha Rao government collaborated with the RSS to destroy the mosque. His desence is that he trusted the BJP word not to touch the shrine.

This explanation has not satisfied the opposition, which has asked for his resignation. In his own party, Rao is under pressure. Now that the incident has happened the ruling party's strategy would be showing "some action" to retrieve the Muslims, who constitute 12 per cent of the electorate and who echo the words of the Shahi Imam of

the Jame Masjid in New Delhi that the minority community has lost faith in the Congress.

The situation in northern India is tense. There have been sporadic incidents of Hindu-Muslim clash in Uttar Pradesh and Gujrat, and some other places of the North and rioting is spreading. Red alert has been sounded in many states and even the army has staged flag marches to instil confidence.

The BJP is apparently grieved over what has happend. Its leaders are saying that some "anti-social elements" queered the pitch. Atal Bihari Vajpayee, a BJP leader, has said that the construction of the temple will now become difficult. It appears that in the BJP scheme of things the destruction of the mosque was before the general election in May 1995 to reap the maximum advantage of Hindu sentiments.

Which card the BJP will play now is a matter of conjecture. However, it is significant that Advant started his ratha yatra from Mathura and his party chief, Murli Manohar Joshi, from Varansi. At both places, the mosques and the temples share the same premises.

Press Note

From Page 1 Col 8 Mosque along with the people

of the country. The government is expressing deep resentment and condemnation at the incident.

"However, it has been noticed the efforts are being taken to create law and order situation in various parts of the country following the Babri Mosque issue. The government is firmly committed to ensure safety and security of all religious places of all religions and life and property of all sects of believers. It is the moral responsibility of all citizens to cooperate with the law enforcing agencies in maintaining

"The government has also taken adequate measures in ensuring peace and to face the situation arising out of the Babri Mosque issues.

"The government hopes that people of all religions and all sheds of opinion will cooperate with the government in maintaining law and order."

Hundreds injured, temples damaged From Page 1 Col 4 lami Chhatra Sena, Tauhidi The slogan-chanting

Muslims in India. A total of 29 people were admitted to the Dhaka Medical

College Hospital alone and another 27 were released after first aid. Twenty five policemen were also injured in the clashes. Heavy contingents of police

and para-military Bangladesh Rifles were deployed in different places of the city to avert Scores of processions that

tried to approach the Indian High Commission at Dhanmondi to register their protest were broken up by police. A tense situation prevailed Monday at Sutrapur, Sankhari

Bazar, Tanti Bazar, Rayer Bazar,

near the Dhakeshwari temple

and other Hindu-populated ar-At least 50 people were injured near the Dhaka Stadium Sunday morning when police used grapeshot, teargas and batons on thousands of stickwielding processionists who tried to enter the Stadium

where the SAARC cricket

match was on. The match between Bangladesh and India was put off after the seventh over at 10.30 am. Police brought the situation under control at

about 12.30 pm. At about 2.15 in the afternoon, a procession turned violent near the Purana Paltan crossing and set fire to the CPB office.

documents onto the street and

set them ablaze.

The agitated people resorted to looting in the areas after damaging and setting fire on those. The mob broken the steel The number of temples gate of the party office, which came under attack numbrought furniture, books and

bers about ten.

Mosque.

in the capital.

Janata and some other pro-Islamic organisation along with the students of Alia Madrasa started protesting the Babri Mosque incident from the early morning by bringing out separate processions in the

The IA office was again at-The procession later, turtacked and set aftre half an ned violent and spread hour later. Fire fighters put out throughout the town turning the situation beyond control of the law enforcing agencies. A noisy procession ran-

> Meanwhile, an all-party meeting in the evening chairby local MP Rabeya Chowdhury formed a committee to restore normalcy and maintain communal harmony in the district. Rabeya Chowdhury was made the Convenor of the all-party committee.

Our Narayanganj Correspondent adds: A 21-member all party committee headed by Deputy Commissioner Habibur Rahman has been formed yesterday to maintain peace and communal harmony in the district.

The committee was formed at a meeting of all political parties called by the Deputy Commissioner yesterday. Jamaat-e-Islami however did not join the meeting.

No major incident was reported so far other than an attack on a temple in front of Chittaranjan Cotton Mills of Siddhirganj in the evening. Only a statue of the temple was damaged partially in the incident. Police deployed nearby managed to disperse the attackers.

Our Correspondent from Natore informed that State Minister for Communications

Fazlur Rahman Patal convened a meeting of the local leaders of all political parties yesterday evening at the local Circuit House to prevent communal riot in the district. No such incident was re-

ported from the district till writing of this report. The State Minister, however, called another meeting today morning at the Nimtala crossing of the town to form an all-party committee in this

regard.

Our Manikgani Correspondent adds: The district administration imposed Section 144 in the Pourashava Area for an indefinite period from 3 pm yesterday to avoid any sort of communal violence.

From Page 1 Col 5

country Abbas expressed his sympathy to the people whose sentiments wee hurt by the Babri Mosque incident.

Denouncing the reactionaries' attacking shops and offices in the city yesterday on the pretext of the Babri mosque incident he said, "Nobody can get revenge by hurting his own body, so I urge them all to stop violent activi-

The peace rally in front of the Press club was also addressed, among others, by Salahuddin Ahmed MP, Five-Party leader A Matin, Workers Party leader Fazle Hossain Badsa, DUCSU GS Khairul Kabir Khokon, BNP leader Kazi Abul Bashar, Jubodal leader Zahtruddin Babul and others.

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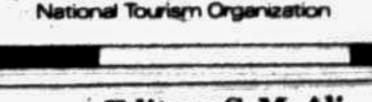
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