

Syed Bukhari. - AFP photo

#### Bukhari arrested

NEW DELHI, Dec 8: Police today arrested Syed Bukhari and 50 other Muslim leaders when they set out to march on the Prime Minister's residence some 10 kilometers (6.25 miles) away, shouting slogans in defence of the fallen mosque, reports AFP.

A police officer said they would be released later today. Muslims number more than 100 million and are India's largest minority. The community has been outraged by the destruction of the Mosque in Ayodhya, nearly 700 kilometers (420 miles) from here.

### Rao

From Page 1 Col 5 a split in the Congress parlia mentary party. However, it is keeping all its options open. It expects Narasimha Rao to invite it for a coalition if he is not able to weather the storm It also is in touch with Arjun Singh and Sharad Pawar to see if one of them can muster enough strength to challenge Narasimha Rao.

Within the Congress party, some ministers are meeting their MPs in twos and threes to gauge the mood. That the party is perturbed over the happenings goes without saying. But it is not sure who among the three-Narasimha Rao, Arjun Singh and Sharad Pawar - can win them the next election. With 12 per cent of the Muslim electorate completely alienated from the Congress, the party members are wanting a person or some steps to win them back. That explains the arrest of L K Advani, the Bharatiya Janata Party leader, and the steps so far taken by the government. While most ministers of the

Narasimha Rao cabinet are trying to prove their innocence by saying that they were not kept informed about the developments in Ayodhya, the general run of Congress MPs maintain that the government did not take any preventive measures to deal with the situation and had only been reacting to what the BJP and its allies were doing.

Indications are that the party on the whole feels that the majority community has felt sorry about the happening. It also believes that instead of taking harsh legal measures, the communal forces should be fought politically. In this context, it regrets that the Janata Dal and the SJD, to some extent, and the Left parties, instead of mounting a campaign against the BJP and its allies, are now interested in attacking the Congress.

In the party's reckoning, there is no scope for debate and all anti-communal forces must put their lot together to meet the serious challenge facing the nation.

Yet, the pressure on Narasimha Rao is relentless. There are rumours that he will be forced to quit, followed by a mid-term poll. The poll part is probably exaggerated reaction but the pressure on Narasimha Rao cannot be minimised. That is the reason why the Congress party spokesman has said that there is no question of changing the party leader, and that a mid-term poll was only a wishful thinking.

The strategy of the Congress, so far, is to fight the onslaught of critics as a party, showing no chinks within. Subsequently, Narasimha Rao went wrong could be assessed and his popularity in the country to ascertain is his equation with the electorate.

What may happen in the meanwhile is that Home Minister SB Chavan may be sacrificed so as to assuage the agitated opposition and the Muslim voter. The move to oust him is already gaining ground and a pointed reference is being made that VK Krishnamenon had to resign from the defence ministership in 1962 after India's debacle at the hands of China. It is significant that this argument has been first used by Sharad Pawar, who is his rival in Maharashtra, from where SV Chavan hails. Meanwhile, Narashima Rao, to gain confidence of his colleagues, has said, "I am ready to do whatever you suggest, gentlemen."

3257. GRAM: DAILY STAR DHAKA.

### Four killed during hartal hours

From Page 1 Col 6
Committee called the 12-hour hartal demanding implemen tation of the four-point agreement signed between the were closed and attendances Government and the Opposition that provides for in offices thin. Golam Azam's trial. The committee also tagged the Babri Masjid issue to yesterday's har-

Jamaat-e-Islami and some other right wing political parties also called the hartal protesting demolition of the 16-century mosque in the Indian town of Ayodhya. The hartal coincided with that called by the Nirmul Committee.

The hartal was complete in Dhaka as well as in other parts

of the country. In Dhaka, supporters of the Nirmul Committee and the Jamaat activists fought pitched battle throughout the day at Purana Paltan crossing, Farmgate, Magbazar, Jatra Bari and Gulistan.

Police moved in between the clashing groups and used tear gas shells to keep them from getting at each other.

The rival groups used mostly stones during the clashes but several cocktails were also blasted intermittently at the time.

Witnesses said that the Jamaat supporters who outnumbered the Committee supporters near the Purana Paltan, were carrying hundreds of

Pistol shots were also heard from among the Jamaat-Shibir-Jubo Command supporters who controlled the Purana Paltan to Dainik Bangla cross-

Nazrul, hit at around 11 am by a rubber bullet in his eye was rushed to Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) where he died after a few

Near Farmgate, witnesses said, a group of Shibir supporters in the guise of Jubo Command workers attacked and chased a Nirmul Committee procession at around 8-30 am. The Committee supporters reorganised and attacked the Jubo Command activists and occupied the spot several hours later.

Both groups used brickbats for nearly three hours.

The Dhakeswari Mandir (temple) areas were the major trouble spots during the hartal where a mob launched a threepronged attack to damage the Hindu shrine.

Police exhausted their tear gas shells and had to get fresh supplies to check several thousand people trying to reach the temple site. The areas were strewn with bricks.

Three temples in Thataribazar, Narinda and Shanir Akra were damaged by agitators.

More than 100 people were injured in Dhaka, 35 of them were rushed to the DMCH from different city points. Eleven of the injured were admitted at the DMCH. A number of policemen and photo journalists were also in-

Police detained more than a score of protesters but arrested only three, thana sources said.

Witnesses said that Tuesday's hartal was more effective than many previous ones in the year.

All sorts of vehicles, excluding a negligible number of rickshaws, stayed off the roads in Dhaka. The inter-city buses remained parked at four

ransack and damage to a num-

ber of temples and houses

arrested from different places

of the town. Contingents of

BDR and police have also been

deployed around temples and

other important points of the

town. The situation is under

control, an official source in-

Agitated people set fire to a

temple at Lamabazar area at

about 11.30 am. Fire service

personnel reached the place

and brought the fire under

control. Temples at Zin-

dabazar, Kalighat, Ramkrishna

Mission, Brahmamayee Bazar,

and Kalighat Balaram Jiur

Akhra at Horipur Bazar also

Meanwhile, police using

magaphone have asked the

people in the town to keep in-

doors by 8 Tuesday night.

formed this night.

came under attack.

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Seven persons have been

city terminals. Steamer services from Sadarghat and train services from Kamalapur were also disrupted because of hartal. Educational institutions

The Nirmul Committee and the Jamaat-e-Islami held scparate rallies in the afternoon and announced their next

courses of action. The Nirmul Committee leaders at a rally in front of the GPO urged the people to make the human chain programme on Thursday a success while the Jamaat decided to organise a procession Thursday to hand over a memorandum to the Indian High Commission.

Jamaat will also observe

closed. Offices, both public and private could not function. The mills and factories could not operate. The cargo handling at Chittagong Port was hampered due to hartal, official sources

Our Staff Correspondent from Khulna adds: Dawn-todusk hartal was observed without any untoward incident. However, Section 144 was imposed in Digholia area. All roadside shops, bazars, business organisations, banks, insurance and private organisations remained closed. Govt offices and autonomous bodies were open with thin atten-

All sorts of vehicles including rickshaws and long route coaches went off the road

ing. All traffic stayed off the

A temple was damaged at Rupganj while two persons were arrested when they attempted to set fire to the Laxminarayan Akhra. Police identified the arrested persons as Ranjit (20) and Mintu Chandra Paddar (22).

Our Correspondent from Natore adds: No major incidents were reported other than an attack on a temple at Vatopara village under Sadar thana today. All statues of the temple were set on fire in the incident.

A dawn-to-dusk hartal was observed. Heavy contingents of police and BDR were deployed in different areas.

Gaibandha



A BDR man consoling a child as residents of Azimpur Colony came out in the street to protest indiscriminate tear gassing which caused injuries to many including children. - Star photo

Fire Department sources said that at least seven temples 'and houses were damaged by demonstrators in Bhola, one temple in Jhenidah, one in Kushtia and nine temples were also set on fire in Sylhet dis-

An indefinite curfew was imposed in Bhola from 4 pm Tuesday after several hundred people attacked a number of temples and shops in the town.

The authorities asked the people to stay in homes until further order. Our Staff Correspondent

from Chittagong adds: Normal life came to a halt in the port city and its surrounding areas yesterday following a dawn to dusk hartal here as elsewhere in the country. The hartal was held peacefully barring some stray incidents of violence. Police and witnesses said two rival groups of supporters of Nirmul Committee and Jamaat-e-Islam fought a pitched battle for two hours beginning 11 am at Anderkilla. At least 15 persons were injured, two of them seriously. The critically injured were rushed to the local clinics. Police and BDR intervened to disperse the battling support-

Police fired blank shots and resorted to lathicharge when both battling groups freely used arms and exchanged brickbats. Some unruly activists of a rival group also stoned at the offices and shops damaging their window panes and doors around Anderkilla.

Besides, during the hartal period all kinds of vehicles including rickshaws stayed off the roads and highways while shops and markets remained

routes to and from Khulna city remained suspended. But mills and factories in Daulatpur, Khalishpur, Atra industrial zone were in normal operation. Loading and unloading at Mongla Port was not hampered.

Processions both by Nirmul Committee and Jamaat-Shibir were broughtout in the city in the morning and evening. Additional police force were

deployed at all vulnerable points of the city. The man who killed in police firing Monday night was identified as Delwar Hussain -

a jute worker. Our Comilla Correspondent adds: Agitated people set the Mohatma Gandhi established Hindu hostel, 'Abhoi Ashram' on fire in the small hours of yesterday.

They also damaged one Hindu temple in the town and three more in other areas.

A total of about 25 shops were also ransacked in the town on the second consecu tive day of communal violence.

Mcanwhile, Ghatak Dalal Nirmul Committee Comilla unit held a meeting at the Pubali Square at the end of hartal.

Our Gazipur Correspondent adds: One person was injured when pickets clashed with shopkeepers in Tongi during hartal hours. All transports stayed off the roads and most factories remained inoperative

Our Correspondent from Narayanganj adds: The hartal was observed peacefully in the district barring some stray incidents.

A local train from Dhaka was damaged by pickets near the No 2 railgate in the morn-

likely to come under the

The government also

purview of the ban.

dusk hartal was observed here in the district peacefully.

UNB reports from Feni: At least eight Shibir activists were injured in a clash between the supporters of Chhatra Shibir and Ghatak Dalal Nirmul Committee in Fent during the hartal period Tuesday.

Meanwhile, a group of angry mob attacked and damaged 13 monasteries at Shahadevpur village in Sadar thana yester-

BSS from Rajshahi adds: Dawn-to-dusk hartal was observed in the northern divisional headquarters city at the call of Ghatak Dalal Nirmul Committee and Jamaat-e-

BNP, Awami League and JSD brought out separate peace processions in the city, condemning the Ayodhya incident and urging people to maintain communal peace. The BNP procession was led by Rajshahi City Mayor Mizanur Rahman Minu.

UNB adds: Section 144 was enforced on Chior thana for an indefinite period from 6 pm Tuesday to ward off violence sparked by demolition of a mosque in India, officials said.

Scores of temples and homes and shops owned by Hindus were ransacked as angry Muslims went on a rampage to protest the destruction of the Babri Mosque in India by militant Hindu extremists. Violence occurred in Ghior,

Shibalaya, Doulatpur and Sadar thanas, police sources said. At least 28 people were in-

jured in clashes between mobs and local people who obstructed attacks on temples.

### Opposition call to resist communal forces

By Staff Correspondent A combined meeting of Awami League, PDF, Five-Party and Ganatantri party in a resolution appealed to all the countrymen to resist the communal force of the country

unitedly. The Bengalis must protect peace and preserve brotherhood by upholding the tradition of non-communal ideals", the resolution said.

The meeting held at the official residence of the Leader of the Opposition in Parliament, Sheikh Hasina at Mintu Road was also presided over by Sheikh Hasina.

The meeting also condemned the attack on the Babri Mosque terming it as a heinous act.

It was also attended among others by Abdul Mannan, Amir Hossain Amu, Tofael Ahmed, Zillur Rahman, Nurul Islam Nahid, Suranjit Sen Gupta, Dilip Barua and Matia Chowdhury.

The meeting viewed that the Jamaat-Shibir elements had started fanning communal hatred for their political ends the pretext of the demolition of the Babri

Mosque. They also said the Jamaat leaders earlier held meeting with the BJP leader Advant and made the blue print of communal disharmony in both the countries.

### Home Minister visits city temples

Home Minister Abdul Matin Chowdhury visited different places and temples of old Dhaka City on Monday, reports

He visited the house of member of parliament Shudangsu Shekhar Haldar Monday night according to an official handout. During his visit to Tanti Bazar, Shankhari Bazar, Ramkrishna Mission, Shib Mandir, Dhakeshwari Temple, Joykali Temple, Rishipara and other Hindu populated areas. The Home Minister talked to the people and enquired about their welfare, safety and security.

He told the members of the Hindu community that the government had taken special measures for their security and protection of temples. He said law enforcing agencies had been deployed at their areas to ensure security and safety. The local people of the ar-

eas told the Minister they were maintaining communal harmony. The Minister told them to exercise maximum restraint. He urged them to be ever vigilant against the oppor-

He assured them that the government would do everything possible in maintaining law and order and communa harmony.

Journalists of different dailies and student leaders accompanied the Minister during the visit.

### AL orders party units to form peace brigades

Bangladesh Awami League vesterday strongly condemned the demolition of the age-old Babri Mosque in Ayodhya in the Indian state of Uttar Pradesh, reports BSS.

The Executive Committee of the party in a meeting with its chief Sheikh Hasina in the chair in a resolution said the incident is tantamount to naked attack on the religious, sentiment of the Muslim community of India. Such an incident was unprecedented and a scandalous chapter in the history of the sub-continental nations and at the same time had disturbed the communal harmony in the countries of the region.

The resolution noted that like in the past the people of Bangladesh despite provocations had shown restraint and patience and would continue to uphold the same tradition.

The meeting called upon the people to keep vigilance so that communal harmony was not disturbed. It also directed the party

units to form peace brigades comprising people irrespective of religion, caste and creed to foil attempt to disturb communal harmony.

### Riots kill 9 in Pakistan

QUETTA (Pakistan), Dec 8: At least nine people were killed when angry Muslims attacked Hindus in western Pakistan today during protests against the razing of a mosque by Hindus in India, government officials and doctors said,

## The Midnight File

Benazir postpones anti-govt march

KARACHI, Dec 8: Pakistan's main opposition leader Benazir Bhutto postponed today an anti-government march because of the situation created by the demolition of a mosque in India by Hindu fanatics. Bhutto said the opposition would instead hold rallies throughout the country on Friday. the scheduled day of the march, to express indignation at the desecration of the ancient mosque, reports AFP.

### Rockets pound Kabul

KABUL, Dec 8: Rockets pounded Afghanistan's war-weary capital for a fourth straight day Tuesday as the beleaguered government sought to negotiate a cease-fire with Iranianbacked Shi'ite rebels. 'At least three times they have called for a cease-fire and each time they attack the high peaks around the city," said a Defence Ministry spokesman, who spoke on condition he not be further identified. "They are trying to fool us," reports AP.

### Hindu temples in England set afire

LONDON, Dec 8: Fire gutted a Hindu temple at West Bromwich in central England early Tuesday and the BBC quoted firefighters as saying they thing the blaze was started deliberately, reports

There was no immediate indication whether the fire at the Shree Krishna temple was associated with the Hindu-Muslim rioting in India over the disputed holy site at Ayodhya which has left more than 200 people dead.

But it follows fire bomb attacks Monday on Hindu temples in Derby and Bradford in northern England.

West Bromwich, Derby and Bradford all have large immigrant populations whose area of ethnic origin is the Indian subcontinent.

The fire at the temple at West Bromwich was first spotted about 3 am (0300 GMT) on Tuesday. A total of 70 firelighters were sent to fight the blaze, the fire brigade said in a statement.

The BBC said the roof and balcony of the two-storey Victorian building had collapsed and the interior was destroyed. It quoted the temple priest

as saying the fire was "an act of barbarism." But it said he urged no one in the local community to seek revenge. Prime Minister John

Major's government appealed Monday to Muslim and Hindu communities "everywhere" to

### Joint procession

From Page 1 Col 8 The meeting called upon the people irrespective of their religions and parties and political opinions to maintain peace, discipline and communal harmony throughout the country and said it was the sacred responsibility and duty of the people to uphold the glorious tradition of communal harmony in Bangladesh.

The meeting decided to bring out a peace procession jointly by BNP and its front organisations today at 3 pm from city BNP office at Nawab Yusuf Market to maintain peace, discipline and communal harmony in the country.

All leaders and workers of BNP and the people have been requested to participate in the procession.

The meeting also called for uniting all sections of the people throughout the country and bring out peace processions to maintain communal harmony.

The meeting directed the ward committees of BNP and its front organisation to maintain peace and communal harmony in the city by organising all sections of the people.

### National flag

From Page 1 Col 7 between the Jamaat workers and the local Ghatak Dalai Nirmul Committee supporters following the attack on the Muktijoddha Sangsad office.

NDC leader Walful Islam was injured when he tried to quell the fighting groups. Heavy contingents of police and BDR were deployed at different places of the town to avert further clashes.

Meanwhile, in Maheshkhali island off Cox's Bazar coast, mobs burned down three temples and 14 homesteads protesting demolition of the Babri Mosque in Ayodhya.

Several people were injured in the mob attack.

#### SAARC From Page 1 Col 7

In Dhaka, rumours were rife throughout the day that summit was about to be put off.

Meanwhile, the Standing Committee is drafting its report to be placed before the Council of Ministers, a SAARC Secretariat official said last

The Standing Committee that has been dealing with a long agenda including most substantive matters is to finalise its report today, the concluding day of its three-day meeting ahead of that of the Council of Ministers.

There are about 150 Hindu

reprisals."

temples in Britain and 350,000 followers of the faith. The number of Muslims in Britain is estimated at up to 2 million, worshiping at more than 300 mosques.

avoid further provocations or

AFP from Islamabad says: Three Hindu temples were burnt Monday in Afghanistan by Muslims protesting against the desecration of the historic Babri Mosque in India, APP

The report, quoting information reaching the northwestern city of Peshawar from across the border, said one temple was set ablaze at Jalalabad in the eastern Ningarhar Province. Two others were burnt at Khost and Gardez in the neighbouring Pakti Province, APP said, adding that angry mobs warned they would expel Hindus from Afghanistan if the Babri Mosque was not rebuilt by the Indian government.

### Rao: Confidence

From Page 1 Col 5 to encounter "some criticism, some hysterics" In the process of rebuilding the mosque, but "We have to be firm," a Congress (I) spokesman briefing the press quoted him as saying.

The premier reiterated his stand that the grand temple Hindu militants want to build for their God-King Rama would have to co-exist with the mosque, built by Moghul Emperor Babar 464 years ago in Ayodhya, Uttar Pradesh

Hindu claim the mosque was built on the ruins of a temple, and insist it marks the birthplace of Rama, worshipped as a god incarnate. Its destruction sparked a violent backlash by Muslims in India.

Rao said an investigation will be ordered into the circumstances in which the mosque was razed to the ground. Kalyan Singh, who was

sacked as Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister for violating a pledge to protect the shrine, would be prosecuted, Rao said, vowing to uphold the law. The Congress (I) MP's

adopted a resolution condemning the "dastardly and diabolic conspiracy" by the Hindu-revivalist Bhratiya Janata Party (Indian People's Party) and the militant Vishwa Hindu Parishad (World Hindu Council) which spearheaded the drive to build a temple on the mosque site.

The meeting of the MP's, held as parliament stayed adjourned following continuing uproar over the Ayodhya happenings, expressed "full confidence" in Rao's leadership and endorsed measures taken in the wake of the demolition. Rao also presided over a

cabinet meeting that expressed "full faith and confidence" in him, Information Minister Ajit Panja said.

### 400 killed

From Page 1 Col 4 temple in Pakistan to avoid further inflaming tempers. The state television also refused to broadcast film shot Sunday in Ayodhya of the invasion of the

Soldiers patrolled streets of dozen towns across the country assisting civilian police. An estimated 10 million people, living in dozens of towns, spent a second day indoors under curiew.

LK Advant and Murli Manohar Joshi, leaders of the nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party were detained at dawn at their homes and put under house arrest in a government guest house.

This is a repressive measure. We have not indulged in any act of violence," Advant told reporters as he was led

He also condemned the decision to rebuild the mosque and to outlaw religious fundamentalist organizations, calling them "Provocative, myopic and repressive steps."

#### six others held Sec 144 in town Islami, Islamic Sevak Sangh and similar other groups are

Temples damaged From Page 1 Col 2 in Sylhet Singhal, President of VIIP (Vishwa Hindu Parishad) VH From Our Correspondent Dalmia, a leading figure of VHP, Vinay Karitan, President SYLHET, Dec 8: Section of Bajrang Dal, another com-144 has been imposed on munal party playing a leading Sylhet town and its suburb role in the mosque destrucfrom 2 pm today following a tion, and Uma Bharati and number of incidents of attack,

> In retaliation of the government move the BJP, VHP and other communal parties have called for a Bharat bandh (nationwide strike) tomorrow It appears now that battle lines have been drawn and the Congress-led secular forces and the RSS (Rastriya Sevak Sangh, the parent communal body for which the BJP and VHP serve as front organisations ) led communal forces are to come to direct clash

throughout the country.

Sadhavi Ritambhara, leading

firebrand figures of the BJP.

In further show of firmness the government has sent in the crack Rapid Action Force - a new anti-communal force that is equipped with bullet proof gear from neck to foot along with other central paramilitary forces and secured the mosque site in Ayodhya. The controversial site has been fully cleared of all the Kar Sevaks. However the Ram idols set up in a hurriedly constructed structure are still in place at the old mosque site.

expected that the extreme

communal parties such as

VHP, RSS, Bajrang Dal, Jamaati

cession the proceedings in the parliament was disrupted and the Speaker was forced to ad-The government is now working out the modalities of banning all the communal parties, the decision about which it announced yesterday. It is

pledged to reconstruct the mosque at the original site. In this regard the government is expected to await the outcome of the court decision about the status of the ownership of the

disputed site before it finalizes In the meantime most of the leaders of the BJP, VHP and RSS have expressed regret for the events at Ayodhya but refused to apologize for the demolition of the mosque.

In a press conference this evening Atal Bihari Bajpayee, known to be a moderate among the BJP leaders, warned the government that it should not ban the VIIP, RSS and similar parties. He advised the government not to reconstruct the mosque at the site which the Hindus claim to be the birth spot of god Rama.

After the initial appearance of inaction and lack of direction, the government appears to now set on firm action against the communal forces and confront the RSS and all its front bodies. For the second day in suc-

However yesterday it was the opposition parties, save the BJP that did most of the disruption, demanding that the PM must resign.

In contrast, today the dis-

turbances came mostly from

leaders. While the other opposition MPs remained relatively quiet. The position of Prime

greatly weakened by his initial situation, continues to remain under the cloud. However within the last 24 hours he own position within Congress his ability to work out a modality of banning the communal

With the call for bandh tomorrow the BJP has clearly gone for the offensive. Narasimha Rao government

has little option but to face the challenge head on.

mains highly charged.

### 150 tribal refugees back home

More than 150 tribal refugees returned here during the last one week despite close vigilance of Indian Border Security Force and Shantibahini men, officials said. It was learnt that most of

the returnees came from Kathalchhari and Karbuk frontier refugee camps

the BJP MPs who were demanding the release of their

Minister, which has been handing of the Babri mosque seems to have consolidated his party and can be said to have his partymen firmly behind him. But much will depend on parties and rebuilding the mosque and carry the majority Hindu opinion with him at the

Meanwhile reports of riots continue and the situation re-

# KHAGRACHHARI, Dec 8:

reports Reuter.