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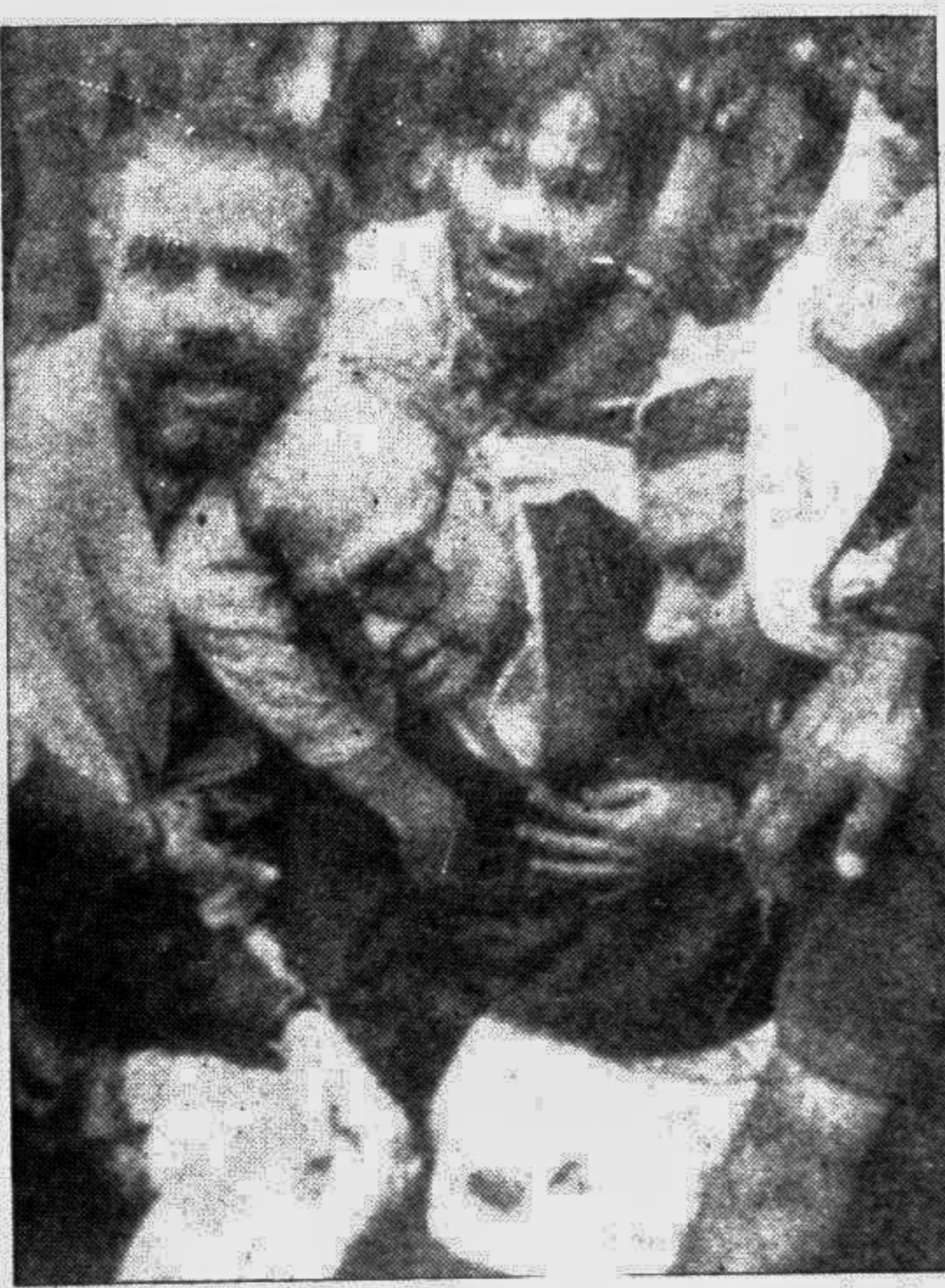
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Police foil BJP rally, arrest top leaders



BJP President Murli Manohar Joshi (C) being assisted by supporters after he was injured in police action yesterday as the BJP tried to hold a rally in New Delhi.

NEW DELHI, Feb 25: Indian police gassed crowds and arrested leaders of the main Hindu nationalist party, knocking one unconscious with a water cannon in an attempt to thwart a banned rally, reports Reuter.

Witnesses said Murli Manohar Joshi, president of the opposition Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), was knocked unconscious by the jet of a police water cannon as he led some 300 supporters towards parliament.

A hospital statement said Joshi was "in serious but stable condition" with injuries to his head and thigh and was being given oxygen. Police confirmed he was under arrest.

At least 54 other BJP supporters, including several Members of Parliament, were taken to hospital with injuries. But it was a far less bloody day than authorities had originally feared.

Top BJP leaders Lal Krishna Advani and Atal Behari Vajpayee were among 100 BJP MPs arrested as they tried to breach steel pipe and barbed-wire barricades sealing off the venue for the rally, the Boat Club grounds near parliament.

Police estimated no more than 30,000 BJP supporters turned out on the heavily barricaded streets on a rain-swept day, eager to be arrested by the 75,000-strong security forces.

Delhi resembled an armed camp as the government pulled out all the stops to prevent a rally called to demand early elections. Demonstrators also pressed the nationalist campaign for a temple on the site of a mosque demolished by a Hindu mob in December.

The government banned the rally fearing it would foment more Hindu-Muslim violence in a country still reeling from ferocious bloodshed in December and January, ignited by the demolition. Nearly 2,000 people were killed, most of them Muslims.

The government's chief spokesman said 1,000 people were detained, including 110 BJP Members of Parliament. Some 60,000 people across the country were also held, he added.

"The situation was controlled throughout the city with minimal use of force. There was no firing," he said.

Police said two city sports stadiums used to house detainees over the past few days were filled and a third had to be used.

A BJP spokesman said police gave up trying to charge thousands of other demonstrators and merely dumped them at Delhi's main jail where they held an impromptu rally.

BJP parliamentary leader Lal Krishna Advani, arrested as he addressed a crowd from the bonnet of a car, said the huge security operation and the

VCs tell Prime Minister No prior permission needed to nab campus terrorists

Vice-Chancellors of the universities yesterday urged the government to immediately give directives to the law-enforcing agencies to sternly deal with the terrorists activities in the university campuses and said no prior permission is required from the university authority to nab any terrorist from the campuses, reports BSS.

They put forward this suggestion when they met Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia as members of the standing committee of the association of universities of Bangladesh at her office here.

Vice-Chancellors also told the Prime Minister that they favour immediate introduction of the 'identity card' system, so that genuine students could be identified properly.

The Prime Minister assured them of all possible help from the government to curb the terrorist activities in the university campuses and maintain congenial academic atmosphere.

During the meeting the Prime Minister and the Vice-Chancellors reviewed the recent upward incidents that occurred at the Rajshahi University, Mymensingh Agricultural University and the Islamic University.

Those who met the Prime Minister were: Prof Emajuddin Ahmed, Vice Chancellor of Dhaka University, Prof Moha-

Jute workers in Ctg cut off rail, road links for 8 hours

From Staff Correspondent CHITTAGONG, Feb 25: Rail and Road communications between Chittagong and other parts of the country remained suspended for eight hours today as jute mills workers put barricade and clashed with the police.

Police resorted to baton charge and fired blank shots to disperse the agitated workers at Barakunda point under Sitakunda thana who threw stones at them on the Dhaka-Chittagong road.

About 5000 workers of Maqbulur Rahman Jute Mills blocked the road from 1 pm to 9 pm yesterday until local administration intervened to bring the situation under control.

The workers were demonstrating to realise their wage arrears, they said.

The angry workers, while demonstrating against the police attempt to remove the barricade and to resist the workers, removed the fish plates from the railway track, witnesses said.

Democratic Forum likely to emerge as political party

By Nazmul Ashraf

Bangladesh Democratic Forum is likely to initiate a "combined political move" aimed at reviewing the existing socio-political and economic situation of the country, identify the national problems and suggest means to overcome them, reliable sources said.

Details of the move is expected to be finalised at the Forum's "National Convention" planned for sometime in May this year, sources added.

Forum leaders from across the country today meet at the Baily Road residence of Dr. Kamal Hossain, chief of the organisation, to constitute a preparatory committee to organise the planned conference.

The preparatory committee, according to an influential leader of the Forum, is most likely to be entrusted with the responsibility of drafting a report after touring the country in two months.

The leader, preferring anonymity told The Daily Star, the committee leaders would address rallies and exchange views with the local elites in a bid to drum up public support for the proposed convention and to make the people aware of the aims and objectives of the forum.

He said the central convention will be held in Chittagong.

JS rejects funds under MPs

By Staff Correspondent

A resolution seeking allocation of Taka one crore for development work in each of the 330 constituencies under the supervision of the local MP was rejected in the House by a division vote yesterday.

All the Opposition members present in the House voted in favour of the resolution, moved by Abdul Awal Mia MP of the Awami League (AL), but it (the resolution) failed to reach through (72 to 103 votes).

Abdul Awal Mia while arguing in favour of the resolution said, the allocation of a lumpsum amount for development work in different areas under the supervision of the concerned MP would definitely help earn prestige for Parliament.

"People's representatives must play the decisive role in developing their respective constituencies," the AL MP said adding "without having authority over disbursement of funds, one cannot effectively assert his stance on the development of a certain sector in his constituency."

A large number of Treasury bench MPs were seen extending their support to the AL MP's statement at the time of his making it although they later voted against the resolution.

Incidentally, Omar Farooque, a Treasury bench MP, had made the original proposal for the allocation of a lumpsum amount to be spent for the development of each constituency under supervision of the concerned local MP during discussions on the proposed budget last June.

The State Minister for Finance Mujibur Rahman, while opposing the resolution said that its adoption would practically involve an additional expenditure of Taka 330 crore for the government which could not be managed from limited resources especially in the middle of the fiscal year.

The Minister also said that development work was being carried out across the country by local government institutions and development agencies.

He, however, observed that the government would have no hesitation to adopt the idea in the next budget provided the House passed such a provision.

The Minister then requested withdrawal of the resolution. But the resolution was put to vote following the AL MP's refusal to withdraw it.

Earlier, Rahmat Ali, Sheikh Haroonur Rashid and Abdus Shahid of the Awami League and Sheikh Ansar Ali, Latifur Rahman and Enamul Hoque of the Jamaat spoke strongly in favour of the resolution.

When the resolution was put to a voice vote, the

1000 tolas of gold seized at ZIA

By Staff Correspondent

Customs air freight surveillance team seized 1000 tolas of gold-bar from a plastic container of chemical pigment consignment at the Zia International Airport (ZIA) in the capital Thursday morning.

The consignment was sent to the Islampur branch of Rupali Bank from M Tradings of Singapore by a Singapore Airlines (SQ-420) Thursday noon, customs sources said.

On suspicion, customs officials scanned the consignment and recovered 100 gold bars each weighing 10 tolas valued at Taka 85 lakh in total, the sources said.

No claimant of the consignment was present in the air freight house at the ZIA yesterday and a departmental case was lodged in this connection, officials said.

TSP Complex operations polluting Ctg air

From Nurul Alam

CHITTAGONG, Feb 25: Massive emissions of hazardous gases and dusts during operation of the country's lone TSP fertilizer manufacturing plant "TSP Complex" in the Chittagong Port City, pose a threat to the environment here, sources said.

But such an environmental issue remains almost overlooked in the absence of proper safety measures, sources added.

Talking to a visiting press team this week at the TSP Complex, an enterprise of BCIC, the Managing Director Jamil Islam said "we monitor the situation regularly and try to control the emission of gases and other hazardous elements most of the time by stopping operation when they are found to be exceeding the limits".

The rate of emission of these hazardous elements at the time of fertilizer manufacturing is recorded at 300 PPM (parts per million) which the Managing Director said was below the acceptable international rate of 400 PPM.

But he could not furnish the standard in the Bangladesh perspective, saying that the environment pollution aspects of this plant were earlier not taken into account so carefully.

However, some safety measures were being planned to check the environment pollution, Islam said adding that contacts with the government's environment department had already been made in this connection.

The gases emitted included sulphur trioxide and sulphur dioxide, Islam added. He in-

Rape not forgivable: AG, Azam fulfils citizenship requirements: DC

By Staff Correspondent

Rape is "never forgivable and inherently unforgettable", said Attorney General Aminul Haque yesterday while quoting a recent Time magazine article which also noted that nearly 2.5 lakh Bangladeshi women and girls had been raped by the Pakistani soldiers in 1971.

He was speaking while submitting a copy of the article headlined "Unspeakable," published in the February 22 issue of the magazine at the hearing of the Writ petition challenging the cancellation of the citizenship of Golam Azam at the Single Bench of the High Court Division comprising Justice Anwarul Haq Choudhury.

The Attorney General also submitted a copy of the tripartite agreement among Bangladesh, India and Pakistan for the repatriation of the stranded Bangladeshis and the Pakistani soldiers in India.

The Time article noted, "revenge, soaked in hatred and hormones may explain some of the Soviet troop's behaviour in Germany but it is not a good all-purpose explanation. Revenge — which in the Nazi-Soviet context — takes on the colour of almost a kind of brutal justice — does not explain Nanjing in 1937."

The Chinese had not committed atrocities against the Japanese people when the Japanese marched into Nanjing and raped — and often murdered tens of thousands of Chinese women. Nor can revenge entirely explain the behaviour of the Pakistani troops who in 1971 raped 2.5 lakh Bangladeshi women and girls.

"It has been said that the question of rape is an inevitable part of war, some sort of a booty," noted Justice Anwarul Haq Choudhury while acknowledging that he had also read the Time article.

The Attorney General pointed out that a high-ranking repatriated army official told him that General Niazi used to ask senior Pakistani army officials: "How many Bengali women have you enjoyed today?"

Mixed reaction over reduction of bank rate

Star Report

The Dhaka Chamber of Commerce and Industry (DCCI) and Bangladesh Jute Spinners Association (BJSA) Thursday expressed mixed reactions over the reduction of bank lending rates from eight per cent to seven per cent.

The DCCI President M Yunus while talking to The Daily Star said that measure would yield result if the government also immediately restored investment atmosphere in the country. "For this the labour situation, law and order situation must be made congenial for investment," he said.

Yunus said measures like reducing bank rate, withdrawal

Professionals announce action programme

By Staff Correspondent

Doctors, engineers, agriculturists and other professionals will go for a massive movement from April 5 in demand of a massive overhauling of the country's existing administrative system.

Leaders of Bangladesh Medical Association (BMA), Engineers Institution of Bangladesh (IEB), Krishibid Institution and Bangladesh Civil Service Coordinating Committee Thursday announced the 15-day movement programme beginning April 5 to press for their 17-point charter of demands.

The demands include appointment of professionals to the function-based cadre, transfer of executive power to the public representatives and re-structuring the present bureaucratic administration.

The charter also demands amendment to the existing "Rules of Business" making the cabinet members chief executives of the concerned ministries for greater accountability and abolition of all the regional administrative positions like Divisional Commissioners and DCs.

Speaking at a press conference at the Jatiya Press Club Thursday, leaders of the professional groups declared that they would wear black badges from April 5 until April 11, observe a two-hour work abstention from April 12 for one week, organise rallies at all the

Improper use of technology hampers output

By Sharier Khan

Improper use of farming technology, according to experts, is hampering jute output.

Although all kinds of jute seeds have potentials to give an yield of 49 to 56 maunds per acre, farmers have been getting a harvest of 12 to 27 maunds, according to researchers of the Bangladesh Jute Research Institute (BJRI).

The researchers observed that farmers did not maintain the right time for sowing different types of seeds as suggested by BJRI for maximum output of the cash crop.

The farmers also neither follow BJRI suggestion to sow the jute seeds in rows, nor use the right proportion of fertilizers nor maintain the crop properly.

The farmers of the country cultivate a total of 8 types of jute of two different qualities — golden and white. Six of which were developed by BJRI, one

US, Russia to invite parties for ME talks

GENEVA, Feb 25: Secretary of State Warren Christopher said today the United States and Russia were inviting Arabs and Israelis to resume peace talks in Washington in April, reports Reuter.

Christopher told a news conference he had briefed Russian Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev on his tour of seven Middle East countries and the two had decided to extend invitations to what will be the ninth round of Arab-Israeli peace talks.

The talks were suspended in December when Israel deported 415 Palestinians from the occupied territories.

"We felt confident enough about the situation to have indicated that the next round should commence in April," Christopher said after talks with Kozyrev in Geneva.

But he did not directly respond when asked if he had a firm commitment from Palestinians to rejoin the talks.

On Wednesday night Palestinians from the occupied territories said they would not be rushed into a decision.

Clinton-Yeltsin summit April 4

GENEVA, Feb 25: US President Bill Clinton and Russian President Boris Yeltsin will hold their first summit on April 4, Russian Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev announced today, reports Reuter.

Kozyrev was addressing a news conference after a meeting in Geneva with US Secretary of State Warren Christopher.

He gave no venue for the summit, which will be the first since Clinton took office on January 20.

He said a summit would enhance cooperation between the two countries and "remove artificial obstacles" in their relations.

Sehri, Iftar Timings

Day	Sehri	Iftar
3	26	6.05 pm
4	27	5.01 am 6.06 pm
5	28	5.00 am 6.06 pm

Crisis in jute sector—II

by the Atomic Energy Commission and one by India.

The BJRI, established in 1951, started introducing its jute seeds from 1961 to fight the problems of conventional jute seeds, to deal with the plant's diseases. But since different time for sowing a particular kind of jute seeds in different regions. But, the researcher observed, "We found the farmers of Faridpur and Rangpur were sowing the seeds at the same time."

The researchers gave their

US, Russia to invite parties for ME talks

The talks were suspended