Rao defeats move to remove him as party chief

SURAJKUND, Mar 27: Indian Prime Minister PV Narasimha Rao received an overwhelming vote of confidence from his Congress (1) Party here Saturday, defeating moves by opponents to remove him as Party leader, reports

Delegates to a two-day national convention of India's ruling party passed a resolution backing Rao by a show of hands after a campaign to oust him as President of India's ruling party failed to garner much

could concentrate fully on his duties as prime minister and counters the challenge posed fundamentalism.

The one-sentence resolution passed by the 800-odd delegates to the session of the All India Congress Committee (AICC) affirmed that the "one man, one post principle shall not apply to the Congress president and prime minister."

The spokesman said he was were on Pakistan territory they rested.

says: India has told Pakistan of "serious implica tions" of not cooperating in locating and handing over six members of the Memon family the main suspects behind the Bombay blasts now reported to External Affairs Minister Dinesh Singh.

Sabha on Mar 24 the Pakistan ambassador in Delhi had been summoned to the Foreign Office and conveyed India's

Dinesh Singh said the ambassador had conveyed the Pakistan Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif's assurance that his government would cooperate in tracking down the culprits if they were in Pakistan.

The Minister said there was a conclusive proof of the alleged culprits being in

of alleged blast culprits to Pakistan was "further proof" of Pakistan's involvement in state sponsored terrorism.

list before identifying it as a terrorist state.

The leaders, including halfa-dozen former ministers. squatted at the entry to the All India Congress Committee (AICC) session in support of their demand.

Spokesmen for the dissidents said they would not give up the protest until Rao, 71. agreed to a secret ballot on whether he should continue as Congress [1] President.

"We need a full-time president to revitalise the party, particularly in the Hindi Belt," said former Minister P Shivshankar. "A secret ballot is a democratic right. What is wrong with it? Why are they afraid of it?"

The protest began shortly after Rao unfurled the tricolour Congress Party flag, formally inaugurating the two-day session here of party delegates from around the country.

High import duty hits Nestle's joint project

Anomaly in import duty of finished products and raw materials, sponsors claim, has pushed a joint venture into uncertainty, reports UNB.

According to the sponsors the 10 million US dollar project of world famous cereal canning and condensed milk producing unit has turned non-viable as duty on raw materials in the current budget was fixed several times higher than finished items.

Nestle-the world's largest food item manufacturing multinational—has a 60 per cent equity in the project sponsored by Nestle Bangladesh which plans to can Ccrelac brand cereal and Blue Cross brand condensed milk.

But sponsors have kept the unit closed even though it is ready to be switched on for several months because what they said high import duty on raw materials has virtually turned the industry noneviable. If put into operation, the

unit will lose more than 200,000 US dollar every month, company sources said.

Imported finished cans and raw materials had identical duty rates until the current budget. The 1992-93 budget abruptly raised the duty on raw materials to 60 per cent from 15 per cent.

Duty on finished can was, however, kept at 15 per cent, making its import far cheaper.

Baffled with the unwarranted situation, sources said, Nestle was now wondering about their decision to invest in Bangladesh.

Sponsors, however, have initiated dialogue with the authorities to correct the anomaly and restore viability of their project.

Any setback to Nestle's investment in Bangladesh may have an adverse impact on investment in the

Eid congregation at the National Eidgah in city Thursday

Hasina condemns

police assault

on Nirmul

supporters

Hasina yesterday condemned

the repressive action of the

law enforcing agencies to foil

the rally of the Ghatak-Dalal

Nirmul Committee in front of

Engineers Institution on

In a statement to the press

the Awami League chief regret

Friday, reports UNB.

Opposition Leader Sheikh

Eid celebrated

re also held in different mosques, and Eidgahs in the city. In many areas prayers could not be held an open places due to inclement weather.

The government had declared a three-day holiday on the occasion beginning Wed

Special prayers were offered at all Eid congregations seeking divine blessings for the continued peace, progress and prosperity of the country and solidarity and brotherhood of the Muslim Ummah.

was hoisted atop all public and private buildings. Main roads and road islands from airport to Bangabhaban were tastefully decorated with national flags, festoons and banners inscribed with 'Eid Mubarak' both in Bangla and Arabic.

orphanages and destitute homes were served with improved dicts on the occasion. In the morning, President

Abdur Rahman Biswas and Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia held receptions at Bangabhaban and Sugandha respectively on the occasion of holy Eid-ul-Fitr. They exchanged Eid greetings with cross section of people, diplomats and their spouses and representatives of UN organisations.

Ministers, MPs, political

leaders, judges, high civil and military officials, elite of the city, journalists, intellectuals Ulema and social workers were present.

- Star photo

In the evening important national buildings were illuminated. Bangladesh Television and Radio Bangladesh put up special programmes marking the occasion.

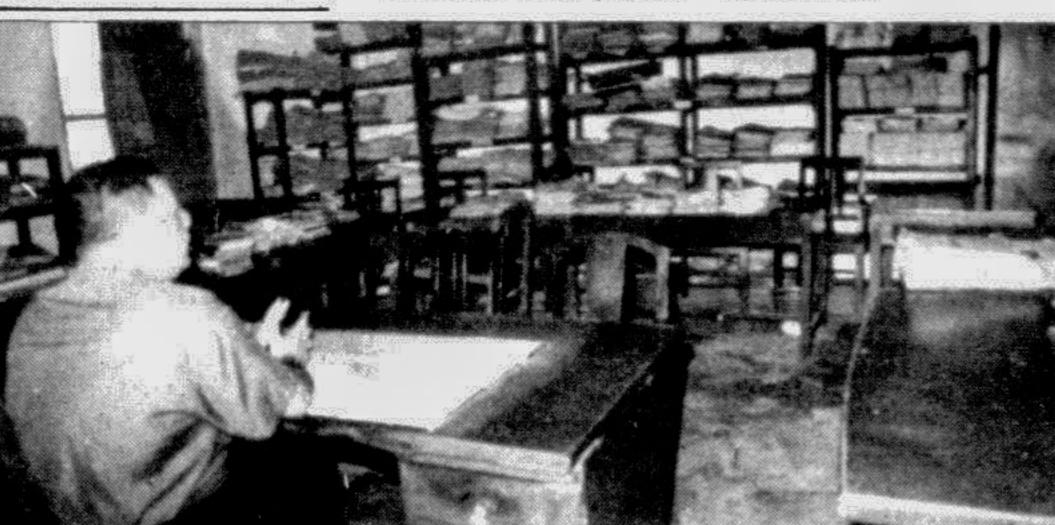
The national dailies brought out special supplements on the occasion of Eid-ul-Fitr Wednesday since the three-day holiday for the newspaper began from March 24.

In the port city Chittagong congregations were held in 46 places under the auspices of Chittagong Central Jamaat Committee.

The main Eid congregation was held at Jamiutul Falah Complex under the overall arrangement of Chittagong City Corporation.

in Khulna, the Eid congregations were held in different mosques due to rain fall in the morning. The main congregation was held at Khulna Town Jame Mosque where Speaker Shatkh Razzaque Ali offered his prayer. Eid congregation was also held at Khulna Circuit House Maidan despite inclement weather.

Besides, there were Eid congregations in the important Eidgahs, mosques and open fields of Rajshahi, Narayanganj, Mymensingh, Comilla, Sylhet, Bogra and other towns of the country.



Attendance was thin at the Secretariat offices yesterday after a three-day holiday. - Star photo

In the evening, important public and private buildings were tastefully illuminated.

ladesh Democratic Forum and

cussions in observance of the

In the afternoon, President Abdur Rahman Biswas and Begum Biswas hosted a reception at the Bangabhaban on the

Khaleda Zia attended the remembers of diplomatic missions, intellectuals, litterateurs and high civil and military officials attended the reception. Some crippled freedom fighters were also present.

and a special prayer was ofings for peace, progress and prosperity of the country.

among hospital patients, the inmates of children homes and

Bands of the Army, Navy, Air Force, Bangladesh Rifles, police, ansar-VDP, and fire brigade played on their instruments at different important points on the occasion.

Discussions and symposiums were held by different socio-cultural and political organisations, highlighting the

significance of the day.

Bangladesh Television and Radio Bangladesh put up daylong special programmes outlining the significance of the

Ships of Bangladesh Navy were kept open for the members of public at Chittagong, Khulna and Mongla Ports and at Sadarghat in Dhaka, BIWTA Ghat at Narayangani and

The day was a public holi-

The Independence and National Day was also celebrated in the port city of Chittagong and elsewhere with a renewed pledge to consolidate the independence and national sovereignty and democracy in the country.

The day was heralded with playing of a five-minute whistle at one minute past 12 mid night at Chittagong Port and a 21-gun salute at the Court Building simultaneously.

In Khulna, the Independence and National Day was observed in a befitting manner. Speaker of the Jatiya Sangsad, Shaikh Razzage Ali attended the programmes, The highlights of the day-long programmes included exhibition of indigenous goods at the premises of Khulna BSCIC of-

Seminars, symposiums and discussions were also held, highlighting the significance of

In Rajshahi and Barisal Divisional Headquarters the day was observed in a befitting

· [More stories on Metro pages]

From page 1 col 7

procedural votes Friday showed they did not have the

Yeltsin

689-two- thirds of the Congress-needed to oust him. Yeltsin proposed the referwith the Congress, which has

endum to resolve a struggle steadily stripped him of his executive powers and hindered his reforms. He said he hoped the ballot-

ing would lead to a new constitution and replacement of the Congress with a bicameral legislature. On Friday, he suggested two questions, asking voters whether they had confidence in the Congress as well as in his leadership.

The Congress voted 621-23 on Saturday to approve in principle the holding of the referendum on April 25.

Hijacker

From page col 5 Lahore Airport for 40 minutes after Pakistani authorities denied it permission to land.

It then turned around for the northern Indian city of Amritsar, where it parked in a corner of the airstrip 1,000 metres (yards) from the control tower.

The hijacker, who identified himself as Hari Singh, 37, said in a long, rambling statement over the aircraft's radio that he was protesting the Hindu-Muslim violence that has killed 2,000 Indians since December, and he began negotiating his surrender.

The hijacker's statement in the Hindi language also criticized the nation's largest opposition group, the Hindu nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party. He blamed it for the destruction of a Muslim shrine that set off nation wide communal riots in December.

Mirpur byelection From Page 1 Col 8

A number of other ministers, the source added, would also be made a parties to the case. "Those (ministers) who have made state largesse and state patronisation" favouring the BNP candidate would

also be included, he said. The application may also challenge the poll results, given out to the media by the Returning Officer. "It (the result) was given out to radio and television without any knowledge of the Election Commission and in total disregard to accepted me-

thods," noted the source. The recounting process of the ballot papers was also likely to be challenged by the petitioner for, what the source said, the failure of the Returning Officer, under whose custody the ballots remained, "to conform to the minimum

legal requirement." The unofficial results of the Dhaka-11 bye-election held on February 3, was broadcast over radio and television the same day and published in major national dailies the next day, creating confusion among the public as the results varied.

Quoting news agencies, UNB and BSS, the government-controlled media declared the BNP candidate the winner by 3,803 votes on election night while the Returning Officer later announced, in an unofficial result, that the BNP candidate bagged 93,797 votes against 90,684 for the AL candidate. However, he soon revised the figures at 80,425 and 77.535

respectively. As per the earlier announcement, on February 4 the Returning Officer officially announced that the BNP candidate received 80,127

votes to the Al. candidate's 77,535

On the same day, the polling agent for the AL candidate, KM Jahangir, MP, submitted an application, against the poll results, with the Chief Election Commi-

On February 13, the Election Commission cancelled the results for, what it said, the counting's not being "conducted legally" and ordered recounting of the ballots.

On February 15, recounting was conducted and the results announced the next day gave the BNP candidate 80,276 votes against 77,651 votes for the AL candidate. Following which a gazette notification was issued declaring the BNP candidate the winner.

One killed as train knocks concrete mixer

From Our Correspondent NARAYANGANJ, Mar 27: One Etd shopper was killed and another 20 injured here Wednesday afternoon when a passenger train knocked a concrete mixer placed close to the rail track and flung it on a track-side Eid market. Salam, 22, died instantly

being hit by the concrete mixer which was dashed by the Dhaka-bound train at about 4 pm on March 24 near the number one rail gate in Narayangani town.

Three seriously wounded victims of the accident were sent to the Orthopaedic and the Dhaka Medical College Hospital while others were admitted at the Narayangani

War criminals

From Page 1 Col 4

committee are Shawkat Osman, Poet Shamsur Rahman, Justice Debesh Chandra Bhattacharjee, Justice KM Sobhan, Barrister Shafiq Ahmed, Dr Khan Sarwar Morshed, Air Vice-Marshal (Retd) Sadruddin, Prof. Anupam Sen, Prof Khalid and Salauddin Yousuf MP.

The commission was announced at a press briefing on the street in front of the Samannaya Committee office (JSD-Inu office) instead of at the planned rally scheduled near the Engineers Institute which could not be held due to police action.

Announcing the Commission convenor of the committee Jahanara Imam urged the people to submit documents against anti-Liberation elements by November 15 to

The eight other persons to be investigated for their role during the Liberation War are Delwar Hossain Sayeedi, Maulana Abdul Mannan, Maulana AKM Yousuf, Kamruzzaman, Abdul Kader Mollah, Ali Ahsan Al-Mujahidi KSP leader SM Solaiman and NDP leader Anwar Zahid

Jahanara Imam said that the committee had given a year to implement the verdict of people's court against Golam Azam and urged to constitute a tribunal to try other war crimi nals but the government ig nored it and harassed commit tee supporters forcing them to form the Public Commission.

She said that the government exposed its "autocratic attitude" by foiling the meeting and repressing the committee leaders and supporters.

Imam said that their campaign would continue despite government repression. This government was favouring the anti-Liberation forces, she alleged.

Abdur Razzak MP who also addressed the briefing said that the committee would stage a sit-in near the secretariat April 20 and organise demonstrations at every meeting of the Prime Minister from May 4 if the demands were not fulfilled.

Committee leaders Hassan Imam, Poet Shamsur Rahman, Barrister Shawkat Ali, Dr Khan Sarwar Morshed, Kazi Arel Ahmed, Sharier Kabir, Mamunur Rashid, Colonel (Retd) Osman Chowdhury were also present at the briefing.

Floods in Ctg From Page 1 Col 4

time. However, the flood water began to recede after 11 am with the stoppage of rainfall.

Chittagong Met office sources said, rainfall here was recorded at 93 mm in the past 24 hours. Meanwhile, the telecommu-

nication that was snapped by thunderbolt on Etd Day was restored yes-terday. Earlier, Chittagong was

completely isolated from the rest of the world on Thursday for about 16 hours as T&T microwave here totally collapsed due to thunder, official sources said.

The Television relay service here from Dhaka was also snapped during that time and as a result, the people o Chittagong could not view the TV special programme on the occasion of Eid festival. Hundreds of queries about non-operation of TV service here from the curious people poured into T&T office.

T&T sources said the NWD and ISD phones from Chittagong could not operate as the microwave link totally collapsed. The thunder damaged the transformer, and all other equipments at the Kumira Microwave Station, 20 miles off the city, the sources added. The trouble began at 1-30

pm on that day and the communication was restored after 16 hours at 5-30 am yesterday through a temporary arrangement with the help of a generator, the General Manager of T&T here Alauddin Ahmed informed

The TV relay service also resumed from 8 am yesterday. Meanwhile the repair works at the damaged Kumira Mircrowave Station continued Ahmed also informed.

Delhi cancels From page 1 col 7

It said an Indian request for

Pakistan's assistance was conveyed on March 23, six days after the suspects were reported to have fled Dubai.

Xinhua adds: The city police

of Bombay seized nearly 1,500 kilograms of explosives in a vacant flat at Mumbra near the southwestern business metropolis Friday, a report reaching here today said. The explosives, most o

which RDX, were packed in a total of 41 gunny bags that smelt of fish and stored in a round floor flat, the reports

RDX explosives are believed to be used in the 13 explosions in Bombay on March 13 which killed over 300 people and injured more than 1,000.

The Midnight File

Avalanches kill 24 in Pakistan

ISLAMABAD, Mar 27: At least 24 people were killed when avalanches swept through villages in the mountainous region of Skardu in northern Pakistan, state-run Pakistan television reported here today. The avalanches hit the villages of Gultari and Mani Das Tuesday and Wednesday, killing 24 people, including three women and six children, and injuring eight seriously, it said. The incident followed two days of heavy rains, reports AFP.

ME talks: Arabs meet in Damascus today

DAMASCUS, Mar 27: Israel's main Arab rivals meet in Damascus Sunday to decide whether to resume negotiations with the Jewish state next month, or reject Washington's invitation and risk the collapse of the Middle East peace process. The two-day meeting - at the foreign ministers level will bring together representatives of Syria, Jordan, Lebanon and the Palestine Liberation Organization. The heads of their negotiating teams also will attend, reports AP.

Yeltsin asks Congress to drop new bid to remove him

MOSCOW, Mar 27: President Boris Yeltsin asked Congress today to drop bold new attempts to remove him from office, calling on deputies to instead entrust him and three other interested parties with solving Russia's political crisis within a week, reports AFP.

Nirmul supporters

and collaborators of 1971 Independence War) at 3.25 pm to attend the meeting where a 'public probe commission" was

"Please don't proceed, you have no permission to hold any meeting," Mustafiz, Deputy Commissioner of Police (North) told the Committee lea-

scheduled to be announced.

"Show us the order of let us go" Jahanara Imam, Convenor of the Committee told the police officer.

During the altercation another police officer Malek ordered his forces to "cordon" the leaders and the constables pushed and forced them to retreat.

Police action on Nirmul supporters condemned

By Staff Correspondent Different political parties and orgnisations yesterday held railies and brought out processions in the city protesting Friday's police action that foiled a Samannaya Committee public meeting.

The meeting was convened at the Suhrawardi Udyan to observe the first anniversary of the Gana Adalat (People's Court) that tried controversial leader of Jamaat-e-Islami Golam Azam for war crimes.

Besides, the parties and organisations in the separate statements also strongly condemned the police atrocities and demanded removal Home Minister Abdul Matin Choudhury.

Bangladesher Samajtantrik Dal (Khalquzzaman) organised its rally in front of the Jatiya Press Club in the afternoon.

Addressing the rally, BSD leaders Abdur Razzak and Belal Choudhury said that the police attacks had marred the spirit of Liberation and unveiled the government's alliance with the anti-Liberation forces.

A statement of the party issued last night said at least 16 leaders and workers of BSD (Khaleq) were hurt when police mercilessly beat up a procession marching towards the Suhrawardi Udyan.

The left-leaning student alliance. Ganatantrik Chhatra Oikya held a rally at the Dhaka University campus in the morning to protest government's ban on the Samannaya Committee meeting and the police attack on the organisation's supporters.

Speakers at the rally said that the government by imposing ban on the Samannaya Committee meeting had unveiled its autocratic character. They also demanded resignation of the Home Minister.

JSD (Aref-Inu) in its state ment resented Friday's incidents and demanded proper investigations into them. The government action had

violated the democratic norms and marred the sanctity of the Independence Day, it added.

Issued by JSD presidium member Kazi Aref and General Secretary Hasanul Haq Inu, the statement called on the pro-Liberation and democratic forces to forge a solid unity against the enemies Independence and to make Samannaya Committee programmes a success.

Sammilito Sangskritik Jote termed Friday's incidents contrary to democratic norms and values and also opposed to constitutional rule in the coun-

Projonma '71 in a statement condemned the police attacks and said those had cleared the government stance regarding the anti-Liberation elements.

issued similar statements.

From Page 1 Col 3 As the altercation and scuffle continued some Committee supporters chanted slogans near the Baitul Makarram and Stadium areas, and were frequently chased by the police.

Earlier, police sealed all the

approaches to the Engineers

Institute placing barbed-wire fences, and also took away the materials taken there to erect the podium for the meeting. Even the pedestrians were prohibited to walk on the pavements in the areas and

police allegedly misbehaved

with some of them, witnesses Parveen Anwar, Bangladesh representative of the New York-based WTN Television and journalist Baby Maudud of the Daily Ittefaq were prevented from the attending a press briefing by Imam on the

street in front of the GPO. Within an hour of the Committee leaders' being stopped on the street, several thousand Committee supporters gathered in the areas and started pelting stones at police and clashed in and around the Stadium, Baitul Mokarram, Bangabandhu Avenue and Zero Point leaving more than 60 injured. The roads in the areas

were littered with broken bricks and sandals. Police lobbed tear gas shells

on demonstrators at Topkhana The committee sources claimed that more than 200 of their supporters were injured

in the hour-long police action. Tuhin, a Dhaka University student was piked up during the incident was released af-

than 1,000 riot police backed by armed police and BDR men were deployed from Gulistan to Shahabag areas via Engineers Institute to maintain order as the Committee announced to celebrate the 1st anniversary of the People's Court which tried Golam Azam for his alleged war crimes dur-

ing the 1971 Liberation War. The committee leaders were also harassed when they tried to return home at around 5:30 pm, witnesses said adding that Imam was forced to take a babytaxi to leave the place and was not allowed to

walk along the road. MP Razzak and other leaders left the spot after Imam's departure.

[Editorial on Page 4] Tornado

From Page 1 Col 3 UNB adds: Hatl-storm accompanied by rains that swept over Feni and the adjoining region in the early hours Saturday disrupted normal life in the town and elsewhere in

the district. Standing IRRI paddy and Kharif-crops on a vast area were affected by the hail-storm which hit five Thanas of the

UNB Correspondent from Sirajganj adds: the district experienced similar hail-storm in the last two days. The storm damaged onion and garlic on a vast tract of farmland in the

district. 50 drowned From Page 1 Col 4

caught by cyclonic storm in the mid-stream of the river Friday near Sripur and sunk Kibria said that more bodies were expected from the hull of

the launch when it would be

Allout search operations were being carried out by special squads to trace out those passengers still missing.

completely salvaged.

PM shocked

Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia yesterday expressed her profound grief at the loss of lives in a launch Samajtantrik Chhatra Front capsize near Sripur in Bartsal and Chhatra League (B-K) also on Friday, reports BSS.

Published by the Editor on behalf of Mediaworld Ltd., 52 Motipheel

Party dissidents had been demanding that Rao step down as party president so that he by a rise in Hindu

Ten senior Congress (I) leaders, including six former ministers, launched a hunger strike in this resort town south of New Delhi on Saturday to demand that the 71- yearold Rao give up the party pres-

Dinesh, Pawar

From page 1 col 7 confident that if the suspects would be tracked down and ar-

be in Karachi, according to the The minister told Rajya

concern over the issues.

Pakistan saying they had travelled from Dubai to Karachi by a scheduled Pakistan International Airlines flight, PK 214. Dinesh Singh said the flight

He informed the House that the US administration had already put Pakistan on watch

Independence Day From page 1 col 7 cluding Communist Party of Bangladesh, Five Party Alliance, Patriotic Democratic Forum, Janata Dal, Nirmul Samannaya Committee, Bang-

a number of students organisations also placed wreaths at the Smriti Shoudha. The parties and organisation also held seminar and dis-

occasion. Prime Minister Begum ception. Among others, Ministers, leaders of political parties, Jatiya Sangsad members, chief of three services,

Islamic Foundation held Quran Khwani on the occasion fered at the Baitul Mokarram National Mosque after Juma prayer, seeking divine bless-

Improved diets were served

the day.

Editor: S. M. Ali

Executive Editor: Mahfuz Anam

C/A, Dhaka-1000 and printed by him at The Sangbad Ltd., 36 Purana Paltan, Dhaka. Editorial, News & Commercial Offices: House No. 11; Road No. 3; Dhanmondi R/A., Dhaka-1205. PABX 500092-4. Advertisement: 500091 (Direct) Fax No. 88-02-863035. GPO Box No. 3257. GRAM: DAILY STAR DHAKA.

ted that the independence loving people who came to the rally were lathicharged and tear gassed. Even the leaders of the Nirmul Committee were not spared, she added. It was a planned attack on the independence loving people on the Independence Day, said Sheikh Hasina, which manifested that the BNP government is engaged in heinous conspiracy with the anti-liberation forces She further said the government has openly sided with the anti-liberation forces and taken the responsibility of protecting them from the wrath of the people and rehabilitating them. The activities of the government have amply proved that it was engaged in establishing the anti-independence Pakistani line, said the Awami League chief, and appealed to the people to stand united against such a heinous con-

From page col 5

Besides, congregations we-

nesday.

On the Eid Day national flag

Inmates of jails, hospitals,