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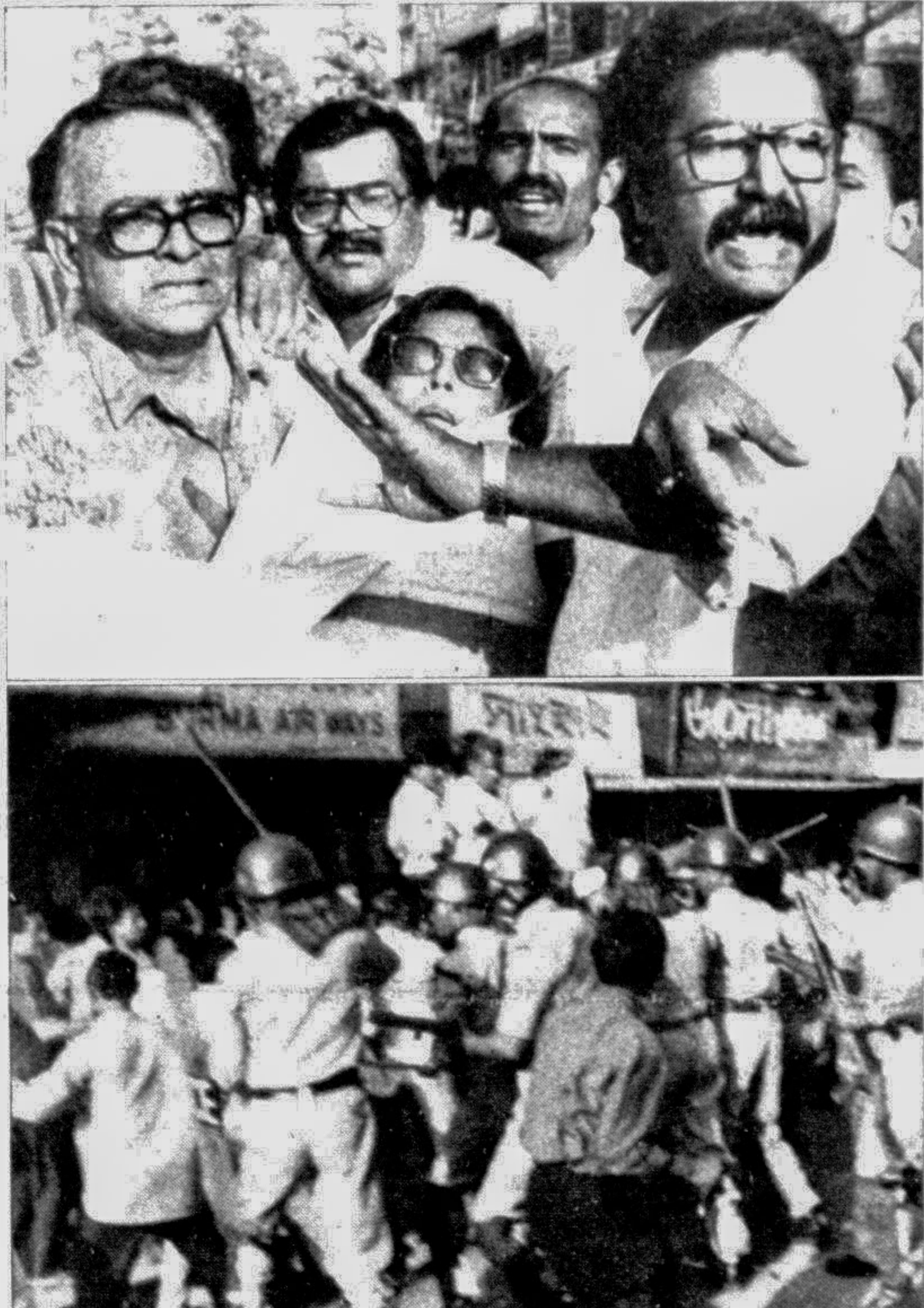
The Daily Star

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Nirmul rally foiled: About 50 injured Jahanara Imam hospitalised after police assault



By Staff Correspondent

Police foiled another rally called by the Ghatak Dalal Nirmul Jatiya Samannaya Committee in the capital yesterday afternoon injuring about 50 leaders and workers of the committee including its chief Jahanara Imam.

Imam and others were admitted to PG hospital after riot police baton-charged them while trying to hold the planned rally in front of the Awami League central office at 4:30 pm.

According to hospital authorities, Imam, remained in serious but stable condition. The attending physicians at the intensive-care unit, fearing head injuries, shifted her to the BIRDEM Hospital for a CAT-scan at around 11 pm.

They said that she would be brought back to the PG Hospital and kept under observation.

Imam (64), mother of martyred freedom fighter Shaheed Rumi and also a renowned writer, sustained injuries on her neck, waist and abdomen.

Rushed to the hospital immediately after the police action at Bangabandhu Avenue at 4:30 pm, she was admitted at PG at around 5:15 pm later. X-rays of her injuries were conducted at the hospital. Imam is presently undergoing treatment for cancer.

AL chief Sheikh Hasina Sunday evening went to PG Hospital to see Jahanara Imam.

Heavy contingents of riot and armed police aided by the members of Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) cordoned off several square-kilometres area of the venue stretching from Bangabhaban and Gulistan in the south, Dainik Bangla crossing in the east, Kakrail and Shahbagh crossings in the north and Nilkhet and Fulbaria in the west to obstruct the committee workers and supporters from attending the rally.

Muktijodher Chetona Bastabayan O Ekattorer Ghatak Dalal Nirmul Jatiya Samannaya Committee or the Samannaya Committee convened yesterday.

See Page 12 Col 4

Jahanara Imam, injured in police baton-charge being taken to hospital (top) and police swoop on Nirmul Samannaya Committee rally in front of Awami League office at Bangabandhu Avenue yesterday (above). — Star photo

Pakistan denies involvement Stop terrorism or face consequences, Cong asks Pakistan

SURAJKUND, (India), Mar 28: Prime Minister PV Narasimha Rao's ruling Congress (I) party today warned Pakistan of serious consequences if it did not cease its alleged support to "terrorist" campaigns in India, report AFP, Reuter.

"If Pakistan continues the policy of destruction, it will have to face serious problems," Foreign Minister Dinesh Singh said as the party adopted a resolution on foreign affairs at a two-day convention in this tourist resort.

Meanwhile, Pakistan accused India today of fabricating evidence to try to show Islamabad was backing terrorism and denied involvement in devastating bombings in Bombay that killed 250 people.

"It is very unfortunate that when anything happens in India the finger is pointed at Pakistan," Foreign Ministry Secretary General Akram Zaki said in a telephone interview with Reuter. He denied any Pakistani involvement in the deadly bombing blitz.

"Pakistan is today creating problems [for India] by supporting terrorists," Dinesh Singh said, repeating accusation that Islamabad backed Sikh and Muslim separatists in the frontier states of Punjab and Kashmir respectively.

"We have to face them strongly," the Minister said. India in big enough to face Pakistan.

"But we must be careful. We have to fight those forces in Pakistan which create problems for us. We must not antagonise the people of Pakistan who are a part of our culture," Dinesh Singh charged Pakistan with "raising the India bogey" to divert attention from "countless sectarian conflicts there." He also accused Pakistan of not doing enough to promote the seven-nation South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC).

"But I think we should still strengthen SAARC and march ahead," he added.

Punjab state Chief Minister See Page 12 Col 7

Launch capsizes death toll rises to 42

Death toll from motor-launch accident rose to 42 as rescuers recovered 16 more bodies from the hold of ML Zubair, the ill-fated vessel that was fully salvaged yesterday.

BIWTA Chairman MG Kibria told UNB that some 16 bodies were recovered yesterday when the ill-fated vessel was completely salvaged. Earlier 26 bodies were recovered on Saturday.

Kibria said at least two passengers were still missing.

ML Zubair met with the accident on Friday night when it was caught in a severe storm in the confluence of rivers Kalabadar and Tatulla near Bhola. It was carrying nearly 100 passengers, according to BIWTA officials.

Seven of the bodies recovered yesterday were identified as: Abdul Hameed Master (35), Borhanuddin (35), Hafer Muhammad Ismail (20), Bhola, Jitu (11), Arati Rani Das (55) and her daughter Swapna Rani (10).

Sharif govt threatened as 3 ministers quit

ISLAMABAD, Mar 28: Three Pakistani cabinet ministers handed in their resignations late on Saturday in a move that threatened the government of Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif, official sources said early today, reports Reuter.

The resignations came amid a bitter rift between Sharif and President Ghulam Ishaq Khan that western diplomats say could prompt the president to exercise his power to dissolve parliament.

Minister for Planning and Development Hamid Nasir Chatha, Minister for Environment and Urban Affairs Anwar Saifullah and Senior Adviser Asad Junejo submitted their resignation to Ishaq Khan, a senior official close to the President said.

The three split with the government after the Pakistan Muslim League (PML) the main party in the fragile coalition government, nominated Sharif to succeed as PML leader after the death last week of party President Mohammad Khan Junejo.

The meeting was not representative because top leaders from all the provinces were not there," Chatha told reporters after he walked out. "I insisted that it be postponed and matters should not be pushed in a hurry."

He complained of "indecent haste" after Junejo's death last Friday. He could not be contacted later to confirm the resignations.

Sharif's aides had been lobbying frantically since Junejo died to ensure his nomination as PML President before he left on Saturday for a week-long trip to Britain and Germany.

Information Minister Abdul Sattar Laleka said the meeting "unanimously" chose Sharif See Page 12 Col 6

Bangladeshi peacekeeper killed in Cambodia

PHNOM PENH, Mar 28: A Bangladeshi soldier serving with UN peace-keeping forces in northwestern Cambodia died today after his unit was attacked by suspected Khmer Rouge guerrillas, a United Nations spokesman said, reports Reuter.

It was the first battle fatality among foreign forces attached to the UN Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC), a 22,000-strong force deployed to ensure terms of a 1991 peace pact are adhered to by all four warring factions.

See Page 12 Col 6

Water talks begin tomorrow

A two-day meeting of the Joint Committee of Experts (JCE) begins here Tuesday to discuss sharing of water of common rivers by Bangladesh and India, particularly the international river Ganges, official sources said, reports UNB.

Irrigation and Flood Control Secretary M Asafadullah will lead Bangladesh side at the talks. Indian Irrigation Secretary Dr. CD Thatta, who is due to arrive in Dhaka today will head his country's delegation.

Inter-ministerial body suggests DCs should coordinate project implementation

By S Y Bakht

Field level coordination and monitoring responsibilities for implementing all development projects should be vested in the district commissioners and divisional commissioners.

This was recommended in a report, early this year, by a 15-member inter-ministerial committee convened by Planning Minister A M Zahuruddin Khan.

The committee was formed, following a decision by the National Economic Council (NEC) last June, to recommend ways to speed up implementation of development projects by removing existing problems and gearing up field-level monitoring and coordination efforts.

The divisional commissioners, with an ex-officio rank of a

director general of the Implementation, Monitoring and Evaluation Division (IMED) of the Planning Ministry, would inspect, monitor and coordinate the implementation of all development projects at the divisional level, the report suggested.

The district commissioners, with the rank of a director of IMED, would be responsible for monitoring and coordinating the implementation of all development projects at the district level.

The above measures for the district and divisional levels have been recommended on condition that the government approved local government system is initiated," the report said, adding "a new field-level organisational system would

evolve once the local government system is initiated and in that context and perspective field-level coordination of development projects could be undertaken.

Identifying the primary bottlenecks in implementing projects included in the Annual Development Plan (ADP), the report went on to recommend a number of steps to overcome the prevailing problems and also suggested further enhancing the scope of work and importance of IMED.

Presented to the Executive Council of the NEC by the Planning Minister January 21, the report is currently awaiting cabinet approval.

Noting that "in many instances project implementation

See Page 12 Col 1

Attack on rally a blow to democracy: Hasina

By Staff Correspondent

Different political parties and organisations Sunday condemned the police attack on the protest rally of Ekattorer Ghatak Dalal Nirmul Jatiya Samannaya Committee.

Awami League chief and Leader of the Opposition in Parliament Sheikh Hasina in a statement said that the attack on the rally by the law enforcing agencies let loose by the ruling BNP destroyed democratic norms of the country.

Hasina also alleged that the government was pushing the country towards dreadful consequences by supporting the Jamaat-Shibir axis. She said the government would have to bear the responsibilities of the consequences of the incident.

She said the government let loose the riot police on the Nirmul committee men with

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Cabinet takes up N-S gas pipeline issue today

As the cabinet is poised to further take up the North-South gas pipeline issue at a meeting today, the relevant inquiry committee is steadfast with its earlier recommendations, reports UNB.

The committee held that the Italian contractor Saipem unduly claimed 14 million US dollar as compensation from the government for which an agreement was already signed.

The cabinet at its March 1 meeting sent back the report to the committee for further appraisal. But, official sources said, the committee informed the authorities that it does not have any second observation on the matter.

The cabinet decision to send back the report was taken after the Energy Ministry — the executing ministry for the North-South Gas Pipeline — contested some of the observations and recommendations of the inquiry committee.

The Ministry particularly opposed the probe committee's observation accusing a section of officials of Petrobangla and the ministry's Mineral Resources Wing of motivatedly favouring Saipem's claim.

The March 1 cabinet meeting postponed the debate over the sensitive issue until further comments from the probe committee.

But the committee sources said, remained firm with its original observation and was rather critical of the Energy Ministry which questioned the rationality of some of the recommendations made by the committee.

The three-member inquiry committee was set up on May 6 last year amidst growing suspicion about the justifiability of accepting Saipem's claim for compensation.

Prof Iqbal Mahmood of See Page 12 Col 7

Jamuna levy Govt to refund money deducted from deposits after July 1, 1992

Government has decided to refund the amount deducted after July 1, 1992, as Jamuna levy (surcharge) on profits of any National Savings Instruments, reports UNB.

Jamuna levy on all kinds of deposits was withdrawn from July 1, 1992.

A National Savings Directorate press release yesterday said investors are to contact the issuing office (National Savings Bureau, bank and post office), and submit their claims by April 15, 1993, against any deductions of Jamuna surcharge after July 1, 1992.

The issuing offices were directed to send a list of investors showing the amount of levy deducted after expiry date and the total amount of claim to the National Savings Directorate at 69/B, Green Road (Panthapath), Dhaka, within April 22, 1993.

No claim from the investors will be accepted after April 15, the press release added.

Hearing of writ on Azam's case resumes today

By Staff Correspondent

Hearing of the writ petition challenging the cancellation of the citizenship of Golam Azam will resume at the High Court Division of the Supreme Court today.

Hearing of the writ, before a single-judge bench comprising Justice Anwarul Haq Choudhury, was adjourned on March 4. On behalf of the petitioner Barrister A R Yusuf will begin the argument when the hearing resumes.

See Page 12 Col 4

Yeltsin, Khasbulatov survive ouster

MOSCOW, Mar 28: Both President Boris Yeltsin and his chief political rival survived attempts Sunday by the Russian Congress to remove them from office, the Interfax news agency reported, reports AP, Reuter.

Citing unidentified Kremlin sources, Interfax said approximately 590 legislators voted for Yeltsin's ouster, well short of the 689 votes needed to remove him.

The news agency also said about 400 law makers voted to replace Congress speaker Rusan Khasbulatov. At least 517 votes, a simple majority of the 1,033-member Congress, would have been needed to remove Khasbulatov.

Legislators were waiting in the Grand Kremlin Palace for the official announcement of the results of their secret ballot.

The vote followed the rejection by the Congress of a compromise proposed by Yeltsin and Khasbulatov in an effort to end a long power struggle between the parliament and president.

The compromise enraged the legislators because it would have eliminated the Congress — and their jobs — in favour of a smaller, bicameral legislature.

Yeltsin and Khasbulatov had agreed to call for early parliamentary and presidential elections in November this year, ITAR-Tassa news agency said today.

The agency said Yeltsin and parliament chairman Khasbulatov, agreed to the compromise in overnight talks.

It quoted first deputy Prime Minister Vladimir Shumeiko as saying regional leaders in the Russian Federation supported the proposal.

After casting his ballot, Khasbulatov told reporters that he had voted for his own dismissal. "I crossed myself out," he said, referring to the Russian voting practice in which voters strike out the names of candidates they don't want. Khasbulatov did not explain his remark.

Yeltsin told a crowd of about 50,000 supporters who rallied outside the Kremlin that he would not step down, even if the Congress voted to oust him.

Declaring that "Moscow has awakened at last," an invigorated Yeltsin told tens of thousands of roaring supporters at the Kremlin gates Sunday that he would not let Congress decide Russia's destiny.

The crowd marched behind a row of tractors decorated with pictures of Yeltsin, surging through the capital to the edge of Red Square with a spirit that evoked the defense of democracy during the failed 1991 coup by Kremlin hard-liners.

Farmers, workers, intellectuals, priests and politicians were among the estimated 50,000 demonstrators whose shouts of "Yeltsin! Yeltsin!" and "Down with the Congress!" echoed off the thick Kremlin walls.

See Page 12 Col 5

63 killed, 120 hurt in ROK train accident

SEOUL, Mar 28: A crowded passenger train toppled off a viaduct in tracks Sunday, killing about 63 people and injuring 120, police and local news reports said, reports AP.

The collapse of rain-soaked ground under the tracks followed blasting work in the area to lay under ground electric cables, an electric company spokesman said.

Two of the train's eight cars crumbled into the hole and three others overturned, police said. The train was reported carrying about 700 people, about 200 more than its seating capacity.

Police reported 57 dead, and MBC television said the toll was at least 63. About 30 of the injuries were reported as serious, and police said more deaths were expected.

"I saw the ground crumbling and put on the brake quickly. But it was too late," Oh In-hwan, the engineer, told reporters.

Police said about 30 meters (30 yards) of track suddenly collapsed as the train was moving at a normal speed, nearing its terminal in the southern city of Pusan on the 410-kilometer (246-mile) trunk line from Seoul.

"It was like an explosion," MBC television quoted a witness as saying. Dozens of passengers were killed.

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