

Come to CHITTAGONG Come to
BANGKOK THAI RESTAURANT
 The only place for ORIGINAL THAI FOOD & SEAFOOD
 in CHITTAGONG (NO BRANCH). Please try us and you
 will love BANGKOK THAI RESTAURANT more than
 ever before.
 143 ASIAN HIGHWAY, OPPOSITE Y. M. C. A. NASIRABAD.
 CHITTAGONG, TEL : 226803, FAX : (880) (31) - 225258

The Daily Star

Nirman Tiles
 In Broken
 Marble Tiles
 Brighter Home
 At Lesser Price
 Tel : 605957, 861985

Inside Today

Metropolitan
 Dhaka Day by Day

Article
 Give Us a Good Government—May be that's what the Country Need Most
 At Home and Abroad
 by S. M. Ali
 Page 4

International
 Congress (I) under fire for aborting trial of SC judge

Business
 Tokyo makes fresh 'buy foreign' appeal to tackle trade surplus
 Call to simplify tax laws
 Pages 6, 7

Women On The Move
 Manzira's Story by Mahfuz Anam
 Page 8

National
 Across the Country
 Naogaon : A peep into the past
 Page 9

NEWS BRIEFS
 Biswas, Khaleda greet Rodriguez
 Four bills placed in Jatiya Sangsad
 Hashish seized in Pakistan
 Section 144 in Shibhalaya

Second day of SKOP strike 200 hurt as workers, police clash in Ctg

By Staff Correspondent

The report, quoting witnesses, said an unspecified number of shots were fired while police claimed to have fired only four rubber bullets.

The police and BDR men, numbering around 1000, led by the Chittagong Metropolitan Police Commissioner himself, launched the attack at about 2 pm and also resorted to baton-charge on the labourers and reportedly chased them into a workers' colony nearby, labour leaders in Dhaka said, adding that the police had also attacked inmates of the colony including women.

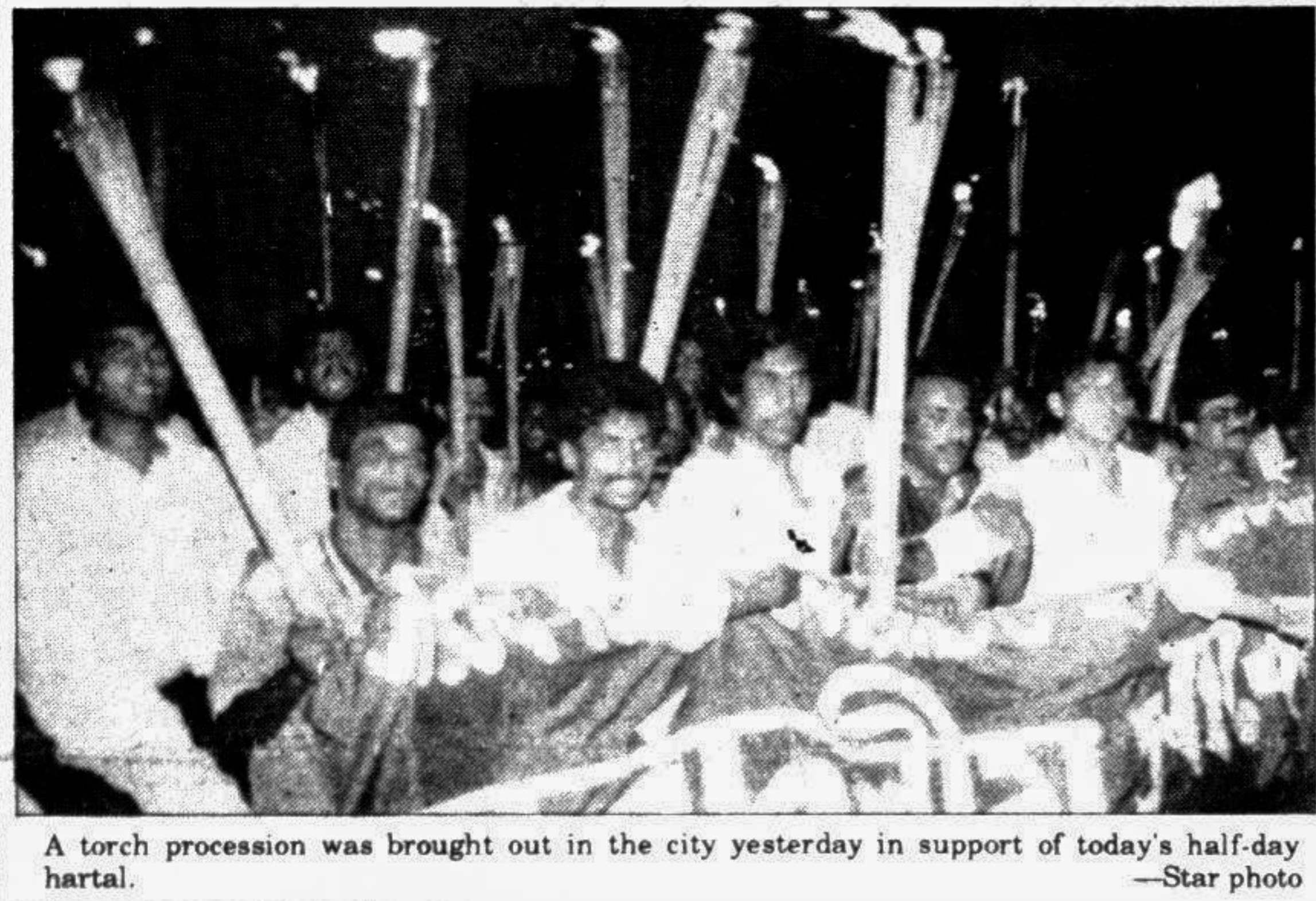
In Pabna, a section of angry strikers gheraoed the office of the Deputy Commissioner during the shutdown programme.

The 72-hour work-stoppage that began Tuesday morning, was simultaneously called by the Sramik Karmachari Olkya Parishad (SKOP) and four trade union federations in the jute-textile-cotton-sugar-BSEC sectors.

Most mills and factories in the Dhaka, Chittagong, Khulna, Narayanganj and Bogra industrial belts did not operate during the second day of the labour strike.

Long-distance private bus services to and from the four major cities— Dhaka, Chittagong, Khulna and Rajshahi— plied infrequently. Movement of motorised vehicles in the capital and the port city Chittagong was, however, normal. The state-owned BRTC buses, trains, launches, steamers also operated throughout the country normally.

See Page 12 Col 1



A torch procession was brought out in the city yesterday in support of today's half-day hartal. —Star photo

Delhi to send back Chakmas in phases

NEW DELHI, May 12 : India will start sending back Bangladeshi tribal refugees, housed in camps in the far-eastern border state of Tripura, within a month, minister told parliament here today, reports AFP.

State Minister for External Affairs Salman Khurshid told the Lower House that the refugees, belonging to the Chakma tribe, would be sent back in phases in line with an agreement reached by the two countries last week.

Khurshid said Dhaka had confirmed it through Minister Oli Ahmed that the deportees would get back their assets and homes and would not be harassed.

The rehabilitation package drawn up for the refugees by the Bangladesh government included a grant to build a house as well as regular rations, the minister said.

He said officials from both countries would meet on May 19 to finalise details to ensure smooth repatriation.

Dhaka, UNHCR sign MOU on Rohingyas

By Staff Correspondent

Bangladesh and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) Wednesday signed a broad-based memorandum of understanding (MOU) detailing a formula to expedite the "safe and voluntary" repatriation of the Rohingya refugees to Myanmar.

Initialed by the UN High Commissioner for Refugees Sadako Ogata and Foreign Secretary Reaz Rahman, the MOU, which comes into immediate effect, stipulates that the two sides would cooperate with each other to ensure safe and voluntary repatriation of the Myanmar refugees who opt to return under existing conditions.

"It is a memorandum that confirms what we have promised to do, assuring voluntariness on the basis of which they (the refugees), can go back (to Myanmar) and assuring access to the refugee camps," Ogata told newsmen immediately after signing the MOU at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

"I hope the refugees will be more assured," she said.

Noting that the MOU contains "very positive" elements which would help the repatriation process, Ogata said that both sides also agreed to persevere with the Myanmar government to take back the refugees.

The accord, to be effective for one year, would be automatically renewed for an additional year unless either side provides a prior notice to the contrary.

The Bangladesh government, under the agreement, would allow free access to UNHCR officials and independent interview of refugees in the transit camps to determine the voluntary character of their decision to return.

Foreign Secretary Rahman hoped that the agreement would contribute towards achieving a "permanent and See Page 12 Col 3

Ogata hopes Myanmar will allow UNHCR

By Staff Correspondent

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) Sadako Ogata on Wednesday hoped that the Myanmar government would allow UNHCR officials on its territory to help expedite the repatriation of Rohingya refugees from Bangladesh.

"We are told that the condition for return (of the refugees) is favourable, but we are not in a position to find out the actual situation in Myanmar," Ogata told newsmen at Zia International Airport on her arrival on a three-day visit.

"I would very much like to be in a position to ascertain the real situation," she said.

Foreign Secretary Reaz Rahman received the High Commissioner at the airport.

Appreciating the role of the Bangladesh government and the people for giving shelter to the Rohingya refugees, the UN envoy said during her visit she expects to see the conditions of the refugees for herself and See Page 12 Col 2

Unscheduled debate dominates proceedings in JS

By Staff Correspondent

Speaker Shaikh Razzak Ali, in response to the AL MP's appeal, told the House that the issue was under the active consideration of the chair and he would try to allow the debate in the House during the budget session.

The Speaker also observed that "The House should give preference to such vital issues rather than trivial matters in order to meet the aspirations of common people."

Finance Minister M Saifur Rahman, taking the floor, expressed his agreement with the Speaker and said, "I also feel the need for taking the opposition views on the country's economic affairs". A detailed discussion could be held on the issue in the next budget session, the minister observed.

At this stage Matia Chowdhury of the AL took the floor to tell the House that the treasury benchers, for the past few days, had been accusing the opposition of raising more political rather than economic issues in the House.

"Now the Speaker has also aired his dissatisfaction at the fact that the House is attaching less importance to issues affecting the people's day-to-day lives."

"But the point should be noted that the opposition had always tried to discuss issues regarding sufferings of the people," she said, adding "I had to wait two and half a months after submitting a notice to the parliament secretary for a general discussion on the problems faced by the country's peasantry."

"Had my notice related to the problems of the 'gentlemen', it would have been discussed much earlier," Matia Chowdhury quipped sarcastically.

Speaker Shaikh Razzak Ali, explaining the procedural reasons behind the delay, said it had nothing to do with the content of the notice.

State Minister for Cultural Affairs Jahanara Begum, protesting Matia's remarks said, "The peasants may be poor but they, too, were gentlemen."

State Minister for Commu- See Page 12 Col 3

8-hr hartal call today

By Staff Correspondent

Fourteen opposition parties including the Awami League have called an eight-hour nationwide hartal today (Thursday) to protest alleged repression by the government and to press the demand for Jamaat chief Golam Azam's trial.

The hartal was called on April 25 after violence during a three-hour sit-in by the Nirmul Samannaya Committee during which many people were injured in clashes with police.

The Samannaya Committee has supported the hartal of the opposition parties. It also demanded a ban on the Jamaat, Shibir and the Freedom Party.

The hartal supporters organised a torch procession in the city yesterday urging the people to make the hartal till See Page 12 Col 6

Shantibahini agrees to hold talks May 22

KHAGRACHHARI, May 12: The third round of talks between the government and the tribal insurgents will be held here on May 22.

Parbatta Chattagram Jana Sanghati Samity (PCJSS), the umbrella organisation of the outlawed Shantibahini, will hold talks with the parliamentary committee for solution of the CHT issue in response to a government proposal, according to the liaison committee.

Liaison committee convenor Hangsha Dhaza Chakma told UNB today (Wednesday) that the decision of the PCJSS was communicated to him by a letter on Tuesday.

The third round of talks was scheduled in the first week of February this year but it could not take place due to "unavoidable circumstances."

The talks will be held at the local Circuit House and the PCJSS leaders will be flown to the venue from Dudukchhari, a frontier hamlet in Panchhari thana of district.

The 9-member parliamentary committee led by Communications Minister Oli Ahmed includes Workers Party leader Rashed Khan Menon, Kalpa Ranjan Chakma and Mushtaq Ahmed Chowdhury of Awami League, Syed Wahidul Alam, Mohammad Shahjahan, Barkatullah Bulu and Mohammad Shahjahan of BNP and Shahjahan Chowdhury of Jamaat.

The PCJSS side at the meeting will be led by its chairman Jyotirmoy Bose hipriya Larma (Shantu). Other members of the team are Rupayan Dewan, Goutam Chakma, Raktuptal Tripura and Sudhasindhu Khisha.

Body to review Muktijoddha Kalyan Trust activities

A six-member committee has been formed to review the overall activities of the Bangladesh Muktijoddha Kalyan Trust and make necessary recommendations to infuse dynamism in the activities of the Trust, reports BSS.

The committee was formed at a meeting of the board of trustees of the Bangladesh Muktijoddha Kalyan Trust held yesterday with its Chairman and Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia in the chair. The committee is expected to place its recommendations in ten days.

The members of the committee are: Hamidullah Khan MP, Qamrul Islam MP, Major General Amin Ahmed Chowdhury, the Industries Sec- See Page 12 Col 6

JMB construction to begin on schedule, JS told

By Staff Correspondent

The construction work of the Jamuna Bridge will begin in January 1994 as per schedule, State Minister for Communications Fazlur Rahman Patal told the Jatiya Sangsad yesterday.

He said that the proposed bridge will have provisions for railway line.

Replying to a supplementary questions, the State Minister said the government had already completed the required formalities for the construction of the bridge to begin.

The project proforma has also been approved, he added.

Earlier, the State Minister told Mirza Azam of the Awami League that the projected cost of the Jamuna Bridge was fixed at Taka 2500 crore and 90 lakh equivalent to 70 crore 17 lakh US dollar as per valuation of 1990.

Of the total estimated expenditure, Taka 897.10 crore will be in local currency and Taka 1603.80 crore in foreign exchange.

The State Minister said that the World Bank, Asian Deve- See Page 12 Col 7

Dhaka proposes fresh N-S dialogue

Bangladesh has called for launching a new North-South dialogue to bridge the gap between the rich and the poor of the world, reports BSS.

Making an intervention on the agenda item of relaunching the North-South dialogue and South-South cooperation at the Non-Aligned Standing Committee at Bali in Indonesia (Tuesday) Foreign Minister Mostafizur Rahman also emphasised the need for according special care and attention to the problems of the least developed countries.

The conference of the Ministerial Level Standing Committee of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) was inaugurated by Indonesian President Soeharto (Tuesday).

Calling for abandoning the antagonistic and confrontational approach which marred the North-South dialogue in the past the foreign minister said that a new dialogue based on pragmatism, mutuality of interests and shared responsibility encompassing all key development issues should be initiated.

Development finance, foreign debt, monetary issues, international trade, commodities, science and technology were among the issues concerned that he mentioned, a message from the venue of the conference said.

East-West reconciliation, the Foreign Minister said, was yet to be matched by corresponding impact on bridging the gap between the North and the South. He also called for strengthening South-South cooperation for collective self reliance.

The donor countries, he said, should honour the commitment made at the Paris conference for providing 0.20 per cent of their GNP to the least developed countries as official development assistance.

He also renewed the call to the donor countries to write off all debts of the least developed countries or convert them into grants.

The Foreign Minister appreciated and supported the initiative of President Soeharto, the current NAM Chairman, for a dialogue with the G-7 leaders in Tokyo.

He informed the plenary See Page 12 Col 8

MCCI, DCCI hail govt for resisting SKOP pressure

By Staff Correspondent

Leader of the MCCI and DCCI, in separate statements Wednesday, hailed the government for not surrendering to the 'illegal' pressure of the SKOP leaders.

President of MCCI (Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce and Industry) Latifur Rahman, in his statement, said the government should announce the agreement with the SKOP null and void as it was not consistent with the laws of the land.

He said the chamber had reports from Dhaka, Chittagong and Khulna on the strike situation where it found that except in a few cases, workers of the mills and factories did not respond to the strike call.

The MCCI President said the wages and other issues should be resolved through the process of collective bargaining as provided in the labour laws and the process of fixation of minimum wages should be expedited through the Minimum Wages Board. See Page 12 Col 1

70 killed, hundreds injured as rockets rain down on Kabul

KABUL, May 12: Maverick guerrilla groups bombarded Kabul with rockets and artillery today, killing more than 70 people and wounding hundreds in the fiercest fighting in two months, reports Reuter.

More than 300 rockets and shells slammed into the Afghan capital in the two hours before dawn and the blitz raged through the day with government tanks racing down city streets to reinforce the main battlefront in the south-western suburbs.

State-run Kabul radio reported that at least 72 people had been killed and one military commander said bodies littered streets near the centre of the fighting in the west.

The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) reported 576 injured people had been taken to the city's hospitals since the dawn assault.

Most of the rockets were fired from positions of the Iran-backed Shi'ite Hezb-I-Wahdat group and the Maverick hardline Hezb-I-Islami Party led by Prime Minister-designate Gulbuddin Hekmatyar in hills to the south and west.

Throughout the day rockets rained down on the northern Khair Khana suburb, site of large government-held military base, and in the western suburbs, which are already almost deserted.

Khair Khana was left virtually unscathed in factional fighting during the last year and its population has been swollen by refugees from other parts of the battered city.

Dr Kokim Qaomy said he had treated 80 injured at a poorly equipped clinic in the suburb and most had been sent to hospitals that have water and electricity. He said he had admitted two dead.

"This is the worst morning we have seen here", he said. One of his staff was hit in the stomach by shrapnel on the way to work.

The exact number of dead was not known because most were buried rapidly, and the administration that should record the toll has been shattered by a year of similar battles since the guerrillas took power from the fallen communist government in April 1992.

Thousands of Kabul residents have been killed and more than one-third of its 1.5 million inhabitants have fled since the guerrillas took power. [Earlier Story on Page 5]

'State leaders' visit to nat'l mausoleum on V-Day a convention'

Deputy Leader of the House Professor AQM Badruddoza Chowdhury yesterday said that visiting Savar National Mausoleum on Victory Day by state leaders was a convention which was being followed since the time of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, reports BSS.

Refuting opposition allegation that the government had undermined the National Independence by not organising visit by Prime Minister and the President to Savar National Mausoleum on Independence Day this year, Prof Chowdhury quoted official records that Sheikh Mujibur Rahman had only once visited the Savar Mausoleum site on March 26 in 1972 to lay the foundation of the monument and later he always visited the site on the See Page 12 Col 5

Four killed, 33 hurt as nor'westers hit 3 dists

By Staff Correspondent

At least four people were killed, some 33 injured and about 300 kutcha houses collapsed in severe nor'westers that lashed Sunamganj Tuesday night and Sirajganj and Gazipur Wednesday evening.

A UNB report says : At least four people were killed in house collapse when a severe nor'wester lashed seven thanas of Sunamganj district late Tuesday night.

District administration sources confirmed the deaths. However, their identities all from Diral thana sadar, could not immediately be ascertained.

About 12,500 acres of IRRU, 1,500 acres of Boro, 4,900 acres of Aus and 500 acres of planted Aman paddy crop were destroyed by the storm that lasted about 20 minutes from 3:30 am, officials said.

More than 100 kutcha houses were also damaged by the storm, accompanied with heavy rainfall.

The affected thanas are Sadar, Doarabazar, Chhatak, Jagannathpur, Diral, Salna and Jamalganj.

Another report from Sirajganj adds : At least 19 people were injured in house collapses and about 200 kutcha houses were damaged during a nor'wester that lashed three thanas of the district Wednesday.

The storm, starting at about 4:30 am, also damaged standing crop on a vast track of land and uprooted a large number of trees during its hour-long fury.

The affected thanas are See Page 12 Col 5

Ceasefire in Mostar

SARAJEVO, May 12: The commanders of Bosnia's mainly Muslim army and Croat forces agreed to an immediate ceasefire Wednesday to halt fighting in the southern city of Mostar, radio Sarajevo said, reports AFP.

The UN mediated agreement calls for the combatants to withdraw to their barracks by noon (1000 GMT) Thursday, the radio said.

Earlier, heavy street fighting wracked the south-western Bosnian city of Mostar on Wednesday.

Much of the eastern, Muslim-held section of the city was in flames as Croat forces battled to break a Muslim foothold on the west side of the Neretva River.

Reuter says, Bosnia's Muslim-led government appealed to the United Nations to make Mostar a safe area, Sarajevo radio said today.