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Landslide victory for Kumaratunga



Sri Lankan president-elect Chandrika Kumaratunga clasps her hands in a traditional greeting in Colombo after being declared the winner yesterday — AFP photo

COLOMBO, Nov 10: Prime Minister Chandrika Kumaratunga won a landslide victory Thursday in a presidential election she called a referendum on the peace talks she began to try to end an 11-year war with Tamil rebels, reports AP.

Her supporters set off firecrackers in the streets to celebrate, defying a nationwide curfew imposed by the military Wednesday night to stop

COLOMBO, Nov 10: The official swearing in ceremony of Kumaratunga was put off until Saturday on the advice of astrologers, official sources here said today, reports AFP.

bloody clashes between rival political groups.

"The whole country has overwhelmingly endorsed the policies of the government," said Justice Minister Lakshman Peiris in declaring victory for Mrs Kumaratunga.

With more than 90 per cent of the ballots counted, Mrs Kumaratunga was some 2 million votes ahead, double the prediction of the ruling People's Alliance. Her main rival, Srma Disanayake of the

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Iraq drops claim over Kuwait as one of its provinces

BAGHDAD, Nov 10: Iraq recognised Kuwait today and promised to respect its new UN-defined borders, reports Reuter.

A statement signed by President Saddam Hussein as chairman of the ruling Revolutionary Command Council (RCC) laid to rest Iraq's long-standing claim to Kuwait as its 19th province.

By accepting the border drawn by a UN commission it also met one of the ceasefire terms Baghdad accepted after its forces, which conquered the emirate in a lightning invasion in August 1990, were driven out by a US-led alliance in February 1991.

The RCC statement was released shortly after the National Assembly passed a similar

resolution.

"The Republic of Iraq recognises the sovereignty of the State of Kuwait, its territorial integrity and political independence," the statement said.

It said Iraq also recognises the international boundary between the Republic of Iraq and the State of Kuwait as demarcated by the United Nations Iraq-Kuwait boundary demarcation commission... and respects the inviolability of the said boundary.

Recognition of the border is a vital step before Iraq can win UN Security Council permission to resume exports from its vast oil reserves and release its economy from crippling, four-year-old trade sanctions. Russia, successor of Iraq's

former superpower ally the Soviet Union, helped broker a settlement during Deputy Prime Minister Tareq Aziz's visit to Moscow this week.

Russian Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev met Saddam on Thursday morning, they addressed a special, open session of Parliament urging acceptance.

Parliament gave him a standing ovation.

"The National Assembly declared its support of the recognition by the Republic of Iraq of the sovereignty of the State of Kuwait and its territorial integrity and political independence, and its support for compliance with United Nations Security Council resolution 833," a statement by Parliament said.

50 hurt during LDF-called hartal

By Staff Correspondent

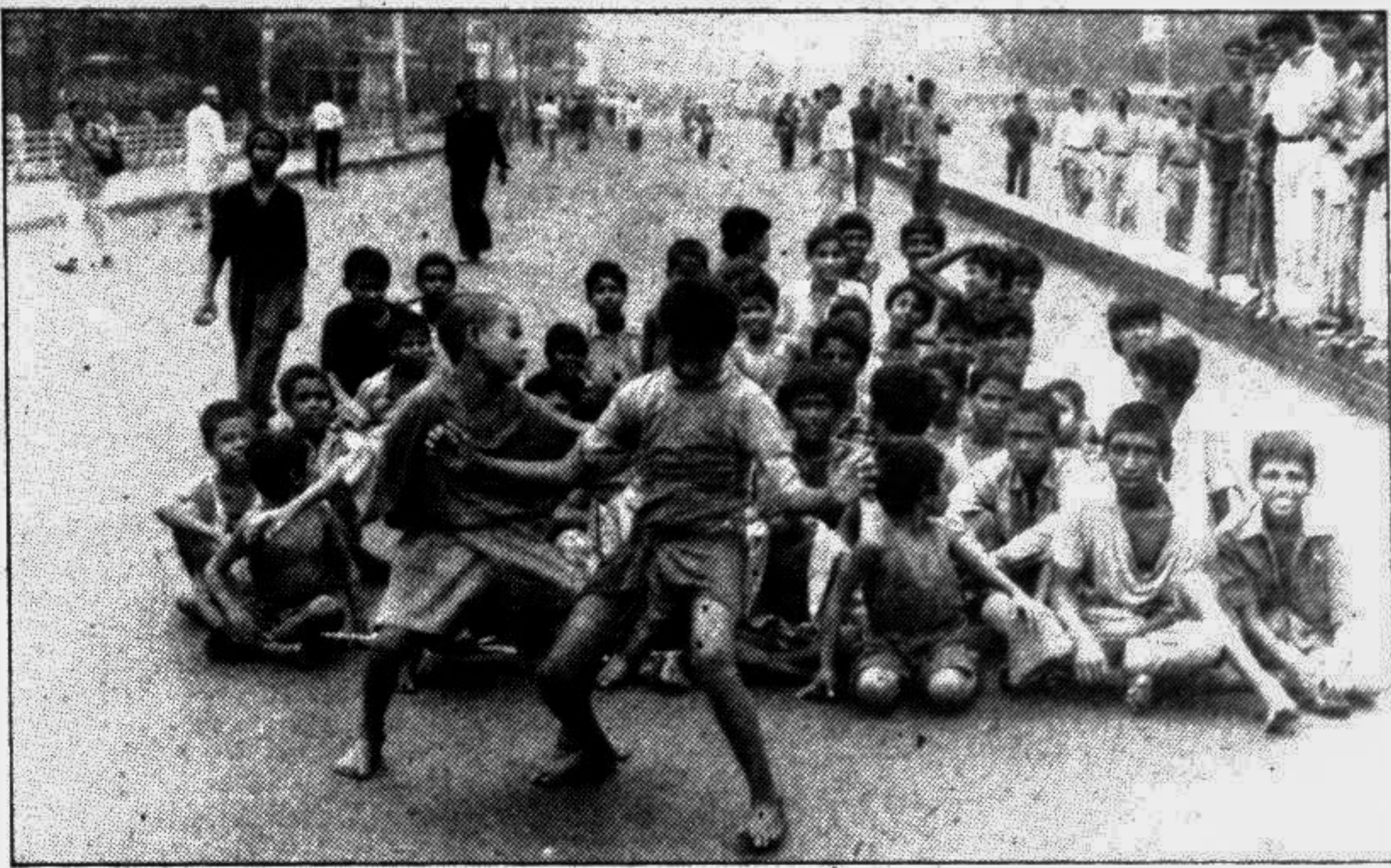
At least 50 people were injured in explosions and clashes between police and demonstrators during the eight-hour hartal called by the Left Democratic Front (LDF) yesterday throughout the country.

The LDF, an alliance of eight leftist political parties, called the hartal to press its seven-point demand which includes the call for elections under a neutral caretaker government.

In Dhaka city, clashes occurred mainly at two strategic points — Farm Gate and Katabon — causing injuries to over 20 people.

The picketes hurled bricks at the police who lobbed teargas shells to disperse them.

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A group of tokais (street urchins) having a field day yesterday near the city's Zero Point on Noor Hossain Square during a half day hartal called by the Left Democratic Front. — Star photo

Gear up agitation to oust present govt: Hasina

By Asiuazzaman

Opposition Leader Sheikh Hasina yesterday urged the people to intensify the current agitation to oust the present government and realise their rights to vote and food, reports UNB.

She accused the ruling BNP of killing democracy which was achieved at the cost of Shaheed Nur Hossain's blood. The Awami League President was addressing a commemorating meeting organised by the City unit of her party in observance of the 'Shaheed Nur Hossain Dibash' at Bangabandhu Avenue in the afternoon.

A worker of the Jubo League, Nur Hossain was killed in police firing during an anti-government agitation on this day in 1987. The slogan — 'Down with autocracy: Free Democracy' — was inscribed on his chest and back when Nur Hossain was shot.

Paying tributes to the memory of Nur Hossain, the AL chief said the hard earned democracy is now shackled by the neo-autocratic government of the BNP.

Hasina said the BNP is accused of the same allegations which were brought against corrupt, vote dacoit and autocratic Ershad. She criticised the government for resorting to oppressive measures on the

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Prospects of dialogue resuming soon bleak

By Asiuazzaman

There appears little positive sign that the stalled Commonwealth-brokered dialogue between the government and the Opposition can resume in the immediate future.

This belief is reinforced by the recent posturings of the ruling BNP and the main parliamentary Opposition parties who have been striving hard to demonstrate their strengths on the streets of the capital.

The ruling party high command has already instructed its front organisations to re-activate themselves by gearing up

party activities at the grassroots level, a move many political observers see as a possible preparation for early elections.

The BNP standing committee will hold a meeting today to discuss, among other things, possible strategies and tactics to counter the increasingly militant Opposition agitations against the government.

The highest policy-making body of the ruling party is also likely to evaluate the present state of the stated dialogue, especially in the light of the contentious statements in recent days by three apparently rebellious party MPs. The three are to be given hearings by the standing committee.

Party chairperson Begum Khaleda Zia, who heads the 15-member committee, will chair the meeting.

The BNP's parliamentary party Wednesday endorsed unanimously a resolution that former information minister Nazmul Huda, Major (Retd) Akteruzzaman and Nurul Islam Moni should explain to the standing committee why they made press statements against the party line on the caretaker government issue that discredited the government no end.

Very well informed party sources said the rank and file

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Bangladesh a shining example of religious harmony: PM

Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia yesterday sought cooperation of all quarters in her government's efforts for developing the lifestyle of the people of all strata and faiths, reports UNB.

"We have been making relentless efforts for the development and prosperity of the people from all walks of life and irrespective of religion, caste and status. We seek cooperation of all quarters in our endeavours," she said.

The Prime Minister was addressing the 'Holy Kathina'.

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JS advisory committee meets today

By Staff Correspondent

The Business Advisory Committee of the Jatiya Sangsad (JS) meets this morning to decide the tenure of the parliament session beginning tomorrow, JS secretariat sources said.

The advisory body is also likely to discuss major subjects for discussion during the session, the 17th of the country's Fifth Parliament.

Opposition members of the committee, a fifteen member body headed by Speaker Shaikh Razzak Ali, will not attend the meeting, Opposition sources said.

The Opposition has been boycotting JS sessions since March 1 last to press home its demand for general elections under a caretaker government.

EU envoys watching situation

By Staff Correspondent

Envoys of several European Union countries met at the office of the German Ambassador in Bangladesh, Dr Jurgen Gehl, in the city yesterday.

The diplomats were briefed by the German envoy about the progress of the current Commonwealth-brokered dialogue.

All EU countries are learnt to be taking an increasingly growing interest in the talks.

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NEWS BRIEFS

President goes to Tangail today

President Abdur Rahman Biswas will visit Tangail today to inaugurate the seven-day programme to mark the 18th death anniversary of Maulana Abdul Hamid Khan Bhasani. The authorities of the Sontosh Islamic University, established by the late leader, has organised the week-long programme at Sontosh, reports BSS.

Khaleda, Hasina greet Chandrika

Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia and Awami League chief Sheikh Hasina yesterday congratulated Chandrika Bandaranaike Kumaratunga, on her election as the new President of Sri Lanka. In separate messages Begum Zia and Sheikh Hasina expressed their confidence that the excellent bilateral relations existing between the countries will continue to be strengthened in the years to come, reports UNB.

Muladi College closed sine die

From Staff Correspondent

BARISAL, Nov 10: The Muladi Degree College was closed for an indefinite period Wednesday afternoon after a clash between two rival groups of students in which eight of them were injured. Police said the activists belonging to the Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) and the Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) clashed with each other on the college campus.

DU exams schedule

Viva voce and practical examination of final MSS last part course of the year 1991 in social science of the Dhaka University will be held according to the following time schedule: Roll 3971-4005 at 8 am, Roll 4006-4062 and 4101-4103 at 2:30 pm today. Practical examination on the thesis will begin at 9 am on November 14, reports BSS.



Health officials at Seoul's Kimpo Airport spray insecticide on luggage off a plane from Shanghai November 9 due to reports that flea-borne plague had broken out in southern China. All planes arriving from China are also treated with pesticides and disinfectants. — AFP photo

Republicans preparing to challenge Clinton



WASHINGTON, Nov 10: Victorious Republicans are planning to challenge President Bill Clinton with their own political agenda as they prepare to take control of the US Congress for the first time in 40 years, reports Reuter.

Republicans in the House of Representatives, led by likely future Speaker Newt Gingrich, promised action in the first 100 days on a controversial 'contract with America' calling for a balanced budget, enhanced defence spending and tax breaks.

Senate Republican leader Bob Dole, stopping short of endorsing the contract, said the Senate would move quickly to deal with problems in Congress, including reducing staff.

Dole said there had been talk in general terms about a balanced budget law and also

listed possible action on welfare and other reforms.

In the House, Republicans gained about 50 seats to establish a narrow majority — expected to be reinforced by ideological allies among the Democrats on many issues.

With control of the two chambers, Republicans will assume chairmanship of numerous committees.

The incoming Chairman of the House Armed Services Committee, Floyd Spence of South Carolina, said in a statement "I will be working to reverse the past two years of neglect of our nation's military" — essentially an indictment of the Clinton administration defence policies.

In both the House and Senate leading critics of the Whitewater affair involving the Clintons when they were in

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Another lucky one from Sunamganj?

From Our Correspondent

SYLHET, Nov 10: Just two days after a person in the capital claimed to have bagged the top prize in the NSC lottery, a resident of Sunamganj town has also laid claim to the Taka 30 lakh prize.

Mohammad Kutubuddin, a tailor by profession, today met the Deputy Commissioner of Sunamganj and showed him a Taka 10 ticket with the numbers Gha-0138626 — the lucky combination announced by the National Sports Council after the draw of its fifth lottery held in the city Nov 6.

On Tuesday, one Anwar Hossain Bhuiyan, a cloth merchant of Jatrabari, Dhaka went

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Indo-Bangla border confce begins

The annual border co-ordination conference between Bangladesh and India began at BDR headquarters in Dhaka yesterday morning, reports BSS.

The Director General of Bangladesh Rifles, Major General Mohammad Anwar Hossain BP, PSC, led the Bangladesh delegation while DK Arya IPS, Director General of Border Security Force led the Indian side.

According to a BDR press release the key note issues like trans-border crimes, their specific identification and affective counter measure to put a check on those were figured in the conference which began in a cordial atmosphere. Matters relating to smuggling, killing, dacoity, kidnapping, trespass, violation of border guide line, disputed land, cattle lifting, push in, maintenance of border pillars, law and order situation in the border areas and allied matters were discussed, among other subjects.

British investors' team due tomorrow

By Staff Correspondent

A high-powered British business delegation is expected to arrive in the capital tomorrow to explore trade and investment opportunities in Bangladesh.

During the visit, official sources said, a British oil and gas exploration company is scheduled to sign a production sharing contract (PSC) to explore oil in southeastern part of the country while a proposal to construct a bridge over the river Meghna at Bhairab would also be discussed.

The leader of the delegation, British Parliamentary Under-Secretary Anthony Baldry, MP, is expected to arrive here today.


The 27-member delegation

comprised representatives from 18 leading British companies ranging from heavy equipment manufacturers, exploration companies, consulting and investment firms.

The British Department of Trade and Industry and the British High Commission in Dhaka are jointly organising the visit, the first by a business delegation from the United Kingdom in over a decade.

The delegation is expected to call on the ministers of Finance, Commerce, Energy, Textiles and Communications and would also hold separate meetings with leading chamber bodies, including the Federation of Bangladesh Chamber

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Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce and Industry Dhaka

Regrets to Notify

cancellation of its meeting with the BRITISH TRADE AND INVESTMENT MISSION and the lunch in honour of the members of the Mission, on Sunday, the 13th November, 1994.

Inconvenience caused to the members of the British Mission and other invitees are regretted.

The Chamber apologises for its inability to inform the invitees individually due to the circumstances beyond its control.

D-11/4