

Hasina

From Page 1 Col 3
the path of confrontation by avoiding a settlement through dialogue, she said.

"This attitude will not bring any good for the country," she said adding. "We hope good sense will prevail upon the government and they will accept the people's demand."

Questioning the government's negative attitude to the proposed neutral caretaker government, Hasina said BNP is opposed to caretaker government as it lost the confidence of the people for its corruption and misrule.

She alleged that BNP wanted to continue in power by rigging the elections and using black money, musclemen and the administration.

Asked if she had received any proposal from Commonwealth envoy Sir Ninian Stephen, she replied in negative. "We have put forward our demand. It now depends on the government."

Earlier, Hasina had a meeting with other opposition leaders at her Parliament office.

Abdus Samad Azad, Tofael Ahmed, Mohammad Nasim and Suranjit Sengupta of the AL, Anwar Hossain Monju and Advocate Fazle Rabbi of the Jatiya Party, Maulana Abdus Sobhan of the Jamaat and Obaidul Huq of the Islami Oikya Jote were present at the meeting.

The opposition parties yesterday separately announced identical programmes of fresh agitation to realise their demand for a caretaker government.

AL rally

From Page 1 Col 4
going Commonwealth-brokered talks, he said, blamed the ruling party for making things complicated.

Referring to the dropping of Nazmul Huda from the cabinet, the AL leader commented such action would fail to suppress the BNP leaders who support the Opposition's legitimate demand. "Fall of this government is inevitable."

"We demand polls under a neutral government because it has been proved that none can vote freely with the BNP in power," he repeated.

Admitting that hartals caused suffering to the rickshaw pullers, small traders and others, Razzak said, "Your sacrifice will be rewarded when your right to vote is established."

Chaired by city AL vice-president Reazuddin Ahmed, the rally, held an hour before yesterday's dawn-to-dusk hartal ended, was also addressed by Advocate Shahara Khatun, Nurul Islam Nahid, Dr. Mostafa Jalal Mohiuddin, Motazzal Hossain Chowdhury Maya, Aktherul Alam, Kamrul Islam, Siddiqur Rouf Khan, Kamal Chowdhury, Nasib Ahmed and others.

Nurul Islam, in his speech, said the BNP leaders, including some ministers, were now supporting the Opposition demand just to save themselves from the public wrath. "They have understood it very well that they have no option but to accept the demand."

Motazzal Hossain Chowdhury Maya alleged that "terrorists" from the residence of Mirza Abbas, MP attacked an AL procession during yesterday's hartal in the city injuring Humayun, Azhar and others.

48-hr hartal

From Page 1 Col 5

The AL will observe December 6 as "Democracy Day", the JP as "Constitution Protection Day" and the Jamaat as "Liberate Democracy Day".

Incidentally, Dec 6 coincides with the fourth anniversary of the stepping down of H M Ershad as president in the face of an unprecedented mass uprising against the then Jatiya Party government.

A number of people of Najim Khan union of Ulipur thana alleged that the local authorities concerned were misappropriating relief items and were distributing those only among people of their choice. False cases were filed against persons who protested this, they added.

Monzur Morshed, a JCD leader, said that they had boycotted the JCD conference at Rangpur protesting the such corrupt practices. He further said they had informed the BNP leaders about this but no measure was taken as yet.

Speaking at a reception hosted by the Foreign Investors' Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Baldry felt that the signs show that Bangladesh is keen to meet the challenge by calling for increased participation in the economy.

"In doing so, they are echoing a call which we in Britain have been making for some years now."

Baldry said that British companies are keen to make the most of Bangladesh's new free market and forty-five companies have already invested in Bangladesh.

The visiting Under Secretary of State for the British Foreign and Commonwealth Office mentioned a catalogue of activities in which British companies were involved in Bangladesh's economic growth in several ways.



Awami League chief and Leader of the Opposition in Parliament Sheikh Hasina addressing a press conference at the Sangsad Bhaban yesterday. Deputy Leader of the Opposition Abdus Samad Azad is seen on her left - Star photo

Russia to buy jute

From Page 1 Col 7
month from the date of delivery of the exported goods. However, he pointed out, if the repayment falls overdue then it would be adjusted against the power sector loans earlier made by the former USSR. The loans were mostly given to Bangladesh in the 70s and the repaid amount is currently being held with the Sonali Bank as legal complications are yet to be straightened out following the break-up of the USSR, the minister said.

Replies to a question he, however, said he did not know the exact amount of the outstanding loan owed to the former USSR, but added the amount was "substantial."

On his visit to the Euro-parliament in Strasbourg, France the Jute Minister said, the purpose was to lobby for amending a bill - EC packaging directive - introduced recently which went against jute.

The bill contained certain clauses which went against the use of jute. The Bangladesh delegation, however, was able to convince EC officials to introduce an amendment to exclude jute from the directive by clearly labelling it as a biodegradable and environment-friendly natural fibre, the minister said.

The Jute Minister said the direct exports by BJMC mills increased by 19 per cent in value to Tk 171 crore during the July-October period of the current fiscal compared to the corresponding period of 1993-94. The total sale of jute goods of BJMC also jumped by 62 per cent during the same period. Steps have been taken to increase overall production be-

cause of the increased volume of foreign sale and exports, he added.

Responding to another question, the minister said that due to the continuing load-shedding in electric supply, the 27 BJMC mills suffered a production loss of 4,918 tonnes worth about Tk 11 crore during the July-October period of 1994-95.

He attributed the improved performance of the public sector jute mills to the reform measures initiated under the World Bank-aided 250 million-dollar jute sector restructuring project (JSRP) started last year.

Asked about the progress of the JSRP, he said, four BJMC jute mills have already been closed down in a bid to reduce excess capacity, but further planned reduction of another 1200-1500 looms before December is being stalled because of increasing demand and the lack of private sector initiatives to meet the demand.

When his attention was drawn towards the possibility that the World Bank may not release the second tranche of the credit, due in December, if the agreed programmes are not implemented, the Jute Minister said: If we are pressured, then we will reconsider it.

He noted that 20,000 workers and employees of BJMC have already been retrenched while a training programme is also being initiated for the others.

About the progress of privatising 14 of the public sector jute mills, the minister said, it is up to the Privatisation Board under the Prime Minister's Secretariat.

Drought in Kurigram

From Page 1 Col 4
day's foodstuff," said Balajan, who has three children.

Nazrul Haq, Abed Ali and Jamalluddin all from char areas who used to work as labourers were now jobless.

A good number of people of Manushmar char, Antola char, Shakhihali char and Boilbondali Khata char of Chilmari had left their homes for different places in search of jobs, the Thana Cooperative Officer, engaged in relief operation there, told this correspondent.

The worst victim are the people of Manushmar char where a newspaper reported, one person had died from starvation, he said. The report resulted in a special sanction of relief for the area, he added. Some 8,000 people of the area relief materials were distributed thrice in the last three months, the lastest on October 19.

"To keep the vulnerable people alive, relief operations are needed every week," he said.

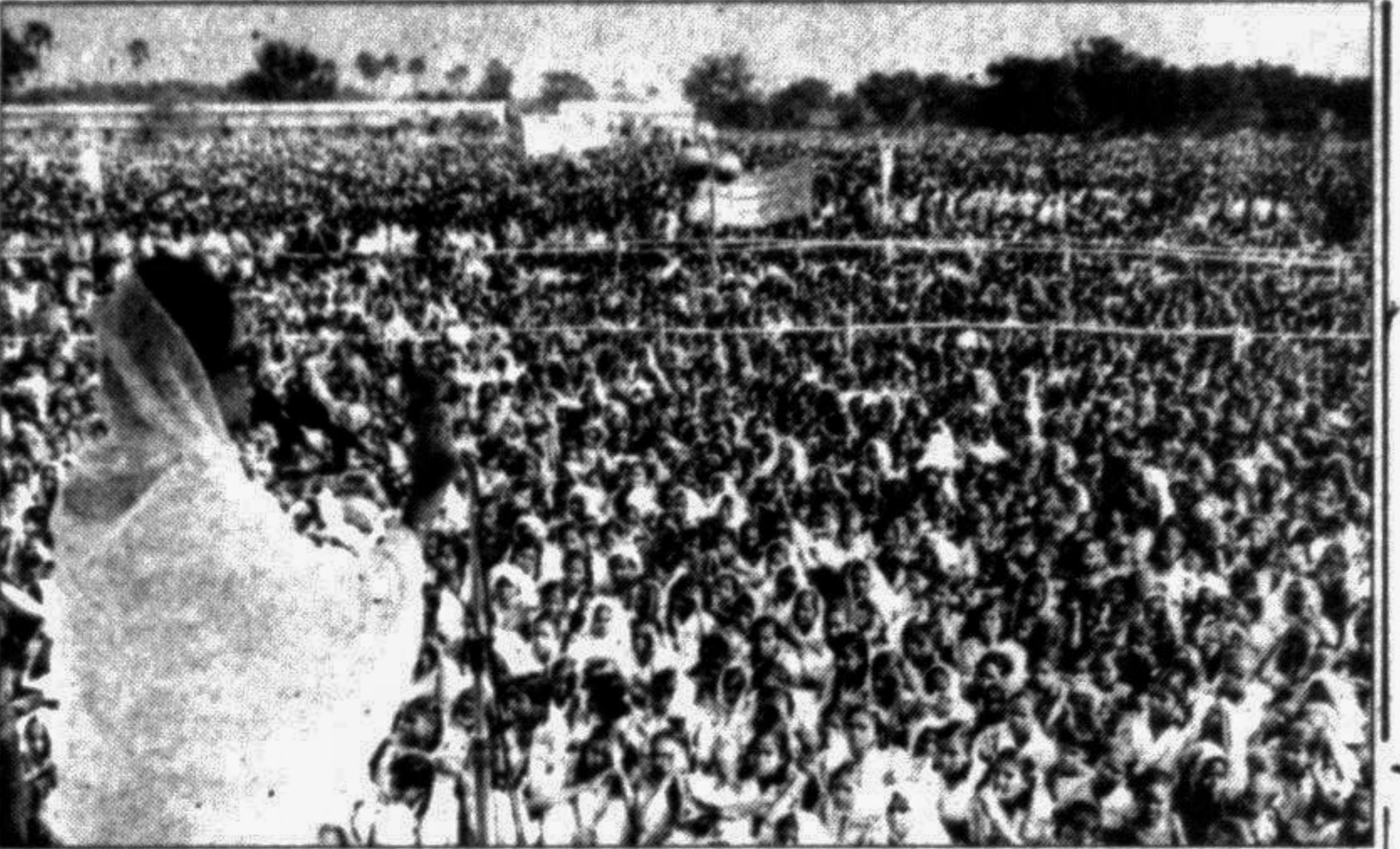
Amiruddin, 35, of Kuranitani village of Rajbari thana, is jobless for the last few months. None hired Amir, a day labourer, during this time. He used to work in farm lands for Taka 12 a day.

Amir said he did not get any VGD card for relief and alleged at least Tk 200 was needed to bribe those concerned to get a card.

"I am now planning to go to Rangpur or Dhaka to make a living by pulling rickshaw. But I am yet to collect transport

Editor : Mahfuz Anam

Printed & Published by A. S. Mahmud, Managing Director, on behalf of Mediaworld Ltd, 52, Motijheel C/A, Dhaka-1000, from City Publishing House Ltd, 90, Kakrakil, Dhaka-1000. **Editorial, News & Commercial Offices House No: 11, Road No: 3, Dhanmondi R/A, Dhaka-1205.** **ABX: 500092-4, Commercial: 500091 (Direct), Fax No: 88-02-863035, GPO Box No: 3257, Cable: DAILYSTAR, DHAKA.**



Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia addressing a huge public meeting at the Porsha College ground in Naogaon district yesterday

— PID photo

Indo-Bangla border confce ends

Both sides agree to curb cross-border crimes

The annual border co-ordination conference between Bangladesh and India concluded in the city yesterday with both sides agreeing to cooperate in containing cross-border crimes and smuggling, reports UNB.

The conference, held in a cordial atmosphere, decided to exchange information between the two countries about smuggling and smugglers, said a BDR press release.

Trans-border crimes figured as the key issue at the conference where both sides agreed to identify and take effective measures to curb them, the release said.

Sharif's father arrested

LAHORE (Pakistan), Nov 13: Pakistan's Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) arrested the father of national opposition leader Nawaz Sharif here today, a move likely to intensify political tension in the country, reports AFP.

The charges against Mian Mohammad Sharif, a leading industrialist, were not immediately known.

Senior leaders from both camps expressed their optimism that the process may take a concrete shape within a couple of days.

Meanwhile, two of Sir Ninian's aides, Dr Ananu and Christopher Childs, had the validity of their visas extended up to December 9, diplomatic sources said.



The Topkhana Road in front of the Press Club during the countrywide dawn-to-dusk hartal yesterday

— Star photo

Countrywide hartal observed

From Page 1 Col 7
near the Farmgate prevented the delegation from heading towards the old airport. Security personnel escorting the delegation dispersed the activists.

Our Staff Correspondent in Barisal reports: Ten persons including a police constable were injured when a group of BNP activists allegedly attacked the JP office in Bholia at 10 am yesterday. Witnesses said, clashes marked by cocktail blasts and chase and counter chase left two persons seriously injured. The two — Madan and Abdur Rab — were admitted to Bholia Hospital.

At least 17 persons were injured in clashes between activists of the Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal and Bangladesh Chhatra League in Khepupara under Patuakhali district at noon.

Of the injured, five were admitted to Khepupara thana health complex. They are Khalil, Kamal, Bullet, Masud and Jof.

In Pirozpur district, 13 persons including a police sub-inspector were injured in clashes between activists of the BNP and the AL in Kaukhali thana. Swarupkathi, Mathbari and Hularhat thana. Three of them, Selim, Kamal, Lutfor, were admitted to Bholia Hospital.

Speaking at a reception hosted by the Foreign Investors' Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Baldry felt that the signs show that Bangladesh is keen to meet the challenge by calling for increased participation in the economy.

"In doing so, they are echoing a call which we in Britain have been making for some years now."

Baldry said that British companies are keen to make the most of Bangladesh's new free market and forty-five companies have already invested in Bangladesh.

The visiting Under Secretary of State for the British Foreign and Commonwealth Office mentioned a catalogue of activities in which British companies were involved in Bangladesh's economic growth in several ways.

Our Staff Correspondent in Chittagong reports: A dawn-to-dusk hartal paralysed normal life in this port city. No untoward incident was reported. The hartal passed off almost peacefully.

Activities at the country's major port came to a standstill.

Loading and unloading of cargo and delivery of goods to and from the port were hampered during the hartal period, port sources said.

PM: Hartals

From Page 1 Col 7

her government is working relentlessly for eradicating poverty. She made a fervent call to work hard to make the country self-reliant through boosting production and employment generation.

Emphasising the need of spreading education for overall development of the country, she said the prime need of the nation is to educate the people since it is not possible to ensure development without

education.

Begum Zia told the youth and rural women to take loans and set up cottage industries like poultry and dairy, nursery and other home-based small industries.

She said the BNP government was striving to ensure food, cloths and education for the people and called upon all to strengthen the hands of her party in the interest of democracy and development.

The "sheaf of paddy" is the symbol of peace, development and prosperity, the Prime Minister said of her party's election symbol and sought cooperation from the people in leading the nation towards a prosperous future.

Addressing the meetings, local leaders put forward various demands and problems and requested the Prime Minister for solution. Begum Zia assured them of looking into their demands.

The Midnight File

Algerian plane hijackers surrender

PALMA DE MALLORCA, Spain, Nov 13: Three men who hijacked an Algerian airliner today freed all 31 passengers and four crew members in Palma de Mallorca and gave themselves up, a spokesman for the airport on the Balearic island said. The hijackers seized the plane during a domestic flight in Algeria and forced it to fly to the Spanish island of Mallorca in the Mediterranean, reports AFP.

GCC to beef up jt military force

RIYADH, Nov 13: Gulf Arab defence ministers agreed on the need to beef up their joint military force, the Peninsula Shield, during a meeting which ended here today. Saudi Defence Minister Prince Sultan Bin Abdul Aziz said. He denied reports of "differences of opinion" on the issue among the defence ministers of Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain and Oman, reports UNB.

Musician

From Page 1 Col 8

he had come to his (Khaleq's) shop with Tk 45,000 at around 3:30 pm Thursday.

Khaleq did not inform any one of the incident until he was picked up and detained by Dhanmondi police for questioning Friday evening.

The decision was reached around midnight after hectic discussion that began at 5 pm at the residence of the minister, Labour Ministry sources said.

The employees were represented at the talks by the leaders of the Liaison Committee of Sarkari Karmachari Samannay Parishad and Sarkari Karmachari Sanghati Parishad.

SMCH non-gazetted employees begin indefinite strike

From Staff Correspondent

SYLHET, Nov 13: The non-gazetted employees of the Sylhet MAG Osmany Medical College Hospital began a strike for an indefinite period this morning demanding the transfer of the director of the hospital, Colonel Fahim Ahmed Chowdhury, for his alleged misbehaviour with employees.

They alleged that the director manhandled a ward boy this morning during the five-hour work abstention.

The employees also held a rally to press their demand for transfer of the director of the hospital.

A hospital official when contacted, confirmed the work abstention by the non-gazetted staff.

Govt urged to start functioning of Sylhet Division

From Staff Correspondent

SYLHET, Nov 13: The Sylhet Division Implementation and Greater Sylhet Development Council has called upon the government to take steps for functioning of the newly formed administrative division.

A meeting of the committee was held Saturday night with Syed Abu Nosir in the chair. The meeting was also attended by the leaders of all four districts of the region. The meeting noted with regret that although the Prime Minister had declared the creation of Sylhet division on September 24 this year, no effective step has been taken so far in this regard.

They called upon the government to start functioning of the division by November 30 otherwise, a bigger agitation would be launched, they declared.

Syed Mohsin Ali, chairman, Moulibazar Pourashava, Shahid Chowdhury, chairman, Habiganj Pourash