

# Congress for talks to resolve all Indo-Bangla issues

NEW DELHI, Mar 20: India and Bangladesh should continue the process of negotiations to find solution to all outstanding issues between the two countries, including the sharing of water resources. There is no problem which cannot be solved through discussions.

All India Congress Committee (AICC) spokesman V N Gadgil said in an interview with BSS at his official residence here today.

Replying to a question on the existing trade imbalance between the two countries, Gadgil, who holds the status of a cabinet minister, said, "India has to increase its imports from Bangladesh to reduce the gap."

The Indian exports to Bangladesh was worth Taka 2150 crore as against its imports worth Taka 140 crore last year.

Gadgil, a former minister of information and broadcasting during Indira Gandhi's time, said, "We have made progress in establishing good relations with the neighbouring countries, excepting Pakistan."

He said, "As we have no expansionist design, we don't want to interfere in any country's internal affairs. He said, the size of India itself, how-

ever, sometimes causes apprehensions in small countries, though there is no basis for such apprehensions."

Replying to a question on Indian Muslims' support to the ruling Congress, the AICC spokesman said, "The demolition of Babri Masjid has eroded the support." He said, the process of rethinking has however, started among Muslims in certain areas. This, he said, does not mean that they have come back to Congress.

Gadgil said, "There is a growing feeling among Muslims that if they vote for other parties, that would ultimately benefit BJP." The Muslims, he said, do not want BJP to come to power.

Replying to a question whether the sensational Hawala (illegal money transaction) case would affect Congress in the Lok Sabha polls, Gadgil said, "Common people have welcomed the Hawala action. We will make a campaign that even people belonging to Congress were not spared. That is how we hope to benefit out of it."

Gadgil said Hawala has totally shattered and demoralised the pro-Hindu Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), which is the main contender for power at the centre.

# Deadlock at Ctg port

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port city yesterday.

The army troops picked up 14 youngsters on charge of their involvement in violence.

Witnesses said eight crude bombs were thrown from a hilltop at an army patrol in Tigerpass area at about 11 am. None was reported hurt.

Bombs were also thrown at the army troops at Oxygen and Alkaran, Cheragipahar and near Alankar Cinema in the morning, they said.

The opposition activists damaged at least 15 autorickshaws in Newmarket, Oxygen, Alankar, Amin Jute Mills and Pahartali areas.

In the morning, army personnel, in separate drives in Byejid Bostami and Shersha colony areas nabbed eight young men while they were allegedly making bombs.

They were identified as Jaimal Abedin, Selim, Milan, Abul Khair, Muhammad Kamal, Muniruzzaman, Abul Kashem and Masud. Another young man was arrested from Baradara-garhat in Mirsarai thana when he tried to damage a truck on Dhaka-Chittagong highway.

The army personnel also picked up five people from Cheragipahar area as they threw bombs at them. Another young man was arrested from Pahartali.

also for security reason.

Army personnel were seen at strategic points in the city today. The 12th day of non-cooperation passed off almost peacefully barring some stray incidents of violence in the city. According to witnesses, few bombs were blasted at Karmel Hat, Bahadurhat, Badshamia road and Ice Factory Road while a taxi was damaged by the pickets at Alankar cinema crossing and another tempo at Jubilee Road.

Police raided some houses at Hazari lane and at Nasrabad areas and arrested 8 persons along with bomb making materials.

Few auto-rickshaws, tempos and rickshaws were seen plying on the roads but most of the motorised vehicles stayed off.

Few shops and offices were seen kept open only in the city.

The opposition parties including Awami League, Jatiya Party and Jamaat-e-Islami held separate rallies in the city where their leaders asked the government to explain deployment of army. They urged the government not to push the army in a state of confrontation with the people.

UNB adds: Opposition activists staged protests against the deployment of army, hurling bombs at patrols and damaging autorickshaws in the

# 'US doesn't want confrontation with China'

GENEVA, Mar 20: Washington is not seeking a confrontation with China, US ambassador to the UN Madeleine Albright said today amid escalating tensions between the two powers off the coast of Taiwan, reports AFP.

"We are not seeking a confrontation with China," Albright told a press conference, adding that the US had moved aircraft carriers into the area "in order to avoid any escalation of this and have made very clear that any aggressive action would cause US the gravest concern."

Beijing has been accused of blatantly intimidating Taiwan with a series of military and naval exercises off the coast of the breakaway island.

# Non-cooperation

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hours at Mirpur Section-10, witnesses said.

Police lobbed tear gas shells to disperse the crowd. The mob then took position at different areas wielding sticks and pelting stones. One police vehicle was damaged by the mob, witnesses said.

At least two persons - Ripon, 18, and Borhan - sustained bullet injuries in the incident. They were both admitted to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital, hospital sources said.

A bus driver Akhter Hossain, 25, and one Asgar, 30, received bomb injuries when pickets threw cocktails in the buses near the GPO at Motijheel and in Panthapath respectively, hospital sources added.

In another incident, one Rustam, 40, was injured in a bomb blast in Motijheel at around 11:15 am and he was later admitted at the DMCH.

# Brawl inside Sectt

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Two of the six JCD activists - A K M Mozammel Hoque and Md Jamaluddin Ahmed - were caught by fellow employees following this and were taken to the 18th floor of the building.

An official of the Education Ministry then took the two under his shelter for their safety. Police later rushed to the spot and brought them to their camp at the Secretariat according to a senior police official.

As the news spread inside the Secretariat, many employees came out of their offices and brought out processions that marched within the Secretariat compound, chanting slogans for ensuring security.

The demonstrators demanded that the state minister be removed within 24 hours, witnesses said.

They also gathered near police camp there, broke flower tubs, pelted bricks and demanded handing over of the two to them, said an official.

Some sources claimed that the JCD activists carried fire arms. Police, however, claimed that no arms were recovered. The two were later shifted to Ramna thana, where a case was lodged in this connection by Kalu, said police.

# Hasina

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caretaker government to improve the economic condition of the people by ensuring their freedom of franchise.

She called for an all-out movement to realise the people's demand at any cost.

The meeting was attended by Muktiyoddha Command Council Chairman Principal Ahad Chowdhury, Group Theatre Federation President Nasiruddin Bachchu, Khushi Kabir of ADAB, Barrister Amirul Islam of the Supreme Court Bar Association, President of Dhaka University Teachers' Association Dr A T M Zahurul Huq, Jatiya Kaba Parishad President Syed Shaahid Huj, Khalilur Rahman Chowdhury and Ariful Haq of the BGMEA, Dr S A Malek of Bangabandhu Parishad, Khaled Khan of Radio-TV Artists Association, Dr Sharfuddin Ahmed of the BMA, Dr Abdur Razzak of Krishibid Institution.

It was also attended by Shirin Akhtar of Nari Samaj, Nurul Islam of SKOP, Azizul Islam Khan of Gano Oikya Jote, Lutfor Rahman Riton, M R Akhtar Mukul, dramatist Prof Montazuddin, Golam Kuddus of Sammilita Sangskritik Jote, Fazlul Huq, President of Primary School Teachers' Association, Akhtaruzzaman, President of College-University Teachers' Association, Kazi Lutful Kabir of Diploma Engineers' Professional Council, Hasan Imam of the Agitated Citizens and Iqbal Sobhan Chowdhury of BFUJ.

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# AL rally 'Caretaker govt only way out'

Awami League leaders yesterday demanded that the "illegal government quit handing over power to a neutral caretaker government for holding fresh election to the sixth parliament, reports UNB.

"Cancel the farcical and fraudulent election and arrange fresh polls under a neutral non-party caretaker government by sending reference on it to the Supreme Court," Awami League Presidium member Abdus Samad Azad said at a protest rally at Bangabandhu Avenue in the afternoon.

"People want peace and stability immediate solution of the longstanding political crisis," said Samad Azad, adding that everyone would accept opinion of the Supreme Court, whatever it says about the formation of caretaker government.

City Awami League organised the rally to protest the alleged gunfire at the residence of party chief Sheikh Hasina on Tuesday evening.

City AL president and DCC Mayor Mohammad Hanif presided over the rally, also addressed by Zillur Rahman, Abdul Momen, Abdur Mannan, Begum Sajeda Chowdhury, Mozaffar Hossain Palto, Matia Chowdhury, Obaidul Kader, Momtaz Hossain, Abul Hasan Chowdhury and Rahmat Ali.

Abdul Mannan said immediate formation of caretaker government to hold fresh election is the only way out of the staggering political deadlock.

Abdul Momen said the people were united on the question of free and fair election under caretaker government and continuing the movement under the leadership of Sheikh Hasina.

# Telephone boxes set afire on DU campus

By DU Correspondent

A group of unidentified young men set fire to two telephone distribution boxes and a Mishuk on the Dhaka University campus yesterday noon.

The incident left most of telephone lines in the university area inoperative till last night.

Besides, a number of cocktail-bombs exploded at different parts of the university yesterday evening creating panic among the general students. A few rounds of gunshots were also heard from the TSC area.

Meanwhile, at a rally in front of the Dhaka University Snacks yesterday evening, the Awami League-backed Chhatra League demanded the immediate resignation of the Prime Minister and cancellation of February 15 'farcical' elections.

# 20 hurt as N'ganj JCD factions clash

From Our Correspondent

NARAYANGANJ, Mar 20: At least 20 people were injured, five of them received bullet wounds, in a gunfight between two groups of Jatiyatubadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) activists at Mondolpara today.

The gunfight spread to surrounding areas including DIT Market and Number 2 Rail Gate areas.

Police fired a number of shot guns and tear gas shells to bring the situation under control.

# 2 Dhaka WASA zones

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tional 22.5 crore litres water a day using the water from the river Sitalakha, easing the crippling supply shortfall in the capital city.

The credit, considered crucial in view of increasing water crisis in the capital, was negotiated in June last year. It was originally scheduled to be presented at the World Bank board in September last. But failure to meet the contract out condition in the face of stiff resistance from the WASA workers and employees, the credit could not be taken to be board for approval.

The French government agreed to supply equipment for the proposed plant against a tied grant but, they said, the grant would be available only after the approval of the IDA credit.

The government, on different occasions, made abortive attempts to convince the World Bank to reconsider the contract out condition in view of the workers' resistance. The Bank argues that private participation in revenue collection would reduce WASA's mounting pilferage which is running at around 52 per cent.

"This tie, we have signalled in clear terms to the WASA employees than the government cannot afford to surrender the IDA credit," said an of-



Princess Diana thanks four-year old Greta Born Tuesday after she received a programme for the Royal Gala performance by the English National Ballet at London's Coliseum.

# Opposition predicts hung Lok Sabha

NEW DELHI, Mar 20: Opposition parties predicted a hung parliament and political instability today following the announcement that India's first general elections in five years would be held in April and May, reports AFP.

The Janata Dal (People's Party), the dominant centrist group, said no party would get a majority in the 545-seat Lok Sabha, the lower house of parliament, in the nationwide balloting between April 27 and May 21.

"It will definitely be a hung parliament," Janata Dal leader Ramvilas Prasad told AFP. "Nobody will get a majority," Prakash Karat, a communist leader, said a hung parliament could not be ruled out.

"But the possibility is that in such a case, the [centrist-leftist] third front will emerge as the largest block [in parliament]," added Karat, whose Communist Party of India (Marxist) is the country's largest left-wing group.

The two previous parliamentary polls in 1989 and 1991 led to the formation of minority government. India's first coalition government took office in 1989 but collapsed within 11 months, necessitating fresh polls.

Prime Minister P V Narasimha Rao also headed a minority government after the May-June 1991 polls, but this Congress (I) Party managed to eventually cobble together a majority by wooing several opposition MPs.

# BNP moves

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who is qualified to be an adviser," as the chief adviser, the draft added.

The advisers shall neither be a member of any political party, nor they will have any affiliation with any party but they must have the qualifications for being a member of Parliament. Besides, the age of the advisers must be within 72.

It can be recollected that the outline for a non-party caretaker government suggested by Awami League chief Sheikh Hasina proposed that the chief justice or a retired chief justice or a judge of the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court head the interim administration.

The ruling party did not opt for a sitting chief justice or a judge on the ground that in such cases, an additional amendment to the Constitution would be required to bring back the head of the caretaker administration to his original job in the Supreme Court, sources in the BNP said.

If the bill is adopted by Parliament, it has to be put to a referendum before being incorporated in the Constitution.

# Over 600 civilians killed in Chechnya

GROZNY, Russia, Mar 20: More than 600 civilians have been killed in recent fighting and shelling in the west Chechen village of Samashki, a delegation of Chechen elders who arrived here from the area said, reports AFP.

The report could not be independently confirmed as Russian forces are still denying access to Samashki.

Russians have blocked thousands of civilians who have been trying to flee the village for the past three days on the road from Samashki to the neighbouring village of Sharoy, villagers said.

"The Russians are shelling relentlessly," said Sadula Yusupov, one of the elders. "Again this morning, when we left, we could hear planes and helicopters bombard the village."

More than 600 civilians were killed in the first days, March 15 and 16, in air raids and by artillery. We buried many of them, as well as we could, in courtyards but there are still many bodies in the streets," she added.

She said she had left the village along with some 6,000 other civilians on Saturday, but that they had been held up immediately by gunfire and shelling.

# The Midnight File

**Bosnian troops pull out of Sarajevo**

SARAJEVO, Mar 20: Hundreds of Bosnian army troops have pulled out of Sarajevo, in line with an agreement making the city a demilitarised zone, NATO officials said today. "Troops and equipment belonging to the (Bosnian) army have been moved from the main Tito barracks," said Major Tom Moyer, a spokesman for the NATO-led Implementation Force (IFOR), reports AFP.

# \$22b IDA credit

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over the past 15 months.

The three-year package begins with a one-year interim fund of about \$3 billion running from July 1996, with decision-making and procurement limited to contributing donors and developing countries. The United States will not contribute to the interim fund, it is instead undertaking to pay \$934 million remaining due to fulfill its commitment to IDA's Tenth Replenishment, which ends in June this year.

In each of the two subsequent years, starting mid-1997, all IDA donors will contribute about \$4 billion to the Eleventh Replenishment of IDA.

"This agreement provides a strong financial base for IDA for the next three years, and that is a significant achievement," said Sandstrom. "It represents an exceptional effort by donors to ensure that IDA financing for poor countries' development can continue without interruption."

The IDA deputies emphasized that private sector-led growth and social and environmental sustainability are the foundations of effective poverty reduction. They called for recipient countries to improve governance and to broaden participation by the poor in development.

To support poor countries' efforts, IDA's Country Assistance Strategies should build systematically on poverty assessments, public expenditure reviews and environmental action plans. IDA should encourage broad-based consultations within recipient countries, and among donors, about the development priorities which drive country assistance strategies, and should assist governments to make analysis of these issues widely available to interested groups in the country, they added.

In formulating country strategies, the deputies said economic policies should ensure broad-based, equitable growth. They called for structural measures to expand access of the poor - and especially poor women - to land and to market opportunities, and to reform legislation and policies that worked to their disadvantage.

# Give opportunity for carrying newsprint: BSP

Leaders of the Bangladesh Sangbadpatri Parishad (BSP) yesterday appealed to all quarters concerned to give opportunity for carrying newsprint for the newspapers, reports BSS.

Professor Majidul Islam and Abul Kashem Majumder, president and general secretary respectively of the BSP in a joint statement to the press said, due to countrywide 'noncooperation,' newsprint from Khulna newsprint mills was not being distributed in different areas of the country. This resulted in abnormal rise of newsprint price in the market, they added.

They expressed the apprehension that this may lead to closure of newspapers if supply of newsprint from Khulna newsprint mills is not arranged soon.

"We will certainly get a majority though not a big one," said Congress spokesman Vithal Gadgil.

A Congress MP who requested anonymity was not optimistic. "We will be a lucky if we get 200 (seats)," the MP said.

The main opposition Hindu-revivalist Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP, Indian People's Party) also claimed it would form the next government but admitted an outright victory would not be easy.

# Reaction

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interest of the people by upholding their glorious tradition since 1971.

**Jatiya Party**

Jatiya Party acting chairman Mizanur Rahman Chowdhury said the army should not be used 'against public opinion.'

"This is a national army, and can not be used against public opinion," he said.

The JP leader told UNB over telephone, "though the calling out of the army in aid of civil power is not contrary to the existing law, but it is unfair to force the people to obey illegal orders of the illegal government."

# One killed

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Pakkerpul area and started firing and exploding hand bombs and crackers which left at least 30 injured. The gun fight was continuing till the writing of this report at midnight.

Repeated clashes between the two rival groups have been taking place in this area for the last one month.

The group backed by Jatiyatubadi Chhatra Dal is led by Wahab while the Chhatra League backed group is led by Selim.

The dead body was recovered by Fatullah Thana police.

# Army called out

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to and from various places are being obstructed causing immense sufferings to the people. Educational institutions could not function due to disruptive activities jeopardising the future of the students and causing concern to the guardians, at added.

The poorer sections of the people, particularly the daily wage earners, are facing extreme hardships being deprived of their livelihood.

"Virtually, this government has no authority. This is evident from the bid of BNP government to reestablish its control over the country by deploying the armed forces," he said.

**JSD-Rab**

JSD leader A S M Abdur Rab castigated the government for deployment of army, showing no respect to the demand of the people.

In a statement, he said that the deployment of army would make it "controversial." He urged all concerned to keep the armed forces above controversy.

**বাংলাদেশ পোশাক প্রস্তুতকারক ও রপ্তানীকারক সমিতি**

**রপ্তানীমুখী পোশাক শিল্প মালিকদের আস্থানে অবস্থান ধর্মঘট**

রাজনৈতিক অচলাবস্থার কারণে স্বয়ংসোনাখ পোশাক শিল্পসহ সকল রপ্তানীমুখী শিল্পকে রক্ষার দাবীতে মালিক-শ্রমিক কর্মচারীদের অবস্থান ধর্মঘটঃ

স্থান : নিজ নিজ ফ্যাক্টরীর সন্মুখের রাস্তার উপর।

তারিখ : ২৪ মার্চ, ১৯৯৬ (রবিবার)।

সময় : সকাল ৮ ঘটিকা থেকে দুপুর ১২ ঘটিকা পর্যন্ত।

বিস্তারিত কর্মসূচী আগামীকাল পত্রিকার মাধ্যমে জানানো হবে।

বিজিএমইএ