Two trains forced back to Dhaka

KISHOREGANJ. Mar 23: Two passenger trains bound for Mymensingh from Dhaka faced obstructions and could not reach their destination as opposition activists put barricades at two stations in the district today, reports UNB.

Witnesses said DBM 201 up local train came under attack at Kuliarchar station at about 11, am. It was stranded at the station for eight hours and was forced back to Dhaka.

A mail Khan Express also came under attack by the activists at Bhairab and finally returned to Dhaka. Engines and some boggies of both the trains were damaged by stones thrown by ac-

In another incident, militants attacked the station master's office at Sararchar at

about 12 noon. The station master was assaulted by them. Office of the assistant station master at Kishoreganj also came under attack in the

Witnesses said angry activists tried to set ablaze the digital telephone exchange of the station. But their leaders refrained them from doing it.

Another report from Pabna adds: Train links between Raishahi and Dhaka and between Rajshahi and Goalanda via Pabna have been snapped due to the ongoing noncooper-

ation movement. Road communications in the 16 northern districts also have been disrupted as motor vehicles remained garaged, causing much suffering to the commuters and consumers as-

People from Pabna are going to the divisional headquarters of Rajshahi via Natore by rickshaw yans.

Commuters also are moving from Dhaka to Rajshahi and Rajshahi to Goalanda by van. the only alternative means of communications, as the intercity Padma and Jamuna express trains are still inopera-

Meanwhile, 16 pilgrims in four vans left Pabna Friday for Dhaka on way to Makkah for

performing holi Meanwhile, traiti communication between Dhaka and Chittagong became almost normal today after a virtual standstill for two weeks due to the Opposition's non-coopera-

tion programme. Army personnel, deployed to ensure safe passage by road and rail between Dhaka and Chittagong, guarded different stations and points on the rail route on the 15th day of the

anti-government programme. There were good number of passengers in the trains sources in Kamalapur station

Railway sources said 13 trains left Kamalapur station in the capital till 6 pm today while six others were sched-

Violence in city

From Page 1

were received from some other areas in the city including Kadamtala, Basabo, Mirpur, Mahakhali and Jatrabari. None was however, injured, wit-

, nesses said. BRTC's double-decker buses and a number of privately owned mini-buses were seen plying on various city roads under escort by security per-

Long distance buses did not

A number of autorickshaws plied on the roads from the morning. The opposition had earlier, announced that those would be allowed to ply from 3 pm to 5 am everyday.

In some shopping centres. some shops opened in the

morning. Security personnel were seen patrolli ig different areas of the city.

Nor'wester

From Page 1 ing at his IRRI paddy farm at 4

District Agriculture Extension Department sources said standing crops were severely affected by the nor'wester coupled with hailstorm in Kanaipur, Kaizuri, North Channel and Degreer Char unions in Sadar thana and Gothi union in

Nagarkanda thana. Faridour is the major onion seed growing areas in the country, and the damage may create adverse impact on the

onion-seed market, they said Temporary Hajj camp at Uttara

A temporary Haji Camp has been set up at Uttara Sector-8 for accommodating the Hajj pilgrims who will perform Haji this year under government arrangement, reports UNB

The pilgrims started to arrive in the capital yesterday. The first Haji flight is sched-

uled to leave Dhaka on March

Hajj officials are working there round the clock, said an

official handout vesterday.

2 killed in Ctg

From Page 1 the 15th day of the Opposition

ralled non-cooperation pro gramme. Autorickshaws said tempos plied after 3 pm during exemption period Besides, some al orickshaws and tempos wire seen plying from morn ing A few Pirfr has and trucks

also plied here Army patrol at important places of city continued today

uled to leave in the night. Total number of trains scheduled to leave Dhaka were 23 during the day.

Of the departing trains, inter city Mahanagar Provati left in the morning and Mahanagar Purabi in the afternoon for the port city of Chittagong while Sylhet-bound Parabat left at

As barricades are still there in Sylhet station, Parabat was scheduled to run up to Shayestaganj station. Six local and four mail trains left Kamalapur till the evening while two inter city and four mail trains were scheduled to leave later in the night.

Apart from two local and three mail trains, the Dhakabound inter city Mahanagar Urmee left Chittagong station in the morning and Mahanagar Purabi in the afternoon.

Two goods trains - one carrying 44 containers and the other with 66 wagons - also left the port city today.

Witnesses said opposition pickets numbering about 50-60 stoned the Mahanagar Urmee at Khanabari near Bhairab, damaging one compartment and injuring its 20 passengers.

Two of the injured - Parul 30, of Jatrabari Jelepara and Rashida Akhter, 40, of Mollartek in Dhaka - were said to be in critical condition. Later, the same group of pickets also stoned another goods train at about 1 pm at

the same place. In western zone, only Khulna-Poradah section oper-

ated today. In fresh incidents, opposition activists uprooted two feet of railway tracks between Piarpur and Bidyanganj stations, near Jamalpur. Similar incident also took place between Ishwarganj and Sohagi stations near Kishoreganj.

World Tuberculosis

Day today The World Tuberculosis Day will be observed in Bangladesh today as elsewhere in the

world, reports BSS The topic of the day this year is "major public health problem and the population still at risk of this brutal dis-

Tuberculosis has long been a leading cause of death in poorer countries of the world Abut 80 thousand people die every year due to tuberculosis in Bangladesh. Every year 1.5 lakh cases of TB is being de-

tected here. TB is caused by inhalation of bacteria floating in the air. It is a slow killer disease and affects' mostly the young adults in our community.

Bomb blasts at Elephant Road

By Staff Correspondent At least three bombs were hurled at the Bata signal crossing at Elephant Road in the

city last night. Witnesses said, the army personnel posted at the crossing told the shopkeepers in the area to go on with their business and not to be pan-

Army patrol teams were

seen moving around the area

AL leader

till late last night But, all shops, excepting few roadside stalls, were found closed by 11 pm.

> Rafiquddin Bhuiyan dead MYMENSINGH. Mar 23:

Veteran Awami League leader Rafiguddin Bhuiyan died at the Mymensingh Medical College Hośpital at 8:30 pm today. He was 66, reports UNB.

A leading organiser of 1952 Language Movement, Liberation War of 1971 and Awami League Presidium member Bhuiyan was suffering from old

age complications. He left behind two daughters, three sons, a host of relatives, admirers and party

colleagues to mourn his death. Late Bhuiyan, a former Parliament Member and ex-District Governor, was a founding member of the Awami League. He played an important role in the Language Movement and

suffered imprisonment. Bhuiyan was elected Chair man of the Mymensingh District Board in 1956 when he was only 25. He led the district AL as President and General Secretary for a long time.

Late Bhuiyan also played an important role during the historical 6-point movement in to accept the reality that the 1966 and participated in Libpeople are united to realise eration War under Sector 11. the demand of holding elec-He was elected a Member of tion under a non-party care-

Parliament in 1973 and District Governor in 1975.

Civic amenities

From Page 1

Star team at 9 pm. few thousand people were seen sitting on mats stretched over the road in front of the Jativa Press Club. Hamif was flanked by some other AL leaders including Abdur Razzak and Begum Matiya Chowdhury

The organisers said there were arrangements of dry food, donated by sympathisers. for people participating in the

Huge contingents of police and BDR were seen on guard around the Secretariat. Barbed wire fences, riot vans and polices carrying water cannon were also seen there.



A partial view of the human chain in the city organised by the ADAB and some grassroots people's organisations in the country yesterday demanding cancellation of the February 15 polls and fresh elections under a neutral caretaker government.

Bid to win general elections

Indian political parties looking for allies

NEW DELHI, Mar 23: With a hung parliament in the offing. Indian political parties have begun looking for allies in their bids to win the first general elections in five years, re-

ports AFP. Leaders of national and regional parties are exploring alliances which would involve joint campaigning or other arrangements in a bid to win the maximum number of seats in the 545-seat Lok Sabha, the

lower house of parliament. "Since no party can sweep the polls this time, there will be very tough contests in al most every single constituency," said Ramvilas Paswan, a leader of the centrist Janata Dal (people's party).

"Each party will look for the best winning combination to try to form a government." he said in an interview, adding that his own party was hoping to rope in "friendly parties" to prevent splitting votes.

Both the ruling Congress (I) Party and the main opposition Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) have given up their earlier hawkishness over going it alone in the staggered April-May hustings.

"Right now our state units are talking to friends to decide with whom we should join hands," said BJP spokeswoman

Attack on JMB

engineer

local people attacked a vehicle

of the contractor of the west

approach road of the Jamuna

Bridge, injuring an engineer at

Madhya Bhadraghat here today.

people halted the vehicle of

MS Song. Chief Engineer

(Survey) of Samwhan Corpora-

tion, the Korean contractor of

Nalka-Saydabad approach road

demanding one more culvert

only two culverts have been

sanctioned for the area, the lo-

cal people pelted brickbats

and stones at his vehicle intur-

sent the Korean national to

Sirajganj General Hospital for

ing him in the right eye.

While Song was arguing that

Police rushed the spot and

A case has been filed with

Cancel 15 polls,

form caretaker

govt: Jamaat

lana Matiur Rahman Nizami

vesterday urged the

government to accept the 4-

point demand of the opposi

tion to bring about a prompt

solution of the current crisis

and save the country from fur-

ther chaos and destruction.

At a rally at the northern

gate of Baitul Mukarram

Nizami reiterated the demands

mosque in the afternoon.

calling for immediate cancella

tion of the February 15 elec-

tion, resignation of the gov-

ernment, formation of a care-

taker government and fresh

He advised the ruling party

The Jamaat secretary gen-

eral suggested establishing a

caretaker government on the

basis of the advice of the

About the deployment of

"The downfall of the BNP

Nizami warned, "If Begum

army, the Jamaat leader asked

the ruling party to take lessons

government is imminent — the

deployment of the army is an

Khaleda Zia does not act

mands of the opposition, she

will have to face the fate of Er

totally failed to restore nor

malcy in the country even after

four-days of the deployment of

He said the government had

shad and Ayub Khan

promptly to accept the de

indication of this," he said.

Jamaat-e-Islami leader Mau-

Police said a group of local

reports UNB.

in their area.

treatment

Sirajgani police.

reports UNB.

polls in May.

taker government

Supreme Court

from the past.

SIRAJGANJ, Mar 23: Some

Sushma Swaraj. "Once the homework is over, the (party's) central election committee will take a final de-

Analysts expect no party to get more than 200 seats, resulting in a minority government in India for the third time since 1989

The general elections will be held on April 27, May 2, May 7 and May 21. The country-wide balloting would be effectively over by May 7. Only three seats in the strife-torn

Indian polls may be shifted for Eid-ul-Azha

NEW DELHI, Mar 23: The election commission is actively considering slifting the first phase of Lok Sabha polls, scheduled to be held on April 27, as it clashed with the Muslim festival of Eid-ul-Azha, reports BSS.

The Muslim leaders and several political parties have made representations to in-Prime Minister Narasimha Rao and Chief Election Commissioner TN Seshan to consider the matter. media reports said today.

Kashmir valley will vote on May

Congress spokesman Vithal Gadgil, a confident of Prime Minister P V Narasimha Rao. said a new government would take office after May 15, most probably before the final round of voting in Kashmir.

"The new government can be formed any day after May 15," he said. Most election results are expected to be known by May 10.

India's first coalition government took office in 1989 1991, when Rao became Prime Minister as the head of a mi-

Rao, 74, managed to woo several opposition MPs, to give his party a majority within two years. Cougress sources admitted that a clear majority may elude the country's oldest political party this time too.

will be a hung parliament." said GVLN Rao, an election analyst. "What is in doubt is who will come first, who will be second, and so on."

The Congress now rules only six of 14 major Indian states. The rest are controlled by a splintered opposition which does not see eye-to-eye on several issues.

Major changes

From Page 1 The proposals were made at an emergency meeting of the BNP parliamentary party held with the Prime Minister and party chief Begum Khaleda Zia in the chair yesterday evening.

meeting sources said.

According to the sources Afzal H Khan proposed that no retired judge should head the caretaker government. He ar gued that the party should prefer institutions to individu als for heading the advisory council. Former minister Nazmul Huda is learnt to have supported his view Khan also said that the chiefs of the services, BDR and

police should be included in the interim government to make the administration an effective one the meeting sources said. When contacted, Khan however, refused to make any comment Former minister M K Anwar opposed the idea of including the chiefs of the services, the

Barrister Ziaur Rahman floated the idea of including the immediate past chiefs of the professional and trade

The members addressing the meeting opposed the idea of allowing an eminent individual on the ground that it

would lead to controversies. 40 Taliban rebels killed in

Afghanistan KABUL, Mar 23. Govern ment jets bombed rebel strongholds south of the Afghan capital, killing 40 guerillas, a government spokes-

man said today, reports-AP. The air raids late Friday were launched to drive Taliban rebels from their positions in Charasyab and the Rishkor Hills along the southern outskirts of Kabul.

The purpose of the bombing was to desolate an unusually large gathering of the Taltban," said Defence Ministry spokesman Amrullah, who like many Afghans has only one

The death toll in Friday's government air raids could not be independently confirmed. Both sides in the past have been guilty of exaggerating the amount of damage inflicted on one another during battle. For several days, Taliban

rebels and forces loyal to President Burhanuddin Rabbani exchanged heavy rocket and mortar fire near the Rishkor Hills overlooking Kabul's southern suburbs. The Taliban, many of whom are former religious students,

hope to impose strict Islamic

rule throughout Afghanistan.

but collapsed within a year. necessitating fresh elections in

nority Congress government.

"There is not doubt there

Most of the speakers, however, suggested that the bill, along with the suggestions. should be sent to a parliamen-

tary select committee for

scrutiny.

Others who spoke on the occasion included Law Minister Jamiruddin Sircar, Morshed Khan, Ebadur Rahman and Khandaker Mahbubuddin Husband, wife

electrocuted in Barisal BARISAL, Mar 23: An official of the agriculture extension

department and his wife were electrocuted at their residence in Gournadi thana of the district this morning, police said reports BSS The victims are: ABM Delwar Hossain. 38, a block su-

pervisor of Agriculture Extension Department, and his wife Jharna Akhtar, 25. According to the sources.

their TV antenna fell on the 11,000 volt main electric line running over the roof of their residence on Friday night. Delwar Hossain was electro cuted as he tried to disconnect the antenna cable from the television set. His wife tried to save her husband, but as soon as she touched him, she was

also electrocuted. 31 killed in Indonesian

bus accident JAKARTA, Mar 23: Thirtyone people were killed when a speeding bus slammed into a car today at the outskirts of Jakarta and burst into flames. police and eyewitness said, re-

ports AP. . The bus carrying 45 people was heading from Jakarta to the West Java capital of Bandung when it swerved to avoid a parked car, ramming

into a jeep, said Manan, an evewitness. Bandung is about 180 kilo-

Shibir activists

From Page 1 in the residents of Shamsuzzaman Shams, District Con-

meters south of Jakarta.

JSD-Inu) at Ambarkhana, The JCD group also allegedly blasted a number of crackers in the official resi dence of Superintendent, Sylhet District Jail this afternoon The guard was also beaten up, the fail super said. The JCD

venor of Chhatra League (Pro-

-Star photo Human chain demanding

By Staff Correspondent

Feb 15 polls

cancellation of

The Association of Devel-Agencies Bangladesh (ADAB) and Trinamool Janasangathan, a platform of grassroots organisations, yesterday staged a countrywide human chain programme demanding cancella tion of the February 15 polls and holding of fresh elections

within 90 days. Men and women belonging to different private voluntary development organisations as well as various professional groups started forming the human chain in Dhaka at about 11 am, with noticeable breaks at many places.

In the capital, part of the chain was formed at Amin Bazar, Mirpur, Asad Gate Science Laboratory, New Market, Azimpur and at the central Shaheed Minar.

Thousands of people particspated in the human chain programme in greater Bogra, Manikganj, Faridpur, Rajshahi and elsewhere in the country, ADAB leaders said

They alleged that the law enforcing agencies at many places in Dhaka obstructed the development workers in form ing the human chain.

At some places, several

crackers were hurled on the participants, the leaders Speaking at a brief gathering in front of the Central Shaheed Minar, ADAB Chairperson Dr. Qazi Faruq Ahmed said that

the development workers have been forced to take to the streets because of the present political crisis that shows no sign of letting up. He said that the poor, both rural and urban, were the

worst victims of the political

crisis and cautioned that if the

impasse continues the country

might experience famine and a Dr. Ahmed, who also heads the Proshika Manobik Unnayan Kendro, suggested that an early election under a caretaker government with wide participation of political parties and voters was the only

30 hurt as JCD tactions clash in Pabna PABNA, Mar 23: At least 30

way out.

people were injured in a gunfight between two factions of ruling BNP's student wing Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) in the town's Anantapara tonight, reports UNB. Six of the injured - namely.

to Pabna Sadar Hospital with bullet wounds. two factions of the JCD went on fighting at about 9 pm when a supporter of Kalu group was

chased by rival Swapan group

Feroz, Jewel, Billal, Hira, Amjad and Rajab - were admitted Police and witnesses said

army patrol, killing 40 troop-ers and a civilian bus passentrated. More than 50,000 peoger, official sources here said. since 1972. · Gunmen of the separatist Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) ambushed the security forces at Sittandy in the district of Batticaloa triggering tank lorry fierce hand-to-hand fighting.

attack here at about 3 pm to-

engage who took the tank lorry to its destination at the Platpolice escort.

of terror at Khalishpur BIDC road by exploding hundreds of

hand bombs and firing shots. They set fire to some roadside shanties. At one stage, they hurled bombs and brickbats at BDR jawans who were called in to tackle the situa-

From Page 1 make the Secretariat "inope-

rative" from today by not attending offices. "If BNP activists attack you with arms, I am ordering you

to snatch those weapons and Earlier, addressing the mammoth gathering. Hasina said the non-cooperation programme will continue till fall of the "illegal government" the legitimate demands of people.

Mayor Mohiuddin Chowdhury "I am ready to shed my blood to break the stalemate in port for the cause of peoples' The acting chairman said participation in the sit-in. ment decision, he would hold a meeting tomorrow with the Committee formed with Awami

> inside the Jatiya Sangsad. Quit now and cancel the sixth parliament," she said. "We raised the caretaker government issue in the JS and tried for 10 months to table a bill but were not al-

She also urged the mem-

tary Zillur Rahman, Prof Mam-

BOMEA

कर्त्रदन ।

of the area.

বাংলাদেশ পোশাক প্রস্তুতকারক ও রপ্তানীকারক সমিতি

রপ্তানীমূখী পোশাক শিল্প মালিকদের আহ্বানে অবস্থান ধর্মঘট

রাজনৈতিক অচলাবস্থার কারণে ধ্বংসোনাখ পোশাক শিল্পসহ সকল রপ্তানীমুখী শিল্পকে

- রক্ষার দাবীতে মালিক-শ্রমিক কর্মচারীদের অবস্থান ধর্মঘটঃ
- নিজ নিজ কারখানা সংলগ্ন রাজপথে নীরব অবস্থান ধর্মঘট।
- তারিখ ও সময়ঃ অদ্য ২৪শে মার্চ রবিবার সকাল ৮ ঘটিকা হইতে ১০ ঘটিকা। স্ব স্ব কারখানার মালিক কর্মকর্তা ও কর্মচারীগণ উপরোল্লিখিত কর্মসূচী বাস্তবায়ন করার প্রয়োজনীয় পদক্ষেপ গ্রহণ করবেন।
 - চট্টগ্রাম সমুদ্র বন্দর ও বেনাপোল স্থল বন্দরে সৃষ্ট জটিলতার জন্য আমদানীকৃত কাঁচামালের অভাবে যে সকল পোশাক শিল্প কারখানা বন্ধ আছে সে সকল কারখানার মালিক, কর্মচারী ও শ্রমিকগণ একই নিয়মে অবস্থান ধর্মঘটে অংশগ্রহণ

বিজিএমইএ

Editor: Mahfuz Anam

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India won't slow down space programme: Rao

NEW DELHI, Mar 23: Prime Minister PV Narasimha Rao today said India will not slow down its ambitious space programme, which aims to carve a niche in the multi-billiondollar commercial satellite launch sector. "The space programme will never be allowed to languish as it is our show-piece," Rao told Indian space scientists visiting the premier after Thursday's flawless launch of the country's most powerful satellite rocket, reports AFP.

LTTE ambushes army

COLOMBO, Mar 23: Heavy

"A civilian bus drove

straight into the fire fight and

a Muslim passenger was killed

on the spot," a police source

here said adding that the bus

was taking pilgrims home after

diers were killed and another

12 wounded but officials said it

was now confirmed that all 40

troops in the platoon were

forcements to the area and

deployed two M1-24 helicopter

gunships to attack the Tamil

Tiger guerillas involved in the

attack but rebel casualties

were not immediately known

The attack marked a fur-

ther escalation of violence in

the embattled eastern region

where 12 days ago the LTTE

attacked an elite police com-

mando unit and killed 23

died in a mine attack in the

north of the country. Another

11 soldiers died in two attacks

Port officials

From Page 1

Talking to this correspon-

dent, the acting chairman of

Chittagong Port Authorities

Captain Zahiruddin Mahmud,

said he had been asked by the

Ministry of Shipping and Port

to hold a meeting with the op-

position leaders including

that in line with the Govern-

leaders of the All-Party Action

League, Jatiya Party and Ja-

maat-e-Islami, port, and the

port users and customs offi-

users today met the Mayor of

Chittagong to discuss resump-

tion of port operations, port

be invited to tomorrow's

the meeting was being op-

posed by opposition leaders

who expressed their reluc-

tance to sit with the ruling

party for sorting out the crisis

also remained suspended to-

remain stranded both at the

port jetties and the outer an-

inside the port for security

foreign shipping companies

have threatened to divert their

vessels to other destinations

abandoning the Chittagong

port from next Monday, if the

situation was not improve

there was partial cargo han-

dling in a foodgrain ship today

and trucks and wagons left the

port carrying foodgrains and

According to port officials.

Meanwhile, cargo handling

At least 53 cargo vessels

Navy personnel are on duty

In another development,

in the Chittagong port.

and opposition sources said.

The chairman and port

However, the BNP will not

The BNP's participation in

The LTTE is leading a pro-

Five days ago, 18 soldiers

the sources here said.

over last weekend.

troopers.

operations.

cials.

meeting.

chorage.

reasons.

bitumen

within this time.

The army poured rein-

Initial reports said 28 sol-

a religious ceremony.

fighting raged in eastern Sri

Lanka today as Tamil Tiger

guerillas wiped out an entire

reports AFP.

the sources said.

patrol, kills 40 troops tracted campaign for an independent homeland on the island's northern and eastern regions where the two million Tamil minority is concen-

ple have died in the fighting Bomb attack on

in Khulna From Our Correspondent KHULNA, Mar 23: A tank lorry carrying furnace oil for

jute mills came under a bomb

The driver, who was seriously injured, fled after being chased by some unidentified Later, another driver was

inum Jubillee Jute Mills under After having failed to set the tank lorry on fire, a group of rowdy people created a reign

Indefinite sit-in

counter the attacks.

She also called for peoples' The AL chief reiterated her demands for cancelling the February 15 polls, resignation of the government and holding of elections under a caretaker government. "Stop the drama

lowed Now, under peoples' pressure she (Begum Zia) has been forced to accept it. But, we don't want it to be 'passed' by vote thieves," said Hasina.

bers of law enforcing agencies and armed forces not to harass people "just for the sake of safeguarding the power of vote As the rally was in

progress, people at Bangabandhu Avenue area were seen running in panic at around 3:30 pm. Some processionists marching towards the rally alleged that a procession from Lalbagh area came under armed attack near Fazlul Hag Hall of Dhaka University The rally was also addressed by AL general secre-

tazuddin Ahmed, Prof Kabir Chowdhury, Advocate Shamshul Haq Chowdhury, Sayed Hasan Imam. Abdul Ahad Chowdhury, Igbal Sobhan Chowdhury, Ramendu Mazumder, Panna Kaiser besides representatives of various professional groups.