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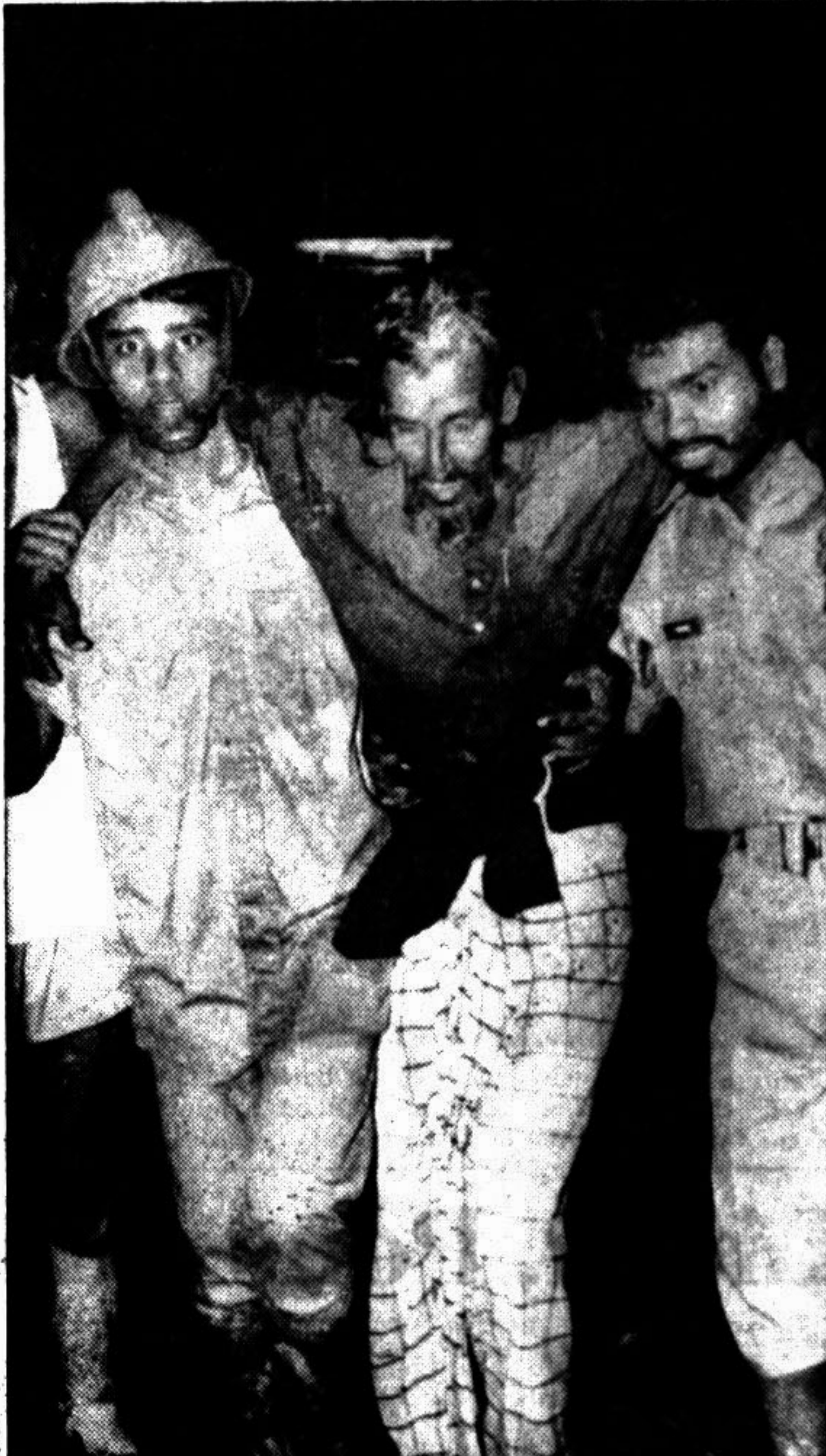
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**Storm kills 15 in Tongi**

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taking off," said Sufulla, an imam from Tongi area, attending the congregation.  
There was panic all over. "It lasted for a few minutes and within minutes I saw everything on the ground. GI pipes, tins and bamboos lay everywhere," said Motiur Rahman, one of the participants who was preparing to say his evening prayers at about 5:45 pm.

"As soon as the wind started with mild drizzles the tins flew like pieces of papers injuring many of the devotees," said Maulana Mesbahuddin who came to attend the ten-day pre-ijtema congregation on the 700-acre site.  
An unknown number of foreign guests attending the religious programme escaped unhurt as their roof withstood the wind that was followed by thunder and hail. Another structure that was still standing was the makeshift dias under a tree by the side of river Turag. The Chief Coordinator of the programme, Haji Abdul Mukit could not be contacted as he rushed to Kakrail Mosque in the city to arrange accommodation for thousands of these elderly people. His aide Haji Mohammad Zakir Hossain, said they had arrangements for 30,000 participants. When asked why the structure was made so frail he replied that it was the wish of Allah.  
Hundreds of injured people were rushed to the nearby 50-bedded Tongi Hospital which, in turn, referred 'truckloads' of them to other hospitals in the city. Doctors from surrounding areas including private practitioners rushed to the hospital to cope with the emergency situation. The on-duty doctors there said, 72 were admitted to the hospital while hundreds of others were provided first aid.  
In the city, 91 were admitted to Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH), 56 to Mitford Hospital and many others to other hospitals and clinics.  
The devotees who were still picking through the rubbles at around 10 pm last night said the wind came from the North-western side of the field.  
Top government officials at the spot said initially the participants themselves organised rescue operations when police, fire brigade personnel and local people joined them. Akram Hossain, who came from Sunjanagar, Pabna said he was almost buried under the roof. After about fifteen minutes I emerged from underneath and helped many others to come out



Fire Brigade men rescuing an injured person from the Ijtema ground yesterday evening.

of the debris," he said.  
At the Tongi Hospital, about one thousand people gathered outside, anxiously waiting to hear about their missing relatives. They were not allowed to get inside because the inside of the hospital resembled a 'war clinic.' The floors and stairs upto the first floor were stained with blood. The injured elderly people shivered in cold, wrapped in bandage and blankets. The first floor of the hospital corridors and female wards were crammed with injured people. Some, with minor injuries, assembled and offered their evening prayers. Ministers, officials and other dignitaries roamed around the hospital, sympathising with the staff as well as the injured.  
Some of the injured persons who could move themselves rushed to the nearby Tongi hospitals. Ten of the bodies were kept at the hospital for a while but later, their relatives, after identifying the dead, took those. Hospital officials were virtually helpless, almost unable to tackle the rush of patients.

**Khaleda**  
From Page 1

She said Majibhandari became the victim of inhuman torture in thana hajat after his arrest and now the attack on his house showed the rude behaviour of the government.  
The BNP chief asked the government to stop such attack and threat or face befitting reply.  
She demanded immediate arrest and exemplary punishment to those responsible for the attack and threat and asked the police administration to discharge its duty neutrally.  
Begum Zia also demanded adequate security for the members of Majibhandari's family.

**Samad Azad**  
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Azad also discussed bilateral relations, a Bangladesh High Commission source said.  
They agreed that the tempo that has been generated in strengthening the relations and cooperation between Bangladesh and India should be kept up.  
Bangladesh High Commissioner to India C M Shaif Sami was present at the meeting.  
The foreign minister leaves Delhi tomorrow for Islamabad where he will deliver a similar letter of invitation from Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina to her Pakistani counterpart Nawaz Sharif.

**D-8**  
From Page 1

Minister for Foreign Affairs Abul Hasan Chowdhury on bilateral matters and implementation of D-8 programmes.  
He is expected to call on Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina. Kemal, who was a senior diplomat of Turkey before assuming the present office, will also meet Foreign Secretary Mustafizur Rahman and ERD Secretary Masihur Rahman.  
Development-8, formally launched at a summit of the eight OIC nations in Istanbul last June, aims at bolstering cooperation among the countries, particularly in trade and economic fields and development of hum.  
It groups Bangladesh, Pakistan, Iran, Malaysia, Indonesia, Turkey, Egypt and Nigeria.  
Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina led the Bangladesh delegation to the summit. Its next summit is scheduled to be held in Dhaka in November-December next year.  
The D-8 Rural Development working group will meet October 20-21 in Dhaka. Official sources said yesterday.

**5 Narcotics Control officials sued**  
in Jessore

From Our Correspondent

JESSORE, Oct 12: Five officials including a deputy director at the district office of Narcotics Control Directorate have been sued for allegedly issuing dangerous drug licences to pharmacy owners in the town in violation of laws.  
The accused are Deputy Director Sahidur Rahman, Assistant Deputy Director Ahmed Chowdhury, inspectors Mazdur Rahman and Bazur Rahman, and officer assistant Motiur Rahman.

**It demarcation**

From Page 1

of the 208 km land border between the two countries.  
Meanwhile, Nasaka assured of full security for carrying out the survey work, sources said.  
The joint border survey is scheduled to be completed by November 25 as per the decision reached at a conference last month in Yangon between the two sides.  
The sources said the mines were laid by Nasaka to resist the movement of Myanmar insurgents staying along the border. Some insurgent groups fighting for liberation in Arakan state of Myanmar, being frequently chased by Nasaka are now on the run having no particular base in the no-man's land.

**Relatives**

From Page 1  
hundreds, referred others to hospitals in the city, including the Orthopedic Hospital.  
The dead, in their sixties, could not be identified immediately at the DMCH. The injured mostly sustained head injuries from the twisted corrugated iron sheets and galvanised iron pipes which framed the huge tin-shed pedant on the ground.  
The DMCH administration summoned off-duty doctors and nurses to cope with the rush of casualties.  
Extra beds and mattresses were martialled along with dressings. The casualties were brought in by fire service personnel, police and others in all modes of transport as the tiny hospital in Tongi could not accommodate the large number of casualties.

**Hasina, Khaleda shocked**

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday expressed deep condolence at the death of devotees in a hail storm at Tongi in the evening and prayed for eternal peace of the departed souls.

An official in the Prime Minister's Office said, the Prime Minister is concerned at the disaster and asked the officials concerned to take appropriate steps for rescue operation in the affected area and treat the injured.  
BNP Chairperson and Leader of the Opposition in Parliament Begum Khaleda Zia also expressed deep shock at the death of several devotees in a severe tornado during a religious congregation at Tongi yesterday.

**Hail storm**

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eastern horizon, released hails with rains and gusty winds.  
It lasted about five minutes and blasted the vacant space on the bank of the Turag making some people believing it to be a tornado.  
Director of Meteorological Department Sajedur Rahman told The Daily Star last night that there was a warning for thunder storm yesterday as the temperature was rising following a dry spell for the past few days.  
The tornado, he said, could have a maximum wind speed of 400 kmph as estimated by US scientist Ferrel.  
Normally, a tornado comes out of the mother cloud in an elongated mass of clouds that moves like a vacuum cleaner in a whirling motion twirling everything like match sticks that lay across its path," he pointed out.  
In recent times tornados struck Sauria near Dhaka in 1987, Tongi in 1991 and Tangail last year killing hundreds of people.

**Khaleda to visit Bogra today**

By Staff Correspondent

BNP chief Begum Khaleda Zia will visit Bogra today. Begum Zia will address a rally as the chief guest at the Alfatunna ground at Bogra at 4 pm, said a press release last night.  
Central leaders of BNP and some party MPs will accompany the BNP chairperson during the visit.

**Destruction within 15 minutes**

Devotees heard a big bang amidst drizzling. The Eijtema ground at Tongi turned into a macabre scene just within 15 minutes, reports UNB.

Like many others, Mujahid Khan was performing ablution for Magreb prayers after the liberation of Kakrail Mosque Tablig Jamaat leader Engineer Abdul Mukit.  
"Shower with wind came and we heard a heavy sound. I never heard such a big bang in my life," said Mujahid, who hails from Atrai thana in Naogaon district.  
He was at the tent for greater Rajshahi district and tried to take shelter with others. "It seemed the calamity brought in the doomsday."  
Mujahid who was on the northern side of the congregation, said the southern part was badly affected and "we saw the tins moving in the air like paper sheets."  
"People being fearful of death and chanting Allahu Akbar tried to go under their mats and mattress as the tins were hitting the devotees," he said.  
Mujahid was lucky enough as he could take shelter under a bedding. He witnessed many wounds and had the 'most painful experience' in his life.  
Immediately after the speed of tornado decreased, firefighters and local people rushed to

the spot and started the rescue operation for the devotees who came to the 'Tablig-e-Jor' scheduled to be concluded this morning.  
Sitting on a corridor of the DMCH, injured Abdul Hakim of Fulpur thana in Mymensingh district, said the disaster started after two thundershowers that snapped power supply.  
"Most of the people were injured by tins that blew up and rods on which those were set," he said informing usually the shed are made of 'chat' (sackcloth) during the Biswa Eijtema in winter.  
"But this time the sheds were made by tins apprehending rains," said Hakim.  
A 50-year-old man whose throat was partially cut by a flying tin was also sitting on the corridor. A doctor asked him to collect needle and thread for stitching. But the poor man from Shyamganj in Mymensingh could hardly speak because of his injury.

He was among many injured people at DMCH, who were asked to collect equipment and medicine for their treatment.  
The young doctors tried their best to attend the injured. "But what can we do if we don't get bandage, stitching materials and medicines," said one of them.

**None arrested for Meser murder**

By Staff Correspondent

Police were yet to arrest any of the accused in the killing of Shaifur Rahman alias Meser who was gunned down by a gang of assailants at Malibagh in the city on Saturday.  
Besides, police could not ascertain the motive behind the killing of Shaifur, 27, a Sramik League activist of Fatullah in Narayanganj. Police suspected that his killing was a sequel to previous enmity.  
The body of Shaifur was handed over to his family after autopsy at Dhaka Medical College Hospital morgue.  
Our Narayanganj Correspondent added that Shaifur was attacked twice in the last two years.  
Shabujbagh police said they were conducting search in different areas of the city and Narayanganj for the accused killers.  
Shaifur's brother Golam Rasul filed a murder case with Shabujbagh thana accusing about 25 people.

**Road links between Rajshahi & other N dists suspended as bridge collapses**

From Our Correspondent

RAJSHAH, Oct 12: Road communication between Rajshahi and other northern districts through Naogaon remained suspended since this morning following collapse of a bailey bridge on river Baranai at Naohata, about 8 kilometers north of the city.  
According to witnesses, the bailey bridge, about 10 years old, collapsed this morning when a potato-loaded truck was crossing it.  
Roads and Highways Department was trying to repair the bridge.  
Meanwhile, bus service between Chapainabaganj and Shibganj remained suspended for the 19th day yesterday following the alleged killing of a bus passenger by transport workers.

**Queen starts India visit**

**Sikhs demand apology for Jallianwala Bagh massacre**

NEW DELHI, Oct 12: Dozens of Indians, mainly Sikhs, today protested near the British High Commission, demanding an apology from Queen Elizabeth for a 1919 massacre by British troops.  
"We would like the Queen to apologise for the killings of Jallianwala Bagh," said Paramjit Singh Pamma, leader of the 50-odd demonstrators.  
Pamma told Reuters the Queen was welcome to visit Amritsar but an apology from her would help soothe the pain and anguish of families of those killed in the massacre in 1919.  
She will visit the sacred Sikh Golden Temple and lay a wreath at the Jallianwala Bagh, where British troops fired on unarmed Indians gathered in the walled enclosure of Jallianwala Bagh, killing 379.  
Britain's high commissioner to India, David Gore-Booth, said last week that the Queen will lay a wreath at the Jallianwala Bagh ground as a diplomatic gesture but would not apologise directly for the massacre.  
"It's not enough to lay a wreath. A few words from the Queen would help heal old wounds," said Bhushan Behl, president of the Jallianwala Bagh Shaheed Parivar Samitee, a committee formed by relatives of those killed in the massacre.  
"We would have liked her to apologise and remove this black mark on the British crown," he told the news agency by telephone from Amritsar on Saturday.  
Pamma said the protesters, were also demanding that the British government lift a ban on wearing of turbans by Sikh soldiers in the army.  
"This has hurt the religious feelings of the Sikh community all over the world. You are requested to intervene and lift the ban imposed on Sikh soldiers of British army," the protesters said in a memorandum to the Queen.  
The turban has great religious significance for Sikhs.  
Police used water cannon to disperse the protesters and two people sustained minor injuries.

**DCC demolishes**

From Page 1

steel gate of the well-equipped and large office to bring the furniture and other things out. About a dozen wooden-framed portraits of Bangabandhu were hastily but carefully taken off the walls and brought outside. Others quickly emptied the large office room while the DCC pay-loader kept revving its engine just a few feet away from the building.  
"During Jatiya Party rule, it was their office, then BNP used it as its office and now we are using it as our office," said Raju Ahmed, a member of the Shechhashebak League. Mohammadpur thana unit. Raju said he was happy that the government was at last taking action on such irregularities but added, "We hope our party will provide us with a proper accommodation." While Raju spoke, Lito Chhatra League Secretary of the unit, cried openly. "We have worked so hard to set up this office, now it's gone," a sobbing Lito told this correspondent. Within half an hour the whole building was knocked down to the ground.  
Mohammadpur thana AL Joint Secretary Intiaz Khan Babul asked, "Where shall we go? Nobody wants to rent his house for a party office and the party has no land everywhere," he said.  
Meanwhile DCC officials said they were considering forming three more teams to assist them in the on-going clampdown on illegal structures in the city.

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**Govt using police force in illegal activities, says Mannan Bhuiyan**

BNP secretary general Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan yesterday accused the governing party of creating a deadlock in the administration through 'naked politicisation' across the country, reports UNB.  
"The government, frightened by the on-going mass movement, is using the administration, particularly the police force, in its illegal activities and repressive measures against the opposition," he added.  
Bhuiyan was addressing leaders of Bhoia district BNP, who met him at party's central office here in the morning to apprise him of the existing political and administrative situation in the district.  
He asked the leaders to further strengthen the party in Bhoia and motivate people to rally round BNP and build up a vigorous movement against the 'subversive, anti-people and fascist activities' of the government.  
Bhuiyan demanded immediate release of JCD leader Javed Iqbal and Juba Dal leader Sanjit Kumar and withdrawal of false cases filed against others.

At the meeting, the Bhoia unit leaders alleged that police being influenced by the ruling party leaders are harassing hundreds of BNP men through arrest and filing false cases.  
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**Transport strike continues in Jamalpur**

JAMALPUR, Oct 12: Road communication of the district with other parts of the country remained snarled for the third consecutive day today due to an indefinite transport strike, reports UNB.

District Sarak Paribahan Sramik Union enforced the strike demanding removal of Sarishabari thana OC Mosh-taque Ahmed Chowdhury.  
The government also announced to improve law and order situation, which the World Bank said, is 'vital for security of life and property, for improving business environment, and for better access to public services by all.'  
"These steps would energise the private sector and stimulate private investment by improving the investment climate," the report said.  
The Bank, the coordinator of the Aid Group Meeting for which it prepares the review, also suggested "strengthening the macroeconomic framework by increasing foreign exchange reserves and reducing government's borrowing from the banking system."  
This will help "avoid crowding out the private sector", it said.  
Price distortions and subsidies are problems in fiscal area, along with still-narrow tax base, large scale tax evasion, loss-making public sector and "quasi-fiscal" losses originating from the banking system, according to the World Bank review.  
Quality of public spending also came in for criticism.

**10 bypasses**

From Page 1

spire people to keep their areas clean to eradicate mosquito. In this regard, massive campaign will also be initiated on radio, television and newspapers.  
Present among others were acting Mayor of DCC Abdul Gaffar, secretary of Local Government Division A H M Abdul Hye, chairman of RAJUK, BRTA, Water Development Board and T & T Board, chief engineer of PWD, Dhaka Metropolitan Police Commissioner, chief engineer of Public Health Engineering Directorate, MD of WASA, DG of DOE, DG of Social Service Directorate, MD of Titas Gas, chief surgeon of Dhaka, deputy commissioner of Dhaka, and representatives of agencies concerned including Water Development Board.

**WB president**

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agency.  
The World Bank is one of the largest multilateral donors to the country and Wolfensohn's visit is expected to result in a more active role of the agency in the future development endeavours of Bangladesh, they observed.  
During the five-day stay in Bangladesh, on the first leg of his two-country trip to South Asia, Wolfensohn will meet President Shahabuddin Ahmed, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and other ministers.  
His extremely busy itinerary also include a 45-minute meeting with Leader of the Opposition in Parliament and BNP chairperson Begum Khaleda Zia.  
Also, the World Bank President will meet the representatives of business, NGOs, media, the donor community, farmers' groups, government and academia.  
"We will look at both bank-supported and other development projects and interact with direct beneficiaries."  
He will go to Chandpur, Chittagong, the Jamuna Multipurpose Bridge, Bhupur in Tangail, and Banaripara and Gour-nadi of Barisal to see the Bank and NGO-sponsored projects.

**Climate not conducive**

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for November 4-5, called for sustaining macroeconomic stability so that the nation could exploit the 'opportunities'.  
For the first time, the meeting has been shifted to Dhaka from its usual venue, Paris. The report, finalised after a series of meetings with government functionaries including the finance minister, was sent to donor representatives and local officials yesterday.  
It said foreign exchange reserves, now at 1.7 billion US dollars, were 'critically low', and banking sector remained 'fragile' posing 'a threat to macroeconomic stability'.  
The Bank cautioned that the reserves would face further pressures with prospects for a pick-up in import demand spurred by an expected recovery in industrial activity.  
Not much could also be done in administrative and legal reforms, privatising the state-run businesses and opening the trade regime, it said.  
"It is clear that Bangladesh needs to improve its policy framework to boost industrial activity and sustain high economic growth," the Bank said.  
The structural weaknesses were defined by 'infrastructural bottlenecks and deficiencies in the public sector institutions' which acted against the private sector.  
The Bank, however, said the country made 'some progress' in areas such as attracting foreign investors for private power.  
"Bangladesh is attracting a strong foreign direct investment interest, particularly in the energy and telecommunication sectors," the Bank said, estimating the FDI inflows at roughly half a billion dollars.  
But it all depends on how Bangladesh goes ahead with its reform agenda. "Accelerating the pace of reforms would help realize this potential FDI and associated benefits," the Bank said.  
"The enormous challenge of poverty reduction facing Bangladesh requires faster economic growth and human development. To this end, completing the unfinished reform programme is the key to success."  
The government also needs to improve law and order situation, which the World Bank said, is 'vital for security of life and property, for improving business environment, and for better access to public services by all.'

while improvements in fiscal balances were praised. But with a question: Will the positive developments in the quality of public spending, the report said.  
The Bank commended increased development funds for social sectors and infrastructure, but added "the ADP also contains many low priority projects and several that would best be carried out by the private sector."  
Dwindling foreign exchange reserves with no signs of recovery prompted the Bank to call the government's responses "inadequate".  
"The measures such as devaluation of Taka against US dollar by 4.6 per cent 'in seven steps' were not enough, it said. "This was not adequate to avoid a four per cent appreciation of the real effective exchange rate, and has likely contributed adversely to the competitiveness of Bangladesh's exports."  
The Bank also warned against "recent sharp devaluation" in South-East Asian countries which "must have further seriously eroded Bangladesh's competitiveness".  
A fall in external current account deficit, by five per cent of GDP, was due to export growth, increased remittances, and a drastic decline in imports because of low food procurement and "subdued" industrial activity.  
All these helped put a brake on reserve losses, which had been a staggering one billion dollars in 1995-96.  
But the achievements were neutralised by a low aid inflow — from an average 1.8 billion dollars in the 90's to 1.5 billion dollars in the last two years — and a sudden outflow of portfolio capital to the tune of 120 million dollars caused by the stock market boom.  
The Bank backed the government steps to improve banking practice, especially loan recovery initiatives. "However, in the banking system, the high-level of non-performing assets and undercapitalisation continue to be serious problems and a threat to macroeconomic stability."  
A bumper rice output for two years in a row mainly gave the good growth rate for the economy — above five per cent. The GDP growth rate, 5.7 per cent, was highest in the 90's, but industrial growth was one of the lowest, at 3.6 per cent in 1996-97.  
The World Bank attributed this low industrial performance to power, gas shortages — which also affected urea production — and labour unrest which affected Chittagong port operations.  
Support came for petroleum price hike which, it said, would improve the financial situation in the energy sector, and the increase in urea prices.

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Investors interested to buy Right Shares of Quasem Drycells Limited through their accounts are requested to contact ICB offices and submit their written purchase instructions along-with deposits (if required) by 19 October, 1997.

**Assistant General Manager**  
GD-239  
Investors Department

**Editor: Mahfuz Anam**

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