

Benson & Hedges concert cancelled

The Benson & Hedges "Twist & Shout" concert scheduled to be held on March 12 at Gulshan park has been cancelled due to unavoidable circumstances, says a press release.

This was announced yesterday by sponsors British American Tobacco Bangladesh through a press release on behalf of the organisers Sandhani National Eye Donation Society and Theatre School.

Those who have bought tickets have been requested to get full refund by handing over their tickets at the place of purchase.

Prominent Housing contradicts report

The general manager of Prominent Housing sent a letter protesting the news item published on the front page of The Daily Star on Saturday under the head line "Flat owners attacked by hired goons" where he claimed that there was no such attack and the involvement of Major (retd) Monzur Kader in the incident does not arise as he was outside Dhaka.

Our report was based on an FIR lodged with the Mohamadpur thana on March 6, and a press release signed by the president of Prominent Welfare Society the same day.

ADB seminar on use of consulting services begins today

A three-day seminar on the "Use of consulting services" organised by the Asian Development Bank (ADB) will begin today at the Dhaka Sheraton Hotel, says a press release.

It will be attended by about forty participants from different ministries and executing agencies implementing ADP-funded projects. The main purpose of this seminar is to help the participants improve project quality through timely recruitment and effective use of consulting services when implementing current and future ADB financed projects.

The seminar will be conducted by Benny Kosinda, Senior Consulting Services Specialists of the bank's central operation services office.

AGM of CUJA held

From CU Correspondent

CHITTAGONG, Mar 8: The Annual General Meeting of the Chittagong University Journalist Association (CUJA) was held at the association office on Sunday.

The meeting was presided over by Ahmed Karim, president of the association.

Among others Tawhid Chowdhury, Oifil Hasnat Ruhin, Jasim Uddin Khan, Hamidullah, Ataul Gani Sumon, Fahad Fardous and Satyajit Datta took part at the discussion in the meeting.

Workshop on potato seeds at BARI from today

A regional workshop on informal/formal potato seed system will begin under close collaboration of International Potato Centre (CIP) Lima, Peru and the Tuber Crops Research Centre (TCRC) of Bangladesh Agricultural Research Institute (BARI) Joydebpur, Gazipur from today, says a press release.

Dr MM Rashid Director General of BARI will inaugurate the workshop at 10:00 AM today as the chief guest. Dr. Sarah Ilangalante, Regional Representative of CIP South West Asia Region, New Delhi, India will attend the workshop as guest of honour and Dr. MA Razzaque, Director (Research), BARI as special guest. The workshop will be presided by the Director TCRC DR. Salahuddin. It will be held in the seminar room of BARI.

45 participants including nine foreign delegates from Pakistan, India, Nepal, Peru, Sri Lanka and the Philippines will attend the workshop. It will provide an opportunity to policymakers, scientists and extension workers of the government and non-government agencies working in potato research and development for an open discussion to formulate a guideline for overall improvement of the potato seed system in this south west Asia region.

The 3-day workshop will end on Thursday.

Obituary

Mostafa Kamal, a senior assistant secretary of the Jatiya Sangsad secretariat died of a heart attack at Suhrawardy Hospital yesterday. He was 36, reports BSS.

He was taken to the hospital after he complained of pain in the chest. Attending doctors declared him dead on arrival.

He left behind his elderly parents, wife and a host of admirers and relatives to mourn his death.

Rehana Begum, wife of former sub-assistant director of BDR and freedom fighter Md Ishak Bhuiyan died of a cardiac arrest at 10:30 am on Saturday at the Combined Military Hospital (CMH). She was 65, says a press release.

Rehana left behind her husband, six sons and daughters and relatives to mourn her death.

Her namaz-e-janaza was held at Baitul Mukarram Mosque and she was later buried in her family graveyard in village.

Her qulkuwan will be held at her residence at Uttar Badda tomorrow after Asr prayers.

Police asked to ensure law & order**Negligence and irregularities won't be tolerated: PM**

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday asked the police forces to discharge their duties with honesty and dedication and warned that no negligence and irregularities in performing their duties will be tolerated, reports UNB.

"You have to be more active to maintain law and order and take measures against the foul activities that create unrest in public life," she said while inaugurating the Police Meet '99 at the Rajarbagh Police Lines in the morning.

The Prime Minister inspected the parade and took salute from a smartly turned out police contingent.

Hasina mentioned that stability is needed for economic development of the country told the police forces to perform their duties with utmost sincerity to ensure law and order in the country.

She said: "Without any demand from you, we have raised the family ration quota to 40 per cent from 20 per cent for the

lower level members of the police forces."

Compensation has been doubled for policemen killed or injured in any incident while performing their duty, she added.

Hasina said the Finance Ministry has been asked to allocate money in the next budget for providing "risk allowance" to those police personnel who are engaged in hazardous task.

She recalled the glorious contribution of police during the liberation war, responding to the call of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

Home Minister Major (retd) Rafiqul Islam and Inspector General of Police AYBI Siddique were, among others, present at the function.

Later, the Prime Minister pinned the Bangladesh Police Medal (BPM) and the President's Police Medal (PPM) to 32 members of the police forces of different ranks.

What's on today....

Drama festival: "Jhala Pala", "Jago Sundor Chiro Kishore" and "Porikha Pasher Montra" will be staged on the 6th day of the National Child-Juvenile Drama Festival. Organiser: Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy in cooperation with People's Theatre Association. Venue: Central Public Library auditorium, Shahbagh. Time: 4:30 pm, 6 pm and 7:30 pm respectively.

Discussion: Department of Political Science, Dhaka University has organised a discussion meeting and cultural programme as part of its 2-day programme on freshers' reception and farewell ceremony. Venue: TSC auditorium, DU campus. Time: 9:30 am.

Club meet: The weekly meeting of Rotary Club of Romna will be held. Rtn ABA Sirajuddowla will speak on "Oil and gas exploration" as guest speaker. Venue: Dhaka Club. Time: 5:30 pm.

Club meet: The Rotary Club of Dhaka New City will hold its weekly meeting. Venue: Vintage Restaurant, Road No: 28, Dharmondi. Time: 5:45 pm.

Club meet: The weekly meeting of the Rotary Club of Dhaka will be held. Rtn Hasan Maniruzzaman, DGN 2000-2001 will be the guest speaker. Venue: Sonargaon Hotel. Time: 5:30 pm.

JU Bangla Dept holds freshers' reception

By JU Correspondent

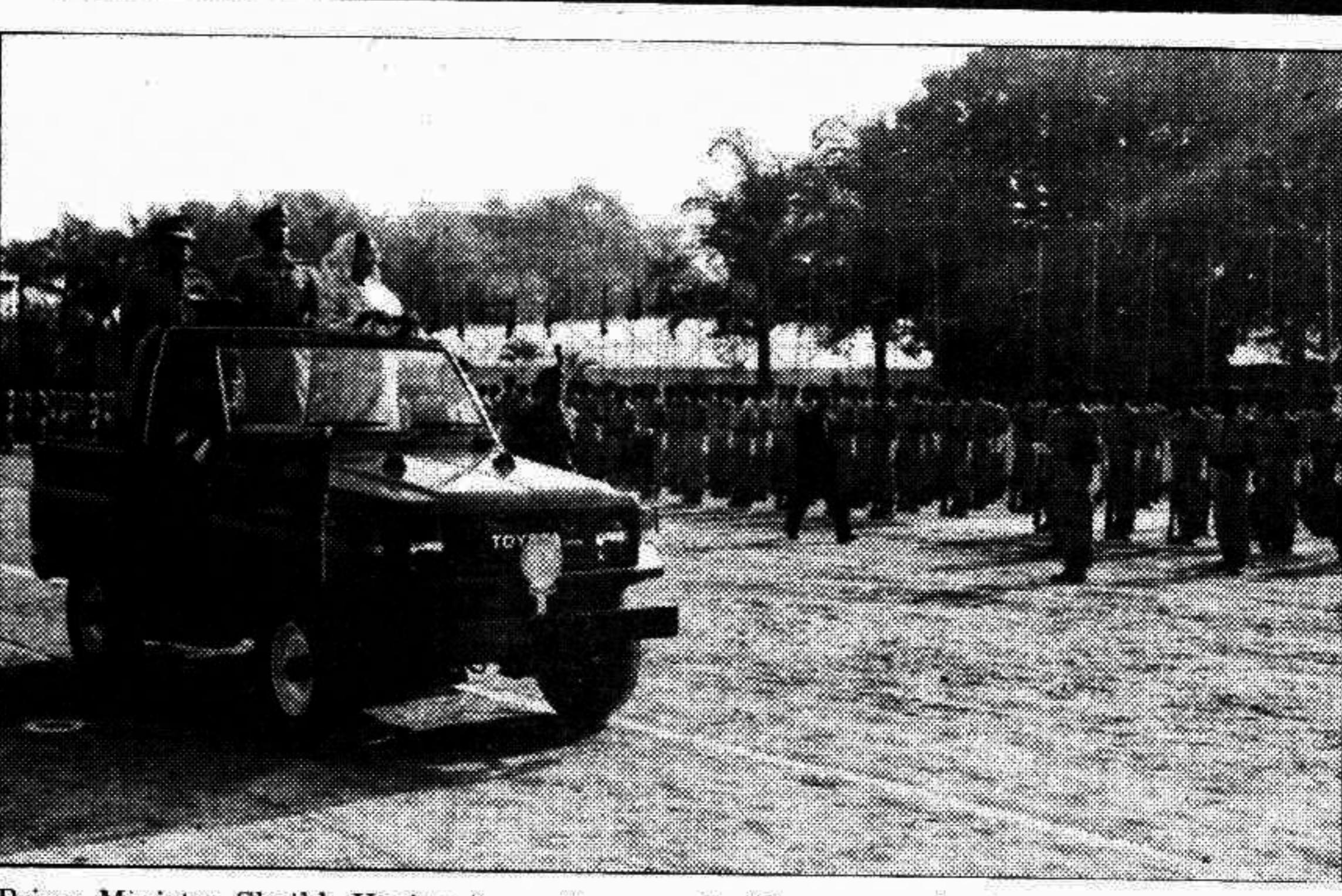
A freshers' reception to welcome the newly admitted students of the Department of Bangla of Jahangirnagar University (JU) was held yesterday at the 'Akashmoni Chhatra' of the university.

Organised by Department of Bangla, the reception was presided over by Dr. Rabeya Moin, chairperson of the department. She introduced the students with the teachers of the department.

Among others present were Prof Idris Ali, Dr Souda Akhtar and Prof Daniul Haq.

Later a discussion was held at the chhatra.

The discussion was followed by a cultural function performed by the students.



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina inspecting guard of honour at the Annual Police Rally '99 at Razarbagh in the city yesterday. — PID photo

Jessore killing condemned

By Staff Correspondent

Speakers at a rally at the Central Shaheen Minar yesterday strongly condemned the incident in which eight people were killed in bomb blasts at Jessor.

They blamed religious fanatics for the killing and demanded immediate arrest and punishment of the persons responsible.

The powerful explosions at a cultural function of Udichi Shilpi Goshthi also wounded more than 100 others in the early hours of Sunday. The Sammilito Sangskritik Jote organised the protest rally.

Expressing grave concern, the speakers said that it was pre-planned and executed very efficiently.

The incident at Jessor is not isolated from the incidents of recent killing of political leader Kazi Aref and attack on poet Shamsur Rahman, they said.

They also vowed to resist the communal forces and demanded a ban on all religion-based political parties including Jammat-e-Islami, Nezam-e-Islami and Harkatul Jehad.

Presided over by Ramendu Majumder, president of the Jote, the rally was also addressed by Syed Hasan Imam, Kamal Lohani, Ataur Rahman, Shahriar Kabir, A F M Mahbubul Haq, Asaduzzaman Noor, Nasir Uddin Yusuf Bachchu, Shamsuzzaman Khan, Monjurul Ahsan Khan, Golam Qudus, Mohammad Samad and Towhid Reza Noor.

Also yesterday, more socio-cultural and political organisations condemned the incident at Jessor and demanded punishment of the persons responsible. The organisations are Jahangirnagar University Teachers' Association, Bangladesh Mukti Joddha Sangsads central command council, Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal, Bangladesh Gana Shilpi Sangstha, ADAB, Ganatantrik Chhatra Oikya, Bangladesh Lekhak Shibir, and Shikkha and Sangskriti Charcha Kendra.

Renowned dance artiste Protiva performed Bharat Natyam at the inaugural function.

The cultural programme was

inaugurated by State Minister for Youth, Sports and Cultural Affairs Obaidul Quader and Indian Commerce Minister Ramkrishna Hegde at Osmani Memorial Hall.

Renowned dance artiste Protiva performed Bharat Natyam at the inaugural function.

The cultural programme will

remain open from 7 in the evening everyday till March 16 at the Osmani Memorial Hall and the National Museum.

Workshop on 'Practising People's Participation'

Integrated approach to water

resource management stressed

Experts at a workshop in the city yesterday called for an integrated approach to water resource management with a strong bias towards community participation, reports APB.

This view was expressed at a day-long workshop on "Practising People's Participation", organised by LGED's Small Scale Water Resources Development Sector Project (SSWRDSP).

Addressing the opening session, Resident Representative of Asian Development Bank (ADB) Phiphit Supaphiphat said poor sustainability has been a long-debated issue of water control operations in Bangladesh.

He said the government of Bangladesh and the ADB designed the programme as one of a new generation water management project which took into consideration the innovative concept on the development of the sector.

Lack of beneficiary participation and sustainability of water control system has often resulted in the failure of such projects in the past, the ADB Resident Representative observed.

Noted water expert and Country Director of IUCN, Prof Inu Nishat analysed and recommended on various aspects of the project.

Student bodies condemn bomb blasts at Udichi confce

Jahangirnagar University campus protesting the bomb attack.

Bangladesh Chhatra Union (BCU), a left-leaning student organisation, brought out a procession and chanted slogans against the fundamentalists blaming them for the attack.

Later, the BCU held a rally at the Arts Faculty premises which was addressed by general secretary Monishankar Das Gupta and organising secretary Aniruddha Das Anjan.

Condemning the attack the leaders demanded immediate resignation of Home Minister for his failure to tackle the situation.

Sammilita Sangskriti Jote (SSJ) also brought out a silent procession at the evening protest.

SSJ will observe Wednesday as the mourning day to pay tribute to the eight persons killed in the bomb attack.

Ganatantrik Chhatra Oikya (GCO) held a separate rally in front of DUCSU building, demanding the removal of the Police Super of Jessor, the GCO leaders blamed the extremist groups for the explosions and said the country's law and order situation has totally collapsed due to inefficiency of the government.

Our JU Correspondent adds: Different student bodies also brought out separate processions and held rallies on the campus condemning the attack.

Int'l seminar on Mar 13-16

The Public Administrative Reforms Commission (PARC) will hold a 3-day international seminar in the city on March 14-16 to hammer out concrete and consensus recommendations for much-needed administrative restructuring reports UNB.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina is expected to inaugurate the seminar at Sonargaon Hotel on March 14.

Sponsored by UNDP, and assisted by Bangladesh Unnayan Parishad (BUP) and Centre for Policy Dialogue, the seminar, titled "Administrative Reforms for Development of Bangladesh," will be divided into 11 sessions.

Meeting sources said Ershad advised the party's acting leader to keep in contact with the opposition Chief Whip during his trip to Saudi Arabia.

Banks facing liquidity crisis, Khaleda tells British MP

By Staff Correspondent

British parliamentarian One King yesterday met Leader of the Opposition in Parliament Khaleda Zia at her official residence and discussed the latest political and economic situation in Bangladesh.

The BNP chairperson apprised her of the situation and problems relating to the democratic process, a BNP press release said.

The former prime minister said her BNP government had taken various liberal measures to attract foreign investment and got massive response, but the investors have now become frustrated due to "wrong doing of the government and lack of facilities".

The government has even failed to ensure adequate supply of gas, electricity, water and other facilities for the industries. Moreover, the commercial banks are facing a liquidity crisis as the government continued to borrow to meet administrative expenditure. Consequently, the banks have become unable to provide capital to the investors, she said.

Khaleda also told the British MP about "rigging" in the recent Pabna-2 by-election, the fourth demand of the opposition, "incompetence" of the Election Commission and "unilateral" holding of municipal polls.

King told the BNP chief that she would brief the British government on the overall situation in Bangladesh.

BNP leaders Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan, Dr Abdul Moyeen Khan and MM Rezaul Karim were present at the meeting.

Meanwhile, the opposition leader in a statement strongly condemned attack on JCD activists during a demonstration on Dhaka University campus on Sunday. She alleged that a good number of activists, including female workers, were injured in joint attacks of police and Chhatra League men.

Ershad discusses party situation

By Staff Correspondent

Jatiya Party chairman H M Ershad discussed latest situation of his party with party MPs at his Baridhara office yesterday.

Twelve MPs attended the meeting, party sources added.

Ershad left for Saudi Arabia for medical check-up after the meeting. He will stay there for three days.

The JP Chairman at the meeting entrusted Dr T I M Farzle Rabbi to act as acting Parliamentary Party Leader in his absence.

Meeting sources said Ershad advised the party's acting leader to keep in contact with the opposition Chief Whip during his trip to Saudi Arabia.

The government opined that use of force or threat to use of force to dissuade people from carrying on their normal pursuits is a criminal act under the penal laws of the land and the same infringes the fundamental rights of the citizens guaranteed by the Constitution.

The government has a legal and constitutional obligation to maintain law and order in the country and to fulfil the guarantee of fundamental rights given in the Constitution and the government cannot sit idle and be an onlooker, said the affidavit.

The government's measure to prevent the people from being coerced is being met with illegal force by the organisers of hartsals and the government's effort in this regard cannot be termed as illegal by calling it as anti-hartsal activities, the government said.

Even in case people bring procession in opposition to hartsals their activities cannot be termed as criminal acts so long those activities were directed against the criminal activities of pro-hartsal activists and do not exceed the right of private defence of person and property, the affidavit argued.

In fact, if use or threat to use of force by the pro-hartsal activists can be prevented and the people are rendered free to choose between hartsal and no-hartsal, there will be no question of resisting the use or threat to use of force by the pro-hartsal activists and there will be no question of taking cognizance of criminal activity of anti-hartsal activists," the government said.

It was also stated in the affidavit that the law enforcement agency has registered criminal case in respect of offences which has come to its notice and it will be an incorrect statement if it is said that the government is not taking any action against the criminal acts done under the cover of hartsal and during the period of hartsal.