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Ctg Steel Mills
Workers call
hartal in
Ctg today

From Staff Correspondent
CHITTAGONG, May 12: The workers of Chittagong Steel Mills (CSM) observed token hunger strike at Shaheed Minar in the city today protesting the 'pay-off' decision of the government.

They also called a dawn-to-dusk hartal in the city tomorrow to press home their demands including reopening of mills and payment of outstanding salaries.

The protesters at a meeting during the hunger strike called upon the people to make tomorrow's hartal against the government a success.

The meeting was addressed by city BNP president Meer Nasiruddin, City JP president Jahangir Alam, city Jamaat-e-Islami ameer Shahi Alam, Sramik Dal president Nazimuddin and Sramik League general secretary Nurul Islam.

Speakers at the meeting said the mill could make profits if the government had provided Tk 40 crore as running capital, but it turned into a losing concern due to its wrong policy.

Chittagong Education Board Chairman Enayetur Rahman informed UNB that the HSC examinations scheduled for tomorrow would be kept out of the ambit of hartal.

58 Bangladeshis held in India

CALCUTTA, May 12: Police arrested 58 illegal migrants from Bangladesh from a train that would have taken them to India's financial capital, a police officer said today, reports AP.

The Bangladeshis boarded the train at the border Indian village of Maslandpur after crossing over the India-Bangladesh land border Tuesday undetected. They included 18 men, 20 women and 20 children, police said.

They didn't carry any travel documents. Their Indian co-passengers on the train became suspicious and called police at Barasat, a town 35 kilometers north of Calcutta, said SP Das, deputy inspector-general of police.

The Indian escort also was arrested. Das said.



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Prayer Timings

May 13

	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	4-15	4-20
Zohr	12-45	1-30
Asr	4-45	4-55
Maghrib	6-30	6-33
Esha	7-55	8-10

Source: Islamic Foundation

13 more lose bank directorship

By M Shamsur Rahman

Thirteen more directors of nine commercial banks, including the chairman of City Bank, lost their directorship after the High Court yesterday discharged their petitions challenging notices of their removal.

Those who lost their seats are Chairman M A Hashem of City Bank, M N Amin, Dr Z H Gazi and Ainul Huq of Social Investment Bank, Md Abdul Awal of National Bank Ltd, Aminul Huq Chowdhury of IFIC, Khushi Akthar and M A Khaleq of Prime Bank, Ramjul Siraj of Arab Bangladesh Bank Ltd, Abdullah Al Ahsan and Rashedur Rahman of Dhaka Bank, Bahauddin Mohammad Yussuf of Al Arafah Bank and Naser Kader of NCCBL.

Around 50 directors of different commercial banks were served with notices under section 17 of Banks Companies Act as they defaulted on repaying their bank loans. They were asked to repay their due loans within two months from receipt of the notices or vacate their offices as directors.

Some of the directors vacated their offices and some repaid their outstanding loans within the stipulated time.

Thirty-six directors went to the High Court and obtained a stay order against the bank notices and continued to enjoy their positions as directors.

The cases had been stayed for over one year by the High Court. In February, these cases came to the Division Bench

comprising Justice Kazi Ebadul Huq and Moazzam Hossain and are now being disposed of.

With the latest ones, as many as 29 cases have been disposed of with the removal of these 13 directors. Earlier this week, 12 defaulting directors of five banks lost their directorship after the same court discharged their petitions.

Petitions of four United Commercial Banks Ltd directors were declared infructuous as the bank had withdrawn its notices.

Stay order

UNB adds: The Supreme Court yesterday stayed operation of the High Court verdict that costs four persons, including

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Step down, sack OC, demands Opposition

By Staff Correspondent

Hundreds of opposition activists yesterday staged demonstrations to protest police assault on pickets, MPs, female activists and supporters and journalists in the capital during Tuesday's half-day hartal.

Witnesses said the BNP, Jatiya Party, Jamaat-e-Islami and Islamic Oikya Jote held separate rallies and brought out processions in different parts of the city chanting anti-government slogans. BNP held rally at Muktangan, JP at Kalabagan, Jamaat at Paltan and IOJ at Paltan Mosque.

Leaders and activists of BNP and its front organisations started gathering at Muktangan from 4 pm and held a big rally chaired by city BNP convener

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Assault on MPs and journalists not on police probe terms

By Staff Correspondent

The terms of reference for the one-man committee to probe the police excesses at Bijoynagar in the city during Tuesday's hartal do not include two of the three specific offences - beating up of MPs and journalists getting injured in the incident," Hawlader told The Daily Star last night.

But, he said in response to a Daily Star query, "I have the scope to see everything that had happened at that time, although the issue of the journalists is not specifically mentioned in the TOR."

The committee comprising Abul Kashem Hawlader, DIG of Special Branch of Police, was formed on Tuesday. It is supposed to submit report to the Inspector General of Police by May 19.

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Opposition plans hartal the day Larma takes over

The BNP-led opposition plans a countrywide hartal the day when installation of interim CHT Regional Council Chairman Shantu Larma will take place.

Larma, who took charge of the council in the capital yesterday to give the December 2, 1997 CHT peace agreement an institutional shape, is scheduled to take office in Rangamati in the last week of May.

The liaison body of the alliance, who are opposing the peace accord of the government with the insurgent leaders, discussed the hartal at a meeting yesterday.

Final decision about hartal will be taken when we will meet again on Friday," a liaison leader emerging from the meeting told UNB.

The liaison committee agreed on principle to make a much-talked-about joint declaration of the alliance fixing the final objective of their movement.

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Bangladesh stumble in pre-WC run

Sports Reporter

The impressive run of the Bangladeshi cricket team was halted yesterday by Northamptonshire who handed the ICC Trophy champions a 44-run defeat in their last warm-up match at Northampton.

The defeat, Bangladesh's first after their enthralling victories over Sussex and Middlesex, has certainly come as a disappointment for the World Cup debutants ahead of their first match against New Zealand on May 17.

Bangladesh, with a couple of changes in the team, eventually paid the penalty of playing only one front line seamer as Northants, deciding to bat after winning the toss, went on to score a commanding 279 for five in the stipulated 50 overs.

In reply, Bangladesh could manage 235 before being all out in 48 overs.

Bangladesh, however, showed signs of an inspiring start

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Larma takes charge, meets PM today

By Special Correspondent

Jyotirindri Bodhipriyo Larma took charge of the interim Regional Council (RC) for the Chittagong Hill Tracts yesterday.

He is expected to meet Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina today, according to sources.

JB Larma, Chairman of Parbatta Chhatram Jana Sanghati Samity (PCJSS), signed a letter issued by the CHT Affairs Ministry appointing him Chairman of the RC at the state guest house Meghna yesterday morning.

The letter was carried back to CHT Affairs Minister Kalparanjan Chakma by Larma's close aides, Gautam Chakma and Rupayan Dewan.

The RC Chairman will enjoy the status of a state minister.

Taking over charge by JB Larma ends nearly eight months of impasse after the government appointed him Chairman of the 22-member interim RC on September 6 last year following signing of the peace agreement with PCJSS on December 2, 1997. He had refused to take charge saying that some important issues in the

hills remained unresolved.

A grand ceremony at Rangamati on May 27 will mark installation of the RC. It will be attended by tribal headmen and elders, Union Parishad members, political leaders and guests from Dhaka, the sources said.

JB Larma, who arrived in the capital on Monday, is expected to leave for Khagrachhari sometime next week, the sources added.

BSS adds: "I am very delighted, a much desired process has been accomplished today.... It has commenced a new era of development in the hills," a beaming Kalparanjan Chakma told reporters after accepting

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WDB contradicts

The Water Development Board has contradicted parts of our story titled "Armed terrorists attack Rajshahi WDB office." The following is the WDB version.

Attention of Bangladesh Water Development Board has been drawn to a double column news item published in the front page of your esteemed daily on Wednesday captioned "Armed terrorists attack Rajshahi WDB office."

A portion of the news item is not based on facts and is likely to create confusion in the

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The Daily Star Star Sport goes 4-page COLOUR from tomorrow



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Yeltsin fires govt on the eve of his impeachment

By Mahfuz Anam

How dare a police officer says that he has orders from high-ups to shoot at pickets and journalists? How dare the police attack and manhandle elected members of parliament? How can it happen at a time when a party, which itself had been a victim of such police brutality for years, is in power? Has home minister Mohammad Nasim forgotten the police attack on Matla Chowdhury, which rendered her unconscious during Khaleda Zia's days as the Prime Minister? But then such is the nature of our politics and of our political parties that they all become brutal and fascistic when they go to power. They do the very things they have condemned others for doing.

There are three issues here that we feel compelled to raise. One, that of the freedom of the press, of journalists, and especially photojournalists to do their work. Two, that of the

right of political parties and of their supporters to stage street demonstrations. How can police beat demonstrators and pull at the sari of a woman who was participating in it? The third concerns the status of elected members of parliament vis a vis police. All these issues are fundamental to any functioning democracy.

Why did the police attack photojournalists? Why were rubber bullets fired at them? When photo journalists protested the police attack, the Officer-in-charge (OC) of the Motijheel police station boastfully declared "You are protesting the beating, you have permission from high-ups to shoot at pickets and journalists."

Freedom of the press and of journalists must be protected at all cost. They are the society's

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ding inability to revive the economy.

"One has the feeling the government's activity on the economy came down simply to negotiations with the International Monetary Fund, as if curing Russia's economy depended solely on the handing out of Western loans," he said, speaking firmly but slightly slurring his words.

MOSCOW, May 12: Russia's State Duma outraged by Yeltsin's decision to sack Primakov, passed a non-binding declaration today urging the Kremlin leader to resign. The declaration was passed by 243 votes to 20, reports Reuters.

The situation is once again far from stability — in the economy and in politics." Yeltsin said on television.

The West said it did not expect Primakov's removal to alter Russia's line in the Kosovo crisis, although Yeltsin threatened to end cooperation if its views were overlooked.

Markets in Russia and abroad tumbled on news of the sacking, which Yeltsin said in a 10-minute broadcast was prompted by Primakov's plod-

ding inability to revive the economy.

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He said the prospects of Yeltsin's impeachment by the State Duma lower house of parliament "remain the same as before the sacking of Primakov."