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Attempt to impeach Yeltsin fails

MOSCOW, May 15: A Communist-led attempt to impeach Boris Yeltsin failed today as lawmakers backed away from a showdown with the president who has dominated modern Russia since its birth, reports AP.

The lower chamber of parliament or State Duma failed to pass any of the five impeachment charges after three days of often acrimonious debate.

The closest vote came on a motion accusing Yeltsin of starting the Chechen War, which got 283 votes of the 300 votes needed to begin impeachment proceedings to remove Yeltsin, according to officials reports.

Communist and other hard-line deputies had predicted certain triumph after working for almost a year to impeach Yeltsin. But centrist and nationalist deputies apparently decided to back Yeltsin because of their greater opposition to the Communists.

The results were read out to a hushed chamber after a day of arguing and wrangling over the voting procedure. It appeared that just 348 deputies took part in the voting, with dozens of others staying away or boycotting the session.

The most difficult political crisis which could have developed has been overcome. Reason has prevailed," premier-designate Sergei Stepashin said after the vote, according to the Interfax news agency. A few liberal deputies grinned widely as it became apparent that the impeachment attempt had failed. Communist deputies were silent, their heads bowed as they wrote down the results on each of the five impeachment counts.

Reuter adds: Opponents charged Yeltsin with illegally dissolving the Soviet Union in 1991, violently crushing a rebellion by hardline supporters of the Soviet-era parliament in 1993, starting an ill-fated war against the rebel region of Chechnya in 1994, ruining the armed forces and launching what foes describe as "genocide against the Russian people."

Impeachment under Russia's 1993 constitution is a vaguely shaped multi-stage process also involving the two top courts and the Federation Council upper house.

Until Yeltsin's decision to sack compromise Prime Minister Yevgeny Primakov on Wednesday, most parliamentary experts believed that the Duma had little chance to secure the needed 300 votes for any of the charges.

Minutes before deputies began voting, the Kremlin announced Yeltsin had undergone routine medical checks earlier today and had then returned to his Rus country residence outside Moscow.

Another report says, Yeltsin watched the parliamentary debate on impeachment charges against him from his country residence today and did not intend to turn up in Moscow at the weekend, the Kremlin said.

The president is fully aware of all developments, a Kremlin spokeswoman said by telephone, quoting Yeltsin's press secretary, Dmitry Yakushkin.

Zimbabwe

From Page 1

on 62 by the 13th over.

But Zimbabwe then hit back as four wickets fell for 25 runs, making it 87 for four.

The innings was, however, shored up by Alpesh Vadher. Coming in at number six, he cracked 54, putting on 84 in 22 overs with Maurice Oduombe.

Vadher delighted the vocal Kenyan supporters, coming down the pitch to the spinners and taking on pace bowler Heath Streak by dispatching him for six over mid-wicket.

He fell in the 45th over, skying a drive to long-on off Streak.

Johnson, who played for Leicestershire two years ago, gave Zimbabwe the ideal start in reply, taking the leading role in an 81-run opening stand with Grant Flower.

The pair smashed Martin Suij out of the attack as his first two overs went for 19 runs.

Paul Strang replaced Flower, coming in as an early pinch-hitter, and blasted 29 runs off 21 balls before he falling with the StoXeo0m1119. Johnson went four runs later, holding out to mid-wicket in the 21st over and Murray Goodwin soon followed to make it 147 for four.

But skipper Alastair Campbell and Andy Flower put on 66 to ensure victory.

Referring to current ethnic conflicts in many parts of the world, she said sectarian and ethnic clashes must, like all other conflicts, be halted.

Amidst cheers from thousands of peace activists at the assembly, the prime minister said: "We in Bangladesh are committed to peace fully and unconditionally. This is a constitutional requirement."

Making a flashback on a horrific experience of genocide, rape, women, arson and exodus of people during Bangladesh's Liberation War in 1971, Hasina said that human tragedy of unprecedented severity made the Bengalis abhor war and cherish peace.

"We are a party to CTBT, NPT and anti-personnel land mine Convention and are, so far, the only nation in our Subcontinent to do so."

Hasina told the meet that her government believes in poverty alleviation, economic and social development, eradication of hunger and ignorance, empowerment of women and securing child rights.

Explaining the landmark peace accord signed on December 2, 1997 to end bush war in the tribal insurgency-torn Chittagong Hill Tracts, she said the peace deal was broached without any mediation or intervention from outside.

"This makes it unique. We do not know of any other instance, at least in recent times, where a conflict has been resolved without any external intervention."

Over sixty-three thousand

refugees from across the border have all returned, she said, adding: "Peace holds firmly in Chittagong Hill Tracts."

Allaying any skepticism that may come from critics at home, the Prime Minister said the accord was signed "without compromising sovereignty and territorial integrity of the country."

Programme are under way for developing the hill tracts, now open to everyone after many, many years, she told the peace conference.

Stressing democratic polity for attaining peace, Hasina said a military ruler or a dictator would care a little for peace. A dictator has little concern for people for he does not have to depend on their support for staying in power.

The Prime Minister said if peace is to be the expectation of the next century, democracy must be practised and democratic values and norms developed all over the world.

Police, extortionists trade fire at Maniknagar: 1 held

By Staff Correspondent

A gang of extortionists traded gunshots with police at Maniknagar under Shabujbagh thana in the city yesterday morning.

Police arrested one extortionist — identified as Titu — from the spot.

According to police, a gang of about six extortionists, went to a house in Maniknagar area and demanded toll at about 9 am.

Acting on a tip-off, a team of Shabujbagh police rushed to the spot. Sensing the presence of police, the extortionists exploded a number of crackers and at one stage fired a number of gunshots.

Police replied with five rounds of shots in which Titu, one of the extortionists, sustained minor injuries. Titu was arrested while his accomplices managed to escape the scene. Shabujbagh police took Titu into their custody.

A case was filed with Shabujbagh thana in connection with the incident yesterday.



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina addressing the concluding session of Hague Peace Conference yesterday. — PID photo

PM: Peace fundamental right

From Page 1

called for cutbacks in war budget, saying that if a fraction of the amounts spent on war and war preparations had been saved to fund human welfare, a dramatic change would have taken place in quality of human life.

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SA squeeze

From Page 1

"I often write 10-dulkar so it was quite nice to wear the 10 shirt," the master batsman said.

Tendulkar, who has lost 13 pounds (six kilos) since suffering back spasms during the home series against Pakistan, curbed his normal aggressive style against the new ball.

He hit a lone boundary when he edged an intended glide off Klusener to wicket-keeper Mark Boucher.

David and Ganguly took advantage of the easy wicket and the lightning outfield on the small ground to score steadily against the much-vaunted South African attack.

The pair took the score over 197 for one by the 42nd over when Klusener broke through again by bowling David as the batsman attempted a flick to leg.

SA squeeze

From Page 1

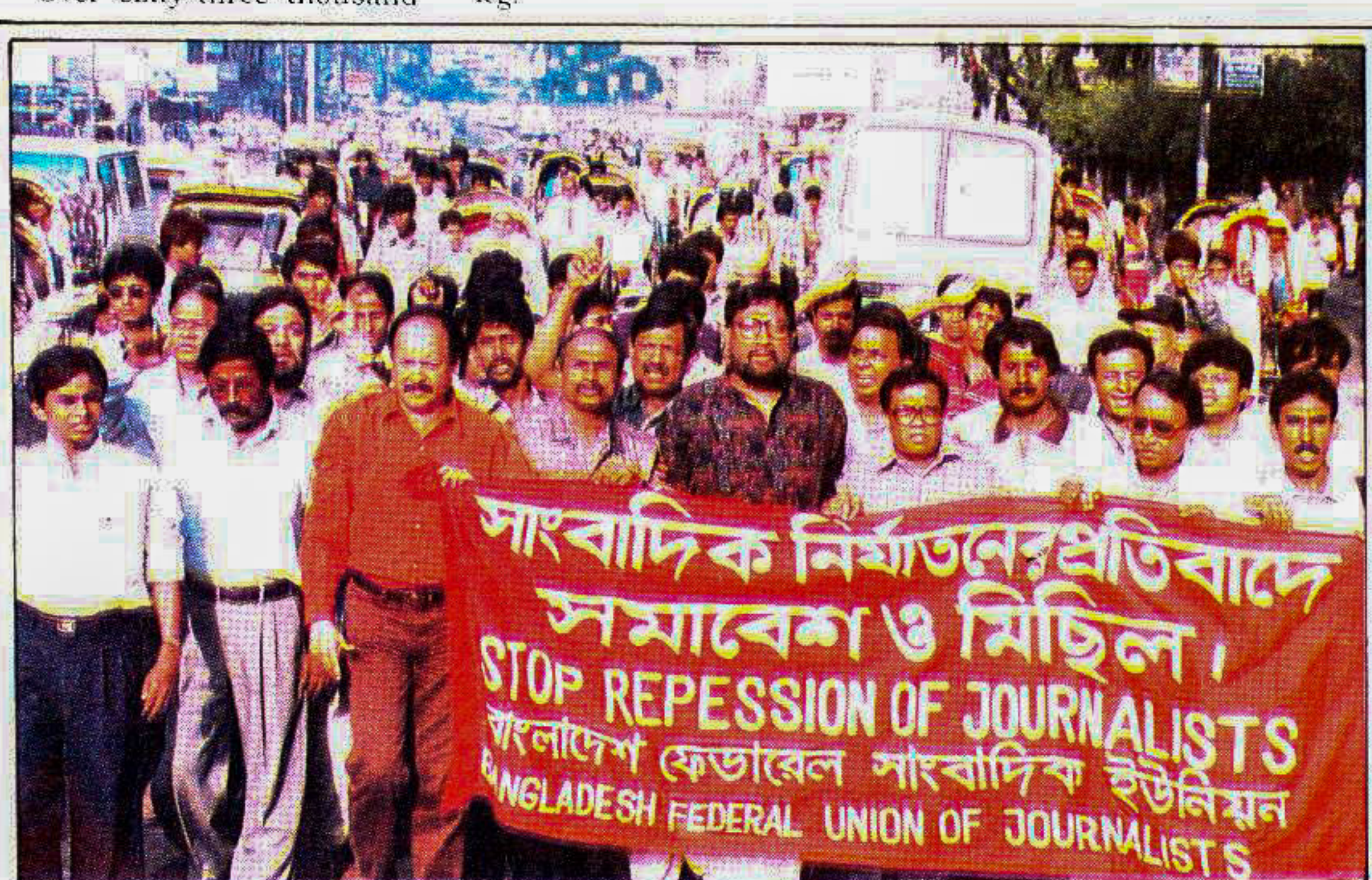
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Bangladesh Federal Union of Journalists (BFUJ) brought out a procession in the city yesterday protesting repression on journalists. — Star photo

Ban on march thru' JMB goes

From Page 1

cern over the developments and warned the government and opposition leaders against confrontational agenda.

Commerce and Industry Minister Tofail Ahmed, Education Minister A S H K Sadeq, Home Minister Mohammad Nasim, Rahmat Ali MP represented the government in the ground-breaking talks with the BNP secretary general Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan MP and M Morshed Khan MP.

Later, the leaders of both sides gave a press conference to announce the deal after the 75-minute meeting at the Secretariat office of the home minister.

Good senses have prevailed upon them," BNP chief Khaleda Zia said, thanking the government for withdrawing the ban.

"Though it will not confess in public, the government has realised its mistake and the injustice done to us, and therefore has lifted the illegal ban..." she told a news conference at her Minto Road residence after the negotiation.

BNP is now set to start at 9am today its three-day "road march" to Panchagarh from Dhaka.

Khaleda Zia will lead the

are likely to be in the caravan," said Fazlur Rahman Fatma MP, a coordinator of the BNP road march.

Another coordinator, Mirza Abbas however said the number of transports including cars, jeeps, buses and micro-buses to start from the Paltan Maidan would not be less than 1,000. Abbas estimated some 4,000 participants in the march and said more would join at different places on the way.

Both the coordinators alleged the government was "requisitioning" vehicles, making it difficult for the BNP to hire buses and cars for the journey. They also accused the government of not allowing them to procure fuel.

The party has made it mandatory for more than 300 top leaders to take part in the march, while participation of others is voluntary, subject to arrangement of cars by themselves.

During the three-day campaign, covering nine districts, the BNP chief is scheduled to speak at as many as 25 points. She will stop at Bogra and Dinajpur towns and again in Panchagarh town before her return to the capital on May 19.

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Dhaka to host peace confce of Asian MPs

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday said the Jatiya Sangsad would convene a conference of parliamentarians from across Asia in a bid to promote peace and cooperation, reports BSS.

She made the disclosure in her speech to the concluding session of the Hague Peace Conference that was held at the Netherlands capital yesterday.

She said the conference, to be dubbed as, Asian Parliamentarians' Conference for Peace and Cooperation, would be organised later this year.

"As far as we know, no such conference has been organised ever before," she said.

The conference, she said, "would try to identify the crucial role of parliamentarians in creating and promoting an atmosphere of peace in Asia."

Another report adds: Hasina also declared that she would write to all world leaders seeking their support for the 'Hague Agenda' for peace and justice for the 21st century.

Mind over matter

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insurance and panache and the Indian total looked to be good enough to test the considerable batting strengths of South Africa. The brilliance of Jonty Rhodes deprived Ganguly from reaching his hundred and some valuable runs thereafter. Some loose shots and very tight out-cricking by the South Africans did not allow the Indians to run away with the match. The difference between the two teams was starkly obvious in the last ten overs. Whereas the Indians curled up and died, the South Africans prospered at the death.

South Africa is a very mechanical side, at times bordering on the robotic. They are programmed to perform, each player in his own very tight way. Their programmed software ran the risk of a collapse as India threatened to match them ball for ball, but for hit. It was heady stuff, but really too good to be true. Two early wickets had rocked them on their heels but Jacques Kallis held the innings together with a very clinical 94. Jonty Rhodes then put the issue beyond doubt with some sharp running between the wickets and typically unconventional batting. The kind that wins matches.

India, as per the form book were expected to lose, but they did have the chance to throw the form book out the window. That they could not should not worry them too much. They have found reserves of fighting qualities in some of the key players and that should serve well during the rest of the month. If Azharuddin can recover from the trauma by the time the next match comes around, the Indians could still have their say on the outcome of this competition.

The Kenyans in the meanwhile succumbed tamely to no one's surprise. Zimbabwe can take heart from the fact that they have two easy points in the bag. They are a team that could be lying in ambush for some of the big boys in this group. After two days this group is wide open and waiting for any kind of script to be written about it.

From Page 1

backed by Gopalganj group, a Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) faction, was ruling the hall for a long time and captured a number of rooms of the dormitory.

The hall authorities yesterday sealed some rooms including 203, 216 and 219 where the outsiders used to stay at night.

Meanwhile, a section of students of the hall welcomed the Vice Chancellor Prof AK Azad Chowdhury with bouquet following a procession, when he went on a visit at the Arts Building and Lecture Theatre yesterday morning.

The students hailed the VC for his recent initiative to drive out the terrorists and outsiders from the campus. Pro-VC and proctor of the university were also present here.

Ramma police said that the arrested were produced before the court yesterday.

No case was been lodged till filling of this report last night.

BNP shows black flag to Hasina in the Hague

BNP staged a demonstration against the government in the Hague, the Netherlands, where Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina attended the peace conference, according to a message received here last night, reports UNB.

Several hundred BNP activists living there staged demonstration and chanted slogans against the government.

Alamgir Kabir, president of the Netherlands BNP unit, Dr Abdul Malek, president of France unit, Mohidur Rahman of USA unit and Mabbub Alam Chowdhury of Belgium unit who led the demonstration showed black flags to the Prime Minister when she entered the conference hall and left it.

They staged demonstration to protest police action on BNP MPs, journalists and stripping off a woman leader in Dhaka during May 11 hartal.

They also handed over a memorandum to the UN Secretary General Kofi Annan.

DU hall

From Page 1

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Pakistan for N-talks

SINGAPORE, May 15: Pakistan hopes soon to resume talks with India to reach an agreement on preventing a nuclear arms race, Pakistani Foreign Minister Sartaj Aziz said today, reports AFP.

He said the dialogue on a "strategic restraint regime" following the signing of the Lahore agreement in February was suspended last month when the Indian government fell. Elections will be held in September-October.

JCD-Shibir clash at RU: 8 injured

RAJSHAHI UNIVERSITY: May 15: A clash between Jatiyatadabi Chhatra Dal (JCD) and Islami Chhatra Shibir (ICS) left eight injured on the campus on Friday, reports AP.

Two JCD workers were arrested following the clash which ensued at the university's Mother Bakhsh Hall over a trifle matter at about 3 pm, campus sources said.

Of the injured, four were admitted to the University medical centre and Rajshahi Medical College Hospital (RMCH).

Khaleda: Dialogue

From Page 1

through dialogue and discussion," she said.

The former prime minister was addressing a press conference at her official residence in the city yesterday.

Begum Zia said: It is the duty of the party in power to take steps to bring the opposition to the dialogue table to find out a solution. The responsibility of the government is much more than the opposition. It is also a matter with the government how they will start the dialogue.

Replying to a question on creation of a favourable atmosphere, the BNP chief said her party will sit for a dialogue if the government agrees to discuss the opposition's five-point demand and wants to resolve the problems.

She said the government had earlier signed a four-point agreement with the opposition but did not implement it. "Later we placed the five-point demand. Now it is the duty of the government to take initiative to meet those."

On her party's demand for early parliamentary elections, she said it is possible to resolve all problems through discussion.

Begum Zia thanked the government for withdrawing the ban on crossing the Jamuna Bridge during BNP's Dhaka-Panchagarh road march, beginning today. "I thank them as good sense prevailed upon them," she said.

She said the opposition announced the road march programme after the success of all

previous programmes and people's response to those. But this time, the road march is not like the previous CHT long march, she said.

About the withdrawal of ban, the Opposition Leader said, "They (govt) will not admit publicly, but they understood that they did a mistake and was doing something unjust by trying to obstruct a democratic programme." Begum Zia added.

"We announced various programmes as alternatives to hartal. Programmes like mass procession, mass hunger strike, road march and procession of MPs were never implemented by any other party in the country. All these programmes were aimed at avoiding hartal," she said.

But, she said, her party will have no alternative but to go for hartal if peaceful programmes are obstructed by the government. "And this time there will be no half-day or one-day hartal. The duration will be increased and government will have to bear responsibility for the consequences. So we hope it will not hinder our constitutional and democratic programmes."

Referring to Jamuna Bridge, she said the whole credit for its construction goes to BNP because it had mobilised funds and completed 80 per cent of the work while it was in power.

Awami League never wanted to construct Jamuna Bridge and therefore as they had founded a hartal on the day its foundation was laid "So BNP's love for the bridge is much more than any others."

Pakistan slam

From Page 1

with 100,000 for this type of match.

"We are keeping potential supporters away from the game," he said. "These are tiny grounds."

Apart from test grounds, many of the matches are being played in stadiums with a capacity of less than 10,000. Extra seating providing a few hundred extra seats has been erected at many of the grounds.

India's game today against South Africa is being played at Hove which holds just 6,000 spectators. Thousands of Indian fans wanting tickets have been disappointed.

Gazing at the cloudy skies as Pakistani players bundled themselves up in thick jumpers, Zafar said it was unwise to have staged the tournament so early in the English summer.

Pakistan's three warm-up matches have been severely affected by rain and Zafar said the players had been deprived of crucial practice. A net today was their first serious chance to practice outdoors, he said.

Foreign oil cos

From Page 1

as per contracts, the source pointed out.

"Unfortunately, the relevant provisions of the PSCs are hardly being followed here," said a local official of an oil company.

The oil company executive who admitted that he did not have a work permit gave an explanation why there was lesser number of local employees. "We would love to take Bangladeshis if we found enough qualified people. Unfortunately, there are not many. A lot of qualified Bangladeshis are working in the Middle Eastern oil companies and they are not interested in coming back. So when we need a qualified person, we bring him from abroad for a short term," he said.

Most of these foreigners have "business visa" which is valid for three months. They usually make a short visit to a nearby country and come back with new business visa, he mentioned.

"I think the government should take up the issue seriously and change the work permit procedures so that foreigners can obtain permit easily and work here in a proper way," an official said.

A view from the Gully

From Page 1

tain by demolishing the top and middle order of the Lankans with his lefty-seamers. He might not be as lethal as Wasim Akram but was as brilliant and effective. Stewart's decision to field on a hard and bouncy wicket on a cloudy day was probably prompted by the fact that he had five seamers who could make best use of the wicket first and also be in an advantageous position had their be rain interruptions and re-fixing of targets letter on. In either case he was proven justified.

The opening pair of Sri Lanka said it all. They were not going for pinch hitting instead they would approach the bowl-

ing on its merit. Jayasuriya was groping for the ball as he looked like a shadow of his past. He was tormented by a luckless Darren Gough who should have accounted for the out of form Jayasuriya. Mahanama ended his misery by an 'agricultural' shot and Atapattu and De Silva left after catch practice. Jayasuriya's painstaking 29 in 52 deliveries clearly indicated that he was no longer the same player.

The repair work was left to little Kaluwitharana and skipper Ranatunga. The diminutive wicket-keeper took the English attack by the sword and his copybook strokeplay was a real treat for the weary eyes after a long lapse of time. His brilliant knock, which could be called 'Kalu-Ki-Tarana' (Song of Kalu), ended abruptly as he grew impatient.

The modest Lanka total was no problem for the Englishmen who went about the whole business with professional dexterity. Their approach to the problems were circumspect. Once again the weakness of the Lankan attack was brought to the fore by Stewart and inform batman Graeme Hick.

The English captain who was on a run-drought this year produced a patient innings brilliantly supported by the tall Hick. Inexperienced Upashanta behaved like a 'ashanta' (restless) boy and Jayasuriya came for a bit of a stick. England were a superior team on Friday and the champions should give them all credit for their victory.

CU clash

From Page 1

Syndicate sources said the authorities might close the varsity for five days from tomorrow.

Meanwhile, Chhatra Shibir called a strike on the campus tomorrow (Sunday). In a memorandum to VC Abdul Mannan tonight, it also demanded arrest of Jubair's killers within 24 hours. Otherwise, they warned, tougher action would be taken.

Gunshots were heard from BCL captured Shah Jalal, Shah Amanat, Suhrawardy and Abdur Rob Halls and Shibir captured FR and Alao Halls, sources said.

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