

Thousands link hands to show no-trust in govt

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Tens of thousands of people locked hands forming a cross-country human wall yesterday to express 'no-confidence' in the government in an unprecedented way with the Awami League (AL)-led opposition parties describing it as a 'stunning success' reflecting people's desire for an immediate step-down of the present rulers.

The 1000-kilometre human wall began at the south tip of the country,

Teknaf, and cut through 18 districts and two metropolitan cities -- Dhaka and Chittagong -- ending at Tentulia in the extreme north.

Organisers claimed over 50 lakh people joined the hour-long demonstration from 3:00pm to 4:00pm supporting the demand for an end to the BNP-Jamaat-led coalition rule. The government and ruling alliance men prevented about 50 lakh more from taking part in the programme across the country, they alleged.

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Attack at Bogra

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Around 200 people including women were injured in attacks by the ruling BNP men who reportedly teamed up with police to prevent the opposition workers from forming human wall in Bogra and Gaibandha yesterday.

In Natore and Netrokona, armed cadres loyal to the alliance government barred the opposition supporters from joining the human wall while in Chittagong police snatched loudspeakers from the opposition men and prevented them from participating in the demonstrations

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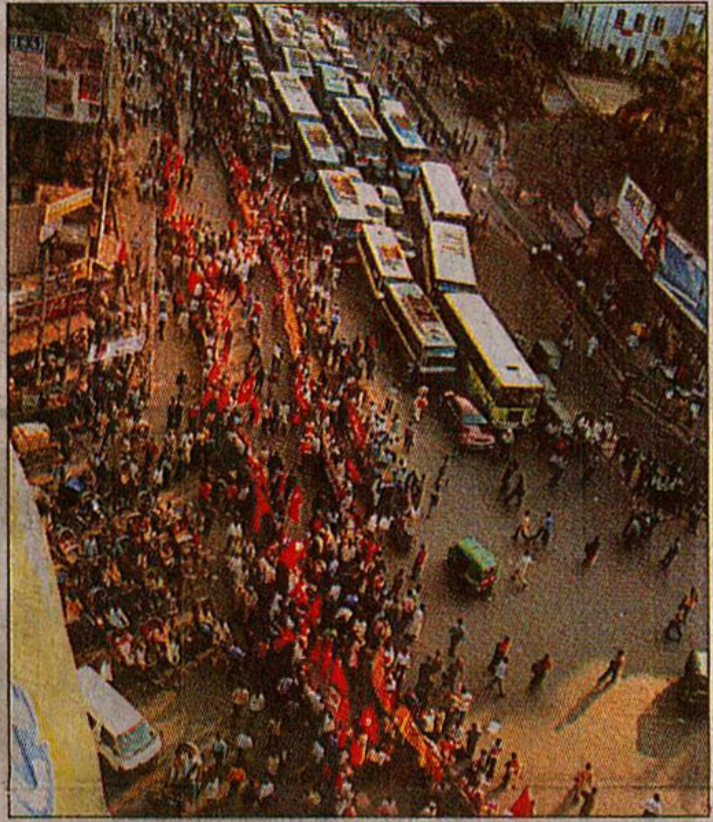
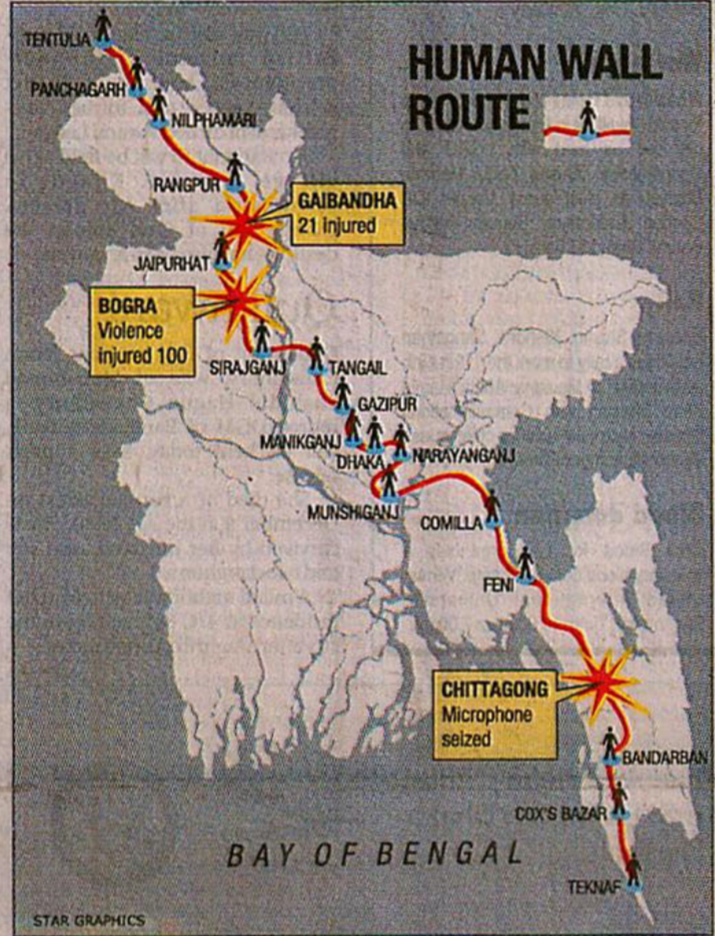


PHOTO: STAR

The Teknaf-to-Tentulia no-confidence human wall staged by the Awami League-led 14-party opposition combine runs through Purana Paltan along the Secretariat in downtown Dhaka yesterday.



STAR GRAPHICS

JUDICIARY SEPARATION SC blasts nine bureaucrats for distorting orders

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Supreme Court yesterday blasted nine government officials for distorting its orders on separation of the judiciary and questioned the government's sincerity in this respect.

The nine appeared in person before the full bench of the Appellate Division headed by Chief Justice Syed JR Mudassar Husain and sought unconditional apology for having doctored the court order.

The court also questioned the sincerity of the government regarding separation of the judiciary. There is a lack of sincerity in the matter," the chief justice observed.

The officials were served with contempt notice for attending an inter-ministerial meeting on November 1 that changed the Supreme Court's draft rule regarding the service of judicial officers.

Before this, the cabinet committee had already approved the rule that was also sent to the president through the prime minister for gazette notification.

The bureaucrats at the November 1 meeting inserted some opinions that offended the court. The court yesterday observed that the president and parliament were supposed to use their wisdom to amend the draft rules that the court made. Instead, the bureaucrats audaciously poked their nose into the matter.

The court wanted to know who is responsible for forming the inter-ministerial committee. Advocate TH Khan, counsel for seven of the nine officials, said the officials did not wittingly convene the meeting, rather a letter from the Prime Minister's Office on October 27 to the establishment ministry

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Nod to Tk 1,429cr flood rehab plan

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Executive Committee on National Economic Council (Ecne) meeting presided over by Prime Minister Khaleda Zia yesterday approved a two-year massive flood rehabilitation programme worth Tk 1,429 crore.

The Asian Development Bank

(ADB) will provide a loan of Tk 1,045 crore (US \$180 million) for the programme set to start in January while the government will provide the rest.

The ADB will provide \$55.27 million for improvement of rural infrastructure, \$25.23 million for city, \$55.5 million for roads, \$15

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CRACKDOWN ON ILLEGAL WORKERS 3,000 Bangladeshis return home

RAFIQ HASAN

Around 3,000 Bangladeshi workers staying in Malaysia without valid documents have returned home since the beginning of November in the wake of Kuala Lumpur's threat of a crackdown on illegal foreign work-

ers. The Bangladesh Embassy in Malaysia issued 1,800 travel passes during this period for those Bangladeshi workers who lost passports or stayed in the country even after expiry of their visa, reports

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Sundarbans to Sunamganj human wall Dec 30

Hartal in Bogra tomorrow

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The mainstream opposition parties announced another cross-country human wall from the Sundarbans in Khulna to Sunamganj on December 30 following what they said was the "stunning success" of yesterday's programme.

The parties will also stage demonstrations across the country tomorrow.

Opposition leaders, including Awami League (AL) Chief Sheikh Hasina thanked countrymen for making yesterday's human wall programme a success and said tens of thousands of people who had braved all sorts of repressive measures on the part of the government joined the programme and showed

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Contempt hearing against Prothom Alo, Bhorer Kagoj begins

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Counsels for the two dailies facing contempt charges for running reports on an additional High Court judge's alleged certificate tampering yesterday said that the reports were not baseless and that the dailies informed people of the matter on the basis of official documents.

The High Court asked them whether the intention (of the reports) could be an ingredient of contempt of court. The court further asked whether truth can be a defence against contempt, meaning that truth or falsity of the report was

not the issue.

"The respondents' actions have not been motivated by any malice or any intention to bring the authority and administration of the law into disrespect or disregard," Dr Kamal Hossain, counsel for the Daily Prothom Alo editor, publisher and reporter, said in his submission during hearing of the case.

The dailies, instead, acted throughout in utmost good faith and with the intention of upholding the integrity and independence of the courts. As representatives of a free

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Tigers toil as Sachin equals ton record

SPORTS REPORTER

Sachin Tendulkar equalled Sunil Gavaskar's record of 34 Test centuries as India took a handsome 164-run lead in the first innings of the first Test yesterday.

The master Indian batsman, playing his 119th Test, remained unbeaten on 159 as India reached 348-7 at stumps on the second day at the Bangabandhu National Stadium in reply to Bangladesh's 184. Anil Kumble was batting with him at the crease when bad light stopped play with three overs remaining.

He also became only the third batsman after Australian Steve Waugh and South Africa's Gary Kirsten to score Test centuries against all Test nations.

But Tendulkar, who smashed 23 boundaries in 272 balls in a contrasting innings spanning just over

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