

Rebels claim successes

NEW DELHI, Monday. — Conflicting reports of the struggle between the Army and the separatist movement today made it difficult to assess the situation in East Pakistan.

The official Radio Pakistan said last night that calm prevailed in all major towns and the countryside with the Army in control.

But clandestine radio stations, said to be manned by Awami League supporters of the break-away leader Sheik Mujibur Rehman, asserted that fierce fighting was still in progress and claimed the capture of several key towns from West Pakistan troops.

Radio Pakistan said the curfew in Dacca would be lifted again today from 7 am to 5 pm.

Banks were told to reopen and workers asked to return to their jobs.

The radio spoke of

trouble in Khulna, about 32 miles from the Indian border and attributed it to a "mob of miscreants." Travellers reaching India said the martial-law administrator there had been seriously wounded.

The official radio also said that the situation in Chittagong, East Pakistan's second port, was improving.

According to the Army-controlled Radio Dacca, several thousand troops had been flown to Chittagong and the martial-law authorities had asked for more reinforcements from West Pakistan.

"Free Bangla Radio" said Sheik Mujibur would guide from Chittagong the provisional government of Bangla Desh (Bengali Nation), headed by Major Jia Khan.

But Radio Pakistan reiterated that Sheik Mujibur was under arrest.

The separatist "Liberation Army," through

unconfirmed reports reaching India claimed to be holding Chittagong, Comilla, Rangpur, Saidpur and to have seized Army cantonments at Jessore and Khulna.

They were resisting in the face of severe shelling and bombing, these reports said.

"Free Bangla Radio" appealed to the freedom-loving and democratic nations of the world to help Sheik Mujibur in his struggle for freedom.

The radio said: "Never in the history of mankind has such brutality been perpetrated on unarmed people as by the barbarous Punjabi troops in Bangla Desh."

The East Pakistan martial law administration today froze all bank accounts held by the Awami League and declared that it had ceased to exist as a political party.

(AAP-Reuter)

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