

# Gauhati businessmen observe strike

FROM OUR STAFF CORRESPONDENT

GAUHATI, NOV. 21.—Even as the business community in Gauhati observed a 12-hour hartal to protest the "excesses" of the authorities during the bandh, two more prominent businessmen were arrested today.

Mr H L Harlalka, president of the Kamrup Chamber of Commerce, and Mr. Jhumurlal Jain, president of the Assam Textile Merchants Association, were taken into custody as a preventive measure, official sources said.

The Kamrup Chamber of Commerce and other trade organisations, which met later in the day expressed resentment over the "repressive measures" adopted by the district authorities against the business community of Greater Gauhati. The chamber also demanded unconditional release of Mr Harlalka.

Today's hartal was observed to condemn the arrest of four businessmen of Gauhati on November 19 and their "expulsion from Kamrup district" for 72 hours. It was claimed that the men were arrested because they refused to keep their shops open during the bandh.

The All-Gauhati Students Union also observed protest day to express their resentment against arrests of students and businessmen and the police firing at Dhing (Nowgong district) in connection with the 36-hour bandh.

Meanwhile, the All-Assam Students Union has called for the observance of a "mourning day" on November 23 all over the State in connection with the death of Dhrubajyoti Nath, a school student who was the victim of the police firing at Dhing

The students have been asked to observe the day by abstaining from their classes and flying black flags at their institutions. Candidates for various examinations have, however, been exempted from observing the mourning day.

The situation in the State was marked by sporadic bomb explosions today.

Mr Suren Hazarika, president of the Assam State committee of the CITU and Mr Bolin Hazarika, a CPI(M) worker, were seriously injured when a bomb hurled by some miscreants exploded at their party office at Jorhat this evening, according to official sources here. Both of them were admitted to hospital.

A girl was killed and four persons injured in a bomb explosion at Gauhati last night.