

BNP Feni meet foiled by chaos

Secretary general leaves under police guard

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Feni

The district unit conference of the ruling BNP was foiled yesterday amid chaos and conflicts that forced the party secretary general to leave the venue under police guard and return to the capital later.

Slogans and counter-slogans by rival groups and throwing of chairs at each other brought the conference to an abrupt end.

The conference, organised in the once trouble-torn Feni after seven years, was abandoned midway due to trouble erupting over an announcement concerning the next president and general secretary of the unit.

BNP Secretary General and Minister for Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperatives Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan, who was the chief guest on the occasion, was quoted as saying, "The conference has not been marred but postponed."

Seven hundred eighty-one councillors and 22 delegates turned up at the conference.

Witnesses said the trouble broke

out when incumbent Feni district BNP General Secretary Prof Joyanal Abedin MP, locally known as VP Joyanal, announced that he and district unit President Mosharraf Hossain MP would not seek any part in the new committee to be formed at the conference. Supporters of Mosharraf and Joyanal strongly opposed it and raised slogans. This led to counter slogans in favour of Syed Iskandar MP, younger brother of Prime Minister Khaleda Zia.

At one stage, militant activists of the rival sides started throwing chairs at each other and the central and local leaders failed to restore order.

As the unruly activists rushed towards the dais shouting slogans, escorted by police Bhuiyan left the conference venue, Zahir Raihan Hall, at about 02:00pm without delivering his address.

Other party leaders including Jahanara Begum, advisor to the prime minister and district minister in charge of Feni; Joint Secretary General Gayeshwar Chandra Roy and Chittagong Division unit

Organising Secretary Mohammad Shahjahan MP also left the venue under police guard.

Bhuiyan and other central leaders went to the local Circuit House and later left for the capital as unruly activists also gathered there and

created trouble.

Talking to reporters, Mohammad Shahjahan MP said such a situation is nothing unusual for a major political party. The next step will be taken in consultation with the party chairperson, he added.

Hartal ends in Sylhet

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

The Arpita Sampatti Ain Protirodh Andalan (vested property law resistance movement), Sylhet has announced fresh agitation programmes after the end of an eight-hour hartal in the Sylhet Division yesterday that passed off peacefully.

The Andalan has been agitating for scrapping the vested property law for the last four months.

Sylhet Mayor Badar Uddin Ahmed Kamran, also the convener of the Andalan, announced the 50-day programme at a big rally held at the Court Point area in the city.

The programme includes mass contact, sit-in, token hunger strike, rallies at upazila and union levels, exchange of views with professional groups and human chain from October 17 to December 4.

Further course of agitation would be announced at a press conference in the National Press Club in Dhaka on December 5 in presence of national political parties, the mayor said.

During the hartal, all modes of motorised vehicles were off the streets. However, some rickshaws plied. Attendance in government and private offices was poor while no class was held in the educational institutions.

The speakers in the rally said the agitation would be given a national shape soon since it was a problem being faced nationally.

The Arpita Sampatti Ain Protirodh Andalan (vested property law resistance movement) was formed after a part of the historic 'Singha Bari' was leased out illegally to an influential quarter four months ago.



PHOTO: STAR

The Bangladesh Krishak Samity took out a procession in the city yesterday to mark its national council.

Concern over 'anarchic situation in judicial system'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Chittagong

President of the Supreme Court Bar Association Barrister Rakanuddin Mahmud yesterday expressed deep concern over the 'anarchic situation in the judicial system' and said, "If this situation continues, the whole judiciary will come under question one day."

The recent amendment to the Civil Procedure Code has exposed the 'autocratic attitude' of the government, he said at the general meeting of Chittagong Bar Association at its auditorium.

Termining the amendment act 'anti-people and black', Rakanuddin threw a challenge to the law minister to make public the audio tape of the discussion on the draft law.

Enactment of such law is an infringement of people's rights, he said.

Rakanuddin called for greater unity of the lawyers to establish a

free and fair judicial system. Chittagong Bar Association President Ferdous Ahmad presided over the meeting.

Businessman shot dead in Feni

Our Correspondent, Feni

A businessman was shot dead by unknown assailants at Five Star point on Feni-Sonagazi Road on Wednesday night.

Nurul Alam, 35, son of Abdul Mannan of Syedpur village, along with three others were travelling in a autorickshaw at about 9.00pm when two armed youths intercepted them.

As they tried to run away, the assailants fired on them, killing Nurul Alam on the spot, police and local people said.

Police recovered the body yesterday and sent it to morgue for autopsy.

3 cops killed in road mishap in Fatikchhari

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Three constables were killed and six police and Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) personnel injured in an accident on Fatikchhari-Khagrachhari road at Painingdu under Fatikchhari upazila Wednesday night.

The dead are Harunur Rashid of Laxmipur, Kamal Hossain of Noakhali and Nazir Ahmad of Feni.

The accident occurred at around 10:15pm on Jhanjhaniya Bailey Bridge when a police pickup fell down being hit from behind by a speeding jeep carrying the BDR personnel.

The injured are Officer In-charge of Fatikchhari Police Station Mahbubur Rahman, Assistant Sub-inspector Jahirul Haq, constables

Binimoy Chakma and Suja Miah, and BDR men Nayeab Subedar Ashraf Hossain and Sipahi Nurul Amin. Critically injured Binimoy and Suja were admitted to Chittagong Medical College Hospital.

Additional Superintendent of Police (North) of the district Chowdhury Monzurul Kabir said the accident occurred due to rough and insensible driving of the jeep. "The accident could have been avoided had the jeep driver slowed down the speed at the time, which he was supposed to do," he added.

The bodies of the victims have been sent to their respective village homes, police said.

A case was filed with Fatikchhari Police Station.

Malek Ukil's anniversary of death today



Today is the death anniversary of former Speaker and Awami League president Abdul Malek Ukil, says a press release.

Malek Ukil was one of the organisers of the War of Liberation and member of the cabinet of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

Leader of the Opposition in Parliament and Awami League President Sheikh Hasina in a message recalled the contribution of Malek Ukil during the War of Liberation and anti-autocratic movement during his lifetime.

On the occasion, AL will organise a milad mahfil after the Juma prayers at its Bangabandhu Avenue office. A discussion meeting has also been organised at the AL office. The central leaders will take part in the discussion.

Zohurul Islam



Today is the eighth death anniversary of Zohurul Islam, founder of the Islam Group of Industries, says a press release.

A milad mahfil has been organised at 11am at all educational institutions, farms and mosques of the Vagalpur including Zohurul Islam Medical College and Hospital and his residence.

Friends, relatives, admirers and all members of the Islam Group have been requested to attend the milad and pray for the salvation of the departed soul.

All institutions of the Islam Group will remain closed on October 19.

Fatema Akther



The 11th death anniversary of Fatema Akther, former vice president of the 'Jago Nari' of Bangladesh Women Congress will be observed today,

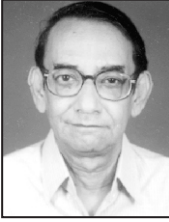
says a press release.

On the occasion a milad mahfil has been organised at Gulshan central mosque and Eidgah Society after Juma prayers.

Friends, relatives and admirers have been requested to attend the milad.

Fatema was wife of MAR Talukder, former chairman of the Bangladesh Parjatan Corporation.

Obituary



MA Mumin, joint chief (rtd), Planning Commission, died at DAB Cardiac Centre in the city on October 15 after cardiovascular failure, says a press release.

His namaz-e-janaza was held at Dhanmondi, Road-7. He was buried at Azimpur (new) graveyard. His qukhwan will be held today at B-4/302 Manoshi Shinepukur Apartments, Mirpur-1, after Asr prayers.

He left behind his two sons, one daughter and a host of relatives and admirers to mourn his death.

Peer Fazlul Hoque

Peer Fazlul Hoque of Fatehabad Darbar Sharif at Debiddar thana in Comilla breathed his last at 8 am yesterday at his residence, says a press release.

He was nearly 100 years. Fazlul Hoque was suffering from old age complications for long. He left behind his wife five sons, four daughters and a host of relatives.

His namaz-e-janaza will be held at the Madrasah Maidan of Darbar Sharif at 3pm after Juma prayers today and will be buried at the family graveyard.

Fazlul Hoque established many makhtabs and madrasahs during his lifetime.

Anwara Ahsan



Anwara Ahsan died on Saturday due to cardiac arrest at the residence of his youngest son in Sweden at the age of 70, says a press release.

She left behind her sons, daughters, grand children and a host of relatives to mourn her death.

Her body will be flown into Dhaka by British Airways tomorrow and buried the same day at her family graveyard at Palash upazila in Narsingdi.



PHOTO: STAR

Students of science faculty of Dhaka University kept the Doel Chattar area on the campus blocked for about three hours yesterday demanding rescheduling of final examination due to be held in Ramadan.

Business as usual in Ctg despite hartal

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

It was business as usual yesterday in greater Chittagong, as the eight-hour hartal called by the Greater Chittagong Development Action Committee (GCDAC) failed to gain the support of the local people.

Except for some educational institutions and a few business establishments that remained closed, the local population chose to ignore the hartal call. The roads were filled with all modes of transport and almost all business and office activities were conducted normally during the hartal hours.

The GCDAC called the hartal from 6:00am to 2:00pm to realise demands for upgrading the infrastructure of Chittagong as commercial capital, improvement in law and

order, the immediate installation of a third bridge on the river Karnaphuli, and preference to Moheshkhali of Cox's Bazar as the site for a proposed deep-water port.

Although supposedly called for the common good of the Chittagong population, the hartal failed to gain the support of the locals, reportedly due to a lack of coordination on the part of the organisers and a lack of motivation on the part of the local population.

Another factor in the failure of the locals to heed the call for hartal was that GCDAC had previously withdrawn many hartal calls at the eleventh hour, resulting in a lack of confidence among the locals that the hartal would be carried through as announced.

After the hartal, GCDAC held a

rally at the Shaheed Minar in the afternoon and announced a fresh agitation programme including a 12-hour hartal in greater Chittagong on June 26 next year.

The rally, presided over by GCDAC chairman SM Jamal Uddin, set April 30, 2004 as the deadline for the upgrading of Chittagong's commercial infrastructure.

The rally announced a token hunger-strike on January 1, a human-chain on March 25, and a siege of the Dhaka-Chittagong road at the city gate area on April 22, 2004.

GCDAC also threatened to besiege the state ministers and MPs from Chittagong and lay siege to different administrative offices to press home its demands.

Hasina condemns police action on nurse

UNB, Dhaka

Leader of the Opposition in Parliament and Awami League President Sheikh Hasina condemned the police attack on nurses in the city yesterday, saying that the day is not far off when the 'anti-people autocratic regime' of BNP-Jamaat alliance will be toppled in the wake of a united resistance.

In a statement last night Hasina protested baton charge by police on the agitating nurses. The 'barbaric police attack' on the nurses exposed the ruling party's autocratic character, she said.

She demanded of the government to meet the legitimate demands of the agitating nurses immediately.

"The nurses also faced such police atrocities earlier... the autocrat alliance government is trying to

make their grip of misrule steady by gagging the voice of people," she said.

Hasina said the government of Khaleda Zia could not stay in power through torture and repression in the past when people's united resistance had forced her to quit power.

New resident director of NDI arrives

UNB, Dhaka

Newly appointed Resident Director of National Democratic Institute for International Affairs (NDI) Dr Owen Lippert arrived in the city yesterday to take charge of its Bangladesh office.

Canadian national Dr Owen Lippert will assume the Bangladesh office of National Democratic Institute (NDI) today for a three-year term, a NDI press release said.

He replaces James V Oliver, who served as Resident Representative for three years prior to his return to the US in August last.

Dr Lippert held a number of both political and research positions. His political appointments include, most recently, foreign policy advisor to the leader of the official opposition in Canada, Stephen Harper.

Previously he had advised the former prime minister of Canada, Kim Campbell, while she held the position of Attorney General of Canada. During her government, he was an advisor to the ministers of industry and science.

Dr Lippert was also an advisor to the premier of the provincial government of British Columbia, serving also as the political secretary to the Apex Planning and Priorities Committee.

On the research front, Dr Lippert was a senior fellow of the Fraser Institute, Canada's largest independent "think tank".

During his time with the institute, he published four books and wrote numerous articles and research papers. He also served a term on the editorial board of the Globe & Mail, Canada's national newspaper.

Dr Lippert received his Ph.D in European History (with a concentration in British Politics) from the University of Notre Dame.

Musical evening at Fantasy Kingdom

A musical evening of Andrew Kishore and a get-together of the performers of a telefilm titled 'Bhalobasha dot com' will be held at the Fantasy Kingdom at Ashulia today, says a press release.



PHOTO: STAR

The Bangladesh Garment Sramik Trade Union Kendra stages a token hunger strike at Mukhtangan yesterday demanding immediate payment of salary arrears.

WEATHER

TODAY

Light rain likely

UNB, Dhaka

Light rain or thundershowers is likely at one or two places over Chittagong, Rajshahi and Dhaka divisions and over the regions of Jessore and Khulna till 6pm today.

Day temperature may remain nearly unchanged while weather nearly dry with partly cloudy sky elsewhere over the country during the period, Met Office said.

Highest temperature 34.4 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday at Chittagong and the lowest 22.7 degree Celsius at Sitakunda.

The sun sets in the capital at 5:31 pm today and rises at 5:57 am tomorrow.

Highest and lowest temperature and humidity recorded in some major cities and towns yesterday were:

City/Town	Temperature in Celsius		Humidity in percentage	
	Max	Min	Morning	Evening
Dhaka	32.4	26.4	77	78
Chittagong	34.4	23.2	78	67
Rajshahi	33.0	25.2	87	80
Khulna	34.0	24.4	81	77
Barisal	33.2	25.7	78	84
Sylhet	33.5	24.8	83	76
Cox's Bazar	33.8	23.8	89	77