

Opposition long march

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Daily Star correspondents, the number of arrests in Bogra was at least 29, Natore 16, Jessore 100, Jhenidha 82, Rajshahi 50, Manikganj 88, Magura 45, Naogaon 92, Ashuganj five, Keshabpur 10, Gurdaspur two, Koira 12, Shibganj one, Jyopurhat 17, Shariatpur three, Compiyanganj four, Noakhali 29 and Sharonkhola 10.

ARRESTS IN DHAKA
The police arrested at least 500 leaders and workers, mostly of the AL and its front organisations, at various ward unit offices, Kamalapur Railway Station, Sadarghat launch terminal, Gatabli, Sayedabad and Mohakhali bus terminals and other places in the city.

As of filing this report at 9:00pm, the police were still conducting a massive manhunt raiding the houses of leaders of the AL and its front organisations across the city.

The police arrested at least 50 leaders and workers in Lalbagh area until 8:30 last night, Dhaka City AL Joint Secretary Hazi Selim told The Daily Star. The AL leaders and workers in the area have fled their homes fearing arrests and harassment, he said, adding the police have also been doing excesses in the name of raids.

A police official told The Daily Star they have received government directives to arrest thana- and ward-level organisers and leaders of the opposition combine and also those who "pose threat to the law and order" so as to hinder as many people as possible from joining the Paltan Maidan rally.

The raids will continue until the march ends on February 5, he said. Additional police have been kept on alert at the bus and railway stations and launch terminals. They have been asked to arrest anyone who would fail to give appropriate reasons for coming to the capital, he added.

RAJSHAH, NATORE, BOGRA
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MEHERCHANDI WARD AWAMI JUBO LEAGUE (AJL) President Anu, Meherchandi Ward Awami Svecchhasebak League (ASL) Vice President Ashraf and AJL leader Shahidul Islam in Rajshahi, Naldanga Thana AL Vice President Abdus Salam, Shingra Sramik League (SL) Publicity Secretary Abdul Halim, Gurdaspur Municipality AJL Joint Secretary Labu and Publicity Secretary Jahrool Islam, and ASL President Masud are also among them.

A 'fuel crisis' has suddenly sprung up in the region, while transport worker leaders alleged certain political quarters asked them not to provide any truck or bus for the long march.

From Wednesday evening, all the filling stations in Rajshahi City as well as the district have stopped selling petrol and octane. The condition in Natore and Chapainawabganj was almost the same.

Some 14-party leaders alleged the fuel crisis was an artificial one, created to bar the long march.

AL leader AHM Khairuzzaman Liton and Workers Party Politburo Member Fazle Hossain Badsha said dealers have stopped supplying oil to pumps following directions from the government high-ups.

"We had to hire a large number of cars and microbuses as we could not manage more than 50 buses from the three districts — Chapainawabganj, Rajshahi and Natore," Liton said. He said local bus owners refused to rent out vehicles to them, mentioning a directive from the police administration.

In Bogra Sadar Upazila the police arrested 20 AJL and Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) workers Wednesday night on charge of planning sabotage. The arrestees were sent to a court yesterday under Section 151 of the CrPC (Criminal Procedure Code).

The police said the arrested AJL and BCL workers were planning to carry out sabotage at Salmatha in the town. Tipped off, the police detained and interrogated them. "Since they could not give satisfactory answers, they were arrested," said a police official requesting for anonymity.

The arrestees are Shahidul Islam, Raihan, Bulbul Mandal, Rafiqul Islam, Khokon Mia, Mosharraf Hossain, Rezaul Haque, Shahjada, Raja Mia, Jahidul, Raja Sheikh, Badal, Shuvra Ghosh, Wahiduzzaman, Milon Sardar, Liton, Shamsul Haque, Nur Mohammad Ranu and Ashraf.

MAGURA
Our Magura correspondent reports: At least 45 people including BCL and AJL leaders and workers were arrested in four upazilas of the district.

The arrestees were produced before a court yesterday under Section 54 of the CrPC. Of them, 23 were arrested in Magura Sadar Upazila, 11 in Shalikhia, six in Mohamadpur and five in Sreepur, the police said.

Magura District AL President Altaf Hossain alleged the arrests were made to foil the long march, but the police claimed they arrested the people for their suspicious movements on Wednesday night.

MANIKGANJ
Our Manikganj correspondent reports: The police arrested 45 people at different places in the district on what they said were previous complaints against them. But, local leaders of the 14-party line-up alleged the arrestees were opposition workers and they were held to hinder the February 5 long march.

NOAKHALI
Our Noakhali correspondent reports: The police on Wednesday night

Gunrunner dies

FROM PAGE 1
Rajshahi Medical College and Hospital in a critical condition.

Two pistols loaded with six bullets and three magazines were seized from the victims.

Major Farooq-e-Azam and another member of RB received minor injuries.

arrested 25 leaders and workers of the 14-party opposition alliance in different areas of the district.

Of them, five were held in Sudharan, three in Begumganj, two in Sonaimuri, six in Senbagh, five in Char Jabbar, three in Compiyanganj, and one in Chaitkhil. They were produced before a court yesterday showing arrested under Section 54 of the CrPC and the court sent them to jail refusing bail petitions.

BARISAL DIVISION
Our Barisal correspondent reports: The police on Wednesday started raiding different areas along the routes of the long march in the southern region in search of opposition leaders and activists.

Barisal City AL Convener and 14-party combine divisional coordinator Shawkat Hossain Hiron alleged eight opposition leaders and activists had been arrested in Baufal and 10 others in Patuakhali town on Monday and Tuesday.

ASL Organising Secretary Harunur Rashid was arrested in Banarpara upazila on Tuesday. Three AJL activists were arrested in Jhalakati on the same day.

Police sources said most of the arrests were made under the Section 54 for suspicious activities, as there was no specified case against the arrestees.

Barisal Range Deputy Inspector General (in-charge) Hemayet Hossain denied the existence of any bid to foil the long march and claimed the police would rather try their best to ensure safety and security of the participants.

NARAYANGANJ
Our Narayanganj correspondent reports: The police held five Fatullah thana unit AL activists during a meeting at the Fatullah Reporter's Club on Wednesday night.

The arrestees are Ujjal, Zakir, Rony, Babul and Mojibur.

Angry AL leaders and activists staged demonstration in front of Fatullah Police Station following the arrests. Later, the police released Mojibur and Rony.

Our Rangpur correspondent adds that three AJL leaders were arrested there yesterday.

LONG MARCH STARTS
Streams of the long march started yesterday from Tentulia in Panchagarh, Mongla in Khulna, Meherpur and Barguna to press resignation of the BNP-Jamaat-led alliance government and holding of parliamentary polls under reformed caretaker government and Election Commission.

The streams from across the country are scheduled to assemble in Paltan Maidan in Dhaka, where Hasina will announce the next programme of the opposition combine.

Long march streams will begin from nine other points across the country today.

AL Presidium Member Mohiuddin Khan Alamgir inaugurated one of the streams of some 5,000 activists at Tentulia Chowrasta intersection at about 11:00am yesterday.

Workers Party Politburo Member Fazle Hossain Badsha, Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal (JSD) Central Committee Joint Secretary Nazmul Haque Pradhan, Gono Forum leader Pankaj Bhattacharya, Gonoratni Party Presidium Member M Afzal Hossain, Workers Party Presidium Member Aminul Islam Gopal and district AL President Nurul Islam Sujon spoke before the marchers started from Tentulia and Panchagarh.

Gono Forum Presidium Member Ranesh Maitra inaugurated another stream from Meherpur point yesterday noon.

UNB adds: The long march with over 20,000 opposition activists started from Mongla bus stand and reached Katakhal in the Mongla-Rupsa Road at about 12:45pm. It then advanced towards Khulna at about 2:00pm.

Opposition leaders ASHK Sadek, Mohammad Nasim, Dr Mojammel Hossain, SMA Sabur, Gonoratni Party leader MA Muhi, Sharif Nurul Ambia and others were leading the march to Dhaka.

US intel chief doubts Iran has nukes

AP, Washington

US National Intelligence Director John Negroponte told Congress on Thursday that Iran probably does not yet have nuclear weapons, nor has it obtained the material central to producing them.

Still, Negroponte called Iran's nuclear program a matter of "highest concern." In prepared testimony to the Senate Intelligence Committee, he said that Iran and North Korea are both major threats to US security.

Negroponte raised the possibility that Iran "will acquire a North Korea weapon and the ability to integrate it with the ballistic missile Iran already possesses."

Negroponte spoke as US and European diplomats worked behind the scenes to build support for their decision to report Iran to the UN Security Council over concerns that it seeking nuclear weapons.

The International Atomic Energy Agency's 35-nation board of governors began a two-day meeting on a European draft resolution calling for Tehran to be referred to the Security Council, which can impose sanctions.

Notwithstanding worries about Iran, "Al-Qaida remains our top concern," Negroponte said in his prepared testimony.

"We have eliminated much of the leadership that presided over al-Qaida in 2001," he said, "and US counterterrorism efforts in 2005 continued to disrupt its operations take out its leaders and deplete its cadre."

Ctg port

FROM PAGE 1
Association (BSAA) at a meeting yesterday morning.

The BSAA leaders also decided to stop operation of all feeder vessels to and from Chittagong Port from 8:00pm on February 05 and general cargo vessels from 8:00pm on February 06.

However, vessels present at berths will complete their works and sail out towards respective destinations, the meeting said.

BIWTA fails

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width to 37 metres, and was scheduled to be completed by January 18, said Joint Director of the Marine Department Emdadul Haque.

The BIWTA authorities said the dredging process is being disrupted at different points from Baghabari river port to Pechakhola due to increasing speed of current at the confluence of the Hura Shagar and Jamuna rivers and decreasing current in the Padma.

The authorities claimed that the dredgers are capable of dredging against a maximum speed of current of two nautical miles but the speed is four nautical miles at different points in the channel.

The authorities also said different points of the 10 kilometre long waterway from Mohanganj to Charsaulla have already lost navigability for heavy currents during the tides and sharp decline of the water level during the ebbs in addition to some other factors.

No large cargo vessel will be able to come to the Baghabari river port if several points on the route is not dredged immediately and the Baghabari Milk Vita Company will suffer the most in that case, they said adding that silt should be removed from at least 1500 metres of the route.

They also said the situation may worsen during the period between the middle of this month and April, as the water level will start to fall down making it impossible even for small vessels to ply the route, which will leave almost two thousand workers unemployed at the Baghabari port alone.

A resident of Nakalia area alleged that the dredging work was being carried out only for three hours at a stretch and with many irregularities.

The workers at the sites however denied the allegation and said they have been working eight hours a day for the last one-month.

5 ministers

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Shahadat Chowdhury, and managing director and chief editor of the state-run news agency Bangladesh Sangbad Sangstha Gaziul Hasan Khan were proposed for consideration for the nomination in the field of journalism.

The shortlist of the fifteen people and five ministers was prepared at a cabinet committee meeting on Wednesday.

Introduced in 1976, the Ekushey Padak is awarded for outstanding contribution to the Language Movement of 1952, and in the fields of education, literature, journalism, and culture.

Last year, Finance and Planning Minister M Saifur Rahman and Chief Whip Khandakar Delwar Hossain were awarded the Ekushey Padak for their contribution to the 1952 Language Movement.

Kansat killings

FROM PAGE 1
Rabbani and eight others were arrested on January 22 on charge of instigating people to raise their voice against local Palli Bidyut Samity that led to the January 4 police firing, in which two youths were killed.

The arrests triggered a violent protest, resulting in the killing of another seven people in police firing on January 23.

Pakistanis clash

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Pakistanis from 34 camps in Dhaka started gathering at the Geneva Camp and adjacent area in the early morning to attend the "peaceful" march to the Pakistan High Commission.

As the procession started for the Pakistan High Commission at around 11:15am, the police barred it putting up barricades and asked the stranded Pakistanis over loud speakers to go back to their camps.

At one stage, the stranded Pakistanis broke the barricades and tried to advance, which prompted the police to charge baton on them. The stranded Pakistanis also started pelting brickbats, shoes and sandals at the police force.

The law enforcers fired shotguns and 56 teargas canisters to disperse the demonstrators, the police said. Shop-owners shut down their shops while vehicular traffic remained halted during the chaos.

Police Sub-Inspector Mezbah Uddin filed a case accusing the arrested six and around 1,500 others of attacking the police and creating obstruction to their activities.

According to a 1992 census, there are 2,38,400 stranded Pakistanis in 66 camps in 13 districts in Bangladesh.

Mizan Chy passes away

FROM PAGE 1
Siddiqui also visited Mizan Chowdhury's house and placed wreaths at his coffin.

The first namaz-e-janaza of late Chowdhury was held at Gulshan Azad Mosque.

His body was later taken to the Central Shaheed Minar where people from all walks of life paid homage to him.

Dhaka University Teachers' Association (Duta), Supreme Court Bar Association, Dhaka Bar Association, Awami Ainjibi Parishad, Muktiyoddha Sangsad Central Command and different socio-cultural organisations paid tribute to the former prime minister.

Afterwards, the body was taken to the central office of the AL on Bangabandhu Avenue where 14-party opposition combine, 11-party Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal, 5-left leaning party, Communist Party of Bangladesh, Gono Forum, Samyabadi Dal, Ganotantri Party and different political parties showed respect to the veteran politician.

After Asr prayers, a second namaz-e-janaza was held at the main gate of the Baitul Mukarram National Mosque attended by senior leaders of different political parties.

On behalf of the prime minister, Forest and Environment Minister Torikul Islam placed floral wreath at the coffin of the veteran politician before the janaza.

After the janaza, the coffin was taken to Birdem hospital. The body will be taken to the leader's village homes Shahrasti and Hajiganj in Chandpur today where janazas will take place. After another janaza at Chandpur Government College ground, he will be buried at his family graveyard with state honour.

ALONG POLITICAL CAREER
A close associate of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, Mizan Chowdhury was born on October 19, 1928 in Chandpur.

His long vibrant political life started in 1945 when he was elected Comilla unit vice president of Nikhil Bharat Muslim Chhatra League (All India Muslim Students League).

In 1950, he became the general secretary of Feni College Students' Union and played active role in the 1952 Language Movement.

In 1962 he was elected an independent member of the then Pakistan National Assembly. The same year he joined the Awami League (AL). He was also elected to the Pakistan National Assembly for next two consecutive terms in 1965 and 1970.

New internet worm set

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spreads primarily by copying itself to shared network locations and then sending itself to e-mail addresses found on afflicted computers. With subject lines that read "the best videoclip ever," "give me a kiss," and "school girl fantasies gone bad," the worm entices computer users to open the attached file.

"This worm feeds on people's willingness to receive salacious content on their desktop computer, but they could be putting their entire company's data at risk," said Graham Cluley, senior technology consultant at Sophos.

According to Sophos, on the third of each month, the worm will attempt to disable existing antivirus and firewall software and also will delete specific files, such as Microsoft Office documents.

The worm is also known as Blackworm, Nyxem-D, and W32.Blackmail.E, among others. There are disagreements in the security industry about the severity of the worm, with Symantec and F-Secure taking different positions on the issue.

Controversy stems from interpreting one of the worm's most intriguing features: a Web counter. Once the worm infects a new computer, it accesses a Web page on which there is a counter. The counter number increases whenever the Web page is accessed.

Andrew Jaquith, a Yankee Group senior analyst, said that most reports indicate that the counter had risen already to 700,000, which could indicate that nearly a million computers are infected.

Much of the speculation in the industry about the potential for damage done by the Kama Sutra worm centers on the counter number — which might represent unique machines or accesses to the counter page by the same machine more than once. One of the things that is "sorely lacking" with mass outbreak malware like the Kama Sutra worm, Jaquith said, is any real sense of how many machines are compromised.

"We still don't know, for example, how many machines were really affected by the WMF vulnerability," he explained. "The antivirus vendors don't seem to know either, or are unwilling to divulge much — possibly because it would expose gaps in their signature coverage."

To address what is so far the most expansive malware attack in 2006, speculation among security vendors and researchers has focused on the destructive nature of the worm. Unlike most viruses currently in the wild, the Kama Sutra code is not intended to reap the code writer's windfall of ill-gotten gains. The hacker designed the worm to create mayhem by destroying documents.

In 1966, Mizan Chowdhury was elected as the organising secretary of the AL.

He discharged the responsibility of acting general secretary of the party in 1966-67 after the arrest of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, Tajuddin Ahmed and other top party leaders.

In 1967, he was also arrested. Mizan Chowdhury served as information minister in the Bangabandhu's cabinet in 1973. He led a faction of the AL, after Banbandhu's killing in 1975.

In 1984, he joined the Jana Dal and later Jatiya Party of HM Ershad and became the prime minister in 1986.

He was elected to the Jatiya Sangsad in 1973, 1979, 1986, 1988 and 1991.

Mizan Chowdhury joined the AL again on August 27, 2001. He was a member of the party's advisory committee till his death.

CONDOLENCES:

President Iajuddin Ahmed in a condolence message recalled the contribution of Mizan Chowdhury in democratic movement for giving parliamentary democracy an institutional shape.

The president also noted the significant role played by Chowdhury in parliamentary politics and said, "his death caused an irrecoverable loss to maintaining political restraint and respect towards the opinions of others."

In a condolence message, Prime Minister Khaleda Zia recalled Chowdhury's valuable contributions towards promoting democracy and said a big vacuum has been created in the country's political arena with the demise of an experienced leader like him. Khaleda Zia prayed for the eternal peace of the departed soul and conveyed her sympathy to the bereaved family.

Opposition Leader Sheikh Hasina in a condolence message said, "The nation will remember him for his outstanding role in stimulating the nation for the freedom under the leadership of Bangabandhu."

Hasina recalled that Mizan Chowdhury, led by Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, had played a glorious role in each of a series of movements starting from the '52 Language Movement for securing the rights of the Bangalees.

Mirza Abbas files defamation case against Prothom Alo editor, publisher

COURT CORRESPONDENT

Public Works Minister Mirza Abbas yesterday filed a defamation case against the editor and publisher of Prothom Alo for running a news item on January 5.

Abbas along with his counsel appeared before the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court, Dhaka at about 12:30pm and filed the case.

After hearing, Metropolitan Magistrate Syed Mohammad Mujibul Haq recorded his (Abbas) statements, took the case into cognisance and issued summons against the daily's Editor Motiur Rahman and Publisher Mahfuz Anam to appear before the court on February 16.

In his plaint, Abbas said the news item headlined "Public works minister has objection to a police complex being built at Razarabagh" and run by the national daily is false, baseless and concocted.

The news has tarnished the minister's image and status in the society. Moreover, it created a bad impression of him among the people of the country as well as of his constituency. The news also led to a misunderstanding between him and the police department, Abbas added.

Besides, the daily did not publish properly the rejoinder sent by the complainant. The defendants appear to have connived to publish the report with an intention of bringing him into disrepute, Abbas said.

EC files appeal

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Abdul Jalil, Rahmat Ali and Asaduzzaman Noor had filed the writ petitions with the HC, questioning the validity of the chief election commissioner's (CEC) "unilateral" decision to have a new roll.

Barrister Amir-Ul Islam and Rokonuddin Mahmud, the counsels for the writ petitioners, yesterday opposed the EC's prayer at the Chamber Judge's Court.

Amir observed that a Chamber Judge's Court usually does not allow a hearing on Thursday, but Judge Amirul Kabir Chowdhury yesterday sat just to hear this particular prayer.

He argued that had the prayer been filed by anyone of the ordinary people, he [the judge] would not have entertained it. Therefore, he cannot allow this hearing to take place today and fix a date for further hearing.

Mentioning CEC MA Aziz's holding two constitutional posts, one as a CEC and the other one as a judge of the Supreme Court's Appellate Division, he said, "One cannot hold two such posts."

Amir said since Aziz is a member of the Appellate Division, justice cannot be expected from the court in a case dealing with him as the CEC. There would obviously be a conflict of interest.

"If he [CEC] has to be a litigant [in the Appellate Division], he must give up one of the two posts," he pointed out.

He said the HC directives were issued on January 4 and since then there has not been any stay order on those. Yet the CEC did not bother to conform to the directives. "Without complying with the court's order, he cannot appeal against it. If he must, he should first comply with the order," he said.

Referring to Khondker Mahbubuddin Ahmed, Barrister Rokonuddin said he just cannot walk in and make the chamber judge sit for an unscheduled hearing.

3 hill dists

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cials, including secretaries to the Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs Ministry, CHT Affairs Ministry and Prime Minister's Office, have been made respondents.

The court in its rule asked the respondents to show cause why they should not be directed to establish judges' courts (civil and criminal) and tribunals in the three districts of CHT to prevent repression against women and children through implementing CHT Regulation (Amendment) Act 2003 and Section 26 of Nari O Shishu Nirjaton Daman Ain-2000.

Counsel for the petitioner Advocate Idrisur Rahman yesterday told the news agency that as per the provisions of CHT Regulation (Amendment) Act 2003 and Section 26 of Nari O Shishu Nirjaton Daman Ain-2000, the government has established judges' courts and tribunals in all districts excepting the three hill districts.

"The writ petition has been filed with the High Court demanding direction to implement the provisions of CHT Regulation (Amendment) Act 2003 and Section 26 of Nari O Shishu Nirjaton Daman Ain-2000 in the three districts," he said.

SP Masud Miah

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media in Rajshahi while he was SP, he said he was not doing any wrong by helping the militant outfit Jagrata Muslim Janata Bangladesh (JMJB) because he was acting under the guidance of higher officials.

The victims of torture by Bangla Bhai's group at Hamirkutsa, Goalkandi, Jugipara, Bhabaniganj and Palashi in Bagmara upazila expressed their joy at the dismissal of Masud.

They demanded his arrest on charge of backing the JMJB activists and action against the home ministry officials and local BNP leaders for guiding him.

Masud was dismissed on Tuesday for lapses in his duty, official sources said on Wednesday.

Masud was 'stand released' as SP on March 5 last year. The Daily Star ran a report on March 1 revealing documentary evidence of his supporting Bangla Bhai's activities.

In February last year, a special police report to the high-ups in Dhaka and the ministry concerned said Masud Miah is the man behind police failure to nab Bangla Bhai.

Besides, the militant kingpin himself came to Rajshahi along with his militant group and met the then SP Masud at his office on April 24 in 2004.

The report said despite the prime minister's order to arrest Bangla Bhai, Masud allowed him to flee.

Talking to The Daily Star on February 27 last year at his office, Masud denied most of the allegations.

While receiving a JMJB memorandum during their Rajshahi march on

May 23 in 2004, Masud told Prof Lutfar Rahman, now an arrestee, "I (SP) will always be with your (JMJB) movement as I am doing now."

Earlier, a two-member inquiry committee headed by home ministry deputy secretary Abdur Rouf visited Rajshahi and talked to a cross section of people and police officials.

The committee heard villagers of Bagmara upazila including the family of Abdul Bari, a businessman, who were fleeing their houses allegedly following police threats of 'crossfire'.

Abdul Bari and his wife Shaifun Nahar told journalists that Bangla Bhai and the SP (Masud), influenced by JMJB leader Mahtab Ali Khamaru chased and harassed them.

According to the probe report, officer-in-charge of Bagmara police station Golam Kibria said Masud demanded Tk 50,000 from him and as he refused, he (Masud) illegally ordered him to be 'closed' in the police lines.

Three others at the police station — Rashedul, Nuru and Israfil — complained that they were suspended for their refusal to pay money to the SP.

Inspector Yusuf Ali told the probe body that he was kept 'closed'