

Cops club agitating

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when it would reopen.

The workers marched towards Actors Sporting Ltd and shouted slogans in support of their demands as Rapid Action Battalion (Rab), police and Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) men asked them to leave the area. As soon as they reached Actors Sporting Ltd, a few thousand of workers of Goldtex Ltd joined them.

The demonstrators started hurling bricks at the windows of Actors Sporting Ltd. Police charged truncheons to disperse the demonstrators triggering chases and counter chases.

The demonstrators went to the DEPZ office where more than one thousand workers of Sofex Ltd joined them around 9:00am.

Police clubbed the agitators again to disperse them triggering chases and counter chases there too. The agitating workers resorted to throwing bricks at the police. Police lobbed at least 12 teargas canisters into the demonstrators.

The demonstrators went on a rampage on Dhaka-Baipail-Kaliakoir highway around 9:30am and vandalised at least 100 vehicles during skirmishes with the law enforcement agencies, disrupting vehicular movement for two hours. Police and Rab charged truncheons again and fired several teargas shells.

However, Paddock's Jeans Ltd, closed on June 13, resumed operation yesterday.

Authorities of Anzir Apparel's Ltd at Baipail closed their factory fearing violence as angry demonstrators of DEPZ on their return vandalised windowpanes of the factory, factory authorities said.

Around five thousand workers of Haesong Corporation Ltd in Baroipara refrained from work yesterday as their demands were not met. The workers stopped operations as factory authorities did not increase the 'piece rate' [payment per piece of product they work on]. Factory authorities give them low piece rate and it varies from worker to worker, alleged the workers of the factory.

Meanwhile, workers of five garment factories demonstrated in support of their 17-point demand in Gazipur yesterday. Clashes between pro-owner workers and general workers left nine people injured in Stylo Fashions in Gazipur yesterday. Two other garment factories, Jahan Tex and Rebit Tex, in Gazipur were also closed following workers' demonstrations.

"Law enforcers have taken necessary steps to maintain law and order inside the DEPZ," said Bangladesh Export Processing Zones Authority's (Bepza) Executive Chairman Ashraf Abdullah Yusuf adding, "Eighty factories out of the 84 are now operational while Youngone is likely to resume operation from today."

Hoping resumption of work at the closed factories soon, Yusuf said, "Factory owners are willing to implement Bepza rules while members of Workers Representative Welfare Committee of 66 factories in a meeting on Saturday night assured me of keeping peace inside DEPZ."

Punishment to the allegedly guilty mid-level officials would be meted out after investigations," he added.

14-party plans

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"There is no alternative to resignation of the CEC and two politically appointed election commissioners in order to ensure drafting of an accurate voter list," 14-party Coordinator and AL General Secretary Abdul Jalil told The Daily Star before leaving for Singapore on June 17.

"The main target of our movements for reform agendas is to over throw the CEC and two [election] commissioners," Dilip Barua, a senior leader of the opposition camp told The Daily Star yesterday. The opposition will also pressurise the government to accept its other demands, he said.

The 14-party combine will lay siege to the EC Secretariat and election offices in other districts from 11:00am to 1:00pm.

It will also put blockades on highways and rail tracks and obstruct river communication on July 2 from 9:00am to 3:00pm.

Earlier, the opposition combine and its youth fronts besieged the EC Secretariat on March 12.

"We will declare a series of tougher programmes to intensify the movement for electoral reforms and resignation of the CEC and two commissioners if the government tries to obstruct or foil the siege programme," AL Presidium Member Amir Hossain Amu told The Daily Star yesterday.

Amu, who returned to country on June 16 after staying in Singapore for more than nine months for his wife's illness, said

no election can be held in the country without drafting an accurate voter list based on the High Court directives.

The opposition has made all-out preparations to make the siege programme a success. It has been working to mobilise a huge number of people from different parts of the capital.

It has also finalised three spots—Russell Square and Dhanmondi 27, front of the Argaoan met office, and Mohakhali rail gate—for gathering before marching towards the EC Secretariat tomorrow.

Meanwhile, the Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP) has taken up elaborate security measures for the EC Secretariat at Sher-e-Bangla Nagar and its neighbourhoods. A police source said barricades will be set up to keep the demonstrators off the secretariat premises.

The opposition camp that has been alleging arrest of hundreds of its workers ahead of the siege programme warned the law enforcers of violent clashes if they try to foil the programme.

The opposition alliance held a series of preparatory meetings in the last few days after AL President Sheikh Hasina declared the EC siege programme on June 13.

The opposition leaders held demonstrations in different areas of the capital and will conduct mass communication in every ward today. The city AL will hold extended meeting today.

Only 6,353 to revise

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the fresh voter list, which is now effectively defunct since the Supreme Court verdict directed the EC to revise the existing voter list instead.

A total of 83 registration officers, 6,270 assistant registration officers, 55,684 supervisors and 2,16,722 enumerators were appointed to prepare the fresh voter list, a draft of which was also published on May 3 enlisting 9.13 crore voters.

But this time around, to revise the existing voter list consisting 7.74 crore voters, only the registration officers and assistant registration officers are delegated with the task. Figures derived from demographic statistics show that over one crore people have become eligible for being registered as voters since the existing voter list was prepared in 2000.

To enlist the new prospective voters, the assigned officials will face tremendous pressure if the eligible people come to their offices to register their names, as the procedure is a very complicated one, officials at the EC said.

"An eligible person who wants to enlist his or her name on the voter list will have to fill up two forms providing a lot of information. But most of the people in villages are not capable of filling up the forms by themselves. So the registration officers and assistant registration officers will have to help them to fill up those forms," a senior official at the EC Secretariat told The Daily Star yesterday.

In addition to including fresh voters on the list, the officials will also have to delete the names of fake voters and the names of per-

sons who died since 2000, if they receive such complaints or claims.

Amid such a situation, the field level task of revising the existing voter list will begin from July 1 and will continue until July 31.

The EC invited the cabinet secretary, establishment secretary, information secretary and top officials of different organs under the information ministry to attend the scheduled meeting today.

The EC will seek cooperation from field level administration and will launch a massive campaign to accomplish the task, sources said.

Meanwhile, a visiting UNDP delegation met Acting Secretary to the EC Secretariat Mohammad Zakaria yesterday and proposed appointment of international consultants for helping the EC to revise the existing voter list. The delegation is scheduled to meet the chief election commissioner (CEC) today.

COLLAPSIBLE GATE
Surprisingly, in an apparent bid to prevent journalists from frequently entering the building in which the offices of the CEC and two election commissioners are situated, the EC Secretariat is going to install a collapsible gate on the passage of the first floor of the building.

Once the collapsible gate is installed, no one will be able to frequent from one building to another freely.

Last week, the EC Secretariat shifted the office of its public relation officer to another building in the complex.

Some senior officials at the EC Secretariat expressed their astonishment over the plan.

2 die

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Communist Party (BCP) and informed about their hidden arms caches.

Two Rab teams took Jamal to Srirampur and Rana to Garchapra in Alamdanga to recover arms from their hideouts.

Rab sources said the accomplices of Jamal ambushed them around 4:00am yesterday when the Rab team reached Asannagar.

A gunfight ensued and Jamal while trying to escape Rab custody during the shootout was caught in the line of fire and died on the spot, Rab claimed.

Rab recovered a pistol and four bullets from the spot. Jamal's accomplices however managed to flee.

According to Chuadanga police, Jamal was accused in eight murder cases filed, with Alamdanga, Jibannagar and Chuadanga police stations. Chuadanga police had Tk 1 lakh bounty on him.

The Rab team with Rana was attacked by Rana's accomplices as the team reached Munshiganj Railway Station area in Alamdanga upazila around 4:30am resulting in an hour-long gunfight.

Rab claimed Rana was trying to escape from the Rab van and was caught in crossfire. He died on the spot. Chuadanga police said Rana was accused in four murder cases.

ADB

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finance the capacity building components.

Hans-Peter Melby, counsellor, and Wilhelm Wiig, first secretary of the Norwegian Embassy in Dhaka, were also present at the signing ceremony. Norway is providing \$5 million in grant from capacity building component of the project.

The gas transmission project and Development Project (GDP), approved by ADB's Board of Directors in October 2005, will construct four gas transmission pipelines 353km long to transport about 360 million cubic feet of natural gas per day to the less developed western region of the country.

GDP will expand the country's north-south system by installing compressors at two locations, Ashuganj south and Muchai. Another compressor station will be located in Elenga. For the first time, gas compressor technology will be introduced to Bangladesh as part of the project.

Apart from installing about 320km of gas distribution pipelines to create new distribution network in Rajshahi, the project will conduct a 3D seismic survey of five operational gas fields to provide updates on the estimated gas reserves in place and to determine the location for further drilling.

"Through this project, country's western part will be facilitated, for the first time, to receive natural gas on a large scale which will help boost its economic development and alleviate regional disparities in the long run," said Piya Abeygunawardena, ADB principal energy economist.

UP chairmen

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amendment of the Local Government Act, which makes way for undue interference by bureaucrats and MPs in the UP affairs, as per Article 59 and 60 of the constitution as well as the Supreme Court directives in the Qudrat e Elahi Panir versus Bangladesh case in 1992.

The UP representatives also demanded stopping all types of extra-constitutional interference in the local government affairs other than the provision of Article 65 of the constitution, granting full autonomy to the UP, specification of the powers and functions of the female representatives in the UP.

They also demanded allocating 25 per cent of the Annual Development Budget for the UPs, putting all sources of revenues within the area of the parishad such as markets, jal-mohals, local ferry ghats, and khas land under its jurisdiction and vesting it with the responsibility for monitoring all government and non-government development projects in the area.

Meeting the demands is needed to make the UPs economically viable institutions, they said.

A thirteen-member team of Union Parishad Oikya Jote headed by its Chairman Abul Hossain Khan and General Secretary Hasan Rakib Azad submitted the memorandum at the Speakers' office yesterday.

Earlier in a rally at Muktangan they vowed to continue their movement to make the parishad an effective body with full autonomy for forging sustainable development at the grassroots level.

The UP representatives also announced sit-in programmes across the country on July 9, one-hour road-siege programme in all districts on July 27 and fast unto death programme on July 29 if their demands are not met.

Diarrhoea

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Thakurgaon Sadar Hospital is having difficulty providing adequate accommodation and sufficient oxygen cylinders to the unusually high number of ailing patients, said doctor Md Shajahan Newaj over telephone.

Shazneen case

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student of class nine of Scholastica also the youngest daughter of a leading businessman Latifur Rahman, was raped and killed at their Gulshan residence on April 23 in 1998.

The prosecution said Engineer Hasan, who was hired as a contractor to renovate Latifur Rahman's house, tried to rape Shazneen on April 1, 1998. Since the incident he was scared that if Latifur Rahman would be informed about the incident, he might lose the job which would tarnish his image.

So, he was thinking of a plan, which he executed on April 23 by instigating five of his accomplices in raping and killing Shazneen.

Latifur Rahman, also chairman of Transcom Group, filed a case with Gulshan police station on the night of the murder, and the police during their investigation filed another case under the Women and Children Repression Prevention Act.

The accused were Shahidul Islam alias Shahid, a domestic help, Syed Sajjad Mainuddin Hasan alias Azad, the contractor, Badal, the contractor's assistant, Shaniram Mandal, a carpenter, and housemaids Estema Khatun Minu and Parveen.

The Second Special Tribunal for Prevention of Women and Children Repression, Dhaka on September 2, 2003 convicted all the accused and sentenced them to death by hanging.

The appeal hearing of the trial court's order at the HC Death Reference Bench comprising Justice Ali Asgar Khan and Justice Emdadul Haque will continue today.

The prosecution also refuted some points that the defence

2,000 AL men

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Kamrangirchar, Lalbagh, Mohammadpur and other police stations in the capital, thronged the place just after noon.

Most of them were accused of damaging vehicles and public property, obstructing government activities and clashes with police and ruling party men.

The presence of such a huge gathering of accused before the court all at a time drew attention of all court-goers as well as outsiders.

After getting bail in each case, the accused brought out processions in groups as they were leaving the court premises. They chanted anti-government slogans for 'falsely implicating' them in the cases 'just for harassment'.

AL leaders including Haji Selim, Makkul Hossain, Jahangir Kabir Nanak and Mirza Azam, and leaders of Bangladesh Chhatra League, Swachhchasebak League and Krishak League led the processions.

Like its previous strategy to

raised regarding why the victim had not informed her parents about the April 1 incident before being murdered.

Stating the psychology of a 15-year-old teenager, Waliur Rahman said, it was difficult for Shazneen to absorb the unexpected incident, which refrained her from sharing the incident with her mother.

She was taking her time to deal with the matter, which her later actions also support. She shared the incident with her sisters during a vacation. Shazneen talked about the incident with her sisters when she went to a tea-garden at Kulaura, the prosecution said.

Waliur Rahman also refuted a claim by the defence that Latifur Rahman's accusation against Hasan was prompted by the fact that he owed Hasan Tk 1.42 crore. The prosecution termed the point as 'untrue' and 'deceptive'.

The prosecution said, although Hasan claimed at the court that Latifur owed him the huge amount, he only provided a voucher of Tk 28,000.

Besides, a witness Atiqur Rahman, who is also a relative of Hasan and through whom Hasan got the job, was even unaware of the money owed to Hasan.

Prosecution said the defence's point is not acceptable as Hasan did not inform Atiqur Rahman about the money Latifur Rahman allegedly owed Hasan although Atiq used to look after the financial issues of Latifur's Rahman's firm.

Additional Attorney General Razak Khan was also present for the prosecution during the argument, while advocate Anisul Huq was present for the defence.

foil the opposition programme, the government conducted a massive crackdown on opposition activists in the city and its outskirts and arrested several thousand people, including a large number of innocent commoners.

According to police, the number was around 2,500 while the AL claimed over 5,000 of their leaders and activists were arrested.

Many of the detained were shown arrested in pending cases while some others on suspicion.

Condemning the mass arrest, different rights organisations moved and provided legal aid for immediate release of the arrestees.

Ten rights organisations including the Bangladesh Bar Council held a press conference on June 7 and asked to put an end to the mass arrest and police harassment.

Earlier on June 4, Ain O Salish Kendra (ASK) in a memorandum submitted to the state minister for home affairs, claimed that it has provided legal aid and freed 199 of the arrestees.

Boishakhi TV

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He was acquitted later of that case.

Dhaka Central Jail authorities yesterday received a copy of the warrant issued against Bulu in connection with the murder case filed with the Anwara Police Station on March 28.

"We have received a copy of the arrest warrant," confirmed a top official of Dhaka Central Jail.

Bulu was released on June 16 after 17 days of confinement. Despite securing bail on June 15 in all three cases previously filed against him, he could not come out as an interim arrest warrant was issued against him on the same day in connection with the case filed with Gournadi Police Station.

However, the case and the arrest warrant were proved false in an investigation by the additional district magistrate of Barisal.

Media Consultant of BNS Group of Companies Shahabuddin Shikder said the case filed against Bulu with Anwara Police Station is false like the one filed with Gournadi Police Station. He said the cases were filed just to harass him.

Bulu was arrested on May 31 in connection with an attempted murder case, a day after he had filed a criminal case against Housing and Public Works Minister Mirza Abbas, and Managing Director of Boishakhi TV, Kazi Mohammad Shahidullah, accusing them of threatening him with death unless he handed over his share of the TV channel to them for free.

Two cases were filed against Bulu within five minutes of his filing the case against the minister on May 30.

Brazil fight

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but his replacement Robinho lived up things up front.

Hiddink pitched on attackers Harry Kewell and John Aloisi into the battle in the second half and Kewell came close to scoring a couple of times.

Dida and Viduka jostled for a high ball and Kewell had an open goal with Dida out of position but blazed over the bar in the 57th minute.

Substitute Marco Bresciano and Kewell both had breakaways but Brazil snuffed them out but Australia were having more of the game.

Hiddink went for all-out attack, like he did in the first match against Japan, and brought on Aloisi for defender Craig Moore with 20 minutes left.

Brazil coach Alberto Carlos Parreira brought on two subs minutes later bringing off Ronaldo for Robinho and Gilberto Silva for midfielder Emerson.

Robinho just missed scoring in the 77th minute with a swinging volley as Australia's defence lived dangerously.

Referee Merk dished out five yellow cards -- to Australians Brett Emerton and Jason Culina and Brazilian skipper Cafu, Ronaldo in the first half and Robinho late in the game.

When the referee blew fulltime Kewell remonstrated with him for half a minute over his display before he was pulled away by a team member.

TEAMS
BRAZIL: Dida; Cafu (captain), Lucio, Juan, Roberto Carlos; Emerson (Gilberto Silva 72), Ze Roberto; Kaka, Ronaldinho; Adriano (Fred 88), Ronaldo (Robinho 72).

Yellow cards: Cafu (29), Ronaldo (31), Robinho (83).

AUSTRALIA: Mark Schwarzer; Craig Moore (John Aloisi 69), Tony Popovic (Marco Bresciano 41), Lucas Neill, Scott Chipperfield; Brett Emerton, Vince Grella, Jason Culina; Mile Sterjovski, Tim Cahill (Harry Kewell 56); Mark Viduka (captain).

Yellow cards: Brett Emerton (13), Jason Culina (39).
Referee: Markus Merk (Germany).
Attendance: 66,000.

Primary school

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their fast until their demands are met.

These include retirement benefit, medical allowance and house rent as given to government primary school teachers.

The primary teachers said they have long been trying to draw the government's attention to their plight but to no effect.

Although several ministers on numerous occasions had assured them of bringing an end to their distress, in reality they never seemed interested in taking up steps in this regard, they added.

"In front of hundreds of teachers observing hunger strike on the Central Shaheed Minar premises in November last year, LGRD and Co-operatives Minister Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan assured that the government would soon meet their demands," said Habibur Ahsan Bablu, president of Awami League backed teachers' association.

"We have called our colleagues from all over the country to come to Dhaka to join the programme, and several hundreds of them have already joined keeping their schools under lock and key," said M Hafizur Rahman, president of BNP-backed teachers' association.

At present, a community primary school teacher gets only Tk 750 from the government exchequer per month.

As many as 10,565 community teachers are at present teaching thousands of rural underprivileged children in 3,778 schools across the country.

Intra-party feud

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essentials through Hawa Bhaban-backed syndicates," Hasina said, adding that the prime minister's family members who are now doing business in rice, pulses and sugar are the masterminds of the price-spiral.

She asked the AL leaders and workers to work hard in organising the party from the grassroots level and remain beside the countryside in their weal and woe.

"We have to prepare for the election as well as to intensify the ongoing movement against the alliance government," she said.

Blaming the government for not fulfilling their election pledge to meet the demands of the primary school teachers, the opposition leader asked the party leaders to support the cause of the agitating teachers.

They [government] appointed the election commissioners and are planning to appoint the chief adviser of the caretaker government as per their wish to sneak back to power, Hasina said.

The government party is amassing black money to use in vote buying in the next general elections, she said.

Prof Akter's death

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Prof Akteruzzaman headed a few medical boards assigned to perform autopsies of several controversial deaths before he was killed in a road accident on Friday afternoon.

In a letter to the secretary of home ministry three days before his death, the forensic expert mentioned harassment in his job and sought security of his life, his family said.

Several quarters had been threatening his father to give biased autopsy reports, said Dr Arifuzzaman, son of the late professor.

"He was even transferred to Rangpur Medical College as a 'punishment' for refusing to perform an autopsy without the presence of a magistrate, which is a gross violation of rules," he told The Daily Star yesterday.

He was sent the transfer order through fax on the very night he refused to violate the law, Arifuzzaman said, adding that his father was also asked to perform the autopsy of Jisan, a schoolboy of Sutrapur, without the presence of a magistrate.

He said his father even decided to resign after getting the fax.

A top leader of Doctors Association of Bangladesh used to ask Akteruzzaman to submit reports favouring a quarter and threat him when the forensic expert refused, Dr Arifuzzaman said.

Another vested section had put pressure on the late expert for

France score

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started with a dull 0-0 draw with Switzerland, stepped up a gear in a bid to keep alive their chances of reaching the knockout stage.

Henry gave them a ninth minute lead with a cool left-foot finish after a Sylvain Wiltord shot took a deflection and broke into his path. It was France's first at World Cup finals since they beat Brazil 3-0 in the final in Paris eight years ago.

Les Bleus, the 1998 champions, went out in the group stage in 2002 without scoring and would have matched Bolivia's unwanted record of five World Cup matches without a goal had they not scored on Sunday.

An ageing France team certainly did not look like title contenders on a dry, mild evening in Saxony and are still not sure of avoiding another embarrassing early exit.

South Korea were lively as ever but looked also naive and harmless against opponents a lot tougher than Togo, whom the 2002 semi-finalists had beaten 2-1 in their opening match.

The French contingent in the Zentralstadion shouted for a goal after 32 minutes when a header from a corner by Patrick Vieira appeared to cross the line before Korean keeper Lee Won-jae pushed it out.

TEAMS
FRANCE: Fabien Barthez; Willy Sagnol, Lilian Thuram, William Gallas, Eric Abidal; Patrick Vieira, Claude Makelele; Sylvain Wiltord (Franck Ribery 60), Zinedine Zidane (captain), (David Trezeguet 90+3), Florent Malouda (Vikash Dhoraso 88); Thierry Henry.

Yellow card: Eric Abidal (79), Zinedine Zidane (85).

SOUTH KOREA: Lee Woon-jae (captain); Lee Young-pyo, Choi Jin-cheul, Kim Young-chul, Kim Dong-jin; Lee Ho (Kim Sang-sik 69), Kim Nam-il, Lee Eul-yong (Seol Ki-hyeon 46); Lee Chun-soo (Ahn Jung-hwan 72), Park Ji-sung; Cho Jae-jin.

Yellow card: Lee Ho (11), Kim Dong-jin (29).

BNP men

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generators, pipes and wood from the godown, Selim alleged.

Law enforcers present near the spot, however, remained inactive while Pintu's men were beating the locals. They also hindered photographers from taking pictures.

Haji Selim said in the press release he bought the piece of land adjacent to Kamalbagh embankment in 1988.

But Pintu tried to hand over the land to the Jatiya Badhir Sangstha (society for the deaf) and put up a signboard of the institute. He had been threatening Selim since the end of May to withdraw his ownership of the land.

Shabana Begum, a resident of Kamalbagh, told The Daily Star that a group of miscreants entered her house around 11:00am, ransacked the house and looted a television set and gold ornaments. They also hit on her forehead with a sharp weapon as she protested.

Another resident Maksud Begum said students and teachers of the Dhaka Badhir High School came to the place by a bus at 8:00am and informed that Pintu will come to occupy the land.

"Later at 11:00am, Pintu along with 200 BNP men came to the place and ransacked around ten houses," she said.

Pintu could not be reached for comments.

No case was filed in connection with the incident. Lalbagh Police Station officials said they do not know anything about the incident.