

Commuters suffer as rally goes block streets

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Unusual traffic jam coupled with fewer motorised vehicles caused immense suffering to the commuters during the founding anniversary procession of the ruling BNP in the capital yesterday.

Due to their procession from Nayabazar to Gabtoli, the 20-kilometer road became virtually non-functional for vehicles from noon to evening.

A reduced number of private and public vehicles came to ply the streets yesterday, as the ruling party was doing publicity for their rally and procession for the last few days.

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JCD forces DU students to join procession

DU CORRESPONDENT

Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) yesterday forced hundreds of Dhaka University (DU) students of different dormitories to join a grand procession organised to mark its parent organisation's 28th founding anniversary.

The ruling BNP yesterday organised the procession where thousands of leaders and activists of BNP and its associate organisations including JCD joined.

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PHOTO STAR

BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia waves through the sunroof of her vehicle at Farmgate in the capital yesterday while leading her party's grand procession from Naya Bazar to Gabtoli marking its 28th founding anniversary.

BNP march turns into huge poll campaign

PM says caretaker govt to take over in line with constitution

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Several thousand ruling BNP leaders and activists yesterday brought out a huge colourful mass procession in the capital led by their

Chairperson Khaleda Zia who is also the prime minister of the country.

The procession marking the 28th founding anniversary of Bangladesh Nationalist Party

(BNP) virtually turned into a massive election campaign on around fifteen-kilometre route of the march, just ahead of handover of power to a caretaker government

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Pirates kill 6 fishermen in Bay

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Cox's Bazar

Myanmar pirates reportedly killed six fishermen in the Bay on Saturday and looted valuables, including fishing equipment, worth Tk20 lakh.

A gang of eight pirates from Myanmar attacked the fishing boat at about 11:00am when the fishermen were sleeping, said Jono Majhi, 38, who luckily survived the attack and returned to the coast by another fishing boat.

"The gang killed six of us and threw the bodies into the Bay. Then they looted our fishing boat," he said.

Five of the victims are Monir Majhi, 37, Habib, 45, and Bhandhari, 45, from Bagerhat, Abul Kalam, 40, from Khulna, and Farid, 35, from Maheshkhali. The bodies have been missing in the Bay.

A police team of Sadar Police Station rushed to Nazirar Tek in

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Indefinite strike in all airports from Sept 7

Biman employees demand measures to make the airline solvent

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Officials and employees of Bangladesh Biman yesterday called an indefinite strike at airports across the country from September 7 to press for urgent measures to make Biman solvent.

"We wrote to all local agencies of international airlines to refrain from using Bangladeshi airports from September 7," a leader of the Bangladesh Airline Pilots Association (BAPA) said.

He said from that day the Biman officials will not do any ground handling at Zia International Airport, Shah Amanat International Airport, Chittagong and Shah Jalal International Airport, Sylhet.

Ten trade bodies of Bangladesh Biman yesterday integrated themselves into a broader platform styled Biman Sammlito Sangram Parishad (BSSP) to protest the national flag carrier's ailing financial condition and tarnished image abroad.

Captain SM Helal of BAPA was made convener of the Sangram Parishad launched after a joint protest rally in front of Biman headquarters. Presidents and general secretaries of the other nine trade unions were made members.

"Our only demand to the government is now for immediate allocation of the funds Biman needs to bail itself out of the acute

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Bodies of six peacekeepers due today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The bodies of the six Bangladesh UN peacekeepers, who died in a road crash in Ivory Coast on August 25, will arrive in Dhaka this afternoon.

Upon arrival at Zia International Airport at 2:00pm, Foreign Minister M Morshed Khan will receive the bodies on behalf of the government with due state formalities.

The six met their tragic death just hours after their landing in Ivory Coast.

A truck carrying the soldiers crashed at Tiasali, some 125km off Ivory Coast capital Yamoussoukro, and veered into a roadside ditch at around 5:30pm local time (11:30pm Bangladesh time). Eleven others were also injured in this accident.

The deceased are lance corporal SM Miraz Ahmed (20 Field Regiment, Artillery) hailing from village Kanudeshkathi in Rajapur

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CTG PORT DEADLOCK

Crisis partly eases as 2 feeder firms to operate

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The crisis over transporting containers to and from Chittagong Port was partially resolved yesterday as two of the five feeder-vessel operating companies agreed to continue operation following a tripartite meeting at the commerce ministry.

Representatives of the feeder vessel operators have agreed to withdraw and refund the congestion surcharges, Commerce Minister Hafizuddin Ahmed said after the four-hour long meeting.

Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters

Association (BGMEA) has also agreed to withdraw its cases against the Chittagong Feeder Trade Committee (CFTC), he added.

Local companies QC Shipping Line and HRC Shipping will continue loading and unloading of containers while the Oriental Express Lines, Sea Consortium, and Atlantic Container Line—all overseas companies—will start operation after signing rules of agreement between their chief executives and State Minister for Shipping Quamrul Islam.

All feeder-vessel operating companies, except the HRC

Shipping, under the banner of CFTC stopped loading and unloading of containers at Chittagong Port on Saturday following a High Court show-cause notice about imposition of congestion surcharge.

"Gross misunderstanding was there among the stakeholders over imposition and payment of the additional surcharges but the misunderstanding has been resolved now," Hafizuddin said.

All the stakeholders have agreed that any additional charge for transporting freights will be paid by

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No 2 al-Qaeda leader in Iraq captured

AP, Baghdad

Iraqi forces have arrested the second most senior operative in al-Qaeda in Iraq, and the group now suffers from a "serious leadership crisis," the national security advisers said yesterday.

Hamed Jumaa Farid al-Saeedi, known as Abu Humam or Abu Rana, was arrested a few days ago, Mouwaffak al-Rubaie said, adding that his arrest also led to the capture or death of 11 other top al-Qaeda in Iraq figures and nine lower-level members.

He was the second most important al-Qaeda in Iraq leader after Abu Ayyub al-Masri, al-Rubaie said. Al-Masri succeeded Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, who was killed in a US airstrike north of Baghdad on June 7.

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PM finalised poll rigging mechanisms

Alleges Hasina

UNB, Dhaka

Opposition Leader Sheikh Hasina yesterday accused Prime Minister Khaleda Zia of finalising all mechanisms to rig the next elections.

"She wants to hang on to power to enjoy the huge wealth earned through illegal means," she said at a discussion at the Institution of Engineers auditorium.

Bangladesh Chhatra League, the student front of Awami League, organised the discussion marking the "national mourning day" 15th August, the day in 1975 when Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman was killed.

"If she [Khaleda] has so much confidence on the people why is she trying to bring Ershad into to

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