

Perform duty efficiently to earn more praise

PM asks army

UNB, Savar

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia, who also holds the Defence portfolio, hoped that the Army would earn more praises from all concerned by efficiently performing their duties.

Addressing a Darbar of Army of Nine Infantry Division and Savar area at Savar cantonment yesterday, she said the armed forces have acted as sentinels protecting national sovereignty, dignity, democracy and people's rights to earn love and respect from the countrymen.

She lauded the role of the Army in various activities inside the country, including setting an example of success by curbing terrorism through "Operation Clean Heart".

Khaleda said the Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) comprising military and police personnel is keeping a significant contribution in containing "bomb terrorism" as well as overall improvement of law and order situation in the country.

"The countrymen are also grateful to the Army for their strong role in facing floods and natural calamity alongside the civil administration," she told the function.

The PM said Bangladesh army today is acclaimed worldwide as an international peacekeeping force and they are working for establish-

ing peace in various conflict-stricken regions of the world.

"Now the glorious presence of Bangladesh Armed Forces is in almost all the regions."

Taking part in the UN peacekeeping activities Army members have been making contribution in establishing peace, restoring democracy, education, healthcare and social development activities in the host countries, she noted.

Khaleda believed that the Army's reputation would further increase in the days ahead, saying that her government would keep up the trend of sending army for UN peacekeeping mission in the future.

She said her government, after assuming power this time, has implemented various programmes for modernising and increasing efficiency of the Army.

"Our objective is to build a patriotic, well-disciplined, well-educated and professionally skilled multidimensional army in safeguarding independence, sovereignty, integrity of the state," she said.

She listed some implemented schemes, including increasing manpower and capability in the Army through forming new units and acquiring latest military equipment and hardware.

"So, nearly 9,000 new recruits

have been taken in the Army. Apart from creating employment, it also increased scope for promotion," she said.

She said the process of modernisation of all corps of army has been continuing, and as part of the process, a remarkable quantum of weapons and equipment has already been procured.

She said her government has also taken programmes for modernising the infantry, the main fighting force.

Army Chief Lt General Moeen U Ahmed and GOC and Area Commander Maj Gen Masududdin Chowdhury received the Prime Minister at the venue.

High civil and military officials were present at the function.

Earlier, Khaleda laid the foundation stone of Savar Sena Palli Prokopa, a low-cost housing project of Bangladesh Army for retired and in-service junior commissioned officers (JCO) and soldiers.

The project site on 632 decimal land is located near Savar cantonment. A total of 40 five-storied buildings will be constructed with 685 flats. Price of each flat would be between Tk 9 lakh and Tk 10 lakh.

'Over 2.28 lakh cases under trial, 8156 pending at High Court'

BSS, Dhaka

A total of 2,28,306 cases are under trial at the High Court and 8,156 cases are pending before the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court at present, Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs Minister Moudud Ahmed told the Jatiya Sangsad yesterday.

In a written reply to a question from BNP lawmaker Advocate Ferdous Akhter Wahida (Woman seat-305), the minister also told the Sangsad that the number of benches to try the under trial cases are not adequate.

Veena Sikri meets Hasina

UNB, Dhaka

Indian High Commissioner in Bangladesh Veena Sikri held an exclusive meeting with Leader of the Opposition in Parliament Sheikh Hasina at her Sudha Sadan residence yesterday evening.

It could not be known what issues were discussed in the hour long meeting.

Three killed in Jessore road accident

UNB, Jessore

Three people were killed and 10 others injured as a bus ran them over on Jessore-Khulna highway in Abhaynagar upazila yesterday.

The deceased were identified as Fatema, 50, and Abdus Samad, 52, and Meherjan, 35, of the upazila.

Police said a Khulna-bound bus ploughed through 13 people waiting at Bhanga gate level-crossing to get into another bus at about 10:00am, leaving Fatema and Samad dead on the spot 11 others injured. Meherjan succumbed to injuries on the way to hospital.

Witnesses said the accident occurred as the bus driver lost control over the steering at the level-crossing.

On information, police rescued the injured and took them to Noapara Health Complex.

The bodies were sent to Sadar Hospital morgue for autopsy.

Rajshahi PDB besieged for smooth power supply

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

Rajshahi City Jubo League yesterday laid a siege to Rajshahi Power Development Board office in the city demanding regular power supply during Ramadan.

Several hundred Jubo League activists marched to PDB office at around 1:30am and held a rally inside the PDB compound for one hour.

The city Awami League Vice President Moshtaque Ahmed Labu and former district Jubo League president Asaduzzaman addressed the rally with City Jubo League President Ramjan Ali in the chair.

The speakers threatened that they would launch tougher movement if their demands were not met soon.

Gayoom shocked at loss of life

BSS, Dhaka

President of Maldives Maumoon Abdul Gayoom yesterday condoled the loss of lives and devastation in some parts of Bangladesh by the recent storm in the Bay of Bengal.

In his message, the President of Maldives expressed profound sympathy for the victims and conveyed sympathy to their bereaved family members.

He also extended his deep empathy to the government and the brotherly people of Bangladesh.

Qulkhwani

Qulkhwani of Lionses Mahmuda Haq will be held at 8/6/2 New Eskatan in the city after Asr prayers today, says a press release.

AKM Emdadul Haq and his family members have requested all her relatives, friends and admirers to attend the Qulkhwani to pray for salvation of the departed soul.



Workers of Yousuf Fashion at Kazir Deuri in the port city stage a demonstration in front of the factory yesterday protesting assault on a female worker named Taslima, inset, allegedly by the manager.

RMG workers protest assault on female colleague in Ctg

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Workers of a garment factory yesterday staged demonstration and refrained from work protesting physical assault on a female colleague by an official.

They also damaged few fluorescent bulbs and chairs of the factory, witnesses said.

The incident occurred at around 12:30pm at Yousuf Fashion located on the third floor of Apollo Shopping Centre at city's Kazir Dewri area under Kotwali Police Station when Mohammad Selim, production manager of the factory, first admonished and then beat operator Taslima Begum accusing her of negligence of duty.

Witnesses said during routine inspection Selim found some trashes near the machine of Taslima for which he charged her.

Taslima defended herself saying that she couldn't clear the trash due to illness.

At this Selim rebuked and slapped her.

The incident soon angered other workers who took no time to suspend work and went on demonstration inside the factory.

On receipt of information police and members of Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) rushed to the scene and in a bid to appease the workers assured them of taking action against Selim who fled away immediately after the incident.

"Mid-level officials or staffs seriously lack managerial skill and don't know how to handle workers or employees of an organisation. They often create embarrassing situation for us by indulging in idiotic activities like what happened today," said Parvez Mohammad Yousuf, factory owner, in the afternoon.

He assured the agitating workers of taking action against the culprit and said a decision in this regard would be taken today.

Ctg port dockers call off strike

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

The scheduled strike of the dockworkers at Chittagong port was called off here yesterday following a fruitful meeting held on Saturday night.

The tripartite meeting that continued for five and a half hours since 7:00am discussed the 24-point demand of the dockers and reached an understanding on some of them including 17 per cent rise in the wages of the dockworkers.

The meeting was held in presence of Fisheries and Livestock Minister Abdullah Al Noman and lawmaker Amir Khasru Mahmud Chowdhury.

Chittagong Port Authority (CPA) Chairman AMM Shahadat Hossain, Chittagong Chamber President Aifuzzaman Chowdhury, Bangladesh Masters Stevedores Association (BMSA) Chairman Manzurul Alam, Dock Bandar Sramik Karmachari Federation and Dock Sramik Union (CBA) President Golam Mohammad Chowdhury took part in the discussion among others.

The meeting decided on withdrawal of audit objection to the newly registered workers, gratuity for sweeping workers, and inclusion of four workers' representatives in Dock Workers' Management Board.

It also reached understanding on the salaries of the 13 technicians of Chittagong port.

CPA Member (finance) Ahmad Abul Kashem, Director (traffic) Ehsanul Kabir, Chittagong Chamber Vice-president Abdul Latif, Director Amirul Haq, BMSA Vice-Chairman Mohammad Ibrahim, former director of FBCCI Tareq Kamal and leaders of Dock Bandar Sramik Karmachari Federation and Bandar Sramik Union leaders participated in the meeting.

Night coach robbery in Jessore

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Jessore

A gang of robbers looted cash and valuables worth about Tk 3 lakh from two night coaches on Jessore-Bagura highway near Khajura Magur under Jessore Sadar upazila at around 2:00am yesterday.

Passengers said Dhaka-bound night coaches of Druti Paribahan and Sonali Paribahan found the road blocked with tree trunks when they reached Khajura Bazar area.

As the buses stopped, a gang of about 25 robbers entered the buses and looted 29 cellphone sets and Tk 1.2 lakh in cash from the passengers.

The passengers alleged that police came to the spot but went away after preparing a list of the body.



Members of Kreta Sartha Sangrakkhan put up black flags at Khulshi Greed Substation in the port city during their siege programme yesterday demanding uninterrupted power.

Uninterrupted power during Durga Puja demanded

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Leaders of Hindu community yesterday demanded the government ensure uninterrupted power supply during their biggest festival Durga Puja beginning September 28.

They said celebration will be greatly hampered if outage goes on during the five-day festival at the Puja Madaps and the adjacent areas.

Leaders of Mohanagar Sarbojanin Puja Committee, Bangladesh Puja Ujjapan Parishad and Bangladesh Hindu Youth Welfare Foundation were speaking at a press conference at the Dhakeswari National Temple in the city.

They urged the government to take special measures in this regard.

They said around 19,000 puja mandaps have been erected across the country. Of them, 156 have been set up in the capital.

Official sources said around 2600 puja mandaps have been set up across the country to celebrate the Durga Puja.

They said "Durga Puja is now a socio-cultural festival as people from all walks of life irrespective of religion visit the Puja Mandap."

"It is responsibility of the government to provide all kinds of facilities so that people can celebrate the festival peacefully," Mohanagar Sarbojanee Puja Committee President Joyanta Sen Dipu said.

He urged the government to supply power on priority basis to the Puja Mandaps and adjacent areas during the period as it is the biggest festival of the Hindu community.

General Secretary Joyanta Kumar Deb urged the government to provide food and residential facilities to the on-duty law enforcers at the Puja Mandaps during the festivals.

Advocate Subrata Chowdhury, an adviser to Puja Committee, said government should take special measures, including uninterrupted power supply, deployment of additional traffic police on the roads near the Puja Mandaps and supply of additional water and removal of garbage at the Mandaps and adjacent areas during the Puja.

2 die in Cox's Bazar shopping complex collapse

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Cox's Bazar

A shopping complex building in Cox's Bazar collapsed yesterday, killing two people and critically injuring 10 others.

Police said two people, Nikongha Bihari Sharma, 50, son of Baykuntha Sharma, of village Notun Mohal, Choupaldhondy in Cox's Bazar and Abdul Qader, 35, son of Fayed Ahmed, of village Kharolya, sadar upazila in Cox's Bazar, died on the spot.

Six critically injured are Monir

Ahmed, Alam, Minto Miya and Zahangir Alam. They were admitted to Cox's Bazar Sadar Hospital.

Abdur Razzak, owner of Shopping Complex named Farid Crocarice, said the incident occurred at about 1:30pm when more than 50 buyers were shopping at the complex building.

On information, fire fighters and Cox's Bazar sadar police rushed to the spot, rescued the injured and sent them to the hospital.



Light to moderate rain likely

UNB, Dhaka

Light to moderate rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty wind is likely at many places over Rajshahi, Dhaka and Sylhet divisions and at a few places over

Chittagong, Khulna and Barisal divisions in the next 12 hours until 6:00pm today.

Moderately heavy falls are also likely at places, Met Office said. Day temperature may rise by 1-3 degree Celsius over the country, it said.

Highest temperature 33.5 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday at Sylhet and lowest 22.5 degree Celsius at Feni.

The sun sets in the capital at 5:52pm today and rises at 5:48am 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 | 31.6 | 25.0 | 83 | 76 |
| Chittagong | 32.2 | 24.7 | 71 | 81 |
| Rajshahi | 30.4 | 25.3 | 95 | 96 |
| Khulna | 32.3 | 25.2 | 83 | 82 |
| Barisal | 31.2 | 25.5 | 59 | 83 |
| Sylhet | 33.5 | 24.3 | 86 | 69 |
| Cox's Bazar | 31.6 | 24.0 | 76 | 85 |