

Jai Jai Din editor now wants talks with sacked journos from hidden place

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Security personnel yesterday morning took Shafik Rehman, the editor of recently discontinued daily Jai Jai Din, to some hidden place from the airport after his failed attempt to leave the country.

On Friday, the management of the daily suspended its publication for an indefinite period due to 'problems with electricity generation', and terminated 104 of its staffs, mostly journalists.

The terminated staffs, who made nightlong protests outside the airport, alleged that Shafik Rehman was trying to leave the country secretly without paying their dues.

Shafik had tickets of five airlines, but none of them agreed to have him on board after Emirates Airlines offloaded him before flying as the agitating journalists contacted them, sources said.

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Leaflets, cops rule barren Secretariat

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government and private offices were a deserted look yesterday after a three-day Eid holidays and two-day weekly holidays, as very few people turned up due to the opposition enforced Dhaka siege programme.

The same atmosphere prevailed at the Bangladesh Secretariat, the headquarters of all ministries and offices of the Republic, with a very thin attendance.

No minister came to the secretariat, while only a few officials were present at their offices for some hours, but left early fearing fresh street violence. Panic and tension were in the air inside the secretariat due to the presence of a huge number of law enforcers, uniformed and plain-clothes.

Meanwhile, several unnamed leaflets were thrown from the secretariat buildings, in which names of top officials who allegedly main-

tained 'special relations' with the alliance government, made fortune and politicised the civil administration, were published.

Witnesses said a 5-page leaflet that listed several secretaries and other top officials were thrown from the top of the 20-storied building no-6 of the secretariat at around 1:30pm.

Police personnel and reporters were seen running throughout the secretariat to catch the leaflets flying in the air.

Meantime, around 50 officials, mostly pro-Awami League (AL) and deprived of promotion during the last five years, met with newly appointed Establishment Secretary AFM Solaiman Chowdhury at around 10:00am.

They also submitted a memorandum containing 7-point demand to the establishment secretary, who was appointed by the alliance government on the last day of its office. These are -- giving promotion

to the deprived officials, cancellation of all contractual appointments, withdrawal of the officials appointed in various sensitive posts by the alliance government, bringing massive changes in the civil administration through preparing new fit list up to the upazila level, compensation to the officials and employees victimised by the previous regime, punishment to those who created indiscipline during alliance rule and not to use civil administration for petty political purpose.

Solaiman Chowdhury, however, told them that he had not taken the charge of the ministry yet and assured them of looking into their just demands soon. At the time of the brief meeting, some of the frustrated officials made negative comment about the establishment secretary and called him "dala" and "razakar," witnesses said.

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11 lakh hits for Star online edition

The Daily Star online edition received 1,132,043 hits from the readers on October 28 since online news updating has been introduced.

100 'killed' as plane crashes in Nigeria

AFP, Abuja

More than 100 people were feared killed yesterday when a commercial airliner crashed moments after takeoff in Nigeria's capital Abuja, aviation industry sources said.

"The ADC plane took off this morning from Lagos to Sokoto en route to Abuja with around 110 passengers and crew. After dropping some passengers in Abuja, it then took off for Sokoto (north). Some moments after taking off, it lost control and crashed," one of the sources told AFP.

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A train leaving Tongi Railway Station for Dhaka comes under attack of 14-party alliance activists during their blockade programme in the capital yesterday.



PHOTO: STAR

Bangladesh Rifles personnel patrol the street in front of Bangladesh Secretariat yesterday as security in the area was beefed up.

70 Taliban killed in attack on Afghan military base

AP, Kabul

Nato and Afghan troops killed 70 suspected militants who attacked a military base in southern Afghanistan, while a roadside blast killed one Nato soldier and wounded eight others, the alliance said yesterday.

Some 100 to 150 militants attacked a military base north of Tarin Kowt in Uruzgan on Saturday, said Maj. Luke Knittig, a spokesman for the Nato-led force. The alliance and Afghan troops fought back for several hours with small arms fire, attack helicopters and airstrikes.

Seventy insurgents were killed, Knittig said, upgrading an earlier estimate of 55 dead. One Afghan soldier was wounded. It was impossible to independently verify the death toll at the remote battle site.

On Sunday, a roadside blast killed one Nato soldier and wounded eight in Uruzgan, the alliance said. Three civilians were wounded. The nationalities of the slain and wounded soldiers were not disclosed.

Saturday's fighting in Uruzgan province came a day after an international human rights group criticised Nato-led troops in Afghanistan, saying their tactics increasingly endanger civilians and are turning the population against the Western alliance.

Nato's top commander apologised Saturday for civilian deaths caused by fighting between Taliban militants and Nato forces earlier in the week, but said insurgents

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Blockade to go on until interim govt formed 'as per constitution'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Awami League (AL) General Secretary Abdul Jaill yesterday urged the 14-party leaders and activists to continue their present agitation till the formation of the caretaker government as per the constitution.

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Monga hits Kurigram with renewed force

Over 1 lakh ultra poor struggle to stay alive

HASIBUR RAHMAN BILU, back from Rangpur

More than one lakh extreme poor families in Monga-prone Kurigram district have been experiencing near famine situation due to scarcity of food and employment, according to district administration officials.

Azizar Rahman Molla, deputy commissioner (DC) of Kurigram, said over cell phone on last Tuesday that among of 2,98,000 poor families in the district, the govt distributed 1,88,500 Vulnerable Group Feeding (VGF) cards.

He said 10kg of rice had been distributed against each card in nine upazilas of the district since last August but no further sanction has been received yet for October.

"Food situation in Kurigram is better this year than the last Monga period," Azizar Rahman added.

However, Safiqul Islam, a union parishad member of Guraguri Union Parishad in Roumari upazila of the district, said scores of poor people have been approaching him regularly for food and work. The Monga situation this year is worse than the previous year, he claimed.

District Administration sources said last year the govt distributed Tk 99,40,000 under Work for Cash project, which is known as 'Kabikha'

project for prevention of Monga in Kurigram district. No such project has yet been taken this year.

World Food Programme (WFP) also distributed 75,000 special VGF cards to the poor people in Kurigram last year. Another foreign organisation distributed a total of 40,342 cards among the ultra poor in the district that time under a special project where each cardholder received 30kg of rice.

During the last Monga period, govt implemented 867 projects under Test Relief (TR) programme against 811MT of wheat and distributed 700MT of rice under the Food for Work project.

A total of 3,03,842 extreme poor families were provided cash and food during the last Monga period in Kurigram whereas only 1,88,500 families have been taken under the VGF cards project this year.

Around 1,10,000 extreme poor families are still out of the government relief programme this year and nearly seven lakh members from those families are the sufferers of the near famine situation, said a responsible government official.

Prayer Timing		
October 30		
	Azan	
Fajr	4-50	5-25
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	4-00	4-15
Maghrib	5-32	5-35
Esha	7-15	7-45

Source: Islamic Foundation