



Sheikh Mujib Road at Agrabad in Chittagong becomes gridlocked yesterday as life returns to normal after four days of blockade programme enforced by the 14-party alliance.

CG controlled by some quarters

Says Khelafat Majlish

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The president/chief adviser to caretaker government is controlled by some quarters, said leaders of Bangladesh Khelafat Majlish (BKM) at a press conference yesterday. They criticised president's recent moves and urged him to take steps carefully and impartially. "By appointing his press secretary as his adviser with the status of state minister, the president made himself open to fresh criticism," said BKM Ameer Azizul Huq at the party office in the city. He also criticised the president's recent move to deploy the army keeping the council of advisers in dark as "an attempt to make the army controversial."

While speaking about the ongoing political situation in the country, Huq held Chief Election Commissioner MA Aziz responsible for the current political impasse. Highlighting the sufferings of people and losses of the business community he said, "We cannot accept such sufferings and losses caused by a single person."

"Considering the greater interest of people we urge him to resign," he added. The Ameer applauded the Council of Advisors (CA) recent efforts to resolve the ongoing crisis through dialogue with the major political parties. He, however, expressed his disappointment as the BKM was not invited for the dialogue with the CA despite the party's representation in last parliament.

When asked about the cause of BKA's dropping out of the dialogue, he said Jamaat might have conspired in this regard. Asked about the party's strategy for the upcoming election, Senior

Nayeb-e-Ameer Habibur Rahman said, "We would take part in the election under the banner of BKM."

"We would not form alliance with any party but we are willing to reach an 'understanding' with any party willing to accept our five-point demand. For this we have had primary talks with Liberal Democratic Party, Jatiya Party (Ershad) and a number of other political parties," he said.

Nayeb-e-Ameer Shahidul Islam, Secretary General Abdur Rauf Eusufi, Joint Secretary General Eusuf Ashrafi, Publicity Secretary Tafazzal Huq Aziz and Hussain Ahmed Nomani were present on the occasion.



BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia speaks at a view exchange meeting with diploma engineers at the Institution of Diploma Engineers in the city yesterday.

France bans smoking in public from February

AFP, Paris

The French government yesterday published a decree banning smoking in public places from February but giving bars, restaurants and nightclubs a reprieve till January 2008.

The ban, following similar measures in other European countries including Ireland, Scotland and Italy, will apply to "all closed and covered places that are open to the public or are places of work."

It is especially draconian in schools and colleges where the ban will also cover playgrounds, gardens and other exterior spaces.

There will be no smoking rooms in public buildings including hospitals, Health Minister Xavier Bertrand said on Wednesday, as the state "can and will set an example."

Insurgents urged to end attacks on Thai civilians

AFP, Bangkok

Human Rights Watch yesterday urged insurgents in Thailand's Muslim-majority south to end their attacks on civilians.

"Insurgent groups are targeting civilians to show their power and highlight the Thai government's weakness," said Brad Adams, director of the Asia division at Human Rights Watch (HRW).

BNP to resist AL politics of anarchy thru' ballots

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP leaders yesterday vowed to resist the Awami League's politics of anarchy, killing and plunder through ballots in the forthcoming general election.

The Awami League is creating anarchy as part of its conspiracy to foil the election, they said at a protest rally at the Victoria Park at Sutrapur in the city.

Amanullah Aman, organising secretary of BNP, said the AL held

the people of the country hostage to achieve its political gains.

He called on the people to remain alert to the evil designs of the AL, saying that it wants to destroy all the institutions.

Commissioner Kazi Abul Bashar presided over the rally while Nazimuddin Alam, Sultan Salauddin Tuku and Mokbul Islam Tipu also spoke.

Different ward and thana units of BNP also held rallies and took out processions across the city yesterday as part of their protest against anarchy and violence by Awami League.

Parties urged not to use children in politics

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Child Development Forum (CDF) yesterday urged the political parties not to use children in politics.

The Forum, representing around 130 children organisations, in a statement said it has been noticed for the last few days that different political parties are using children in processions, meetings and rallies.

Bricks and sticks were given to their hands, which is not a good sign for the nation, the statement added.



Sammilita Ainjibi Samannay Parishad forms a human chain on the High Court premises in the city yesterday demanding reconstitution of the Election Commission.

Captain fined Tk 60,000 for recruiting fake sailors

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

A mobile court led by Chittagong Port Authority (CPA) magistrate yesterday fined the captain of a vessel Tk 60,000 for recruiting fake sailors. Sources said Magistrate Md

Munir Chowdhury fined the captain of the Eid-E-Mostafa owned by Continental Liner Agency for recruiting persons having no requisite certificates as 'sailors' and allowing them to travel foreign ports in violation of the Bangladesh Merchant Shipping Law 1983.

On Wednesday, the mobile court arrested three fake sailors who have travelled different foreign ports without valid documents.

In separate drives yesterday, the court also fined four lighter vessels - MV Bashundhara Logistic-9, MV City-8, MV Malek-1 and MT Neimal - Tk 80,000 for anchoring in the port channel, posing danger to other vessels.

CU reopens amid tight security

CU CORRESPONDENT

After a 47-day vacation, the academic activities of Chittagong University (CU) resumed yesterday amid tight security.

The university authorities deployed huge number of police at different spots on the campus from the morning to avert any untoward incidents.

Students of different departments and institutes attended their classes while the resident students of all dormitories and cottages have started returning.

Student fronts of different political parties brought out processions and held rallies on the campus creating tension among the general students.

Activists of Islami Chhatra Shibir (ICS) took position at different spots on the campus reportedly accompanied by several outsiders from the morning, sources said.

They brought out procession and held rally on the Railway Station premises at around 12:30pm.

Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) brought out a procession at around 11:30am that paraded different campus roads and ended after holding a rally in front of the administrative building.