

Transport strike situation improves

By Staff Correspondent
The situation in the road transport sector arising out of the country-wide indefinite strike by workers improved slightly with the issuance of move appointment letters.

The crises in Narayanganj, Narshingdi and Kishorganj have been solved but in Comilla, Jessore, Rangpur, Bogra and Pabna, it remained unresolved, a Sarak Paribahan Sramik Federation source said.

A tripartite meeting between the government authorities, workers and owners would be held at Rajshahi today (Friday). Communications Secretary and the Chairman of Bangladesh Road Transport Authority (BRTA) are expected to be present at the meeting.

The day on which people power won over autocracy



Clockwise from top left: People power on Dhaka street, Ershad handing over power, Rejoicing in the capital and Acting President Justice Shahabuddin with Begum Khaleeda Zia and Sheikh Hasina.

Terrorism

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Ratan and Malek expelled by Dhaka University authorities for terrorism, such call from the Prime Minister for halting terrorism proves that the government wants to run the country by "muscle power."

The government is not at all sincere to stop terrorism, the resolution added.

Party's acting president Abdus Samad Azad chaired the meeting that reviewed the country's prevailing situation.

The meeting in a resolution said that the state programmes on the Victory Day was cut, short dropping the march past of the combined forces.

"It's a part of conspiracy against the armed forces built through the great Liberation war....."

The whole nation is stunned to see the government's move to hide the history of brutality of the Pakistani occupation forces by dropping the Victory Day march past programme, said a separate resolution.

This once again proved that late President Ziaur Rahman initiated the process of rehabilitating the anti-liberation elements like Shah Aziz and distorting the history of Liberation war, the meeting remarked.

It further said that the present BNP government, following the footsteps of the Zia regime, is also engaged in anti-liberation activities.

Referring to the dissolution of the Upazila System by ignoring the parliament, the meeting said that the abolition of the upazila through an ordinance is a "deep-rooted conspiracy" to make the parliament ineffective.

It also blamed the present ruling clique for politicising the administration in the Ershad style.

The nation today celebrates the first anniversary of the people's triumph over the autocratic regime of Lt Gen Hussain Muhammad Ershad.

The nearly nine-year-long regime of Ershad collapsed before the might of the masses with the transfer of power to the Chief Justice Shahabuddin Ahmed on this day in 1990.

The success of the people's struggle against Ershad's illegal rule heralded a new era of enormous opportunities for the nation's return to democracy. Though brief in duration, the ceremony of transferring power to the Chief Justice by Ershad at the President's Secretariat in the afternoon of December 6 will remain ever-fresh in the memories of the people who eagerly followed the occasion on the television

screen. Indeed, the whole nation bunt into profound jubilation, almost ecstatic with this first ever constitutional change-over in the country.

The three alliances of the mainstream opposition political parties had earlier unanimously chosen Justice Ahmed as the Vice-President of the Republic to whom Ershad would tender his resignation. The formalities involved Vice-President Moudud Ahmed resigning to President Ershad who then appointed Justice Shahabuddin to the post, under the provisions of the Constitution. Soon after wards Ershad resigned to the newly appointed Vice-President as per the constitutional provision of Article 51 (3).

Justice Ahmed, who acted

as the Acting President according to the Article 55 of the Constitution, also headed the interim government which conducted the general elections on February 27 this year.

The liaison committee of the three alliances which formulated the modalities of the power transfer, held long parleys to name a consensus vice president after Ershad had announced his decision to resign with immediate effect on the night of December 4, 1990 over radio and television.

Sinking all differences, the leading politicians, particularly the BNP chief Begum Khaleeda Zia and the Awami League president Sheikh Hasina, agreed to nominate the Chief Justice after day-long discussions in the liaison committee

meeting on Dec 5.

The national consensus on the nomination of Justice Ahmed was made public that evening. The jubilant masses across the country rallied behind the idea of the Chief Justice as the Acting President, confident in the belief that they would be able to exercise their democratic rights under his impartial stewardship leading to the election of the true representatives of the people to power.

Ershad's dramatic Dec 4 declaration to quit in the wake of one and a half month's intensive mass movement, fuelled by the killing of Dr Shamsul Alam Khan Milon on Nov 27, delighted the masses who thronged the streets and public venues throughout the country even late into the

night.

Cheering people started dancing and singing songs of joy and victory.

The city of Dhaka witnessed a series of momentous events in that night and the following day. Some, infuriated by the excesses of the illegal Ershad regime, chose to vent their frustrations by attacking the residences of top Jatiya Party leaders and associates of the regime, ransacking and setting on fire the Allahwala Building in Motijheel where the main offices of the then ruling Jatiya Party were housed. Sporadic armed clashes were also reported elsewhere in the city. But the fury and the wrath of the masses were overshadowed by the general rejoicing that

gripped the entire city during the course of Dec 5.

The "people's dias" erected at the Purana Paltan-Topkhana Road crossing where cultural programmes and victory celebrations attracted hundred of thousands of people from every walk of life, was the focal point of the popular celebrations.

The final phase of the mass upsurge had begun on October 10 when the mainstream opposition political parties lay siege to the Bangladesh Secretariat through a sit-in demonstration demanding Ershad's ouster.

Since then, until Ershad's eventual fall, the days had been filled with high political drama, apprehension and expectations leading to the triumph of people's power.

Dacoits kill coach passenger, helper

By Staff Correspondent
A passenger and the helper of a Dhaka bound night coach from Chittagong were killed when dacoits stabbed them near Chandina of Comilla at early hours on Thursday, a workers' union source said.

The driver and two other passengers were also seriously injured by the attack, sources said. The injured were under treatment at Chittagong clinics, they said.

A group of dacoits who attacked the coach and looted it also beat up some passengers before their escape, sources said.

Bangladesh Sarak Paribahan Sramik Federation held a rally at Seyedabad bus terminal and brought out a procession in the city to protest the incident.

Dacoity in night coaches have increased in recent days in the Dhaka-Chittagong highway, the union leaders said.

Jute, textile workers threaten movement

From Our Correspondent
GAZIPUR, Dec 5: Bangladesh Jute and Textile Workers Action Council on Thursday would start 'oust-government' movement from December 21 if its eight and six point demands are not met and arrested leaders and workers not freed by December 20.

"We will start a oust-government campaign if 33 of our fellow workers and leaders are not freed unconditionally by December 20 and the demands are not met," Abul Bashar, Convener of Jute and Textile Sangram Parishad told a workers rally on Thursday, attended by several thousand workers.

The rally was organised in protest against the arrest of parishad's Joint Convener Abdul Mannan on Wednesday.

Among others, Adamjee CBA secretary Ismail Hossain and Tongi unit of Jatiya Sramik Party President Kashiduddin addressed the rally presided over by Olympia Textile CBA Secretary Rashad Mian.

They said that the workers can topple any government which was proved earlier.

The trade union leaders said that no workers were involved in uprooting rail tracks during the 48-hours blockade on November 25-26.

They criticised the government for terminating more than 400,000 jute and textile workers and termed it as treachery.

JCD activist hurt as his gun betrays

By DU Correspondent
A Jatiyatobadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) activist received bullet injury Wednesday late night at the Mohsin Hall reportedly by a misfire of his own arms.

Campus sources said the bullet went off while Mukti was cleaning the gun. He was taken to a private clinic in the city.

Meanwhile, several rounds of gun shots were heard at the Zahurul Haq Hall of Dhaka University Thursday at about 11.30 am.

No injury was reported.

Recession: No recovery

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four months of fiscal 1991-92 stood at Taka 2286 crore compared to Taka 2034 crore in the corresponding period of the last fiscal year. The increase was mainly due to improved earnings from garment sector. Other major export items like jute faced 6.7 per cent, frozen food 13.5 per cent and leather 29 per cent decline.

The depressed economic activities also resulted in a decline of money supply by over 9.5 per cent compared to June, 1991. The contraction in outstanding credit was mainly responsible for the decline in money supply, the MCCI study said.

The import also declined by 21 per cent during the July-September, 1991 compared to the corresponding period of last year.

During the first quarter of 1991-92, the imports in terms of Letter of Credits (LCs) opened amounted to Taka 2578 crore. The figure was Taka 3276 crore for the same period of last fiscal year.

In Dollar terms, the figure was 24 per cent lower for the current fiscal year. The major items which faced a decline in import were milkfeed, soybean oil, liquid petroleum oil (POL), cement and industrial machinery and raw materials.

The import for industrial machinery and raw materials fell by the highest 42 per cent. The reason was due to the go slow of the industrial sector.

The foreign exchange reserves position improved during the period due to import contraction and increased foreign aid disbursement. Improved export and remittance earning also contributed to the increased reserve position. In October, 1991, foreign exchange reserves increased to 1130 million US Dollar compared to 880 million US dollar in June 1991.

She said during its election campaign, the ruling BNP had pledged to reopen all closed mills and factories of the country but after takeover, found it very difficult due to indiscipline and corruption bred during nine years of autocratic administration.

Suhrawardy

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Deputy Leader of the Opposition in Parliament Abdus Samad Azad attended the function as chief guest while former chief Justice Kamaluddin Hossain and Bangladesh Press Council Chairman Justice Ruhul Amin were present as special guests.

The discussion was also addressed by Dr Kamal Hossain, Gazul Haq, Dr Ashraf Siddiqi, Barrister Amirul Islam, Nur-Alam Siddiqui, Prof Syed Maksud Ali, Prof Hirendra Nath Biswas and KM Obaidur Rahman.

Shaheed Suhrawardy Smriti Sangsad Organised a discussion at a local hotel Thursday afternoon in which Principal Dewan Muhammad Azraf, Barrister Syed Ishtiaq Ahmed, Barrister Arsarul Hossain, Professor Dr. Emajuddin Ahmed, addressed.

The Awami League organised a discussion meeting Thursday afternoon at the party central office. Presided over by Acting President of Awami League Abdus Samad Azad, the meeting was addressed, among others, by AL central leaders Sajeda Chowdhury, Tofael Ahmed, Amir Hossain Amu and others.

Paying rich tribute to the memory of Hussain Shaheed Suhrawardy, the Awami League Acting President called for concerted efforts for giving democracy a firm footing.

He said Awami League Chief Sheikh Hasina was always ready to extend any co-operation to the ruling party.

"Let us work together with consensus and with the spirit of cooperation," he said.

Azad called upon the ruling party to abandon its attitude of serving petty party interests and accused BNP of resorting to unleashing a reign of repression on the leaders and activists of Awami League in the name of curbing terrorism.

Bangladesh Muslim League, Jatiya Janata Party (Asad), Bangladesh Islamic Party, National Republican Party, Democratic League (Oli), Janadal, Bangladesh Republican Party, Gano Azadi League, Progotishil Ganotantrik Shakti, Dhaka Autoricshaw Sramik Union and other organisations also arranged discussion meetings to observe the day.

Kazi Zafar granted bail

A High Court Division bench of the Supreme Court Thursday granted bail to former prime minister Kazi Zafar Ahmed in two separate petitions but asked him to surrender his land property in Khulna city with the government as security, reports BSS.

The bench comprised Justice Abdul Bari Sarkar and Justice Kazi Ebadul Huq.

The Court also ordered that the bail of the petition shall be liable to be cancelled if he is found in any way to be interfering with the investigation and influencing and tampering with the evidence in the case by use of privilege of the bail.

Earlier a High Court Division bench and the Appellate Division had rejected his ad-interim bail.

One case had been filed against Kazi Zafar Ahmed for abuse of power as a minister regarding import of sugar at a higher rate causing financial loss to the government.

Another case concerned violation of the detention order under Section 7 (B) of the Special Powers Act.

The trial began on May 13 against Kazi Zafar in absentia as he had remained a fugitive from law and justice since December 26, 1990.

Tinbigha accord

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To a query by Amar Roy Pradhan (FB), the Minister said that Kuchalbari would not become an enclave following granting of the Corridor and the government would ensure that there were no problems for the Indian citizens in the area whose every right and facility would be preserved.

Answering a supplementary from Gumanam Lodha (BJP), he said all Indian civic and military personnel have unfettered access to the Corridor.

On a query regarding a fly-over instead of the Corridor, he said such a thing was not in the agreement.

He told Amar Roy Pradhan that the government was in constant touch with the West Bengal government on the issue so as to ensure that there were no operational problems.

In a written answer, he said that the government has not received any demand for a white paper on the issue.

The Midnight File

Libya detains two Pan Am bombing suspects

PARIS, Dec 5: Libya has detained two suspects wanted by US and British authorities over the bombing of a Pan Am airliner over Scotland in 1988, the Libyan Ambassador to France said today. "The two people are definitely detained, there is no doubt about that," he told Reuters in a telephone interview, reports Reuters.

Walesa names Olszewski to form new govt

WARSAW, Dec 5: President Lech Walesa today name Lazer Olszewski to form a new government after the Diet overwhelmingly accepted the resignation of Prime Minister Jan Krzysztof Bielecki and his administration. The Speaker of Parliament's lower house, Wieslaw Chrzanowski, read a statement from Walesa asking Olszewski, who has the backing of a five-party centre-right coalition, to form a new government, reports AFP.

Shoot-at-sight in Bihar ordered against rioters

PATNA, Dec 5: Shoot-at-sight was today ordered against caste rioters in Bihar's Saharsa and Purnea districts. The chief minister, Laloo Prasad Yadav, asserted that those responsible for caste tensions in the twin districts would not be spared. Yadav told newsmen that certain 'disgruntled politicians' were creating caste hatred in the two districts to serve their own ends, reports PTI.

Fresh autopsy

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ous death on last Friday of Hafez Mukhter Hossain and taken on five-day police remand.

The autopsy report of Mukhter by DMCH indicated that the death was suicidal.

Police till yesterday did not find any evidence to say that the case was not suicidal.

Police were still waiting for the report from CID which was examining the finger print on the revolver concerned, the used bullet and the bullet's pellet.

Since the police remand was over, Shyamoli was produced before the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate Court Thursday afternoon.

The eldest brother of Hafez Mukhter Alhaj Rakibuddin was also present in the court.

He said that his brother was murdered and prayed for a proper investigation into the case.

Mukhter Hossain left behind his wife, two daughters and two sons.

BCL demands Liaqat's release

By DU Correspondent
The Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) at a rally Thursday, at the Press Club demanded immediate release of Liaqat Hossain, a Juba League leader, who was arrested Wednesday in connection with the Dr Milon murder case.

Held in observance of the fourth death anniversary of Dawlat Khan, a Chhatra League activist, the rally was presided over by Ahmed Hossain, the acting president of BCL.

The speakers at the rally termed the case against Liaqat as false and motivated one and demanded its immediate withdrawal.

The rally called upon the government to find out the actual murderers of Dr Milon soon.

The rally was addressed by Kamal Hossain, Golan Mustafa Sujan, Kamruzzaman Ansari, Momtazuddin Mehdi.