

People have rejected BNP's misrule: Mizan

Acting Chairman of the Jatiya Party Mizanur Rahman Chowdhury described the 'grand success' of hartal yesterday as a clear manifestation of people's total rejection of the misrule of the present BNP government, reports UNB.

"It also reflects the people's whole-hearted acceptance of the programme for the realisation which the opposition parties resorted to hartal," he said.

Addressing a news conference at the end of the eight-hour hartal at his Gulshan residence in the evening, he said the salient features of the Jatiya Party's 7-point programmes were release of Ershad, restoration of the upazila system and repeal of the anti-terrorism act.

Mizanur Rahman Chowdhury, in reply to a correspondent's query, reiterated that his party's demand for an interim caretaker government.

An interim caretaker government presupposed resignation of the present government, he said in reply to another question.

Former Prime Minister Kazi Zafar Ahmed, who was sitting beside Mizanur Chowdhury, denounced alleged repression against his party activists during the hartal hours in the city and elsewhere in the country.

Giving a detailed account of alleged physical torture on the Jatiya Party workers and leaders at various places, Kazi Zafar Ahmed noted with deep anguish that a member of his party President and MP Monirul Haq Chowdhury was subjected to worst kind of brutality at Comilla.

He alleged that Monirul Haq Chowdhury, while driving past Comilla town, was attacked by a handful of hirelings during the hartal hours. His driver was so

mercilessly beaten up that he suffered a fractured arm. Both were admitted to a private clinic in Comilla, Zafar said.

He also pointed out that another MP of the Jatiya Party — Advocate Abdul Majid — was grossly maltreated by the police at Kauran Bazar in the city when he was leading a peaceful procession.

Kazi Zafar said when Majid pointed out to the police that he was within his democratic rights to lead a peaceful procession, a police officer told him bluntly: "We are under instruction not to allow the Jatiya Party activists to take recourse to rallies, demonstrations and processions."

Zafar claimed that 21 JP workers were wounded in various incidents during yesterday's hartal.

Kazi Zafar Ahmed claimed the BNP activists opened fire on the peaceful procession of the Jatiya Party on the eve of hartal at Gazipur injuring one person. Similar painful incidents also took place at Kushtia.

When asked why the Jatiya Party activists were being singled out for attack by the government, Mizanur Rahman Chowdhury came out with a prompt reply: "It only expresses the ruling party's spirit of revenge against the Jatiya Party."

Announcing his party's follow-up action programmes after yesterday's hartal, Mizanur Chowdhury said the Jatiya Party would start a mass contact fortnight from October 14 and on October 23, it will observe its 'Upazila Day' by holding protest rallies and processions at all upazilas throughout the country. On November 10 the party will observe a protest day, he said.

Factional clash leaves 20 dead in Kabul

KABUL, Oct 10: Rival Afghan gunmen fought with rockets and artillery in their capital Kabul today, killing 20 people and injuring more than 80 in the heaviest clashes in weeks, hospitals said, reports Reuter.

Up to 900 rockets and mortar bombs pounded the city after fighting between the Iran-backed Shiite Hezb-i-Wahdat and the hardline Sunni Muslim Ittihad-i-Islami erupted before dawn and raged into the afternoon.

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Thousands of people have been killed in rocket attacks and factional fighting in and around Kabul since the Mujahideen took power from the former Communist government in April 1992.

An Ittihad spokesman accused its Shiite rivals of starting the bombardment that he said killed 10 civilians and injured 40 in villages between the Wahdat headquarters in Kabul's western suburbs and the Ittihad base in mountains overlooking the city further to the west.

Wahdat leader Abdul Ali Mazari said the fighting had been heavy and blamed Ittihad.

"Ittihad infantry advanced but we pushed them back and captured some of their posts as well," he said in an interview.

He said his forces captured two tanks and four artillery pieces after Ittihad Mujahideen fighters retreated.

A six-man commission set up last July to monitor a cease-fire and an end to a year of similar skirmishes had ceased to function, he said, blaming Ittihad leader Abdurrah Sayyaf for refusing to negotiate.

Sayyaf was unavailable to comment.

Injured poured into the Karte Se Hospital in the Hezb-i-Wahdat western district of Kabul and doctors and fighters reported at least 10 dead and 40 injured, including 20 seriously hurt.

Residents said it was the fiercest fighting for many weeks in a city where several people die almost daily in battles between the rival Mujahideen parties that make up the fractious coalition Islamic government.

36 killed in Bihar bus plunge

NEW DELHI, Oct 10: At least 36 people were killed and 15 injured today when a bus plunged from a bridge into a dry river bed in the east Indian state of Bihar, the United News of India (UNI) said, reports Reuter.

UNI, quoting witnesses and police, said the crash occurred after the driver lost control of the bus, which was travelling from the state capital Patna.

Most of the injured were in serious condition, UNI added.

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conditions and modalities for extending a package of financial and technical assistance.

Under the project, the barge loading facility at the main silt jetty at Chittagong Port will be repaired and some equipment of the jetty would be furnished with modern facilities. The central storage depot (CSD) at Halishahar, Dewanhat and the LSD scheme at Chandpur Ghat, Swandip, Chiringa, Nazirhat and Dulahazari will also be upgraded under the rehabilitation programme.

Shipping Ministry sources said with the upgradation of these ports and the foodgrain godowns, the cargo handling capacity of the ports would increase. They hope this would help quick clearing of the ships moored at the ports.

Ordn on wages

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amount of Taka 296 crore this fiscal year.

Policy makers in the government suggested that the corporations may issue bonds instead of cash to pay the arrears to avoid extra pressure on their annual budgets.

Painter dead

Noted painter and sculptor Muhammad Anwar Jahan died of a massive heart attack at his residence here last night soon after he performed his Esha prayer in the local Mosque. He was 55, reports BSS.

He left behind his wife, two sons and admirers to mourn his death.

His namaz-e-janaza will be held at the Baitul Mukarram Mosque today after Zohr prayer.

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A group of Russian soldiers leave Red Square after visiting the Lenin Mausoleum yesterday. The mausoleum shut to the public yesterday afternoon and is expected to be closed forever. — AFP photo

Benazir claims right to form govt

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poised and making efforts to win over support.

Aides of both former premiers confirmed that the hectic search for allies and wooing of independents was on behind closed doors, but the mood was upbeat in Bhutto's camp after the unexpectedly heavy inroads she made into Sharif's Punjab bastion in Saturday's provincial polls.

"We and our allies are simply delighted with the results and accept the verdict of the people," she said. I will phone Nawaz Sharif and congratulate him. He should be ready to play the role of opposition at the centre and in the provinces.

"The message is clear and it will be PPP and its allies who will form the government in Punjab."

But she was more cautious on who would be the next premier of Pakistan, saying: "There is always a slip between the cup and the lip. After the election of the Speaker and Deputy Speaker, the message will be clearer."

The new National Assembly is scheduled to meet on October 15 and to elect a premier on October 19, but party MPs will be bound by a ban on floor crossing passed by the interim government of Moeen Qureshi on the eve of the provincial elections.

The Sharif aide said he estimated it would take three days at least before the situation clarified.

Pakistani political commentators were pessimistic.

"The election has failed to resolve the crisis. The fight was between two main parties, but the balance of power is in the hands of independents," said Pakistani intellectual and columnist Anwar Khalil. "They have become the decisive power. It has opened up a Pandora's box of problems."

Murtaza wins Larkana seat

ISLAMABAD, Oct 10: Benazir Bhutto's brother faces airplane hijacking charges and hasn't set foot in Pakistan for 16 years, but that didn't stop him from winning a seat Sunday in provincial elections, reports AP.

His famous family name was enough for Murtaza Bhutto to win his hometown of Larkana, part of the southern province of Sindh. Even so, the successful candidate, who's been living in Syria, isn't expected to return home any time soon because of the outstanding criminal charges against him.

His sister, who is expected to become Prime Minister again, won't be celebrating his victory.

Ms Bhutto and her brother are political opponents with a sibling rivalry so heated that they no longer speak to each other.

Murtaza polled 22,140 votes as an independent to defeat the candidate of his sister's Pakistan People's Party (PPP) by just over 2,000 votes, according to the results.

He was standing in six provincial seats. In some he polled just a few dozen votes despite the backing of his mother.

Final standings

ISLAMABAD, Oct 10: Final party standings in elections to the provincial assemblies of four Pakistan provinces, Punjab, Sindh, Northwest Frontier Province (NWFP) and Baluchistan as announced by the Election Commission, reports AFP.

Parties	Punj	Sin	NWFP	Balu
PPP of Benazir	94	56	22	3
PML of Sharif	106	8	15	6
PML-Junejo	18	-	4	-
MQM of Altaf	-	27	-	-
ANP of Khattak	-	-	20	1
Others	5	3	7	21
Independents	17	5	11	9

The commission says the result of one seat in NWFP has been delayed, and polling in one constituency in Sindh province was called off due to the death of a candidate.

Ferry disaster

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tragedy, one of the worst sea accidents in recent Korean history.

Defence Minister Kwon Young-hae and Home Minister Lee Hae-ko rushed to the area to help supervise rescue efforts. A team of 50 navy commandos trained in underwater operations were flown to the scene, officials said.

Television reports showed helicopters hovering over whitecaps trying to retrieve bodies. A morgue was set up at Puan hospital on the mainland and survivors were taken to a nearby hospital by helicopter, news reports said.

Survivors were rescued from rubber lifeboats and some were found clinging to pieces of debris from the sunken ship, said fishermen and police who helped with rescue operations.

Bodos attack 30 villages, kill 50 in 3 days

BIJUNI, India, Oct 10: At least 50 people, mostly Muslims and migrants from Nepal, have been killed by Bodo tribesmen in attacks on 30 villages in India's northeastern state of Assam in the past three days, officials said today, reports Reuter.

They said troops had fished out 28 bodies from ponds in five villages so far and many bodies were still lying scattered in six other villages.

"It's going to take us some time to recover all the bodies from the remote villages because the fleeing tribesmen had destroyed many bridges linking the villages," said Bishen Johar, a local official.

"The casualties are likely to be twice as many" Johar said. Officials said the Bodos at-

Bodos attack 30 villages, kill 50 in 3 days



A South Korean Coastguard vessel moves in to pull a man's body from the sea after a ferry with more than 200 people aboard sank off the west coast yesterday. — AFP photo

Admn officers of universities go on strike today

By DU Correspondent

The administrative officers of the universities in the country will observe a four-day strike from today to press home their two-point demands.

The officers' demands included amendment to the wage structure and enhancement of officers' representation to the Senate, Syndicate, Finance Committee and the Academic Council.

The decision was taken at a meeting of the working committee of Bangladesh Inter-University Officers' Federation recently.

The federation demanded immediate fulfillment of their demands which had already been recommended by the Syndicates of the universities, University Grants Commission (UGC), Ministry of Education and high powered committee of the Government.

On the concluding day of the strike, Thursday, the officers from different universities will hold a grand meeting at the Teachers' Students' Centre (TSC) of the Dhaka University.

One stabbed to death

By DMCH Correspondent

One Mafzuddin was reportedly stabbed to death on the outskirts of the city yesterday early dawn.

The victim came under attack by some unidentified miscreants Saturday night when he was returning home from the mosque at Gulshan Road in Narayanganj.

Mafzuddin, 40, was rushed to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) where he succumbed to his injuries early yesterday morning.

His body was sent to the hospital morgue for autopsy.

Meanwhile, at Lalbagh in the city, one minor boy was injured when a bomb exploded near him at Toofi Angkor Lane around 9 am yesterday. Details of the incident was, however, not available.

The victim Zakir Hossain, 9, was admitted to the DMCH in a critical condition.

Hasina thanks people

Awami League President Sheikh Hasina thanked the people for observing hartal throughout the country yesterday registering their verdict against 'misrule, corruption and inefficiency' of the BNP government, reports UNB.

In a statement, she said, despite 'provocation by the ruling party and even by the head of the government', people had observed the shut down peacefully.

Hasina, also the Leader of the Opposition in Parliament, expressed the hope that all would come forward unitedly to step up the current movement for emancipation of the commonman.

Dr Kamal

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movement against those who want to control the society with muscle power.

Asked who he thought were responsible for the killing of Mizan, Dr Kamal replied that an investigation was on and the killers should be identified soon.

Recalling that Mizan died in a meeting which was ironically discussing ways to stamp out violence, he said "Mizan is the first martyr of our anti-terrorism movement."

When his comment was sought on the Jatiya Party's demand for the release of its jailed chairman H M Ershad, the lawyer-politician said the demand had no legal basis.

"Ershad had committed serious crimes during his nine years of rule," he said. "The nation cannot forgive Ershad."

Aideed's son a US Marine Reservist

WASHINGTON, Oct 10: The son of Somali warlord Mohamed Farah Aideed is a US Marine Reservist who served in Somalia, the marine corps said on Saturday, reports Reuter.

Marine Reserve Corporal Hussein Farah joined the marines in 1987 where he trained as an artilleryman.

When the United States Launched Operation Restore Hope to feed starving Somalis, Farah, one of the few marines to speak the Somali language, volunteered to serve on active duty, Marine Corps spokeswoman Lieutenant Kim Miller said.

Farah, 31, was an interpreter-translator for the force commander, Lieutenant General Rober Johnston, from December 18, 1992, until January 5, 1993. He returned to the United States the following day.

The Midnight File

Papandreou leading in polls

ATHENS, Oct 10: Greek socialist leader and former Prime Minister Andreas Papandreou took an early lead in national elections today and looked set to return to power after four years in opposition, Independent Mega television channel said. Its senior analyst Elias Nikolakopoulos said that in first returns across the board Papandreou's Pasok Socialist Party was clearly ahead of the conservative party of Prime Minister Constantine Mitsotakis, reports Reuter.

Ex-KGB chief sworn in as Azeri President

MOSCOW, Oct 10: Former Soviet Politburo member Haydar Aliyev was sworn in today as president of Azerbaijan after winning 98.8 per cent of votes cast in an election last week, Itar-Tass news agency reported. Aliyev, also a former KGB security police chief, vowed to end the war with Armenia over the disputed enclave of Nagorno-Karabakh and improve living standards by introducing economic reforms to create a "civilised market economy," reports Reuter.

Aided supporters hold peace rally

NEW HAVEN (Connecticut), Oct 10: President Bill Clinton on Saturday strongly denied that the United States offered a cease-fire with Somali warlord Mohamed Farah Aideed, reports Reuter.

Clinton told reporters that widespread reports that a special US envoy to Somalia, Robert Oakley, was carrying an offer of a cease-fire with him to Mogadishu were "just not true."

"We didn't extend an offer of a cease-fire and there's been no direct communications (with Aideed)," Clinton said.

Meanwhile, some 2,000 supporters of Mohamed Farah Aideed demonstrated for peace early today in the capital Mogadishu, the day after the fugitive Somali warlord called for a ceasefire in his militia's attacks on UN forces, reports AFP.

"We need peace not war," chanted the demonstrators, including many women and children who carried portraits of Aideed and offered fresh cut

US denies truce offer

flowers to reporters at the scene. "We agree with the peaceful statements of Bill Clinton and Les Aspin," they shouted, referring to the US President and his Defence Secretary.

But the crowd also expressed resentment toward UN Secretary General Boutros Boutros-Ghali criticizing him for the UN mission in Somalia.

"They (Somalis) don't like Boutros-Ghali because he was not well briefed on a situation he should be more familiar with," said Burhan Gutali, a spokesman for Aideed's Somali National Alliance (SNA).

Pro-Aideed demonstrations have become a regular affair on Thursdays and Sundays since the United Nations put a price on Aideed's head, after the SNA was blamed for the June killings of 24 Pakistani UN troops.

Flanked by SNA marshals, today's demonstrations were larger than usual and followed a quiet night in the capital.

Hartal passes off

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government, release of its party chief deposed President HM Ershad — jailed on charges of corruption — and end to political harassment of the party activists.

In the capital, the hartal was observed almost peacefully with a few scattered incidents of brickbating, teargassing, baton-charges and bomb blasts.

Police baton-charged and teargassed a crowd at Dhonia near Jatrabari, to disperse picketers who attacked the inter-city night coaches approaching the Sayedabad bus terminal in the early morning.

Police also used batons and lobbed teargas shells to disperse a procession of a youth-front of the Jatiya Party at Purana Paltan at 12.45 pm. Two processionists were arrested from the scene.

Hundreds of street urchins indulged in a provocative role by pitching bricks at the police posted at the Zero Point near the GPO at 9 am.

Police resisted a procession of street urchins — carrying a torn red banner which read 'telex-fax-computer' — from proceeding towards the Purana Paltan crossing. Tension escalated when a bomb exploded, leaving police constable Abdul Halim wounded.

Besides, police and picketers chased each other at the Azimpur, New Market, Kauran Bazar and Farmgate areas. Several handmade bombs exploded during the incidents.

During the hartal hours, both the Awami League and Jatiya Party as well as their front organisations brought out several processions chanting

Hartal in districts

anti-government slogans. They also held a number of rallies at different city intersections.

Our correspondents in different districts have reported that the hartal was observed peacefully barring some stray incidents.

Our Chittagong Correspondent informs that the hartal, observed peacefully, paralysed the port city.

Police picked up several picketers from different city points.

Chittagong port functioned partially and delivery of cargo remained suspended.

Most mills and factories in the industrial areas remained shut down. Commercial areas remained closed. Only a few rickshaws plied on the roads.

Biman's first flight between Chittagong and Dhaka was cancelled today due to the hartal.

In Narayanganj, one person was injured in a bomb blast at Galachipa. Nawab Ali, 55, who was injured in a cocktail explosion, was admitted to the Narayanganj hospital.

The Adamjee Jute Mills remained open and operated normally. However, all the mills and factories in the town were closed. Road traffic on the Dhaka-Narayanganj highway remained suspended.

Our correspondents in Natore, Habiganj and Sherpur districts informed that the shops and business centres remained closed during the hartal hours and vehicles except a few rickshaws remained off the roads. Educational institutions remained closed.

AL on PM's speech

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President Mohammad Hanif, was also addressed, among others, by Begum Sajeda Chowdhury, Zillur Rahman, Mohammad Nasim, Tofael Ahmed, Amir Hossain Amu, Abdul Jalil and different city AL leaders.

Mohammad Nasim criticising Begum Zia for her statements in New York regarding the AL's demand for trial of the killers of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, said, "Khaleda said that she could not even try the killers of Ziaur Rahman therefore how would she be able to try the killers of Mujib?"

"My question is — what is preventing the Prime Minister from trying the killers of her husband?" Nasim asked and added, once not too long ago AL leader Matia Chowdhury approached the Prime Minister suggesting she begin the trial of the killers of Ziaur Rahman.

"Matia Chowdhury told Khaleda Zia that she had some vital evidence for such a trial, but Khaleda instead asked Matia to proceed with the case. This proves that Khaleda is even-reluctant to try the killers of her husband," Nasim said.

Tofael Ahmed denounced the government for closing the

AL on PM's speech

Airport Road for three hours on the occasion of the arrival of Begum Zia from the UN last Thursday.

"Never in the history of Bangladesh had any government closed any road like this," Tofael said.

The AL leaders, placing their 7-point demands before the public, announced that the party would stage a sit-in at the Secretariat on November 7.

The AL would also conduct a mass-contact tour across the country from October 20 to November 5 to rally public support for its demands.

The AL leaders also accused the BNP government of failing to maintain law and order, inefficiency, corruption and nepotism in the administration. They also claimed unemployment was on the rise.

The AL's 7-point demands include repeal of the Indemnity Ordinance and the anti-terrorism act, a ban on communal politics, removal of 'corrupt' ministers, trial of Golam Azam as 'war criminal', implementation of the 11-point demands about the farmers, saving the country's industries, ensuring a violence-free campus and reducing unemployment.