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Dhaka Day by Day



Hartal peaceful on first day

By Staff Correspondent
yesterday to press home their demand for general elections under a caretaker administration.

In the capital, all modes of transports remained off the roads during the hartal hours, except a small number of rickshaws. All markets, business centres, offices and banks remained closed.

According to reports received in Dhaka, at least 15 persons were injured in Narayanganj and over 25 in Sirajganj in clashes during the hartal hours.

The Awami League, Jatiya Party and Jammat-e-Islami called the 30-hour hartal till 12 noon today with a four-hour break from 6 pm to 10 pm

No inter-city buses or trains moved to and from Dhaka. At the Sadarghat terminal, inter-district launches were seen leaving Dhaka with smaller number of passengers.

The city Awami league held a rally in front of the Jatiya

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With Victory Day nearing, peddlers selling the national flag found very few buyers on the deserted city streets during yesterday's hartal hours.
— Star photo

Recess makes little difference

By Staff Correspondent

The four-hour recess during yesterday's hartal in the capital made very little difference in the traffic scenario and city life remained coiled in the wintry evening.

Though the two-day hartal across the country was relaxed yesterday from 6 pm to 10 pm to allow people to complete their daily chores, many apparently chose to remain at home.

Shops and market places were seen shuttered down while banks, commercial and business houses closed much before sun set.

However, a few groceries, tea-stalls and video-shops remained open after 6 pm.

The city streets wore a deserted look in the evening with few cars and rickshaws on the roads.

Rickshaws and auto-rickshaws piled for exorbitant fares after the hartal hours but their number decreased with the approach of the night.

Those arriving at Zia International Airport, Kamalapur railway station and the three inter-district bus terminals in the city had to face particular difficulty. The hartal ends at noon today.

Yesterday's Awami League rally was addressed by Amir Hossain Amu, Abdur Razzak MP, Abdul Jalil, Dr Mostafa

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2 Bangladeshis die in Malaysian landslide

KUALA LUMPUR, Dec 7: Two Bangladeshis were killed, while four others including a Malaysian were feared dead in landslides after torrential rain at a highland resort in Malaysia's central Pahang state, Bernama news agency reported today, says AFP.

Bangladeshis Mohammed Moklesur Rahman, 28, Mohammed Abdul Latif, 23, were found dead after a landslip at Cameron highlands early Wednesday buried four of them under mud. The other two have not been found nor identified.

A day earlier, Bangladeshi M. S. Salam, 35, was working on a vegetable farm when a hillslope gave way. Rescuers have not located him.

Rescuers were still digging for survivors, officials said.

All-out agitation after Dec 27, warns AL

By Staff Correspondent

Awami League leaders yesterday said the people would wage an all-out agitation against the government if the demand for a caretaker government to conduct national polls was not met within the deadline set by the Opposition, reports UNB.

Addressing a post-hartal rally at the Bangabandhu Avenue in the evening, they said a greater agitation would be started to oust the government if it failed to accept the Opposition demand by December 27.

Opposition Awami League, Jatiya Party and Jamaat-e-Islami yesterday enforced a country-wide hartal to press the government to concede to the demand for a non-party caretaker government.

The Opposition Tuesday gave a three-week ultimatum till December 27 asking the ruling BNP to accept their demand. Otherwise, they threatened to resign en masse from Parliament on December 28.

Yesterday's Awami League rally was addressed by Amir Hossain Amu, Abdur Razzak MP, Abdul Jalil, Dr Mostafa

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Pullout of Bangladeshi troops trapped in Bihac begins

Serbs.

Despite heavy shelling in recent days, UN sources said there appeared to be no point in keeping the Bangladeshi soldiers in Velika Kladusa. About 1200 soldiers arrived this fall to replace French troops, but officials said only about one in six had his own gun.

Major Herve Gourmelon refused to give any details on the number of men in the first contingent leaving the pocket in northwest Bosnia for Croatia.

Earlier UN officials said they were planning to withdraw 400 poorly supplied Bangladeshi troops stuck in the middle of vicious fighting in northwest Bosnia.

Velika Kladusa, in the far northwest corner of Bosnia, is held by government soldiers but appears to be close to falling to a month-long assault by renegade Muslims and

Sources in Zagreb, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said about 100 peacekeepers would be moved out of the area per day.

The sources said the United Nations still had to get approval for the plan from the combatants, and predicted that the Bosnian government might object.

Besides a couple of small supply convoys, Serbs have refused to allow UN convoys for the Bangladeshi to cross the territory they hold in Croatia. The Bangladeshi are reported to be short of food and medicine, and the United Nations said one man died last week of an illness.

Bangladeshi soldiers in another embattled town, Bakac, 40 kilometers south of Velika Kladusa, and at a base came at Coralići halfway

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Opposition must shoulder responsibilities: Salam

By Staff Correspondent

The opposition will have to shoulder the responsibilities for dissolution of the Fifth Parliament if they resign before its five-year term is completed, BNP Secretary General Abdus Salam Talukdar said yesterday.

"They are responsible for making Parliament ineffective by a prolonged boycott and they will also be held responsible for a premature expiry of the House," Talukdar said while giving his reactions on the Opposition's ultimatum for its MPs to resign.

He said there are constitutional provisions to handle the situation arising out of a mass caretaker government.

"Either we have to hold by-elections or call for fresh elections by dissolving Parliament," he said.

He, however, would not say which option the ruling party would follow if the opposition demand for a caretaker government to conduct the next elections.

Regarding hartsals the BNP Secretary General said the people would judge the merits and demerits of the country-wide general strike enforced by the Opposition yesterday.

He indicated that the BNP's standing committee would sit shortly to evaluate the latest situation.

Bangladeshi troops in Somalia moved to safer position

The Bangladeshi troops barricaded by Somali militia men near Mogadishu, took safer position Tuesday after removing the barricades reported UNB.

Three of the soldiers, however, suffered minor injuries during the action, an ISPR press release said yesterday.

They are Lance Dafader Monir Hossain, Naik Shah Alam and Sepoy Imdad Hossain. Their condition is now well, said the release.

The troops, who are in the Bangladesh battalion working with the United Nations Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM) took position in the Mogadishu port area after removing barricades on the way to their camp at Sabeli, north of Mogadishu.

The action was taken in accordance with the decision taken by the UNOSOM headquarters with the support of the troops of other countries in the UN mission.

Equipped with heavy arms, the militiamen laid the barricades on November 29. As a result, the Bangladeshi troops had been cut off from their base camp at Afgo.

The action plan was taken after UN officials' talks with the Somali gunmen for removal of the roadblocks had failed.

Jamaat MP Abu Baker dead

Mohammad Abu Baker MP of the Jamaat-e-Islami died of heart attack early yesterday. He was 61, report agencies.

The Jamaat MP elected from Natore-3 constituency suffered a massive heart attack in his village home in Singra thana of Natore district and died at about 2:15 am on his way to the Rajshahi Medical College Hospital, a Jamaat source said.

Late Baker left behind wife, four sons and seven daughters and a host of relatives and friends to mourn his death.

President Abdur Rahman Biswas expressed deep shock at the sudden death of Mohammad Abu Baker MP.

In a message of condolence President Biswas said Abu Baker was a dedicated political leader who always upheld the people's interest and fought for them.

The President conveyed his sympathy to the members of

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Mostafiz off to Casablanca to attend ICFM meet

By Staff Correspondent

Foreign Minister Mostafizur Rahman left Dhaka yesterday for Casablanca to attend a two-day meeting of the Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers (ICFM) beginning in the Moroccan city on December 10. This would be the 22nd conference of the Foreign Ministers of the OIC.

The ICFM is expected to prepare the agenda for the 7th summit of the OIC scheduled to be held on December 13 and 14 in the same city, located on the Atlantic coast.

International issues, particularly those concerning the Muslim world including that of Palestine and Middle East, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Cyprus and persecution of Muslim minorities in non-Muslim countries are expected to be discussed at the OIC meet.

The 7th summit of the OIC comprising 52 member countries would also commemorate

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No instance of caretaker govt anywhere in the World : PM

destructive politics being pursued by the Opposition political parties is severely hampering the development process.

"There is still time to come out and join the people. Only then will be accepted by the people in future," she advised the Opposition, which enforced a one-and-a-half-day hartal from today as part of their current move for a caretaker government to conduct national elections.

Begum Zia listed the development programmes of the government in all the sectors, including education, communication, health and employment.

Referring to local demands, the prime minister assured that Keshabpur-Trimohini road would be metalled soon, the local hospital upgraded to 50-bed one and a hostel be constructed for the students of Keshabpur College.

Presided over by thana BNP president Abu Bakar Abu, the meeting was also addressed by

Unknown Van Gogh at flea market

AMSTERDAM, Dec 7: A French flea market purchase has been identified as a previously unknown flower still life by Vincent Van Gogh, the Van Gogh Museum announced today.

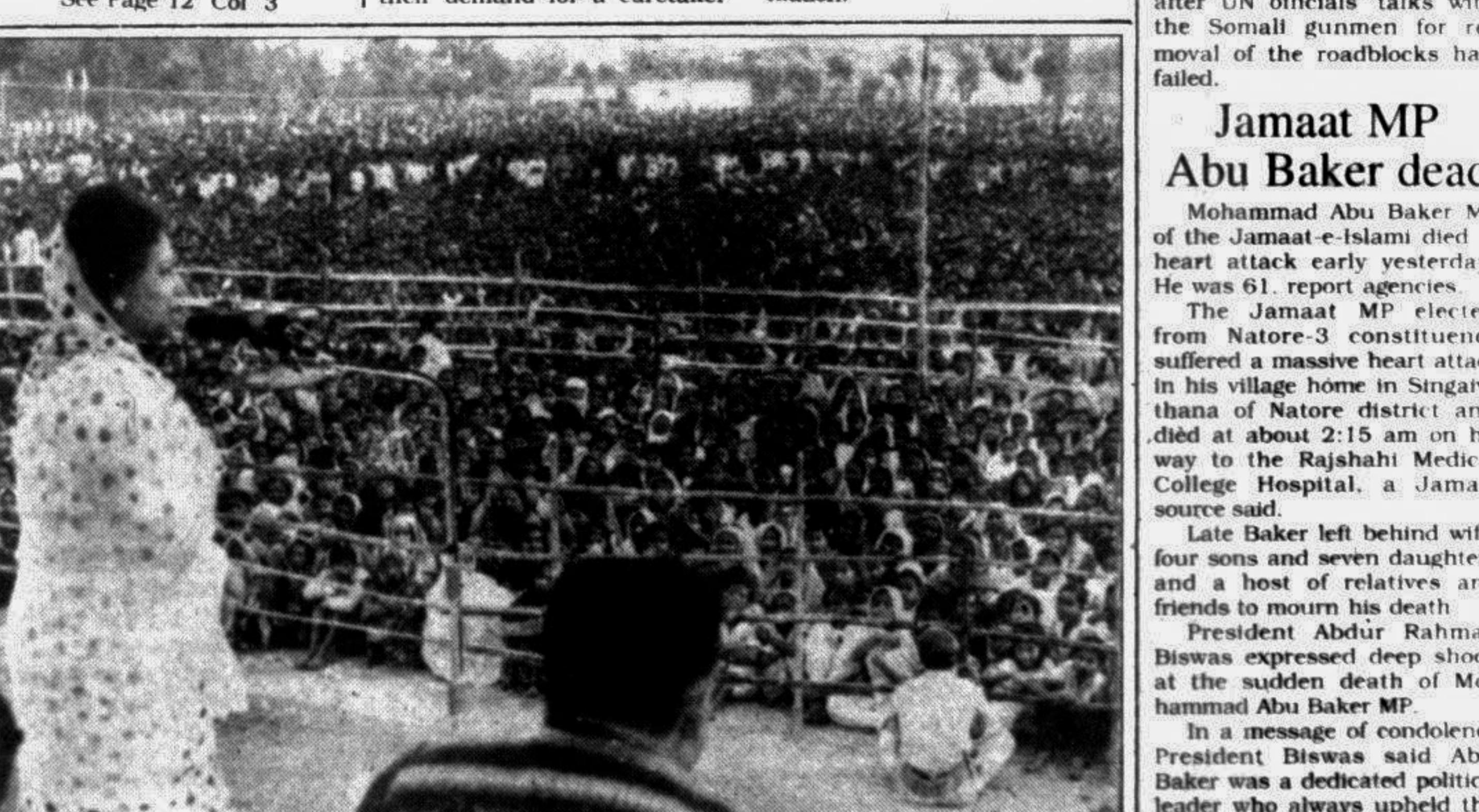
"It's never been seen by the public, never touched by professionals. There was no varnish on it and no frame. It's so pure," said museum spokeswoman Rianne Norbart.

The oil, called 'Still Life with Flowers' by the museum, shows a brilliantly colored autumn bouquet with asters and other flowers.

The oil, called 'Still Life with Flowers' by the museum, shows a brilliantly colored autumn bouquet with asters and other flowers.

The unnamed owner bought the painting at a flea market

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Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia addressing a huge public meeting at Keshabpur in Jessor district yesterday.

— PID photo

Two Indian ministers may have to quit over bank scandal

By Staff Correspondent

NEW DELHI, Dec 7: Two close colleagues of Prime Minister PV Narasimha Rao came under severe pressure today to resign over the nation's worst financial scandal after opposition groups disrupted parliament over the issue, reports Reuter.

The scandal emerged as the most important Opposition plank today when Parliament began its winter session. Its last meeting before the budget in February.

Shankarandran is an influential leader in the southern state of Karnataka where the Congress is expected to lose.

"There's every chance that he will be asked to go. Defeat in Karnataka will make him dispensable," a deputy close to the scandal.

He said Rao might also persuade Thakur, whose influence stems from his closeness to the family of former prime minister Rajiv Gandhi, to bow out.

"I am sorry, we cannot take up any other matter unless the

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JS session may be prorogued today

By Staff Correspondent

The seventeenth session of the country's Fifth Parliament, which began November 12, is to be prorogued today.

Speaker Shaikh Razzak Ali informed the House yesterday that President Abdur Rahman Biswas had already asked him to prorogue the session yesterday.

The request would be to prorogue the session tomorrow (Thursday), the Speaker added.

But the House resolved to request the President to reconsider the prorogation order because yesterday's scheduled business was suspended following the death of Jamaat MP Mohammad Abu Bakar.

"I have already received the prorogation order from the President, but I would like to adjourn. If the Leader of the House consents, the sitting to-day in order to maintain the tradition of showing honour to a sitting member," the