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Inside Today

Article
 Politics is not Power Alone
 by Abdul Hannan Page 4

Focus
 Children: Victims of a culture of silence; Focus on fishing forces down net profits; and Admission test: Why should it continue? Page 5

International
 Iraq invites Iran to form common front against US
 Human Rights groups accuse Punjab police of secretly cremating 3,000 Sikhs Page 8

Business
 Bangladesh Trade Fair begins in Tokyo Nov 1
 Strife continues to hit Pak economy Pages 6, 7

Metropolitan
 Dhaka Day by Day

The Tall Tal and Missing Ghosts
 Page 3

100 hurt on second day of hartal

By Staff Correspondent

The second day yesterday of the Opposition-called four-day hartal in the country, excepting Rajshahi division, passed off with sporadic incidents of violence which left over 100 people injured.

Normal life was severely disrupted by the non-stop shutdown.

Awami League (AL), Jatiya Party (JP) and Jamaat-e-Islami called the hartal from Monday to press their demands for dissolution of Parliament and holding of general elections under a caretaker government.

In the capital, chase and counter-chase between police and pickets and bomb explosions in Assad Gate, Shyamoli, Syedabad, Topkhana and some other areas of the city left more than 40 injured.

At Feni, some 15 people were injured when police lobbed tear gas shells at Awami League supporters protesting the arrest of Feni district AL General Secretary and former MP Jainal Hazari from his house at Masterpara yesterday afternoon. He was sent to jail, reports said.

In Brahmanbaria, where Chhatra League leader Shahnewaz was killed Monday, two AL activists — Zakir and Shahjalal — were seriously injured when police opened fire and lobbed tear gas shells at youths who were attacking houses of BNP activists after the burial of Shahnewaz at around 1 pm, according to our correspondent.

In Rajapur area of Jhalakathi district, 30 people were injured in gun-battles between Jatiya Party and Jatiyatabadi Juba Dal activists yesterday morning and evening. Three of the injured — Masum (40), Munir Hossain (27) and Farid (26) — were admitted to Rajapur thana Health Complex in serious condition.

In Barisal, 12 people were injured in a clash between two rival groups of BNP supporters at Rahamatpur under Babujan thana.

In the capital, police arrested 19 people involved in picketing yesterday. Five of them were arrested after the

Joynal Hajari arrested

FENI, Oct 17: Awami League leader and former MP Joynal Abedin Hajari was arrested today in a murder case from his Masterpara residence in the town, reports UNB.

Tension heightened in the district headquarters as Hajari's militant followers swung into rowdy protest and gheraoed the police station, witnesses said.

Police sources said a joint team of police and BDR ringed the residence of Hajari, general secretary of the district Awami League, at about 3:30 pm to arrest him.

They said Hajari was wanted in a student leader murder case. Ashraf was killed on September 8 this year.

Hajari's well-regimented party cadres gheraoed the sadar thana when he was taken there first. Police later sent him to jail.

See Page 12 Col 8

PM leaves for NY Oct 21 Dhaka may raise Farakka issue at UN again

By M Anwarul Haq

Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia in her address to the forthcoming Special Session of the United Nations will once again highlight the water sharing issue with India and the devastating affect of the Farakka Barrage, it was learnt yesterday.

The issue was also raised at the 48th General Assembly session in October, 1993 when the Prime Minister addressed the UNGA.

The Bangladesh delegation led by Begum Khaleda Zia, leaves Dhaka in the early hours of October 21 to attend the UN session.

The Prime Minister in her address to the UNGA on October 23 will also mention about Bangladesh's association with various UN activities and also in its global peacekeeping operations. She will reiterate Bangladesh's support for the territorial integrity of Bosnia and Herzegovina and touch on the world economic order and the changed global scene and also on democracy and human rights.

The Prime Minister is expected to focus on the problems facing the Least Developed Countries due to the adverse development in the

Twelve 'smuggled' Bangladeshi kids returning home

NEW DELHI, Oct 17: Twelve Bangladeshi children, who were stranded for several years in a juvenile home in Bombay, were sent to Calcutta by train today on way to Dhaka by air, reports BSS.

They are expected to reach Dhaka on a Bangladesh Biman flight on October 19, said an official of Bangladesh High Commission here.

The children aged between 6 and 13 years were rescued when they were being flown to Dubai by kidnapers Bombay's Santa Cruz airport in 1990 and in 1992, he added.

SOS Children's Village, an NGO, is financing the expenses for travel of eight of the 12 while the Government of Bangladesh will bear the expenditures for four others.

The total number of children rescued from kidnap- See Page 12 Col 8



An office room in the Housing Directorate during office hour on the second day yesterday of the four-day hartal. — Star photo

Rehman Sobhan meets Hasina soon Outcome of meet with PM conveyed to AL

Star Report

The group of five eminent citizens has conveyed the Awami League leadership about the outcome of its second meeting with Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia held Monday evening.

A source close to the group said that Prof Rehman Sobhan had a long conversation with AL leader Abdus Samad Azad over telephone last evening during which the views of the PM about resolving the political crisis were communicated.

"Samad Azad will convey the message to the AL chief (Sheikh Hasina) and inform the group later about Hasina's reply or reaction," the source said.

Prof Sobhan, a member of the group, may also meet Sheikh Hasina within a day or two to discuss about resolving the political crisis over the question of holding elections under a neutral caretaker government, the source indicated.

The group of five comprising former chief justice Kemaluddin Hossain, Barrister Syed Ishtiaq Ahmed, Prof Rehman Sobhan, Fakhruddin Ahmed and Faiz Ahmed already met the Prime Minister twice on October 9 and 16 and once with AL president on October 14.

The group in their bid to help resolve the persisting political impasse, has been trying to arrange a dialogue between the two top leaders.

It was earlier reported that the PM had expressed her willingness to meet Sheikh Hasina "to discuss with an open mind to find a solution to the prevailing crisis."

Meanwhile, Sheikh Hasina told the BBC last night that the government will have to create a congenial atmosphere. See Page 12 Col 3

US official meets Moudud, newspaper editors

By Staff Correspondent

Director of the South Asian desk of the US Department of State Lee O Coldrin leaves Dhaka today for Karachi ending a four-day familiarisation visit to Bangladesh. During the visit, Coldrin met some political leaders, newspaper editors and the Chief Election Commissioner.

Yesterday, he met Barrister Moudud Ahmed of Jatiya Party and held discussions for nearly 90 minutes at the latter's residence.

Talking to The Daily Star Moudud later said he informed the US official his views on the present political situation and suggested that the Prime Minister resign 90 days ahead of the elections and that the next polls be held under the Chief Justice.

Coldrin who had served earlier in Dhaka as the Deputy Chief of the US mission also met the Editor of Holiday Enayattullah Khan and See Page 12 Col 7

NEWS BRIEFS

Storm lashes Hatibandha
 LALMONIRHAT, Oct 17: A violent storm lashed several villages in Hatibandha thana of the district damaging hundreds of thatched houses today. Witnesses said 10 people were injured during the storm at Barokhata Hat. Nearly 800 houses were collapsed and hundreds of trees uprooted at Dolapara, Barokhata, Baura, Thangahara villages during the 10-minute fury of the storm, they said, reports UNB.

One electrocuted in Jhenidah
 JHENIDAH, Oct 17: A man was electrocuted and another seriously injured as they tried to steal sugarcane from a field surrounded with live electric wire at Kala village in Sadar thana early today. Police recovered the body of Jamal, 21, from the spot and sent injured Kamal, 22, to Sadar Hospital, reports UNB.

Student leader dies at DMCH
 SIRAJGANJ, Oct 17: A student leader, who was critically injured in a bomb explosion, succumbed to his injuries at the Dhaka Medical College Hospital today. Police said Rafiqul Islam Ranju, 18, and his four associates, including Saiful Islam and Babul Akhter, were injured in an explosion while they were making bombs at Paikartoli village on Saturday, UNB.

JP, Juba Dal men clash in Jhalakathi
 BARISAL, Oct 17: At least 25 people were injured, three with bullets, in sporadic armed clashes between the Juba Dal and the Jatiya Party activists in Rajapur Bandar area of Jhalakathi district today, reports UNB.

Indian Airlines cancels flights
 Indian airlines cancelled its IC 723/724 flights on Dhaka-Calcutta route today due to unavoidable reasons, an airlines press release said today. The airlines also cancelled its flight on this route Monday, reports BSS.

Hand-to-hand fighting in Jaffna leaves 89 dead

COLOMBO, Oct 17: Hand-to-hand fighting raged in northern Sri Lanka today as Tamil guerrillas bitterly resisted an army advance and carried out a kamikaze attack at sea, raising the death toll on both sides to at least 89, the military said, reports AFP.

With this, 136 died in the region today in three separate incidents, the military added.

Some 7,000 ground troops launched the operation code-named Rivirasa (sunshine) inside the northern Jaffna peninsula against positions of the separatist Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) defence sources said.

"There is very intense hand-to-hand fighting going on. So far we have lost 18 soldiers and one officer killed and 157 men wounded. We have recovered the bodies of 11 terrorists," military spokesman Sarath Munasinghe said.

However, he said infantry troops backed by tanks and air cover kept up their advance into territory held by the LTTE inside the Jaffna peninsula, where the guerrillas maintain their de-facto separate state.

"The difference we are seeing this time is that we are coming across a lot of close-quarter fighting. In the past, we encountered lot of mortar attacks from the Tigers," Munasinghe said.

He said three infantry fighting vehicles were destroyed by rocket-propelled grenades fired by the guerrillas.

Court orders Bal Thackeray to behave
 NEW DELHI, Oct 17: India's Supreme Court today threatened to initiate contempt proceedings against a Hindu leader and ordered him to behave, reports AFP.

A three-member bench said Bal Thackeray, controversial head of the Shiv Sena (Shivraji's army) party, had failed to apologise for his earlier criticism of Supreme Court judges over the razing

Hasina warns against repressive measures

Awami League President Sheikh Hasina yesterday condemned the government "for resorting to arrest, repression, firing and attack on opposition workers" on the second day of 96-hour hartal in the capital and other parts of the country, reports UNB.

Hasina cautioned that the consequence of repressive steps can not be good. She said peaceful democratic agitation cannot be suppressed by using force as people are determined to establish their rights.

In a statement she protested the arrest of party's former MP Joynal Hazari in Feni yesterday. At least 15 people suffered bullet wounds when police opened fire on processionists who were staging protest against the arrest.

Besides, Hasina said eight people including Chhatra League leader Akkas Ali were injured at Nagarkanda in Faridpur when BNP terrorists attacked on Awami League procession.

In Dhaka, Commissioner Shahabuddin, Mohammad See Page 12 Col 1

NAM summit opens in Colombia today

CARTAGENA (Colombia), Oct 17: The 11th Non-Aligned Summit begins here tomorrow, report agencies.

The leaders have started converging in this coastal city to take up such issues as the environment, human rights, trade and access to Western technology.

Several years after the disintegration of the Soviet Union, NAM is trying to make itself meaningful again.

The Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), with a current membership of 113 countries, wants to boost its power at the United Nations, and is thrashing out stands on possible UN reforms as the world body marks its 50th anniversary this month in New York.

Tough it has an effective majority in the UN General Assembly, the NAM wants to boost its profile on the Security Council, where the buck stops at the veto power of the five permanent members: Britain, China, France, Russia and the United States.

Among those expected to attend are Pakistan's Benazir Bhutto, Cuba's Fidel Castro and Palestinian leader Yasir Arafat. Bangladesh delegation will be led by Finance Minister M Saifur Rahman.

A mound of declarations, including widespread condemnation of the US trade embargo against Cuba, are likely to emerge from the conference, although the movement has no authority to enforce resolutions. Egypt plans to promote disarmament in the Middle East.

The movement has roots in the 1950s, when nations such as Egypt and India drew solidarity from anti-colonial-

Mother shot dead in city

By Staff Correspondent

A young man accidentally killed his mother at East Rajabazar in the city yesterday afternoon.

Police sent the body of the victim, Rokeya Khatun, 45, wife of Suruj Mia to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) morgue for autopsy at 5 pm.

According to police, her eldest son Kamal, 27, opened fire at his uncle Sultan at their residence but the bullet hit his mother. The bullet pierced through the left chest of his mother as she tried to resist her son from opening fire.

She died on the spot. Quoting family sources, our DMCH correspondent says, Kamal opened fire following an exchange of hot words with his uncle over an employee of the latter's jewellery shop. The details could not be known immediately.

When contacted, Tejgaon police said, Kamal was absconding.

BCL activist shot dead in Jessore

JESSORE, Oct 17: A Chhatra League worker was shot dead and 15 others were injured during an armed clash between two factions of Chhatra League and Juba League in the town tonight, reports UNB.

Shahidul Islam, 20, succumbed to his bullet wounds on the spot at about 10:15 pm when Chhatra League (Mintu group) and Juba League (Mehedi group) exchanged fire at Puratan Koshba area.

During the 30-minute clash, which started at about 9:45 pm, rioting groups used pipe-gun, pistols and bombs.

The clash is believed to be an outburst of a dispute over the formation of Juba League district committee.

The conference of Jessore district Juba League was held on October 15 but new committee could not be formed because of the leadership conflict.

Police recovered pipe gun, locally made pistol and some bullets from the spot.

Relocation of Aricha ghat unnecessary, locals say

By Morshed Ali Khan

The proposed partial relocation of the Aricha ghat would cause wastage of funds and land and throw thousands of people out of business, according to local people and official sources.

The government has decided to relocate part of the Aricha ghat that now ferries Dalatdia-bound traffic to Baruria, 9 kilometers downstream to reduce congestion. However, Aricha ghat would continue its services for Nagarbari route.

But people of Aricha, who recently formed a resistance committee to protest the move, claimed that the government's decision was taken "without considering the inherent layout" of Aricha ghat, the country's busiest ferry terminal which ferries, on an average more than 2,500 vehicles a day.

"Instead of improving the existing facilities in the ghat they have embarked on an ambitious project. This will have nothing to do with saving time," said Hamidur Rahman Hena, a local businessman and a senior member of the Aricha Relocation Resistance Committee.

This ghat has grown in over one hundred years. First, it was a steamer ghat. Then in the early sixties, it started offering ferry services. You see so many people are now facing unemployment in the ghat due to this change," said Anwar Hossain Badal, a businessman and Joint Convener of the Resistance Committee.

The proposed partial shifting of the ghat to Baruria is now awaiting approval of the Planning Commission, according to sources in the Shipping Ministry. A nine kilometre long road would be constructed from Uthali, on the Dhaka-Aricha highway, upto the new ghat.

There are 3,000 registered shops, hotels, restaurants and thousands of See Page 12 Col 4



A large number of shops, hotels and other businesses at Aricha Ghat will face closure if the ghat is shifted. — Star photo