

May Day observed**Fresh pledge to protect workers' rights**

By Staff Correspondent

The historic May Day was observed in the country Wednesday with a renewed pledge to protect and uphold the fundamental rights of the working people.

Different trade unions and socio-cultural organisations planned programmes which included rallies, processions and discussions on the significance of the day.

The day was a public holiday.

The day is observed every year in remembrance of the eight workers who were killed in a police firing in the US city of Chicago on May 1, 1886. They were holding a rally demanding an 8-hour working day.

President Abdur Rahman Biswas and Chief Adviser Muhammad Habibur Rahman in separate messages recalled the significance of the day. Political leaders also gave similar statements marking the day.

Different political parties and labour organisations organ-

Indian polls

From Page 1

companies Indian elections. Detainees usually are released after the balloting ends.

Press Trust of India claimed 300,000 people were under preventative arrest, but gave no basis for the figure.

Voting also was being held in Arunachal Pradesh, Goa, Meghalaya, Sikkim, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Orissa, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu and Karnataka.

In the southern state of Andhra Pradesh, guerrillas of the People's War Group were blamed for the explosion in Nizamabad, 160 kilometers north of the state capital of Hyderabad. The three policemen were searching for a jeep stolen by the rebels when they detonated the mine.

The guerrillas also snatched ballots from two polling stations to ensure that the voting would be invalidated, police said.

The militant outfit, claiming to represent landless peasants, had an election boycott and had threatened to disrupt voting. It is opposed to elections and says only a Marxist state can end exploitation by landowners and oppression by police.

Opinion polls have indicated no party will win a majority in the 545-seat lower house of Parliament, forcing the party that receives the most seats to lead a coalition government.

The first exit poll published since voting began Saturday showed the governing Congress Party trailing the Bharatiya Janata Party, a Hindu nationalist party.

The exit poll of 3,000 voters in seven states Saturday, published in Outlook magazine, predicted the Bharatiya Janata Party would win 192 seats, up from its current 120, and Congress would take 142 seats, a loss of 90. No margin of error was given.

used rallies and discussion meetings on the occasion.

BNP held a rally in front of its central office at Naya Paltan in the city. Party general secretary Abdus Salam Talukdar called upon all to take a fresh vow for maintaining the democratic trend and putting more relentless effort to improving the relationship between the owners and workers and boost production.

Bangladesh Communist Party (CPB) held a rally in front of its office at Purana Paltan. It was followed by discussion meeting. Speakers at the meeting said that the working class was being exploited in Bangladesh by the capitalist political system. The speakers emphasised that this type of a political system should go.

Bangladesh Trade Union Federation organised a workers' rally at Purana Paltan on the occasion.

Bangladesh Television and Radio Bangladesh broadcast special programmes on the significance of the day.

In Chittagong and Khulna, different political parties observed the day through holding discussions and organising rallies.

City incidents

From Page 1

An unidentified male, aged 45, died at DMCH on Wednesday night. He was brought to the hospital from Sutrapur area with head injuries.

Liton, 23, a resident of Rampura was killed at Mirpur during a clash between some local mastans over distribution of money.

Moury, 14, sustained serious injuries as she fell from the roof of her house at Ibrahimpur in the city on Tuesday night. It was learnt that two youths had forcibly taken her to the roof of their house and tried to violate her. Moury fell from the roof during tussle with the youths.

She died after being admitted to DMCH.

Mahbub Ali, 30, son of late Syed Uddin, a resident of a slum near Gandaia rail crossing died at DMCH on April 28. He was beaten by some local mastans on April 25. He was buried at Jurain graveyard without autopsy. Police exhumed the body from the graveyard.

Miscreants

From Page 1

way on Saturday night.

The gang stabbed constables Altaf Hossain, Habibur Rahman and Shamsul Haq who challenged it at about 12.30 am. The miscreants also took away their rifles along with 15 bullet and made good escape.

The injured policemen were admitted to General Hospital in the town, where Altaf Hossain died at about 2.30 am on the Eid day. Habib was later shifted to Dhaka.

A case was filed with Modhukhali thana in this connection.

Nomination seekers

From Page 1

Prominent among those who submitted their applications until yesterday are: Deputy Speaker L K Siddiqi, BNP joint secretary Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan, former ministers Abdul Matin Choudhury, M K Anwar, Maj (retd) Abdul Mannan, Abdul Mannan, Nazmul Huda and K M Obaidur Rahman, the former BNP secretary general who recently returned to the party.

Those who bought application forms until yesterday seeking BNP nomination include all the members of the BNP Standing Committee except R A Ghani, new entrants in the BNP — Jamaluddin Ahmed, Anwar Zahid — and most of the ministers in BNP government and the former MPs of the sixth parliament.

Former minister and BNP Standing Committee member Col (retd) Oli Ahmed is among those who collected two forms.

Jatiya Party

Some 1,100 nomination seekers collected forms for contesting the elections on Jatiya Party ticket till yesterday.

JP secretary general Anwar Hussain Manju collected application forms on behalf of jailed party chief H M Ershad and for himself from the Banani office of the party, said a party press release.

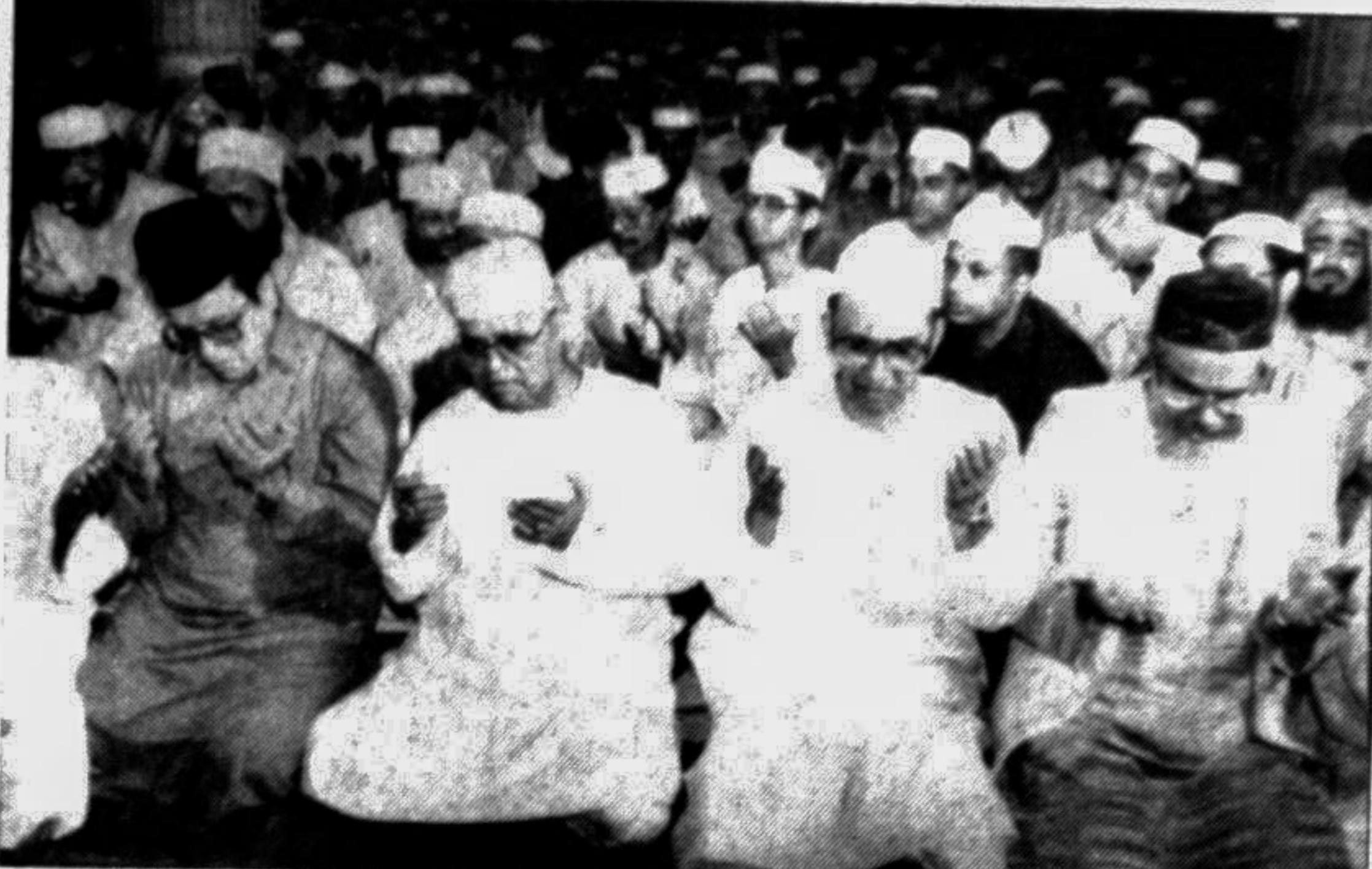
JP application forms can be collected till May 5 and a parliamentary board of the party would start interviewing intending candidates from May 6, the press release added.

Meanwhile, the Jamaat-e-Islami's parliamentary board would finalise party nominations in all 300 constituencies of the Jatiya Sangsad by May 6, said a party press release yesterday.

Samridha Bangladesh Andolan (SBA) convener Salman F Rahman yesterday invited applications from candidates to contest the upcoming elections from the SBA platform.

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The main Eid congregation at Baitul Mukarram Mosque on Monday.

— Star photo

Dhaka's call for increased ODA flow to LDCs

PRETORIA, (South Africa). May 2: Bangladesh has called for substantial improvement in the flow of overseas Development Assistance (ODA) to the Least Developed Countries (LDCs), reports BSS.

Delivering a statement on the opening day of the plenary of the UNCTAD on behalf of the LDCs, the leader of Bangladesh delegation, commerce secretary A H Motazuddin Karim, said the process of globalisation and liberalisation while creating job opportunities for countries had given rise to many challenges, particularly difficult for the LDCs.

The commerce secretary said the programme of action was drawn up against the backdrop of sharp decline in socio-economic conditions of the LDCs in the 1980s.

He noted with concern that although there was a recovery in the world economy, the LDCs, as a group, suffered decline in per capita income in recent years.

The erosion of trade preferences, higher prices for import of food, pharmaceuticals and essential capital goods and increased administrative cost for compliance in the aftermath of the Uruguay Round would create difficulties for the LDCs, he pointed out.

During the current UNC-TAD IX conference being held in Midrand, South Africa, the commerce secretary also chaired a symposium on 'LDCs and Global Trade'. He also acted as one of the three panellists in the round table conference of the participating ministers on the challenges of development.

On Wednesday, police arrested two young men — Biplob and Sayed — from Aliganj area of the town and recovered a gun from their possession.

NDP activist killed in Ctg

From Staff Correspondent

CHITTAGONG, May 2: Police recovered the body of an activist of National Democratic Party (NDP) from Chakital canal on Wednesday morning. The victim was identified as Abdus Sukkur, 28. Police said Sukkur was beaten to death by his rival on the night of Tuesday. No further details were available in this regard.

Eid celebrated

From Page 1

Four other Eid jamaats were also held at the Baitul Mukarram mosque. Eid jamaats were also held at different city mosques and open places.

Special prayers were offered at all Eid congregations seeking divine blessings for continued peace, progress and prosperity of Bangladesh and for the solidarity and brotherhood of the Muslim ummah.

Earlier, members of the diplomatic corps based in Dhaka and heads of various UN agencies and international organisations attended the reception.

Chief Adviser Muhammad Habibur Rahman also hosted a reception in honour of the diplomats and distinguished citizens at Bangabhaban in the morning.

Chief Justice A T M Afzal, members of the council of advisers, judges of the Supreme

Court, chiefs of staff of the army, navy and air force, the governor of Bangladesh Bank, the vice chancellors of different universities, leaders of various political parties, editors of news agencies and national dailies attended the reception.

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Chief Adviser Muhammad Habibur Rahman also hosted a reception in honour of the diplomats and distinguished citizens at 30 Hare Road.

The National Flag flew atop important public and private buildings. The main thoroughfares and road islands from Zia international airport to Bangabhaban were decorated with national flags, festoons and banners inscribed with 'Eid Mubarak' both in Bangla and Arabic.

Police and witnesses said some armed youths went on rampage by exploding bombs and opening fire at their rivals while buying the skin of sacrificial animals in Sholoshahar, Hill View Society, Chittagong Road and Bohadharhat areas.

When a local resident at Sholoshahar protested the incident, the youths hurled bombs on his residence that left his daughter Arshad Jahan and some others injured, witnesses said.

The government had announced a three-day national holiday on the occasion of the Eid-ul-Azha from May 28.

BSA adds: In Chittagong, the main Eid congregation in the city was held at the Jamiatul Falah complex premises.

The other main Eid congregation under the Chittagong Central Eid Jamaat Committee was held at the Chittagong Stadium.

In Khulna, the main Eid congregation was held at the local Circuit House Maidan. Eid congregations were also held at different places in the city.

JCD leader held in Rajshahi

From Our Correspondent

RAJSHAHI, May 2: Boalia thana police arrested Shafiqur Rahman Shafiq, Joint Convenor of the Jatiyatobadi Chhatar Dal city unit this morning from Sonadighi crossing near BNP office, Chhatar Dal brought out a protest procession in the city demanding unconditional release of Shafiq.

Police arrested Akram, 22, Muktar, 23, Zaman, 25, Dulal, 25, Masud Rana, 20 and Mohammad Hossain 25 from the spot. They were reportedly involved in several cases of terrorism and toll extortion.

On Wednesday, police arrested two young men — Biplob and Sayed — from Aliganj area of the town and recovered a gun from their possession.

26 die in Pak bus plunge

From Staff Correspondent

ISLAMABAD, May 2: Rescuers today continued efforts to recover bodies from a bus which fell into the river Indus, killing all 26 people on board, Pakistan television said. The vehicle which was on its way from nearby Rawalpindi to the northern city of Gilgit, was also carrying 15 members of a military volleyball team. The bus fell thousands feet into the river Indus when it reached Saseen town, about 350 kilometers (220 miles) north of here on Monday, reports AFP.



The new leader of Chechen separatists Zelimkhan Yandarbyev (R) gestures during his press conference for selected mass media representatives at a secret location in southern Chechnya May 1. The chief of staff of separatist armed forces Aslan Maskhadov is seen on his right.

— AFP photo

Storms hit Sirajganj, Rajshahi

SIRAJGANJ, May 2: At least 24 people were injured, nine of them seriously, in a storm that lashed Kazipur and Rajganj thanas of the district Wednesday night, reports UNB.

Witnesses said the storm accompanied by thundershower lasted about 20 minutes, damaging some 1,000 kutchha houses and crops on vast areas of land.

Of the injured, six were admitted to Sadar Hospital and three to Kazipur Hospital.

Meanwhile, the Jamaat-e-Islami's parliamentary board would finalise party nominations in all 300 constituencies of the Jatiya Sangsad by May 6, said a party press release yesterday.

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Russian planes pound village in Chechnya

KOMSOMOLSKOYE (Russia), May 2: Russian warplanes pounded the village of Komsomolskoye in southwestern Chechnya for two days despite a peace accord signed by village elders earlier this week, reports Interfax yesterday.

Several officials of the pro-Moscow Chechen government have said the 44-year-old Yandarbyev died on Sunday night in a gun battle with other separatists near Urus-Martan, 25 km south of the capital Grozny.

Rebel commanders denied the reports but uncertainty about Yandarbyev's fate remained until Wednesday, when he made his first public appearance since the report of his death.

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World Press Freedom Day today

World Press Freedom Day will be observed around the globe with a fresh call for freedom of information, reports BSS.

The selection of May 3 as world press freedom day by the General Assembly of the United Nations expresses the dedication of the international forum to a free and pluralistic media for ushering unhindered flow of information and opinions in all parts of the world. The Coordinating Council for Human Rights in Bangladesh in collaboration with Bangladesh Federal Union of Journalists will hold a discussion on 'independence of newspapers, democracy and economic development' to mark the day at the Jatiya Press Club VIP Lounge on May 8.

Adviser for Education Prof Shamsul Hoq will be the chief guest while the key note paper will be presented by the Chairman of Mass Communication and Journalism Department of Dhaka University Dr A N M Arefin Siddiqui at the discussion.

Violence in Ctg on Eid day: 20 injured

From Staff Correspondent

CHITTAGONG, May 2: At least 20 people including some children were injured in sporadic incidents of violence at different parts of the city here on the Eid day, hospital sources said.

Five of the injured in bomb explosion were admitted to Chittagong Medical College Hospital. They were identified as Rafia Begum (35), Arshad Jahan (22), Rubel (6), Jimi (7) and Bappi (7).

Chief Adviser Muhammad Habibur Rahman also hosted a reception in honour of the diplomats and distinguished citizens at Bangabhaban in the morning.

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