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The World on Time



BNP Chairperson and Leader of the Opposition in parliament Begum Khaleda Zia addressing the biennial conference of Jatiyatabadi Samik Dal at the Engineers Institution in the city yesterday.

## Khaleda: Oust this govt

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will return home safe and sound." The BNP Chairperson said there are terrorism, extortion and indiscipline everywhere. From grocery shopkeeper to industrialist, everyone has become unable to do their business due to toll extortion and terrorism by the ruling party-men.

She observed that, the government has made all arrangements to destroy the country's booming garment and textile sectors so that Bangladesh could not compete after the year 2005 when there would be no quota system for garment export.

In this context, Begum Zia said garment export to USA has declined by 7 per cent only in one year. "Steps taken against the garment and textile sectors are aimed to give our international markets to a particular country," she added.

"Production in industrial sector has fallen sharply due to planned load-shedding and unabated smuggling. The government has opened all the border points allowing very low quality goods to flood the country without any resistance," she said.

"The load-shedding was created deliberately to import electricity from India to permanently close local industries," she said adding that the government has struck a secret deal with the Asian Development Bank in Manila recently to import power from India.

"This conspiracy must be resisted. BNP will not allow this government to do any conspiracy against the interest of the country and its people," she said and called upon the people to be ready to resist any attempt to buy electricity from India.

Begum Zia said the commercial banks are facing serious liquidity crisis and industrialists and businessmen are not getting loan as the government itself is borrowing from banks to pay salaries of government

employees. The opposition leader urged the government not to destroy the political atmosphere and obstruct democratic practices. "No one will come to invest here if you jeopardise the political stability and destroy democratic institutions."

Begum Zia alleged that the Chittagong port was closed several times in last one year as the ruling party wanted to politicise it. She asked the government to allow functioning of the Labour Law Commission which was formed during the BNP regime.

Turning to the privatisation process, she said the party in power wants to privatise all industries overnight. She strongly protested retrenchment of workers in different industries and closing down of mills and factories.

She termed the two-day weekly holiday as peculiar idea of this government and said it aims to make the people workless and idle. "When the people of other countries are opposing excess vacation and holiday, the present government is increasing holidays," she added.

The BNP chief said the government puts all the blame on the BNP, but never speaks of the nine-year autocratic rule marked by massive plundering of national wealths. "Obviously, the ruling party had collaboration with the autocratic regime and this is why it does not say anything about the misdeeds of that regime."

About BNP's ongoing movement, she said her party still kept the agitation limited to meetings and processions in the streets and enforced only two half-day hartals across the country which were needed in the national interest.

Said Begum Zia: "Time has come to go for street action against the government for our survival, for national interest, for production and for protecting independence and sovereignty of the country."

## AL: Friday's prayer

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Baitul Mukarram and free the mosque from the Zionist clique," urged Moulana Nurul Islam, Minister of State for Religious Affairs, saying that those who threw shoes at the religious function had not only demeaned President Shahabuddin but also dishonoured Prophet Mohammad (SM).

Acting president of the party Amir Hussain Amu also urged all to join the Jumma prayer at Baitul Mukarram mosque. He said that after failed bids to get a single political issue, the religion peddlers were now trying to play with the religious sentiment of the people.

Amu said calling a hartal even after adoption of an unanimous resolution by the Jatiya Sangsad condemning act of blasphemy in the Israeli occupied territory, tantamounts to dishonouring the Prophet (SM). He noted that the reactionary forces which called the hartal, also made the attack on the Miladun Nabi function.

Those who dubbed us as agents of India, themselves visit that country at the invitation of Advani, leader of the BJP, which is responsible for damaging mosques in India," said Amu.

The acting president of AL said that the present government was ever-ready to take actions against the forces which dare to demean the Prophet (SM).

With the city AL president and mayor Mohammad Hanif in the chair, the protest rally was addressed, among others, by Water Resources Minister Abdur Razzak, Food and Agriculture Minister Begum Motia Chowdhury, Mozaffar Hussain

Paltu, Abdul Mannan, Nurul Fazal Bulbul, Mozaffar Hussain Chowdhury, Mofazzal Rezauddin Ahmed.

Abdur Razzak said the followers of 'Moududibad' dishonoured the Prophet(SM) by attacking the religious function. He named Jamaat-e-Islami and its leaders Gholam Azam and Delwar Hossain Saidee, MP, as followers of 'Moududibad'.

He held the Khatib of Baitul Mukarram mosque responsible for dishonouring the Prophet (SM) and recalled that the same Khatib had made statements against the country's independence on several occasions in the past.

Begum Motia Chowdhury criticised the main opposition BNP for not condemning the attack on the religious function and dubbed the party as 'B-team' of Jamaat and Islamic Oikya. Jote as it extended support to the latter's hartal call on July 15.

She said as a taxpayer of the country she could not pay tax for paying salary of a Khatib who played a role in the shoe-throwing incident.

Mohammad Hanif said, "our protest is not aimed against any individual, rather we condemn those who are trying to create rift among Muslims of the country."

He demanded exemplary punishment of those responsible for the attack on the Miladun Nabi function. "Proceed with utmost patience. Our leader (Sheikh Hasina) is out of the country now. But she is maintaining a constant contact and is well informed about the developments at home," he added.

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Printed by the Editor from City Publishing House Ltd., 90 Kakrail, Dhaka-1000 and published by him on behalf of Mediaworld Ltd., 52 Motijheel C.A., Dhaka-1000. Editorial, News & Commercial Offices: House No: 11, Road No: 3, Dhanamandi R/A, Dhaka-1205. PABX: 500092-4, Commercial: 500091, Fax No: 88-02-863035, GPO Box No: 3257, Dhaka: DAILYSTAR, DHAKA. Email: dstar@bangla.net

## Quest for cause of hypertension intensifying

LONDON, July 22: The quest for genetic clues explaining why some people are more prone than others to hypertension is intensifying, doctors said on Monday, reports Reuter.

Genes sing a prehistoric song. And we must pay attention to it," Dr Clarence Grim of the Medical College of Wisconsin told delegates to the 12th International Interdisciplinary Conference on hypertension in Blacks.

The four-day conference, which opened on Monday, is examining why hypertension afflicts nearly twice as many blacks as whites and what can be done about it.

Delegates were told that blacks may be more sensitive to salt and thus more vulnerable to high blood pressure than whites. They were also told that blacks may suffer more from dysfunctions of the endothelium, or the lining of blood vessels.

But delegates firmly rejected the notion that the possible genetic causes of hypertension were exclusive to one racial group.

"His debate is about genetics and not about race," said one delegate.

Added another, "there are probable genetic predispositions towards hypertension, but they cut across racial lines."

Dr John Flack of Wayne State University School of Medicine in Detroit said that much of the current research failed to take account of physical and social differences among people within a single racial group as a result, differences between people of different racial groups were grossly overstated, he said.

"Both black and white people have some predisposition to salt sensitivity and environmental factors affect that. Why don't we look at the environmental factors," he asked.

Taking another view, Grim told delegates that the unique characteristics of the slave trade may have predisposed blacks towards salt.

"Blacks who didn't survive the migration from Africa died from diarrhoea as they were salt deficient. Those who survived had a better ability to retain salt," he said.

Flack responded by saying that recent studies have shown that people from Finland have higher rates of hypertension than African Americans and that people from Hungary and the Czech Republic have higher incidences of strokes.

"None invokes genetic explanations for the high stroke rate among Czechs and Hungarians," he said.

## Barisal transport strike likely to end today

From Staff Correspondent

BARISAL, July 22: The road transport strike on all 50 routes between Barisal and the rest of the country will called off tomorrow morning.

The decision was taken at a meeting held here today.

Chief Whip Abul Hasanat Abdullah, MP, the Divisional Commissioner, the DIG, DC, SP and the leaders of different road transport owners and workers associations and unions of Barisal division were present at the meeting.

A meeting will also be held here tomorrow to solve the problems of the road transport owners and workers.

The strike began on July 14 last.

## JS body on private members' Bill meets

A meeting of the private members' bill and resolution committee of the Jatiya Sangsad was held at the Sangsad Bhaban yesterday with committee chairman Col (ret'd) Shaukat Ali in the chair, reports UNB.

The meeting discussed the 'Members of Parliament (Special Provisions) Bill 1996' placed in the Jatiya Sangsad by Giasuddin Quader Chowdhury.

Committee members Abdul Latif Mirza, A K M Jahangir Hossain, Prof Anna Kaiser and Mohammad Mizanur Rahman Chowdhury attended the meeting.

Giasuddin Quader Chowdhury was present with special invitation, said a press release.

## BNP: Failure

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It also accused the government of conspiring to withdraw the army from the CHT and urged all concerned to resist the move.

The BNP meet also complained of the government's alleged indifference to the plight of the flood victims and "the absence of relief operation" in the affected areas.

"The prime minister's holidaying in the United States at the cost of public money and at this crisis hour of the nation speaks of her lack of responsibilities," it said.

The resolution also accused the ruling party of filing false cases against BNP workers ahead of the coming local government elections.

"Alleging that the people have no security of life, the meeting observed, 'The PM has strengthened her own security throwing the nation into the hands of terrorists.'"

Some 20,500 refugees are still residing in camps in Cox's Bazar. Myanmar authorities have issued clearance for repatriation of 700 of them. Another list of 9,000 refugees is lying with the Myanmar authorities for clearance, said a high official in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The Myanmar authorities are saying that the addresses mentioned in the list were not correct, added the source.

First batch of refugees was repatriated on September 22, 1992. The last batch was repatriated on April 30 this year before the process resumed afresh on Sunday last.

In another development, the government has turned down a UNHCR proposal to 'locally integrate' the refugees who would continue to stay in the two camps in Cox's Bazar after expiry of the June 30 deadline for completing the repatriation process.

Muhammad Mohi-ud-Din, Legal Officer of UNHCR, Dhaka, confirmed that the proposal was not accepted by the Bangladesh government.

Sunnah explained that if the remaining two camps could not be dismantled immediately a "pull-factor" would continue that might lure many others from across the border to sneak into Bangladesh.

He said the Commission's fund for feeding the refugees in camps was exhausted and UNHCR would have to make a fresh international appeal for further funding if the repatriation process lingers.

Christiane Blessing, UNHCR Programme Officer at Cox's Bazar earlier told our correspondent Abdul Monayem Khan that the Commission was run out of funds after spending 100 million US dollars since 1992.

## Fee hike: JCD threatens to cripple DU

By DU Correspondent

The Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD), the student wing of BNP, yesterday threatened to cripple the normal functioning of Dhaka University if the authorities did not rescind their decision to raise admission and other fees.

The JCD activists brought out a procession and later held a rally on the campus. Shahiuddin Chowdhury Anney, Nasiruddin Ahmed Pintu, Monwar Hossain Rana, Shahabuddin Laitu and Selimuzzaman Selim spoke at the rally presided over by Nasiruddin Asim.

Addressing the rally, they said the poor students would suffer if the decision to increase fees was not withdrawn.

## Crude salt worth Tk 22 lakh seized in Khulna

From Staff Correspondent

KHULNA, July 22: Police seized eight thousand maunds of crude salt worth about Tk 22 lakh from Shironi Cable Factory ghat today. Reportedly smuggled from Myanmar the salt was brought in three mechanised trolleys from Chittagong for five salt crushing factories here. Police seized the trolleys and took the crew into custody.

The seized trolleys are: MV Ahmadullah, MV Garib Ali Shah and MV Shahi Mirpur.

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trict administration officials at Moulvibazar to discuss the latest situation.

Another team of experts from Singapore reached Magurchara yesterday afternoon and began assessing the situation in and around the gas field area, the sources added.

Occident will soon resume digging of several small wells to release the gas from the gas traps in the surrounding areas of the main well, the company officials said. Preparatory work on selecting a new location for the Relief well will also begin soon.

The official further informed that due to the heavy rains during the last two weeks, the surface of the gas trap became solid and it has caused spreading of the fire horizontally.

Meanwhile, plucking of tea leaf in the Fulbari Tea Estate remained suspended for the third day today, in compliance with the instructions from Occidental authorities.

## UNHCR protests repatriation

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Bangladesh to complete the current phase of repatriation by mid-August, the officials said.

Some 187 refugees belonging to 45 families were sent back home across the Naaf river on Sunday morning. Thirteen people were injured in a clash between refugees unwilling to go back home and members of law enforcing agencies.

Asked to comment on UNHCR's claim that it was allowed to ensure 'voluntariness of repatriation', a Foreign Ministry official said, "Under the agreement with UNHCR we can't force refugees to return home, rather we ensure voluntary repatriation."

Quoting reports sent by the Relief and Rehabilitation Commissioner (RCC) from Cox's Bazar, the official said that field staff of UNHCR were present during Sunday's repatriation.

A senior official told The Daily Star that Bangladesh was trying to hold "high-level official talks" with Myanmar over the latest developments regard-

## Kerb traders demonstrate in front of DSE

By Staff Correspondent

The kerb market operators demonstrated in front of the Dhaka Stock Exchange yesterday protesting the continuous fall in the share prices of listed companies.

They also paraded different roads in the Motijheel area raising slogans against the Finance Minister and the members of the DSE.

Later at a rally, they demanded immediate resignation of the DSE chairman, Abdul Haq Howlader, and urged the government to take necessary steps for resolving the situation in the share market.

The rally held under the banner of Bangladesh Small Investors Federation was presided over by its president, Moniruzzaman.

The speakers at the rally vowed to continue their agitation programme everyday until normalcy returns to the capital market and share prices go up.

## Looted rifles recovered in Cox's Bazar

COX'S BAZAR, July 22: Police and forest officials jointly recovered two looted rifles from Kalichara of Cox's Bazar Sadar thana here last night, reports BSS.

According to forest officials, the two rifles were looted from the special patrol team of the forest department, when they challenged a cargo boat, carrying smuggled goods near Mohekhkhali channel on July 17.

The smugglers fired on the patrol team and later snatched the rifles.

The rifles, left at Kalichara, were recovered last night. Earlier police arrested two persons in this connection, the sources said.

## Eden College

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Sources said the clash erupted after a JCD activist was allegedly beaten by some BCL activists while she was passing by their procession on the campus at about 11:30 am.

Both the BCL and JCD supporters locked in the clash as the news of the incident spread on the campus. Helen Jerin Khan, Nazma, Sathi and Beauty were beaten up during the hour-long clash, police said.

Several crackers were also exploded. A large number of students have already left their dormitories as tension mounted on the campus, college sources said.

## Khatib

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Ministry Sohabuddin Ahmed also include Deputy Secretary of Education Ministry Mohammad Asfaruddin and Islamic Foundation Secretary M M Paniruddin Haider. The committee will submit its report to the governing body of the Islamic Foundation within five days.

On July 17, President Shahabuddin Ahmed had to abandon a scheduled Eid-e-Miladun Nabi function at the mosque premises amidst a chaotic scene and exhibition of shoes by some trouble makers.

The religious affairs minister further said the Khatib is an honorary post without having any government rank. He draws Tk 20,000 as salary and other allowance. Moulana Obaidul Haq was appointed Khatib of the Baitul Mokarram National Mosque after his retirement from the Government Alia Madrasa as Head Moulana.

Moulana Obaidul Haq could not be reached over telephone last night. His daughter told this correspondent that he was out of the residence then.

When contacted, Motijheel police said no case was registered with the thana till last night regarding the July 17 incident.

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## One killed in Bogra clash

BOGRA, July 22: A clash between two rival groups of villagers in Dupchachia thana yesterday left a young man dead and 20 people injured, reports UNB.

Police said the clash occurred at Baraminhal village over a land dispute.

The dead was identified as Abdur Razzak, 27. He succumbed to his injuries at Bogra Mohammad Ali Hospital this noon. Two others — Bhutto and Abdur Razzak — were undergoing treatment at the hospital.

## 8 soldiers killed in Nagaland

GAUHATI, July 22: Separatist rebels fired with machine guns at an army convoy in northeastern India today, killing eight soldiers and injuring 13 others, police said, reports AP.

## IFIC Bank

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and fixed the matter for hearing on August 27.

Upon admission of the petition, Rokonuddin filed an application for injunction to restrain Salman Rahman and Sohail Rahman from presiding over the AGM and seeking reelection as directors and also to restrain the IFIC from electing them as directors.

On Rafiqul Huq's submission for time to give a reply to the injunction petition, the court fixed the injunction matter for hearing today at 2 pm considering the urgency of the matter.

Rokonuddin contended on behalf of the petitioners that Salman Rahman and Sohail Rahman borrowed about Tk 225 crore from IFIC through 131 false accounts. They admitted their liabilities and gave undertakings to repay those. So ceased to be directors, chairman and vice chairman of IFIC and as such they can neither preside over the AGM nor they can seek reelection as directors.

Rokonuddin further contended that unless they are restrained by an injunction the Chittagong city, 50 per cent in Divisional Headquarters, 40 per cent in District Headquarters and 30 per cent at Thana and Union levels. Besides, Tk 350 per month has been suggested as medical allowance for employees above the age of 40 and Tk 250 for employees below 40 years.

## JMB: Rail track

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"Rail track on the bridge can be ready for train service even if we get government order in this regard by the current month," Deputy Project Manager of JMB Brig (ret'd) AHM Abdullah said.

Officials at the JMBA headquarters in Dhaka, when contacted said they have initiated a feasibility study on setting up of both broad gauge and metre gauge rail track on the bridge.

Setting up of metre gauge track was originally designed but the government later thought of broad gauge track and now, both are under consideration.

Explaining, a JMBA official said, a three-line track, one line for both the systems is being planned to minimise the 'dead load' of the bridge. Several other options are also being weighed to minimise the 'dead load'. These are: replacing concrete barrier between the road way and the railway by steel barrier, minimising the thickness of the surface of the bridge by using alternatives to concrete construction, limiting the speed of traffic and carrying of half-loaded containers by the railway. These will substantially reduce the 'dead load' and allow setting up of both types of track, he said.

Meanwhile, the railway authorities floated international tender for construction of rail tracks to connect the bridge with Joydevpur railway station in the east (86 km distance) and Jaamtoll station in the west (some 14 km). Construction of the rail tracks on the two sides of the bridge is likely to be completed by 2001.

However, if tracks are laid, trains will be operated from the day of opening of the bridge by connecting it with the nearest points of the existing rail tracks in both the ends, they said.

JMBA officials at the construction site further said the Asian Development Bank and Canada have showed interests to fund the railway link project.

## Metropolitan court

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of the sessions court of the Dhaka Session division is not being conducted as per law after the amended provision of the Sections 7 (4) and 9 (1) of the Code of Criminal Procedure (CrPc), became effective on August 10 in 1979.

According to the ministry proposal, the provision for MCS was made as early as 1976, to be effective from 1979, under the same law which provided for creation of metropolitan magistracy and metropolitan police.

India's game against Pakistan was washed out twice on Sunday and Monday and more rain is forecast for the rest of the week.