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BNP Chairperson and Leader of the Opposition in parliament Begum Khaleda Zia addressing the biennial conference of Jatiyatabadi Sramik 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.

She observed that, the government has made all arrangements to destroy the country's booming garment and textile sectors so that Bangladeshi 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

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 Shababuddin 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 Miladunnam 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, Moazzaf Hussain

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6 killed in Comilla road accidents

COMILLA, July 22: Six people, including a young woman and her son, were killed and 15 others injured in separate road accidents in the district today, reports UNB.

Police said Saleha Begum, 38, and her son Abdul Mannan Raju, 12, died on the spot when a Chittagong bound truck collided with a Comilla bound microbus at Nalchar on Dhaka-Chittagong highway in Sadar thana at about 8:30 am.

Saleha, wife of one Sultan Ahmed, hailed from Kalikapur village in Sadar thana.

In Burichong thana, Joynal Abedin, 30, of Klaswar Mohonpur village in Chandina thana was killed and five others injured when a Dhaka bound bus from Chatkhil overturned at Nimeswar on the same road at about 2 pm. Joynal, a village doctor, was on a bicycle.

The decision was taken at meeting here today.

Chief Whip Abul Hasnat Abdulla, 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.

Three of the injured — Hasu, 35, of Debaidi thana and Selim, 33, of Laksham thana and Mobarak Ali, 27, of Senbagh thana in Feni district — were admitted to Chandina thana health complex.

In another road mishap, three people were killed and 10 others injured when a Comilla bound bus fell into a roadside ditch at Batabaria on Comilla-Sonamuri road in Laksham thana in the afternoon.

The dead were identified as Abul Kalam, 28, of Begumganj thana in Noakhali, Imran Hossain, 14, of Laksham thana and a woman aged about 30. The injured were admitted to Laksham thana health complex.

The bodies were sent to Comilla Sadar Hospital morgue for autopsy.

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

Unicef report

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riore, however, gave a gloomy picture of the low birthweight of new born babies in the country.

In Bangladesh, over three million babies are born in every year. But half of them are born with low birthweight, which the report rated highest in the world.

By the time the new born babies reach five years of age, two out of three will be stunned, it said.

Also, three women die in Bangladesh every hour from pregnancy-related complications. Better medical facilities can improve the situation by reducing the death rate. Carriere said.

Data collected from 69 developing countries show that half of them have exclusive breastfeeding rates below 25 per cent, he said. Only 15 countries, including Bangladesh and India, reported breastfeeding rates above 50 per cent.

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-e-Islami and its leaders Gholam Azam and Dewar Hossain Saidee, MP, as followers of 'Moududibad'.

He stressed the need for effective laws and their proper enforcement, and concerted mass social mobilisation campaign in preventing unethical promotion of breastmilk substitutes.

Replies to questions from the participants, the Unicef Representative said malnutrition of 30 per cent young children could be reduced with package system of water, sanitation and hygiene.

He said Unicef has a programme for childhood development and stressed the need for spending more money for the child upto one year from the birth.

Replies to another question, Carriere said with the present trend of economic growth it would take 30 years for Bangladesh to double its per capita income.

He said if Bangladesh can achieve 9 per cent economic growth like other South Asian countries, even then it would take 10 years time to double its income.

Carriere said best place for putting money is the education sector. The children in Bangladesh have direct contact with the schools for only 30 to 40 hours in a week which is 1200 hours in China.

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."

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 end tomorrow morning.

The decision was taken at meeting here today.

Chief Whip Abul Hasnat Abdulla, 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 (retd) Shawkat 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 Panna Kaiser and Mohammad Mizanur Rahman Chowdhury attended the meeting.

The seized trawlers are : MV Ahmadullah, MV Garib Ali Shah and MV Shaha Mirpur.

Gas well fire

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trict administration officials at Moulibazar to discuss the latest situation.

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

Occidental 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.

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