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## BNP calls day-long hartal in city today

By Staff Correspondent

BNP chairperson Begum Khaleda Zia has called dawn-to-dusk hartal in the capital today and across the country on Thursday, protesting police action on the party activists and ban on street rallies.

The hartal programme was announced yesterday evening following series of fierce clashes between the police and the BNP activists around the party's central office at Naya Palton in the city that left scores injured.

The fresh agitation programme, announced from the second-floor balcony of the party office, also includes demonstration at the district and thana headquarters on

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## Motijheel thana OC, ASP sued alleging attempt on Khaleda's life

The Bangladesh Nationalist Party yesterday sued police for alleged attempt on the life of BNP chief and trespass on the party office, reports UNB.

BNP Office Secretary Nazrul Islam Khan filed two cases with the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court accusing Motijheel thana OC Akhtaruzzaman, ASP Haider Yasin and others.

In one case, the policemen have been accused of making attempt to kill BNP chairperson Begum Khaleda Zia and in another of storming the party office on September 18.

It was stated in the petition that on September 18 police lobbed teargas cell which exploded next to the flag-marked car of Begum Zia, Leader of the Opposition in Parliament, in front of BNP central office at Naya Palton.

Complainant Islam also stated the accused trespassed on the BNP office and broke furniture and "committed theft."

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# Police, BNP men clash again: Scores injured, 85 arrested

By Staff Correspondent

Police fired volleys of tear gas shells and rubber bullets and used water cannons and batons to prevent BNP supporters from staging a rally in front of the party office at Naya Palton in the city yesterday afternoon.

It turned the area and its neighbourhoods into a virtual battlefield for several hours as BNP supporters retaliated with rocks, home-made bombs, and Molotov cocktails leaving central Dhaka in chaos during the rush hour.

Police arrested 86 people on charge of rioting.

At least 25 people were taken to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital for treatment. Most of them sustained rubber bullet wounds, other received clubs and stones on their hands. An

unspecified others received treatment at different clinics, BNP sources claimed.

At least eleven policemen were injured in the clashes, police said.

Two people, including a young rag picker and a woman aged about 35 were injured in explosion of home-made bombs earlier in the morning near the BNP office and at Chand Kha Pool. The causes of the blasts were not known.

Some people were also injured when unidentified persons hurled home-made bombs on a bus at Nilkhet and in Shahbagh area, police said.

Traffic moved at snails pace in a gridlock when police put up barbed wire barricades in Pura Paltan and Segunbagicha

areas in the early afternoon to prevent staging of rallies in front of the Jatiya Press Club and Paltan crossing. It's spillover effect continued late into the evening.

However, the Jamaat-e-Islami held a rally at Paltan crossing. Police did not prevent it from holding the rally but used batons and tear gas when its supporters tried to defy a ban on rallies and demonstrations in and around the Baitul Mukarram mosque at the end of the rally.

Sporadic violence continued late into the evening. Police played cat and mouse with the BNP supporters who took their wrath on vehicles; torching a police van, a BRTC bus, an autotempo and a truck. They

smashed windshields of 25 other vehicles and glass panes of a cinema hall, a hotel and damaged several shops and the Employment Exchange office at Kakrail. An office of Awami League at Segunbagicha was also ransacked by the BNP activists, police said. A micro-bus was set on fire at Road 27, Dhanmondi R/A, at 8-30 pm.

Earlier, extra police forces were deployed sealing the roads to the BNP office from Fakirpool crossing to prevent party loyalists from gathering for a planned demonstration to protest police action on Thursday and denounce ban on street rallies.

Trouble began at 4.30 pm

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Police dispersing BNP workers in Bijoy Nagar area in the city yesterday.

— Star photo

## The Daily Star Roundtable

# JS probe report on Sheema's death 'politically motivated'

By Staff Correspondent

Speakers at a Roundtable in the city yesterday bitterly criticised the Parliamentary Committee Report on the mysterious death of Sheema Chowdhury saying that it tried to suppress facts and evidences of the incident.

They also alleged that the Parliamentary Committee conducted a politically motivated probe into the case. They urged the members of Parliament to challenge the probe report in the House.

Sheema died in 'safe custody' in Chittagong jail in February this year.

The Roundtable organised by The Daily Star was participated by Barrister Amir-Ul-Islam, Attorney General KS Nabi, Workers Party leader Rashed Khan Menon, Barrister Rabeya

Bhuiyan MP, Tasmina Hossain MP, Dr Hamida Hossain, Farida Akhter, Maleka Begum, Dr Naila Khan and Rehana Sultana — representing the parliament, lawyers and women's rights activists. It was moderated by Editor of The Daily Star Mahfuz Anam.

## R&H employees begin 9-day strike today

By Staff Correspondent

The Roads & Highways Department (R&HD) Engineers and Sramik Karmachari Oikiya Forum yesterday called a nine-day strike across the

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While the Attorney General urged the women's rights activists to refrain from discussing the Sheema murder issue till the Supreme Court gives its verdict on an appeal, in the case, the other speakers severely criticised the government for not pursuing the case seriously, and as one that symbolised violation of human rights by the law enforcing authorities.

The participants discussed in detail the parliamentary committee report and pointed out that it was 'full of ambiguity'. They also questioned the system of 'safe custody' in jail saying that courts allow such safe custody of women although women were the 'worst victims' of the law enforcing agencies.

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## DU VC's office searched for terrorists!

By DU Correspondent

The office of the Vice-Chancellor of Dhaka University, the lounge adjoining it and the Senate room of the university, were searched by police and leaders of Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) yesterday to apprehend an alleged terrorist belonging to a faction of the BCL, witnesses said.

Some activists of BCL led by its central committee leaders Iqbal Hossain Apu, Aminul Islam Ratan and Mossarraf Hossain came to the VC's office and claimed that Sentu, known as Sada Sentu, a leader of the Gopalganj faction of the BCL came to the VC's office at around 2 pm.

But the VC Prof. AK Azad Chowdhury denied it. The BCL activists then wanted to search the VC's office. The VC locked all the gates of the administrative building leading to his office. Some 100 BCL activists then gathered there and

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## Aid sought from donors to privatise SOEs

Allaying fear about the future of the disinvestment programme, the Privatisation Board sought package assistance from the donors to carry out the scheme.

In a meeting with a group of donors' representatives in Dhaka yesterday, Privatisation Board Chairman Kazi Zafarullah stressed the need for developing a 'package understanding' with donors for the success of the programme.

"We want that the donors make commitments in the next aid group meeting to assist our privatisation programme," he told UNB after the meeting that lasted more than an hour at the Board office.

Zafarullah said assistance from the donors was sought for three tasks — workers' retraining, public awareness programme and payment of liabilities, including workers legitimate claim of the mills to be privatised.

The response of the donors, who participated in the meet-

ing, was "by and large favourable," he said. He, however, informed that they were yet to calculate the cost of the three programmes.

The Economic Relations Division (ERD) of the Finance Ministry will place the financial requirements for the programme in the Aid Club meeting to be held in Dhaka November 4-5, he said.

As per the rough estimate of the Board, retrenchment of each worker will require Tk 1 lakh to 140,000 while retaining cost Tk 4,000-5,000 each in two months.

Zafarullah led a four-member team in the meeting. The other members were Board Secretary Nasir Uddin, Additional Secretary SM Zakaria and Director (Planning) Sarwar Hossain.

The donor group comprised European Commission Ambassador Michael Drury, Canadian High Commissioner Nicholas Etheridge, French Ambassador

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## Continue agitation till fall of this govt: Khaleda

By Staff Correspondent

BNP chief Begum Khaleda Zia yesterday called for an all-out resistance against "government repression" on Opposition activists and continuing the present agitation until the government steps down.

"Days of this government are numbered ... It must go after apologising to the people for its misdeeds ... its fall can't be checked through repression", the Leader of the Opposition in Jatiya Sangsad told her party activists who gathered in front of the BNP central office at Naya Palton in the city after sporadic clashes with police.

Begum Zia's unscheduled speech was delivered from the second floor balcony of the four-story party office at about 6.30 pm.

In her brief speech, the BNP leader also announced dawn-to-dusk hartal in the capital today and across the country on Thursday amid slogans by the agitated party workers.

The Opposition leader al-

leged that the government was destroying the country and said programmes for greater movement would be announced if the government did not "correct" itself.

Blasting the government for "police atrocities" on her party workers and obstructing them from exercising their democratic right of doing street agitation, the Opposition leader warned, "Consequences of behaving in an autocratic manner won't bring anything good for the government."

Condemning the police action on the BNP leaders and workers, she said the policemen doing such acts were being listed. She also threatened the police officials of bad consequences for such acts. "Going by such directives will be suicidal for you (policemen)..." the former prime minister remarked.

However, Begum Zia also blamed the ruling party for compelling the police to go for

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## Khaleda calls on President, lodges complaints

Opposition BNP yesterday complained to the President about "extreme lack of tolerance" on the part of the government which it apprehends is endangering democratic process in the country, reports UNB.

A 13-member delegation of the Bangladesh Nationalist Party, led by its chairperson and Leader of the Opposition Begum Khaleda Zia, called on President Justice Shahabuddin Ahmed at Bangabhaban and apprised him of the latest political situation.

"We are not allowed to speak in parliament, not even to hold public meeting to ventilate our political views," the delegation

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## BNP's agitation destructive, says Ershad

Jatiya Party Chairman HM Ershad yesterday strongly criticised BNP's "destructive" agitation, but said his party will launch a constructive movement to resist the anti-people activities of the government, reports UNB.

Addressing a rally of the Jatiya Krishak Party at Dakkhinkhan in the city, Ershad said BNP wants to go to power by unleashing destructive politics while Awami League wants to remain in the chair by any means.

"My party does not believe in politics of destruction ... we don't have any faith in hartal," he said, adding that Jatiya Party would not go for anarchic activities, rather build a constructive movement.

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## Monajatuddin's son allegedly commits suicide

The only son of late journalist Monajatuddin allegedly committed suicide in his room at a BUET dormitory yesterday, reports UNB.

Campus sources said Abu Obaida M Zafar Sadiq was found hanging from a ceiling fan at room no. 107 of Rashid Hall at about 8 pm.

Sadiq was a third-year student of Electrical Department of Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (BUET) and magazine secretary of Rashid Hall Students' Union.

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WE ARE  
WHAT WE  
REPEATEDLY DO.  
EXCELLENCE, THEN,  
IS NOT AN ACT,  
BUT A HABIT.  
—Aristotle

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