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The World on Time



President Shahabuddin Ahmed accompanied by city Mayor Mohammad Hanif yesterday visited Osmany Uddyan, one of the seven venues selected for public meetings. — PID photo

Govt itself rung bell

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haves like an autocratic one. That's why, we've called hartal despite our unwillingness for such programmes".

Begum Zia accused the government of getting busy how to harm and weaken the Opposition while giving no attention for development of the country. "Instead of listening to our warning against its misdeeds, the government has opted for the path of repression on us".

Blaming the government for destroying everything in the country, the Opposition leader told the gathering, "You'll have to continue the agitation for the sake of your survival... It's better to fight than die".

The BNP chief claimed that the country was suffering immense losses in every sector due to misrule by the government. It is creating new problems one after another instead of resolving the existing ones. "There is no competent person in this government".

In its position, it's our responsibility to identify their mistakes and alert the people. But we're not allowed to perform our duties".

The Opposition leader asked the government not to obstruct her party from carrying out its responsibilities, if it believed in democracy.

She also claimed that the

UNCTAD chief

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also trade, open up investment and creating a congenial atmosphere for the free market economy".

He also praised the efforts of the Prime Minister to improve the condition of the people at the grassroots level and increase the volume of trade. He also appreciated her genuine efforts and measures for poverty alleviation.

Ricupero also paid tributes to the founding father of Bangladesh, Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

Praising the leadership of Sheikh Hasina, the UNCTAD chief executive said that he has chosen Bangladesh as the launching pad for the LDCs report, a flagship publication of the United Nations.

The launching of LDCs Report '97 will be held in the city today in cooperation with the Ministry of Commerce.

Privatisation

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The PB will launch a public awareness programme within next two months to mobilise public support for privatisation. Seminars and meetings will be held with different professionals, he said.

The PB has initiated a three-day discussion with donors as they are curious to know whether the government is committed to privatisation and whether the Board is getting support from the policy makers.

"Such meetings are specially useful ahead of the Aid Club meeting as a part of the aid commitment depends on the government's efforts to stop wastage of resources," said the PB chairman. "Tk 2000 to Tk 2500 wastage annually on account of the SOEs is not affordable."

He said the Board has already met some workers' cadres to discuss the handing over of five mills to workers as recently suggested by Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina. Another meeting is scheduled this week to identify which mills they want to take.

"We are acting fast to hand over five mills from five areas to the workers. They will form a sort of cooperatives or limited companies to run these."

The meeting was also told that the PB is planning to send a team of workers' leaders, and members of parliament to visit New Zealand, Malaysia, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka where privatisation programme was a success.

The PB has also sought donors' assistance for 'golden handshake' programme and for retraining of workers.

President

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Awami League government had failed to run the country after independence and has also failed now. "People have totally lost their confidence in the party and it's not possible for it to do anything good in future too".

Chaired by Jatiyatabadi Tanti Dal chief Abdul Ali Mridha, the meeting was also addressed by BNP Secretary General Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan, MP, its Joint Secretary General Abdullah Al Noman and some other leaders including Shahidullah Khan, Ataur Rahman Angur and Humayun Islam Khan.

In his speech, Mannan Bhuiyan said Awami League is the best democrat while in the Opposition but the worst autocrat while in power."

Bus service

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the two capitals in mid-October.

He said Dhaka and New Delhi are keen to introduce bus services to facilitate movement of lakhs of people including pilgrims, students and businessmen between the two countries.

The Joint Secretary said that the Indian team had sought modification of several provisions of the draft agreement in view of the position of five Indian states touched by the route.

Traffic jam

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elsewhere, the air was thick with smell of rubbish as water found their way into the bins and overran the heaps of uncleared garbage. Meteorologists said only the city and its suburbs experienced the downpour. But elsewhere in the country barring Sylhet which had only 27 mm, Srimangal 30 mm, Feni 20 mm and Sandwip 18, there had been practically no rain till the evening.

Though the monsoon was still active, it was on the wane with change in weather pattern, paving slow arrival of the autumn.

The northern parts of the country had already reported foggy evenings and mornings.

Director of Meteorological Department Sajedur Rahman told The Daily Star last night that the monsoon had been fair, distributing its bounty this season. "Even the dangers of a limited flood in the Ganges basin later this month seems to be waning."

Although a seasonal monsoon depression was brewing quietly in the North-West Bay turning into a well-marked low yesterday off the Orissa coast of India, it may roll towards the Orissa-Andhra coast unless it veers off course at the last moment.

Only then it may bring heavy showers to Bangladesh, otherwise normal rains are likely along the south-western coast.

The monsoon says goodbye to Bangladesh on October 10.

Chambers

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critical for the country's economic growth at this juncture.

"It is a pity that whenever the private sector of the country tries to rejuvenate the economy, such political violence frustrates their efforts."

The FBCCI mentioned that this view was supported by the Presidents of Dhaka Chamber, Metropolitan Chamber, Foreign Investors' Chamber and Bangladesh Garments Manufacturers and Exporters Association.

It said city streets are obviously not for holding any public meeting. "From this point of view, the FBCCI has always been in favour of fixation of the places for public meetings."

The FBCCI hoped that a consensus would be reached regarding holding of political meetings in selected locations to avoid "confrontational politics".

"This is the only solution to save trade and industry from ruination," said the country's apex trade body.

Maizbhandari's bail petition rejected

By Court Correspondent

The Additional Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's court yesterday rejected the bail petition of Nazibul Bashar Maizbhandari, Convenor of Jatiyatabadi Ulema Dal, a front organisation of BNP.

A prayer for division moved on his behalf was left for consideration of the District Magistrate.

Maizbhandari, also a former MP was taken into custody from in front of the Press Club on Monday at the flag end of the dawn-to-dusk hartal called by the BNP.

He was charged under Section 353 of the Penal Code and Section 3 of Explosives Substance Act, for obstructing police in discharging their duties.

Trawler hijacked in Bhola

By Staff Correspondent

BARISAL, Sept 23: A trawler was hijacked by a group of armed dacoits from Gazipur river under Lalmoni thana of Bhola district late last night.

The Chandpur-bound trawler FB Salma was carrying a load of hilsa worth about Tk three lakh, witnesses said.

Ten people were also aboard the trawler when the dacoits took control of the vessel at gunpoint.

However, one of them jumped into the river and escaped.

Social Welfare Secy made OSD

By Staff Correspondent

Mokhlesur Rahman, secretary at the Ministry of Social Welfare, has been made an officer on special duty (OSD) at the Establishment Ministry.

M Nurul Abedin, currently an additional secretary at Health and Family Welfare Ministry, will replace Rahman at social welfare ministry.

The changes were announced yesterday, a government press release said.

200 massacred in Algiers

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ALGIERS, Sept 23: Muslim rebels killed between 180 and 200 people in a massacre in suburban Algiers overnight Monday, survivors said today. reports AFP.

The government put the toll at 5, adding that at least 31 of the injured were seriously hurt.

The slaughter came less than a month after 98 people were killed, according to the government, in the worst single massacre in five years of bloodletting between the army and the outlawed Islamic Salvation Front.

RU controller

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Course examinations of 1992 and 1993 respectively of the University. Vice-Chancellor Prof Abdul Khaleque presided over the meeting.

Meeting sources said that a six-member committee has been formed with Treasurer of the University Prof. Abdul Fazal Haque as convener to further investigate the irregularities.

Other members of the committee are Prof Fakhruddin Islam, Prof Entazul Haque, Prof. Sajidur Rahman Khan, Prof Habibur Rahman Akanda and M Mohsin.

The four suspended employees are Senior Assistant Abdul Mannan, Recordkeepers Gaous Azam Shaikh and Nurul Gani Tulu and Lower Assistant Syed Ali.

The CSE was already practising the system, which was being attributed to the Chittagong

noise of loading of guns."

"An officer came later and ordered to unite us and remove the blindfolds. I saw Maj Farook when my blindfold was removed. He also ordered Maj Shahidullah to take us to the Ganabhaban.

"I later came to know that through the mediation of Maj Shahidullah we were released and sent to the Ganabhaban although Risalder Moslemuddin had earlier instructed the group to eliminate us.

"Maj Shahidullah escorted us to the Ganabhaban and handed us over to another group of officers there who took us to the office of the ADC and kept us under tight security.

"Then we contacted the Ganabhaban to get our uniforms and soon after we changed our civilian clothes. Later, when Brig Mashrur Huq contacted the Army Headquarters, we were directed to report there.

"We reported to Col Nasim, Military Secretary at the Army Headquarters and through him got directives from the high command to report to the Ganabhaban. It was already 4:00 pm in the afternoon when we left the Army Headquarters.

"The President's office at Ganabhaban was crowded with military officers and civilians when we reached there and we found Khandaker Mushtaq Ahmed occupying the chair of the President.

"They asked us to sit on the ground of the nursery near the road in the lake side. Later they also blindfolded us.

"From a transistor at the nursery we heard radio broadcasts saying, this is Maj Dalim speaking... despot Mujib has been killed."

"There we also heard the

12 R&H union leaders held

By Staff Correspondent

Police arrested 12 leaders of the Roads & Highways Department (R&HD) Karmachari Oikyo Forum from the R&HD head office yesterday, the second day of their nine-day strike across the country.

When contacted Ramna police said, they were arrested on charge of damaging public property and rioting.

The R&HD employees have been on strike since September 22 to press their 11-point demand.

There demands include work charge for 8203 casual workers and regularisation of 131 'work charge' employees.

A press release of the Forum said the arrested leaders include Abu Kalam Shamsuddin, Moklesur Rahman, Sheikh Talib Rahman, Raazul Karim, Abu Saleh Talukdar, Ahmad Ullah and Shah Alam. The strike will continue despite arrest of their leaders, the release added.

Most of woman repression cases false: IGP

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Most of the woman repression cases filed with concerned police stations of the country are false, said Inspector General of Police M Azizul Haque, reports UNB.

He was addressing a monthly review meeting on crime at the Police Headquarters yesterday, said an official handout.

The IGP directed the district and unit heads of police to initiate case as per the existing laws of the land against those who file false cases on charge of women repression.

He also directed the city and district detective branches to discharge their duties with sincerity to check criminal activities.

The IGP also laid emphasis on strengthening community policing throughout the country, including Dhaka city.

Market operators

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profit and buy at a lower price. The DSE chief said the liquidity in the market was already going up with the introduction of netting.

Yesterday's market indeed did not reflect the brokers' mood, which was explained by Monday's hartal and another day-long countrywide shutdown scheduled for Thursday. This means that the number of trading days will be less this week. The market players are a bit confused due to uncertainty as there will be no transaction on Thursday to Saturday.

"It's not only based on supply and demand." Other factors such as speculation, company performance also mattered, he said.

The brokers will benefit a lot because they will not have to pay money everyday but what benefit it will bring for the investors remains a question," he said. "Rather the brokers will be able to play with the investors money."

The CSE secretary said he hoped the new system would help bring buoyancy in the market. But he feared the liquidity situation might be hampered due to the settlement frequency.

"Let's see what happens in the future after introducing the new system."

Operators on the ground gave a rather apathetic response. "Traders are a bit confused and not sure about the method of trading otherwise it was more or less same on the floor," said floor trader Rashedul Kabir.

"There was crisis a few days back. Now it seems opposite. We have to work for a longer time as turnover is increasing."

Bisnu Pada Kandu, another floor operator, explained: "Huge selling pressure, profit-taking by investors and an inactive ICB were the main reasons for the market to fall."

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