

BNP, 6 other parties call half-day hartal in city today

Main opposition BNP and its six allies called a half-day hartal in the city today that coincides with the opening of a two-day Aid Group meeting, being held for the first time in Bangladesh, reports UNB.

The 6 am to 1 pm shutdown was jointly called by BNP, Jamaat-e-Islami, Jatiya Party (Zafar-Moazzem), Jatiya Gano-tantrik Party (Jagpa), Democratic League, Progressive Nationalist Party (PNP) and National Democratic Alliance.

According to a BNP press release vehicles of law enforcing agencies and newspapers, fire brigade, ambulance, hospitals, medicine shops and garment factories will be exempted from half-day hartal.

BNP Chairperson and Leader of the Opposition in Parliament Begum Khaleda Zia has called upon the people of Dhaka city to see Page 12 Col 8

Bail petitions of 21 BNP men rejected

By Court Correspondent

The Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's court yesterday rejected bail petitions of 21 BNP leaders and supporters who were arrested during Sunday's clashes with police in the city.

Police accused them of rioting, hurling explosives at police, damaging and setting fire to vehicles after police foiled their bid to demonstrate on city streets.

They were sent to Dhaka Central Jail. The court also rejected a prayer by police for placing them on remand. Advocate Samaulah, Advocate Habibur Rahman Mandal and others appeared for the accused.

Corruption case

Dr Mosharraf, 8 others granted ad-interim bail

By Court Correspondent

Former Energy Minister and BNP leader Dr Khandaker Mosharraf Hossain, MP, and eight co-accused were granted ad-interim bail in a corruption case by the Divisional Special Judge, Dhaka.

They were accused by the Bureau of Anti-corruption of taking financial benefit by paying extra compensation to Sipem. The company claimed the compensation for the delay in completion of a gas pipeline project during the previous government.

BNPPP meet adjourned again

By Staff Correspondent

The BNP Parliamentary Party (BNPPP) met briefly at the Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban yesterday and the meeting was again adjourned until November 9.

Chaired by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition Prof Badruddoza Choudhury, the meeting started at 7:50 pm and continued till 8:10 pm. Chief Whip of the Opposition Khandakar Delwar Hossain.

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Aid Group meeting begins in city today

Star Report

The Aid Group meeting for Bangladesh starts today for the first time in Dhaka amid a seven-hour hartal in the city, called by the opposition BNP.

Donor representatives from 15 countries and 12 international development agencies will sit with the government side at 9 am at the Sonargaon Hotel. The meeting will be coordinated and chaired by World Bank Vice-President for South Asia Miekko Nishimizu.

The business of the two-day event will begin with a review of the macroeconomic situation of the country, the issue of governance, public sector management and local government reforms, project implementation, privatisation and private sector development.

Departing from the usual business, some donors may express their concern over the current political stand off, apparently thwarting regaining the weakened business confidence after the past long political turmoil, hard earned economic stability and economic reforms.

The following day, the participants will delve into poverty incidence and trends, progression into social indicators including education and gender.

The issues related to food security will also be discussed on the same day with particular focus on enhancing the purchasing power of the poor so that they have access to food.

According to donor sources, development partners are

likely to urge the government to create an enabling environment for curing the deep seated structural weaknesses, including infrastructure bottlenecks and deficiencies in the public sector institutions responsible for implementing policies and regulations governing private sector activities.

A strong emphasis would be given on fine tuning of trade and industrial policies and carrying forward the banking reform, needed to sustain rapid economic growth.

The donors would suggest framing a clear policy to boost industrial activities and sustain economic growth against the backdrop of declined manufacturing growth—3.6 per cent

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Khaleda turns down diplomats' plea to call off hartal

By Staff Correspondent

BNP Chairperson Begum Khaleda Zia yesterday turned down requests from the representatives of some major western donor countries, Japan and international financial institutions to withdraw the seven-hour hartal in the capital today.

The ambassadors of the United States, Japan and Sweden, the High Commissioner of the United Kingdom, the local mission chief of the World Bank and a top level representative of the Asian Development Bank met the BNP Chairperson at her cantonment residence.

BNP Secretary General Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan and party standing committee member Saifur Rahman were also present during the meeting that began at 6:00 pm.

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Alleged bid to show suicide as murder Salman Shah's parents, 3 policemen may face trial

By Staff Correspondent

At least six people, including three policemen and the parents of late film star Salman Shah may face trial for their alleged attempt to turn the young actor's death into a murder case.

The CID has submitted their investigation report to the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's court yesterday recommending to lodge a case against the six.

The report said Salman committed suicide due to a family feud last year.

However, the CID is yet to find out the motive behind the move allegedly sponsored by Salman's parents along with the policemen to prove the film star's death as a murder case. The three policemen include a former Officer-in-Charge of

Cantonment thana and two Sub-Inspectors.

"The motive behind the attempt will be unveiled after the case is lodged against the six," said a senior CID official.

Salman, at the peak of his career in the Dhaka film industry, committed suicide by hanging himself from a ceiling fan hook at his 10th-floor apartment in the city's Eskaton area in September last year.

The death created a sensation and controversy as Salman's parents claimed their son was murdered.

The Detective Branch of Dhaka Metropolitan Police investigated the incident at the time and said in its final report that it was a case of suicide.

But the controversy that ap-

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Albright arrives Nov 19

US Secretary of State Madeleine Albright will arrive in the city on November 19 on a two-day visit to Bangladesh, diplomatic sources said yesterday, reports UNB.

Albright, who will fly into the city on the last leg of her three-nation trip to the sub-continent, will be received at the airport by Foreign Minister Abdus Samad Azad. She will come here after visiting India and Pakistan.

This will be the second visit by an American foreign minister to Bangladesh. Dr Henry Kissinger, the then US Secretary of State, came to Dhaka in 1974.

Albright's visit is billed very significant as it is taking place against the backdrop of a radical change in the global scenario, compared to that of early 70s when the Soviet Union mattered various developments in Afro-Asian region.

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Four city roads renamed after 4 national leaders

Four main roads of the city have been renamed after the four national leaders who were killed in Dhaka Central Jail on November 3, 1975, reports UNB.

North South Road has been renamed after Syed Nazrul Islam, Tongi Diversion Road after Tajuddin Ahmed, the road from in front of the High Court crossing (Kadam fount) to Kakkral crossing after Capt Mansur Ali and the road from Joykali Mandir to Fulbaria after M Qamruzzaman.

Dhaka City Mayor Mohammad Hanif announced this yesterday at a rally of Awami League at Osmani Uddyan organised to mark the Jail Killing Day.

The Mayor said all the commissioners of the city corporation irrespective of their political affiliation gave their full support to the decision of the DCC to rename the roads after the four national leaders.

"By doing this we have been able to show a little respect to the great leaders who led the Liberation War as per direction of the Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman during his absence," he said.

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Opposition leader destroying stability: PM

By Staff Correspondent

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has castigated the opposition BNP for calling a hartal coinciding with the Aid Group meeting, beginning in the capital today.

"The Leader of the Opposition has called a hartal at a time when the donors are coming here to extend their cooperation because she doesn't want improvement of the lot of the people and development of the country," she told a public meeting at the Osmani Uddyan in the city yesterday afternoon.

The public meeting was arranged in observance of the Jail Killing Day. Four national leaders — Tajuddin Ahmed, Syed Nazrul Islam, Capt (ret'd) M Mansur Ali and AFIM Qamruzzaman were killed inside the Dhaka Central Jail amidst a political whirlwind on this day in 1975.

Referring to corruption cases filed against former prime min-

ister Khaleda Zia and some members of her cabinet, Sheikh Hasina said, "We can't be blamed if they are arrested on corruption charges. The Bureau of Anti-Corruption has filed cases against them."

Questioning the justification of BNP-called hartal, Hasina, also president of ruling Awami League said that her party, while in Opposition, had called hartals against "vote dacoity by the Khaleda government for which the people toppled it from power." "But why hartal against us? It's not we who stole votes."

She also accused the Opposition leader of destroying peace and stability in the country. "In fact, the Opposition leader is still unhappy as she failed to cling to power through stealing votes."

Accusing BNP leaders of plundering national wealth and

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More discussion on draft CHT accord at next meet

By Special Correspondent

There is less possibility of an agreement to be initiated at the November 16 meeting between the National Committee on Chittagong Hill Tracts (NCCHT) and the Parbatia Chattagram Jana Sanghati Samity (PCJSS) to resolve the

decades-old CHT problems, sources concerned said.

They said the NCCHT did not send the draft agreement to the PCJSS by October 31 as demanded by it. The NCCHT wants the draft to be tabled at the next meeting and differ-

ences ironed out across the table before signing of the accord.

Hanadhaj Chakma, who maintain liaison between the NCCHT and the PCJSS, came to Dhaka last week, ostensibly to collect the draft to dispatch it to the PCJSS high command. But he has been briefed on the situation and he goes back to his home at Khagrachhari today and is expected to pass on the information to PCJSS.

The PCJSS had sent a 'communique' to the NCCHT on October 16 urging it to send the draft of the agreement by October 31 and proposed to hold the next meeting on November 16. The date of the meeting was accepted but the draft was not sent, the sources said.

The PCJSS demand came as a surprise to the NCCHT as its supreme Jyotirindriyo Bodhipriyo Lama alias Shantu

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Rumours of 'eviction' concern settlers

From Reaz Ahmed

RANGAMATI, Nov 3: Rumours of 'eviction' spread like wildfire among the settlers living in cluster villages in this hill districts over the peace treaty to be signed between the NCCHT and the PCJSS.

Despite motivational drives by various groups, politicians and the administration to dispel the fear of 'eviction' many

settlers living in cluster villages in five out of 10 thanas of the district, are still paying heed to the rumours.

Some 1480 Bengalee families live in cluster villages in Bogaichhari, Longodu, Kowkhal, Barkal and Naniar-char thanas in the district with a population of 4.5 lakh.

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Tension in BCL dominated halls at DU

By DU Correspondent

Tension mounted in different Chhatra League-dominated halls of Dhaka University as a central leader of the BCL returned to the campus yesterday two months after he was ousted by a rival group in the organisation.

Some activists of the rival group in different halls were beaten up while some rooms belonging to them were ransacked as Shamim Ahmed, who leads another faction, returned at about 7:30 pm.

An outsider on the campus, who was residing in Zahurul Haq Hall, was seriously injured when assaulted allegedly by activists of Shamim group.

Later, at around 8:30 pm, detective police picked up Shamim Ahmed from Zahurul Haq Hall and conducted a raid in the hall.

No arms were recovered and no arrest was, however, made, witnesses said.

Shamim group re-established its leadership in all the

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Death of Biman crew in custody 3 policemen likely to be chargesheeted

Star Report

Four persons including three policemen are likely to be chargesheeted in connection with the death of a cabin crew of Bangladesh Biman, Nuruzaman Sharif, following alleged torture while in custody at the city's Tejgaon thana in June last.

According to CID sources, two other policemen including the Officer-in-Charge (OC) of Tejgaon thana may face departmental action.

The CID, after about a four-month investigation, is now waiting for clearance from the Public Prosecutor (PP) before submitting the chargesheet under sections 302, 325, 201 and 114 of the Penal Code. The accusations include murder, assault and concealing facts. Investigating Officer of the case Munsif Atiqur Rahman, ASP, is preparing the Memo of Evidence

of the investigation. Nuruzaman, 37, died on June 16 after he was taken to court custody in the city on the expiry of a two-day police remand. He was arrested on charge of illegal trespass into the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) three days before his death.

CID sources said the four persons likely to be chargesheeted are a Sub-Inspector, an Assistant Sub-Inspector, a constable and a young man who worked as a 'source' for Tejgaon thana.

The investigators have found that a constable of Tejgaon thana assaulted Nuruzaman using belt and kicked him indiscriminately while in custody. The constable allegedly used a rope to tie Nuruzaman with an iron rod of the security

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Preparatory body discusses agenda of 3-nation summit

The 2nd meeting of the National Preparatory Committee for three-nation Business Summit was held at the State Guest House Meghna yesterday, reports UNB.

Committee Chairman Foreign Minister Abdus Samad Azad presided over the meeting which discussed programme and agenda of the proposed summit.

A large number of leading businessmen of the three countries are expected to attend the summit to be held in Dhaka on November 23, said an official handout.

Committee members Finance Minister ShAMS Kibria, Commerce and Industries Minister Tofael Ahmed, State Minister for Foreign Affairs Abul Hasan Chowdhury, Pri-

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Rickshawpuller injured during police-BNP clash dies at DMCH

By DMCH Correspondent

An unidentified rickshawpuller who sustained bomb injuries during a clash between the BNP activists and police Saturday afternoon succumbed at the Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) yesterday.

Hospital sources said the injured man aged about 30 suffered fatal wounds in his head and other parts of the body. He died at the DMCH at about 1:30 pm. The body was kept at the DMCH morgue for autopsy.

However, Motijheel police said they did not have any information in this regard till last night.

Seminar for MPs begins in city today

A three-day seminar on 'Post-Election' for the Members of Parliament jointly organised by Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) and Bangladesh Parliament Secretariat begins in the city today, reports UNB.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina will inaugurate the seminar to be held at the International Conference Centre.

Five CPA members arrived in the city yesterday to attend the seminar.

They are Speaker of Uganda parliament James Francis Wambugu Wapakhabulo, Deputy Speaker of Canada Peter Andrew Stewart Milliken, for-

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Construction materials block many city roads

By Morshed Ali Khan



Construction materials piled up on a city road near Dhanmondi Park. — Star photo

With a boom in construction sector, road users are increasingly facing hazards in the city's residential areas particularly Dhanmondi and Gulshan as many roads are laden with construction materials.

Dhaka City Corporation's Estate Department, responsible for looking into the matter, has no immediate plan to crack down on the offenders. In the absence of any authority, encroaching public roads has become a common practice of the developers.

At places, the developers have even gone up to the extent of making temporary work sheds for materials like cement and tiles.

At Dhanmondi and Gulshan, construction work is going on along almost every road. Piles of rods, bricks, sand, brick-chips and cement bags are kept on footpaths and roads, encroaching the public thoroughfares. This not only causes encroachment but also threat public safety. At Gulshan 2, an elderly man tumbled over the iron rods and broke his right

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Bangabandhu Murder Case Maj Rashid ordered troop deployment in civil areas

A retired artillery JCO yesterday said soldiers were deployed in civil areas not for martial law, but at the order of Major Rashid after the August 15 tragedy, reports UNB.

"After the killing of Bangabandhu, there was no martial law before August 24, but army troops were deployed in the civil areas at the order of my CO Major Khandakar Abdur Rashid," said the 35th prosecution witness in Bangabandhu murder case.

Recalling the worst days of the nation, Subedar Major (ret'd) Anisul Haq Chowdhury said on August 15 morning, the driver of Major Rashid, commanding Officer of the 2 Field Artillery, informed him that Bangabandhu had been killed.

"Driver Ali Mia also told me that martial law had been proclaimed. But it was not true. Martial law was imposed on August 24," said the witness during cross-examination all through the four-hour trial proceedings yesterday.

Anis, who rushed to his 2 Field Artillery unit after hearing the killing news of father of the nation, told the court that he did not have to make any report on August 15 carnage as his senior officers were directly in-

volved in it. He said it was his duty to inform the higher authorities if found any member of the contingent committing crime. "But it was not necessary to make written or verbal report even to my immediate superior as my higher officers committed it."

The ex-armyman told the court that it was CID to whom he, for the first time, made statement on the August 15 scenario. "But I had not to go to the DGF office at the cantonment to tell the CID about the incidents as I was on pension."

Anisul Haq Chowdhury, then Subedar Major—the post generally means guardian of the troops of a unit—made his deposition Sunday mainly highlighting the preparations by his officers for the bloody operation under the guise of night parade.

When a defence lawyer without mentioning the frequent meeting of Rashid and Farooq asked him if it was his duty to inform the army intelligence about any act that goes against the state, he said he would have to go through proper channel.

The retired Junior Commissioned Officer said there were more than one military intelligence officers who were directly in-

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