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Barricades around my house, says Khaleda

By Staff Correspondent

Barricades were put up late yesterday afternoon on the entry road leading to the house of the Leader of the Opposition Khaleda Zia, she told BBC.

On inquiry by her staff no satisfactory answer was received, following which she herself came out and challenged the military personnel to remove the barricade, she said.

On repeated insistence for about an hour, during which she squatted on the road, a senior officer came and removed the barricade later in the evening, a source close to her said. Officials however denied the charge.

Home Secretary Shafur Rahman told BBC that the government did not put any restriction on the Leader of the Opposition. He was commenting on her allegation to BBC last night that barriers were being raised on the street leading to her home, the radio said.

"When my son enquired about it there was no answer from the people raising the barricade. It would block movement of people coming and going to and from my home," Khaleda Zia told the BBC.

"I do not know who had ordered putting the barricade," she was quoted by the BBC.

No one was available for further comments.

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DSE digs into 'unfair' deals

By M. Shamsur Rahman

The DSE is investigating what it suspects to be unfair transactions involving an influential broker.

The influential DSE member was using a broker's workstation designated to an "inactive" member of the bourse, according to sources. The member was authorised to use the workstation by its owner Shafiqul Begum.

Following widespread allegations of unusual trade volumes of certain issues, the DSE surveillance team launched an inquiry into the matter.

Tracking down sales of Chick Textile shares in huge volumes, the DSE officials found that the orders were coming from a member using a Wide Area Network (WAN) connection.

They also detected that the workstation with the WAN connection belonged to Shafiqul Begum, a member of the DSE who is also Principal of Tejgaon Mahila College.

The workstation (computer), from which the orders for those transactions were coming, was located in an Olympic Industries office room on the Sixth Floor.

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Draft land accord with Myanmar approved

The Cabinet has approved the draft of Bangladesh-Myanmar Land Accord, reports UNB.

The approval was given at a meeting of the Cabinet at the Prime Minister's office yesterday with Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in the chair.

The meeting also okayed the proposal for re-fixing the postage charges of outgoing international letters and post materials.

Govt offices may remain open on weekly holiday

Government offices and semi-government and autonomous organisations may remain open on Friday or Saturday next, reports UNB.

The government, in view of the current hartal, is considering to keep the offices open to recover from the century's worst flood, a source said.

The BNP-led seven-party alliance has extended its 48-hour countrywide hartal yesterday till Wednesday evening.

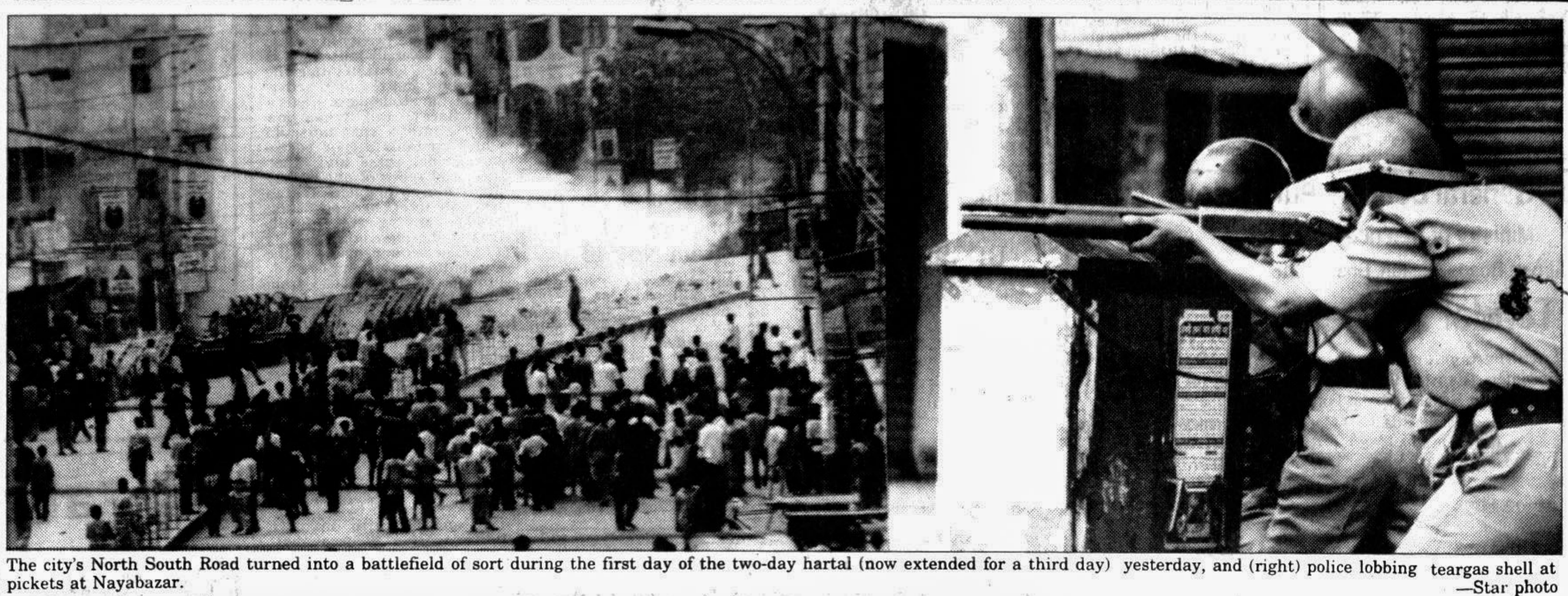
Security forces take control of 'risky' forest areas in CHT

From Nurul Alam

CHITTAGONG, Nov 9: Security forces have taken full control of the vast tracts of inaccessible undemarcated deep forest areas in the three hill districts.

Security sources said, those 'reserve forest areas' which were 'risky' during the last two decades due to insurgency have now been brought under security patrol. There is no border outpost (BOP) in the undemarcated forest areas in Alikadam and Thanchi of Bandarban, Bagaihat of Rangamati and Dighinala-Panchhari of Khagrachhari districts, the sources said.

Tribal guerrillas of the now disbanded Shantibahini, used to slip into those deep forests after sniper attacks in the CHT during insurgency period that



The city's North South Road turned into a battlefield of sort during the first day of the two-day hartal (now extended for a third day) yesterday, and (right) police lobbing teargas shell at pickets at Nayabazar. —Star photo

The first day of countrywide shutdown

Hartal sees 2 killed, 200 hurt

By Staff Correspondent

At least two persons were killed in the city and about 200 injured in the country on the first day yesterday of the 48-hour hartal called by BNP and its allies.

Police arrested 193 people across the country including 78 in the city.

Of the injured, some 40 were bullet-hit with five in the capital, 26 in Sylhet, three in Comilla and the rest in other areas of the country.

The two killed were identified as Omar Faruk, 16 a rextene factory worker and Abdus Salam, 30, a hawker. They were bullet-hit when a BNP office at Nazirabazar in the city was attacked and set on fire by some anti-hartal activists.

Faruk died on the spot and Salam at the Dhaka Medical College Hospital, DMCH sources said.

The body of Farook was handed over to his elder brother Abul Bashar and that of A Salam to his wife Bilkis Begum, they said.

Other than the capital, violence was reported from Sylhet, Bhola, Comilla, Sherpur and Mymensingh.

The BNP-led Seven Party Alliance called the hartal to protest, what they said, attempt on the life of the Leader of the Opposition Begum Khaleda Zia. Yesterday evening, the Alliance extended the hartal period till Wednesday evening.

Inter-city buses remained off the roads yesterday. Railway communication across the country was also disrupted.

In the capital, rickshaws and a very small number of auto-rickshaws and auto-tempos were seen plying.

Educational institutions remained closed while transactions in financial institutions were poor. Shopping complexes and markets were shuttered. Groceries, medicine shops and kitchen markets remained open.

Some BRTC double-deckers and private minibuses plied on some city streets under police escort. Life was paralysed as most economic activities came to a halt.

Pro-hartal activists clashed with anti-hartal elements backed by police in some parts of the city including Tikatuli, Roy Saheb Bazar Crossing, Nawabpur, Dholaikhal, Purana Paltan, Bijoy Nagar, Dainik Bangla crossing, and Jatrabari. A large number of crackers were exploded in these areas.

There were very few processions by pro and anti-hartal activists in the city yesterday.

Zahid, 15 son of Abul Kashem, also received bullet injury in his left chest during the attack on the BNP office at Nazirabazar. He was sent to the DMCH and later shifted to Orthopaedic Hospital.

After the BNP office was torched, the pro-hartal activists regrouped and clashed with their opponents intermittently for some time.

Police swung into action firing tear gas shells and rubber bullets. Two boys, Jumman and Ripon, were admitted to hospital with injuries from rubber bullets, their hospital sources said.

Jumman, 13, was hit by rubber bullet all over his body. He was brought to the DMCH in the evening.

Ripon, 12, also received injury from rubber bullet when he

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26 hit by bullets in Sylhet

From Staff Correspondent

SYLHET, Nov 9: At least 30 people were injured, 26 of them bullet-hit, in Sylhet in a gunfight between activists of Bangladesh Chhatra League and Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal in the Judge Court area today, the first day of the two-day Opposition-called countrywide hartal.

The bullet-hit people include police constable Jahir Uddin, five BCL activists and two JCD activists. They were admitted to MAG Osmani Medical College Hospital. The rest were released after treatment.

Police and witnesses said the clashing groups traded at least 30 gunshots, exploded about 50 crackers and chased each other with brickbats.

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With guns in both hands, he moves like an action hero in city's Bangshal area while a boy, bullet hit at a place nearby, is being rushed to hospital during hartal hours yesterday. Whether the bullet that struck the little boy came from him could not be known. —Star photos

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BNP extends hartal till Wednesday evening

By Staff Correspondent

BNP has extended the on-going countrywide hartal till Wednesday evening protesting "killing and arrest of its activists and attack on BNP processions across the country" on the first day of the hartal yesterday.

Addressing a press briefing at the BNP central office yesterday, leaders of the major opposition party alleged that three BNP activists were killed, more than 500 injured in attacks by Awami League "terrorists" and police and 300 of their leaders and activists were arrested on the day.

Convener of city BNP Sadek Hossain Khoka, MP, gave a description of hartal-hour incidents and alleged that terrorists belonging to Awami League coming out from Dhaka May-

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Bangabandhu Murder Case

Verdict to go to SC for confirmation

The verdict awarding death penalty to 15 for killing Bangabandhu along with his family members will automatically go to the Supreme Court for confirmation, reports UNB.

Advocate Anisul Huq, one of the public prosecutors, said as per Section 374 of CrPC, the verdict will go to the High Court Division for confirmation.

"Death sentence cannot be carried out until it is confirmed by the High Court," he said.

Beside, the convicts will apparently move the higher court against the judgement which is to be done within seven days.

About the completion of process, Advocate Huq said, it would at least take another seven to eight months.

After completion of the trial process in the High Court, the convicts will get another chance to move to the Appellate Division. However, a last resort also remains for them: To seek clemency of the President.

Khan Saifur Rahman, counsel for Lt Col (retd) Syed Faruq Rahman who was condemned to death, said that he will move the appeal as soon as he get the certified copy of the judgement

from the District Court.

When asked whether Maj (retd) Bazul Huda can seek for fresh trial, Advocate Anisul Huq said there was no scope for that. But he (Huda) can appeal to the higher court against the verdict.

Bazul Huda, who was awarded with death penalty along with 14 others, was extradited to Dhaka on Sunday from Thailand.

Huda fled to Bangkok after June 12, 1996 elections and was jailed in Bangkok for shoplifting.

Advocate Khan Saifur said Huda can demand a fresh trial as he was tried in absentia and was awarded death penalty.

On the question of execution of death sentence in firing squad, Advocate Anisul Huq said the CrPC has specified that when a court gives a sentence of death it should, as per Section 368 (1) of CrPC, direct that the accused be hanged by the neck till his death.

So in this case, the order that they should be shot to death by a firing squad will not be operative.

He had to bribe police for his brother's body?

By Staff Correspondent

At a BNP-called press briefing at its central office in the city the elder brother of hartal victim Omar Faruk yesterday alleged that he had to bribe police Tk 10,000 to take the body of his brother from Dhaka Medical College Hospital morgue.

Omar Faruk was killed when anti-hartal activists attacked and set fire to a BNP office at Nazirabazar in the city at about 10:30 am.

"When we approached police guarding the morgue for taking my brother's body, one man in uniform told us to talk to another uniformed person standing beside", Faruk's brother Abul Bashar said.

BNP Acting Secretary General Ashraf Hossain and Sadek Hossain Khoka MP addressed the press briefing earlier.

"The man took us aside and demanded Tk 15,000 for the body", Abul Bashar said.

"After some persuasion, the policeman agreed to accept Tk 10,000 saying the money will not be grabbed by him alone. It will be distributed among some others," Abul Bashar said.

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Noor Hossain Day today

The historic Noor Hossain Day will be observed today with fresh vow to realise the dreams of the martyrs who laid down their lives for restoration of democracy and country's economic emancipation, reports UNB.

On this day in 1987, Jubo League leader Noor Hossain, who wrote the slogan "Democracy be freed, autocracy be exterminated" on his chest and back, was killed when police of the then autocratic ruler opened fire on an Awami League procession at Zero Point.

Several others were also killed in police firing on the day as the then three alliances lay a siege on the capital to oust the "autocratic regime of General Ershad."

The supreme sacrifice of Noor Hossain culminated in a people-student mass upsurge in 1990 and the three alliances compelled the Ershad government.

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Appeal against acquittal of 4 being planned

The prosecution is planning to appeal against a part of the verdict in the Bangabandhu Murder Case relating to the acquittal of Taheruddin Thakur and three other accused, reports UNB.

"There is every likelihood that we are going to appeal against the part of the judgement of Dhaka District and Session Judge Court acquitting four persons from the charges, said a prosecution source.

He informed that legal experts will sit in a day or two to examine the ground for the appeal against the acquittal of the accused, specially Taheruddin Thakur and Abdul Wahab Joardar.

Hony Capt (retd) Abdul Wahab Joardar was freed from Dhaka Central Jail Sunday evening, but former state minister Thakur is still in prison as he is a charge-sheeted accused in the Jail Killing Case.

The court also acquitted two others, tried in absentia, Dafadar (retid) Marfat Ali Shah and Lance Dafadar (retid) Abul Hashem Mridha from the charge of conspiring and killing Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

In his verdict, District and Sessions Judge Kazi Golam Rasul said they were acquitted on ground of benefit of doubt as the allegation against them was "not proved beyond doubt."

Hartals aim to shield Aug 15 killers: PM

By Staff Correspondent

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has flayed BNP chairperson and Leader of the Opposition Khaleda Zia for "trying to protect the killers" of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman "by destabilising the situation through hartals."

"There is no issue now for calling hartals one after another. The opposition leader has proved her sympathy for the killers and is calling hartals with a perverted mentality."

"She wants to create a situation so that the court verdict -- death penalty -- awarded to the killers are not executed. Street agitation for the killers is really unfortunate," Hasina told the Jatiya Sangsad yesterday.

Sheikh Hasina claimed to have learnt that Khaleda Zia did not want the trial of the killers and was conspiring to protect them. "Maybe she had commitment to the killers. Pronouncement of verdict against the killers may have angered her to opt for the destructive path."

She also blamed the opposition leader for rewarding Bangabandhu's killers as was done by her late husband, Ziaur Rahman.

Elaborating, she said Khaleda Zia helped Lt. Col (Retrieved) Khandaker Abdur

Two alleged snatchers shot dead in city

By Staff Correspondent

Two alleged snatchers were shot dead by police near Raj Moni Cinema Hall under Demra thana in the city last night.

One of the dead was identified as Jahir, 25, while his accomplice aged about 22, could not be identified immediately, Siddhirganj police said.

Quoting police officer Narayan-ganj correspondent reports, a gang of about seven muggers on board a tempo intercepted the private car of Sirazul Islam, a contractor, at Mouchak under Siddhirganj thana on Dhaka-Chittagang highway at about 7:30 pm.

At gunpoint they robbed Tk 12,500 in cash and valuables and drove off. Sirazul informed the policemen, who were deployed in that area for hartal, soon after the incident.

Sirazul, along with a constable, started chasing the gang with his car, police said. The gang hurled bombs and fired at Sirazul's car from the tempo when they arrived near the cinema hall.

In reply, the constable fired seven rounds of bullets from his rifle injured the two snatchers. At this the gang stopped their vehicle there and five of them escape the scene, leaving two injured accomplices inside the vehicle, our correspondent added.

Meanwhile, SI Mozaffar, the on-duty officer at Demra thana told The Daily Star over telephone last night that being informed, they rushed to the cinema hall and found those two inside tempo at about 7:30 pm.

Police took the injured to Dhaka Medical College Hospital where the on-duty doctors declared them dead.

No case was lodged till last night.

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This is for information of all intending Bangladeshi nationals that a most suitable Commercial Plot more or less 4 (four) Bigha having road facilities on two sides by Dhaka-Mymensingh Road (Comprising Plot No 34, 36, 38 & 40 on Poet Farrukh Sharani and Plot No 61, 63, 65 & 67 on Airport Road) in Nikunja North, Dhaka will be allotted for 99 years lease on open auction for constructing of a Hotel of International Standard.

Prescribed application form with terms and conditions may be obtained from Sonali Bank, Janata Bank, Agrani Bank, Rajuk Bhaban Branch, Dhaka on payment of Tk 5,000.00 (Taka five thousand) only in cash (non-refundable) from 15-11-98 to 30-11-98 during office hours and will be received by the Director (Estate) from intending persons up to 1:00 PM on 2-12-98.

The auction will be held at 11:00 AM on 6-12-98 in the conference room (3rd floor) of Rajuk Bhaban, Dhaka.

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