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## PM tells MPs Monitor agri loan disbursement process to check any irregularities

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina told the Jatiya Sangsad yesterday that agricultural loan is being disbursed among the affected farmers as per proper guidelines and asked the MPs to monitor the process to check any irregularities, reports UNB.

"Of the allocated Tk 3,270 crore agri-loan, Tk 589.45 crore has been disbursed till October 31 and the process is going on," she said while replying to a question of Abdul Latif Mirza (AL-Sirajganj).

Responding to a supplementary, the Prime Minister said the government has taken all steps to ensure that the loan reaches all affected farmers.

Even the marginal farmers and sharecroppers will also get the loans without collateral.

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## Japan assures more help for post-flood rehabilitation

Japanese Prime Minister Keizo Obuchi yesterday said his government will do its best to extend further support for post-flood rehabilitation programme in Bangladesh, reports UNB.

He said this while responding to a request by Foreign Minister Abdus Samad Azad who called on him in Tokyo in the afternoon.

Samad Azad conveyed personal greetings of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina to the Japanese Prime Minister and handed over a letter inviting Obuchi to visit Bangladesh.

The Japanese Prime Minister expressed his eagerness to visit Bangladesh at the earliest. He also expressed his deepest sympathy to flood victims of Bangladesh, according to a message received here.

Meanwhile, Samad Azad yesterday visited headquarters of Japan External Trade Organisation (JETRO).

Chairman of JETRO Noboru Hatakeyama welcomed the Bangladesh minister.

Magurchhara fire  
Occidental to  
compensate  
for damages

Occidental will compensate for the damages caused to the environment and forest resources by the Magurchhara gasfield explosion, reports UNB.

This was disclosed when a three-member delegation, led by Occidental Executive Vice-president Rob Ireland, called on Environment and Forest Minister Syeda Sajeda Chowdhury at her office yesterday.

The Minister told the delegation that there is every scope to overcome any complexity through discussion in coordinating the money estimated for compensating the environmental degradation.

This was informed at the meeting that an expert-level meeting comprising authorities concerned from both sides will be held soon to resolve the matter.

The Ministry in its recent survey has estimated that the fire caused damage worth Tk 600 crore to environment and forest resources.

Senior Vice-President of Occidental R Casey Olson, President Nigel L Hopkinson, former FBCCI President Yussuf Abdullah Harun and senior officials of the ministry were present on the occasion.



**ARE THEY ALL AT FAULT?** Arrested "indiscriminately" from the city's Nayabazar area and locked up in Kotwali thana, one of them asks for water. As our photographer approached them yesterday, they alleged they were even denied drinking water let alone any food when some of them had been put behind the bars the previous night.

—Star photo by Amran Hossain



**UNDER FIRE:** Pro-hartal activists being picked up by police from the city's Nawab Yusuf Market and, (right), police open fire to force pickets in Gopibagar area retreat.

— Star photos

## 150 hurt on second day of hartal 235 arrested in city

By Staff Correspondent

At least 150 people were injured in incidents of violence in the city and elsewhere in the country on the second day yesterday of the Opposition-called 60-hour hartal.

In the city, around 50 people including three policemen and four photojournalists were injured in clashes between pro- and anti-hartal activists.

Of the injured, 20 were in the port city of Chittagong, 30 in Bholha, 15 in Mymensingh and the rest in some other areas of the country.

Police arrested 235 people in the capital, including Habibun Nabi Sohel, General Secretary of BNP's student front JCD. Sohel was arrested from Kawranbazar area, police said.

Fifty people were arrested in the port city, and another 19 in Bholha, our staff correspondent reported.

The BNP led Seven-Party Alliance had called the hartal to protest, what it said, attempt on the life of Leader of the Op-

position Begum Khaleda Zia. Initially, the hartal was called for 48-hours but later it was later extended till Wednesday evening.

Inter-city buses remained off the streets. Train service across the country was disrupted.

In the capital, a small number of autorickshaws and tempos were seen playing on different roads. The number of rickshaws and pushcarts plying on city roads yesterday were more than that on Monday.

Some BRTC double deckers and private minibuses were seen plying on some city streets under police escort.

Educational institutions remained closed and transactions in financial institutions were poor. Shops and shopping complexes also remained closed.

The day witnessed sporadic clashes, hurling of bombs and attacks on newsmen in the city. Tanti Bazar, Nayabazar.

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**Injured teenage boy dies**

By Staff Correspondent

Jahangir, 17, who was injured in a crossfire between rival groups at Shahid Nagar under Demra thana in the city on Monday night, died at Dhaka Medical College Hospital in the early hours of yesterday, hospital sources said.

Son of Abdul Malek Sarder, a slum dweller of Mirpur area, Jahangir was on way to visit his cousin when he was hit by bullet, they said quoting his relatives.

It could not be known whether the gunfight was linked to hartal on the day.

**20 hurt, 50 held at Chittagong**

From Staff Correspondent

CHITTAGONG, Nov 10: At least 20 people including five policemen were injured in sporadic incidents of violence that triggered a tense situation in the port city today, the second day of Opposition called hartal, police and witnesses said.

The injured police personnel were admitted to police hospital and others in private clinics.

Commissioner of Chittagong Metropolitan Police Kutubur Rahman said that 50 pickets were arrested from different places of the city today.

Police said a garbage carrying vehicle of Chittagong City Corporation was damaged by pro-hartal activists at around 11 am at Bahaddur crossing.

Police soon chased the activists who hurled a cocktail injuring five policemen. Police then charged batons, fired tear gas shells and brought the situation under control.

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## Alleged encroachment by Khaleda Nasim plans steps to recover cantt land

By Staff Correspondent

Housing and Works Minister Mohammad Nasim announced in the Jatiya Sangsad yesterday that "necessary steps" would be taken in consultation with the Cantonment Board to recover the land. Opposition leader Khaleda Zia had "encroached" adjacent to her cantonment residence in the city.

"I was surprised to know, after taking over the works ministry, that the Ershad government handed over the possession of two houses -- one preserved for the army chief in the Dhaka Cantonment and another abandoned house at the Gulshan Model Town -- at a nominal cost of Tk 1001 only to Khaleda Zia and her two sons -- Tarek and Arafat," Nasim said and added public property worth crores of taka were thus misused.

"There is no rule to allocate any house in the restricted area of cantonment to a private citizen. The house earmarked for the army chief, was given to Khaleda Zia violating all rules and regulations," the minister told the House during the question-answer session.

The official residences of the president, the prime minister and the army chief are public property and law does not permit allocation of those to any person, he noted.

"General Ershad gifted Khaleda Zia the two houses in 1982 when we were on the street fighting the general's rule," he said.

Accusing Khaleda Zia of encroaching a piece of land adjacent to her cantonment house and spending Tk 82,000 illegally from the public exchequer to decorate the house, the minister said.

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## Don't be misled by propaganda, says BNP

By Staff Correspondent

BNP's acting secretary general Ashraf Hossain has urged the people not to be misled by the propaganda of the ruling Awami League.

He was briefing newsmen at the official residence of the Leader of the Opposition and BNP chief in the city yesterday.

The BNP leader condemned statements made by some ruling party legislators in the Jatiya Sangsad regarding the on-going "anti-autocracy movement" of his party.

He alleged that AL MPs were conspiring to provoke the opposition through their activities and statements.

He said BNP is continuing movement to protect the country's independence and sovereignty, democracy and dignity of the people, and not to foil any 'dubious'.

The prime objective of the on-going movement is to protect the people's interests and save them from the consequences of a dictatorship.

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## Democracy demands that Govt treat Opposition better

By Mahfuz Anam

Today is the third day of BNP's hartal. What it has gained from keeping the nation hostage for sixty hours is something the BNP will have to answer to the people. We are sad that the historic day of the verdict in the Bangabandhu Murder Case should be followed by 60 hours of hartal. In our view we should have been celebrating the occasion for the sheer fact that after 23 years our nation was able to establish the supremacy of law and correct, however belatedly and inadequately, a mighty wrong against a mighty man.

However, the sad fact is that today, instead of rejoicing at the moral vindication of us as a people, we are in the midst of a destructive hartal.

Why? Is it all BNP's fault? What was the role of the ruling

**Commentary**

Awami League in all this? Did the government behave responsibly with the opposition as it should in parliamentary democracy?

Awami League has repeatedly claimed that BNP's activities, especially the hartal, were to protect Bangabandhu's killers. How could street agitation or even strikes protect them? The judge's verdict would be just as valid and as final whether it is given on a normal or a hartal day. If BNP wanted to protect the killers would it not have made more sense doing something during the trial, rather than during days before announcement of the judgement?

Throughout the trial and even after the verdict, BNP maintained, in our view, an unfortunate, disdainful silence. Instead of welcoming this judicious process that brought Bangabandhu's killers -- some of whom were self-confessed -- to justice, BNP took a 'holier than thou' but essentially bankrupt, position by saying "we are in favour of trial of all killers".

We would have preferred our foremost opposition, and former ruling party, to have come out clearly and unequivocally in favour of this trial. Having said that, we wonder on what ground and on what evidence can it be claimed that BNP was opposed to the trial?

If the above claim is based on BNP's past -- the late President Ziaur Rahman phase of BNP -- then there is sufficient

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**UNB report false, baseless: BNP**

BNP has refuted a UNB report that Chairperson Begum Khaleda Zia made provocative remarks against the army, reports UNB.

"The report is utterly false, baseless, fabricated and politically motivated... question of making any provocative remark against the army and abusing the army personnel on duty by her or by her son, Tarek Rahman, do not arise at all," she said in a press release issued Tuesday night by Ahmed Nazir, press secretary to the BNP Chairperson.

The report, circulated by the agency quoting competent sources on Monday, was published in a section of the national dailies yesterday.

The press release said the report was intended to undermine the image of Begum Zia and her son. "We strongly condemn and protest the report."

Explaining the situation, it said Begum Zia enquired the army officials the reason for raising barricade on the entrance to her Cantonment residence.

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Bangladesh batsman Faruque Ahmed plays a backfoot defence during the third limited-over match against West Indies A at the Bangabandhu Stadium yesterday.

—Star photo

## Bangladesh win series

By Lenin Gani and Hasan Masood

Bangladesh cricketers recorded a famous victory last night to clinch the three-match series against a strong West Indies A. In the rain-reduced third match, played day-night at the Bangabandhu National Stadium, Bangladesh defeated the Caribbeans by 10 runs.

The match was delayed by a side that has several national players and some in the making is a big boost for local cricket.

Winning the toss in the afternoon, the West Indies captain put Bangladesh into bat. Skipper Aminul Islam led from the front, and with the help of his 52, Bangladesh scored 229 for seven in their 50 overs.

The series victory against a side that has several national players and some in the making is a big boost for local cricket.

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The match was delayed by a light drizzle after the Bangladesh innings and West Indies were given a revised target of 194 in 35 overs.

The West Indies innings began to collapse from the third

## Why those Rajuk vehicles were parked there?

By Staff Correspondent

Rajuk claims it incurred a loss of Tk 1.86 crore as seven of their vehicles were set afire on its premises and some other articles were damaged by an 'unruly mob' on Saturday.

Sources, however, pointed out that the vehicles set alight were not supposed to be parked on the Rajuk premises on Saturdays.

Rajuk has a huge parking lot at Mohakhali and the vehicles were supposed to be there during the weekend and other than office hours, official sources said. They blamed Rajuk drivers for 'regularly' violating office rules and said it might be difficult now to make 'insurance claims' on the loss.

Following disturbances at last Saturday's BNP public meeting at the nearby Paltan Maidan, a mob entered the Rajuk premise and set ablaze two buses, two Pajero jeeps, vans and motor cycles. They also damaged foreign-made lights and other decorative pieces.

Superintendent Engineer of Rajuk Mohammad Sirajuddin had estimated the total loss at around Tk 60 lakh in a general diary with Motijheel police. But later the amount was put at Tk 1.86 crore.

## Larma tells Khagrachhari rally A quarter within govt obstructs CHT peace

From Our Correspondent

CHAKMA IN 1983 at his hideout in Tripura.

It was the first time the PCJSS observed Manabendra's death anniversary in public. It was also the first public rally of PCJSS since signing of the CHT accord.

Shantu Larma also accused the government of dilly-dally over the implementation of the accord since it was signed on December 2 last year.

Despite a general amnesty for all the tribesmen under the accord, cases were yet to be withdrawn. A dozen members of Shantibahini are still in jail, Larma claimed. He said that it was not clear to PCJSS why the government was 'weak' in implementation.

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**ISPR version on 'barricade'**

Attention of the Army Headquarters has been drawn to a news item broadcast on Monday on the BBC Bangla programme and reports published in different national dailies yesterday regarding the raising of a barricade in front of the residence of the Leader of the Opposition and BNP chairperson Begum Khaleda Zia, an ISPR press release said in the city, reports BSS.

It said in the context there is much scope for stating the facts for all to know.

It said measures are taken to maintain overall security and traffic control of the Cantonment as per the Army Act.

Many times stop-bar, speed breaker and road divider are used at the entry point of the main road from lane or by-lane to avoid accidents. A part of this system like other places in the Cantonment, similar steps had been taken at the crossing point of Shaheed Mainul Road and the main road.

The crossing point was located 300 yards east of the residence of Begum Zia.

Begum Khaleda Zia and her son came at the end of Shaheed Mainul Hossain Road at 6:45 pm on Monday after its divider had been repaired. They stayed there for nearly 1.45 minutes.

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## Nobody seems to care for her

By Gobinda Bar

It has been some 23 days in the Dhaka Medical College (DMCH), but the eight-year-old Runa is yet to have any special care assured by the health minister.

Runa was admitted to the Ward Number 33 at the DMCH after both of her wrists were blown off in a bomb blast during an Opposition-sponsored hartal on October 18. Her mother said the poor girl was recovering slowly.

"Nobody now comes to see how the girl is being treated and how we are here at the hospital," said Fatema, Runa's mother. "Nobody cares for us since we are poor and down-trodden," she said. There has been no change in her being

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Runa — File photo

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