

## What's on today . . .

**Annual general meeting:** The annual general meeting of Mujibnagar Karmachari Kalyan Sangsad will be held. The election of its central executive committee will be held during the meeting. Venue: Hotel Razmoni Ishakha. Time: 10.00 am.

**Founding anniversary:** The fourth founding anniversary and first central conference of Garments Sramik Oikya Forum will be held. Venue: Dhaka District Sports Association. Time: 10.30 am.

**Rally:** Gano Forum will hold a rally, which will be followed by a procession. Venue: Muktangan. Time: 3.00 pm.

**Meeting:** The general meeting of Bangladesh Anti Drug Federation will be held. Venue: Begum Sufia Kamal auditorium, National Museum. Time: 3.00 pm.

**Inauguration:** The inaugural ceremony of Midas Mini Mart's Bailey Road branch will be held. Chief guest: Tofail Ahmed, Minister for Commerce and Industries. Venue: House no 61, Shiddeswari. Time: 4.00 pm.

**Meeting:** The organising committee of the Society for Care and Welfare of Schizophrenic (SCWS) will hold a meeting. Venue: Flat no 601, Building no 3, Eastern Circuit, 30 Circuit House Road. Time: 5.00 pm.

**Inauguration:** The 3<sup>rd</sup> solo painting exhibition of Bipul Shah titled 'Life, Nature, Reality' will be inaugurated. Venue: Zahid Gallery, Institute of Fine Arts, Dhaka University. Time: 5.00 pm.

The exhibition will remain open from 2.00 pm to 8.00 pm everyday till October 27.

**Discussion meeting:** Nirapad Sharak Chai will hold a discussion meeting to mark Safe Road Day'99. The day also marks the 6<sup>th</sup> death anniversary of Jahannara Kanchan, wife of film star Ilyas Kanchan. Venue: National Sports Complex auditorium. Time: 5.00 pm.

**Sculpture exhibition:** The first solo sculpture exhibition of Ivy Zaman will be inaugurated. Chief guest: Shah AMS Kibria, Minister for Finance. Venue: Gallery 21, 765, Satmasjid Road, Dhanmondi. Time: 5.00 pm.

**Painting exhibition:** The solo painting exhibition of Sarkar Nahid Nazma Manna Nipu titled 'Wooden Box' will be inaugurated. Chief guest: Rafiqun Nabi. Venue: Alliance Francaise de Dhaka. Time: 5.30 pm.

The exhibition will remain open from 3.00 pm to 8.00 pm everyday till November 4.

**Film show:** Three French movies *My Mothers Courage*, *Au Revoir les Enfants* and *Le Plaisir* will be screened. Venue: Alliance Francaise de Dhaka. Time: 11.00 am, 4.00pm and 6.00 pm.

**Meeting:** Srisri Raman, Kali Mandir and Srma Anandamayi Asram Puja Udayan Parishad will hold a general meeting. Venue: Srisri Dhakeswari Jatiya Mandir premises. Time: 6.00 pm.

**Cultural evening:** A solo performance by singer Shumon Chowdhury will be held. Venue: Indian High Commission Cultural Centre, 758 Satmasjid Road, Dhanmondi R/A. Time: 6.30 pm.

**Premiere:** Bangladesh Short Film Forum will hold the premiere of *The Long Wait*, an independent documentary on pioneer sculptress Novera Ahmed by N Rashed Chowdhury. Venue: Goethe Institut, House no 10, Road no 9, Dhanmondi R/A. Time: 7.00 pm.

## ..... and tomorrow

**Seminar:** Bangladesh Ain Samity will hold a seminar on 'Independence of the Judiciary, and the Transparency and Accountability of Judges' will be held. Chief guest: Abdul Matin Khasru, Minister for Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs. Venue: British Council auditorium. Time: 10.00 am.

**Launching ceremony:** The launching ceremony of 'Aid, Development and Diplomacy' by National Professor Muhammad Shamsul Huq and Prof Chowdhury Rafiqul Abrar will be held. Chief guest: Shah AMS Kibria, Minister for Finance. Venue: FREPD, Sonargaon Road, Palashi Crossing, DU campus. Time: 10.30 am.

**Signing ceremony:** The signing ceremony and press briefing on direct equity investment by Citicorp International in Ekushey Television Limited will be held. Venue: BRAC Inn, BRAC Centre, Mohakhali. Time: 10.30 am.

**Seminar:** Young Economists Forum (YEF) and Debating Club of North South University will hold a seminar on 'Transition and its Impact on Bangladesh's Economy'. Chief guest: Tofail Ahmed, Minister for Commerce and Industries. Venue: IDB Bhaban, Sher-e-Bangla Nagar. Time: 3.00 pm.

**BPJA exhibition:** Bangladesh Photo Journalists' Association (BPJA) will hold the inauguration of a 3-day long photo exhibition on the recently concluded 8<sup>th</sup> SAF games. Chief guest: Obaidul Quader, Minister for Youth, Sports and Culture. Venue: BPJA auditorium. Time: 4.00 pm.

**Publication ceremony:** The publication ceremony of two books edited by Md Rafiqul Islam Khandakar will be held. Venue: Jatiya Press Club. Time: 4.00 pm.

**NICVD symposium:** National Institute of Cardiovascular Diseases (NICVD) will hold a symposium on 'Treatment of Acute Coronary Syndrome: At the turn of the Millennium'. Venue: Dhaka Sheraton Hotel. Time: 7.45 pm.

## Weather

### Light rain likely

Light to moderate rain or thundershowers is likely at a few places over Khulna, Barisal, Dhaka, Chittagong and Sylhet divisions and at one or two places over Rajshahi divisions till 6 pm today, reports UNB.

Moderately heavy falls are also expected at places over Khulna, Dhaka, Barisal and Sylhet divisions, according to Met Office.

Forecast that day temperature may rise 1-2 degree Celsius over the country and rainfall activities may decrease during the period.

The country's highest temperature yesterday 33.7 degree Celsius was recorded at Sitakunda and the lowest 22.6 degree Celsius at Sathkira.

The sun sets in the capital today at 5.27 pm and rises tomorrow at 5.59 am.

Maximum and minimum temperature and humidity recorded in some major cities and towns yesterday were:

City/Town	Temperature in Celsius	Humidity in percentage
	Max	Min
Dhaka	30.5	24.1
Chittagong	33.0	24.5
Rajshahi	30.7	24.5
Khulna	31.5	23.5
Barisal	31.8	24.0
Sylhet	27.5	22.8
Cox's Bazar	33.0	24.0

## HERE and THERE

**MMC** participated at the four-day long workshop.

The second workshop was held from October 14-17. Twenty reporters and local correspondents of national and local newspapers from Noakhali, Laxmipur & Feni participated in this batch.

The last workshop was held from October 18-21. 20 newsmen from Noakhali, Feni and Laxmipur participated.

MMC trainer Mir Masrur Zaman, Media Centre Chief Mobarak Hossain, Asst Media Centre Chief RM Aurangzeb, Circulation Manager Imran Ali Khan conducted the workshop.

## PM attaches great importance to foster friendly ties with Australia

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has expressed her firm conviction that peace and stability are indispensable for sustainable development of teeming millions of the region and said if congenial atmosphere prevails, the poor can change their fate through partnership, reports BSS from Canberra.

It is my firm conviction that peace and stability at home and in the region are indispensable for the sustainable development," she said while speaking a dinner hosted in her honour by the Australian National University on Wednesday night.

Sheikh Hasina, who is now on a five-day official visit to Australia, said Bangladesh, through its prudent policies and programmes, has attached great importance to her relationship with Australia and other friendly countries.

The prime minister said Bangladesh considers Australia an old trusted friend as it had

not confined itself to providing support only in the struggle for independence in 1971 but also was the first western country to recognise Bangladesh's independence.

She observed that relationship over the years has gained in depth and dimension and today it has been further strengthened by the presence of thousands of Bangladeshi people in Australia.

Referring to her government's initiative to resolve internal and bilateral issues Sheikh Hasina said, "my government amicably resolved the old issue of sharing of the Ganges river water with India. This decision reflects our sincere desire to create an environment in South Asia, which would inspire other nations to resolve their bilateral issues in an amicable manner."

The government, reached an agreement with the tribal people in Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) which brought to an end a

long period of hostility in the region. This initiative was widely acclaimed, she said.

The prime minister said good governance and transparency is another priority of her administration. "I consider the promotion of the welfare and the well being of the people through good governance as my government's mandate," she added.

The prime minister laid emphasis on micro-credit programmes and support systems for the betterment of the poor. "I believe, human beings, however poor, do have the innate capacity to change their fate for the better through empowerment and partnership."

She also mentioned about the 'Aarayan' project. The project, designed by the prime minister herself, is a comprehensive scheme for human settlement and sustainable livelihood. It will provide settlement and means of livelihood to 50,000 families.



Unidentified terrorists hurled bombs at a police vehicle at city's Bijoy Nagar during the hartal hours yesterday.

— Star photo

### Khaleda to address rally at Jamalpur tomorrow

By Staff Correspondent

BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia will address a public meeting at Dewanganj high school playground in Jamalpur district on Saturday afternoon.

The meeting has been organised by Dewanganj thana BNP to protest the killing of its president Advocate Abdul Razzak. The BNP leader was chopped to death allegedly in an attack by Awami League terrorists during the observance of countrywide 'Anti-aggression Day' on October 11.

Local BNP leader M Rashiduzzaman Millat will preside over the meeting while party's central and local leaders will address it, said a press release.

### Nijhu's death condoled

State Minister for Youth, Sports and Cultural Affairs Obaidul Quader today expressed deep shock at the death of promising Rabintra Sangeet artist Amnur Rahman Nijhu in a road accident on Wednesday.

In a message of condolence, he said the contribution made by this talented artist to the country's art and culture would be gratefully remembered in the days to come. "His death is an irreparable loss in the field of art and culture in Bangladesh," he added.

Obaidul Quader prayed for the peace of the departed soul and conveyed his heart-felt sympathy to the members of the bereaved family.

The Director General of Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy Azad Rahman and other staff members also condoled the sad demise of their beloved colleague Amnur Rahman Nijhu, a lecturer of the training department of the academy, and conveyed sympathy to the members of the bereaved family.

Leader of Sammilito Sangskritik Jote, Ramendu Majumder and Golam Quddus, in another condolence message, expressed their shock at the untimely death of Nijhu and prayed for the peace of his departed soul.

Bangladesh Rabintra Sangeet Shilpi Sangstha in a statement yesterday condoled the death of artist Amnur Rahman Nijhu and expressed sympathy to the members of the bereaved family.

The Sangstha in an extra ordinary general meeting tomorrow will pay tribute to the noted artist at Kakoli High School in the city.

**Death anniversary** The third death anniversary of Engr. Kamal Ahmed, former superintending engineer of Civil Aviation Authority of Bangladesh, will be observed today, says a press release.

On the occasion, a *milad* *mayit* will be held at his residence at House no. 40, Road no. 8, Sector no. 3, Uttara Model Town, after Asr prayers.

All his relatives, friends, well-wishers and colleagues have been requested to attend the *milad* and pray for the departed soul.

### UPDF rally in Khagrachhari today

By Staff Correspondent

United Peoples' Democratic Front (UPDF), a political party based in Chittagong Hill Tracts, yesterday said that a vested quarter was trying to foil the UPDF's demonstration to be staged today in Khagrachhari.

In a press release UPDF expressed its concern saying that a vested quarter backed by JSS had brought out a procession demanding cancellation of the UPDF programme. UPDF further said that the quarter was planning to make violent attacks on the people today.

Convener of UPDF Prashit B Khisha in a press statement urged the people to participate in the demonstration ignoring all resistance and said that if any untoward incident took place at the demonstration, the government and JSS would be held responsible.

### Arms ban on Faridpur-4 constituency

The government has imposed a ban on carrying licensed arms within the Faridpur-4 constituency of the Jatiya Sangsad from midnight of October 25 to midnight of October 28 for by-election in the constituency, scheduled to be held on October 27, reports BSS.

The ban has been imposed under the sub-section 1 of Section 17A of the Arms Act 1878 to maintain law and order in the by-election, an official handout said.

If any one found guilty for violating the official ban, legal actions would be taken against him or her.

"The ban will not be effective for members of the law enforcing agencies engaged in electoral process," the handout added.

Another report says: A general holiday has been announced in Faridpur-4 Jatiya Sangsad constituency on October 27 on account of parliamentary by-election.

Government, semi-government, autonomous, private and other institutions will remain closed to facilitate the people to exercise their franchise in the by-election, an official handout said yesterday.

### Nabo Obhijan Editor buried

A S M Rezaul Huq, Editor of the daily Nabo Obhijan, buried at Banani graveyard yesterday afternoon, reports BSS.

Earlier, his *namaz-e-janaza* was held at Tiptop mosque after Zohr prayers.

Huq, 76, died at the metropolitan hospital here last night. He was a former ward commissioner of Dhaka, was suffering from diabetic problems for a long period. He left behind his wife, three sons, three daughters, relatives and a host of admirers to mourn the death.

Qulshwari of the deceased will be held at his 67 Siddheswari residence after Asr prayers today.

### People have expressed no-confidence on govt: Khaleda

By Staff Correspondent

BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia has congratulated the countrymen for observing the country-wide dawn-to-dusk hartal yesterday called by the opposition alliance.

In a statement yesterday, she said the countrymen have once again expressed their full support for opposition's one-point demand for resignation of the government and national election through observation of the hartal.

Besides, the people have also expressed their no-confidence on the government. The people have also strongly protested government's failure, incompetence, corruption, nepotism, misrule, anti-people activities and Indian aggression in borders, she said.

### Communications Minister cautions against hartal

KAUKHALI (Pirojpur). Oct 21: Communications Minister Anwar Hossain has cautioned the people against the adverse effects of hartals and said such destructive programme can bring no good for the people, reports BSS.

Addressing a public meeting at the Dasherathi Government Ground here yesterday, he said the provision for free and fair elections under a non-partisan interim government has been incorporated in the constitution but some political parties seem to be seeking to impose their own plans.

The minister said polls will be held under the interim government when they are due but these parties are trying to subvert the normal procedure by calling frequent hartals and other programmes.

The communications minister said that those who plundered the wealth of the state must be brought to book and no amount of assurances to take them to task is any longer enough.

### Power generation

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have any clause for such a guarantee and the subsequent actions of AES."

AES has been told that IFC-WB were not the only lenders in the world and it should seek other sources which were "less demanding".

Whether the government should pursue a second deal for Meghnaghat or not is a matter of sovereign decision of the government," he pointed out. The WB has not given Bangladesh any loan in the energy sector for the last one decade and why should we surrender to its pressure?"

On the other hand, AES representatives told the government that it was compelled to suspend works at Haripur as it was depending on a "confirmed financing" from IFC. A source quoting AES representatives said that the US firm had no doubt about getting the IFC loan, until it suspended it. As a proof, AES said that it has already spent 30 million dollars from its own fund for the project.

It is expected that the deadlock would be resolved within a couple of weeks.

## Hartal

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of them including three policemen critically.

The clashes broke out when police intercepted a BNP procession towards the Lalidighi Maidan in the afternoon to hold a rally there, as announced earlier. Awami League was holding a rally there at that time, also as per its earlier announcement.

In Dhaka city, Naya Paltan, Bijoy Nagar and areas near the BNP central office where pro-hartal activists clashed with police intermittently.

A BNP procession, started from the party central office at Purnan Paltan at about 4-45 pm. The procession was virtually abandoned off by police in several places.

The bombs were hurled when the processionists were parading some streets, reached near the WASA over head tank at Bijoy Nagar on their way back to the party office.

Police immediately swung into action and the processionists were dispersed. The police action in the area continued for over half an hour.

BNP, Jatiya Party (Ershad), Jamaat-e-Islami and Islami Oikya Jote also brought out separate processions in Bijoy Nagar and Kakrail areas after 10:30 am.

A powerful cocktail was blasted when a BNP procession reached the police barricade near the Paltan intersection at about 11:25 am. The processionists retreated and no untoward incident took place there at that time.

Police recovered seven home-made bombs from the Bijoy Nagar road island.

Incidents of bomb blast were also reported from Kamalapur, Dholaipar, Kalabagan, Malibagh, Mahakhali and areas adjacent to the CMM's court.

No inter-district bus left the city yesterday. Train services were normal. All scheduled flights operated normally at the Zia International Airport, officials said. Launch services operated partially, they said.

Educational institutions, business houses, private offices and stock exchanges remained closed. In some banks, transaction took place in a limited scale.

A small number of BRTC buses and private mini-buses piled in the city under police protection. Rickshaws were far less than usual. Attendance in the Secretariat was thin.

The ruling Awami League and its front organisations also brought out anti-hartal procession on the North-South Road, Topkhana Road, and in Mirpur, Mohammadpur, Gulshan, Uttara and Mahakhali areas. Pro and anti-hartal activists clashed at Kalabagan, police and witnesses said.

### Rajshahi

Our Rajshahi correspondent reported that at least seven people were injured in a clash between pro and anti-hartal activists at Charghat thana headquarters in the morning.

The clash broke out when a BNP procession came under attack by a group of anti-hartal activists. Police arrested four BNP workers in the morning when they were picketing in the town.

All modes of transport were off the roads in the city. Educational institutions including Rajshahi University, shops and business houses remained closed.

BNP, Jamaat-e-Islami brought out separate processions and also held separate rallies in the town.

### Khulna

Our Staff Correspondent from Khulna reported that the hartal passed off peacefully in the metropolitan city.

All modes of transports were off the roads. Shops and educational institutions remained closed. There was no transaction in banks.

### Inderfurth

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Inderfurth said the recently elected government of Prime Minister Vajpayee and the new coalition it has formed represent a 'continuity' that could lead to improvements in 'economic reform, rural development, and national security' for India. He said he expects to discuss security and non-proliferation issues with India's External Affairs Minister Jushant Singh when he arrives in Washington next week on an official visit. These discussions were helped up because of India's political situation and the recent elections, he said. Inderfurth noted that in two weeks, President Clinton's signing into law, economic sanctions that were imposed on India and Pakistan as a result of their testing of nuclear devices could be lifted.

He also announced that Secretary of Energy Bill Richardson will visit New Delhi and Varanasi next week to discuss energy and environmental issues, marking the first high-level contact between the US and India since the Vajpayee government was sworn in October 13.

Inderfurth expressed the hope that greater 'liberalization' of India's economy would improve the US-India economic relationship, which he predicted could launch a "second generation of reform" on the continent. He also predicted that an economic package that would encourage more trade between the two countries would be ready next month.

Inderfurth said he would like to see India open up its telecommunications and insurance to investment.

India's Ambassador to the US Nareish Chandra told the conference that seven multi-million dollar power projects were approved last month and India is opening up its oil and power resources for exploration.

## Megawati wins

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the main tourist area. No injuries were immediately reported in the second protest there in two days.

"Megawati lost, we burn everything. We are mad. This is people's power," said one of the protesters, who identified himself as Putu.

The No 2 victory by Megawati, the daughter of Sukarno, Indonesia's founding president, means that she could eventually succeed Abdurrahman Wahid as the country's new president.

The post of vice-president had previously been seen as an insignificant one in Indonesia.

But it has assumed greater importance because of concern over the health of the frail new president, Wahid, 59, a nearly blind stroke victim who needs help walking and had to take dictation from an aide to recite his oath of office yesterday.

Under Indonesia's current constitution, if the president becomes unable to exercise his functions, the deputy takes over as head of state for the remainder of his or her five-year term.

Many people believe that Wahid, 59, a moderate Muslim politician and cleric who is blind and has had two strokes, may not be able to complete his five-year term in office as Indonesia's leader.

Shortly before the vice presidential election, Gen Wiranto, head of the powerful military, and Akbar Tanjung, chief of the former ruling Golkar Party, withdrew from the contest.

Both said they were doing so to promote national unity in this diverse country.

"Hopefully... the situation will calm down and we're going to have peaceful days. Let's not forget all our differences in the past. We have to stay united together to rebuild the country. Hopefully all the wounds will be healed now," Amien Rais, the newly elected, reformist speaker of assembly, said after Megawati's victory.

Anticipating that outcome, the stock market jumped 5.5 per cent, and the rupiah currency gained strength against the US dollar.

His election gave Islam unprecedented influence in the world's largest Muslim nation.

Indonesia also is struggling with democratic reforms that it began to introduce 16 months ago when President Suharto, who ruled with an iron fist for 32 years, was driven out of power by a violent, pro-democracy movement.

His successor, President B.J. Habibie, withdrew from Wednesday's presidential election shortly after the legislature rejected his administration in the equivalent of a no-confidence vote.

On Wednesday, Jakarta was paralysed by widespread protests that broke out when Megawati's many supporters heard she had lost the presidential vote. But pro-Wahid celebrations also occurred in many other cities on the country's 17,000 islands.

Gun shots rang out across Jakarta as thousands of demonstrators tried to march on Parliament, throwing rocks and gasoline bombs at police who stopped them with tear gas and warning shots. The clashes continued well into the night before an advance by security forces sent them scattering.

Gangs also roamed some streets and tried to hijack cars. At least two people were killed and 65 injured when a car exploded. A separate homemade bomb, hidden in a flower pot, injured five people at the city's main traffic circle.

Meanwhile, Megawati was sworn in as vice president yesterday after a suspense-filled election victory that eased political tensions across the country.

President Abdurrahman Wahid witnessed the swearing-in, along with his predecessor B.J. Habibie, foreign diplomats and the political elite in the world's fourth largest nation.

## Tug of war

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"We are an alternative political force in the country. LDF, by its charter, can't ally with bourgeois parties like Awami League or BNP. We can't compromise with such parties," said Khalequzzaman Bhuiyan of his faction of BSD, one of the LDF components. He however did not rule out the possibility of any of the partners' individual support to the big parties.

Asked about local polls, the BSD leader said the 11 parties "share a common view that the existing political atmosphere is not suitable to holding polls".

Workers Party general secretary Rashed Khan Menon however denied having had any contacts, even informal, with the AL or BNP. "I met leaders of those parties on different occasions recently, but heard none speaking about it."

Asked on the prospects of understanding with any of the two big parties, Menon said: "BNP is now allied with the rightist parties. The Left parties can't have a place there. The Awami League seems confident of being in power for the next 20 years. Do they at all need any support?"

But a junior Workers Party leader confirmed discussions on the issue with both AL and BNP. "But we are yet to take a concrete position. The Left parties are also in a dilemma."

## Zero tariff

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Australian and Bangladesh authorities and that appropriate measures would be taken if any lapses were found.

Replying to questions from Bangladesh journalists, now visiting Canberra as the prime minister's entourage, Vaile said, "As an exporting country, it hurts our name and reputation."

Asked if any action would be taken