



Merapi's wrath

Indonesia's Merapi Volcano spews lava and hot clouds late Sunday. Residents in the surrounding area of the country's most active volcano remains on alert as it continues to spew lava and hot clouds 2.5kms (1.5 miles) down its south-west slopes.

Resolve conflicts to win polls, PM asks partymen at Natore

Cabinet meets at Uttara Ganobhaban today

NAZMUL ASHRAF, from Natore

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina called upon her party leaders yesterday to resolve internecine conflicts in the party and work extensively so that the party can win all the parliamentary seats in greater Rajshahi in the next elections.

Addressing AL leaders of northern districts including Natore at the Uttara Ganobhaban, she advised the local leaders not to waste time lobbying for party nomination but to work hard to win the people's support.

Hasina also the AL chief, instructed the district leaders to form

teams at the village level and campaign for the AL government's achievements.

"You must work for the 'boat' (AL's election symbol) no matter who gets nomination," she said.

The AL chief also warned of action against those partymen whose misdeeds would harm the party's image.

The PM flew in Natore at 4:20 pm to hold a meeting of her cabinet at the Uttara Ganobhaban today. She is also due to address a public meeting before the cabinet meeting.

Sheikh Hasina said, the opposition's oust-government movement

has failed. "We challenge the opposition's threat ... We'll return to power with the people's mandate," she said.

The AL chief also instructed the partymen to alert the people about the ongoing destructive activities of the fundamentalist forces.

She warned of stern action against those engaged in acts of sabotage in the name of religion.

Besides local leaders, minister Sayeda Chowdhury, Abdul Jalil, Motia Chowdhury, Prof Abu Sayeed, Satish Chandra Roy, Zinnatun Nessa Talukdar, and Abdul Kuddus also attended the meeting.



BNP brought out a torch procession in the city yesterday on the eve of today's countrywide dawn-to-dusk hartal called by the four-party opposition alliance.

Civil society leaders urge citizens Form vigilance bodies to halt terrorists' training in madrassahs

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Oikyobaddha Nagarik Andolan (United Citizens' Movement) has called for formation of citizen's vigilance committees across the country to protect the sanctity of mosques and madrassahs.

It also demanded filing of criminal cases against Fazlul Haq Amini, Azizul Haq and Charmonai Peer Fazlul Karim for declaring two High Court judges murtad and issuing death sentence for them.

At a press conference yesterday, leaders of the movement also demanded identification of the madrassahs where armed training

were given by Harkatul Jihad and other terrorist organisations.

If found guilty, these madrassahs should be stripped of government grants and taken stern legal actions against, they said.

Criminal cases should also be filed against all involved in the recent killings, terrorism and destructive activities, they observed.

Leaders of the movement also reiterated the demand for ban on religion-based political activities in the country and trial of the war criminals of 1971 by a special tribunal.

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Khaleda condoles death of Tawfiq Aziz Khan

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Leader of the Opposition in Parliament and BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia has expressed profound grief at the death of Tawfiq Aziz Khan, executive editor of The Daily Star.

In a message of condolence issued yesterday, she said that late Tawfiq Aziz Khan was not only an eminent journalist, but also a popular sports commentator, adding that the deceased would be remembered as a successful journalist and commentator.

Khaleda prayed for salvation of the departed soul and expressed sympathy to the bereaved members of his family.

In a separate message, BNP secretary general Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan also condoled the death of Tawfiq Aziz Khan. He prayed for eternal peace of the departed soul and conveyed sympathy to his bereaved family.

Photographer stabbed to death in city

STAFF COREESPONDENT

Miscreants stabbed to death Kafil Uddin, 78, a professional photographer, in front of his house at 27/10 Tajmahal Road in Mohammadpur at about 1 p.m. yesterday, when he reached his residence from the local market by rickshaw, police said.

Police took him in a critical condition to the Bangladesh Medical College Hospital where the

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Case under PSA in Ctg Morshed Khan, his son, 4 others chargesheeted

UNB, Dhaka

M Morshed Khan MP, his son Faisal Khan and four others have been chargesheeted in a case filed under the Public Safety Act (PSA) for 'ransacking' Misfalah hotel at Nasirabad in Chittagong on December 26.

Investigation Officer Abdul Khaleq submitted the charge sheet before the CMM's Court yesterday. He also submitted a list of 16 witnesses in the case.

Four other accused are Chittagong JCD's general secretary Chowdhury Shahin, vice-president Mosharrif Hossain, joint secretary Shawkat Azam Khwaja and Morshed Khan's driver Mizanur Rahman.

Three accused JCD leaders are in jail hajot while others enlarged on ad-interim bail.

A counter-case filed by driver Mizanur Rahman, accepted by the police, is

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Nigerian HC asked to take Ochendo home in next 5 days

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A High Court Division Bench yesterday ordered the Nigerian High Commissioner to Bangladesh to take Ochendo Goddya back home within the next five days.

The HC Bench yesterday passed the order following a prayer by the Nigerian High Commission in Dhaka for five days' time to arrange Ochendo's trip back home.

Ochendo has been languishing in jail for five years and seven months despite serving his two-

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Bangabandhu Murder Case Hearing on split verdict begins

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

Hearing on the split verdict on the six accused in the Bangabandhu murder case began in the High Court yesterday.

The split verdict was given by a Division Bench of the High Court on December 14 last year. One of the judges, Justice Ruhul Amin, in his verdict had upheld the death sentence of ten out of the 15 convicted by a trial court on November 8, 1998 for killing Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman on August 15, 1975. He acquitted the rest five. Justice Khairul Huq, another judge of the Bench, upheld the death sentence of all the 15.

Justice Fazlul Karim heard the verdict on the six accused. One of the six, Capt (rd) Majed, was given death sentence on murder

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Taraj murder: Police yet to arrest Dipu

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Police failed to arrest Dipu Chowdhury, the main accused in Taraj Uddin murder case until yesterday.

According to the FIR filed with the Uttara police thana, Taraj was shot dead at his office Thursday night by armed men instructed by Dipu who was present on the spot during the incident.

Twenty-three persons including Dipu have been enlisted in the FIR filed by Taraj's brother Nurul Islam.

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Fine Arts students of Chittagong University form a human chain in front of the Jatiya Press Club yesterday and display posters demanding implementation of the Prime Minister's announcement for a fine arts institute in the port city.

Tk 15 cr IT project for five varsities hangs in balance

MUSTAK HOSSAIN

The fate of Tk 15-crore project for a one-year postgraduate diploma programme in information technology (IT), considered a thrust sector in the country's economy, hangs in the balance due to bureaucratic bottleneck.

The government initiated the programme in 1998, aiming at developing human resources in the IT sector. The specially tailored course is supposed to teach the bright students of science and business disciplines the fast growing information technology, sources said.

Five universities Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (BUET), Shahjalal University of Science and Technology, Khulna University, Chittagong University and Rajshahi University were selected to introduce the course. The government-provided fund would be equally distributed among five universities.

The course curriculum was also finalised last year and several meetings were convened to finalise the course. Main thrust of the initiative is to produce brilliant IT professionals, another source said.

The programme also looked forward to getting feedback from IT sector. The government has a plan to earn one billion US dollars from this sector in three years.

Though the Ministry of Science and Technology sent the file to the

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Arrest of IOJ leaders: HC rule on govt

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

A Division Bench of the High Court yesterday issued a Rule Nisi upon the government to show cause within two weeks why Islamic Oikya Jote (IOJ) Chairman Shaikhul Hadith Maulana Azizul Huq and General Secretary Mufti Fazlul Huq Amini should not be brought before the court to satisfy it that they are not held in custody illegally and why their detention should not be declared illegal.

The Division Bench comprising Justice Abu Sayeed Ahammad and Justice Khademul Islam Choudhury gave the order following filing of two writ petitions on behalf of them.

The petitions were filed by advocate Mahabur Rahman MP, according to a press release issued by him.

Azizul Huq is aged over 82 years. He and Amini were implicated in "false cases", the writs said.

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