

Hasina blames govt for death in bus fire

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Leader of the Opposition in Parliament and Awami League (AL) President Sheikh Hasina yesterday expressed her grief at the death of Khorshed Alam who sustained burn injuries during a fire in a bus in the city on Friday.

Some unruly people set on fire a double-decker near the city's Baitul Mokarram National Mosque in the city on Friday. Alam died from his injuries at around 11.30pm the same day.

In a statement yesterday, Hasina blamed the government for the act of setting fire to the bus that caused the death of Khorshed Alam.

"The government resorted to the heinous act to divert the people's attention from the unlawful atmosphere that has created a sense of insecurity across the country," the statement said.

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Altaf orders action, DC turns blind eye

No attack on Hasina's motorcade, says report

BSS, UNB, Dhaka

Home Minister Altaf Hossain Chowdhury has directed police to arrest those who tried to destabilise the country by attacking the motorcade of Awami League President Sheikh Hasina during her visit to Satkhira on Friday.

Chowdhury asked them to arrest all the trouble-mongers without showing any leniency. "Trouble-mongers must not be spared or shown mercy," the minister was quoted to have told the police yesterday.

The home minister also asked police to take legal action against the culprits for attacking the journalists.

Meanwhile, Deputy Commissioner (DC) of Satkhira Abdul Matin Chowdhury dismissed allegations of attack on Hasina's motorcade and said it was a member of her private protection team who fired a blank shot as she was passing through Kolaroa.

In a detailed report on the incident submitted to the home ministry, the DC said Hasina's car got stuck in a traffic jam created in front of her motorcade at Kolaroa when a bus was obstructed by Chhatra/Jubo Dal workers, but dismissed reports of any attack.

According to the report, Hasina had arrived at Satkhira Hospital at around 11:00am on Friday to see

Mahfuza Khatun, wife of freedom fighter Atiar Rahman. At 11:35am, she started for Magura via Kolaroa, Jessore. At 11:55am, shortly before she reached Kolaroa, Chhatra Dal/Jubo Dal workers numbering 15 to 20 put up a barricade on the road in front of Government Primary School at Kolaroa Bazaar with one bench and two chairs. But police removed the barricade immediately and the motorcade passed through unobstructed. Meanwhile, some Chhatra Dal and Jubo Dal workers obstructed the road in front of the nearby BNP office, which compelled a bus as well as a truck behind it to stop on the road. At that time, a bus

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AL leader, five activists hurt in Satkhira clashes

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Satkhira

An Awami League (AL) leader and at least five activists of the main opposition party were injured in stray incidents of clashes with workers of the ruling BNP at different places in Satkhira district yesterday.

The clashes took place as a sequel to the attack on AL chief Sheikh Hasina's motorcade at Kolaroa on Friday.

Police arrested eight activists of the AL following the clashes. A tense situation is prevailing in the district. A number of microphones used for announcing AL's hartal programme today protesting Friday's incident were also damaged allegedly by BNP activists.

According to sources, BNP activist

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PHOTO: STAR

Marked out... a few of 5,500 two-stroke three-wheelers, exempted from the government ban that will be enforced in the capital from today.

Houses of top AL leaders raided

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Police yesterday raided the city residences of six top leaders and many activists of the Awami League (AL), ahead of today's hartal called by the party.

Uniformed and plain clothes police raided the residences of Tofail Ahmed, Mohammad Nasim, Amir Hossain Amu, Motia Chudhury, Saber Hossain Chowdhury and Mookbul Hossain. None of the AL leaders were found at their residences as they stayed elsewhere to avoid arrest, sources said.

Meanwhile, police have been asked to be on high alert and not to allow any opposition leader to come out of their 'hideouts' to observe the hartal, police sources said.

Security has beefed up in the capital as the AL-called hartal coincides with the founding anniversary of the ruling BNP today and the Autorickshaw and Tempo Sangram Parisad begins an indefinite strike to press its eight-point demand.

The BNP earlier requested the AL to postpone its hartal programme today.

Sources said the higher authorities have directed police to take all steps to ensure that a ruling party procession as part of its founding anniversary programmes could parade different city streets unhindered.

A total of 4367 policemen and Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) personnel would be deployed in different parts of the city today. They include 12

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BNP's 24th founding anniversary today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The ruling Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) celebrates its 24th founding anniversary today amid a countrywide hartal called by the main opposition Awami League (AL).

The AL has called a dawn-to-dusk hartal to protest at Friday's attack on Sheikh Hasina's motorcade at Kolaroa in Satkhira.

The BNP's anniversary programmes, announced on August 25, includes feteiha at its founding chairman, late president Ziaur Rahman, at 9:30am and a procession from the Paltan Maidan at 4:00pm. Rallies and processions will also be held at different districts.

With both the AL and the BNP determined to carry out their programmes, there is fear of widespread violence.

The government has, meanwhile, promised legal action against perpetrators of Friday's incident.

"The Awami League has been looking for a ground to call hartal and now it has got one. But it is not fair as we have announced our

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Govt plans graft case, ETV for fresh licence

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

With the highest court declaring the licence of Ekushey Television (ETV) illegal, the government is contemplating graft case against people involved in issuance of the licence.

However, the Bureau of Anti-corruption (BAC) has not yet received any instruction from the government in this regard.

On the other hand, the ETV authorities are weighing two options: how they can obtain permission for satellite transmission and whether they can take the government for forcing the private television channel off air.

They are likely to initiate the process for fresh licence today, an ETV official told The Daily Star yesterday.

Meanwhile, according to

sources, the BAC started an inquiry into irregularities in issuance of ETV licence while the case was on at the High Court.

BAC officials also went to the attorney general's office to collect relevant documents. The attorney general's office, however, turned them down, asking them to collect the documents from the government when the case was over. The BAC move ended right there.

Now, BAC officials believe they will be instructed to re-initiate the move now that irregularities in issuance in ETV licence have been proved.

In case of a legal action, some senior ministers and bureaucrats of the Awami League government could be implicated.

In another development, the ETV

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Transmission after verdict angers govt

STAR REPORT

The government is learnt to have considered confiscation of all equipment of Ekushey Television (ETV), as the private television channel continued transmission for several hours on Thursday after the final verdict of the highest court.

But it did not attempt the move as the Bangladesh Telecom Regulatory Commission (BTRC) was responsive to such a hasty action, according to sources.

The pressure is nonetheless mounting on the independent regulator to comply with the government's wishes, sources believe.

Meanwhile, a top executive of the private television channel said the ETV has received a government order to dismantle its installations outside the capital.

On Thursday, the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court upheld a High Court Division verdict declaring the ETV license illegal.

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DENGUE ALERT

Forty-five more hospitalised

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

At least 45 people infected with the dengue virus were admitted to different city hospitals and clinics yesterday.

Of them, 21 were admitted to Suhrawardy Hospital where army doctors are working alongside regular hospital staff for treating dengue patients.

The Central Dengue Control Room however said only 35 dengue patients were admitted to hospitals and clinics in the city yesterday. The control room was unable to give the number of dengue-infected patients outside Dhaka as district administrations were closed due to a public holiday yesterday.

Meanwhile, relatives of a 14-year-old boy who died at the Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) in the early hours of yesterday claimed that the boy died of dengue, and blamed doctors for failing to diagnose the disease. Doctors however denied the claim.

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Flip side of ban on 3-wheelers

'Adequate alternatives' still not arranged

RAZIUR RAHMAN

While movement of around 12,500 two-stroke three-wheelers is banned on the city streets from today, the government is yet to arrange 'adequate alternatives' to ease the shortage of transports.

Sources in the Bangladesh Road Transport Authority (BRTA) and the Bangladesh Road Transport Corporation (BRTC) fear that there would be a huge shortage of transports in the city, especially during peak hours. The BRTA and the BRTC are the two government agencies controlling the road transport system.

The city dwellers have welcomed the ban on two-stroke three-wheelers in the city, as it would reduce air and noise pollution to some extent. But they feel the government must arrange alternatives.

The sources in the BRTA and the

returned to the owners.

The BRTA officials said 4,367 of the 5,500 received the special stickers and BRTA clearance till yesterday. The rest are expected to get them by tomorrow.

Earlier, the government banned all two-stroke three wheelers totaling 18,000 from plying the city streets from September 1.

But following pressure from two-stroke auto-rickshaw owners and employees as well as due to inadequate preparations by the authorities for ensuring replacement of the air pollutants, the government agreed to allow the 5,500 vehicles to operate on the city roads for the next four months.

On August 20, the BRTA signed an agreement in this regard. Thirteen associations of owners, employees and spare parts traders of the two-stroke three wheelers signed the agreement under the banner of Dhaka Auto-tempo, Autorickshaw, Auto-Truck Malik-Sramik

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Oikya Parishad.

A High Court Division directive on March 27 also asked the government to ban these vehicles by December 31 and arrange motor vehicles that run on clean fuel, instead.

In January, a similar move was taken to ban the air pollutants on the city roads. But in the face of agitation by the owners and employees, the government backed off.

Meanwhile, Bangladesh Rickshaw, Auto-rickshaw, Auto-tempo Chalak-Malik Sangram Parishad, another platform of auto-rickshaw owners and employees, has announced an indefinite strike from September 1 protesting the government decision.

They have warned that the government would be responsible for any untoward incidents during the indefinite strike.

The Oikya Parishad leaders, however, said they will abide by the

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Stepbrother says Chhabi not actively associated with AL

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

The stepbrother of Chhabi Rani, allegedly assaulted by BNP cadres on August 21, yesterday sought to take the political colour out of the issue, saying that Chhabi fell victim to a long-standing dispute with the prime accused Kazi Bashir over possession of a shrimp enclosure at Rampal.

Chhabi's stepbrother Sabuj Kumar Mondal while visiting Chhabi at the Khulna Medical College Hospital (KMCH) said his sister votes for 'boat' but that does not mean she is actively associated with AL politics. Referring to Chhabi's medical reports, Sabuj Mondal hoped that she would soon be able to leave the hospital for home.

Daughter of the first wife of late Shishubar Mondal of Orhanubia

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PHOTO: AFP

With colouring on their face and wearing traditional clothes, a child dressed as Hindu lord Krishna (C) and friends take part in a rally to observe Janmastami, the birthday of lord Krishna, in the city yesterday.

Janmastomi celebrated

UNB, Dhaka

Hindu community yesterday celebrated 'Janmastomi', the birth anniversary of lord Sri Krishna, across the country with religious fervour and festivity.

Mohanagar Sarbojonin Puja Ujjan Committee brought out a colourful traditional procession in the city yesterday as part of their two-day programme on the occasion.

The Janmastomi procession participated by a large number of Hindu people started from Dhakeshwari temple and ended at Victoria Park in the old town.

Dhaka City Mayor Sadek Hossain Khoka inaugurated the procession while State Minister for Water Resources Goutam Chakraborti was present as chief guest.

Major General (Retd) CR Datta Bir Uttam, Anil Chandra Nath, Swapan Kumar Saha and Mongol Chandra Ghosh also spoke on the occasion.

Besides, a 'Geeta Jagya' was held on the premises of Dhakeshwari temple yesterday praying for the peace and welfare of the country and the people.

Violent incidents kill 147 in country last month

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

At least 147 people were killed in the country last month in incidents of violation of human rights, political vengeance and other crimes, according to a report prepared by Odhakar.

Odhakar prepared the report on the basis of its investigation and data collected from newspapers.

Ten people died in police custody and in jails. Of them, four - Banesa Khatun (48), Russel (25), Dudu Mia (72) and Tamizuddin (40) - died in Mymensingh Central Jail alone, allegedly due to lack of proper treatment, it claimed.

Violence against women continued as before. Fourteen women were killed for dowry and 131 raped.

In one of the most brutal incidents, one Hajera Begum (22) was

hanged from a tree and tortured throughout the night by her husband Foyazuddin and his nephew Babu for a dowry of Tk 30,000 in Thakurgaon.

A total of 41 people suffered from acid-throwing during the month.

The victims included 13-year-old Tania. Kajal Mia of Nandail threw acid on her wife Monowara (20) for dowry.

Males also became acid victims. One of them was Khokon Chandra

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	Sun Rises	Sun Sets
Sept 1		6-18 pm
Sept 2	5-40 am	

Prayer Timings

Sept 1		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fair	4-30	5-00
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	4-45	5-00
Maghrib	6-22	6-27
Esha	8-15	8-45

Source: Islamic Foundation