

25 hurt as cops club AL procession

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

At least 25 leaders and activists of the main opposition Awami League (AL), including former lawmaker Kamal Ahmed Majumder, were injured as police charged batons on a party procession at Mirpur in the capital yesterday.

Riot police intercepted the procession, brought out to mark the 'Victory Month' (December 16 is the Victory Day) near the Mirpur-10 roundabout at about 4:00pm.

Participants in the procession then pelted brickbats at police and shouted anti-government slogans. Police dispersed them charging batons.

The injured were treated at local clinics.

AL General Secretary Abdul Jalil, city AL President Mohammad Hanif, General Secretary Mofazzal Hossain Chowdhury Maya and party central leaders AKM Jahangir and Shamsul Haq also joined the procession led by Kamal Majumder.

Ward-level leaders and activists of Mirpur, Pallabi and Kafrul units of the AL, Bangladesh Chhatra League, Awami Jubo League, A w a m i

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Environment department officials check pollution levels of vehicles on Manik Mia Avenue yesterday as part of a pilot programme to cut gas emission.

PHOTO: STAR

Mechanics to get pollution control training

AKBAR HOSSAIN

The government will launch a Tk 2 crore training programme for automobile workshops aimed at checking vehicular emission in Dhaka more effectively.

The programme should begin in

about three months as part of Dhaka Urban Transport Project (DUTP) and will be conducted by Bangladesh Road Transport Authority (BRTA).

Sources in the Dhaka Transport Coordination Board (DTCB) said necessary equipment such as gas

analysers, smoke meters and engine tuners are currently being purchased for the training. Such equipment are believed to help quick and efficient identification of the reasons for harmful emission.

"Mechanics from government

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Two lynched in city

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Two young men were beaten to death apparently in the same incident in the city's Madhya Badda area Monday night.

Nazmul Hasan, 20, and Kajal Mollah, 24, died at Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) after being separately admitted there with broken limbs and head injuries, police and hospital sources said.

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Limited ban on traffic on New Year's Eve

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP) yesterday slapped a limited ban on traffic movement in and around Gulshan, Banani, Baridhara and Dhaka University in a bid to avert any untoward incident on the New Year's Eve.

Only people driving in cars will be allowed into Kemal Atatürk

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Musharraf gains powers with upper house nod

REUTERS, Islamabad

Pakistani President Pervez Musharraf won vast powers, including the authority to dismiss the elected government, yesterday as the Senate approved a set of sweeping constitutional amendments despite opposition protests.

The national assembly passed the constitutional amendment bill on Monday by a two-thirds majority.

The approval of the upper house of Pakistan's parliament means Musharraf will stay in power until late 2007, subject to a formal vote of confidence on Thursday, and keep the powerful post of military chief for one more year, until the end of 2004.

Musharraf took power in a bloodless coup in October 1999, before handing over some powers to a prime minister after elections in October 2002.

The bill was approved in the Senate by 72 of the 100 house members, with opponents staging a

walkout, government officials said.

The ruling coalition won the votes of a hardline Islamic alliance, the Muttahida Majlis-e-Amal (MMA), to get the required two-thirds majority.

The MMA, which vehemently opposes Musharraf's decision to side with the United States in the

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Eminent HR activist Barrister Salma Sobhan passes away

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Barrister Salma Sobhan, a lawyer, social worker and human-rights activist, died of a cardiac arrest at her Gulshan residence in the early hours of yesterday. She was 66.

Salma, wife of Professor Rehman Sobhan, an economist and former advisor of the caretaker government, fell sick while reading a book in her room at around 1:00am. She was rushed to Sikder Women's Medical College and Hospital at Dhanmondi, but doctors declared her dead on arrival.

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Pervez Musharraf

Cold wave claims nine in two days

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The cold wave sweeping over the country has claimed nine more lives and caught the poor, especially the homeless in the capital and other cities, cold.

The spell is likely to continue for a couple of days intensifying at some places and dipping the mercury further with drifts of smog hanging amid overcast conditions. Many a cold affected people will continue to light bonfires to blunt the bite of the cold.

At least six people have died in Joypurhat and three others in Pabna within the last two days.

Hospitals have reported treating a large number of people with cold-related complications.

"The weather in the next couple of days may be even colder and the mild cold wave blowing over Ishwardi, Jessore, Chuadanga and Sri Mongol is like to extend over Faridpur, Madaripur and Satkhira regions from today," an official of the Met Office said yesterday.

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US bolsters security for foreign airlines

New directives to carry air marshal in flights

AP, Washington

Foreign airlines risk being denied access to American airspace if they don't obey a new US directive that some international flights crossing over or headed to this country must carry an armed law enforcement

officer to thwart terrorists, Homeland Secretary officials say.

"Any sovereign government retains the right to revoke the privilege of flying to and from a country or even over their airspace," Homeland Security Secretary Tom

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Govt decision against Poush Mela protested

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Artists, intellectuals and journalists yesterday condemned and protested the government decision not to allow the Poush Mela Udjapan Parishad (PMUP) to celebrate Poush Mela ((winter fair)) at Ramna

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Another tremor shakes Ctg

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Another mild tremor jolted the port city and its adjoining areas yesterday.

According to sources, the tremor, measuring 3.75 on the Richter scale, occurred at 11.37 hours 18 seconds in the morning and lasted for 14 seconds.

Its epicentre was 124 km off the

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Prayer Timings		
December 31		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fair	5-45	6-10
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	4-00	4-15
Maghrib	5-28	5-33
Esha	7-00	7-30
Source: Islamic Foundation		