

AL finds ally in WP, BNP to kick-start campaign to quell AL agitation

Hartal tomorrow in build-up to anti-government alliance

REAZ AHMAD

The Awami League (AL) and leftist Workers Party (WP) yesterday agreed to forge a unity in a bid to force the coalition out of office, a new development in opposition politics that came two days before a daylong countrywide hartal.

Briefing newspersons after a meeting at 9:15pm, AL General Secretary Abdul Jalil said both parties agreed that there was no alternative to unseating the government to save Bangladesh from what they said was lawlessness.

The WP chief, Rashed Khan Menon, told reporters the issue of a collective agitation would be discussed with other partners in the 11-

party leftist alliance.

"Allowing this government to continue one more day in office means bringing more miseries to people," Menon said.

AL's move to form an anti-government alliance came on expiry of its 30-day ultimatum for meeting the 15-point demand including curbs on price spiral of essentials and law and order downslide.

Analysts viewed AL's 6:00am to 6:00pm hartal tomorrow as a political showdown against what it said was government's indifference to its demands, including the close-down of ruling BNP's controversial alternative powerhouse -- Hawa Bhaban.

"We will lay out fresh anti-

government programmes at a post-hartal meeting," Jalil told The Daily Star, identifying rising crime, corruption and high living cost as the rationale for the 'broad-based pro-liberation unity'.

"Political dialogues will go on and we will talk to other leftist leaders and Dr Kamal Hossain of Oikya Procheshta," he said.

The situation appears a bit dismal for the BNP-led coalition, especially after Sunday's walkout from parliament by lawmakers of the second largest opposition party -- Ershad-led Jatiya Party -- in a second stormy protest since N o v e m b e r t h a t

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The ruling BNP has decided to kick-start a massive political campaign to quell opposition Awami League's planned one-point agitation to overthrow the government.

BNP sources said party policymakers and the prime minister as well favour holding public meetings and other public campaigns to draw people's support to the four-party coalition government.

On the last day of AL's one-month ultimatum to press for its 15-point demand, Prime Minister Khaleda Zia yesterday met her senior cabinet colleagues to review the latest situation and decided to

face AL politically.

Dhaka City BNP President and Mayor of Dhaka City Corporation Sadeque Hossain Khoka yesterday told The Daily Star that the city unit would arrange around eight public meetings and the prime minister would attend those rallies as chief guest.

He said dates of two meetings, one at Jatrabari on February 14 and the other at Lalbagh on March 6, have been finalised. Dates of other meetings at Mirpur, Bashabo, Uttara and other places would be announced soon.

"We are not sitting idle...we are



PHOTO: STAR

THE SHOW IS ON: Performers form the official logo of the U-19 World Cup Cricket on the lush greenery of Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday to mark the launch of the mega-event.

ATTACK ON TANGAIL AL MP

Lawmaker vexed at govt inaction

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

n opposition lawmaker yesterday expressed deep frustration as law enforcers showed cold shoulders to his repeated pleas for arresting alleged ruling BNP-men who assaulted him at his Tangail constituency five days back.

Awami League (AL) lawmaker Dr Mohammad Abdur Razzak, who represents Modhupur-Dhanbari constituency in Tangail, showed his dissatisfaction at a press conference held at the Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban.

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PHOTO: STAR

This is how crucial evidences in connection with rape, murder, arson and other serious crimes are preserved in Tejgaon Police Station in Dhaka.

Bomb threat on Indian deputy envoy in Rajshahi

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

Rajshahi Metropolitan Police beefed up security at the office and residence of the Indian deputy high commissioner here after a letter claiming to be from the al-Qaeda threatened to blow up the office unless the diplomat paid it Tk 5 crore.

A group claiming itself the mujahids of al-Qaeda gave a seven-day ultimatum to the deputy high commissioner.

The letter dated February 7

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3 killed, 20 hurt in Gaibandha road crash

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Gaibandha

Three people were killed and 20 others injured, six of them seriously, in a bus-truck collision on the Rangpur-Bogra Highway in Gobindaganj upazila yest-erday.

According to police and witnesses, the accident occurred when a Dhaka bound passenger bus from Rangpur collided head on with a truck coming from opposite direc

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Prayer Timings		
February 11		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	5-40	6-10
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	4-15	4-30
Maghrib	5-55	6-00
Esha	7-30	8-00
Source: Islamic Foundation		

43 die in Iran plane crash in UAE

AP, Sharjah

An Iranian plane carrying mostly foreign workers renewing their visas crashed yesterday as it approached Sharjah airport in the United Arab Emirates, killing 43 people aboard, officials said. Three survivors were being treated at a hospital.

The Kish Air Fokker-50, flying to Sharjah from the Iranian island of Kish in the Gulf, crashed at 11:40am in an open area about two miles from the airport, said Ghanem al-Hajiry, director general of civil aviation and the Sharjah Airport Authority. The cause of the crash was not known, he said.

No one on the ground was hurt, Al-Hajiry said. Witnesses said the plane crashed on a road near an upper-class residential neighborhood.

Rescue workers in white robes searched for survivors in the burning wreckage. Helicopters landed near the scene with rescue workers and to remove victims. A row of bodies lay covered in red blankets.

The front of the plane appeared to be no longer intact, but there were no flames around the tail section.

Of the 46 people aboard, 43 were killed, said Col. Saleh Ali al-Mutawaa, general director of Sharjah Police. He identified them as 19 Iranians, 12 Indians, four Egyptians, two Filipinos, two Algerians, one Syrian, one Chinese, one Nigerian and one Bangladeshi.

Flights to nearby destinations such as Kish mainly carry foreigners -- particularly Asian workers,

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Resolve problems through talks

PM tells Indian envoy

BSS, Dhaka

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia said yesterday the problems between Bangladesh and India, if any, could be resolved through bilateral discussion.

She was talking to new India High Commissioner to Bangladesh Veena Sikri at her office in the afternoon.

Describing Bangladesh-India relations as very good, Khaleda underscored the need for further strengthening the trade and cultural

ties between the two countries.

She emphasised on exchange of visits both at the government and private levels and by the business and cultural delegations.

Veena showed India's keen interest to widen its relations with Bangladesh in all fields including in trade, commerce and investment.

Terming the meeting between Prime Minister Khaleda Zia and

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Youth killed in Tantibazar

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Local miscreants shot and stabbed a youth to death yesterday evening at Tantibazar under Kotwali thana.

Krishna Komol Sarkar, 24, was playing video games at a shop in Tantibazar when a gang of 8/10 led by Bhutto called Krishna out of the shop at around 6:00pm.

The gang shot and stabbed him, said eyewitness Manik Pal, also a friend of the victim.

Relatives rushed Krishna to local National Hospital and then to Dhaka Medical College Hospital where doctors declared him dead.

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Death anniversary of Tawfiq Aziz Khan today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The third death anniversary of Tawfiq Aziz Khan, eminent journalist, sports writer and commentator, and former executive editor of The Daily Star, will be observed today.

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Sylhet bank robbery case IO changed

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

The investigating officer (IO) in Tk 22 lakh robbery from the Pubali Bank has been changed within 2 days.

Sub-inspector Bashir Khan of kotwali Police Station has been replaced by Additional Superintendent of Police (North) Siddiqui Tanjilur Rahman, an official said.

Earlier on Saturday evening, the sum was looted from a microbus of the bank's Kadamtali Branch in the city's Humayun Rashid Chowdhury Square.

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4 'outlaws' lynched in Khulna, Bagerhat

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Four suspected outlaws were lynched in two separate incidents in Khulna and Bagerhat districts Monday night.

In Bagerhat, members of village defence party (VDP) at Roygram under Chitalmari Police Station caught three young men after they fired at the VDP men who had challenged the three strangers to the village.

Officer-in-charge of Chitalmari Police Station said the incident happened at around 11:30pm when

the three men, who were on their way to extort money from a wealthy man, came across the four VDP men patrolling the area. The gun-shot and commotion of the scuffle between the VDP and the alleged outlaws drew a large number of villagers to the scene.

The three men were later beaten to death by the angry mob.

Police recovered the bodies shortly after the incident. A locally-made gun and a piece of live ammunition found on the persons of the deceased were also recovered.

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1.3cr disabled await an end to disparity

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

About 1.3 crore physically challenged persons constituting 10 percent of the population are being denied their rights, speakers at a discussion in the city said yesterday.

They called upon all to uphold human, civic and political rights of the disabled like any other citizen at every step of life.

"People of all spheres have to

come forward with a concerted effort to redress the grievances of the disabled," Dhaka City Corporation Mayor Sadeque Hossain Khoka said while inaugurating the discussion on development interventions for the disabled in Dhaka.

Action on Disability and Development (ADD), a UK-based non-governmental organisation, arranged the meet.

Calling the disabled an integral part of the society, the mayor said their parents or relations had no reason to despair from a sense of inferiority.

"It's not the disabled but others who, because of their mindsets, feel embarrassed with their disability," said Rokia Afzal Rahman, former

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Gold jewellery cache recovered

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barisal

Police in two separate operations in Bagerhat and Jhalakathi have recovered about 4.25kg of stolen gold jewellery from a band of robbers and smugglers.

Police first came upon about 3kg stolen gold ornaments Monday morning while searching a private car (Reg. No. Da-70001) at a check post on Pirojpur-Bagerhat highway. They arrested the carrier and alleged ringleader Lutfar Rahman alias Monju Molla, his companion Anisuzzaman Chapal and the car

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