

Situation tense in Barisal

Hasina begins her tour today

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Barisal*

Tension has been running high in the region ahead of the visit by Leader of the Opposition and Awami League President Sheikh Hasina who is scheduled to arrive here today.

Attacks on AL workers, demolition of arches set up to welcome the Opposition leader, procession of ruling party's front organisations against her visit made the situation volatile.

During her tour, Hasina will address a public meeting at Bhola on Wednesday and another at Barisal on Thursday afternoon.

On her way to Barisal, Hasina will address in roadside meetings at Vanga of Faridpur district,

Mostafapur, Kalkini and Takerhat of Madaripur district and Gournadi, Uzirpur and Babuganj of Barisal district today.

Barisal BNP has arranged different counter programmes. The ruling party cadres were marching in processions in the city yesterday evening chanting slogans against the opposition party and its leader.

The JCD held a rally yesterday evening in protest against 'the criminals' attempt to return back to the region'.

The ruling party will hold a human chain programme in the city today to protest the crimes and torture perpetrated during the tenure of the previous AL regime.

The four-party alliance will hold a public meeting in front of Aswani Kumar Hall on Wednesday.

AL sources alleged that ruling

party workers have hacked BCL leader Faisal and Juba League leader Liton, creating a panic in the area. They also prevented the AL workers from announcing Hasina's programmes through loudspeakers in different areas, they said.

According to a report from Gournadi, the BNP cadres have dismantled an arch at Vurghata, the entry to Barisal district.

Maulana Nurul Huq, convener of the Gournadi upazila Awami Olama League, was injured in an attack at Gourmand Bus stand yesterday morning while he was supervising the construction of an arch.

Project to strengthen local govt

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Democracywatch has undertaken a two-year advocacy programme to strengthen local government system and facilitate its effective role at Union Parishad level.

The project aims to create a platform for the common people to oversee functions of the UPs and discuss social and developmental issues ensuring people's participation in the local government institutions.

It also aims at removal of shortcomings of developmental and administrative functions of the UPs through counselling, advocacy, discussion and monitoring, Democracywatch officials

said at a press conference yesterday.

Local government expert Prof. Salahuddin Aminuzzaman of Dhaka University said, "Neither the Union Parishad representatives nor the common people are aware of their rights, duties and obligation."

Funded by Danish International Development Assistance (Danida), the Tk 1.97 crore project titled 'Janaganer Darbar' (People's reporting centre) has been being carried out since October 2003 in six unions --Basan under Gazipur Sadar, Khogakhribari under Nilphamari, Singra and Bulakipur under Dinajpur, and Fatehpur and Ramnagar under Jessore Sadar.