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## BNP young Turks behind rally foil

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A mixed reaction has been created within the ruling BNP over not allowing former president AQM Badruddoza Chowdhury to hold his scheduled public rally at Mukhtangan in the capital yesterday.

BNP sources said majority of the party policymakers and senior ministers were in favour of allowing the former president to hold the rally and they tried to persuade the party high command not to obstruct a 'peaceful and democratic' programme.

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## Political parties slate attack

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Opposition parties, including the Awami League (AL), yesterday condemned an attack on AQM Badruddoza Chowdhury as the government's fascist reaction to a rally where the former president was due to launch his alternative political stream.

A wave of angry reactions came after a mob attacked Badruddoza and his supporters with stones and bricks, preventing him from holding the rally at Mukhtangan and injuring over 300 people.

Yesterday's attack followed a string of bombs unknown attackers

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## Azad eats liquid food

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Injured writer Humayun Azad could take liquid food on his own yesterday, showing signs of remarkable improvement in the last few days.

"He does not need to take liquid food through tube any more," Azad's wife Latifa Kohnoor said yesterday from Combined Military Hospital (CMH) where the versatile writer has been undergoing treatment since the February 27 machete attack on him near the Bangla Academy.

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# BNP men attack B Chy, cops join to foil rally

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Alleged BNP activists aided by police attacked Badruddoza Chowdhury and his supporters yesterday, injuring over 300 people and ruining his rally where the former president was due to launch his alternative political stream.

The assailants barred Badruddoza and other leaders from coming to the Mukhtangan rally venue from Baridhara by car, injured them slightly in repeated raids in Baridhara and Mohakhali when they were heading towards the downtown and attacked his followers on the Dhaka-Mawa Highway.

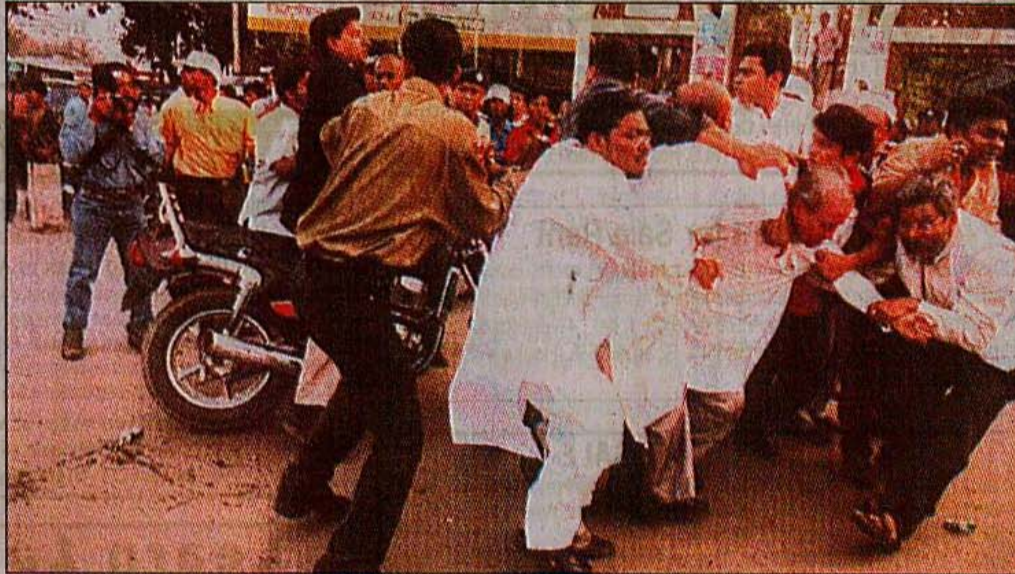
The ruling party activists also occupied Mukhtangan in Purana Paltan and drove away people who tried to enter the public meeting place in a frenzy of anti-rally actions,

a day after attackers hurled homemade bombs at his office on Wednesday night and smashed a podium being made for the rally.

Soon after Badruddoza, along with former army major Abdul Mannan and Mahi B Chowdhury, two legislators who resigned from parliament and the BNP on Wednesday to join the new platform, started for Mukhtangan from Baridhara, police waylaid him putting up a makeshift roadblock at Biswa Road rail crossing.

Police told Badruddoza, the founding secretary general of the BNP that they would not let him go without explaining the reason. A helpless Badruddoza, a renowned physician, then tried to take another route, but faced similar blockades on all sides.

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An attacker drives his motorcycle into key alternative political stream leaders AQM Badruddoza Chowdhury, former army major Abdul Mannan and Mahi B Chowdhury, top, at Mohakhali rail crossing; Supreme Court lawyer Dr Zakir Hossain, bottom, tries to escape from attackers, who beat him after he went to Mukhtangan to join hands with Badruddoza yesterday.

## Attack 'barbaric' 'Alternative stream' blasts govt role, forms 12-member convening body

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

While announcing a 12-member convening committee of an alternative political stream, Badruddoza Chowdhury condemned the ruling BNP last night for its 'barbaric' attack on him.

Police and activists of ruling Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) yesterday attacked and foiled the Mukhtangan rally, from where Chowdhury was scheduled to announce the committee.

Retorting in anger, the former president, who was forced to resign from the presidency in June 2002 following a threat of impeachment

from the ruling BNP lawmakers, said, "This government is savage and fascist; no-one is safe from it. It has lost all rights to stay in power and should quit immediately!"

Referring to the attack, he said, "Such measures can't suppress the people. They couldn't do it in 1971 during the liberation war and won't be able now too."

"In my long political career, I have never come across such ugly behaviour by any government," Chowdhury told the newsmen at his KM Memorial Clinic office.

Instead of Mukhtangan, he announced his committee there,

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## Taiwan can do business sans diplomatic ties

Dhaka believes in one-China policy, Morshed tells JS body

SHAKHAWAT LITON

Taiwan can do business in Bangladesh without diplomatic recognition, but Dhaka believes in 'one China policy' and does not want to anger China, the foreign minister said yesterday.

"We are happy with the existing relationship with China and have already categorically said that Taiwan is nothing but a province of China," M Morshed Khan told newsmen emerging from a

meeting of the parliamentary standing committee on the foreign ministry.

The standing committee however was far from happy at the diplomatic developments and expressed concerns about the sudden strains in ties with the Asian giant. The committee members asked the government to stick to 'one-china policy' and not to give Taiwan diplomatic recognition.

They alleged they had been told

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## 4 outlaws lynched for killing JCD leader

UNB, Strajganj

Four young men were killed in mob beating when they tried to escape after killing a local leader of Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) at Nandinamadhu in Kamarkhanda upazila yesterday.

Witnesses said a gang of 10, believed to be members of an underground outfit, intercepted Khurshed Alam Huda, 30, president of JCD Kamarkhanda upazila unit, and Abul Kalam, secretary of the unit, at about 11:00am while they were going to upazila headquarters by a motorbike to join the inaugural function of a trauma centre Health Minister Khandaker Mosharrar Hossain was to attend as the chief guest.

The gang shot Huda in the chest

point blank and slit his throat. Upazila JCD secretary Abul Kalam managed to run away.

Hearing the news, locals rushed to the spot, caught four of the gang and beat them to death.

The dead are Kanchu, 22, of village Majjail and Asabuddin, 28, of village Charmajjail in Belkuchi upazila, Omar Ali, 23, of village Jotibari in Kamarkhanda upazila and Polash, 22, of village Khidirbattala in Sadar upazila.

Police raided the area and arrested Nurabi, 18, a second year student of Konabari College, for his alleged involvement in the murder.

The deputy commissioner and police superintendent visited the spot.

# 190 die in Madrid train blasts

Spanish officials and media blame Basque separatist group ETA



Bodies of victims are evacuated after a train exploded at the Atocha train station in Madrid yesterday. At least 190 people were killed and some 1,200 injured in near-simultaneous explosions on three trains in Madrid.

AP, Madrid

Ten terrorist bombs tore through trains and stations along a commuter line at the height of Madrid's morning rush hour yesterday, killing more than 190 people and wounding 1,240 others before this week-end's general elections. Officials blamed Basque separatists for the worst terrorist attack in Spanish history.

"This is mass murder," said a sombre Prime Minister Jose Maria Aznar following an emergency cabinet meeting, vowing to hunt down the attackers and ruling out negotiations with the ETA separatist group.

The bombers used titidine, a kind of compressed dynamite also found in a bomb-laden van intercepted last month as it headed for Madrid, a source at Aznar's office said, speaking on condition of anonymity. Officials blamed ETA then, too.

But a US intelligence official,

speaking on condition of anonymity, said, "It's too early to tell. We're not ruling anything out."

Panicked commuters abandoned bags and their shoes as they trampled each other to escape the Atocha terminal, where bombs struck two trains. Some fled into darkened, dangerous tunnels at the station, a bustling hub for subway, commuter and long-distance trains just south of Madrid's famed Prado Museum.

The bodies of the dead, some with their cellphones ringing unanswered as frantic relatives tried to contact them, were carried away by rescue workers. The wounded, faces bloodied, sat on curbs as buses were pressed into service as ambulances.

One firefighter said he saw 70 bodies along a platform at El Pozo station, just east of downtown Madrid. One corpse had been blown onto the roof.

A total of 10 bombs exploded in a 10-minute span along nine miles of

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## Outlaws kill Naogaon BNP leader

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bogra

Alleged operatives of outlawed Purbo Bangla Communist Party (PBCP) killed Vice-president of BNP unit of Manda Upazila of Naogaon Monsur Ali Mreedha last night.

Monsur, 40, was taking tea with some of his supporters at a bustling Prasadpur Bazar in Manda at 8:30pm when the attackers numbering about 15 attacked him.

"The outlaws opened fire on him from sophisticated weapons," said a witness.

"As bullet-hit Monsur fell to the ground, the outlaws slaughtered him in front of the market crowd," the witness said.

The attackers left the spot chanting slogans of PBCP (Red Flag), formed recently and operating in Rajshahi.

## Announcement

The next instalment in our series 'The Strength Within' comes out Saturday. The story this week is how an initiative by five professionals is supporting students and preventing dropouts from colleges around the country.

## Country can't be run by alternative force

PM calls B Chy's political forum 'inoperative'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia yesterday dismissed the alternative political stream of former president Badruddoza Chowdhury as 'inoperative'.

"They are not alternative force, they have become inoperative. The country cannot be run by an alternative force, it needs an original one," she said, without naming anyone.

Speaking at a huge public meeting organised by the BNP-led four-party alliance at Madrassah Maidan in Rajshahi in the afternoon, Khaleda advised the main opposition Awami League (AL) to join Jatiya Sangsad giving up hartal and other destructive activities, promising it to give enough time to speak in parliament.

"Give up ... hartal and stop destruction in order to sustain

democracy and development. Let us march toward development," the premier urged the AL, as she said frequent hartals are causing sufferings to people and damages to the economy.

"Come to parliament, we will give you as much time as you want to speak. And for transparency, parliament sessions will be broadcast live on radio and television. So, come and see if we let you speak or not."

Khaleda, also the ruling BNP chairperson, urged people to compare the governments of the Awami League and the four-party alliance to decide which one to throw their weight behind.

She blamed the AL for what she said is launching a false propaganda campaign against the government. "While in power they (AL) said that they would not call hartal but

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## Beware of dotcom jobs

RAFIQ HASAN

Beware of too lucrative job offers on the internet. Those might be posted by false and fraud companies who advertise overseas jobs with handsome salaries just to cheat the job-hungry people of the third world countries including Bangladesh.

Sporting enticing prospectuses of employer-organisations, application forms and agreement letters on websites the swindlers invite applications for employment accompanied with a 'small sum' as entry fee or service charge.

The government has warned all, particularly the young job seekers, the main target of the cheats, of such scams and advised to go for financial transaction only after verifying the authenticity of the employer and the job.

"Nobody should send any money without clarification from the government," said Mohammad Quamrul Islam, state minister for Expatriate Welfare and Overseas Employment.

Confirming the fraudulent practices by false companies using the internet, which is open to all, he said, "We can't close the websites but we can confirm whether the company is genuine or false if anybody comes to us after getting the offer."

The companies, mostly claiming to be based in Europe and America, disappear from the web after amassing handsome amounts of money as entry fees, according to sources.

Right now, such a job offer is posted on the internet by Caledonian Offshore Ltd, claiming to be an offshore oil company, for a

daily salary of \$310 to \$430.

The offer sets a deadline of April 7 this year for receiving applications from skilled and unskilled workers of Bangladesh. The company will charge a total of \$438 as service charge from an applicant. The money will have to be sent in two instalments, the first of \$189 as entry fee with the application and the second after confirmation of the job.

According to the announcement, the Canadian company, incorporated in Liberia, has processing and service centres in the USA, Denmark and Singapore and at the moment it has many entry level jobs even for people with limited or no previous work experience in offshore oil industry.

It also sketches a beaming future saying the offshore oil company

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## 2,500 vehicles get stranded over Padma bridge demand

Road blockade at Daulatdia

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

More than 2,500 vehicles with about one lakh passengers got stranded on both sides of the Padma at Daulatdia-Paturia point for five hours yesterday due to a road blockade at Daulatdia in Goalundo upazila of Rajbari to press the demand for construction of Padma bridge at Daulatdia-Paturia point.

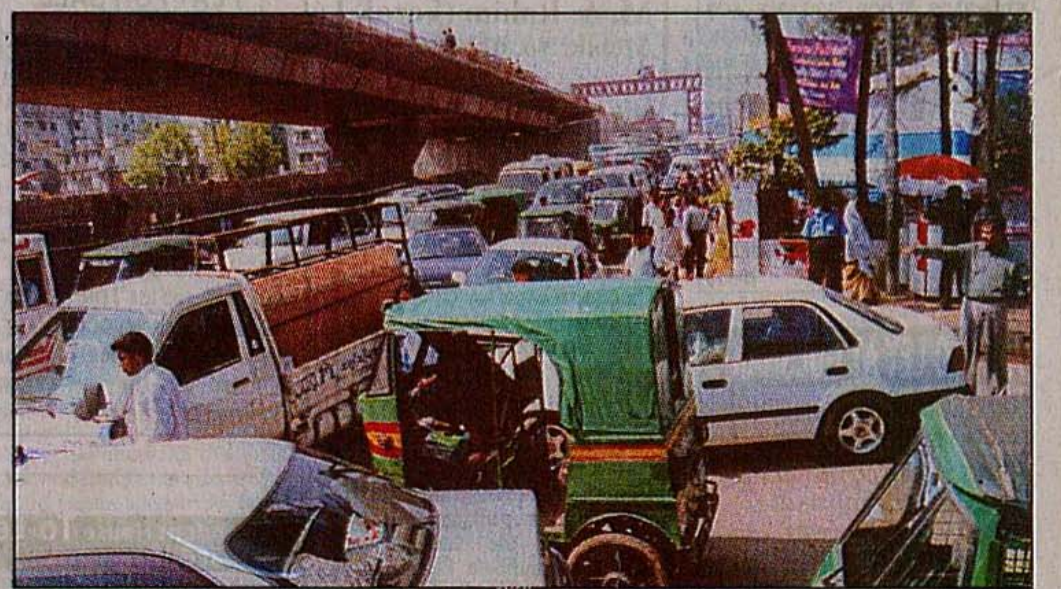
The government announcement of Mawa-Janjira as the site for construction of the proposed bridge

prompted a massive demonstration and blockade at Daulatdia led by local BNP lawmaker Abu Newaj Mohammad Khaiyam.

Nearly 5,000 demonstrators blocked the road from Daulatdia ferry ghat to railway station with trees, dredging pipes and burning tyres. Trains also were not allowed to leave the station during the blockade, Goalundo police said.

The demonstrators took out processions in the area during the

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Vehicles jam the road in Mohakhali yesterday, as traffic congestion has become commonplace because of construction of a flyover there.

PHOTO: STAR