



PHOTO: STAR
Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal (JSD-Inu) took out a procession in the city yesterday in support of two-day countrywide hartal beginning today. Awami League and JSD called the hartal protesting police action on opposition political activists and mass arrests.

FEMA to observe poura polls

BSS, Dhaka

The National Executive Committee of FEMA has decided to observe forthcoming pourasabha election by deploying stationary poll observers. Fair Election Monitoring Alliance (FEMA) organised a three-day training programme, in this

regard.

More than 100 representatives of the FEMA district units participated in the training.

FEMA district leaders will coordinate the activities of the poll monitors and send report to the National Headquarters in Dhaka to release it to the press.

Mass arrests condemned

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The South Asian People's Union (SAPU) against fundamentalism and communalism has condemned recent mass arrests of innocent people by police in the capital and elsewhere in the country.

In a joint statement issued on Monday, the union leaders said the BNP-Jamaat-led ruling alliance has tarnished the image for the country by depriving the people of their basic

human rights.

They said by resorting to repression on the people, the defeated forces in the liberation war are taking revenge of their defeat in 1971.

The signatories to the statement included union President Prof Kabir Chowdhury, presidium members Justice K M Sobhan, Major General (retd) C R Dutta, Prof Borhanuddin Khan Jahangir, Prof Ajay Roy and General Secretary Shahriar Kabir.

DHAKA
TODAY

Discussion

Amra Mujib Sena organises a discussion on 'Historic Mujibnagar Day and present Bangladesh.' It will be followed by a poetry recitation. Venue: Bishwasahitya Kendra auditorium, Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue. Time: 4.30pm.

BCS (Taxation) meet

A meeting of the executive committee of Bangladesh Civil Service (Taxation) Association will be held. Venue: 2nd 12-storey Government Building, Segun Bagicha. Time: 4.15pm.

Concluding function

The concluding function of the four-day-long folksong festival, organised by Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy, will be held with Law Minister Moudud Ahmed as chief guest. Venue: National Art Gallery of the academy, Segun Bagicha. Time: 6.30pm.

Reception

A reception for Maestro Afzalur Rahman and an instrumental recital titled 'Ganer Sangsar' will be held. Venue: Shaheed Zia auditorium, National Museum. Time: 6.30pm..

Film show

The Academy Film Society will screen an American film titled 'Auto Focus' (2002). Venue: Society auditorium, 21/C Jigatola. Time: 6.30pm.

Workshop

The opening session of a two-day workshop on 'Climate forecast applications in Bangladesh: experimental forecasts and concept note on next phase of CFAB.' Venue: BRAC Inn auditorium, Mohakhali. Time: 9.00am.

Film show

The Academy Film Society will screen an Indian film titled 'Chalte Chalte' (2003), an American film titled 'Pirates of the Caribbean' (2003), and a French film titled 'The Realm of the Senses' (1969). Venue: Society auditorium, 21/C Jigatola. Time: 3.30pm, 6.30pm and 8.30pm.

Dance day

On the occasion of World Dance Day, Nrityadhara organises a dance programme to be participated by its artistes. Venue: Mohila Samity auditorium, New Bailey Road. Time: 7.00pm.

Condolence meet

The Sandwip Samity, Dhaka organises a condolence meeting in memory of those killed in severe tornado and tidal wave that lashed the island on this day. Venue: Eastern University auditorium, Dhanmondi. Time: 6.30pm.

DHAKA
TOMORROW



Members of the Professional Secretaries Welfare Association pose with the guests at a discussion at Sharaton Hotel in the city recently. The association organised the event to mark the International Administrative Professional Day.



Bangladesh Deed Writers and Stamp Vendors Sangram Parishad stages a demonstration in the city yesterday to press its seven-point demand.

Lack of funds hits roadwork in three hill districts

ABDULLAH-AL MAHMUD, Ctg

Inadequate flow of funds has left 15 road construction projects in the three hill districts and in Cox's Bazar in limbo.

The projects are aimed at developing a road network covering remote and inaccessible areas of Khagrachhari, Rangamati and Bandarban where inhabitants remained underprivileged.

Establishing better communications would help alleviate poverty, create employment opportunities and ensure economic growth through exploiting huge resources in the region, sources said.

The Social Works Organisation (SWO) of the Engineering Corps, Bangladesh Army, was entrusted with the tasks as it would be difficult for the Roads and Highway

Department to implement the projects in the inaccessible, rugged and hilly areas, they said.

Three Engineer Construction Battalions with the support of 24 infantry division of the Bangladesh Army have been engaged in implementing the projects -- ten in Rangamati and Khagrachhari, four in Bandarban and one in Cox's Bazar.

The progress of the projects was 'satisfactory', but the lack of funds is a major problem, sources said, adding that nine of the projects did not receive funds in the current fiscal.

The implementation of a major project, Cox's Bazar-Teknaf Marine Drive Road, virtually came to a halt as it failed to get any fund allocation in the last two fiscal years.

The earthwork for the road

construction has been completed, but it could be damaged in the coming monsoon if the work remains postponed, sources said.

At the same time, the delay in work would also hinder the growth of tourism and dishearten the entrepreneurs who took initiatives to set up tourist spots along the marine drive from Cox's Bazar to Teknaf.

Five other projects suffering from lack of inadequate funds are Chimbuk-Thanchi road (54 km), Ghagra-Bandarban road (59 km), Chittagong-Rangamati road (37 km) and Baghaihat-Massalong-Sajek road (36 km) and Chhoto Marong-Changachhari-Longadu road (28 km).

Under the Chimbuk-Thanchi project, carpeting of the 54 km road and construction of three bridges could not be started due to shortage of funds.

ATTEMPTED RAPE CASE

Police submit charge sheet against Babul

COURT CORRESPONDENT

Badda Police yesterday pressed charges against Nurul Islam Babul, Chairman of Jamuna Group, in the attempted rape case.

The investigation officer (IO) of the case submitted the charge sheet to the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's (CMM) Court, Dhaka showing seven people as prosecution witnesses.

During the investigation the IO seized a torn blouse which was dressed with the victim at the time of the occurrence.

In the case filed with Badda thana, a woman of Dholairpar under Demra thana in city alleged that she met Babul, a leading businessman and owner of the leading Bangla newspaper, Dainik Jugantor, at his office in Motijheel on March 17 for a job. Babul took her to Kuril Bishwa Road in Badda by a car, aided by an armed gang. She accused Babul of forcing her into a tin-roofed house near Bishwa Road and attempted to rape her.

Police arrested Babul at his Gulshan residence-2 on March 20 over the killing of dredger worker Alam Pramanik on September 1 last year. Later, he was shown arrested in the attempted rape case on March 23.

Meanwhile, the Fourth Special Tribunal for Prevention of Women and Children Repression, Dhaka yesterday rejected the bail petition of Babul in connection with the attempted rape case.

Judge Akhter Jahan Kaniz Fatema issued the order following a criminal revision filed by the defence lawyers seeking bail against the rejection order of the CMM's court.

Earlier, the investigation officer of the Alam Pramanik Murder case submitted a charge sheet against Babul, his son Shamim Islam and eight others.