

AL launches arson attack on bus

Bhuiyan tells party rally

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Local Government, Rural Development and Co-operatives Minister and BNP Secretary General Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan yesterday accused main opposition Awami League (AL) of arson attack on a double-decker bus on Friday that killed nine people.

"This party throws bombs on the transports before every hartal to create panic among the public," he said this while he was addressing a public meeting at Muktaganga in the city organised by BNP protesting arson attack on a passenger bus.

Bhuiyan said AL has tarnished image of the country calling hartal during the visit of US Defence Secretary Donald Rumsfeld.

"AL calls hartal whenever any foreign dignitary comes to Bangladesh as it wants to tarnish country's image abroad," he added.

"AL and its leader Sheikh Hasina is segregated from its grassroots workers as most of its leaders don't want hartal," he said.

Bhuiyan said AL has betrayed countrymen as they promised not to call hartal while in power.

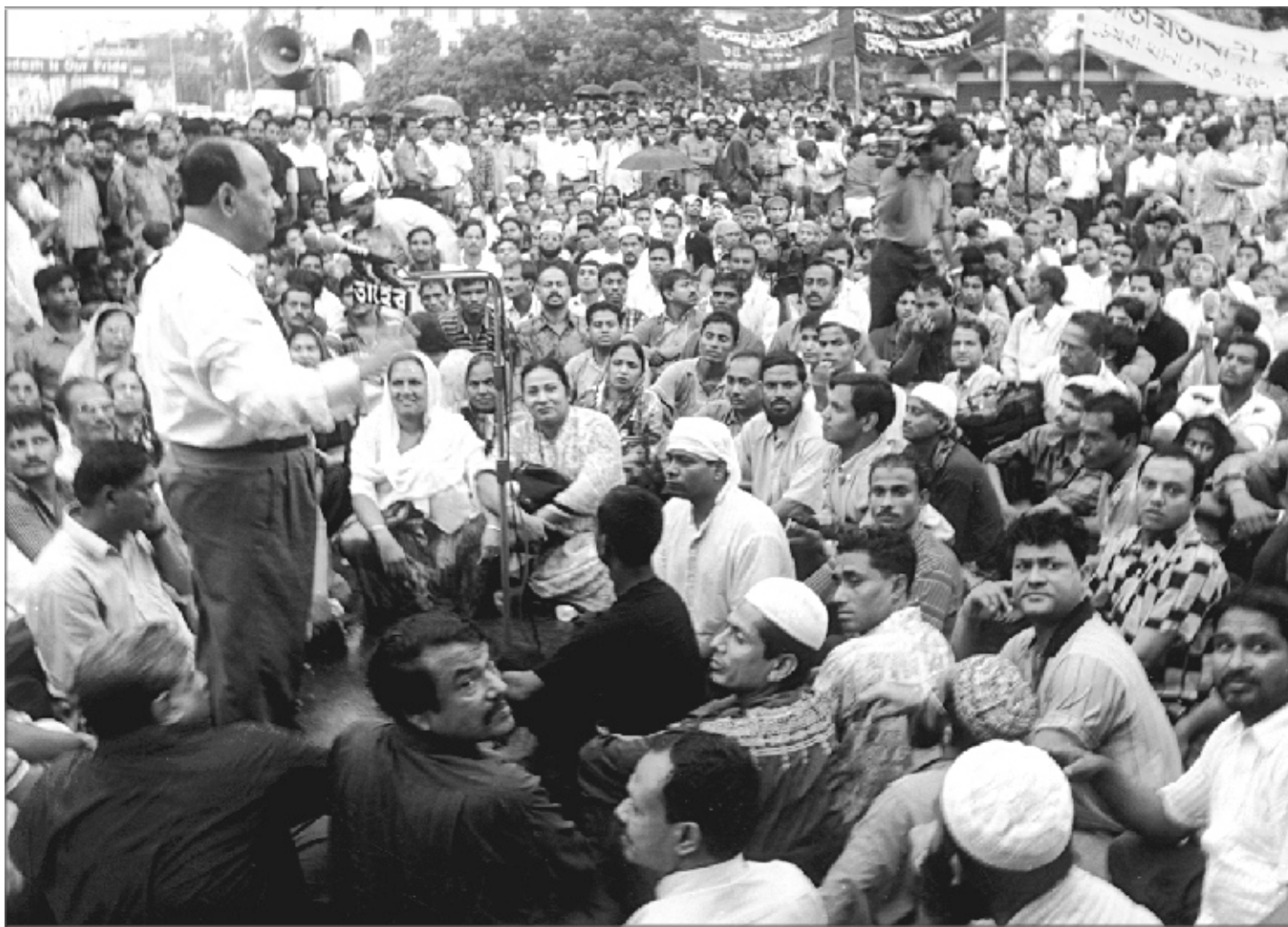
Mayor Sadeq Hossain Khoka said the bus was set on fire by the AL activists to create panic among people.

"The alliance government is voted to power by the countrymen not only for development works but also to ensure security of the citizens that's why we would take stern action against the criminals," Khoka said.

He urged BNP leaders and workers to remain alert against the 'AL conspiracy' and to be united to fight against criminal activities.

The rally was also addressed by Forest and Environment minister Tariqul Islam, Moazzem Hossain Alal M.P, Advisor of the Commerce Ministry Barkat Ullah Bulu, State Minister for Labour and Employment Amanullah Aman and city BNP General Secretary Abdus Salam.

The meeting was followed by a procession that ended in front of the BNP central office at Nayapalton.



LGRD and Cooperatives Minister and BNP Secretary General Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan addresses a public meeting at Muktaganga yesterday protesting arson attack on bus. BNP organised the meeting.

21 bank officials fall sick after taking stale snack

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Twenty-one commercial bank officials fell sick after taking stale snack during a routine training programme at the Bangladesh Bank Training Academy yesterday.

According to the bank sources, the mishap happened during a training programme of 150 officials from different commercial banks. It was held on the 24th floor of the Bangladesh Bank headquarters in Motijheel.

At around 11 in the morning, each of a group of 50 trainees was served with a sandwich and a banana. About two hours after taking the meal they began complaining of an upset stomach and were immediately taken to the medical centre on the bank premises.

As condition of 21 people worsened they were immediately shifted to nearby Islamic Bank Hospital in Motijheel.

Dr Shafiqul Islam, emergency medical officer there, diagnosed 18 of them as suffering from food

poisoning.

"We kept four including one female patients under observation here in Motijheel hospital. Because of shortage of bed we had to shift more stable ones to our branch in Kakrail," said Dr Islam.

However, by 5:00pm all the patients were released as their condition improved, the hospital authorities said.

"Luckily, none of the patients got into critical condition. As they managed to throw up the food, the poison couldn't reach the blood stream and didn't do any harm," Dr Islam added.

Meanwhile, Governor of Bangladesh Bank Dr Fakrudin Ahmed visited the sick officials in the hospital yesterday afternoon. He instructed officials concerned to initiate an investigation and take necessary action.

Stale sandwiches supplied by a fast food shop are believed to have caused the contamination, sources said. No one was held in this connection until 7:00pm.

Cops nab who took RU dy registrar to hospital

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

Police are yet to find out any clue to the murder of Muhammad Mustafa, deputy registrar of Rajshahi University (RU) and ward level Jamaat leader.

They have, however, arrested Manik, a RU employee and Jubo League worker who took Mustafa to Rajshahi Medical College Hospital after he was shot on Friday night.

Manik has been placed on a two-day remand by a magistrate's court.

Earlier, the local BNP-Jamaat leaders blamed 'an alliance of opposition Awami League (AL), leftist parties and outlawed Purba Banglar Communist Party (PBCP)' for the murder.

At a press conference organised jointly by the district and city BNP-Jamat, Rajshahi city mayor and BNP lawmaker Mizanur Rahman

Minu said the murder of Mustafa was preplanned and committed by an unholy alliance which is creating anarchy in the country by killing people one after another.

Rajshahi Jamaat Ameer Ataur Rahman, district BNP President Azizur Rahman and city BNP President Saleh Uddin Baby were present at the press conference.

Meanwhile, local leaders of AL and 11-party alliance have refuted the allegation saying the opposition parties were blamed for political vengeance.

City AL General Secretary AHM Khairuzzaman Liton said the allegations of the ruling alliance are politically motivated.

Local Workers Party leader Liaquat Ali Liku, Communist Party leader Enamul Haq and Jatitya Samajtantrik Dal leader Abdullal Shibli, in a joint statement, have also denied the allegations.

Govt plans to amend contempt of court laws

Provision of Penal Code under sections 501 and 502 not under consideration

UNB, Dhaka

Law Minister Moudud Ahmed at a press conference yesterday said that the government was considering updating the contempt of court laws and the amendments would be placed before the cabinet for approval shortly.

But he didn't elaborate on the nature of the amendments.

But amendment to provision of the Penal Code under sections 501 and 502 is not under consideration now as Moudud said there were "split opinions" in this regard. These two sections, related to punishment for defamation, hang like sword of Damocles over the heads of journalists.

Narrating successes and achievements of his ministry in brining reforms and enacting new laws to make the judicial system more dynamic and timely and to ensure access to justice, Moudud said many a step had been taken in last two and a half years of the alliance government.

He termed Speedy Trial tribunals, Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) system, Legal Aid, Artho Rin Adalat and other

reforms and enactment of new laws "historic achievements" of the ministry.

During 193 sitting days in 11 sessions of the 8th parliament, the House has passed 93 laws-25 of those related to financial reforms that were "very important".

At a press conference he said that legal framework for the much-talked-about separation of judiciary would be completed within two or three months, but appointing judicial cadres would take about six years.

About the installation of an independent Anti-Corruption Commission, another much-sought-after measure in the direction of good governance, Moudud said the formation of the commission is under process, and the select committee for choosing commission members had already been formed.

And other preparations are afoot. A criminal law amendment act will be placed before the cabinet today and it will be passed in the next session of parliament, he said.

Giving statistics, he said at the Speedy Trial Tribunals 366 cases had so far been disposed of and 166 people handed down capital pun-

ishment. And 23 of the disposed cases were sensational.

About the ADR, he said the law that came into effect on July 1 last year helped settle 2,654 cases amicably till May 31 this year. This not only saved time but also money, he added.

He said with the Artho Rin Adalat law having taken effect on May 1 last year, 21,818 cases were disposed of and financial institutions so far could realise approximately Tk 800 crore.

He said the government provided legal aid to 10,101 people for which 1,807 lawyers were listed in the panel of lawyers.

To a question about the Official Secrets Act which journalists say holds back information--Moudud said the law would be further examined and obstacles to free flow of information would be removed.

About the power to arrest any person on suspicion under section 54 of the CrPC, Moudud said such law exists in almost all the countries of the world. "Problem with this law in this region is about misuse and misapplication, and a suggestion has been sent to the home ministry to rationalise the law, not to repeal it," he added.

About death-reference cases, he said the backlog of such cases would be over as five Division Benches, with all logistics, like preparation of paper books by computer, had been set up.

He said in last five months 66 death reference cases had been disposed of by the High Court, as two paper books are being prepared a week in a speedy process, which he said was impossible in the past.

To a question about the Bangabandhu Murder Case, Moudud denied any failure of the government. He said the case is with the Appellate Division and questioned why those who are concerned about the case are not approaching the court.

He said independent interrogation cells had been set up on an experimental basis in 30 police stations to make the police report on cases more effective as, for weak collection of evidences and witnesses, only 15 per cent cases could come to the higher judiciary.

Moudud said proper judicial system is a precondition for establishing the rule of law and good governance and the present government is determined to ensure it.

State Minister for Law Shahjahan Omar and high officials were present at the press conference.



No change in temperature likely

UNB, Dhaka

Light to moderate rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty wind is likely at few places over Rajshahi, Dhaka, Chittagong and Sylhet divisions and at one or two places over Khulna and Barisal divisions till 6:00pm today.

Day temperature may remain nearly unchanged over the country during the period, Met Office said.

Highest temperature 35.4 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday at Majde Coart and the lowest 23.0 degree Celsius at Dinajpur and Sayedpur.

The sun sets in the capital at 6:45 pm today and rises at 5:10 am tomorrow.

Highest and lowest temperature and humidity recorded in some major cities and towns yesterday were:

City/Town	Temperature in Celsius		Humidity in percentage	
	Max	Min	Morning	Evening
Dhaka	32.9	27.5	74	91
Chittagong	32.8	26.4	76	71
Rajshahi	28.5	24.6	91	85
Khulna	34.0	27.3	77	94
Barisal	33.5	26.3	78	94
Sylhet	30.0	24.0	95	79
Cox's Bazar	33.0	25.5	76	79

Criminals kill expatriate

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Unknown criminals slaughtered a man and dumped his severed body on Bishwa Road near Khilgaon Community Centre yesterday.

The victim Mizanur Rahman Mizan, 35, returned to country a month back after three-year stay in Malaysia.

A speeding CNG-run three-wheeler left a cloth bag on the road at about 1:30pm, witnesses said. As locals approached the bag, they found parts of human body in it.

Khilgaon police recovered the body with its right leg and fingers of right hand severed and the head almost cut off. The severed leg was not in the bag, police said.

The victim's brother rushed to Khilgaon Police Station in the afternoon and identified the body.

Mijan went out of his house in Bara Maghbazar at around 11:00am yesterday, police quoting his family members said.

Police could not ascertain the motive behind the murder.

DHAKA TODAY

Dance

Nityanchal organises an evening of Gourio dance to be conducted by Dr Mohua Mukhopadhyay of Kolkata. Venue: Bangladesh Shishu Academy auditorium. Time: 7:00pm.

Film show

Academy Film Society will screen an American film titled 'From Hell' (2001). Venue: Society auditorium, Jigatola. Time: 6:30pm.

Exhibition

The opening ceremony of exhibition '748', an installation by Kasef Mahboob Chowdhury, will be held. Venue: Goethe Institut, Dhanmondi. Time: 6:30pm. The exhibition will remain open till June 21 from 2:00pm to 8:00pm daily.

Six-point discussion

A discussion will be held to mark the historic six-point day with Awami League President Sheikh Hasina as chief guest. Venue: Institution of Engineers, Bangladesh. Time: 3:00pm.

Zia discussion

Zia Parishad will hold a discussion to mark the 23rd death anniversary of former president Ziaur Rahman. Venue: Bangladesh Krishi Bank auditorium, Motijheel. Time: 4:15pm.

BML discussion

Bangladesh Muslim League (BML) organises a discussion to mark the birth anniversary of Nawab Sir Salimullah. Venue: National Press Club. Time: 9:45am.

Memorial discussion

A discussion will be held in memory of Ismail Mohammad (Udayon Chowdhury), a noted filmmaker and litterateur. Venue: Bishwasahitya Kendra

auditorium, Bangla Motor. Time: 5:00pm.

Council

The national council of Prosperous Bangladesh Movement will be held. Venue: CIRDP auditorium, Topkhana Road. Time: 10:30am.

Publication ceremony

The publication ceremony of a book titled 'Mutual contribution of Islam and Iran' by Prof Murtaza Mutahharli will be held. Venue: Iranian Cultural Centre, Dhanmondi. Time: 5:00pm.

Seminar

A national seminar on 'Fruit processing, preservation and marketing' will be held with Agriculture Minister M K Anwar as chief guest. Venue: BARC auditorium, Farmgate. Time: 10:00am.

DHAKA TOMORROW

Roundtable

A roundtable on 'Indoor air pollution in Bangladesh', organised by Environment and Social Development Organisation, will be held. Venue: Press Institute of Bangladesh, Circuit House Road. Time: 10:00am.

Seminar

A seminar on 'Challenges and opportunities of e-business in Bangladesh', organised by Daffodil Institute of IT, will be held. Venue: DIIT auditorium, Dhanmondi. Time: 4:00pm.

Talk

French Embassy Trade Commissioner Dominique Simon will deliver a talk on 'Prevailing business opportunities with France'. Venue: Spectra Convention Centre, Gulshan. Time: 12:30pm.