



PHOTO: STAR

Paltan area in the city during opposition programme yesterday. Opposition parties form a 50-km human chain from Gazipur to Narayanganj across the capital to register no confidence in BNP-Jamaat coalition government.

India should increase imports from Bangladesh

Buddhadev tells JPC team

BSS, Kolkata

West Bengal Chief Minister Buddhadev Bhattacharya yesterday said that his government has always been in favour of increasing imports from Bangladesh to reduce the huge trade gap between the two neighbours.

Talking to a visiting delegation of the Jatiya Press Club led by its President Reazuddin Ahmed at his Writers Building Office in the evening, he said Delhi should take steps so that increased quantity of Bangladeshi goods could enter Indian markets.

He said the relations between India and Bangladesh, particularly with West Bengal have always been special since the Liberation War in 1971 and it should continue to remain so.

He described the recently held Home Secretary level meeting in Dhaka as positive. He expressed the hope that the next Home Secretary level meeting would take the Dhaka-Delhi relations to a new level.

Buddhadev said Nazrul anniversary should jointly be celebrated at official level in Dhaka and Tagore anniversary in Kolkata to promote cultural relations between the two countries.

Besides, he said, film fair of Bangladesh could be organised in Kolkata and Indian film fair in Dhaka with the objective of improving cultural ties.

The issue of cable operators also came up for discussion.

On water sharing issue between the two countries, he emphatically said that his government favours just solution of water of the river Teesta between the two countries.

In this context, he recalled the special role of the then Chief Minister Jyoti Basu regarding Ganges Water Sharing Agreement. He said the problem of enclaves should be solved.

Replying to a question on "Bangabhum" activists operating from West Bengal, he said his government

would never patronise such elements. He said the man who heads it has no follower.

Press Club Vice President Nurul Huda, General Secretary Shaikat Mahmood, Ziaul Huq, Zahedul Karim and Yusuf Pasha spoke during the courtesy call on with the Chief Minister.

Kolkata Press Club General Secretary Snehasis Sur introduced the Jatiya Press Club delegation to the Chief Minister. Kolkata Press Club President Raj Mithaulia was present.

DU students protest police harassment

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Students of Dhaka University formed a human chain at the Central Shaheed Minar yesterday to protest the harassment of a student by police.

The demonstrators also demanded immediate action against the policemen responsible for harassing Safaet Ullah, a third year student of physics department.

Three policemen stopped and harassed him at Tilpapara in Khilgaon at around 2.00am on September 3 without provocation when he was returning to his hall on the DU campus from his friend's home, Safaet said.

They also arrested him and took

him to Khilgaon Police Station although he showed the student ID card to them, he said.

Safaet alleged that the duty officer also hurled abusive words at him and confined him to police custody. The policemen also did not allow him to call any of his friends or relatives.

He was released after the policemen produced him in the court the next day.

Safaet said the police harassment shocked him deeply.

The protesters said it was a crime against all students of the university.

They also threatened to launch tough movement if the authorities do not take any action against the policemen responsible.

JCD-Shibir clash in Kushtia college

Pro-Jamaat teachers beat one

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kushtia

At least 15 Jatiyatibadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) leaders and activists were injured during a clash with Islamic Chhatra Shibir at Jibonnagar Degree College here yesterday.

The clash erupted when Shibir activists chased JCD activist Shamim Ahmed on the college campus. Shamim took shelter at the teachers' common room but pro-Jamaat teachers handed over him to Shibir cadres after mercilessly beating him, sources said.

Shibir cadres stabbed Shamim with machete leaving him critically injured.

As the news of beating spread, JCD leaders and activists stormed into the college campus and clashed with Shibir workers. Fifteen JCD leaders and activists including college unit President Abdur Rakib, General Secretary Matiar Rahman were injured.

Later, the JCD activists ransacked several messes belong to Shibir activists.

The injured were admitted to local health complex.

Police came to the spot after two hours of the incident.

Tense situation was prevailing at the upazila headquarters following the clash.

Death anniversary

Today is the seventh death anniversary of Alhaj Md Firozer Rahman (Firoz Master), former president of Faridpur Chamber of Commerce and Industry, says a press release.

A milad mahfil will be held at his residence adjacent to Jhiltully Jame Mosque after Asr prayers and at Faridur Muslim Mission and Arambagh Orphanage, Faridpur.

Obituary

Birendra Chandra Talukder, a retired teacher of Kendua Government High School, died of a cardiac arrest on September 18 at the age of 75, says a press release.

He is survived by his wife, two sons, three daughters and a grandson.

His shradha will be held at his village home at Bhatia in Mohanganj, Netrakona on September 30.

Save Lauachhara national park

Environmental groups urge govt

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Environmental groups yesterday appealed to the government not to allow Unocal, a US-based oil company, to set up gas pipeline through the fragile national park at Lauachhara in Moulvibazar.

In a letter to Prime Minister Khaleda Zia, Bangladesh Environment Lawyers Association (Bela), Centre for Sustainable Development (CSD) and Forum of Environmental Journalists of Bangladesh (FEJB) sought her intervention in protecting the park, also a reserve forest.

They said the Lauachhara National Park is an extremely rich ecosystem that reportedly sustains

at least 167 high value plant species, four species of amphibians, six species of reptiles, 246 species of birds and 20 species of mammals.

As per existing laws, there is no scope to allow commercial activities within a national park, but the government has decided to allow Unocal to set up 1.5-km gas pipeline through the fragile and sensitive eco-system of the park, they added.

Besides, the government took the decision without any Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) that is an utter disregard to the national law that requires environmental clearance for setting up gas pipelines, they added.

'Some parties plot to create instability'

BSS, Dhaka

Information Minister M Shamsul Islam yesterday said some political parties were engaged in a conspiracy to create instability in the country.

Through their movement to oust the government, he said, they have proved that going to power was their sole objective despite the loss of lives in the August 21 grenade attack.

Criticising the role of Awami League in the Jatiya Sangsad, he said that in fact, the party believes in destructive politics.

He was addressing a rally in front of BNP central office, organised by the Jatiyatibadi Jubo Dal (south) to

protest continuous strikes, terrorism and anarchy in the society.

Deputy Minister for Land Ruhul Quddus Talukdar, Jubo Dal President Barkatullah Bulu and General Secretary Moazzem Hossain Alal MP also spoke at the rally, presided over by Ahmed Hossain.

The information minister said the government has already constituted a one-member judicial commission to probe the August 21 incident.

The incidents of bomb attacks can be checked if Awami League cooperates with the commission, but the party does not want a permanent solution to such problems, he added.



PHOTO: STAR

Dr Kamal Hossain speaks at a press conference in the city yesterday on the progress of Supreme Court Bar Association probe into the August 21 grenade attack on Awami League rally.

JCD prevents BNP MP from joining JU syndicate meet

JU CORRESPONDENT

Aruling party lawmaker could not attend a special meeting of the Jahangirnagar University (JU) syndicate yesterday in the face of protest by Jatiyatibadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) activists.

About 100 students led by JCD leaders gathered in front of the administrative building on the campus to prevent Salahuddin Babu, a BNP MP and government-nominated syndicate member, from joining the meeting. They stayed there from 4:30pm to 5:00pm.

The lawmaker could not attend the meeting till writing of this report.

The students, however, alleged that they were forced to join the demonstration.

At a meeting on September 4, the JU JCD declared the lawmaker 'unwanted' on the campus and demanded immediate cancellation of his membership of syndicate as he slapped JU JCD President Parvez Mallik on the day.

Tension was running high as a faction of the JCD, Avi group, was trying to let the lawmaker enter the campus.

REFORMS IN SECONDARY LEVEL EDN Credit agreement signed with IDA

A credit agreement was signed on Tuesday in the city between Bangladesh and the International Development Association (IDA) to provide assistance for identification and implementation of reforms at secondary level in education sector, says a press release.

Economic Relations Division (ERD) Secretary Mirza Tasadduq Hossain Beg and World Bank Country Director Dr Christine I Wallich signed the agreement on behalf of their respective sides.

Under the provision of the agreement Bangladesh will receive 100 million US dollar (equivalent to about Tk 600 crore). This will assist education ministry in undertaking the first phase of reform agenda aimed at addressing systematic governance issue in order to raise the quality and cost-effectiveness of service delivery, and improve equity of access in secondary education.

The reform agenda mainly focuses on increasing accountability of secondary schools both to the government and to the community, enhancing equity in access, improving teacher's quality through emphasis on recruitment and training, enhancing transparency in textbooks production and making curriculum more relevant and demand driven.

Coordinated efforts a must to stop child, women trafficking

Speakers tell discussion

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Around 550 women and children were trafficked from Bangladesh to different countries since March 2000.

This was disclosed at a meeting on 'Ways to resist child and women trafficking' at Chittagong Press Club (CPC) Auditorium on Tuesday.

Chittagong Social Development Forum (CSD) and CPC jointly organised the meeting sponsored by USAID and Action against Trafficking and Sexual Exploitation of Children (ATSEC).

CSD Chairperson SM Nazer Hossain presided over the meeting.

Deputy Inspector General (DIG) of Chittagong Range M Abdus Sattar addressed the meeting as chief guest.

Former secretary and Project Director of ATSEC Nurul Abedin

and CPC President Abu Sufian were present as special guests.

Abdus Sattar said police alone cannot address the problem, it needs coordinated efforts from cross-section of people.

Nurul Abedin said poverty followed by dowry and temptation to better living are mainly responsible for trafficking.

The speakers said human trafficking has turned into a lucrative business after drug and arms dealings.

Organised international criminal syndicates with their wings spread all over the world are involved in trafficking, they added.

The speakers expressed grave concern at the alarming increase in trafficking and sexual exploitation of children and women in the country.

The border districts are most vulnerable to human trafficking, they added.

The speakers emphasised the need for using social influence of Imams and inclusion of write-ups in textbooks to help resist children and women trafficking.

Two PBCP men beaten by mob in Khulna

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Two activists of Purbo Banglar Communist Party (Janajuddho) were mercilessly beaten by angry mob as they demanded Tk 50,000 as toll from a cement dealer of Sabujbagh under Sonadanga Police Station yesterday.

They were admitted to Khulna Medical College Hospital (KMCH) Prison cell with fatal injuries.

The arrested outlaws were identified as Bulbul and Dulal.

No case was filed till writing of this report.

1,761 more held

UNB, Dhaka

Police arrested some 1,761 people including six listed criminals on various charges during their countrywide drive in the last 24 hours ending at 6.00am yesterday.

During the period, the law enforcers recovered 16 firearms, eight other weapons, 24 bullets and four bombs and filed 12 cases against 15 people under the Arms Act, said an official release.

WEATHER TODAY

Moderate heavy falls likely

UNB, Dhaka

Light to moderate rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty wind is likely at many places over Chittagong, Dhaka, Rajshahi and Sylhet divisions till 6.00pm today.

Moderate heavy falls are expected at a few places over Khulna and Barisal divisions during the period, Met Office said.

Highest temperature 34.6 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday at Sayedpur and lowest 23.5 degree Celsius at Rangamat.

The sun sets in the capital at 6:54pm today and rises at 5:48am 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	29.1	25.3	87	80
Chittagong	30.5	25.0	83	85
Rajshahi	32.2	26.0	88	94
Khulna	32.5	26.6	82	76
Barisal	32.4	26.4	92	98
Sylhet	31.4	23.8	93	93
Cox's Bazar	30.4	25.0	82	87



The American Alumni Association (AAA) distributed relief among the flood victims at Karail in Dhaka on September 20. AAA President Syed Almas Kabir, Secretary Ayesha Dastgir and executive committee member Quazi M Ahmed were present.

7x2

President greets Saudi king

UNB, Dhaka

President Iajuddin Ahmed yesterday greeted King Fahad Bin Abdul Aziz Al-Saud on the occasion of the national day of Saudi Arabia today.

In a message, the president expressed his belief that existing bonds of friendship and cooperation between the two countries would be further consolidated and diversified in the years to come.

Iajuddin wished the King good health, happiness and long life and continued peace, progress and prosperity of the people of Saudi Arabia.

In a similar message, Prime Minister Khaleda Zia felicitated Prince Abdullah Bin Abdul Aziz Al-Saud.

She also expressed her firm belief that the existing ties of friendship between Bangladesh and Saudi Arabia would be further strengthened and consolidated in the years ahead.