

AL men carry vegetables to protest against price hike

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Opposition activists carrying different vegetables took to the city streets yesterday as a gesture of protest against the skyrocketing prices of essentials.

Demonstrating against the price hike, Awami League (AL) men asked the BNP-Jamaat-led coalition to admit failure to tackle the market situation and step down accordingly.

The AL supporters paraded the streets from Gulsitan to Bahadur Shah Park at old Dhaka. They carried various vegetables like gourd, cucumber, okra, aubergine, kidney beans, arum, potato, onion, papaya and green chilli and chanted slogans against the government.

They also carried placards and banners demanding ouster of the government.

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Mosque stands in link road's way

Tk 32cr Doyaganj-Jurain road not opened 2 yrs into construction

ABDUL KADER

The Doyaganj-Jurain link road, constructed about two years ago by Rajdhani Unnayan Kartripakkha (Rajuk), is yet to be opened as the authorities are in dilemma over the relocation of a mosque on the road in West Mir Hajirbagh, Demra.

Rajuk constructed the 3km link road from Doyaganj to connect the Bangladesh-China Friendship Bridge over the Buriganga river at Postogola in 2002 at a cost of about Tk 32 crore to reduce traffic pressure at Jatrabari crossing.

"Once the link road opens,

southern district bound vehicles from the Sayedabad terminal can use the road that would ease traffic congestion in Jatrabari area," Rajuk Chief Engineer M Emdadul Islam told The Daily Star.

He said construction work of the road was completed long ago, except the area where the mosque is located. Rajuk tried several times to move it, but its efforts were in vain due to resistance from local residents and landowners.

"A mosque is a prayer house of Allah. It cannot be demolished," said Aftabuddin who donated land for the mosque. "They [Rajuk] can change

the direction of the road keeping the mosque intact or can move the mosque to any other suitable location in the area."

When Rajuk tried to shift the mosque to adjacent plots, it faced resistance from plot owners. "The landowners filed a writ petition before the High Court and the court has issued an injunction on acquisition of the lands," Aftabuddin said.

When asked, local lawmaker Salahuddin Ahmed said, "I am trying to manage a piece of land for the mosque, considering public needs. I hope we will be able to solve

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PHOTO: STAR

Rajuk could not open a link road from Doyaganj to Jurain for a tin-shed mosque located on the road in West Mir Hajirbagh area of Demra. Once opened, the road constructed at a cost of Tk 32 crore two years ago would ease the traffic pressure on Jatrabari crossing.

Pak PM with 60-member team arrives November 3

UNB, Dhaka

Pakistan Prime Minister and Saarc (South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation) chairperson Shaukat Aziz arrives in Dhaka on November 3 on a two-day official visit.

Shaukat Aziz will be accompanied by his wife and a 60-member delegation comprising four ministers, two state ministers and a high-powered business team, Foreign Minister Morshed Khan told newsmen at his office yesterday.

Khan said it is a customary practice that the incumbent chairperson of the Saarc undertakes visit to the member countries at the end of his tenure.

The Pak prime minister will hold official talks with Prime Minister Khaleda Zia at her office on November 3.

"Since the Pakistan prime minister has got vast experience in economic sector, he would perhaps spell out his idea about how to acquire economic growth by the Saarc countries," Khan said.

To a question, Khan said both

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Ecneec turns down bypass road project as too costly

Tk 2,530-crore dev plan okayed

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Executive Committee of National Economic Council (Ecneec) yesterday sent back a communications ministry project for a 61-km link-road between Joydevpur and Dhaka-Chittagong Highway finding the costing too inflated.

The Ecneec meeting chaired by Finance Minister M Saifur Rahman

directed the ministry to resubmit the proposal again in its next meeting after physical verification of expenditures and making required modifications to it.

The revised costing of the project, conceived at fiscal year 1997-98, was Tk 124 crore higher than the initial estimation of Tk 192 crore. The fresh figure of Tk 317 crore includes Tk 110 crore for land acqui-

sition and land filling.

The communications project that failed to pass the Ecneec scrutiny yesterday is for constructing a Dhaka City by-pass starting from Joydebpur and running through Narsingdi and Pragati Sarani of the capital to join with Dhaka-Chittagong Highway at Madanpur in Narayanganj district.

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B Chy, Kamal hold third dialogue in Mymensingh today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Jatiya Oikya Mancha and Bikalpa Dhara Bangladesh (BDB) hold their third Mass Dialogue (Gono Sanglap) under the parties' Gono Ishtehar Kariyokrom at 2:00pm at the conference lounge of Hotel Amir International in Mymensingh district town today.

The second mass dialogue in Rangpur on October 19 was foiled by an attack on the two parties' key leaders by the government-backed miscreants. The first dialogue was held in Dinajpur on October 18.

The two prominent politicians--BDB President Prof AQM Bodruddoza Chowdhury and Oikya Mancha President Dr Kamal Hossain--will share their concerns and opinions with people at the mass dialogue, said a press release of Gono Ishtehar Kariyokrom of the two parties yesterday.

They will listen to people's suggestions to form a 'Gono Ishtehar' or recommendations giving certain directions over the country's politics, criminal activities, corruption

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PHOTO: STAR

Traders, shop owners and employees bring out a huge procession at Karwan Bazar in the capital yesterday in protest against increasing extortion and criminal activities in the area.

Karwan Bazar traders take to street, ask govt to stop extortion

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Extortion has snowballed at Karwan Bazar kitchen market in the city during Ramadan despite special anti-crime drives by the Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) across the country, alleged businesspersons yesterday.

Exasperated with increasing extortion, the businesspersons of

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Most poor unaware of OMS

Misappropriation of allotment alleged

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government's Open Market Sale (OMS) programme passed its fourth day yesterday with many poor people in Dhaka and other parts of the country expressing their ignorance of any OMS centres in their areas and many others alleging misappropriation of allotted rice in areas where the drive is going on.

OMS dealers however said the daily allotment of 510 kg of rice each is too small for the large number of low-income people who rush to buy the Tk13 a kg coarse rice.

Visits to a number of the capital's kitchen markets yesterday showed that most of them were without any OMS centres while a few others had such centres but they stopped sale

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Sehri-Iftar			
Ramadan	Oct	Sehri	Iftar
10	25		5-28
11	26	4-40	5-27

Prayer Timing		
October 25		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	4-40	4-46
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	4-00	4-15
Maghrib	5-28	5-33
Esha	7-15	7-45

Source: Islamic Foundation

US Muslim leaders pull for Kerry

Washington Post backs Bush challenger

AFP, Detroit/Washington

Democratic presidential candidate John Kerry has received the backing of leaders of the estimated seven-million-strong Muslim-

American community, but the endorsement was lukewarm at best.

The half-hearted expression of support last week was the most that the American Muslim Taskforce on Civil Rights and Elections (AMT)

was prepared to give the Massachusetts senator after months of behind-the-scenes negotiations with his campaign officials.

Earlier the Washington Post endorsed John Kerry for president in an editorial yesterday, saying the choice was not an easy one but that President George W. Bush had not earned a second term in office.

"On balance... we believe Mr Kerry, with his promise of resoluteness tempered by wisdom and open-mindedness, has staked a stronger claim on the nation's trust to lead for the next four years," the Post said.

The president's record "particularly in foreign affairs, can't be judged with a simple eye or nay," the influential daily said, lauding him

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Injured BCL leader dies

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

A Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) leader beaten up earlier by Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) activists succumbed to his injuries yesterday evening sparking off tension at Godagari upazila.

Victim Feroz Ali, the Godagari upazila BCL convenor and former president of Degree College Student Union, died at Rajshahi Medical College Hospital.

Hearing the news of his death, Godagari Awami League (AL) and BCL brought out procession and held a protest rally in the evening demanding immediate arrest of his killers.

Sources said, some 20 JCD cadres including the upazila JCD leaders Iftekhar Alam, Ashraf Uddin, Selim, Parvez and Masud called Feroz out of his relative's house at Kamarpara on October 20. They took him to Sultanganj and beat up with iron rods tying his hands and legs.

The victim's family members

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