

# Protests across country

## AL holds rallies, demonstrations decrying Habiganj grenade attack, calls for observing hartal to oust government

STAR NATIONAL DESK

Awami League and its front organisations staged protests across the country yesterday against the barbaric grenade attack on an AL rally in Habiganj that killed its front ranking leader and former minister SAMS Kibria and three others.

The protesters, marching streets chanting full-throated slogans and holding rallies, also called upon the people to observe three days' hartal announced by the AL to compel the alliance government to step down, according to reports from our correspondents.

Our Nilphamari Correspondent reports: Awami League brought out a big procession in the town and held a rally where speakers said fundamentalist forces under the patronisation of the government are engaged in a dirty game to eliminate secular and pro-liberation forces in a planned way.

They also alleged that the bomb attacks are going on against Awami League leaders and workers one after another but the government is indifferent. They said that the fundamentalist forces within the government will not spare the secular and pro-liberation forces in BNP also in course of time.

They said if the grenade attack on August 21 was properly investigated and killers punished, such incident would not have been repeated.

They termed former finance minister Kibria an asset of the country and said this killing is equal to the killing of intellectuals in 1971.

Those who killed the intellectuals in 1971 have become active again. They must be contained anyhow, he said.

The speakers urged all the people to make the hartal a success in Nilphamari district.

Our Barisal correspondent reports: Awami League and its front organisations brought out a procession in the city and held a rally protesting the grenade attack.

The procession started at noon from Sohel Chattar and paraded the main streets.

The rally was presided over by advocate shawkat Hossain Hiron and addressed by, among others, Talukder Yunus, Anisur Rahman, Moshirur Rahman, Golam Maksud Bablu, Anisuddin, Shahid, Nizamul Islam Nizam, Abul Fossais Arun, Anwar Hossain, Helwar Hossain, Kohinur Begum and Milon Zia.

The speakers severely criticised the ruling alliance for the attack and made it responsible for it.

They also urged the people to observe hartal and other programme announced by the central Awami League.

Our Kushtia Correspondent reports: Kushtia district Awami League brought out a procession in



Namaj-e-Janaza for three Awami League (AL) activists killed in Thursday's grenade attack on an AL rally at Boidder Bazar was held at Shirishtala ground in Habiganj town yesterday.

the town and held a rally, calling upon the people to build a movement to compel the alliance government to step down.

The procession, led by AL leader and Kushtia municipality chairman Anwar Ali, was started from Razarhat. The rally was addressed by, among others, party leaders Aggar Ali, Jufkar Ali Arzoo, Sheikh Gius Uddin Ahmed, Mintu, Faruk Ahmed, Sheikh Hasan Mehedi, Bakrillah Bikul, Faruk Ahmed and Majharul Islam Sumon.

They blamed ruling BNP-Jamaat coalition for patronising terrorist across the country. The parties in power are responsible for the bomb attacks on opposition activists one after another, they said. They demanded resignation of the government.

The speakers said ruling party cadres were involved in all the bomb attacks but the government did not take steps to nab the criminals.

They urged AL leaders and activists to prepare for a mass movement to dislodge the government.

In Meherpur, AL and its front organisations at a rally blamed ruling BNP-Jamaat coalition for the heinous grenade attack on Kibria's public meeting and demanded resignation of the government.

This government has no right to stay in power as it failed to secure

people's life. It did not properly probe any of the bomb attacks made during its rule.

They said Kibria was a renowned economist. His murder is a loss for the nation.

The processionists led by district AL President Joinal Abedin paraded streets in the town and converged at the Public Library ground where the rally was held.

With Joinal abedin in the chair, the rally was addressed by, among others, party leaders Advocate Miajan Ali, Yarul Islam and Salauddin.

Our Rangamati Correspondent reports: District units of Awami League and its front organisations yesterday brought out several processions in the town's Bonorupa. Reserve Bazar and Tabalchhari areas, protesting the grenade attack.

Former AL MP and president of Rangamati AL Diponkor Talukder led the main procession, brought out from the Court Building area. The procession terminated in front of Alee Boarding in the town's Bonorupa area.

Shechhashebak League, Jubo League, Sramik League, Mohila Awami League and Chhatra League leaders and activists joined the procession.

Addressing the rally, the speakers said the alliance government is

eliminating its opposition in a planned way to perpetuate its power.

The bomb incidents in the past and Thursday's grenade attack in Habiganj are not isolated incidents, they alleged, Diponkor told the rally.

"Grenade or bomb attack is taking place at every Awami League meeting.

"If the situation continues, country will plunge into a civil war".

AL leaders Mahbubur Rahman, Anil Kumar Tanchangya, Ruhul Amin and Ching Keu Roaza, Jubo League leader Jameer Uddin, Mintu Marma and Udayan Barua, among others, spoke at the rally.

They demand immediate arrest of perpetrators as well as trial of all bomb and grenade attacks on AL rallies in the last three years.

In Reserve Bazar, AL leaders and activists brought out another procession and held rally at noon.

In Tabalchhari, AL and its front organisations held a protest rally in the afternoon. AL leaders addressed the rallies.

Our Satkhira Correspondent reports: A joint meeting of Satkhira district Awami League and its front organisations was held this morning at Satkhira district AL office protesting the grenade in Habiganj.

District AL leader Monsur Ahmed presided over the meeting,

addressed by, among others, Nazrul Islam, Sheikh Abu Nasim, Abu Ahmed, Mahidul Haq, SM Lutfur Rahman, Monsur Hossain, SM Shawkat Hossain, Firoz Ahmed, Sheikh Nurul Haq, Mahmud Ali Suman, Shajahan Ali.

The speakers held the BNP-Jamaat responsible for the attack and called upon the party men to prepare for a movement to oust the government.

Killings increased after the alliance government came to power, they said.

Kibria's killing is apart of a blue print to eliminate secular and pro-liberation forces, they said and called for launching a movement to dislodge the government.

The parties brought out a protest procession in the town in the afternoon.

Our Manikganj Correspondent reports: The district Awami League and its front organisations brought out a procession and held a rally in the town protesting the Habiganj incident.

The rally was addressed by, among others AL leaders Dipak Ghosh and Gazi kamrul Huda Selim and Jubo League leader AEM Sultanul Azam Khan. Similar programmes were also organised at upazila headquarters, partysourcesaid.

## Former AL MP joins BNP

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Moulvibazar

Former Awami League member of parliament from Baralekha Md Sirajul Islam joined BNP along some of his followers yesterday.

Islam is also a former president of Baralekha upazila AL.

Sirajul Islam met with Finance and Planning Minister M Saifur Rahman at Moulvibazar circuit house yesterday evening and joined BNP.

Other district leaders of BNP were also present.

While joining, Sirajul Islam told Saifur that he wanted to pass the rest of his life with BNP politics. He also termed Saifur Rahman a "great leader".

Congratulating him, Saifur said, "You would have become a MP from Baralekha had you joined BNP earlier".

Sirajul Islam was expelled from AL twice. He was elected MP with AL ticket in 1979. In 1984, he was expelled from AL. He then joined Jatiya Party when the party was in power.

He was elected upazila chairman during that period.

After the fall of Jatiya Party government, he returned to AL and tried to get an AL ticket for parliament election in 1996 and 2001 but was refused.

He was expelled from AL again in 2003.

## Janakantha Editor, 3 journo sued in Barisal

### Complainant says news tarnished Mayor's image

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barisal

A defamation case has been lodged against Janakantha Editor Atiqullah Khan Masud, Executive Editor Borhan Ahmed and two journalists of the daily for "tarnishing" the image of Barisal Mayor Majibur Rahman Sarwar MP through publishing a news on Thursday.

The two others sued are Janakantha Staff Reporter Mamun-Rashid and its Barisal correspondent Kazi Shamim.

The case was filed with Kotwali thana yesterday by Advocate Kazi Bashir Uddin, Assistant Public Prosecutor and leader of Jatiotabadi Ainjibi Forum in Barisal.

The case was lodged under sections 500, 501, 502, 504, 5005 and 182 of the CrPC (Criminal Procedure Code).

The Public Prosecutor, Legal Advisor to Barisal City Corporation

(BCC), some ward commissioners and a DAB (Doctors Association of Bangladesh) leader have been made witnesses in the case.

In the case the complainant alleged that in the news item, the BCC Mayor and his family members were presented as "corrupt" people sheltering criminals and amassing wealth through illegal means.

The Mayor was also portrayed as a godfather of extortionists, drug peddlers and tender snatchers, the complainant said.

"I became sick and my blood pressure increased after reading the news item", Kazi Bashir Uddin stated in the complaint.

When contacted, Mizanur Rahman, officer-in-charge of Barisal Kotwali police station, acknowledged filing of the case and said a decision in this regard will be taken as per law.

The BCC Mayor was not available for comment.

## TENGRATILA BLOWOUT

### Gas leaking again, 11 families move to safety

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

Eleven families in Tengratila village, asked by officials of Canadian company Nico on Thursday, left homes and moved to safer places as gas started leaking from the gas well there at several points.

The houses were about 200 metres from the gas well where a massive blowout on January 7 caused a fire that damaged crops and the environment and burnt a huge quantity of gas.

An official of Nico said, "We asked them to move for security reasons as we saw gas leaking at several points on four homesteads.

"We have decided to give each family Tk 6,000 per month as compensation till the situation allows them to stay in their houses again".

Meanwhile the 'Tengratila Namkoron O Dabi Aday Samity', a newly formed body in the area, on Thursday handed over a list of 600 more affected families to the company, demanding compensation.

Another list of 82 affected traders has also been handed over to the company by Tangratila Traders Association for compensation, members of the association and company officials said.

"We will check the lists and take necessary steps" a company official

said. Compensation payment has been decided but it may take some time, he said.

The company earlier paid Tk 5000 to each of 616 affected families as "immediate assistance" just after the blowout. Work for a drilling pad to dig a relief well 250 metres from the blowout site is going on.

The relief well is being drilled to seal the original well through "directional drilling", the official added.

It may take at least one month to complete the preparatory work for drilling, he said.

## 4 cops among 200 hurt in B'Baria clash

### Police fire shots, tear gas shells in Nasirnagar

OUR CORRESPONDENT, B'baria

At least 200 people including four policemen were injured in a clash between two groups at Shreeghar village in Nasirnagar upazila on Thursday.

Police arrested 16 people from the spot.

The clash ensued when one person-- Asgar Ali-- demanded repayment of loan money from Manzu Mia, police and witnesses said.

As they were locked in a brawl after an altercation, their supporters came in and fell upon each other with lethal weapons. They chased each other during the intermittent clashes that lasted for about three hours from noon.

Being informed, a police team headed by Nasirnagar thana OC Md. Nazrul Islam rushed to the spot and brought the situation under control.

Police used batons and fired 14 blank shots and five tear gas shells,

police said.

The injured police are SI Md. Abdul Karim and constables Mashur Rahman, Ashish Sharma and Guljar Mia.

Twenty-one of the injured people have been admitted to hospitals. The ten seriously injured people at Brahmanbaria Sadar Hospital are Iman Ali, Fakrul, Diashir Mia, Maraz Mia, Faisal Mia, Abu Jamal, Sarwar, Tajul Islam, Ramzan Mia and Asgar Ali.

Eleven people admitted to Nasirnagar Thana Health Complex are Sahid Mia, Ahad Mia, Shah Alam, Kuddus Mia, Suttu Mia, Insan Mia, Hafizul Mia, Safiullah, Nazrul Islam, Jahirul Islam, and Arab Ali.

The rest were given first aid at Nasirnagar and Sarail health complexes, Brahmanbaria Sadar Hospital and at some private clinics.

Police have been deployed at the village. Any case is yet to be filed.

## Hearing today on remand of 25 JMJB men

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

Police on Thursday sought five days' remand for Bagmara upazila unit leader of JMJB (Jagrata Muslim Janata Bangladesh) Abdus Sattar Mastar and 24 activists of the militant Islamist party.

The 24 zealots are among 64 party activists arrested on Monday while clashing with police, protesting the murder of three party men by angry villagers. Abdus Sattar Mastar was arrested Tuesday night.

Magistrate Sohel Imam Khan of Rajshahi Speedy Trial Tribunal fixed Saturday for hearing on the remand prayer as the accused were produced in the court in the evening.

The court also rejected the bail prayer of Abdus Sattar Mastar.

Abdus Sattar Mastar has been accused in all the three cases filed for "attempt on the life" of Sripur Awami League president Mokbul Hossain Mridha, murder of local AL leader Mahub Hossain in a bomb explosion and clashes with police.

The 24 are Hafizul Momin of Naldanga in Natore; Momen Uddin, Khalekuzzaman, Abdur Rashid, Belal, Fazlu, AK Azad, Lokman and Mofiz Uddin of Atrai in Naogaon; and Abdus Sattar, Abdul Motin, Abdus Subhan, Md Ali, Abdul Jalil, Abdur Rashid, Motiur Rahman, Shafi, Jonab Ali, Faruk, Abdul Hannan, Abdul Mannan, Mokbul Hossain, Abdus Sattar-2, Saiful and Akkas Ali of Bagmara in Rajshahi.

"After quizzing all the 64, we found these 25 people to be potential for more information", ABM Golam Kibria, officer-in-charge of Bagmara police station told The Daily Star.

Earlier on Saturday, several hundred angry people of Khoira, Kachhari-Koali and Sripur villages lynched three JMJB men after they along with eight others bombed to death Mahub and injured 30 villagers while fleeing after a failed attempt on Mokbul.

## Saifur opens Zia Auditorium

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Moulvibazar

Finance Minister M Saifur Rahman yesterday inaugurated the Shahid Zia Auditorium at Moulvibazar Government College yesterday.

Post and Telecommunication Minister Barrister Aminul Haque was the special guest at the function.

The 700-seat auditorium was built at a cost of Tk 2.57 crore.

The inaugural function was also addressed by, among others, Principal of the college Prof Noni Gopal Roy, Moulvibazar Pourasava Chairman Fayezul Karim Mayun and Naser Rahman MP. The inaugural function was rounded off with a cultural programme.

## SNAPS

### 3 girls rescued from trafficker in Rajshahi

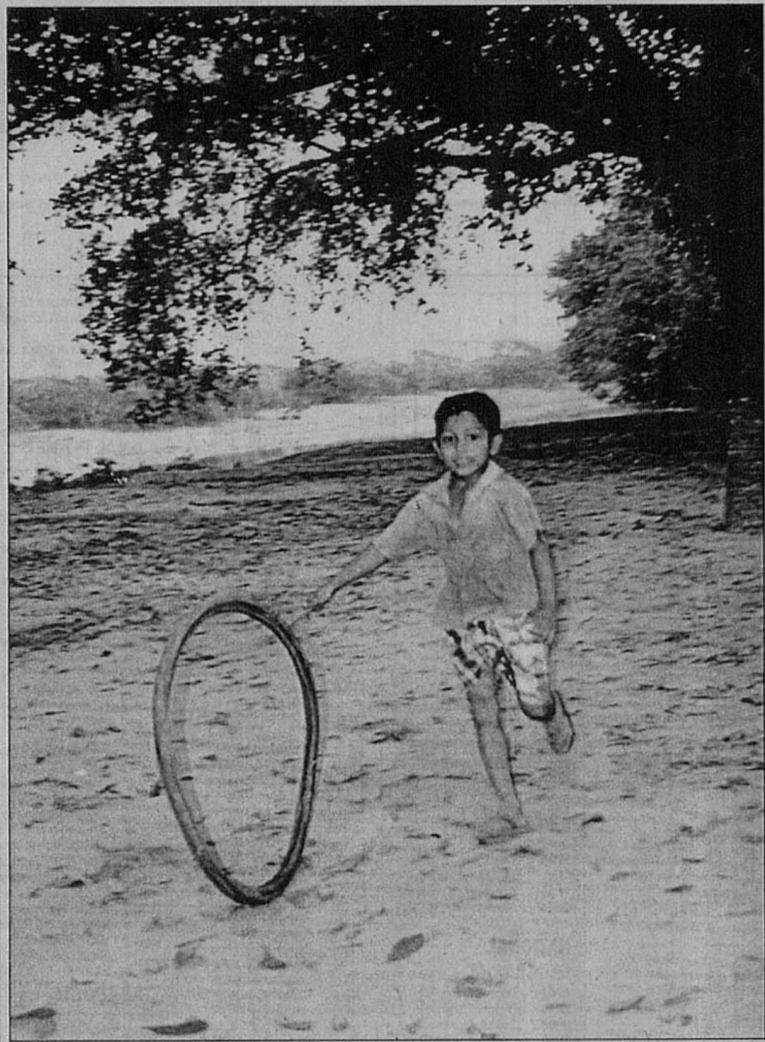
STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

Police on Thursday rescued three girls from an alleged woman trafficker at the city bus terminal and arrested a woman. The girls are Nasima, 12, Golapi, 16 and Shamima, 17, lured abducted from Anulia Purbopara village in Durgapur upazila. They were handed over to their families after rescue. Police said they suspect that arrested Rina Begum, 25, is a member of a gang of traffickers. She told police that she was taking the girls to Dhaka, luring them with jobs.

### Discussion on AIDS held

RU CORRESPONDENT

The Center for Communication and Development (CCD) and the Bangladesh Anti Aids Students Alliance (BASA) jointly organised a discussion on HIV/AIDS at the CCD office here yesterday. About 200 students of Rajshahi College, Rajshahi City College, Government Women College, Mother Bux College, Mother Bux Economic College, Shah Mukdum College, Darul Salam Madrasa and Madinatul Uloom Kamil Madrasa students took part in the discussion, styled Focus Group Discussion (FGD). Speaking on the occasion, CCD Executive Director Golam Mourtzoza called upon the students to work for creating mass awareness against HIV/AIDS. At the meeting the students, in group discussions, chalked out programmes to create mass awareness to prevent spread of HIV/AIDS in Bangladesh. The group discussion was followed by an open discussion. Programme Director Shahana Parvin and Programme Coordinator Abdul were present.



Carefree childhood days... the child makes the most fun of a rejected bicycle tyre, driving it with a stick under the tree amid fallen leaves in late winter.

## Order to arrest Bangla Bhai a 'mockery'

### Sarder Amjad tells Bagmara public meeting

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

Former minister and leader of a faction of Jatiya Party, Sardar Amjad Hossain, has said the Home Minister's order on Wednesday for arrest of 'Bangla Bhai' is a mockery as the Prime Minister's order is still "ignored".

"What is the use of this order when the Prime Minister's order is not followed", Amjad said addressing a public meeting at Bhabaniganj in Bagmara on Thursday. The meeting was organised to protest recent incidents in Bagmara.

"What is happening in our country now in the name of Islamic militant organisations was seen in Afghanistan in the past. Afghan militants drove out Russians, but they could not run the country. In course of time, Americans captured the country", Amjad said.

The same political leaders who had once patronised outlaws are now sheltering Bangla Bhai, he claimed.

Bagmara JP President Azaharul Haque chaired the meeting, addressee by, among others, party vice-president Shawkat Hossain Badal and general secretary Moklesur Rahman.

## 2 Rab posers held from Goalondo brothel

BSS, Rajbari

Police arrested two fake RAB members while they were collecting toll from brothel in Douladnia in Goalondo upazila of the district last night.

Police said, they were identified as Aowlad Hussain, 35, son of Azizul Islam and Aftab pramanik, 28, son of Janab Ali Pramanik of village Char Khan Khanapur in Rajbari Sadar upazila. They are from the same village.

## BARISAL SSC EXAM SCANDAL

### Schoolteacher, staff held, 4 suspended

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barisal

A teacher and an office staff of Baishari High School in Bonaripara in the district have been arrested and five other teachers and staff suspended by school authorities for their alleged involvement in changing answer scripts of an SSC (Secondary School Certificate) examinee last year.

The arrested persons are teacher Mustafa Kamal and office staff Motahar Hossain Bali. They have also been suspended.

The other suspended persons are teachers Sujit Charoborty and Niranjana Chowdhury; office clerk Matiar Rahman and peon Dulal Kahhar of Baishari School; and Sirajul Huq and Sirajuddin, two examinees who were on duty at Baishari High School centre during the SSC examination.

The actions followed filing of a case by Golam Mahub, secretary of the examination centre, with Banaripara police station on Tuesday.

suspended after the school Managing Committee at a meeting found their replies to show-cause notices "unsatisfactory".

The school authorities have formed a five-member inquiry committee headed by the headmaster of Banaripara Pilot High School for further probe. The committee has been asked to submit its report within 15 days.

Optical Mark Reading (OMR) identification of examination scripts of Mizanur Rahman, a poor but meritorious student, were changed with those of two other examinees -- Ziaul Huq and Sirajuddin.

As the SSC results were published, Mizanur Rahman failed but the two other students got 'A'.

After re-examination and investigation, Mizan got 'A+' and results of the two others were cancelled.

As the scandal came to light, Barisal Education Board cancelled SSC examination centre at Baishari High School and barred its teachers and staff from duty in public examinations.