



Police club pro-hartal activists in Haragachh yesterday. The hartal was called to protest power outage.

PHOTO: STAR

Violence marks Haragachh hartal for power supply

100 hurt in clashes; protesters batoned, tear gassed

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Rangpur

At least 100 people including Rangpur Municipality Chairman Mamunur Rashid and Additional Superintendent of Police Iqbal Hossen were injured in incidents of violence in Haragachh during hartal hours yesterday.

Police charged batons and lobbed over 100 tear gas shells to quell clashes between supporters and opponents of the hartal.

The hartal was called on Tuesday by students in protest against power outage for about two weeks in Haragachh. The hartal call was supported by bidi factory owners and workers. Haragachh is a hub of bidi factories.

The clash ensued when an anti-hartal procession led by the municipal chairman was attacked by pro-hartal activists.

As the anti-hartal procession came under attack, Municipal Chairman Mamunur Rashid ran away and entered the municipal compound. Pro-hartal activists attacked him there and beat him. They also damaged some vehicles.

Police led by Additional Police Superintendent Iqbal Hossen rushed there and swung into action, ensuring a clash with pro-hartal activists. The ASP was injured there.

Reinforced, police lobbed at least 100 tear gas shells and

brought the situation under control there. Intermittent clashes also took place in the small town during the hartal.

Haragachh is without power supply for about two weeks following a row between consumers and Rural Electrification Board (REB).

The power outage triggered demonstrations by local people including students and bidi factory workers. Sources claimed that at least 40,000 workers lost their jobs as bidi factories stopped production due to power outage.

The situation turned for the worse on Tuesday when movable property of two local Awami League leaders and a leader of Bidi Workers Union, accused in a

case filed by an REB official, were attacked as they did not appear before court.

They were sued in an incident of attack on a senior REB official last month when he had gone to realise outstanding power bills.

REB sources earlier said power bills amounting to around Tk 7 crore were outstanding with consumers in Haragachh.

The consumers stopped payment of bills after Power Development Board (PDB) handed over power distribution in the area to REB about two and a half years back. The consumers are demanding power supply by PDB, saying it is less costly and supply is more regular than by REB.

B'BARIA TRIPLE MURDER

Another killer confesses to involvement

OUR CORRESPONDENT, B'baria

Masum, one of the four alleged professional killers, during interrogation yesterday confessed to police his involvement in the gruesome murder of Akter Hossain's family in Brahmanabaria town.

Another killer, Babul Mia, confessed his involvement in the murder before First Class Magistrate Sayed Nurul Basir on Monday.

They gave description of the murder, now a talk of the town.

Akter Hossain, 37, a First Class contractor for LGED, his wife Sabrina Akter Joly, 27, and their two and a half years daughter Arna were hacked to death at around 2 am on August 10.

Masum and Babul Mia said they and Akter's elder brother Siraj, nephew Rajib and Suhel were involved in the murder.

Police said they confessed that professional killers were hired to kill Akter Hossain, his wife Sabrina Akter and the minor daughter Arna.

On the night of August 10, Babul reached the spot where five other killers including Masum, Kabir and Suhel were waiting.

They all were equipped with grill-cutter, 'chapat', takishal and other sharp weapons. As planned earlier, they reached near the the window of Akter's kitchen. One part of the window was open. They broke the grill with their grill-cutter. One of them, Kabir, who was slim entered the house. At once Kabir climbed stare case and opened the door of the of rooftop stair. The rest entered the house through rooftop window.

They hacked Akter, Sabrina and Arna to death and escaped.

On Thursday, Akter's elder brother Sirajul Islam filed a murder case with the Sadar thana without accusing any body. He also tried to prove that it was an incident of dacoity.

But his postures seemed mysterious to neighbours.

The reason behind the murder came to light when the professional killers were locked in conflict over distributing the money they were given for this.

It is learnt that Sirajul Islam hired the killers with Tk one lakh to kill of his younger brother Akter and his family to capture his property.

Killer Babul informed police that ringleader Masum gave him only Tk 10, 000 while another killer, Kibir, got Tk 30,000.

Bomb blasts trigger wave of protests

STAR NATIONAL DESK

The bomb blasts across the country yesterday triggered a wave of protests and condemnations by leaders of political parties, socio-cultural organisations, professional bodies and people representing different strata of society.

Reports on protests and condemnations were pouring in The Daily Star Office in Dhaka from different districts till late night yesterday.

Our Staff Correspondent in Khulna reports: Khulna district and city units of Awami League held a rally yesterday evening in front of the party office to protest the incidents.

With city AL president and lawmaker Talukder Abdul Khaleque in the chair, speakers at the rally strongly condemned the bomb attacks across the country that created panic among the people.

They accused anti-liberation forces for this, saying it is a conspiracy against pro-liberation forces.

They demanded resignation of the government for its failure to ensure security of people's life and property. They called upon the people to resist the "rise of fundamentalists" in the country. They should be resisted in the interest of democracy.

The rally was addressed by, among others, city AL Secretary Mizanur Rahman, former Whip Mostafa Rashidi Shujua, district AL President Shaikh Harun-or-Rashid and former lawmaker Begum Mannujan Sufian.

BNP lawmakers Ali Asgar Lobi and M Nurul Islam, Whip Ashraf Hossain, Khulna city Mayor Shaikh Tayebur Rahman, former Speaker Shaikh RazzakAli, Khulna district BNP president Prof Majidul Islam and Khulna city BNP Secretary Nazrul Islam Manju in a statement strongly condemned the "planned bomb attacks designed to create panic among people and lawlessness in the country".

The BNP leaders demanded immediate arrest and punishment of the perpetrators.

Khulna unit of Sammilito Ainjibi Parishad observed a token hunger strike to protest the bomb attacks. It also held a rally. Presided over by Khulna Sammilito Ainjibi Parishad President Md. Abdul Halim, it was addressed by, among others, Kazi Abdus Salam, Kazi Badsha Man and Mina Mizanur Rahman.

Khulna city unit of Jamaat-e-

Islami in a statement said the bomb attacks across the country as part of a "deep-rooted conspiracy to destabilise the democratic government and create a law and order situation".

Leaders and activists of Jamaat later brought out a procession, followed by a rally where they called upon the people to stand united against "conspirators".

It is a well planned sabotage to tarnish image of the government of four-party alliance, they said.

The rally was presided over by city Ameer of Jamaat and lawmaker Mian Golam Parwar and addressed by, among others, its Nayeb-e-Amir Prof Abdul Matin, Shaiful Alam and Moulana Abul Kalam Azad.

Khulna district and city units of Bangladesh Chhatra Union accused "fundamentalists" for the bomb attacks. It is a design to disgrace all pro-liberation forces, they said and called upon the people to forge greater unity against "anti-liberation forces responsible for today's series of bomb attacks".

A Correspondent reports from Sirajganj: Sirajganj district units of BNP, Awami League and Bangladesh Samajtantrik Dal brought out separate processions protesting bomb blasts in the town and elsewhere in the country.

At a rally held at Nazmul Chatter, AL leaders blamed the BNP-led alliance government for sheltering religious extremists, "who are responsible for the

blasts". AL leaders Abu Eusuf Surza, Abdul Latif Mirza, Altaf Hossain, Mostafa Kamal Khan and others spoken at the rally.

On the other hand, BNP leaders at a separate rally blamed AL for the bomb blasts, saying it was done to portray Bangladesh abroad as "country of fundamentalists" and to disgrace the government.

Our Correspondent reports from Mymensingh: Different political parties including the 14-party alliance led by Awami League (AL), BNP and Jamaat-e-Islami brought out separate processions and held rallies in the town protesting the bomb blasts.

The 14-party alliance held a rally at Krishnachura Square with district AL president Motiur Rahman in the chair. It was addressed by, among others, Abdul Matin Sarker MP, Nazrul Islam and Sadek Hossain of JSD and Ziauddin Ahmed of NAP.

They held the BNP-led government responsible for patronising anti-liberation forces "who are behind all acts of violence in the country". They demanded resignation of the government.

BNP and Jamaat-e-Islami at another blamed "anti-people and anti-state forces" for the blasts.

It was addressed by, among others, BNP district secretary Manjurul Haque Manju and district Amir of Jamaat Prof Jasim Uddin.

Long March to press for development

Set up land port, stop river erosion, demand Kurigram people

RAFIQUE SARKER, back from Kurigram

A large number of people joined a 'long march' from Bongo Shonahat in Bhurungamari upazila to Kurigram district headquarters yesterday, organised to

press for their five-point demand including setting up of land port at Bongo Shonahat.

Organisers claimed that at least 20,000 people from all walks of life took part in the 'long march' led by local leaders of ruling parties. It was held amidst tight secu-

urity in the wake of bomb blasts across the country.

The other demands include steps to protect the area from erosion by Brahmaputra and Dudkumor rivers, renovation of Bhurungamari-Kurigram road and infrastructure development in the

two upazilas.

BNP leader Saiful Islam Rana, Nageshwari Municipality Chairman Mohammad Hashem, Kurigram district Amir of Jamat-e-Islami Azizur Rahman Shwapan led the 'long march'. People from the three upazilas in Kurigram joined the procession.

The march started after a rally held at Bongo Shonahat. Several hundred motorcycle riders joined the march in the front, who were followed by people crammed in motorised vehicles and many on foot.

The marchers converged on the ground in front of Kurigram Deputy Commissioner's office in the afternoon, where another rally was held.

The leaders handed over a memorandum to the DC Azizur Rahman.

The rally was presided over by Saifur Rahman Rana, president of the Parishad and addressed by, among others, Shamsul Alam badsha, Khairul Alam, Kazi Mustafa and Kazi Nizam.

They said the people of northern districts are deprived due to lack of attention by successive governments. They said a bigger movement will be launched if the government does not take steps immediately to resolve their problems.



PHOTO: STAR

The Uttar Dhorola Development Sangram Parishad organised a 'long march' from Bongo Sonarhat in Bhurungamari upazila in Kurigram to the district town yesterday to press its five-point demand.

6X2

DEATH OF PRISONER

Bogra jailor, 4 others sued for 'torture'

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bogra

Bogra Jail Superintendent AKM Zahir Uddin and four other officials have been sued for alleged torture and lax in treatment of a prisoner -- Abdur Razaque--, who died on June 16 this year.

The victim's mother, Rokeya Begum, filled the case with the court of a First Class Magistrate in Bogra.

Rokeya Begum, wife of Abdul Jabber of Modapara in Bogra town, complained that her son Razaque was sent to jail on September 12 last year in a "fake case" filed under the Woman and Child Repression Prevention Act.

She alleged that her son fell sick

in jail in June this year.

A pharmacist demanded money for her son's treatment and she gave him the money. But the authorities did not take proper care of her son, she alleged.

She had also sent medicines for her ailing son, but those did not reach him, she further alleged.

On June 16 this year, she was informed by the jail authorities that her son Razaque was shifted to Bogra Mohammed Ali Hospital for better treatment. But he died there on 16 June.

The jail authorities informed her on 17 June that her son Razaque died from liver problems, she said.

5X3

5X3

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