

Biman paralysed for 9hrs as staff go on strike

Passengers get stranded as striking employees demand pay hike; foreign airlines cancel flights

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

All the seven airports in the country plunged into anarchy as agitated Bangladesh Biman employees seeking new pay scale began an indefinite strike from 6:00am yesterday that however ended at 3:00pm as they reached an understanding

with the government.

Normalcy returned to the airports after 5:00pm as it took about two hours for the striking staff to resume work.

During these 11 hours, around 1,000 passengers coming from Kuwait, Riyadh, Jeddah and Kuala Lumpur in Biman flights were

stranded and harassed. Passengers of Qatar Airlines flight from Doha also got stranded.

At least eight foreign airlines refrained from flying to Bangladesh as they were informed about the strike the previous night. Unaware of the strike beforehand, at least three foreign airlines diverted their

flights from Zia International Airport (ZIA).

Biman cancelled five domestic and one Kolkata bound flights, and delayed seven other domestic and international flights, causing sufferings to many more passengers.

As Biman provides all ground

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BDR, BSF agree to step up coordinated patrols

AFF, New Delhi

India and Bangladesh yesterday agreed to increase coordinated patrols of their shared border and drew up a set of confidence-building measures to prevent an outbreak of tensions, a report said.

The two countries' border security forces also discussed India's contentious project to fence off the 4,095-kilometre (2,539-mile) border to stop illegal immigrants, a move opposed by Dhaka, the Press Trust of India news agency said.

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15 pirates killed in gunfight with cops

35 including 5 law enforcers injured

BDNEWS, Bhola

At least 15 pirates were killed and 35 others, including five law enforcers, injured in a gunfight between the robbers and joint force of police and coastguards at Monpura in Bhola yesterday.

The bodies were washed away by the Meghna river, police and coast-

guard sources said.

The bullet-hit injured include the officer-in-charge (OC) of Tazmuddin Police Station, two other cops and two coastguards.

The joint force of the police and coastguards has cordoned off Char Tazammul, the scene of the gunfight.

The law enforcers arrested three bullet-wounded pirates and seized

two foreign-made guns, one pipe gun, four bullets, some lethal weapons and a trawler.

The injured pirates and cops were admitted to Tazmuddin Hospital.

Injured OC of Tazmuddin Police Station Rabiul Alam said a 16-member team of the joint force, led

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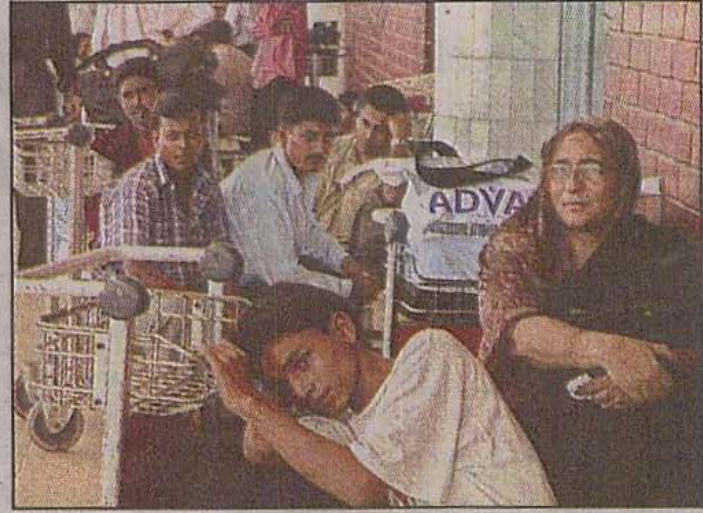


PHOTO: STAR

Employees of Bangladesh Biman, left, stage demonstration in front of the national airlines' headquarters in the capital demanding new pay scale, and stranded passengers, right, wait at a lounge at Zia International Airport during the nine-hour strike yesterday.

Fuel station strike from today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Petroleum Dealers, Distributors, Agents and Petrol Pump Owners Association enforces an indefinite strike across the country from today to press home its 12-point demand.

Meantime, Energy Ministry Adviser Mahmudur Rahman said the government may take legal action if the strike is imposed. The legal action could be cancelling the licences of the strikers, he added.

The association on August 31 announced to stop buying fuel from the government depots if the demands are not met by September 27. It also sent a letter to the energy ministry, which did not respond, association leaders said.

The leaders said they will not purchase petroleum from the

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Military finds no militant link of army men

JULFIKAR ALI MANIK

A quick inquiry of the military intelligence has found no evidence for the allegations against retired and in-service army personnel of having any link with Jama'atul Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB) or training its activists on bomb-making.

The situation arising out of the allegations against army men took a twist as the information provided by civil investigators about the statements of JMB activist Obaidullah Suman, his identification of retired army lance corporal Harun-ur-Rashid as a bomb-trainer, and Harun's information about the involvement of eight in-service army men in the training came under doubt.

Following the development, the

military intelligence is about to investigate how, why and who provided the information about the army men's involvement in the August 17 bomb attacks that shook the whole nation.

Military sources said they are sure that Harun, arrested on information that he along with former honorary captain of the army Mohiuddin trained the JMB bomb squads, was not involved with the JMB, "let alone training them".

The information about former honorary captain of the ordnance factory Mohiuddin's involvement was also not proved as no Mohiuddin with this designation was found in the ordnance factory records.

"We've found one retired honorary captain with this name who was

a clerk of the army engineering corps...He was merely a clerk and had no training in bomb," said a source in the army.

Although Mohiuddin did not match Suman's statement, the Directorate General of Forces Intelligence (DGFI) picked up clerk Mohiuddin, who hails from Kishoreganj, from Kachukhet in the capital a couple of days ago and interrogated him.

On being sure that he had no link with the banned militant organisation, the DGFI later released him.

Irked by Harun's alleged confession, which pointed finger at links of eight in-service defence personnel to the August 17 countrywide bomb blasts, the military intelligence forces launched their own facts-

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Probe on into tampering with govt officials' job records

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The establishment ministry has launched a departmental inquiry into the missing of and tampering with government officials' annual credential reports (ACRs), the establishment secretary told a parliamentary body meeting yesterday.

The parliamentary standing committee on the establishment ministry also asked the establishment ministry to submit a detailed report on the missing and tampering of ACRs at the next meeting, committee member AKM Jahangir

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Nabisco fined for 2nd time

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A mobile court yesterday fined Nabisco Biscuit and Bread Factory Limited for the second time for not mentioning expiry dates on the packages of some of their biscuits and raw food products.

The court also found that the factory, situated in the Teigoan commercial area, uses sodium bicarbonate without an expiry date and maintains a huge quantity of glucose without the seal of the Bangladesh Standards and Testing Institution (BSTI).

For all these offenses, the court led by Magistrate Rokan Ud Doulah, fined the factory Tk one lakh.

However, the court said it observed a better condition during the second raid on the factory.

"During our first raid in the Nabisco factory last June, we found most of the biscuit packages without an expiry date, but this time we

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Students abuse Buet VC

Call indefinite strike over Puja vacation

DU CORRESPONDENT

Unruly students of Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (Buet) yesterday abused the vice-chancellor following an altercation over declaring the Durga Puja vacation.

A student platform styled Students Against Terrorism called an indefinite strike from today,

demanding resignation of VC Alee Murtuza branding him a "fundamentalist".

Meantime, at least three students and five activists of Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD), student wing of ruling BNP, were injured in clashes on the campus. Five of them - Annu, Rajib, Anup, Himadri and Russell - were admitted to Dhaka Medical

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Govt doesn't recognise Tuesday Group

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government does not recognise the existence of the so-called "Tuesday Group" and will not allow any foreign diplomat to interfere in domestic politics, including the election process, a high government official said.

"We can recognise groupings of ambassadors and high commissioners like the Saarc, Asean or European Union because these are recognised groupings in the world. But what is the Tuesday Group... I have never heard about any such grouping

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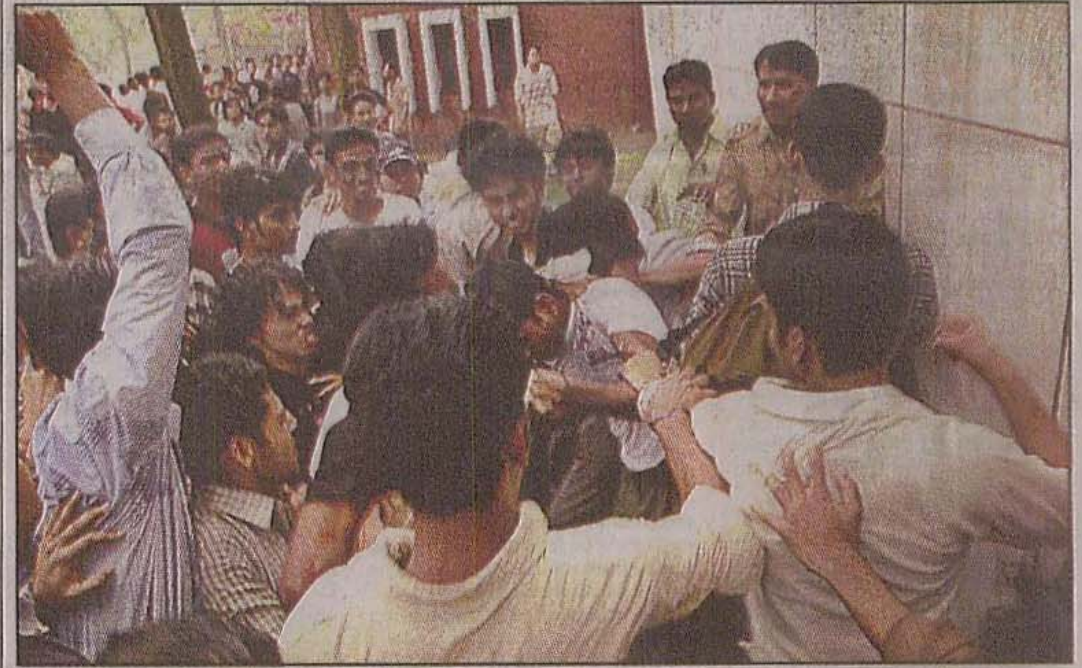


PHOTO: STAR

Buet students agitating for a seven-day Durga Puja vacation rough up a Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal activist for threatening them on the campus yesterday.

The bubble floats 2mrw
 gotta be there
you first!