

River transport workers go on strike

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Noujan Sramik Federation began an indefinite strike across the country from midnight last night protesting the government's decision to issue certificates for vessel masters and drivers.

Leaders of the federation said they have started the countrywide strike and it will continue until the decision is withdrawn.

Recently, the Department of Shipping has introduced certificates for vessel masters and drivers for five years instead of certifying for life and postponed issuing new certificates.

Leaders of the federation at an emergency meeting at federation's central office at Sadarghat yesterday decided to strictly enforce the strike. Later, the river transport leaders and workers brought out a procession, which terminated at Mukhtangan.

"There is no alternative but to

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UNSC reaches tentative accord on N Korea sanctions: US envoy

China, S Korea back action

AFF, United Nations/ Beijing

The UN Security Council reached a tentative agreement on a compromise draft resolution mandating wide-ranging sanctions against North Korea over its declared nuclear test and will vote on it Saturday, the US ambassador said yesterday.

US Ambassador John Bolton told reporters that the vote would take place "tomorrow morning", after the text is finalised, with possible "additional changes" later in the day.

"The council has agreed basically that we'll put our text in blue (meaning that it is ready for adop-

tion) this afternoon and vote tomorrow morning," the US envoy said. "We do have unanimous agreement."

Japan's UN envoy Kenzo Oshima, the council's president for October, confirmed that a vote was planned for Saturday morning.

"All council members are asked to come back tomorrow," Oshima said.

The latest text, drafted by council experts late Thursday after envoys of UN powers resolved some of the key outstanding issues, invokes Article 41 of the UN Charter, which authorizes sanctions not involving the use of force, such as economic

and diplomatic sanctions.

This was a key concession to veto-wielding China, North Korea's closest ally and its biggest provider of aid, which insisted on including Article 41.

The text, a copy of which was obtained by AFP, "condemns" last Monday's announced nuclear test in defiance of a Security Council resolution, "acting under Chapter Seven of the Charter of the United Nations, and taking measures under its Article 41".

The draft, essentially based on

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PHOTO: STAR

The footpath being occupied by hawkers, passers-by and Eid shoppers make their way through the road, foiling attempts to ease traffic congestion on the Mirpur Road adjacent to the New Market in the capital.

PM leaves for Jeddah today

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia leaves Dhaka for Jeddah today on a weeklong visit to Saudi Arabia as guest of the Saudi government.

The foreign ministry here said the prime minister will call on King Abdullah Bin Abdul Aziz Al Saud in Mecca tomorrow. She will have a separate meeting with Crown Prince Sultan Bin Abdul Aziz in Makkah on October 17.

The prime minister and the Saudi leadership will discuss matters concerning bilateral relations between the two countries during the meetings, the foreign ministry said.

On the sidelines of the official talks, heads of the Islamic Development Bank (IDB) and the Organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC) will call on the prime minister.

The prime minister will perform holy Umrah and go to Medina to perform Ziarat at the Raoza Mubarak of Prophet Muhammad (SM).

The Bangladesh community will host an Iftar in honour of the prime minister in Jeddah on October 16.

She is expected to return home on October 21.

Plight of fire victims

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

With dashed hopes, Humayun Kabir now faces uncertain future as Nur Plastic Industries that he restarted only a month ago, gutted in Thursday's fire at Lalbagh.

Earlier he had invested Tk 8 lakh to establish a plastic ornaments factory at Nama Posta of Lalbagh but he had to close it one year ago due to loss in the business.

With loan taken from the relatives and a cooperative society, he managed to restart the factory one month ago after a year's break, but Thursday's fire destroyed the factory.

"All the valuables of the factory have been burnt down, making me a pauper again. I have been struggling hard to change my fate but it betrayed me again," sighed Humayun.

His wife and four sons, who stayed with him even a year before, now live in Noakhali as he can no longer afford to keep them in Dhaka.

Humayun is one of the many people who turned destitute by the

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PHOTO: STAR

Two members of a family sit amid the remains of their house yesterday that was ravaged in Thursday's fire at Lalbagh in the city.

RMG workers to enforce 48-hr strike tomorrow

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Different associations of garment workers have called strike at garment factories across the country on Sunday and Monday demanding re-fixing of their minimum wage, implementation of the tripartite agreement, withdrawal of false cases against the workers and Eid bonus before the Eid-ul-Fitr.

Garment Workers Unity Forum, Jatiya Sramik Jote Bangladesh, Garments Sramik O Shilpa Rakkha Jatiya Mancha, Bangladesh Garments Sramik Trade Union Centre organised separate rallies and urged all to make the strike successful.

At a rally at city's Mukhtangan yesterday, leaders of National Garment Workers Federation termed the recently passed Labour Law 2006 a black law that goes against the workers' interest.

Leaders of Bangladesh Garments Sramik Trade Union Centre said the government and

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BNP plans show of strength on power handover day

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Ruling BNP yesterday asked its leaders and lawmakers to prepare to make a show of its strength in the streets across the country on the day the four-party alliance will hand over power to the caretaker government.

It also decided to hold a public rally in front of the BNP central office at Nayapaltan either on October 28 or 29 and a cultural programme to mark the occasion of power transfer, sources said.

The decisions came at a meeting with Secretary General Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan in the chair at his official residence on Bailey Road.

"As a political party, the BNP now is stronger than any time in the past and we will face the opposition politically at the end of our rule," Bhuiyan, also LGRD and cooperatives minister, told reporters after the meeting.

"We will hand over power within a few days and the Eid vacation too will begin soon. At the meeting, we have discussed how to go about our organisational activities during that time," he said adding that they also talked about ways to have the party men even more active.

"In the last five years, we have done many development works across the country. We have decided to tell the people about those through rallies and processions," he added.

Meeting sources said the party has decided to ensure its dominance on the city streets during the time of power handover. Especially, the lawmakers from the Dhaka city have been asked to be on the alert while leaders and workers will take position at different strategic points on that day.

The participants also stressed the need for strict vigilance by the

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Massive protests if power handed over without reforms

HASAN JAHID TUSHER

The Awami League (AL)-led 14-party opposition combine plans to go for a countrywide indefinite hartal and blockade programmes alongside a march towards Dhaka if the present government hands over power ignoring the opposition's demand for electoral reforms.

The combine is preparing to bring to the capital thousands of demonstrators with sticks, oars and poles of boats from across the country if the government on expiry of its tenure on October 27 hands over power to a caretaker government headed by former chief justice KM Hasan. It also plans to keep the capital blockaded for an indefinite period to make the interim government unable to function.

Following directives from AL chief and Leader of the Opposition Sheikh Hasina, grassroots level leaders and activists of the party in

different districts are now getting ready to come to Dhaka with oars and poles.

"If the ongoing AL-BNP dialogue fails to resolve the issue of electoral reforms as per our demands, we will have no alternative but to go for a countrywide indefinite hartal and blockade programmes to press the demands," AL Presidium Member Tofail Ahmed said at a meeting of the 14-party combine yesterday.

Tofail feared that the country would head towards political confrontations and crisis if their demands for reforms in caretaker government system and the Election Commission (EC) are not met by the present government.

AL acting General Secretary Obaidul Quader said people who will come to Dhaka with sticks, oars

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Consolation win for Bangladesh

BISHWAJIT ROY FROM JAIPUR

Vice-captain Shahriar Nafees smashed his second one-day hundred as Bangladesh outclassed Zimbabwe with a 101-run victory to restore pride in their last preliminary game of the ICC Champions Trophy at the Sawai Mansingh Stadium in Jaipur yesterday.

The left-hander scored unbeaten 123 off 161 balls with 17 fours and one six, the highest individual score for any Bangladeshi batsman, to propel the Tigers to 231-6 in 50 overs after being put into bat in the day-night match.

Bangladesh then stormed to their first win in the history of the competition when they shot out Zimbabwe for 130 in 44.4 overs. Both the teams have been eliminated from the meet but for

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Sehri, Iftar timing

Ramadan	Oct	Sehri	Iftar
20	14		5-37
21	15	4-36	5-36
22	16	4-36	5-35

Prayer Timing

October 14

	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	4-35	4-45
Zohr	12-45	1-20
Asr	4-30	4-45
Maghrib	5-37	5-57
Esha	7-30	8-00

Source: Islamic Foundation