

BLOCKADE PROGRAMME

Burimari land port paralysed, incurs loss of Tk 1crOUR CORRESPONDENT,
Nilphamari

Due to countrywide blockade enforced by Awami League-led grand alliance since Sunday last, the government has incurred a loss of more than Tk 1 crore in revenue at the country's second largest land port at Burimari in Lalmonirhat district.

Clearing and Forwarding (C&F) agency sources said during this period all the activities of the port came to a standstill.

Hundreds of incoming and outgoing tourists, patients and students and more than 100 trucks loaded with perishable imported goods were stranded at both sides of the port on Bangladesh and Indian territory.

Sources at the port said about

200 incoming and outgoing tourists, patients and students from Nepal, Bhutan, India and Bangladesh were stranded and suffered untold miseries.

Of them, women, children and elderly were the worst victims.

Due to onrush of stranded tourists, all the hotels and rest houses at Burimari and nearby Patgram upazila headquarters became over crowded.

Many of them took shelter in nearby houses of the local people and bus counters.

While talking to newsmen, Hamidul Islam, an attendant of a cardiac patient from Domar upazila, said he was returning with his father from Kolkata after his treatment there.

"But I could not return home due to blockade although my ailing

father's condition is not well," he lamented.

A Bangladeshi importer Akhtar Hossain from Saidpur said he had spent his days amidst great anxiety for his truck-loaded perishable goods.

No bus, truck and train could ply from Burimari in last three days.

The pro-blockaders burned used tyres and brought out processions surrounding the land port compelling the authorities concerned to suspend all activities.

Thousands of people including day labourers who are dependent directly or indirectly on the port have become unemployed.

Assistant Commissioner of Customs A Z M Zakaria told newsmen that due to suspension of normal activities at the port, the government had to incur huge revenue loss.

3 killed in Chandpur road crashOUR CORRESPONDENT,
Chandpur

Three people were killed and three others critically injured in a road accident on Chandpur-Comilla highway in Hajiganj upazila yesterday.

The accident occurred when a Chandpur-bound bus and a Dhaka-bound taxi had a head-on collision at 6:00am due to dense fog, said UNO Anisur Rahman and Police Super Obaidur Rahman while talking to this correspondent.

The dead were identified as Zakir, 30, Wasim, 30, and Opu Chowdhury, 30.

Zakir and Wasim died on the spot while Opu died in Hajiganj Hospital.

Opu hailed from Pallabi of Mirpur in Dhaka, said police.

The injured are Abul Kalam, 35, of Matlab, cab driver Manik, 35, of Syedpur and Md Nasir, 30, of Rajargaon under Hajiganj upazila.

They have been admitted to Hajiganj Health Complex.



PHOTO: STAR
Sewerage water overflows on a road in front of the BTME Bhaban at Karwan Bazar in the city, causing suffering to pedestrians. The picture was taken yesterday.

Jubo League calls hartal in Munshiganj today

UNB, Munshiganj

Jubo League, youth front of Awami League, called a half-day hartal in the town and its nearby areas today, protesting the killing of its leader Abul Kalam Azad Raja.

Local leaders of Awami League and Jubo League demanded arrest and exemplary punishment of the killers of Raja, vice president of No. 2 ward Jubo League.

Raja was killed by the miscreants at Idrakpur in the town on Monday evening.

Victim's father Nurul Haque filed a case with local police stations accusing nine people in this connection.

CNG-run microbus explodes

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A gas cylinder of a CNG-run microbus exploded while refuelling at a filling station at Jatrabari in the city yesterday.

The owner of the microbus was injured in the heavy explosion that destroyed the vehicle and damaged window panes of several nearby buses and the filling station at Jatrabari.

Employees at the station blamed the gas cylinder for the blast saying it was faulty and could not take the pressure of gas.

The incident occurred at United Cab Limited, a CNG filling station at Rayerbagh area at 6:40am, said police.

Standing only a few yards away

from the spot, Yunus Miah, owner of the microbus, sustained injuries as some glass pieces hit his face.

The driver, who went to get water just before the explosion, has been absconding since the incident.

Death anniversary of Badal observed

DU CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) yesterday observed the 15th death anniversary of its leader Moniruzzaman Badal on Dhaka University campus.

To mark the day, BCL central and DU committee placed wreaths at the memorial of Badal in front of Shamsunnahar Hall in the morning.

Motorcycle hijacked

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A gang of criminals hijacked the motorcycle of a staff of The Daily Star at Dhanmondi in the city on Monday night.

The gang in a car first hit the motorcycle of Ehsanur Raza Roni at Dhanmondi Road No. 27 at around 11:45pm when he was returning home from the office.

As Roni fell to the ground, the criminals came out of their car and started beating him while one of them sped away with his motorcycle.

Later, other members of the gang also sped away in the car.

Roni received minor injuries in the incident.

A general diary has been filed with Mohammadpur Police Station in this connection.

German envoy meets Dhiraj

UNB, Dhaka

German Ambassador to Bangladesh Frank Meyke yesterday met Advisor Dhiraj Kumar Nath at his office and discussed issues of bilateral interest.

During the meeting, the German Ambassador hoped that the pace of socio-economic development and democratic progress in Bangladesh would continue, and said all the EU countries treat Bangladesh as their dignified partner.

The Advisor thanked the German government for extending cooperation to Bangladesh during the War of Liberation and postwar development activities.

CEDAW session begins Jan 15

The 37th session of the United Nations Committee on the Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) will begin at the UN headquarters in New York on January 15, says a press release.

Ferdous Ara Begum, the newly elected member of the committee, will attend the session. She was elected a CEDAW member on June 23 last year for a four-year term from 2007 to 2010.

At the session, the committee will review reports by 15 state parties and measures taken to implement CEDAW provisions and also elect a chairperson, three vice-chairpersons, and a rapporteur for two-year tenure.

President's statement hailed

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

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total of 468 pro-BNP teachers of Dhaka University in a statement yesterday hailed President/Chief Adviser Iajuddin Ahmed's statement saying that through his speech the president gave logical explanation of his initiatives taken during the tenure of the caretaker government.

The teachers said president's statement indicates that he could realise the main reason of the ongoing political crises in the country.

They also said people of the country would welcome president's any initiative that aims at protecting the sovereignty and constitution of the country and saving people's life and property.

The signatories include White Panel Convenor Prof Sadruddin Amin, Amirul Rahman, Ferdous Hossain, Tajmeri SA Islam and Mozammel Hoque.



PHOTO: STAR
Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) Chairman Justice Sultan Hossain Khan speaks at the inaugural session of a three-day conference on 'Transparency in the Election Process' organised by Odhikar at Spectra Convention Centre in the capital yesterday. On his left is Ambassador and Head of Delegation of European Commission to Bangladesh Dr Stefan Frowein and on his right is columnist Farhad Mazhar. (Story on Page-16)

'Hold polls on time to continue democratic process'

DU CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Sammilita Peshajibi Parishad has called upon the caretaker government to hold the ninth general elections on time to continue democratic processes in the country.

In a joint statement yesterday, the parishad leaders also urged the government to take firm actions to save lives and properties of people against the backdrop of country's volatile political situation.

They also expressed grave concern over the undemocratic activities of some political parties.

The sudden declaration by some political parties to boycott the elections has put the country's democratic and constitutional process into uncertainty, said the statement.

Those who signed the statement included parishad's Chairman Engineer Mahmudur Rahman, Vice-president Journalist Mozammel Haque, Secretary General Prof AZM Zahid Hossain, Agriculturist Javed Iqbal, Film Director Chashi Nazrul Islam and Prof Dr Md Aminur Rashid.