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Prepare for agitation

Khaleda tells Rajshahi rally
UNB, Rajshahi

BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia yesterday declared that programmes of anti-government movement will be announced from the party's May 19 Dhaka city grand rally. The movement will be launched to save the country and its people from "repression, misrule and misdeeds" of

Settle conflicts first, then go for movement

Party men urge
ANWAR ALI, Rajshahi

Though BNP men at yesterday's grand rally in the city's Madrasa Maidan agreed on Khaleda Zia's call for launching a movement, the grassroots leaders think that the party should not go for the movement before reorganising it and settling intra-party conflicts.

AL men attack BNP rally-goers

1 killed, 100 hurt in Natore; hartal called in Bogra for Sunday

STAR REPORT

One person was killed and nearly 100 injured in Natore yesterday when activists of ruling Awami League attacked BNP activists on their way to attend the party's grand rally in Rajshahi.

The deceased was identified as Zakir Hossain, president of Garidaha Union under Bogra's Sherpur upazila. BNP leaders blamed the ruling AL for the killing but AL leaders made a counter-allegation, saying the opposition activists attacked the offices of the party's local units and houses and shops owned by AL men at Singra in Natore.

In protest of the killing, BNP will stage demonstrations in all the district headquarters Saturday and observe a half-day hartal in Bogra on Sunday.

The namaz-e-janza (funeral) of Zakir Hossain will be held at Altafunnessa ground in Bogra today after the Zohr prayers. BNP and its front organisations will observe his gayebana janaza across the country Friday.

BNP Secretary General Khandaker Delwar Hossain condemned the attack on his party workers and demanded arrest of the attackers.

BNP leaders including lawmaker Mostafa Ali, Bogra Municipality Mayor Mahabubur Rahman and Lalmonirhat Municipality Mayor Mosharrif Hossain Rana blamed cadres of local AL lawmaker Zunaid Ahmed Pallab for the attack.

Zunaid, however, denied the allegation. "The BNP activists attacked Awami League offices and houses owned by our party leaders and activists, but we showed the highest patience," he



Abrupt pouring just before BNP's divisional grand rally in Rajshahi yesterday prompts the crowd to use chairs as umbrellas. Inset, Opposition Leader and BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia is addressing the rally.

Khaleda's 'no confidence' ignored

HC bench rejects second time her plea for referral to CJ
STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A High Court bench yesterday for the second time rejected BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia's petition that expressed "no confidence" in the bench over getting justice in a writ petition regarding her cantonment house.

The bench of justices Md Imman Ali and Obaidul Hasan adjourned for a week the hearing on Khaleda's writ petition filed in May last year challenging a government notice for vacating her cantonment house.

Legal experts said HC benches have jurisdiction to reject such petitions, but a bench rejecting such a petition twice was unprecedented.

Eminent jurist Rafique-ul Huq said he had never saw such an instance in his fifty-year career.

War probe chief quits

Sahara defends his appointment despite 'dubious' political past; chief prosecutor terms it a mistake
STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Chief of the war crimes investigating agency Abdul Matin quit yesterday amid controversy over his appointment and alleged affiliation with Islami Chhatra Sangha, the then student wing of anti-liberation force Jamaat-e-Islami.

Home Minister Sahara Khatun announced it at a brief news conference at her Secretariat office in presence of Matin.

Earlier in the morning, Matin tendered his hand-written resignation letter to Home Secretary Abdus Sobhan Sikder.

Sahara, however, strongly defended his appointment as head of the seven-member agency formed on March 25 this year. "The government surely made a right decision," she added.

Chief Prosecutor of the International War Crimes Tribunal Golam Arif Tipu contradicted Sahara's view saying the authorities made a mistake by appointing Matin.



Abdul Matin

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Appointments shrouded in questions

JULFIKAR ALI MANIK and HASAN JAHID TUSHER

No disciplined methods were followed to form the bodies to try the war criminals that led to an unexpected reshuffle in the prosecution panel and resignation of chief investigator Abdul Matin within four and 40 days respectively.

Prior to formation of the investigation agency and prosecution panel on March 25, a number of influential ministers and policymakers apparently engaged in a competition to include their proposed names.

Inclusion of ruling Awami League lawmakers Nurul Islam Sujan and Sanjida Khanam in the announced 12-member prosecution panel first drew flak and the government later dropped their names.

Of the announced names, the government has appointed only six with Golam Arif Tipu as chief prosecutor

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LAW AND ORDER SLIDE Cops point at AL men

KAILASH SARKAR

Law and order has deteriorated largely because of widespread tender manipulation and violence by ruling party activists, senior police officials have alleged.

They made the allegation at a quarterly crime conference at the police headquarters in the capital, said sources.

The police high-ups said chain of command in the law enforcement agency is at stake as many junior officers tend to defy seniors cashing in on their ties with ruling party leaders and lawmakers.

They expressed frustration over frequent political intervention, which is hampering discipline and the sense of pride in the police force.

About 150 high-ranking police officers attended the two-day conference that concluded yesterday.

The police chief asked the police personnel to go tough on ruling party cadres involved in tender manipulation and campus violence, said sources.

Ruling party lawmakers and leaders often intervene in their professional duties. Besides, some police officers try to gain personal interests by serving political leaders.

Inspector General of Police Nur Mohammad warned of stern action against any official, who instead of performing duties try to wield influence in the force capitalising on their ties with political "godfathers".

Requesting anonymity, a senior police official told The Daily

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Mysterious murders on rise

SHAHEEN MOLLAH

The recovery of the body of one unidentified person in Khilgaon area yesterday brought the number of secret murder victims to seven in the city over the last nine days, a clear indication of increasing trend of such killings.

Officer-in-charge (OC) of Khilgaon Police Station Nazimuddin said police recovered the body of a youth aged around 30 from an under-construction house in Nasirabad area at 9:00am.

Police suspect that miscreants strangled the man by using cloth or rope and dumped the body there. There were bruises around the victim's throat.

On Tuesday the body of Mizanur Rahman, Assistant Sub-inspector of Ramna Police Station, was recovered from Mirzapur in Tangail.

Two more bodies recovered on the same day -- one from inside a drum at a bus counter

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DEV BUDGET GLITCH

Work quality may drop as tender terms eased

REJAUL KARIM BYRON

The quality of rural development work might suffer because of the cabinet's recent decision to allow inexperienced bidders to contest for projects worth up to Tk 2 crore, and selections of contractors through lotteries, development partners and planning officials feel.

On March 1 the cabinet decided to amend the Public Procurement Act (PPA) for the second time in four months, to concretise the new provisions.

Planning ministry officials, a prominent economist, and development partners said if the latest amendment is passed by the parliament, the gate will be flung wide open for partisan favouritism, resulting in low quality work under some ministries.

They said the amendment will make it quite easy for ruling party leaders to arrange work orders for their flunkies in collusion with local level government officials, taking advantage of the "no experience necessary" clause and the system of lottery.

In June last year when the amendment initiative was just taken the World Bank and Asian Development Bank in separate letters to the government said qualification requirement is a fundamental criterion in any competitive bidding, the proposed changes would undermine fairness and equitable treatment of

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