



Scuffle between law enforcers and political leaders, including lawmakers, or police action on such big shots is a common hartal culture in Bangladesh. Yesterday's hartal, called by BNP-led four-party alliance, was not an exception. These photos snapped within 20 minutes from 7:17am show police action on BNP Chief Whip Zainul Abdin Farroque after a brawl with him near parliament complex at Manik Mia Avenue in the city. (Story on Page 1)

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

**KRISHNA MEETS MEDIA EDITORS**

**Delhi wants more ties with Dhaka**

BSS, Dhaka

Bangladesh-India relation is now at a "momentous juncture" and "we are looking forward to a meaningful visit of Prime Minister Manmohan Singh to Bangladesh, said Indian External Affairs Minister SM Krishna yesterday. Krishna, who arrived in Dhaka yesterday afternoon, was having an interaction with the editors of leading newspapers and electronic media at hotel Sonargaon in the evening. Indian High Commissioner to Bangladesh Rajeev Mitter was present at the interaction. When an editor pointed out that Singh's controversial remarks reflected the "mindset" of a section of the Indian establishment which fed him with wrong information, Krishna said, "I had a meet-

ing with the prime minister three days ago and the PM has conveyed in unequivocal terms of his affection for the people and the leadership of Bangladesh." "There is no reservation on the part of India and its people about relations with Bangladesh. There is no factor, which limits our relationship. Sky is the limit of our relations with Bangladesh", he added. When another editor pointed out a sense of frustration over the implementation of 51 decisions contained in the Joint Communiqué, adopted during Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's visit to Delhi January last year, he admitted "certain delays" and said the gestation period in a democratic set up was longer but the two countries were well set to implement the projects.

In this context, Rajeev Mitter said a lot of work has been done in bilateral cooperation in the power sector and a long-term power purchase agreement between the two countries is in the final stage. When an editor referred to the killings along the border, Krishna said maximum restraint has been ensured and as a result, number of such killing has come down drastically. "We will have to deal with the border situation in a humanitarian manner," he said adding that there should be strong coordination to check such incident. "There is no justification in the killing of innocent people. But at the same time, border management is the responsibility of both the governments and border rules have to be adhered to," the external affairs minister said.

**SCBA president demands PM's resignation**

UNB, Dhaka

Supreme Court Bar Association (SCBA) President Khandker Mahbub Hossain yesterday asked Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina to step down voluntarily. "Don't do excess anymore, step down willingly, otherwise, face dire consequences for clinging on to power," he said. Speaking at a meeting of pro-BNP lawyers in front of the Supreme Court entrance during yesterday's hartal, Mahbub also demanded midterm elections and restoration of the repealed provision of non-party caretaker government to oversee free and fair election.

**Maintain austerity in power use**

**PM urges people**

BSS, Sangsad Bhaban

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday reiterated her call to the people to maintain austerity in using electricity at their houses and workplaces as well. "You have to maintain austerity in using power so that we could provide new electricity connections to the consumers," she said and advised all to switch off power immediately after office hours and keep air cooler at 30-degree Celsius to this end. Replying to a supplementary of treasury bench member Waresat Hossain Belal in the Jatiya Sangsad, Hasina mentioned various programmes undertaken by her government for increasing the country's power generation. She said after assuming office, her government has taken prompt steps to solve the country's power crisis.

Hasina criticised the past BNP-Jamaat government for its negligence in improving power situation. She said the BNP during its five-year tenure and the subsequent caretaker government for two years did not do anything for raising the country's power generation. The BNP had destroyed the sector through unbridled corruption and mismanagement, she added. Answering to the main question, the prime minister said her government has taken various steps across the country to prevent illegal connections of power. She said steps have been taken to conduct 15 mobile courts in Dhaka, five in Chittagong and others in different divisional and district headquarters to ensure lawful action against the illegal power users. Steps have also been taken to make the Power Act-1910 time benefiting, she added.

**Schoolgirl commits suicide**

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A girl student of class VIII allegedly committed suicide by hanging herself at her house in the city's South Jatrabari yesterday.

Nurjahan Akhter Nipa, 14, daughter of Nur Hossain, was a student of a local school.

Jatrabari police said Nipa entered her room after her mother rebuked her yesterday noon.

After long, her family members and neighbours broke open the door and found her hanging from the ceiling fan.

**Blind federation member killed**

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A member of National Federation of the Blind was killed yesterday afternoon allegedly by his rival group at the organisation's Chawk Bazar office in Old Dhaka.

The deceased, Idris Bepari, 50, was an accused in the organisation's previous general secretary Khalilur Rahman murder case, said Kazi Wazed Ali, officer-in-charge of Mirpur Police Station.

Idris and other accused in the case were released on bail about a month after the killing on January 2, he added.

Parvin Begum, wife of Idris, told The Daily Star that she and her husband went to the organisation's central office on Orphanage Road around 11:00am. Around 2:00pm when she was talking to some people outside the office building, Idris came out of an office room screaming in pain as his throat was slit open.

He was rushed to Dhaka Medical College Hospital where doctors declared him dead.

Parvin said the rival group of Khalil might have killed her husband over a previous enmity between Khalil group and the group led by Ayub Ali Hawladar.

**Barapukuria coal price may get refixed**

BSS, Dhaka

The power division, a major buyer of Barapukuria coal, will consider refixing coal prices to reduce loss of Barapukuria Coal Mine Company Ltd (BCMCL).

The power division for long was not responding to the energy ministry's proposal to increase the coal price, as BCMCL has been incurring a loss of US\$41 per tonne for the last two years, an authoritative source of the ministry told the news agency. "Now, they (power division) have agreed to review the coal price", the source said.

**জমি বিক্রয়**

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