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Govt slaps ban, BNP shifts date

Opposition defers mass procession plan to tomorrow, says it is showing tolerance; AL postpones rally

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The BNP last night rescheduled today's mass procession in Dhaka for tomorrow.

The decision came after a daylong drama followed by a police ban on rallies and processions in the capital and four other cities today amid fears of a deterioration in law and order.

"Showing tolerance, we deferred our programme for a day. We will hold it on Monday [tomorrow]. We will go for fresh programmes if the government obstructs our Monday programme," acting BNP secretary general Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir told reporters on emerging from an emergency meeting of the party's standing committee.

BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia presided over the meeting at her Gulshan office in the capital.

The Awami League has also postponed its rally today in the capital following the imposition of the ban.



"We have postponed our rally out of respect for the law. We will sit soon to decide our next course of action," said Mofazzal Hossain Chowdhury Maya, general secretary of AL Dhaka city unit.

Meanwhile, police have imposed a ban on public gatherings in the metropolitan areas of Chittagong, Khulna, Rajshahi and Sylhet.

On January 9, Khaleda Zia at a Chittagong rally declared country-wide mass procession programmes for today and a rally in Dhaka on March 12 to apply pressure on the government for a restoration of the caretaker government system.

The BNP chairperson was scheduled to lead a procession today from the BNP's Naya Paltan office in the capital.

More than two weeks after her announcement, the AL city unit on Thursday declared that it would hold a

TRANSIT, TRADE
India wants renewal of protocol
Considers hiking fee

OUR CORRESPONDENT, New Delhi

India will seek extension of its Trade and Transit Protocol with Bangladesh beyond March this year.

The Ministry of External Affairs will try to extend the timeframe when it comes for renewal to provide longer certainty to vessel operators, a statement issued by the Indian Prime Minister's Office said yesterday.

It said India's shipping ministry has been asked to consider providing additional money to ensure navigation facilities on India-Bangladesh waterways route at night times.

Efforts would also be made for the early completion of Ashuganj multimodal port by Bangladesh and its regular use as a transit port, the statement added.

The decisions were taken recently at a meeting presided by Pulok Chatterjee, the Indian prime minister's principal secretary.

BNP out to go to power 'using army'
Hasina alleges, doubts the party's belief in democracy

AGENCIES

BNP is trying to go to power riding on the shoulder of the army, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina alleged yesterday.

"It's their old fashion. They always tried to get to power using the army," she said addressing a view-exchange meeting with the Awami League leaders from Laxmipur district at the Gono Bhaban.

Hasina said the history of BNP shows that they never believed in democratic means for transfer of power, UNB reports.

Blaming BNP for undermining the country's



Air quality worst in India
Bangladesh next polluted country
STAR REPORT

Bangladesh ranks second from last in terms of air quality with regard to its effect on human health, according to 2012 Environmental Performance Index (EPI).

The study, which is conducted by Yale and Columbia Universities, reveals that India holds the very last position in controlling

REPORT IN CANADIAN MEDIA

Niko paid bribe for Bapex deal

Mamun got \$10,000 to win Hawa Bhaban nod

SHARIER KHAN with EMRAN HOSSAIN

A Canadian magazine revealed last August that Niko, a company of that country, had paid half a million dollars to Hawa Bhaban men to get a controversial joint venture deal with Bangladesh Petroleum Exploration & Production Company Limited (Bapex) in 2003.

Hawa Bhaban used to be the political office of BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia who was also the prime minister back then, but it doubled as an alternative power centre revolving around her elder son Tarique Rahman. One of Tarique's

close friends is Giasuddin Al Mamun, who became quite influential and wealthy during the last BNP-led regime.

The ROB Magazine -- a supplement of one of the leading Canadian dailies Globe & Mail -- quoting Canadian police records of Mamun's statements, said initially Niko offered him a retainer of US\$10,000 to make the deal successful.

But Mamun ultimately failed to make the deal happen on his own. The report "Niko Resources: Ottawa's corruption test case" by reporter Greg McArthur, published on August 26, 2011 states, "As a



A clash between Jatiya Party activists and staff of Rangpur Medical College Hospital yesterday. PHOTO: FOCUS BANGLA

RECRUITMENT AT RANGPUR MEDICAL

50 hurt as JP men run amok

A CORRESPONDENT, Rangpur

At least 50 people, including a lawmaker, were hurt during a clash between Jatiya Party activists and employees of Rangpur Medical College Hospital in the

northern city yesterday over the legislator's "demand" for jobs for his men.

Five truckload of stick-wielding Jatiya Party activists led by lawmaker Hossain Mokbul Shahriar Asif, nephew of JP chief HM

Ershad, went to Rangpur Medical College Hospital to demand 30 class-III and class-IV jobs for his party men around 12:30pm, sources and witnesses said.

This did not go well with the employees of the hospital and

they set up a barricade between the JP activists and the hospital director's office. A clash ensued and law enforcers had to fire 40 teargas canisters and use truncheons to dispel the feuding sides.

Heartiest Welcome to Shri Namo Narain Meena Honourable Minister of State for Finance Government of India.

State Bank of India Bangladesh Operations

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ইমকন এখন **ইমকন ১**

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১ টি ট্যাবলেট প্রতি ট্যাবলেট অর্ধ-১.৫ গ্রাম: পিচোলেভাসলোন বিন

ইমকন ১
পিচোলেভাসলোন বিন

রেনাটা লিমিটেড

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