

**ROAD BLOCKADE
Fakhrul again
denied bail**

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday rejected BNP acting secretary general Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir's bail petition in a case hours after granting him bail in another case.

Judge Md Zahirul Haque of the Metropolitan Sessions Judge's Court in Dhaka denied the bail to Fakhrul in a case filed with Motijheel Police Station for blasting cock-tails and assaulting police during the opposition's countrywide road blockade on December 9 last year.

Earlier in the day, the same judge granted bail to the BNP leader in another case filed with Sutrapur Police Station for assaulting police and preventing them from discharging duties during the road blockade.

Fakhrul was arrested in the two cases on January 3. Later, his lawyer filed the bail petitions with the court.

**Inu for inclusion
of internet right
in constitution**

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Right to internet is one of the fundamental human rights, and this right should be included in the constitution, said Information Minister Hasanul Haq Inu yesterday.

He stressed on developing a strong mechanism to combat cyber crimes and blocking offensive contents on internet.

Free flow of authentic information can play a significant role in empowering people and strengthening democracy, he said.

The minister told a public dialogue titled "Freedom of Expression and the Internet in South Asia: A way forward to ensure people's right" at a hotel in the capital.

Voice for Interactive Choice and Empowerment (Bangladesh), Internet Democracy Project (India), Internet Security Nepal, Point of View (India) and Global Partners and Associates (UK) jointly organised the dialogue.

Referring to the recent Ramu violence, Information Commissioner MA Taher emphasised responsible use of the internet and social media as its misuse can push the society into a situation that created in Ramu.

Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB) Executive Director Dr Iftekharuzzaman said openness, transparency, equal access, accountability, participation are the main pre-requisite to ensure internet governance.

Journalist Manjurul Ahsan Bulbul said the young generation can be isolated from the real social world through excessive use of internet and social media.

The youths are becoming confined to virtual world and becoming separated from real social life, he said.

Voice for Interactive Choice and Empowerment Executive Director Ahmed Swapan Mahmud moderated the dialogue, while telecom expert Abu Saeed Khan, a number of bloggers, among others, spoke on the occasion.

**UK, Bangladesh
to collaborate on
energy research**

OUR CORRESPONDENT,
London

The government and UK's Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council (EPSRC) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on energy research yesterday.

Under the MoU, researchers from internationally renowned UK universities and institutes will partner with their Bangladeshi counterparts to develop research projects on renewable energy, and work relating to energy technologies, systems, services and policies.

UK Energy and Climate Change Minister Greg Barker said, international collaboration on research is vital to make renewable energy viable for developing countries and help tackle climate change. Through the MoU we can also learn valuable lessons from countries that are undergoing rapid change, he added.

**Cops again foil MPO
seekers' demo**

'Injured' Patuakhali teacher dies; rights bodies condemn police action

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Law enforcers once again barred agitating teachers and employees of non-MPO educational institutions from holding their demonstration in the capital yesterday.

Police fired tear shells, liquid gas and water cannons to disperse them in two places.

More than 200 agitators went to Manik Mia Avenue to hold a scheduled fast-unto-death programme in front of the residences of lawmakers around 10:30am but police obstructed them at western corner of the avenue.

After being dispersed, a group of teachers went to Sobhanbagh to stage a sit-in before the Prince Plaza. But police again obstructed them and used water cannon to disperse them. The teachers claimed that the law enforcers also lobbed tear shells, injuring some of them.

Lastly, the agitators rushed to TSC area of Dhaka University and held a demonstration on the footpath of TSC till 3:30pm.

The teachers and employees under the banner "Non-MPO Shikkha Pratishthan Shikkhak Karmachari Oikya Jote" have been agitating since January 7 to press home their demand to include their educational institutions in the monthly payment order (MPO) list.

However, police barred the previous

demonstrations they tried to hold in the last five consecutive days and they mostly used liquid spray to disperse the agitators.

According to their platform, there are more than 100,000 teachers and employees of around 7,000 non-government secondary schools, colleges, madrasas and technical educational institutions who have been deprived of MPO facilities for long.

Esharat Ali, president of the jote, yesterday said they will announce their next course of action through a press conference at Dhaka Reporters Unity today.

Esharat also claimed that a teacher who sustained injuries during the demonstrations on January 10, died in Patuakhali early on Tuesday.

The deceased is Maulana Sekander Ali, 45, super of Chargorabdee Islamia Dakhil Madrasa under Dumki upazila.

However, Sekander's family said he had just gotten ill after coming back from the capital and passed away.

Condemning the cop action, Asian Forum for Human Rights and Development (FORUM-ASIA), a regional human rights organisation representing 47 rights bodies, yesterday, in a statement, urged the government to refrain from using force on the teachers, rather initiate dialogue with them.

**Religious
fundamentalists
attempt to kill
blogger Asif
Allege relatives**

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Religious fundamentalists attacked popular Bangla blogger and online activist Asif Mohiuddin on Monday night with an intention to kill him, alleged a group of bloggers and victim's relatives yesterday.

They said Asif wrote several articles on militancy in the name of religion, secularism and religion-based politics, which incensed some people.

They have been threatening him on Facebook and blogs, they told journalists at Dhaka Medical College Hospital where the injured blogger is under treatment now.

Three unknown persons hacked Asif with sharp objects in front of his office at Uttara-11 around 10:00pm on Monday. Asif suffered injuries in the head, shoulders, back and hands. Doctors said he bled profusely and was not "out of danger".

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Condolence



We deeply mourn the sad demise of M. A. Syed, a visionary man of principles and values. We pray to Allah for the salvation of the departed soul.

We express our condolence to the bereaved family.

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