

BNP calls 12-hr hartal in Ctg for today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

The main opposition BNP called a 12-hour hartal in Chittagong district from 6:00am today protesting Sunday's attack on BNP lawmaker Mostafa Kamal Pasha's residence allegedly by Awami League activists that left his son bullet-hit.

Iqbal Pasha Javed was shifted to a Dhaka hospital from Chittagong Medical College Hospital for better treatment, BNP Sandwip upazila unit General Secretary Belayet Hossain told The Daily Star.

Announcing the hartal at a press conference in Chittagong Press Club, BNP Chittagong city unit President Amir Khasru Mahmud Chowdhury said the primary terminal exam will remain out of the hartal's purview.

He alleged that the administration was not taking any step against the attackers and so they too "will face trial".

Pasha, Chittagong-16 constituency lawmaker, said "Awami League and Jubo League activists" on 15 motorcycles came to his Rahmatpur union residence in Chittagong's Sandwip upazila around 3:30pm and fired gunshots.

"Javed was hit when he came up to save me. They conducted the attack to kill me," he said.

The attack was among a string of alleged violent incidents. AL Sandwip unit General Secretary Mohammad Ali Khosru alleged that on Saturday evening a group of BNP men cut off the wrist of a local Jubo League activist named Akbar Hossain.

The next morning, another Jubo League activist, Mehedi, was kidnapped by some miscreants of BNP and tortured inside Pasha's residence before being released, he claimed.

No case was filed with Sandwip Police Station till yesterday afternoon over any of the incidents, said the officer-in-charge, Gias Uddin.



Acting Deputy United States Trade Representative Wendy Cutler, left, and Bangladesh Commerce Secretary Mahub Ahmed, right, sign the US-Bangladesh Trade and Investment Cooperation Forum Agreement (Ticfa) in Washington, DC, last night while US Trade Representative Michael Froman, standing left, and Bangladesh Ambassador to the US Akramul Qader, standing second from right, look on.

PHOTO: AFP

ARSON, VANDALISM ON DHAKA-CTG HIGHWAY UP chairmen urge for army deployment

CITY DESK

The Association of Union Parishad Chairmen in Chittagong yesterday urged the government to deploy army on the Dhaka-Chittagong highway in Sitakunda upazila to stop arson attacks on vehicles and vandalism there.

Rehan Uddin Rehan, president of the association, also requested for a military and police combined operation against activists of Jamaat-e-Islami and Jamaat-backed Islami Chhatra Shibir.

He was addressing a press conference at Chittagong Press Club.

Rehan, also chairman of Baroiyadhala union, claimed that in the last four months, Jamaat-Shibir activists vandalised around 1,000 vehicles and torched over 100 on the 50km stretch of the highway in the upazila.

Meanwhile, police arrested eight Shibir activists in Sitakunda upazila in connection with vandalism and arson attacks

SEE PAGE 4 COL 2

TICFA SIGNING BY INTERIM GOVT AL's ploy to win US backing for one-sided poll

Say left parties

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Although the current poll-time government is not allowed to take any major policy decision, its signing of the Trade and Investment Cooperation Forum Agreement (Ticfa) with the US yesterday appears to be a ploy of the Awami League to garner the superpower's support for holding a one-sided election, several left parties alleged yesterday.

Holding separate rallies in front of the capital's Jatiya Press Club, they also said the trade deal would have adverse effects on the country's economy.

The government signed the Ticfa with the US in Washington last night.

Addressing a rally of the Communist Party of Bangladesh (CPB), Bangladesher Samajtantrik Dal (BSD) leader Rajekuzzaman Ratan said the agreement would require Bangladeshi pharmaceuticals to buy licences from the US to produce some patented drugs they were producing now with a waiver. So, prices of medicines will go up due to an increase in the production cost, he added.

Khalequzzaman of BSD and Monjurul Ahsan Khan of CPB also spoke at the programme.

Separately, leaders of Gonotantrik Bam Morcha (GBM), an alliance of several leftist parties, said the government was signing the controversial

SEE PAGE 4 COL 5

HASINA-KHALEDA PHONE TALKS HC rejects writ petition against publishing content

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday summarily rejected a writ petition filed challenging the legality of recording and publishing the phone conversation between Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia.

Abdullah-Al Baki, a Supreme Court lawyer, lodged the petition as a public interest litigation on November 2 praying to the HC to direct the government to identify the people responsible for recording and publishing the conversation, and take appropriate legal action against them.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 5

Interim cabinet gives final nod to DNA law

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The interim Cabinet at its maiden meeting yesterday gave the final approval to the draft DNA Act-2013 which would help identify and bring to justice criminals and find the identities of unidentified bodies.

The act states how to accurately carry out DNA tests, to preserve and protect databases, bring under a framework the quality of laboratories and administrative system and to set up a directorate to properly carry out DNA activities.

Having a maximum seven years jail penalty and Tk 3 lakh fine, the act allows law enforcers to take to court persons who refuse to provide DNA samples.

The act will help identify blood relations, Cabinet Secretary M Musharraf Hossain Bhuiyan told journalists after the meeting in Bangladesh Secretariat chaired by Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina.

A person will be jailed for two to five years for running unauthorised DNA laboratories or organisations and face three years' imprisonment and a fine of Tk 50,000 for unauthorised collection or disclosure of DNA data, says the act.

A person trying to damage or corrupt DNA reports

SEE PAGE 4 COL 8

10 hurt as RMG workers, police clash in Gazipur

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Gazipur

At least 10 people, including a policeman, were injured in a clash between workers of a garment factory and police in Nayapara area of Kashimpur in Gazipur yesterday.

Witnesses said the clash ensued after police prevented agitating workers of Alim Knitwear Ltd, a factory under Mondol Group, from blocking the Dhaka-Tangail highway at about 2:30pm.

Police charged baton and fired several rounds of tear shells to disperse the workers who retaliated by throwing pieces of bricks at the law enforcers, said witnesses. A police van was set on fire during the clash.

An agitating worker told The Daily Star that they were demonstrating as there was disparity in the wage rate between their factory and their sister factory, Moontex Ltd.

Inspector Nazrul Islam of Gaizpur Industrial Police said the situation was brought under control.

Five held by Rab in capital

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) picked up five people in separate incidents from the capital yesterday.

Acting on a tip-off, a Rab-10 team, led by Maj Mistah Uddin Ahmed, caught Javed Ali, an "arms dealer", with a pistol, a magazine, a bullet and a one-shooter gun from Abdullahpur where he was waiting to sell those around 3:00pm.

Meanwhile, a Rab-2 team, led by Jigarul Alam, arrested an alleged member of banned outfit Hizb-ut-Tahrir and recovered many anti-state leaflets and a pen-drive from his house on Mohammadpur's Shahjahan Road around

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4



Communist Party of Bangladesh and Bangladesher Samajtantrik Dal stage a rally before the capital's Jatiya Press Club yesterday protesting the signing of the Trade and Investment Cooperation Forum Agreement (Ticfa) with the US.

PHOTO: FOCUS BANGLA

Fire breaks out at two Ashulia factories

20 injured

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Savar

At least 20 people were injured in two factory fire incidents at Zirabo and Tongabari in Ashulia on the outskirts of the capital yesterday.

Fire fighters and witnesses said about 4:45pm a fire broke out at the ground floor of Aman Spinning Mills Ltd at Zirabo. Cottons were kept at the floor, sources said.

Five local people were injured while trying to douse the flame along with the fire fighters. They brought the blaze under control after one hour of

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

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