



Drivers and owners of battery-run three-wheelers lay siege to the residence of Sylhet Mayor Ariful Haque Chowdhury Thursday night protesting seizure of the unauthorised vehicles by law enforcers. A private car, inset, among around 100 vehicles vandalised by the demonstrators.

PHOTO: STAR



SEIZURE OF BATTERY-RUN 3-WHEELERS Drivers, owners go berserk in Sylhet

Damage 100 vehicles; besiege mayor's house

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

The drivers and owners of battery-run three-wheelers went berserk and vandalised over 100 vehicles in different parts of the city on Thursday night following the law enforcers' drive against the unauthorised vehicles.

Police yesterday arrested eight people and filed a case in this connection against 48 people, said Mohammad Rahamat Ullah, additional deputy commissioner of Sylhet Metropolitan Police.

During the drive, police seized around 100 three-wheelers, known as easy-bikes.

Meanwhile, the sufferings of the city dwellers escalated as the rickshaw pullers and CNG-run auto-rickshaws charged higher fares in absence of easy-bikes.

Protesting the drive, the drivers and owners brought out a procession in the city and held a rally under the banner Sylhet Mohanagar Easybike Samity at Zindabazar

on Thursday afternoon.

Later that day, the city mayor called a meeting to discuss the issue at his Kumarpura house around 10:30pm. He told the owners and drivers that BRTA should be consulted first in this regard.

The mayor also said he would call another meeting on Friday after consulting the BRTA.

Around 500 owners and drivers staged agitation in front of the mayor's house following the mayor's remarks.

Moments later, the agitating drivers started vandalising trucks, minibuses and private cars at Mirboksh tola, Manik Pir Road, Ambarkhana, and Sobhanighat areas at around 11:30pm which lasted half an hour.

Meanwhile, around 100 truck workers put barricade on the road from Sobhanighat to Roseview hotel point at midnight, protesting the attack on trucks. Police, however, cleared the road after an hour.

Lightning kills 2 kids

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kushtia

Two children were killed and two others injured by lightning while playing at Satbaria village in Bheramara upazila yesterday.

The dead are Sayem Hossain, 8, son of Humayun Ahmed; and Ivana Khatun, 11, daughter of Abdul Zalil, were declared dead at the hospital on arrival.

Govt to call

FROM PAGE 3

of getting necessary consular services due to non-cooperation of the two top officials of the embassy.

The ambassador in his letter to foreign ministry complained that Counsellor Monemul did not consult with him while renting out the office, did not deposit consular income to the government fund, among other malpractices.

The investigation found that the ambassador was not interested to listen to the problems of Bangladeshi workers there.

There may be some fault on the part of the counsellor, but the ministry did not find any such evidence of malpractice against him, official sources said.

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Indigenous people's rights

FROM PAGE 3

people, but it was being misunderstood.

The commission's members Swapan Adnan, Khushi Kabir, coordinator Hana Shams Ahmed, Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB) Executive Director Iftekharuzzaman were present.

Meanwhile, Parbatya Bangalee Chhatra Parishad formed a human chain in Larma Square area of the district town, protesting the visit of the commission's team.

The activists also gathered in front of Parjatan Motel and held a rally there.

A delegation of the commission is currently touring the hilly districts to observe the situation there. On the first day, which was Thursday, the delegation visited Khagrachhari and it was supposed to visit Rangamati yesterday.

But in the face of fierce opposition

from some Bangalee organisations, it declared that it had cancelled its pre-scheduled programme, and the commission's team was returning to Chittagong.

Following the declaration, six organisations of Bangalee settlers called off their 36-hour road and waterway blockade enforced in Rangamati protesting the visit of the commission's team to the hilly region, reports our Rangamati correspondent.

The organisations enforced the blockade at 6:00am yesterday, but called it off around noon.

The leaders of the organisations at a briefing at Vedvedi in the town said they withdrew the programme as the team cancelled its scheduled visit to Rangamati yesterday.

On Thursday, at a press conference, the six organisations called the block-

ade declaring the commission unwanted and controversial.

The organisations are: Somo Odhikar Andolan, Parbatya Gono Parishad, Parbatya Nagorik Parishad, Parbatya Bangalee Chhatra Parishad, Parbatya Bangalee Chhatra Oikya Parishad, and Parbatya Somo Odhikar Chhatra Andolan.

In the meantime, instead of going to Chittagong, the commission's team reached Rangamati in the evening, confirmed our district correspondent.

Two organisations in Bandarban -- Parbatya Bangalee Chhatra Parishad and Bangalee Nagorik Parishad -- have called a 96-hour road and waterway blockade tomorrow protesting the commission's visit to the district, reports our Bandarban correspondent.

The commission is likely to visit Bandarban tomorrow.

Teacher sent to jail

FROM PAGE 3

Shakil had made derogatory comments on Bangabandhu, the president and the prime minister during a class in January.

In-charge of the university's Khulna branch, Prof Anwar Karim, told BBC Bangla last evening that the student did not complain to the university authorities about Shakil. "Being informed from some local journalists, we inquired about the allegation and found no evidence," he added.

Shakil's family claimed that police arrested him without probing the allegation and he was a victim of conspiracy made by an influential quarter including a local journalist leader.

The influential quarter even ran aggressive campaigns against Shakil threatening him of dire consequences soon after the press conference, added the family.

Khulna police said none brought any

direct allegation against the teacher. After several local dailies published the news referring to the student's statements, it drew the administration's attention, police added.

Police then interrogated the teacher at police station and later detained him under the special power act, Officer-in-Charge Maruf Ahmed of Sonadanga Police Station told BBC Bangla.

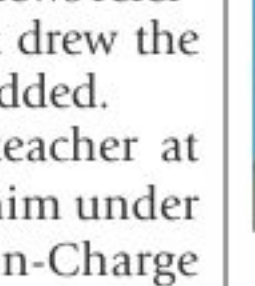
He, however, claimed that they got primary evidence against the allegation but failed to show any audio or video clip as evidence.

Maruf said they will also quiz Nayeem and will talk to other students. Investigation is yet to be complete, he added.

Terming the allegation baseless, Ishrat Jahan Lina, wife of Shakil, threw a question at BBC Bangla that how police arrested her husband only on the basis of a claim by a student instead of conducting any probe.

Death Anniversary

STAFF CORRESPONDENT



Today is the 19th death anniversary of Justice Mohammad Ansar Ali.

On the occasion, discussions, doa mahfil, and Qurankhwani have been arranged in the city's Banani graveyard and his village home in Naogaon, said a press release.

He begun his career as a lawyer and was awarded posthumous Matrebhasa Padak in 2001 for his role in the language movement.

Bangladeshis to be allowed

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"We were told that this group would be issued with tourist visas with a maximum 90-day stay in India," he said.

"These visas cannot be used for work or business purposes," he further clarified,

quoting the external affairs minister.

Swaraj has not offered any other category of visas, as being alleged by certain quarters, Sonowal defended.

He also accused Tarun of indulging in cheap politics.



Chakma King Barrister Debashish Roy and new queen Yan Yan at the latter's residence in Uzanipara of Bandarban yesterday. He got married for the second time, around 15 years after his first wife passed away in 1998.

PHOTO: BANGLAR CHOKI

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