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Protesters back to Shahbagh

Demand death penalty for Sayedee; police foil Gonojagoron Mancha sit-in

DU CORRESPONDENT

As the Gonojagoron Mancha activists returned to Shahbagh intersection after months, four of them were injured in police action using water cannons and teargas yesterday.

Two factions of the platform had taken their position opposite the National Museum demanding death sentence to Delwar Hossain Sayedee around 8:00am, witnesses said.

After the Supreme Court sentenced Sayedee to imprisonment until death around 10:00am, the faction led by Imran H Sarkar brought out a procession from Shahbagh and was stopped by police near Doyel Chattar.

Back to Shahbagh, pro-Imran protesters staged a sit-in at the intersection for about half an hour till the police attack around 11:40am. The law enforcers injured the four, including Imran.

Around noon, activists of Shahbagh Andolon, another platform of war crimes trial campaigners, were also harassed by police as they were gathering near the intersection.

The Imran-led faction announced a protest rally to be held at Shahbagh at 4:00pm today and tomorrow.

Shahbagh was reverberated with slogans chanted by Gonojagoron Mancha activists on Tuesday evening. It was their first gathering in months on the venue -- the centre of never-seen-before Shahbagh Andolon beginning February last year.

"It is a biased verdict aimed at establishing the politics of Jamaat-e-Islami and Shibir," Imran told reporters. "The verdict is an outcome of the government's compromise with Jamaat."

Imran, one of the injured, was taken to Dhaka Medical College Hospital. He alleged that the government split the platform in two to divide the youths against such biased verdicts.

In an interview with BBC Bangla, Shibli Noman, superintendent of Ramna zone police, said police dispersed the Mancha activists considering the location of two hospitals there.

"We have heard screams of patients as ambulances stood stuck in traffic due to the rallies," he said.

The Kamal Pasha-led faction too faced police barricade when its activists

SEE PAGE 11 COL 2



Police use water cannons and teargas to disperse the Gonojagoron Mancha activists agitating at Shahbagh yesterday against the Supreme Court verdict on Sayedee. The protesters said imprisonment till death is not enough for the Jamaat leader's war crimes and he deserves capital punishment. Bottom right, an elderly man protesting with a noose in his hand. PHOTO: PALASH KHAN/ RASHED SHUMON



UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY 178-member team to go with PM

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina leaves for the US on Sunday to lead Bangladesh to the 69th UN General Assembly (UNGA) with a 178-member delegation, the biggest entourage since her taking office in 2009.

Last year, she led a 134-member delegation to the 68th UNGA.

"The number of entourage members may rise further as the authorities have issued a government order [GO] later and others are possibly awaiting visa because their applications were submitted a few days ago," said a highly placed government source.

Besides, an advance team of Special Security Force (SSF) and civil officials had already been to New York, added the source.

During her weeklong visit, Hasina is scheduled to take part in a variety of UN meetings and side events, a bilateral meeting with Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi on September 27.



SEE PAGE 11 COL 5

AK Khandker quits as SCF chairman

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Air Vice-Marshal (retd) AK Khandker yesterday resigned as chairman of the Sector Commanders' Forum (SCF) yesterday, citing his old age as the contributing factor.

"I have got his [Khandker's] resignation letter around 8:00pm today (yesterday)," Haroon Habib, acting secretary general of the SCF, told The Daily Star last night.

In the letter, he stated that due to his old age, he was incapable of performing his responsibilities as the chairman of the SCF, Haroon said.

Khandker, who was the deputy chief of the liberation forces during the Liberation War, is facing strident criticism from different quarters, including lawmakers, civil society members and freedom fighters, for some

SEE PAGE 11 COL 3

Qaeda's S Asia wing claims major attack

REUTERS, Islamabad

Al-Qaeda's South Asia wing has claimed responsibility for hijacking a Pakistani naval ship and trying to use it to fire rockets at US vessels in the Arabian Sea, in the first major assault by the newly created group.

The SITE monitoring service quoted its spokesman, Usama Mahmood, as saying a group of militants had succeeded in seizing control of the Pakistani frigate PNS Zulfiqar and tried to use it to attack nearby US vessels.

"These mujahideen had taken control of the Pakistani ship, and they were advancing towards the American fleet when the Pakistani army stopped them," he said.

"As a result, the mujahideen, the lions of Allah and benefactors of the Ummah, sacrificed their lives for Allah, and the Pakistani soldiers spoiled their hereafter by giving up their lives in defence of the enemies of the Ummah the Americans."

SITE said Mahmood's statement also provided a picture and a detailed layout of the PNS Zulfiqar.

The navy and the army's press wing were not immediately available for comment.

The naval yard on Pakistan's Arabian Sea coast is a strategically important facility at the centre of US-Pakistani security, anti-

terrorism and anti-trafficking cooperation.

The foiled attack comes at a time when regional powers are already concerned about stability as US-led forces continue to withdraw from neighbouring Afghanistan, potentially creating a security gap for insurgents to exploit.

The attack, which lasted several hours, also shows just how much the Islamist militants are capable of striking at the heart of Pakistan's vast security apparatus and raises questions about the nuclear-armed nation's ability to guard its installations.

The Pakistani Taliban, closely allied with al-Qaeda, had earlier said that the Sept 6 attack was carried out with the help of insiders. Pakistan later arrested a number of navy personnel on suspicion of collaborating with the attackers.

Al-Qaeda announced the formation of the new group on Sept 4, with its chief, Ayman al-Zawahri, promising to spread Islamic rule and "raise the flag of jihad" across South Asia, home to more than 400 million Muslims.

Analysts say the move is part of al-Qaeda's plan to take advantage of the planned withdrawal of US-led forces from

SEE PAGE 11 COL 3

IS THREATENS TO TARGET WHITE HOUSE: PAGE 8

Another haul of arms, explosives in Satchhari

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Moulvibazar

For the fourth time in three months, Rapid Action Battalion members recovered a cache of firearms and explosives at the Satchhari National Park in Habiganj's Chunarughat upazila early yesterday.

There were 14 sacks of explosives, 112 rocket launchers and 48 chargers of rocket launchers among the weapons,

SEE PAGE 11 COL 1



Rab seizes 112 rockets at Satchhari of Chunarughat in Habiganj yesterday. PHOTO: BANGLAR CHOKH

Final push for Scottish referendum

Voting today

REUTERS, Edinburgh

On the eve of Scotland's historic referendum, polls showed support for staying in the United Kingdom just ahead of backing for independence but tens of thousands of citizens were still agonising over which way to vote today.

Three surveys showed support for independence at 48 percent compared with 52 percent backing for the union. They found 8 to 14 percent of Scotland's 4.3 million voters were still undecided before polls open at 0500 London time.

Leaders and supporters of both sides took to the streets yesterday for a final day of campaigning in a country gripped by excitement and hope balanced by a strong measure of dread and concern.

Voters will be asked to answer "Yes" or "No" to the question: "Should Scotland be an independent country?"

A "Yes" vote would spell the end of the 307-year-old union with England and the break-up of the UK.

MORE ON PAGE 8

Antarctic sea ice set for record high

THE GUARDIAN ONLINE

The extent of sea ice in Antarctica is set to reach a record high, scientists said, as they announced that Arctic sea ice appeared to have shrunk to its sixth lowest level ever.

The NSIDC said that satellite data was expected to shortly confirm whether the maximum extent of sea ice at the opposite pole, in Antarctica, had set a new record.

"Antarctic sea ice is poised to set a record maximum this year, now at

SEE PAGE 11 COL 5



The Daily Star



Integral Energy Limited

ONLINE POLL

Do you think it would be justified for the government to introduce one percent surcharge on calls and other uses of the device?

Yes (30%)
No (70%)

TOTAL VOTES: 213

TODAY'S POLL

Do you think it is justified for the private bus operators to charge higher fare from the passengers ahead of the Eid-ul-Azha and Durga Puja?

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www.thedailystar.net

PRAYER TIMING September 18

	Azan	Jamaat
Fazr	4-35	5-10
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	4-30	4-45
Maghrib	6-09	6-12
Esha	7-45	8-15

Source: Islamic Foundation