

RMG workers, cops clash near Secretariat

Student orgs condemn police attack on protesters

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A clash broke out between police and garment workers marching from Shrom Bhaban towards the Secretariat yesterday, as they protested for unpaid wages, Eid bonuses, and leave.

The confrontation occurred around 12:30pm in front of the Secretariat. Protesters claimed police charged batons at their peaceful demonstration, injuring several.

Some, including Dilip Roy, president of Biplobi Chhatra Maitree, were taken to Dhaka Medical College Hospital for treatment.

"Dilip was badly beaten and dragged into custody," said a protester.

He was later released.

Meanwhile, in a Facebook post last night, Dilip said police beat him up twice.

"They kept on cursing

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PHOTO: ORCHID CHAKMA

A woman sprinkles rose petals as she walks on a street at Dhaka University as part of a procession. Prachyanat organised the march, from TSC to Fuller Road, to honour the martyrs of the Liberation War and July uprising. They also protested Israeli atrocities in Gaza.

Committee formed to review quota in govt jobs

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Ministry of Public Administration has formed an 11-member committee to review the implementation process of quotas in government jobs and make necessary recommendations.

The committee has been instructed to submit a report within 30 working days, according to an official order issued in this regard yesterday.

The committee is headed by the additional secretary (Regulations) of the Ministry of Public Administration, while the deputy secretary (Regulations-I) of the ministry will act as the member secretary.

The formation of the review committee comes seven months after the then government issued a notification determining the quota system in government jobs following a ruling by the Supreme Court on July 23 last year.

According to the notification, 93 percent of direct recruitment will be based on merit.

The remaining positions are allocated to following quotas: 5 percent for children of freedom fighters, martyrs, and war heroines; 1 percent for ethnic minorities; and 1 percent for persons with disabilities and third-gender individuals.

According to sources from the Ministry of Public Administration, since there is no legal definition of the third gender in Bangladesh, there are no guidelines on how to implement the 1 percent quota for third-gender individuals in job recruitment.

Meanwhile, various groups, including persons with disabilities and ethnic minorities, have raised objections to their

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EC to review nine key areas of electoral reform

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Election Commission has been asked to provide its opinion on the Electoral Reform Commission's recommendations, focusing on nine key areas of reform.

Speaking at the Election Bhaban in Agargaon yesterday, EC Senior Secretary Akhtar Ahmed said, "The Cabinet Division has sought our opinion on these nine issues, and we will respond as soon as possible."

The proposed reforms include amendments to the Representation of the People Order,

for the December elections."

BCP challenges NCP's abbreviation

The Bangladesh Citizen Party (BCP) has objected to the abbreviation "NCP" used by the newly formed National Citizen Party, arguing that its correct short form should be "JNP" (Jatiya Nagorik Party).

BCP General Secretary Shahriar Khan Abir sent a letter to the EC on March 22, saying, "A party's name does not change regardless of the language it is written in."

EC Additional Secretary KM Ali Nawaz said the matter would be reviewed before a decision is made.

The proposed reforms include amendments to the Representation of the People Order, changes to the Election Commission Secretariat Act, election officer regulations, election observation and media guidelines, political party and candidate codes of conduct, draft affidavits, voter registration (including expatriates), postal ballots, transparency in electoral financing, and governance measures

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Ahmed said the chief election commissioner and EC members had discussed the proposals but could not yet disclose their recommendations.

The Cabinet Division sent a letter on March 19 urging prompt action.

When asked about the impact on upcoming elections, Ahmed said, "The impact will depend on the proposals. Our priority is to resolve these issues quickly so we can prepare

BCP, founded in 2018, is yet to be registered with the EC, while NCP, formed on February 28 by leaders of the July uprising, is the newest political entrant.

Meanwhile, a faction of the Jatiyo Party (JP) loyal to Raushan Ershad has applied to the EC for recognition of Raushan as party chair and Kazi Mamunur Rashid as secretary general.

The faction claims that JP's former chairman, GM Quader, led the party into the 2024 elections despite opposition from many leaders. At a meeting on February 24, they decided to remove Quader and General Secretary Mujibul Haque Chundu.

Their letter argues that the leadership change aligns with party regulations and seeks EC recognition.

India Today report of coup 'false, fabricated' Says ISPR

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) in a statement yesterday dismissed a report published by India Today, saying it was based on "false and fabricated" information.

The ISPR statement said it lacked credible sources or verifiable evidence.

The Bangladesh Army has strongly rejected the report that claimed that an emergency meeting was held amid an alleged possibility of a coup against Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus, it said.

The ISPR statement said, "The claims made in the article are entirely unfounded."

The army remains steadfast in its commitment to the service of the nation and will continue to uphold the principles of democracy and peace, the statement read.

According to the statement, the India Today report, titled "Bangladesh Army Holds Emergency Meeting Amid Possibility of Coup Against Chief Adviser Mohammad Yunus", was published yesterday, and the ISPR labeled it as "a glaring example of journalistic malpractice".

The statement further

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YUNUS-MODI MEETING

Dhaka awaits Delhi's response



DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka is awaiting a positive response from New Delhi regarding a meeting between Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus and Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi in Bangkok.

"There is a possibility of overcoming the current impasse in Bangladesh-India relations," said Foreign Secretary Jashim Uddin at a media briefing yesterday.

The BIMSTEC summit will be held in Bangkok from April 2-4, with Bangladesh set to take over as the next chair of the regional group.

Prof Yunus will attend, along with leaders from India, Bhutan, Nepal, Myanmar, Sri Lanka, and Thailand.

Earlier, Bangladesh sent a letter to India, seeking a meeting between Prof Yunus and Modi on the sidelines of the summit.

Last week, Indian Minister for External Affairs S

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2 new apex court judges sworn in



STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Two newly elevated judges of the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court were sworn in yesterday.

The judges are Justice AKM Asaduzzaman and Justice Farah Mahbub.

Chief Justice Syed Refaat Ahmed administered the oath at the Supreme Court Judges' Lounge around 10:30am.

With their appointments, the number of judges at the Appellate Division now stands at seven.

CRIMES AGAINST HUMANITY

Arrest warrants against Nowfel, AJM Nasir

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The International Crimes Tribunal yesterday issued arrest warrants against former ministers Hasan Mahmud and Mohibul Hasan Chowdhury Nowfel, former Chattogram mayor AJM Nasir Uddin and 12 others for their alleged involvement in crimes against humanity during July uprising.

Others facing the arrest warrants include Awami League and its associate organisations' leaders Helal Akbar Chowdhury Babor, Chattogram city BCL former general secretary Nurul Azim Rony, Chandgaon thana Swechhasebak League president Mohiuddin Farhad.

Home adviser vows crackdown on criminals

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Home Affairs Adviser Jahangir Alam Chowdhury yesterday warned that those involved in criminal activities and inciting anti-state movements and gatherings will be arrested.

Addressing a press briefing after the eighth meeting of the Law and Order Advisory Council, he said discussions were held regarding the current law and order situation, with a focus on the Independence day, as well as the Eid celebrations.

Jahangir emphasised that law enforcement agencies would take strong measures to prevent any disruptions, including arresting those instigating anti-state movements and violent protests.

"The authorities will increase their presence and improve intelligence monitoring to ensure public safety during the festive season," he said.

Jahangir said the government has also

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'Provide a clear explanation'

Says Tasnim Zara about Sarjis's motorcade funding; Sarjis claims family, well-wishers chipped in

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Tasnim Zara, senior joint member secretary of the National Citizen Party (NCP), has called for a "clear and credible" explanation regarding the financing and management of the large-scale event marking Sarjis Alam's visit to his hometown in Panchagarh, where he arrived with a convoy of more than 100 vehicles.

In a Facebook post, Zara directly addressed Sarjis Alam, the chief organiser (north) of the party, questioning how such an elaborate event was organised despite his previous statements about financial hardship.

"I am writing this as a political activist of our party, from the perspective of our party's principles and transparency," she said. "Recently, your entry into your home district with such a massive convoy has understandably raised legitimate questions among the public."

She recalled Sarjis' earlier remarks, "Not long ago, you publicly stated, 'I don't have any money right now. I'm living on borrowed funds. This is the reality. I don't even have a wallet in my pocket.' Your simple lifestyle had impressed us and made our struggle more relatable to the people."

Zara then questioned how such a large-scale event could have been arranged given his past statements about financial constraints.

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A woman casts a fishing net in a canal near the Sundarbans in Khulna. During low tide, many locals use small boats and nets to catch various native fish like bele and shrimp. They sell the fish in the local market, earning around Tk 300-500 a day. The photo was taken in the Dhangmari area of Dacope upazila yesterday.

PHOTO: HABIBUR RAHMAN