

DHAKA



A young woman lights clay lamps, surrounded by marigold decorations, on the floor of a temple in the Hospital Road area of Barishal city yesterday evening. On the occasion of Kali Puja and Deepabali, Hindu devotees decorated their homes and temples with lamps, candles, and colourful flowers to celebrate the festival of lights.

MPO teachers issue two-day ultimatum

Warn of tougher movement if demands not met

DU CORRESPONDENT

MPO-enlisted teachers of non-government educational institutions have given Education Adviser CR Abrar a two day ultimatum to implement their demand for a 20 percent increase in house rent allowance.

Continuing their protest for the ninth consecutive day at the Central Shaheed Minar yesterday, the demonstrators demanded that the government issue a gazette accepting their three-point demand.

On behalf of the teachers, Delwar Hossain Azizi, member secretary of the Alliance for Nationalisation of MPO Institutions, announced that they will stage a sit-in and march from Shaheed Minar to Shahbagh today, wearing black cloths over their mouths.

Azizi said, "We will wait until October 22. If our demand remains unmet and the government fails to issue the gazette by then, the situation will turn into something Bangladesh has never seen before. We will bring teachers from across the country to Dhaka and lay siege to Jamuna [the chief adviser's residence]."

He said their protest has now turned into a hunger strike unto death.

Four teachers have already fallen sick and received hospital treatment,



- » Teachers demand a 20% rise in house rent allowance
- » Term govt's 5% offer unrealistic
- » Protest continues for the ninth consecutive day
- » Protesters to march from Shaheed Minar to Shahbagh today
- » BNP expresses solidarity with teachers

and many others are unwell. If any teacher dies due to the hunger strike, the responsibility will lie with Education Adviser CR Abrar," he added.

Azizi also said they no longer recognise the education adviser's authority. "If he cannot fulfil our demand, he must resign," he said.

The alliance further announced that teachers unable to join the central programme in Dhaka will hold a one-

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'Don't harass minorities'
Fakhrul urges law enforcers

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir yesterday urged law enforcement agencies not to harass people from religious minority communities.

"I want to say something very clearly to you [law enforcement agencies]. I receive a lot of news. No one should harass anyone from minority communities. We stand beside them and will remain beside them with all our strength," Fakhrul said at a programme held at the party chairperson's office in Gulshan.

Leaders from the Matua community, Shri Guru Sangha, Sanatan Sewa Ashram, and Hindu Sangha Samiti attended the event.

Reassuring the Hindu community, Fakhrul said, "From now on, you will find us beside you. We are with you, and we will remain with you."

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Under the scorching October sun, protesting MPO teachers huddle beneath umbrellas and banners for shade at the Central Shaheed Minar yesterday, as their demonstration over a three-point demand entered its ninth consecutive day.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

JULY KILLINGS
Most cases moved to Speedy Trial Tribunal

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Cases filed over the killings during July uprising, except those already under trial at International Crimes Tribunal, will be moved to Speedy Trial Tribunal, law ministry spokesperson Md Rezaul Karim said in a statement yesterday.

A special committee has also been formed to ensure speedy and proper prosecution of serious offences, including murder, committed during the uprising.

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SAGAR-RUNI MURDER PROBE REPORT Task force may again miss HC deadline

ASHUTOSH SARKAR

The government-formed task force may again fail to submit its full-fledged probe report to the High Court in connection with the murders of journalists Sagar Sarwar and Meherun Rani.

The court is scheduled to hear the matter tomorrow.

"We will inform the High Court about all the progress of the investigation into this [Sagar-Runi murder] case. However, there isn't much positive news to share still now," said Md Mustafa Kamal, additional inspector general of police and chief of the Police Bureau of Investigation (PBI), who is leading the task force.

When asked whether more time

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- » PBI chief says there is "not much positive news"
- » Probe delayed due to repeated officer transfers, pending forensic report
- » HC to hear the case on October 22
- » 122 extensions granted so far for report submission

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