



Women Awami League activists being heckled by the police while marching in a procession during hartal hour on Tuesday in front of the Awami League office at Bangabanghu Avenue. —OBSERVER

Hartal passes off peacefully

Staff Correspondent

The dawn-to-dusk hartal, called by main opposition Awami League's student wing Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) and two other left-leaning student organisations, was observed peacefully and spontaneously in the city and elsewhere in the country on Tuesday.

However, a few incidents of cracker blast and damage of vehicles took place during the hartal hours in the city.

The BCL and the two student bodies — Bangladesh Chhatra

Chhatra Moitry (BCM) — called the daylong nationwide hartal protesting against the July 23 heinous police atrocities on the female students of Shamsunnahar Hall of the Dhaka University (DU) and demanding immediate resignation of DU VC Prof Anwarullah Chowdhury and Proctor Prof Nazrul Islam.

Their demands also included immediate reopening of the university, withdrawal of false cases against students and Shamsunnahar Hall Provost Prof Sultana

This was the second hartal on those issues. Ganotantrik Chhatra Oikya, a unity of five left-leaning student bodies, also observed a half-day (6am-12pm) hartal in the city on Monday. Awami League, the parent organisation of BCL, lent its support to the Tuesday's hartal call.

Huge contingent of police, riot police and paramilitary BDR were deployed in and around the DU areas as the students' agitation was concentrated on the DU campus. Police put up barricades at all

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entry points leading to the DU campus and did not allow the students to enter the university.

Pickets blasted two crackers on North South Road at Suritola under Kotwali thana at about 10:20 am. Two more crackers were blasted in front of the old gate of Jagannath College at about 3:10 pm.

The hartal supporters damaged the window shields of a double-decker bus and a minibus in front of the Biman office at Motijheel at about 10:25 am. Pickets also damaged the glasses of a minibus at Dania on the Dhaka-Chittagong highway at about 11:30 am.