

Mayhem at peaceful Karwan Bazar | Decision withdrawn

THEĊAPITAL

Residents of the capital woke up to find the entire city blockaded and its streets free of everyday traffic jam yesterday as

songs at intervals of speeches by their

traditional violent political demonstrations, suddenly Karwan Bazar erupted into violence around 11:30am.

Led by AL leader HBM Iqbal, 14-party activists were holding a rally at Saarc street. The leaders were delivering speeches from a truck used as a make-

with a water cannon started jetting hot water from the direction of Panthapath on the activists who were singing songs at intervals of the speeches without provok-

Battalion started to club the demonstrators mercilessly prompting the demonstrators to retaliate with brickbats.

Dispersed, the demonstrators attacked the law enforcers while police fired teargas shells and rubber bullets to scare the demonstrators away.

secretary of unit 2 of the party under ward

Enraged by the incident, the demonstrators set fire to a police van in front of

As the situation gradually calmed down, police took the injured two to Dhaka Medical College Hospital where doctors declared Waziullah

Samorita Hospital with injuries.

Leaders of 14-party coalition alleged that police deliberately drove the van through the crowd to create a situation for army deployment.

"It was a totally peaceful rally until police doused us with water, clubbed us and fired teargas canisters at us, said Delwar Hossain, a folk singer who was singing songs on the podium. Several others echoed Delwar. Talking to The Daily Star yesterday

evening, Deputy Commissioner (Tejgaon) Kohinoor Mian admitted to ordering the police to turn water cannon on the demonstrators. "I gave the order to disperse the demonstrators for clearing the busy street after the demonstrators had refused to free the street despite repeated requests," he

Meanwhile, Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP) authorities formed a threemember committee headed by Deputy Commissioner (Motor and Transport) Faruq Ahmed to investigate yesterday's violence at Karwan Bazar and the incident of driving a police van through the

"Punitive measures will be taken against those responsible for the incident as per the recommendations of the inquiry committee," said a news release issued from the public relations section of the Detective Branch of police.

The release claimed that the two demonstrators were injured when a police truck unintentionally hit them while was being driven to a safer place towards Bangla Motor from Farmgate area after being attacked during chase and counter chase between police and 'illegal public'.

A case was lodged with Tejgaon police station in this connection, the

In Mirpur, law enforcers and demonstrators locked in a clash at Mirpur-10 roundabout when police charged batons and chased some demonstrators who were vandalising an auto-rickshaw there at 11:00am. The demonstrators threw stones at the law enforcers.

Normalcy was restored in a few minutes after intervention by 14-party eaders and top police officials.

Demonstrators broke windshields of some auto-rickshaws also on Dhaka-Chittagong highway.

In Savar, hundreds of activists gathered at different points. They vandalised 15 vehicles at Savar Bazar bus stop.

COUNTRY In Narayanganj, at least 20 people were njured when 14-party activists clashed with police on Dhaka-Sylhet highway at Tarabo point under Rupganj upazila around 11:00am.

As police obstructed an AL procession at Tarabo, the pickets threw brickbats, breaking the windshield of the vehicle of Police Superintendent Shahabuddin Khan.

Police clubbed the pickets, lobbed 20 teargas canisters and sprayed 70 rubber bullets, leaving 20 people

In Mymensingh, at least 50 passengers were injured when three compartments along with the engine of Sevenup, a Bahadurabad Ghat bound passenger train from Dhaka, derailed and fell into a roadside ditch at Golabari village between Mashakhali and Kawridh railway stations at 2:15am

The train derailed as 126 feet of railway tracks had been uprooted at Golabari, railway sources said.

Fifteen of the injured were rushed to Gafargaon Upazila Health Complex for

Rescue trains from Dhaka and Mymensingh reached the spot at 8:00am and reinstalled the damaged railway tracks and train compartments at 1:30pm.

In Netrakona, 11 people were injured in two incidents. At Gotora on NetrokonaKalmakanda road, pickets threw stones leaving five injured while six people were wounded as a passenger bus was torched at Razur Bazar.

In Brahmanbaria, pickets threw stones at the Bhoirab bound Balla local train at Poyertala outer signal of Brahmanbaria Railway Station. At about 10:00am, they stopped Dhaka bound Mahanagar Express. Later, all the services were cancelled.

Meanwhile, Akhaura land port remained paralysed.

In Rajshahi, demonstrators stopped Titumir and Modhumoti intercity trains at Arani of Bagha upazila. Goods-laden trucks remained stranded at Sona Mosque land port.

In Sylhet, activists forced Dhaka bound Joyontika Express train to a halt at Longla Station of Kulaura upazila. They vandalised the train until police brought the situation under control.

In Khagrachhari, pickets vandalised a vehicle of a pharmaceutical company at Alutila and beat up the staff. They also vandalised a truck at Bhaibonchhara and later set fire to an effigy of the chief election commissioner.

The blockade programme was observed peacefully in other parts of the country, report our correspon-

"The rules of business clearly

explains how such a decision should be taken through involving the council," Mashhud noted. "If the authorities need the army, this must at first be suggested from a local level of the administration. Such an instruction cannot be imposed from the central level on a wholesale

repetition of such embarrassing

presence of a government within the

present government, Mashhud

said, "There is no gap inside the

some initial glitches of lack of com-

munication but now this has been

taken care of. "Now, we all (advis-

ers) can hear each other," he

Finance and Planning Adviser Dr

Akbar Ali Khan said, "We have

cancelled the decision (to deploy

army) because this kind of plan is

unnecessary. The laws of the land

give a clear cut direction to the

district administration about how to

such a decision was taken, he said,

The president and chief adviser

has told us that he would look into it.

Asked about punishment of those

responsible, he said, "If an official

violates service rules, a committee

is formed and the official is given

chance twice to defend himself in

writing. After this, an action is taken.

I was a government servant. I don't

want to comment on this matter

secretary being a controversial

person and whether he would be

removed, Akbar said, "There is an

advisory committee on administra-

tion headed by the chief adviser and

aided by two advisers. I hope they

is that this kind of decision did not

comply with the rules of business,

which clearly states that any vital

political decision cannot be taken

without the approval of the council

..You might want to credit us for

Housing and Fisheries Adviser

cancelling such a wrong decision."

Dhiraj Kumar Nath felt the same

way and expressed his embarrass-

ment. Asked how such a decision

was taken bypassing the advisers,

he said, "Please don't ask me that

Information Adviser Mahbubul

Alam said the circular was not

necessary. "If army deployment is

necessary for any particular areas,

the district magistrate can do the

same under the existing criminal

meeting held between 11:00am

1:00pm at the CA's office saw a lot of

debates on this issue. All the advis-

ers expressed their surprise on the

Sources said yesterday's council

procedure code," he added.

kind of question."

He went on, "Our main statement

would surely look into this matter."

On the question of the home

Replying to a question on how

take help of the army."

Talking to The Daily Star,

He however said there were

the president and chief adviser on incidents in the future," the former the unilateral circulation of the army chief said. decision to deploy army.

Asked whether they would take At this stage, the home secretary action against those involved in the was summoned to the meeting who process, he said, "It is the job of the told the council that he had issued home ministry high command to find the circular in consultation with the out them. We are examining law secretary. Apparently enraged, whether this was deliberate or not.' the advisers asked for bringing in In reply to a question on the the law secretary.

government."

But the law secretary failed to nive any satisfactory explanations that further annoyed the advisers. And they told the meeting that it would not be possible for them to continue work if decisions were taken without following rules and keeping them uninformed.

"At (yesterday's) council meeting, we have ascertained that the process of taking the decision and purpose of it were all wrong. Such a gross mistake is not acceptable in such a sensitive matter," said Hasan Mashhud Chowdhury.

Sources said the advisers pointed out that if troops are deployed now and they creates any controversy, it will be hard for the army to work when they will be deployed during the next elections.

Though the whole episode left the advisers bewildered, they did not take any step yesterday to find out those behind this move and bring them to task.

When the home ministry circular had already reached various authorities concerned and even the media Sunday afternoon, the advisers were unaware of this decision. In the evening, when the advisers had a meeting with the chief adviser (CA) and president, who is also incharge of the home ministry, they were still not informed about it.

"Such a decision cannot be taken by a ministry on its own. This must be discussed at the council.' said former army chief and Energy Ministry Adviser Hasan Mashhud Chowdhury yesterday.

"The most embarrassing thing is that although we were at the advisers' council meeting Sunday evening, we were not informed about it," he pointed out while talking to The Daily Star.

"At (yesterday's) council meeting, we made sure that the process followed and purpose of taking this decision were all wrong. Such a gross mistake is not acceptable in such a sensitive matter," he

"We will remain alert about

rent of \$18,000 per day.

SUNDAY'S

CONTROVERSIAL MOVE On Sunday, President and Chief

Adviser lajuddin Ahmed decided to deploy army across the country in aid of the civil administration to maintain law and order.

A letter was sent to the divisional and deputy commissioners to facilitate matters for the military forces. The letter signed by Home Secretary SM Jahurul Islam reads, 'The government has decided to deploy military forces to aid the law enforcement agencies in maintaining the law and order."

But a late night handout signed by a joint secretary of the home ministry said: "In fact, regarding the army deployment the government has decided that the troops might be deployed after taking into consideration the situation. Since no such situation has arisen, the decision to deploy the army has not yet been

The president/chief adviser did not mention even for once the decision to deploy army during two and half hours of his meeting with the

Just when everyone was preparing to sign off, he said he wants to invite the home secretary to hear about the latest situation regarding the 14-party blockade. The home secretary came in and casually said the Chittagong Port has become inoperative and this may necessitate military deployment.

The suggestion greatly annoyed the advisers, who said the implications of any such decision might be very grave both nationally and internationally. The secretary did not tell them that the decision to that effect had already been made and communicated to the local administration. The advisers left the meeting with the impression that it was just a plan and came to learn about the truth from the media afterwards.

Govt to import

Procurement Regulation (PPR) so that the products can be imported within shortest possible time.

talking to the reporters.

have taken some six months to import, but now it would only take 2 weeks." he added.

fertiliser in two installments.

also relaxed the procedure of Public

'There is no shortage of food in

the country but we have taken the decision as a precautionary measure," the finance adviser said while "By following the PPR, it would

In another meeting of Cabinet Committee on Purchase chaired by Law Adviser Justice Md Fazlul Haque, a decision was taken to import 1.27 lakh metric tonnes of

for the Netcare 911 rescue service.

Botha said that a total of 20 people had been killed in the crash and six others had been either seriously or

truck was on a level crossing when it was hit by the train shortly after 7:00 am (0500 GMT).

The vehicle had been sliced in half by the impact of the collision and the wreckage was widely scattered around the tracks, said an AFP pho-

The railway safety regulator (RSR) said that an immediate investigation had been launched to determine the cause of the crash

"The RSR has dispatched inspectors to the scene of the accident to work alongside the operator in investigating this incident," it said in a state-

"Preliminary investigations suggest that the immediate cause of the accident was that the driver ignored warning signals and proceeded to cross the level crossing resulting in the

Apolice spokesman said that it was too soon to give an exact cause for the "We don't know whether to blame it

on a mechanical failure or a failure to AFP.

and eight women. Twelve others were injured, Jones said

The group had been on their way to

contract told the South African Press

senger service Metrorail said the level crossing "conforms to legal requirements in terms of statutory warning signage and is protected by stop boards, road warning signs and train

The crash is one of the worst in South Africa in recent years. Nine people died and 59 were injured in April last year after a bus rammed into a freight train in the northern Limpopo

of KwaZulu-Natal.

World's poor shown

around the world to attend the

Campaigners say microloans, which average 100 dollars and require no collateral, can help the critically poor expand a basic food-selling or handicraftmarketing business and enable them to lift themselves out of poverty.

"Today we are already 100 million, so it's not even double the size, so that way it's not the same challenge. We have created the momentum already. Yunus told AFP on the sidelines of the summit.

Yunus, who was awarded the Nobel prize last month for his decades-long work in advancing microcredit, was referring to a target set in Washington in 1997 to advance microloans to 100 million poverty-stricken people by the end of 2005.

Campaigners concede they are not there yet, but say they are on track to reach that goal by the end of this year, and are now setting their sights wider.

The Nobel peace laureate said he envisages a world where future generations would have to go to "poverty museums" to

discover what poverty was. "It's not the money that's the important thing, it's the will that's the important thing," Yunus, who is known as the "godfather" of microcredit, added.

Interest in microcredit, which is largely granted to people vying to survive on less than one dollar a day to start or expand small businesses, has mounted since Yunus won the peace prize in mid-October.

Yunus founded the Grameen Bank in Bangladesh to oversee tiny business loan lending and the bank has extended microloans to 6.6 million people since 1976

Queen Sofia, who has long been an advocate for microcredit, attended the summit sporting a cloth wrap over her left shoulder that she had purchased from a group of women in Yunus's native Bangladesh for 120 cents

Fresh pledges of cash were announced Sunday to support the growing movement.

Peter MacKay, Canada's foreign minister, announced to delegates that his government had approved over 40 million

dollars for different microfinance projects that would be targeted at projects in Asia. Africa and Latin America.

"Around the world, the power of microfinance is transforming lives," MacKay said.

'Canada's new government is leader in microfinancing in Afghanistan, which is part of our efforts to foster self reliance," he

Honduras's President Manuel Zelaya announced that his government was appropriating some 50 million dollars to advance microcredit schemes in his coun-

Although delegates were upbeat at the summit's opening ceremony, the enormity of the global challenge facing the microcredit community and Yunus is daunting.

Experts estimate there are between 1.0 and 1.2 billion people around the world, mainly in Asia, who live on less than one dollar a dav.

Ministers and delegates pointed out that microcredit alone is not a magic "panacea" for eradicating world poverty, but said it can be a very powerful anti-poverty tool when linked to better education and improved healthcare.

Delayed aman

FROM PAGE 16

At least 12,000 of the 25,000 people of his area are suffering from scarcity of food, Abdul Gafur, Chairman of Baldia Union Parishad in Bhurungamari upazila of Kurigram district said.

Some people in Jadurchar in Roumari upazila of the district have not the ability to buy rice even if it were available at a very cheap price, said Union Parishad Chairman Mazibur Rahman. Golap Uddin, 60, a rickshaw

van puller at Burashal village in Hatibanda upazila of Lalmonirhat district, said he has to maintain a family of five members with an average daily earning of Tk 20 and most of the day labourers are facing similar conditions Five members of her family

have to sacrifice the meal of one time to provide food for her baby, said Alefa, wife of a rickshawpuller in Patgram

Bus bomb kills 20

FROM PAGE 16 Leqaa Abdul Razzaq was fatally shot

late last month as she was traveling in south Baghdad's lawless Dora

At least 89 journalists have been killed in Iraq since hostilities began in March 2003, according to an Associated Press count based on statistics kent by the New York-based Committee to Protect Journalists.

Another 35 media employees including drivers, interpreters and guards, have been killed, all but one fthem Iraqi

In Diyala, the increasingly volatile province northeast of Baghdad, council member Assim Mahmoud Abbas was killed in a drive-by shooting, council head Ibrahim Bajilan said. A fellow council member was wounded in the attack in Wazirivah. northeast of the capital

Sunni Sheik Namis Karim was gunned down Monday morning as he was heading to a mosque in Baqouba, police said. Also in Baqouba, 35 miles north-

east of Baghdad, police reported finding the bodies of two women who had been shot to death. A civilian was reported gunned down as well

Police in western Baghdad found four bodies that had been shot. The victims were handcuffed and their bodies showed signs of torture, police 1st Lt. Maithem Adbel-Razzaq

On Sunday the Iraqi army reported discovering 50 bodies dumped behind a provincial electrical company near Bagouba, and an army official in Diyala said local forces and US troops were heading to the area to recover the corpses Gunmen had prevented their immediate retrieval. The army official spoke on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to

provide details of the operation.
Authorities said 159 people were killed or found dead nationwide Sunday, including 35 who died when two suicide bombers detonated explosives belts among police recruits outside a west Baghdad

for the sectarian conflict on Sunday and promised to reshuffle his Cabinet after rebuking lawmakers for disloy-

alty.

The country's Sunni defense minister challenged al-Maliki's contention that the US military should quickly pull back into bases and let the Iraqi army take control of security countrywide

Intérior Minister Jawad al-Bolani was at the top of the list to lose his post in the coming Cabinet shake-up, key lawmakers from al-Maliki's Islamic Dawa Party said, because police and security forces were failing to rein in the unbridled sectarian killing verging on civil war in Baghdad and the center of the country. Al-Bolani, a Shia who was chosen

in June and a month after al-Maliki's government was formed, is an independent. The United States demanded that the defense and interior posts be held by men without ties to the Shia political parties that

to curb violence, with Washington hammering on him to disband Shia militias believed responsible, through their death squads, for much of the

killing.
The interior minister controls police and other security forces which already are infiltrated by the Badr Brigade and the Mahdi Ármy, the armed wing of radical Shia cleric Muqtada al-Sadr's political movement. Al-Maliki is dependent on both SCIRI and the Sadrists for his hold or

Defense Minister Abdul-Qadir al-Obaidi rejected calls by al-Maliki for the US military to speed transfer of security operations throughout the country to the Iraqi army, saying his men still were too poorly equipped and trained to do the job.

"We are working hard to create a real army and we ask our government not to try to move too quickly because of the political pressure it feels." al-Obaidi said.

Al-Maliki wants the Americans confined to bases for him to call on in emergencies, but he boldly predicted his army could crush violence within

six months if left alone to do the work. The top US commander in Iraq Gen. George Casey, last month said it would take 12 to 18 months before Irag's army was ready to take control of the country with some US backup.

SC remains

preparation of electoral roll. About the "confusing" govern-

ment decision on deployment of army in aid of civil administration to maintain law and order across the country, the meeting was very critical of the caretaker government and said the government of lajuddin Ahmed "held back its decision as his advisers threatened him to guit.'

Khan, Ruhul Quddus Babu and Moksedul Islam, among others, spoke at the meeting.

Palestinians

compromise premier came "after a deal" on the new administration's

there is no going back on their principles but the West's principal demand for lifting the boycott has always been an agreement to recognise Israel and past peace

Mustapha Barghuti, an indeendent MP who has been mediat-

Keep patience

the politically appointed officers in charge (OC) of police were not

responsible for the attacks on 14party leaders and activists vesterday. government (CG) assumed the office. t has failed to act neutrally. The CG

the DC and other police personnel

dark about the decision to deploy army and demanded the home secretary to disclose the name of the person behind the directive. Jalil also demanded the CG to take disciplinary

removed. He has been working in favour of a political party. He conspired to deploy the army to make it controversial and misuse them for political purposes, Jalil explained. The AL leader was relieved as the conspiracy was not been successful.

announcement that the BNP would declare counter programmes, the AL general secretary questioned Bhuiyan against whom the BNF

programme is only to protect the people's democratic rights.
Bhuiyan has been trying to create chaos in the country by taking a stand against the demand of reconstitution of the Election Commission (EC) and removal of the chief election commissioner (CEC). He has been patronis-

ing the CEC to hold a 'blue-print

adviser (CA) functioning effectively. fair election within the 90 days. He also asked the president to appoint a non-partisan individual as the CA to create a congenial atmosphere if he

fails to perform effectively. To create a neutral environment for a free and fair election. Jalil also demanded immediate removal of Home, Establishment and Cabinet secretaries, cancellation of all contractual appointments, removal of all present DCs, Superintendents of Police (SP), Upazila Nirbahi Officers (UNO) and Ocs and replace them with the officials deprived and made OSDs (Officer on Special Duty) by the previous 4-party alliance govern-

Obaidul Quader said the state run

Bangladesh Television (BTV) is still

Joint General Secretary

Bhaban -- BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia's political office. Quader demanded immediate removal of the top officials of BTV to ensure its neutrality. He also alleged that although the AL President Sheikh Hasina is no more the leader of the opposition, her residence is under strict vigilance of different intelligence agencies and telephone conversations of 14-party

leaders including the AL chief is being

tapped. Quader demanded tele-

phone conversation tapping to stop. He also demanded immediate removal of the president's press secretary for leaking out sensitive information from Bangabhaban and punishment of the corrupt ministers and lawmakers of the last govern-

ment of the BNP-Jamaat coalition. Among others, senior 14-party leaders Abdur Razzak, Tofail Ahmed, Suranjit Sengupta, Sheikh Fazlul Karim Selim Rashed Khan Menon, Hasanul Haque Inu, Sultan Mohammad Mansur Ahmed, Bimal Biswas, Pankai Bhattacharva, Nurul

present at the press briefing.

Interim govt the election and represent the people in future," Information Adviser

Islam and Dilip Barua were also

Mahbub Alam said at a news confer ence yesterday. Adviser Akbar Ali Khan told reporters that the dialogue is aimed at reaching a consensus on ways to hold a free and fair election. "We will take a decision as soon as possible. However, we don't want to impose anything on the political parties. We

just want to help them sort out a solution regarding the present situation." he observed The caretaker government that was formed last month has been in extreme difficulties regarding reconstitution of the EC following the chief

No other caretaker government faced such a complex political crisis since inception of the system in 1996. The AL-led 14-party alliance has been calling for electoral reforms for

election commissioner's (CEC)

refusal to stand down.

raised during the rule of four-party alliance, but the onus to resolve the issue has been put on the interim government Things got more complicated after

the much-vaunted dialogue between

the BNP and AL in October failed to

over a year. The demands were first

settle the deadlock. Amid a volatile situation. the caretaker government assumed office on October 29. The council of advisers at its very first meeting on November 1 took a

number of initiatives to make the EC It sent an adviser to CEC MA Aziz to know whether he would resign if requested by the caretaker government. But the CEC stubbornly refused to resign and instead announced that the next parliamen-

Following the refusal, the council of advisers held three meetings but could not find a way out of the trouble Information adviser Mahbub Alam termed the decision to have talks with

change for the better. At a jam-packed news conference at the conference room of Press Information Department (PID), he said the advisory council will talk on a wide range of issues including those relating to the free and fair conduct of

Asked whether any decision has been taken on the CEC or his deputies, Mahbub said, "If we already had a decision, then why would we be having talks with the political parties.

FROM PAGE 1

Tejgaon office lajuddin told Renata that the Election Commission is an independent constitutional body and assured the UNDP resident representative that free, fair and neutral elections would undoubtedly

he held in Bangladesh The UNDP representative

in Bangladesh. The president hoped that the UN, like in the past, would send election observers to Bangladesh

Renata responded positively

Bangladesh in holding free and fair elections

Why me worry FROM PAGE 1 During the meeting with the UN delegation, different aspects of providing the international observers with facilities to

the task of interpretation for the international observers," he said. Deputy commissioners and superintendents of police will ensure security for international observers, said the EC secretary who had held a meeting with the secretaries of the foreign, home, health and information ministries

the issue of foreign observers. full swing, he said when asked whether the task of printing the voter list has been stopped on grounds of faults in the updated electoral rolls.

Vendors sent a letter to the EC secretariat on November 6 seeking guidelines to remove the faults in the updated voter list before printing, sources at the EC secretary said, adding that the vendors cited faults that include some names of male voters in the list of female voters and inconsistency

November 9 directed the district election officers to correct the "The district election officers will be responsible as the registra-

tion officer for preparing the voter

list, if the guidelines are not fol-

lowed to correct the manuscript of

the updated voter list," the EC

of four new cars costing Tk 72 lakh by the EC secretariat, rumour spread among the EC officials that a few election commissioners may be appointed to make the EC

Economy looks down Fazlul Haque, president of **Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers** Expressing concern over the and Exporters Association situation, the business community

(BGMEA).

has urged the political leaders to Two days' loss in the garment keep the port and export sector out of sector alone would be around Tk 500 the purview of political programmes. A delegation led by Federation of crore due to the closure of the ports Bangladesh Chamber of Commerce and countrywide blockade and Industry (FBCCI) President Mir programme, Fazlul Haque said. Nasir Hossain will call on the The sector suffered Tk 200 crore President and Chief Adviser to the losses due to suspension of exports caretaker government lajuddin while its production losses is no less Ahmed today to urge him to take

steps for resolving the political impasse immediately for the greater interest of country. Losses due to sudden closure of ports and other business activities

The sudden political stalemate

will hamper in achieving this year's

target of 6.2 per cent Gross Domestic

will be colossal, Nasir said.

Product (GDP) growth, he said. The FBCCI chief called upon the political leaders to keep the port and export-oriented sectors out of the purview of political agitation. "The dream for increasing the amount of annual garment exports

4-party rallies

than Tk 150 crore per day, he said.

reach the factories.

Besides, many garment manufac-

ments while many buyers concerned

over the situation may turn to other

countries for placing orders, he said.

industries that are related to the

garment industry -- banks, insurance.

Many other organisations and

also want a free and fair election.' About the decision to deploy army by the chief adviser, also the president, which was later cancelled by the council of advisers, Bhuiyan said, "It's government business. They will take

Dhaka City Mayor and City BNP President Sadek Hossain Khoka. briefing among others

the decision if they feel the need."

across the country today. With unconstitutional demands, central office.

ers the army has full confidence on the caretaker government and its capabil-

critically injured. Cape Town emergency services spokesman Johan Minnie said the

collision with the train.

work at a wine farm in the area. "This is a terrible day. It is a great disaster. They were just innocently coming to work," a staff member of the farm which employed the workers on

whistle boards".

came in 2002 when 24 people, mainly school children, were killed near the eastern city of Durban in the province

FROM PAGE 1 Terming Justice Aziz a shameless man, the meeting alleged that he had misappropriated funds in the

Abdul Baset Majumder, Mahbubey Alam, Rafiqul Islam Mian, Subrata Chowdhury, Abdul Matin Khasru, AM Amin Uddin, M Enayetur Rahim, Mahbub Ali, Abdul Mannan

FROM PAGE 16

ing between Abbas and Haniya, had

14-party activists took to the streets to enforce the blockade. Blocking the city streets at different points, the activists were singing patriotic

leaders to keep the tempo up standing on makeshift podiums As the blockade was going ahead peacefully in the capital, unlike other

Fountain intersection blocking the busy All of a sudden, a police truck fitted

Members of police and Armed Police

As the whole area turned into a battlefield, a police truck from the direction of Farmgate drove through the activists at Saarc Fountain and sped away towards Bangla Motor critically injuring two blockade supporters, one of whom was identified as Waziullah, 40, AL publicity

AL leader HBM Igbal was taken to

removed after repetitive demands. Jalil accused Deputy Commissioner (DC) of police Kohinur Miah of masterminding yesterday's attack on demonstrators at Sonargaon intersection in the capital that left one person killed. He demanded immediate punishment of

police said the 14-party Jalil alleged the home secretary of keeping the council of advisers in the

action against the secretary and track down his patrons. The home secretary must be

Jalil reiterated that their blockade

Referring to BNP Secretary

General Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan's

election to return to power, Jalil lashed The AL leader also accused BNP of not letting the president/ chief He demanded immediate separation of the staff of the president and the CA for neutral operation of the CG and urged the CG to hold a free and

tary election will be held under the the political parties an important step towards getting things started to

> the upcoming general election. The advisers have very little time in hand and they must work faster, he

We are sitting with them as different political parties have different opin-

lajuddin

expressed concern of the UN secretary general to the president about the recent political violence

saving that the United Nations will extend "all-out cooperation" to

observe the next election were discussed, the EC secretary said. "The Election Commission has finalised a policy for the international observers with a new provision for ensuring the neutrality of the interpreters. Politically biased persons will not be allowed to do

yesterday morning and discussed The printing task is going on in

in the serial number of voters. The EC secretariat on and houses of his party men across

secretariat circular said. Meanwhile, following purchase

transport, hotel -- will also suffer huge up to \$15 billion from the existing \$8 losses due to the volatile political billion is going to be shattered due to sudden political unrest," said SM situation, he added.

the democratic process, Bhuiyan said, "We will not create any confrontational situation but we will be keeping an eye on the scene each moment. He also expressed hope that the tive' programme in the greater interest of the nation. "People are suffering due to their programme. Students cannot attend their exams while the prices of

essentials are increasing day by day,

Protesting attack on BNP offices

the country by the 14-party activists Bhuiyan warned, "Everybody should remember that BNP is a big political party of the country." He also criticised setting fire to train by the blockade Replying to a question, the BNP secretary general said that it is the responsibility of the caretaker government to ensure security of public life and property and improve the law and

against the ongoing 'anarchy' created

adviser committee to hold discussions

with the political parties, he said they

will respond if the committee calls

them because we want peace and

When asked on the newly formed

"We are ready to discuss with

Joint Secretary General Nazrul Islam Khan and Aman Ullah Aman, Nazim Uddin Alam, Zahiruddin Swapan and Abdus Salam were also present at the JAMAAT-E-ISLAMI BRIEFING

Jamaat-e-Islami Secretary General Ali

Ahsan Mohammad Mujahid yester-

day called upon the 4-party alliance to

hold peaceful processions and rallies

AL and its allies are trying to create an anarchic situation to thwart the polls," he said at a press briefing at party Asked about his view on deployment of army, Mujahid said the report-

20 killed

years, emergency workers said All the victims died at the scene of the crash near Crovdon, about 40 kilometres (25 miles) east of Cape Town, said Chris Botha, a spokesman

turers are unable to continue production as the raw materials did not tographer at the scene. The exporters are now spending extra money for emergency air shipment to fulfil the buyers' require-

> stop." Superintendent Billy Jones told He put the death toll at 19 -- 11 men

Association. The government-owned rail pas-

province. The worst crash in recent years

security forces headquarters. Al-Maliki blamed Sunni Muslims

Al-Maliki is under pressure both

from his people and the United States

Hamas officials have insisted

programme.

deals and renounce violence

said late Thursday that the two leaders had agreed on who should lead the promised national unity