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Violent protests in Kathmandu

2 killed: Curfew imposed : Dipendra dead, Gyanendra new king

AFP, Kathmandu

At least two people died in violent protests that swept the Nepalese capital yesterday, as demonstrators denounced the new monarch, King Gyanendra, and demanded an explanation for last week's massacre of almost the entire royal family.

One protestor was killed when police opened fire on a group who broke a curfew in the city, police sources said. Another was reported to have died before the curfew began when police armed with batons charged protesters.

The curfew was ordered after tens of thousands of demonstrators took to the streets to protest against Gyanendra being crowned king following the death of his nephew, the former crown prince Dipendra. Police were given orders to shoot violators who resisted arrest.

Dipendra died on Monday, two days after allegedly killing his parents - King Birendra and Queen Aishwarya - and several other relatives and shooting himself.

"The king is dead, long live the king," state radio said in announcing the death of the 29-year-old Dipendra, who had been on life support in hospital since Friday night's massacre at the royal palace here.

Dipendra, who allegedly opened fire following an argument over his choice of a bride, died at 3:45am on Monday, the radio said.

The late king Birendra's 53-year-old younger brother, Gyanendra, was crowned at the old palace here just hours after his nephew's death.

Unlike the late king Birendra, who was revered by the population, Gyanendra is not a popular figure and is suspected of favouring a return to the pre-1990 system of absolute monarchic rule in Nepal.

The authorities announced the curfew as public anger, which has been swelling since the massacre, boiled over into violence.

The home ministry directive, broadcast on state radio and television, said the curfew also covered the neighbouring towns of Lalitpur and Bhaktapur.

Anyone found on the streets would receive a police warning to stop before the police opened fire, the ministry said. Those arrested for violating the curfew would face a month in prison. The curfew will initially last until 5:00am today.

The order meant people were not allowed to attend the state funeral of Dipendra, who was named king on Saturday despite the allegations he carried out Friday's massacre.

Dipendra was cremated late Monday on the bank of the holy river Bagmati, after a funeral procession, which began at 4:00pm, with only senior officials and the security forces taking part.

Government officials initially accused Dipendra of the killings, but the

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Three possible reasons behind the church blast

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, back from Baniarchar

The shocked and aggrieved people of Baniarchar village and nearby areas were found talking about three possible causes of Sunday's bomb blast at the Catholic church there.

Some people said the incident might be sequel to a row centring a former Father of the church.

Some others said it might be a pretext for enactment of a new law guaranteeing security of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina after her resignation. She hails from Gopalganj district. Baniarchar village is also in Gopalganj district.

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A distraught mother bursts into tears seeing the body of her son (covered in mat made of dry leaves), one of the ten people killed in the bomb blast at the Baniarchar Catholic Church on Sunday.

Wailing relatives 'The pineapple-like bomb was made in Chile'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, back from Baniarchar

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, back from Gopalganj

Amid heavy rains, hundreds of aggrieved people continued thronging the Baniarchar Catholic Church premises throughout the day yesterday, demanding punishment of the culprits responsible for Sunday's bomb explosion that killed 10 people and injured many others in the church.

As relatives of the victims started gathering there since early morning, their wailing rent the air.

Talking to this correspondent, many of them expressed their

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The bomb that went off at the Catholic Church in Baniarchar village under Muksudpur thana in Gopalganj Sunday morning was a 'powerful device' made in 'Chile', thoroughly 'improvised with deadly shrapnel' and planted as per a 'well chalked out plan', army bomb experts from Jessore Cantonment said.

They noted that planting of the device inside the church was not an easy task, particularly in a remote village like Baniarchar, without 'close liaison with some highly experienced people and links with at least one or more locals.'

"The bomb was similar to the Chilean-made live bomb recovered from the DC's office at Jessore three months ago," one of the bomb experts said while collecting evidences of the explosion on Sunday night.

It is suspected that the original bomb was wrapped with additional explosives, metal splinters and glasses to "give it maximum impact on explosion", he told The Daily Star preferring anonymity.

He also said that the bomb looked just like a pineapple and that such

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Share scam case HC turns down petition by Beximco cos

STAR REPORT

The High Court yesterday rejected a petition by two Beximco concerns seeking a stay on an order of the Second Additional Metropolitan Session's Judge's Court.

The metropolitan court on May 27 rejected discharge petitions filed by Beximco Pharmaceuticals and Shinepukur Holdings along with Doha Securities. The court had also fixed June 11 for framing charges against the accused.

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Coronation of Prince Gyanendra (left) as the new king of Nepal was greeted yesterday with shaven-headed mourners displaying portrait of late King Birendra and chanting slogans against the new king (middle) and police trying to quell violence that swept Kathmandu.

Miladunnabi today

UNB, Dhaka

Holy Eid-e-Miladunnabi, commemorating the birth and passing away of Prophet Hazrat Muhammad (SM), will be observed in the country today with religious fervour.

The prophet was born in Makkah in 570 AD when the Arabians were immersed in obscurantism, ignorance and superstitions. The great

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AL set to pass undemocratic law abusing power: BNP

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP has strongly criticised the proposed law concerning special security and privileges for Sheikh Hasina and her family members as undemocratic, saying it will result in abuse of power ahead of the general election.

Addressing a press conference at 29 Minto Road yesterday afternoon, Deputy Leader of the Opposition Prof AQM Badruddozza Chowdhury said the proposed law totally contradicts the spirit of the caretaker government by providing equal status to the former prime minister and chief advisor of the caretaker government.

He said the law would affect the neutrality and fairness of the ensuing general election, introducing a sort of a dual rule during the pre-election period as the ex-PM will have similar authority, status and image as the head of caretaker government.

The law will also violate Article 27 of the Constitution granting equal rights to all citizens, he added.

Contradicting AL's claim that such provisions exist in

India and Sri Lanka, Chowdhury said the examples are completely inappropriate as the incumbent PMs in those countries act as head of the interim government during polls and there is no provision for caretaker government in those countries.

"The conceptions of caretaker and interim government are totally different. We brought changes in the Constitution through introducing the provision of caretaker government," he said.

About a proposed similar special arrangement for the incumbent Leader of the Opposition in Parliament, he said, "We strongly protest the arrangement. BNP is a people's party and we have complete confidence in the people. The present opposition party is not at all ready to accept any facility contrary to the existing laws of the land," he said.

He said: "we accept the inherent risk in doing politics... we are not ready to accept any special security for ourselves leaving the people in total insecurity." He said

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Never on a Tuesday

Market at Bhulta regularly holds up traffic on Dhaka-Sylhet highway

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

If you are planning a trip through the Dhaka-Sylhet highway, better not do it on a Tuesday.

Every Tuesday, an organised gang, allegedly in connivance with police, deliberately creates obstruction to traffic movement in the shape of a weekly market on a stretch of road called Gausia at Bhulta under Rugganj thana of Narayanganj.

At any time on any Tuesday, long queues of vehicles stretched over a few miles in both directions can be seen on the highway. Thousands of people in buses, trucks and other motorised and non-motorised vehicles are made to wait for hours on end. Ambulances are not spared either. The situation gets even worse when unruly bus drivers jump the queues onto the oncoming lanes. It takes a vehicle at least three hours to cross the area on any Tuesday.

Hundreds of vendors do brisk business with the stranded commuters, selling variety of things ranging from bottled mineral water to lungis and saris throughout the day.

Vendors and roadside shop-owners pay up to Tk 20 each to local police and musclemen "to let us do business," one hawker told this correspondent on Tuesday last. Two policemen were seen having tea at a roadside stall, completely indifferent to the suffering thousands.

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PM to address nation June 12

BSS, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina will address the nation over Bangladesh Betar and Television on June 12 commemorating the election victory of Awami League on this day in 1996.

Awami League will hold a rally in the city on June 23 on the occasion.

Rejoinder

Qatar Airways in a rejoinder to a news headlined "Mother, two sons rescued from traffickers" published in The Daily Star on May 29, said that the news item wrongly associated Qatar Airways with the trafficking incident.

The rejoinder said, there was no flight of Qatar Airways to Dubai or Doha on Sunday (May 27, 2001) night, nor were there any bookings in the name of the passengers mentioned in the news, with any flight of Qatar Airways seven days before or after the said date.

INSIDE TODAY

Article 4

A promoter of peace is no more

Column: Matters Around Us
Zaglul Ahmed Chowdhury

Supplement 8, 9 & 15

Two pages on National Day of Sweden and one on World Environment Day

Holiday Notice

Offices of The Daily Star will remain closed today on the occasion of the Eid-e-Miladunnabi.

Therefore, there will be no issue of the newspaper tomorrow.

	Sun Rises	Sun Sets
June 5		6.42 pm
June 6	5-11 am	

Prayer Timings

June 5		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fazr	4-15	4-45
Zohr	12-45	1-20
Asr	5-00	5-15
Maghrib	6-46	6-50
Esha	8-00	8-30

Source: Islamic Foundation

Move to shut 6 Shishu Academy branches

Recommendations of two ministries ignored

REZAUL KARIM

The government is planning to close down six branches of the Shishu Academy at six thanas despite recommendations of the ministries of women and children's affairs and planning for their continuation and placement under the revenue budget, according to sources at the Academy.

The six branches, set up in fiscal 1996-97 to expand activities of the Academy, are at Parshuram thana in Chittagong division, Babuganj under Barisal, Kulaura under Sylhet,

Sreenagar under Dhaka, Keshabpur under Khulna and Mithapukur thana in Rajshahi division.

These were set up under a 6-year (1995-2001) 25.39 crore taka expansion project. The project is facing closure as there has been no allocation for it in the proposed Annual Development Programme (ADP) for the 2001-2002 financial year.

The annual budget for fiscal 2001-2002 will be placed in the Jatiya Sangsad on June 7.

An inter-ministerial meeting held at the Ministry of Establishment on May 27 endorsed closure of the six branches despite strong pro-

test by officials of the Academy and the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs, officials at the Academy told this correspondent.

The meeting also approved abolition of 18 posts of officials and employees at the six thana offices, six posts at the Academy headquarters in Dhaka and 44 posts of night guards at district offices. The Academy has also been asked to hand over its only minibus now being used for children's study tour, they said.

The officials said the decisions came at a time when the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Ministry of Women and Children Affairs recom-

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