

Ukraine opposition blocks PM from entering office

AFP, Kiev

Ukraine's pro-Russia Prime Minister Viktor Yushchenko could not enter his offices yesterday as thousands of cheering opposition supporters revved up pressure on the state over a disputed election by blocking key buildings.

"The prime minister could not get into the government building today, and as a result he could not meet European ambassadors as planned," spokeswoman Anna German told AFP by telephone.

"This has paralyzed the government. We cannot get into the building," she said.

Yanukovich had been due to meet with visiting EU foreign policy chief Javier Solana and Polish President Aleksander Kwasniewski as international efforts to mediate a conflict that has pitted the ruling party and its main backer Russia against Europe and the United States.

It was not immediately clear where, or if, the meetings would take place.

"Yushchenko! Yushchenko!" chanted the crowd, many clad in the orange color of opposition leader Viktor Yushchenko, as more and more people streamed toward the 10-story government building in the center of the capital.

Crowds also blocked off the streets leading to the main and back door entrances to the presidential administration building. The whereabouts of President Leonid Kuchma were unclear.

The demonstrators formed a barricade around the nearby national parliament building with two minibuses, preventing the lawmakers from getting inside.

The opposition asked its supporters to block the entrances Thursday evening only minutes after Ukraine's supreme court ordered a delay in the publication of official results that handed victory to Yanukovich.

The delay means that Yanukovich cannot be sworn in until the court hears an appeal from Yushchenko's camp. The hearings are scheduled to begin early Monday and the ruling party candidate protested the decision.

"We are starting to take state power under our control," declared Alexander Zinchenko, who heads a National Salvation Committee that the opposition formed Thursday night.

Some 150 police cadets in uniform, some wearing orange ribbons, marched in front of the presidency in a faceoff with elite riot officers. They were later shown live on television singing the national anthem in the main Independence Square, where a 100,000-strong opposition crowd was gathered.

"The most important thing is honesty, democracy. We are not indifferent to the fate of our people. Tomorrow our whole police academy will be here," said one of the cadets, 21-year-old Sergel.

A colonel in the special forces guarding the presidency said he would stand firm.

"I would rather die than leave this place. Everyone makes their choice, they made theirs and I have made mine," he said.

Tipaimukh dam

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Barak, which will adversely affect it in many ways.

The next meeting of the JRC could be an appropriate forum for Bangladesh to express its concern to India, sources at the Water Resources Ministry said yesterday.

The 36th meeting of the JRC is likely to be held sometime in January in Dhaka.

Meanwhile, people in greater Sylhet under the banner of Shahjalal Samaj Kalyan Parishad plan to hold a rally at Court Point in the divisional city today, protesting the Tipaimukh project.

In India too, protests have been going on for years in the northeastern region as many people living in the Barak catchment areas fear permanent flooding of their areas due to the impact of the dam.

According to reports from across the border, the Naga Women Union of Manipur protested Manipur State Government's signing of agreement with the North-Eastern Electrical Power Corporation (NEEPCO) for constructing the project. It feared that due to the dam-induced submergence, 15,000 people would be rendered landless and homeless.

Fatah confirms

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after Arafat's death a fortnight ago.

Reuters adds: Jailed uprising leader Marwan Barghuti would have to run for Palestinian president as an independent after the Fatah faction formally endorsed Mahmud Abbas as their candidate, a Fatah official said Thursday.

Ahmed Ghnem, of the Fatah Revolutionary Council, told the news agency the council's approval of Abbas' candidacy on Thursday meant "the door was closed" to Barghuti running on the Fatah ticket to replace the late Yasser Arafat as Palestinian president.

Barghuti may announce his candidacy soon, Palestinian officials said.

DU wakes

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micro-organisms that may cause various diseases like hepatitis-A or jaundice.

In a press release yesterday the authorities said they are taking emergency measures to check the situation.

They claimed they directed all the hall authorities to ensure supply of safe drinking water for students and also have taken steps to boil the drinking water.

The authorities will also evict all illegal makeshift shops from inside the halls and asked all shopkeepers under DU control to ensure supply of fresh food.

They said a medical team is on alert at the three halls to supervise sickness of any student. Arrangements have also been made to refer sick students to public hospitals for treatment.

Meantime, of the students suspected of having been infected by jaundice, 150 were tested positive. The press release said 62 of them are suffering from mild infection, while the conditions of others are slightly above the risk level.

"If any government officials come here, they come wearing this," he said, pointing to his orange armband.

Ulfa claims

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government to their offer of peace talks.

The blasts came soon after Prime Minister Manmohan Singh rejected the group's demand for independence for oil and tea-rich Assam state, saying it was an "integral part" of India but that he was open to discussion of other issues.

The rebels blew up an injection well belonging to India's state-owned Oil India Ltd in the Lankachari area in the east of the state. In another incident they injured at least five soldiers in a grenade attack on an army vehicle.

They also threw a grenade at a police station but there were no casualties.

An Oil India spokesman said crude supply was not affected.

The blasts preceded ULFA's annual protest day Sunday that marks the 10th anniversary of a fierce army crackdown against its forces.

"We've put extra troops around vital installations, especially in areas through which oil pipelines pass," said state Inspector General of Police Khaqen Sharma.

ULFA rebels often attack oil installations in Assam, which is the source of some 15 per cent of India's onshore crude oil production or about five million tonnes annually, as well as striking government and military targets.

ULFA, which took up arms for an independent homeland in 1979, has demanded independence be the core issue in any peace talks. Singh ruled out independence during his trip to Assam that ended Monday but said New Delhi's door was "always open for negotiation" with any group shunning violence.

Recent tremors of moderate intensity in Dhaka, Sylhet, Chittagong and other parts of the country were caused by the deviation, they observe.

Observatories

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New bangabazar

FROM PAGE 1

savings and Tk 1.5 lakh borrowed money to build up a good stock of blankets, but all were reduced to ashes.

"If I am not the victim, then who?" he questioned in a choked voice.

Like Haque, Nurul Islam, Shah Alam, and Mohammad Babu could not get their names into the list for compensations.

The affected traders said it cost the owners around Tk 25,000 to build a tin roofed shop with wooden structure.

Poor relief

FROM PAGE 12

card," said Golam Mohammed Moulou of the Gosaibari Masterpara of Dhunat upazila, referring to the VGF ration card.

"If we could remove the sand from our land we could cultivate vegetables in our small patch of land," he said. He added that he asked about the government's rehabilitation programme but did not get anything.

The entire Gosaibari village and its 300 houses were buried in sand or washed away by the dam cut disaster. NGOs helped 38 villagers to rebuild small houses. Some others built small houses corrugated in.

Kalpana Akhter, 30, the wife of a rickshaw-puller from the village, said her family was still living in a neighbour's house, as her husband was unable to rebuild. "We just ran away with our kids in the middle of the night and could not save anything," she said. "Now, how can we build the house with our low income?"

In the Dhunat upazila, where 43,807 families were affected by floods, the government allocated only Tk 50,000 as house-building assistance. "I did not distribute the house-building grants (till the first week of November), as it was about nothing compared with our requirements," said Muhammed Al Amin, the UNO of the Dhunat upazila.

David

FROM PAGE 1
Secretary and BRTC Chairman Taimur Alam Khondoker, former BNP MP Sirajul Islam, BNP leader Nurul Islam Sarder and local Bikalpa Dhara convenor ATM Kamal were present at David's janaza held at Missionpara after the Juma prayers.

He was buried later at Masdai graveyard.

The Narayanganj top criminal was killed with two bullets to his chest and abdomen in front of Malibagh Community Centre at 9:15pm Wednesday, about one hour after a Rab team started following him from Jatrabari.

Ahmed Ghnem, of the Fatah Revolutionary Council, told the news agency the council's approval of Abbas' candidacy on Thursday meant "the door was closed" to Barghuti running on the Fatah ticket to replace the late Yasser Arafat as Palestinian president.

Barghuti may announce his candidacy soon, Palestinian officials said.



Supporters of Ukrainian opposition leader Viktor Yushchenko climb on a truck blocking the entrance to the presidential office in Kiev yesterday protesting the results of the recently held general elections.

Long arm of land grabbers

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According to witnesses, at about 10:30 in the morning on November 2 a group of about 30 men led by Lal Mia, an influential local leader, attacked the makeshift cluster houses of the Hindus while most of the men were busy tilling their land.

Maran, a young man, was the first victim who received injuries on his head, arms and back from the sharp weapons the thugs used.

The tremor had its epicentre 17 kilometers (10.5 miles) south of Nabire and 33 kilometers (20 miles) underground.

In February strong earthquakes jolted Nabire, which is 580 kilometers (359 miles) west of Jayapura, for three days and killed 37 people. Six hundred others were injured.

Papua, Indonesia's easternmost province, is largely mountainous and jungle-clad with few roads, complicating relief efforts.

Indonesia, an archipelago of more than 18,000 islands, lies at the collision point of three tectonic plates. Pressure between the massive segments of the Earth's crust cause frequent earthquakes and volcanic eruptions.

Two weeks ago a succession of powerful earthquakes struck Alor island in eastern Indonesia, killing 26 people.

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Police sent the bodies to

Chuadanga Sadar Hospital for

autopsy.

With these latest casualties, the

number of outlaws killed in such

incidents in the district since May 12

rose to 25.

HUNT IN KHLUNA

Our staff correspondent in Khulna

reports members of Rab raided and

searched the houses of a journalist

and two local leaders of the BNP and

one of Awami League (AL) Thursday

evening in Dumuria upazila.

Police said Mabud and Habib

were caught in crossfire as they tried

to escape in handcuffs from a police

van and died on the spot.

A police constable sustained

outlaw injuries from bombs blasted

by outlaws on the police team.

According to police, at least 40

shots were exchanged during the

half-hour gunfight, of which they

admitted to have fired 14 shots. They

retrieved two shotguns and 13

bullets from the spot.

In the second case, police raided

a house at Parlaksmipur village at