

# Ukraine opposition blocks PM from entering office

AFP, Kiev

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

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

FROM PAGE 1  
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 submerison, 15,000 people would be rendered landless and homeless.

## 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 Masdar 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.

## DU wakes

FROM PAGE 1  
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.

## 17 killed

FROM PAGE 12  
food was available but residents badly need medicine and tents.

"We are still waiting for supplies from Blak town. The airport's runway is cracked in six places but Twin Otter planes can still land here," Batlayeri said.

The main quake, measuring 6.4 on the Richter scale, hit Nabire at 9:25 am (0225 GMT), meteorology officials said. Some 150 buildings were flattened and another 178 were set ablaze.

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.

## Observatories

FROM PAGE 12  
Surveys show about 15 earthquakes struck Bangladesh in the last 100 years. Experts say deviation in the Mediterranean-Himalayan seismic belt was the main cause of these quakes.

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

## 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 Moulana 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 made small houses corrugated tin.

Kalpna 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 Mohammed Al Amin, the UNO of the Dhunat upazila.



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

FROM PAGE 1  
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.

During the hour-long mayhem, Maran, along with six housewives who cried out for help to save Maran, received near deadly injuries. All the injured were rushed to a local hospital. One of them is still fighting for his life in Gonoshashya Hospital in Savar.

"We had no idea they would launch a bloody attack on us. Some of us begged for mercy but they continued their charge on us sparing none—not even the children," narrated Gour Dashi, one of the victims who survived a two-inch-deep cut on her back, close to the spine.

Recalling the horrifying moments of the attack, twenty-four year old Dashi continued, "When I regained consciousness and looked around while still lying on the courtyard I saw many other fellow housewives lying on the ground, some of them bleeding from their wounds. It was like aftermath of a run-over battlefield."

The attack ensued after the police, responding to complaints from the village, seized at around 9 in the morning on the day of the attack a water pump used by the miscreants for fishing in a pond close to a Hindu temple.

Defying an earlier court injunction the miscreants continued to use the water body, which measures 57 decimals of land and belongs to the minority community for worshipping. They also threatened severe consequences if anyone resisted.

Earlier a probe from the government had found that Tamij Uddin,

one of the miscreants, had prepared false documents to claim ownership of the water body. Later the court had dismissed the arbitration and proclaimed that the land belonged to the minority community.

Despite a judicial settlement of the dispute the miscreants, allegedly led by Md Badesh Fakir, an influential businessman of the locality, continued to use muscle and power to evict the Hindus.

"We want protection of our lives. To seek justice we lodged complaint with the police accusing eleven people including Ibrahim, Jahangir, Sona Mia, Sobhan and Mujibor Rahman of the attack. Surprisingly, all the accused are moving freely," said Santosh Sarker.

The situation has turned so tense since the day of the attack that children have stopped going to school in fear of being abducted or injured. Even men do not dare to go alone to the market a little distance away for daily needs.

"Whenever we go out we go in groups as the narrow passages we walk through to reach the local market run through territories that belong to the miscreants," said Hari Lal Sarker.

Duli Rani, an elderly woman of the community assuming this correspondent to be a high official from the capital, pleaded for help to bring peace to the society while others whispered names of the five brothers who created the reign of terror in the village.

"I am 66 years old and I have never witnessed such angry attack on us," said a visibly frightened Rani adding, "Some of the Hindu leaders believed to be targets for attacks move only during dark to avoid being identified."

Biva Biswas, the secretary of HRCBM who had gone to investigate the incident, told The Daily Star, "The Hindu community in Gopalpur are

living in anxiety. They have been attacked in the previous years and we fear this may continue. When we sought police help they refused to extend cooperation."

When contacted, Md Badesh Fakir denied the allegations of masterminding the attacks. He said, "Why should I be blamed for starting the chaos. It is absolutely baseless. In fact, I have invited leaders from both the parties to settle things down but the Hindu leaders refused to compromise."

When contacted, the local member of parliament (MP), Barrister Ziaur Rahman Khan said, "I was informed of the incident but I believed it was a trivial matter and so it would be settled at their level. But it seems now it is turning into a serious conflict."

He assured this correspondent that he would mediate for a peaceful settlement.

Barrister Zia later said, "The leaders of the Hindu community met me Saturday morning at my Dhaka residence. The issue seems quite mysterious to me, but I have instructed three neighbouring union parishad chairmen to investigate the matter and submit separate reports to me within 7 days. After that I will sit with both the parties and try to solve the problem."

Asked about the incident, Dhamrai police station officer-in-charge, Md Tareq Kamal, told The Daily Star, "I cannot provide protection to the community as I do not have enough force. But I assure you that we will arrest the accused as soon as possible."

Meanwhile, Fulbanu, one of many victims of the incident, is being treated in a secret location in the village while Haridas, another victim, is fighting for life at a nearby hospital.

## Saarc economic

FROM PAGE 1  
Bangladesh hosted the summit again in 1993.

The Saarc preparatory committee has decided that the inaugural ceremony would be held at the Bangladesh-China Friendship Conference Centre on January 9 and the concluding ceremony at the International Conference Centre at the Prime Minister's Office on January 11.

January 10 has been set as the day of retreat when most of the bilateral meetings would take place at the state guesthouse Jamuna. The agenda of the summit would be fixed in a series of committee meetings from January 3.

The programming committee would sit January 3-4, Saarc standing committee comprising foreign secretaries from January 5 to 6, and the Saarc council of ministers, comprising foreign ministers, from January 7 to 8.

The budget for the summit has been fixed at Tk 15 crore by the Saarc Cell, headed by Reaz Rahman, advisor to the foreign ministry.

Although the most visible preparation for the summit is beautification of Dhaka, security, protocol and logistics have received the major chunk of monetary allocation. It is expected that preparations for the summit would be finished by December.

The 10 sub-committees working under the Saarc Cell are Summit Preparation; Protocol and Management; Accommodation; Security; Transport; Culture; City Beautification; Information and Public Relations; Post and Telecommunications; and Health.

Bulk of the budget is being spent on the transport and accommodation and security of the leaders. State Minister for Home Affairs Lutfozzaman Babar has said that the security during the summit would be foolproof.

The areas surrounding the Dhaka Sheraton Hotel, where Saarc leaders would reside during the summit, would be cordoned off by law-enforcement agencies.

Some 220 government officials are expected to be included in the state delegations while another 300 to 400 media personnel will attend the summit.

# 15 more bodies found in Mosul

## 2 GIs, 4 British company guards and 6 Iraqis killed in attacks, blasts

AFP, Reuters, Mosul

Fifteen more bodies were found in and around Mosul in the past 24 hours, said the US and Iraqi officials Friday, bringing to at least 40 the number of corpses discovered in the northern city in the past week.

The new bodies have not been identified but the ones found before belonged mostly to Iraqi soldiers in what US military commanders say is campaign by insurgents to spread fear among members of the fledgling force and ordinary citizens.

"Twelve more unidentified bodies were found by multinational forces conducting patrolling operations on the western side of the city," said US military spokesman Lieutenant Colonel Paul Hastings.

He said this was in addition to the three bodies, including one of a Kurd and member of Iraq's security forces, found Thursday near a mosque in the New Mosul neighbourhood and at the Al-Yarmuk roundabout on the city's west side.

An AFP reporter embedded with the military was with the troops when they found those three bodies.

"Iraqi security forces have been targeted by religious extremist elements to spread fear," added Hastings.

One of the bodies was picked up Saturday near the city's bridge number one in the south, General Motaz Taqa of the Joint Coordination Centre which is a quick reaction unit comprising US and Iraqi forces.

He said six bodies were found Friday in a cemetery in the Wadi al-Aqat area on the west side and three others in the industrial zone.

"We have taken them all to the morgue, only one of them had an identification card saying he was from Diwanah in the south, so he may be a soldier," he told AFP.

Hastings said two bodies were found in Tall Afar, west of Mosul.

At least 40 bodies have been found in the city over the past week.

US troops also arrested the imam of a mosque near the location where one of the bodies was found yesterday.

He said four employees of a British security firm were killed Thursday in an attack on Baghdad's fortified "Green Zone", a company spokesman in Dubai told AFP yesterday.

"Four of our staffers were killed in Baghdad yesterday," said Tim O'Brian, from the British security firm Global Risks Strategies.

He did not wish to reveal the nationalities of the victims until next of kin had been notified, but added that several other of the firm's employees were wounded in the attack.

O'Brian said an investigation was under way and could not specify

what type of attack had killed the four men.

Earlier two US Marines were killed in the Iraqi city of Falluja Thursday when insurgents threw grenades at them after they entered a house to search it, their commanding general said yesterday.

Lt Gen. John Sattler said Marines had also killed three insurgents in the incident. Marines have been searching houses in Falluja for weapons and guerrillas after a major offensive in the city earlier this month.

In Kirkuk a policeman was shot dead near Iraq's northern city of Kirkuk yesterday while a member of a political party accused of ties to the US military was killed in Samarra, police said.

"A policeman was killed and three others wounded, including an officer, in an automatic gunfire attack near a checkpoint about 10 kilometres (six miles) south of Kirkuk," said the city's police chief, General Turhan Yusef.

In the restive Sunni Muslim city of Samarra, a former general who was recently reconquered by US forces after remaining a no-go zone for months, a political party member was gunned down by unknown attackers.

"Nabil Said Darwish, a member of the National Salvation Movement, was assassinated this morning by armed men in Samarra," said police Lieutenant Colonel Mahmud Mohammed.

The party is led by Wafiq al-Samarrai, a former general under Saddam Hussein, who broke away from the regime shortly before the US-led invasion of Iraq in March 2003.

"Darwish had survived several assassination attempts over the past two months, which had left two of his bodyguards dead," the police officer said.

Two Iraqi civilians were killed and two others seriously wounded Thursday when a bomb exploded by a police checkpoint south of the main northern oil city of Kirkuk, police said.

"A bomb exploded near a checkpoint set up on the road linking Kirkuk to Suleiman Pak, killing two Iraqis and seriously injuring two others," said Lieutenant Ahmed Abdallah, from the Kirkuk police.

In Samarra, two people were killed and 14 wounded in bomb attacks, one of them a suicide bombing, in the restive Iraqi city on Thursday, police and hospital officials said.

"We received two bodies completely burned and 13 wounded, six of them from the police and seven civilians," said a doctor at the general hospital, referring to a first car bomb, which police said exploded as a US-Iraqi patrol was passing.

# Immunity to WB

FROM PAGE 12  
immunity, but the WB, as a financial institution, can never get such privilege, he noted.

Rafiq Zaman, president of BOUK, terming the WB merely a proponent of capitalism and free market economy, said lately it has got scared that Bangladesh's people might soon go to court against the international financial organisation as it has scarcely been of any benefit to the country.

The WB's assistance was immense during the rule of Ershad, who used the money mainly in unproductive sectors. The Bank, which always preaches democracy and transparency, should have ceased providing assistance to the despotic regime at that time, he added.

The WB, in fact, has always maintained a close connection with the fascist governments in countries across the world. The WB's prescription can do no good to the common people, Zaman observed.

"We just don't get why some of our ministers are zealous to give immunity to the Bank and the government also does not have any answer to it," he said.

Sohrab Hassan, a journalist, taking part in the discussion, said, "We are, in fact, very unfortunate that our democratic government despite seemingly being aware of the implications of providing such immunity, keeps mum about the issue."

Advocate Mizanur Rahman of Anti-Immunity Alliance said nowhere in the original documents (act and constitution) of the Washington-based multilateral lender has 'blanket immunity' been justified. The WB itself has shifted from its basic principles by asking for immunity.

"Bangladesh has already incurred huge loss by granting immunity to the Asian Development Bank (ADB). We were then not much aware of the consequences. But now we just can't afford to repeat the mistake by letting the government give immunity to the World Bank," he headed.

"All the other financial institutions and multinational companies will also ask for immunity once the government has set the precedent by giving immunity to the World Bank. Then we dread to think what will become of the country," he added.

Monwar Mostafa Jolly of Unnayan Anneshan, Faysal Bin Mazid, general secretary of BOUK, also addressed the discussion.

## 2 foreigners die

FROM PAGE 1  
doctors of the company treated them late Thursday night.

But by the next morning the condition of Buthan and Isaev worsened and the former died at about 11:00am, Siddhirganj police said.

Police recovered Buthan's body from his quarters at 2:00pm. "He was lying dead in the room," Sub-Inspector Mokbul of Siddhirganj Police Station said.

Police sent the body to Narayaganj Sadar Hospital for autopsy.

As Isaev's condition became critical too, four staff of the company including staff doctor Kravchenko Michael rushed him to Birdem hospital in the capital at around 2:00pm.

Kravchenko said Isaev might have suffered food poisoning. But the Birdem authorities refused to admit him there.

He was then taken to the DMCH at 2:40pm. "His condition was very bad and he needed life support," a doctor who attended Isaev said on condition of anonymity.

The doctors on duty at the DMCH instructed the bearers to take Isaev to the intensive care unit, on way to which he expired.

His body was kept at the DMCH emergency department until filing of this report at 8:35pm. Doctors will perform an autopsy of the body today.

In the inquest report, Siddhirganj police said the two foreigners might have died from alcohol poisoning.