

Clashes mark

FROM PAGE 1
for electoral reforms, resignation of the chief election commissioner (CEC) and two 'politically appointed' election commissioners, and to protest 'police atrocities' on opposition leaders and workers during the Dhaka siege on Sunday.

The countrywide shutdown badly disrupted normal life, affecting road communications and economic and other activities.

Educational institutions, markets, shops, business establishments and many private offices remained closed due to the hartal.

Motorised vehicles kept off the roads while rickshaws plied unhindered in Dhaka and other major cities and towns. Bus communication between the capital and districts remained suspended while train and launch services operated as usual.

LASTING IN THE CAPITAL

Some 50 people including women activists of the 14-party were injured in clashes with police in different parts of the capital. Pro-hartal pickets threw brickbats at police and the latter fired teargas shells and charged batons to disperse them.

At least 20 people including three policemen were injured in clashes between police and pickets in Lalbagh area. Pickets also set fire to seven vehicles including one requisitioned by police.

Police picked up at least 20 opposition men from the area. AL leader Haji Mohammad Selim claimed that 60 of their party workers were injured during the clashes.

The trouble started as police intercepted a pro-hartal procession from Begumbaraz marching towards Chawkbazar at about noon.

Pickets hurled brickbats at police and police fired blank shots, lobbed teargas shells and charged batons on them. Intermittent clashes between the two sides followed this, tuning the entire area into a virtual battle field.

Violence spread to Mughaltuli, Rahmatganj, Devi Das Ghat Lane, Moulvibazar and other adjacent areas and continued till about 12:30pm.

Pickets set fire to three loaded trucks at Panghat and a pick up van and a police-requisitioned vehicle at Rahmatganj.

Some 10 persons were injured in a clash between police and pickets in front of Government Titumir College at Mohakhali.

Of them, AL presidium member Tofail Ahmed suffered minor injuries. He was leading a procession that police intercepted.

Photojournalist of the New Age Reza Khan was among the injured.

At least 20 AL lawmakers brought out a procession from parliament area and marched towards Farmgate at about 11:00am but police intercepted the procession near Tejgoan College.

The lawmakers staged a demonstration there and five of them — Tanjim Ahmed, Sohel Taj, Shahabuddin Khan, Ekabbor Hossain, Mahbubur Rahman, and Mohammad Ali — proceeded to the VIP Road and staged a sit-in there.

They stayed there until 3:00pm and demanded electoral reforms and resignation of the CEC. They did not leave the spot even when the prime minister's motorcade passed through the road. Police picked up some 10 passers-by a few minutes before this.

Police charged batons on a procession led by AL leader Abdur Razzak on Mirpur Road near Shukrabad. More than five activists were injured there. Police also picked up four activists, three of them women.

The opposition men then brought out another procession and held a rally at Russel Square, protesting the police action.

Police also charged batons on a procession led by AL leader Mohammad Nasim at Kalabagan.

Pro-hartal pickets damaged two three-wheelers near Russell Square.

A procession led by AL lawmaker Asaduzzaman Noor from Motijheel area was repeatedly attacked by police and finally dispersed before it reached Paltan area.

Police also dispersed a Jatiya Samik League procession at Motijheel and picked up at least five activists.

Pickets hurled brickbats at passenger buses, leaving five people injured at Malibagh intersection at about noon.

The AL central office on Bangabandhu Avenue was virtually under police siege since Monday midnight as the law enforcers put barbed wire fences on the adjacent roads. The opposition men held a brief rally near it under police vigilance.

Around 7,000 police, Rab and BDR were deployed in the capital to avert untoward incidents.

COUNTRYWIDE HARTAL

A correspondent reports from Tongi that hartal supporters vandalised and torched five buses on the Dhaka-Mymensingh highway at Tongi early in the morning. They also ransacked several rickshaws and autorickshaws.

Our Narayanganj correspondent reports: At least 40 people including two journalists were injured in violence during the hartal in Narayanganj.

Storming into district AL office, police beat up 14-party workers, prompting them to retaliate hurling brickbats and other things.

The opposition activists barricaded roads in Ukilpara area of the town and police chased them resulting in chase and counter-chase.

Forty people including district AL President Anwar Hossain, BCL General Secretary GM Arfa, photojournalists of the 'Jugantor', Shameem Nur and of 'Ajker Narayanganj' Sajib Khondoker

were injured there.

In Sirajganj, at least 15 pro-hartal activists were injured, including two seriously, when police charged batons on them at Nalka bus station in Raiganj upazila yesterday morning, reports our Sirajganj correspondent.

The pickets vandalised about 10 vehicles.

In Pabna, at least 10 BCL and Jubo League activists were injured when JCD activists attacked them during the hartal hours, reports our Pabna correspondent.

JCD cadres chopped Jubo League leader Azizul Babu who was rushed later to Dhaka Medical College Hospital.

Our Jessore correspondent reports: BNP activists in a motor-bike procession attacked a Jubo League procession at Chhotoanchra in Benapole at 11:30am yesterday. Some people also attacked AL leader Nuruzzaman who was injuring his brother Wahiduzzaman and four others.

Police arrested three AL activists earlier on Monday night.

Our Barisal correspondent reported that pickets tried to put barricades at Nathullabad, Rupatali, Kalijira and other entry points of the city in the early morning and vandalised two buses and trucks, four tempos and rickshaws, injuring at least two passengers.

In Manikganj, opposition activists set fire to two passenger buses in Dhamrai and Uthuli in Shibhalaya upazila, reports our Manikganj correspondent.

Our staff correspondent in Sylhet reported that pickets pelted brickbats on Islami Bank and T&T Office at Talota in the city and damaged eight rickshaws there.

Reports from our correspondents in Bogra, Khulna and Bandarban, and at Rajshahi University said hartal was observed peacefully in the districts.

HASINA STATEMENT
Leader of the Opposition Sheikh Hasina blasted the police for excesses on opposition leaders during the countrywide shutdown yesterday and urged them to stop attacking and torturing the opposition's peaceful demonstrations.

Hasina, also the AL president, in a statement yesterday thanked the countrymen for observing yesterday's hartal and urged them to make today's hartal a complete success.

The AL chief also demanded immediate release of the opposition leaders and activists arrested during Sunday's Dhaka siege and hartal.

"The government will have to step aside from the path of conflict to overcome political crisis", Hasina said urging the alliance government to accept their demand for electoral reform. She said otherwise the government would be forced to accept the demand and resign after vigorous movements.

Brazil ride
Facing the Brazilian "magic game" of Ronaldo, Kaká, Ronaldinho and Adriano, Croatian coach Zlatko Kranjcar fielded a five-man midfield including former Juventus defender Igor Tudor.

The Croatians had to make a change on 40 minutes when skipper Niko Kovac, already booked for a challenge on Kaká, withdrew clutching his chest after a tussle with Adriano, giving way to Jerko Leko as Tudor took the captain's armband.

Behind the interval, Croatia had to raise their game and Pro and Ivan Klasnic forced Kaká's clubmate Dida into two smart steps in quick succession.

After 55 minutes, Ronaldo, languid in the extreme in the opening period, suddenly roused himself to shoot just over.

Adriano had also been quiet and it was left to Ronaldinho to move into the centre forward position on 63 minutes, his header from a right-wing cross by veteran skipper Cafu bringing an athletic stop from Pletikoska.

Robert Kovac then followed his sibling into Mexican referee Benito Archundia's book for felling Adriano.

With 20 minutes remaining and not satisfied that a blunt Ronaldo — whose weight and form have been sources of much controversy — was going to find a way through, Brazil coach Carlos Alberto Pereira sent Robinho into the fray.

That only spurred the Croatians on as Marko Babic fired straight at Dida and Niko Kranjcar headed over.

Kaka then showed he has a right foot as talented as his left in firing a snapshot just wide as Brazil closed out the result.

TEAMS
BRAZIL: Dida; Cafu, Lucio, Juan, Roberto Carlos, Emerson, Ze Roberto; Kaká, Ronaldinho; Ronaldo (Robinho 69), Adriano.

Yellow card: Emerson (42)
CROATIA: Stipe Pletikoska; Dario Simic, Robert Kovac, Josip Simunic; Darijo Srna, Igor Tudor, Niko Kovac (Jerko Leko 40), Marko Babic; Niko Kranjcar; Dado Prso, Ivan Klasnic (Ivica Olic 57).

Yellow cards: Niko Kovac (32), Robert Kovac (67), Tudor (90)
Referee: Benito Archundia (Mexico)

Attendance: 72,000

JS approves

FROM PAGE 16
defence ministry spent Tk 330 crore extra, and the home ministry spent Tk 229 crore extra. The local government department's extra expenditure is Tk 215 crore, while the power division, and the textile and jute ministry spent Tk 127 crore and Tk 120 crore extra respectively.

According to the Supplementary Financial Statement, an additional Tk 500 crore has been allocated to the revenue budget of the agriculture ministry for enhancing agriculture production as well as for implementation of 23 new development projects.

Expenditure of the defence ministry increased due to procurement of transport, spare parts, and fuel for the United Nations peace keeping missions abroad in which Bangladesh participates, for payment of allowance to the army personnel engaged in such missions, and for additional expenditure in overall defence logistics.

The home ministry's expenditure rose as it had to purchase transports for the police and Rab, for maintaining law and order during the recent Saarc summit, for purchasing security and communication instruments, etc.

Yesterday, Finance Minister M Saifur Rahman placed the supplementary budget for the parliament's approval with the main opposition Awami League absent in the House.

5 boys

FROM PAGE 16
Mohammadpur in Dhaka.

The boys, hail from Comilla, Magura, Borguna and Dhaka districts, said they came out of the shelter on promise by the traffickers of good jobs in India.

3 missing

FROM PAGE 16
remained missing since the accident.

Fire Brigade divers from Sadarghat rushed to the spot, but could not rescue any of the victims as of 7:00pm.

The boatman was identified as Ratan, 60. Identity of the passengers could not be known.

BNP leader

FROM PAGE 16
place. He was rushed to Khulna Medical College Hospital for treatment.

Police said Salam used to issue death threats to owners of shrimp farms to extract money from them. Locals attacked him around 11:30pm on Monday, beat him up and gouged out both his eyes.

Police quoting locals said Salam was also closely linked to Purbia Banglar Communist Party (PBCP) Janajuddho faction.

Indian

FROM PAGE 1
Commission in Dhaka requested the Bangladesh government to share with it the details about the identity of those killed in the operation, reported as being 10 Indian nationals and members of the National Liberation Front of Tripura (NLFT), sources said.

A Rab release said yesterday the raid was conducted following information from two drug peddlers — Shishir Marak and Salang Marak — arrested on Sunday in Dhaka.

The two were also killed during the gunfight as bullets fired by the miscreants hit them.

The Rab release said the identities of the eight other miscreants could not be ascertained, but it is suspected that they are Bangladeshis nationals.

Sources said the dead miscreants might be members of NLFT. The insurgents of the organisation have been operating in various bordering areas since its formation in 1994, security sources added.

Our Rangamati and Khagrachhari correspondents report: Sources said the joint team of around 100 army and Rab personnel surrounded the den in a remote hill area of Sajek union on Monday morning and asked the insurgents on loudspeakers to surrender. But the terrorists started firing on the joint team members.

The operation was led by Chittagong Rab-7 commanding officer Lt Col Haseenur Reza, Rab intelligence wing Director Lt Col Gulzar and Major Mujibur Rahman of 24 infantry division of Bangladesh Army in hill tracts.

During the half-an-hour long clash, two members of the joint force were also hurt.

"As the situation calmed down, the joint force members entered the den and found eight dead bodies," said the Rab press release.

The firearms and explosives seized from the den include one 9mm SMG, one DBBL, one 303 rifle, two pistols, two revolvers, three single barrel gun, 50 electric detonators and 10 power gel explosives. Besides, an SMG magazine, a walkie-talkie set, one telescope sight for weapon and 25 rounds of bullets were also seized.

The joint force handed over the 10 dead bodies to Baghaichhari police around 9:30pm on Monday.

Officer-in-Charge of Baghaichhari Police Station Aminul Haq could not provide any information regarding age, address and nationality of the dead. He said a case was filed with Baghaichhari PS in this connection on Monday.

The autopsy of the 10 dead bodies was carried out at Khagrachhari Sadar Hospital at about 11:30am yesterday.

The bodies were supposed to be sent to Chittagong later.

No compensation

FROM PAGE 16
but compensation for the damage is yet to be realised.

During a recent visit to Magurchhara area by this correspondent, the affected people expressed their dissatisfactions to him over the role of national political leaders as well as the government in the failure to realise compensation for the damage. They wanted to know the mystery behind the long silence of the leaders and the government regarding settlement of compensation claims.

Louwachhara Reserve Forest adjacent to the exploded gas well was massively damaged. A shegun timber garden, established in the years 1944 to 1950, a bamboo garden, established in the years 1993 to 1995, and a strip of plantation, which was established in 1994 were also massively damaged by the fire.

About 96 acres of Louwachhara forest were completely burnt. Fifty percent of forest resources on 111.15 acres of land and 30 percent resources on 106.21 acres of land of the reserve forest were also damaged. A variety of organisms and animals which use the forest as a safe habitat were also extensively harmed. Experts said the loss is irrecoverable. Since the fire, wild animals from the forest now come out into human habitats in search of food.

The erstwhile AL government formed a committee with the erstwhile additional secretary to the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Resources as its chief to assess the loss of resources due to the explosion.

The committee submitted a report to the secretary to the ministry on July 30, 1997. Later the parliamentary standing committee on energy and mineral resources ministry formed another investigation committee comprising three lawmakers. Besides, the forest department had also conducted a survey on June 16 and 17, 1997.

According to the reports of these committees, the damage done to the forest resources amount to Tk 9858 crore and 29 tea gardens of the area suffered a loss of about Tk 46.07 crore.

The railway department suffered a loss of Tk 21 crore, Jalalabad Gas Company suffered a loss of Tk 13 lakh due to the damage to its pipeline, the electricity department suffered a loss of about Tk 1.35 crore. The Khasia community suffered a loss of Tk 18 lakh in damage done to their betel leaf plantations.

The reports said the damage done to the ecology will be impossible to recover within the next 50 years.

The local people of Kamalganj area are however yet to receive compensations while Occidental already made a safe exit from Magurchhara.

After the accident, another US company Unocal took over the operations of Magurchhara gas field and later yet another US company Chevron bought out Unocal. Now the onus is on Chevron for disbursing the claimed compensations.

According to Chevron, Moulvibazar gas field at Magurchhara has been operating safely since its re-inception in March 2005. The company drilled through sand twice where the accident had taken place in 1997. One well is currently producing natural gas.

A top ranking official of Chevron in Dhaka told this correspondent that they had conducted a third party survey several years ago to

asses the impact on environment. A settlement offer of Tk 6 crore was made to the ministry of environment based on the assessment to settle the matter, he claimed.

He claimed that Chevron had already paid all substantial claims of compensation for the June 1997 explosion.

But the local people as well as the local press are not informed about this claim of Chevron.

Lasker Maksudur Rahman, divisional forest officer (DFO) of Sylhet told this correspondent that he knows nothing about the assessed loss in Louwachhara Reserve Forest following the gas well explosion and about realisation of compensation from Occidental or Chevron. The DFO said the file is now at the ministry. He said he had joined the office a few years ago.

Govt forms

FROM PAGE 1
country's apparel industry.

Ten teams will work in Dhaka, four in Chittagong and one in Narayanganj, an official of the labour and employment ministry told the news agency yesterday.

The teams will visit 15 to 20 factories every week and closely monitor whether the workers are paid regularly and given identity card, appointment letter, overtime allowance, maternity leave and weekly holiday as per the memorandum of understanding (MoU).

The teams have been asked to submit report once a week to the labour and employment ministry. Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA) is likely to form a committee to ensure implementation of the MoU.

EC decision

FROM PAGE 1
the commission should make the best use of it and if not, a computerised database should always be maintained to avoid future controversy, costs and labour; and the persons whose names are already in the existing electoral roll cannot be dropped unless they are dead or have been declared to be of unsound mind or ceased to be residents or ceased to be deemed to be residents of that area or constituency.

The Appellate Division rejected the EC appeal on May 23, upholding the HC directives with two modifications that, according to legal experts, strengthened the HC directives further.

Govt asked

FROM PAGE 16
tarnish the image of the judiciary.

It also denounced police action on the opposition political leaders and workers during agitation to realise their various demands and demanded immediate release of those arrested and withdrawal of "false" cases filed against them.

The SCBA claimed compensation for the victims and demanded proper medical treatment of the injured.

Abdul Baset Majumder, Mahbubey Alam, Amrin Uddin, M Enayetur Rahim and Bashir Ahmed, among others, spoke at the meeting.

Many may miss

FROM PAGE 1
according to the Electoral Rolls Ordinance 1982 and Electoral Rolls Rules 1982, any eligible people can register his or her name in the voter list at any time.

Such activities of correction, amendment and inclusion of one's name in the voter list go round the year, Acting Secretary to the EC Secretariat Mohammad Zakaria said.

Since 1973, the EC officials have visited door to door to collect information about the prospective voters to prepare the voter list ahead of the parliamentary election.

But as the EC officials will not visit door to door to this time, experts fear that huge number of people will remain out of the list.

"It is the responsibility of the Election Commission to enroll eligible people in the voter list. So, the election officials should visit door to door to do the job. Huge number of people will remain out of the voter list if they do not visit door to door," former election commissioner M Munsef Ali told The Daily Star.

CEC MA Aziz has also admitted that the EC has no mechanism to identify the fake voters while a huge number of fake voters exist in the present voter list.

"The voter list prepared in 2000 was flawed," Aziz said at a programme on April 25.

He quoted the EU letter addressed to the previous CEC MA Syed, to have pointed out the existence of as many as 13 million ghost voters, while the US State Department report this year made a mention of 8 per cent fake voters on the list.

The Election Commission has got the opportunity to prepare an accurate voter list after the court's verdict, former election commissioner M Munsef Ali said.

"If the enumerators visit door to door, it will be easy to delete fake voters and names of dead persons from the voter list," he said, adding that eligible people will also have the chance to get their names enrolled.

Over 1 lakh

FROM PAGE 16
centres for the physically challenged in six divisions.

The prime minister said the government actions and efforts to bring the physically challenged people into the mainstream of development have been highly acclaimed both at home and abroad.

She said the government has been working to make it sure that the disabled people could enjoy their equal rights in every sphere of life.

Bulu gets bail

FROM PAGE 16
and remanded for one day in an attempted murder case filed by Abdus Salam Majumdar with Gulshan Police Station at around 8:20pm the previous day. His chief accountant Anwar Kabir was also accused of the charge.

Five minutes before filing of this case, Bulu's divorced wife Hosne Ara Naznin filed another case for torturing her for a dowry of Tk 2 crore.

Earlier on the same day, Bulu filed a criminal case against Housing and Public Works Minister Mirza Abbas, and Managing Director of the private satellite TV channel Kazi Mohammad Shahidullah, accusing them of threatening him with death unless he handed over his share of the channel for free.

On June 6, Bulu suffered a heart attack when he was standing in the dock of a Dhaka court during the hearing of his remand prayer in connection with another attempted murder case filed with Motijheel Police Station.

Meantime, Officer-in-Charge (OC) of Motijheel Police Station Abdul Motaleb was suspended on June 7, apparently for torturing Bulu while on remand.

BAIL OF ATTEMPTED MURDER CASE REJECTED
Another Dhaka court yesterday rejected Bulu's ad interim bail petition in the attempted murder case filed by Nur Hossain with the Motijheel Police Station.

Judge Mohammad Momin Ullah of the Metropolitan Sessions Judge's court fixed tomorrow for full hearing on the issue.

Paban's bail

FROM PAGE 16
A Detective Branch (DB) team of police captured Paban on Bailey Road with a stolen Toyota Premio around 10:30pm on June 7.

Three criminals hijacked the vehicle at gunpoint from its driver in Motijheel on October 13 last year.

DB produced Paban before Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's (CMM) Court the next day showing him arrested without any remand prayer. The court then ordered to send him to jail rejecting bail prayer.

The same court placed Robin on a four-day remand against the prayer of a 10-day one.

11 Palestinians

FROM PAGE 16
was loaded with Katyushas," referring to the Russian-made rocket launcher that have a much longer range than the usual makeshift missiles fired by Palestinian factions.

The army said that 39 makeshift rockets had been fired from Gaza into Israel during the past 24 hours and more than a 100 since last Friday.

"What Israel is doing is called state terrorism," Abbas told reporters at his office in Gaza. "This state terrorism will not shake us."

Earlier his spokesman said the Palestinian leader called on the international community to "intervene immediately to put an end to the Israeli aggression and escalation."

Separately Tuesday, four people were reported by witnesses to have been injured in an air strike near Beit Lahiyah, also in northern Gaza. The Israeli military did not confirm carrying out the second attack.

The Israeli military regularly carries out raids against militants in the densely-populated coastal strip. Palestinian militants often fire rockets into Israel from the north of the territory.

Tuesday's deaths bring to 5,105 the number of people, the majority of them Palestinians, who have been killed since the start of the Intifada in September 2000, according to an AFP count.

No plan

FROM PAGE 16
strategic investors through the Privatisation Commission.

Bangladesh Bank's improved payment systems as well as gradual development of fund management by the scheduled banks have helped reduce the volume of idle money, the minister said.

The volume of idle money was Tk 1,546 crore in March 04, and Tk 1,167 crore in March 05 while it came down to Tk 432 crore in March 06.

Hasina

FROM PAGE 1
informed the House immediately after yesterday's session began.

The expulsion came just after a day the main opposition in parliament Awami League (AL) walked out of the House in protest at a comment made by Moshir.

BNP lawmaker Moshir Rahman, taking the floor during a point of order on Monday implicated Sheikh Hasina in showing reverence for former Jamaat chief Golam Azam. Hasina in a retaliatory reply described the relation between BNP and Jamaat as one that exists between family members.

Following the incident the House witnessed a pandemonium for about 15 minutes as AL lawmakers' demanded that Moshir's comment be expunged from the records and that he apologise for the comment. As their demands were not met, AL lawmakers walked out of the House.

After the AL walkout, LGRD and Cooperatives Minister Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan took the floor and termed the opposition leader's statement 'indecent' and 'un-parliamentary'.

The acting speaker on Monday assured that he would expunge the 'un-parliamentary' statements after reviewing the records.

British police 'shot without warning'

Says victim of Bangladeshi origin

REUTERS, London