

Cops go wild

FROM PAGE 1
indiscriminately on some female workers taking shelter in a by-lane. They even entered a house and a clinic and beat up the female workers mercilessly, injuring at least 20 others.

The angry opposition activists at one stage pelted brickbats and chased the police. Additional police force rushed to the spot and chased the opposition men.

The law enforcement stormed into Nasim's residence, where many opposition activists took shelter, and damaged the security guard's room.

Before its attempt to march towards the PMO, the opposition alliance held a rally at Dharmundi vowing to resist the upcoming parliamentary election without electoral reforms.

Doctors at the BMCH said around 100 opposition workers and leaders went to the hospital to take treatment after the clashes.

A total of 36 severely injured opposition men, including Nasim, Ajay Karan and SM Kamal, were admitted to BMCH.

Condition of Nasim who was admitted unconscious was critical, said Prof Abdur Rauf Sarder. "But we cannot say anything definitely about the state of Mohammad Nasim before 24-hour observation," he said. Nasim received injuries all over his body, including on the hands, legs and head, he added.

General Secretary Abdul Jalil, Organising Secretary Abdul Mannan and other senior leaders and hundreds of activists rushed to the BMCH to see Nasim and other injured.

ALPP PROCESSION

An AL Parliamentary Party (ALPP) procession comprising 13 AL lawmakers led by opposition Chief Whip Abid Shahed and Col (Retd) Farook Khan brought out a procession from the NM building.

The police intercepted the procession thrice before it reached the Bijoy Sarani intersection. The AL lawmakers held a rally there.

BANGLAMOTOR CROSSING

Police clubbed the leaders and activists of 14-party alliance at Bangla Motor intersection area during their peaceful rally at around 12:30pm.

The police assaulted and injured at least 50 demonstrators including AL leaders Asaduzzaman Nur MP and Moshawer Ali, president of city (n o r t h) Awamia League and Swechchabak League.

Police attacked and drove the demonstrators away from the rallies in Bangla Motor, Sonargaon road and Eskaton areas.

A group of demonstrators put up a little resistance by pelting brickbats at the police but soon gave in to police might and dispersed.

AL President Member Md. Chowdhury, speaking from a make-shift stage aboard a truck bed, said the people would retaliate with a vengeance for all the bloodshed caused by the police.

Mofazzal Hossain Chowdhury, May, general secretary of Dhaka City Awami League, presided over the rally.

AGARGAON

Agargaon area turned volatile after some demonstrators hurled four molotov bombs at around 12:45pm toward the police positioned in front of DBB Bhaban.

riot police charged in and chased the opposition activists away. The activists answered with brickbats.

At least five AL activists were injured during this clash.

Two AL leaders fell off the truck that was carrying them and suffered injuries as the police was chasing them.

27 people killed

FROM PAGE 16
were wounded.

Gunmen also shot dead a policeman in Baghdad, where insurgents have managed to carry out a series of large-scale attacks despite a security crackdown since mid-June.

Northeast of the capital in the country's restive Diyalah province, 11 people were killed in a string of bombings and shadings.

In the deadliness of the attacks, four people were killed and 24 others wounded when a bomb exploded near a shop in the town of Muqaddiyah.

A separate bomb attack also killed Brigadier General Ali Hassan Jubar, head of operations in Muqaddiyah's police headquarters, police said.

He was killed in Abu Sayda, near Baquba, the provincial capital, as he left his home for work.

The other casualties were civilians, all killed in different shooting attacks in the town of Khalis, the Al-Tahri neighbourhood of Baquba and a market in Baquba.

Police also found three bodies in the province on Tuesday.

An ethnically mixed province, Diyalah is one of the most violent regions in Iraq with dozens killed every week in bombings and shootings.

In the northern city of Mosul, a police captain was shot dead as he was driving in his car.

In the town of Samarra, 125km north of Baghdad, four people were shot dead by gunmen in the town's industrial zone.

Also southwest of Samarra, a policeman was killed and another wounded when a roadside bomb hit their patrol.

Near the northern oil city of Kirkuk, an Iraqi soldier was killed and three others wounded when a roadside bomb struck their convoy.

Also in Kirkuk, police arrested a wanted insurgent from a local hospital and his interrogation led to arrests of another two policemen suspected of links with insurgent activities, police said.

Police found 15 bodies of men shot to death across Iraq, including the three in Diyalah province.

Govt crackdown

FROM PAGE 1
organisation's preparation to send a large number of people to Dhaka to take part in the 14-party programme of laying siege to the Prime Minister's Office yesterday and an opposition grand rally scheduled for September 18.

Proshika sources said panic-stricken staff of the NGO are preferring not to attend their offices and are not staying in their residences to avoid arrests and harassment by the government.

Law enforcers yesterday continued their surveillance of Proshika offices, but no new arrest was reported till 7:30pm.

Police however had picked up a Proshika employee at Dumuria yesterday but he was released after he had been taken to the police station, the Proshika sources said.

Some arrested Proshika staff obtained bail from local courts, but they were yet to be released from jail till 7:30pm yesterday, according to sources.

A Proshika official said two arrestees from Dhamrai, one each from Ashulia and Savar, five from Brahmanbaria, six from Bhatra, seven from Pakundia and four from Bajitpur were granted bail yesterday.

Meanwhile, different social and rights organisations in separate statements yesterday strongly condemned and protested the "illegal arrests" of Proshika staff.

The statements condemned the crackdown terming it a "violation of human rights" and demanded immediate release of the arrestees and a stop to the harassment.

The demonstrators there grew stronger as more processions joined them, but they did not succeed to remove the police barricade.

The leaders refrained their activists from further attempts and held a rally there. Speakers, presided over by Rashed Khan Menon, spoke from a makeshift podium built on a truck bed.

Dr Mohiuddin Khan, Alamgir, Subd Ali, Bhuiyan, Zahid Hasan Russell MP, AKM Rahmatullah and MA Baker spoke at the rally.

Tofail Ahmed threatened the government with indefinite strikes from October 28 if Justice KM Hasan is allowed to be the chief of the caretaker government and Chief Election Commissioner MA Aziz continues with the electoral process.

Two crackers went off after Tofail and other leaders got down from the podium instructing their followers to march towards the PMO.

Demonstrators started to hurl brickbats at the police and police pushed them towards the Mohakhal Bus Terminal area.

Three more crackers went off one after another when Tofail and other leaders reached near Mohakhal-Gulshan linkroad with a procession.

FRESH PROGRAMMES

The opposition combine held an urgent meeting at its coordinator Abdjalil's residence with Tofail Ahmed in the chair last night.

The meeting announced demonstration programmes at Chalk Bazaar and Bangabandhu Avenue today and at eight electoral constituencies in the capital tomorrow.

Jill, also the General Secretary of AL, demanded immediate removal of police DC Kohinoor Miah and accused him for masterminding the carnage during the PMO and EC siege programmes.

Polythene bag

FROM PAGE 1

Police put up barricades at Mohakhal rail crossing, Farmgate, Mohakhal flyover, Moghbazar, Bangla Motor, Shyamoli, Asad Gate, Panthapath, Russell Square, Dharmundi Road No 27, Rokeya Sarani intersection and Bijoy Sarani intersection clogging traffic during the rush hours of the day.

People who came out from their houses in the morning were seen walking to their destinations while many had to wait for a long time to get public transports.

"Oh God, what should I do now, I have to go to Al-Raji Hospital within an hour," a little boy, who was carrying food for his sick brother, told this correspondent at Mohakhal, as public transports were barred from running in the area at the moment.

"Now how will I go to Farmgate?" he asked before he started walking towards Farmgate.

"After remaining stranded for over an hour in front of the Army Stadium, I got off the bus and walked to Banani to attend my office," said a commuter.

Thousands of city-dwellers were seen waiting for hours at different intersections including Shabagh, Malibagh, Mouchak, Maghbazar, and New Market for busses.

"As a result, nearly 1000 people were stuck in traffic for two hours," he added.

PM opens

FROM PAGE 16

manufacturing 500 tonnes of fertiliser a day. Toyo Engineering Corporation and Mitsui Ltd of Japan constructed the unit.

"DAP has the quality to meet the demand for both TSP and urea. So, farmers will not have to buy TSP and urea separately as they can meet the requirements of the two fertilisers by using DAP," said an expert at the newly-built factory.

The two new units will produce around 5 lakh tonnes of DAP fertiliser annually, which is equivalent to 5 lakh tonnes of TSP and 2 lakh tonnes of urea fertiliser.

Judge Mohammad Aman Ullah of the Fifth Additional Metropolitan Sessions Judge's Court, Dhaka on Sunday fixed October 10 and November 5 for hearing on the petitions.

The raw materials of DAP-1 are phosphoric acid, ammonia, and sulphuric acid while of DAP-2 are phosphoric acid, ammonia and silica. Ammonia and sulphuric acid are available locally while phosphoric acid has to be imported.

The prime minister inaugurated the troubled areas in Mirpur on foot while trying to hail public transports, which were plying on Mirpur Road via Mirpur 1.

"I was in a hurry to go to Dharmundi but could not. I had to wait for an hour and a half at Mirpur 10 intersection due to shortage of public transports," said Shafiq, an official of a real estate company.

Rickshaw pullers and drivers of CNG-run three wheelers were demanding high fares prompting the commuters to get locked in bargaining squabbles with them in which the commuters had ultimately given in to the transport operators' demands.

"I was coming to Farmgate from Shabagh. Finding no bus, I looked for a rickshaw, but none of the rickshaw pullers agreed to come. After waiting for almost an hour, I started walking towards Farmgate," said Shahid, a student.

Dhaka set to sign

FROM PAGE 1

A team of PTTEP executives made this proposal during their visit on August 20-22. It was then said the Thai energy minister will visit Dhaka next month (September) and participate in the signing of the MoU on the proposal. But soon after reviewing the proposal, Petrobangla forwarded it to the energy ministry asking it to sign a MoU.

"Firstly, this is an unsolicited proposal. This is not attractive. But if we float an open tender, there is a chance that we might get better offers from other international companies, private or national oil agencies," noted an official.

"Secondly, the energy ministry last month finalised the new map of offshore blocks that will be open for the third round block bidding for oil and gas exploration. So, we cannot give away some of these blocks to PTTEP without any competition or before we conclude this international block bidding," he added.

Besides, the political governments of both Thailand and Bangladesh are now at the end of their tenure. Both the countries are preparing for elections. "Therefore, it is not a good time for striking an investment deal," he pointed out.

The MoU to be signed between the two countries will focus on broad-

based cooperation. Sources however said the draft of the MoU has not yet been finalised.

Thailand had been holding dialogues on energy sector cooperation from March last year. A high-level team of PTTEP officials had met the energy minister, Petrobangla and Bapex chiefs and later sent a proposal for Thailand scholarship on reservoir engineering and geo-science studies, visit of Bangladeshi oil and gas executives to Thailand oil and gas facilities and review of off-shore geological and seismic data of Bangladesh from Bangladesh Data Centre.

As a follow up, Bangladesh sent two officials from Bapex and Bangladesh Gas Field Company Ltd to Thailand under the scholarship programme late last year. In March this year, high officials of the energy ministry, Petrobangla and Bapex visited Thailand oil and gas facilities.

Bangladesh has great potentials as the people here are hospitable, sincere, peace- and democracy-loving while the media is free, noted the American ambassador.

Earlier, Butenis visited the two-century-old Chhota Sheshawali Kali Temple and talked to the Hindu leaders there. Chief priest Chandra Shekher Chakrabarty and human rights activist Advocate Sunil Sircar received her at the temple.

Talking to the press on the temple premises, she said Bangladesh has a proud tradition of interfaith harmony and the constitution safeguards the rights of the minority communities.

Butenis said the country's image as a moderate and peace-loving state has been brightening among the international community.

The US envoy visited Chittagong Export Processing Zone (CEPZ), Chittagong Port Authority and a private industrial enterprise at CEPZ. She exchanged views with the leaders of Chittagong Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CCCI) and joined a dinner hosted by former city mayor and Jatiya Party leader Mahmudul Islam Chowdhury last night.

Butenis also called on Mayor ABM Mohiuddin Chowdhury at his Chasma Hill residence.

While meeting the CCCI representatives, she said political stability, consistency in policymaking, diversification of export basket and enabling infrastructure are the key to sustainable economic development.

Highlighting the steady economic growth of Bangladesh for several years, she appreciated its entrepreneurial performance.

"Bangladesh has shown resilience in the changing market climate in post-MFA era," Butenis said adding that alongside some other major sectors, the pharmaceutical industry has witnessed a robust growth in recent years.

Chamber President Saifuzzaman Chowdhury requested the ambassador to use his good offices in ensuring duty-free access for Bangladesh products to the US market and more US investment in the country.

BNP Standing Committee Member also Health Minister Khandaker Moshtarak Hossain, Law Minister Moudud Ahmad, Post and Telecommunications Minister Aminul Haque, and BNP Joint Secretary General Nazrul Islam Khan also attended the meeting.

EU mission asks

FROM PAGE 1

The exchange occurred when the mission delegates met the leaders of BNP in the party's central office at Nayapaltan in the capital yesterday.

During the meeting, which went on for about two hours, BNP leaders led by its Secretary General also LGRD Minister Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan, and the EU mission led by Andrew Bruce discussed the matter of monitoring the upcoming election and the pre-election circumstances of the country. The ruling party leaders gave their consent to deploying the EU mission for observing the next election.

"Now we are listening to the authorities concerned including the government, different political parties, the civil society, media and others and gathering information so that the EU could deploy its observation team for the next election," Andrew Bruce, election expert of the EU External Affairs Department told reporters after the meeting.

Declining to disclose the meeting agenda, the leader of the EU mission said, "We have just listened to their views."

But meeting sources said the EU mission asked the ruling party leaders about their position regarding the proposal for electoral reforms and also wanted to know about the views of BNP regarding Justice KM Hasan, the likely chief adviser to the next caretaker government, and Chief Election Commissioner Justice MA Aziz. The

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