

More violence

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several shops at Oshkali, Tamrudi, Sonaria, Boyarchar, Nolerchar, Jahajmara, Nijhumdip and Char Ishwaryesterday.

In Majid, 14-party activists vandalised a local UCBL Bank and some business houses owned by BNP members and supporters, prompting police to fire rubber bullets and tear gas canisters.

Twenty of 14-party men and some policemen were injured during the incident.

MAGURA

Zinur Islam, general secretary of Choulia union committee of AL, died on his way to Dhaka for better treatment after being injured in Saturday's clash between BNP and 14-party coalition men at Dhaka Road Bus Stand in Magura town, bringing the number of death in the clash to two. The other victim was Jamaat-e-Islam's town committee associate member Arafat Hossain.

BARISAL

BNP worker Abul Kalam, 24, who was injured in Saturday's clash between BNP and 14-party coalition at Sharupkuti in Pirojpur died in Barisal Medical College Hospital yesterday.

Unknown people vandalised the offices of Workers Party and Chhatra Moitree while rivals vandalised houses of AL leaders and activists at different parts of the district.

The local administration imposed section 144 in Barisal city for an indefinite period from 4:00pm yesterday.

NARAYANGANJ

A cadre of Islami Chharta Shibir, Farhad, 20, who had been injured in an AL attack at Siddirganj on Saturday, died in Ibne Sinha Hospital in Dhaka yesterday, reports UNB.

Some shops and houses were plundered in violent incidents across the district when four-party alliance activists moved in processions.

NILPHAMARI

About 50 people were injured in sporadic clashes between Jammat and AL activists amid section 144 in Jaldhaka upazila yesterday, while two commercial banks were burnt during the rampage.

The clash in Jaldhaka began when AL activists pelted a Jammat procession with stones yesterday morning, prompting them to burn Sainik League office. The AL men later burnt a local Islami Bank alleging that it has been fronting for Jammat.

Jammat men then set fire to houses of two AL leaders and a local Sonali Bank, while AL activists burnt several houses of Jammat leaders.

Fire engulfed the whole area and went out of control, while the so-called activists also looted around 30 shops and business establishments.

SIRAJGANJ

Over 100 persons were injured, two of them critically, including police and journalists, in sporadic clashes among Awami League, BNP, Jamaat and police in Beluchi, Ullapara and Sirajganj district town yesterday.

CHAPANAGA

A clash between AL and Jamaat at Chatra Bazar in Shibganj upazila left eight persons injured on Sunday evening. The injured were admitted to local clinics.

MUNSHI JAHAN

Activists of AL and BNP fought with each other in Tongibari upazila headquarters yesterday noon leaving 22 persons injured.

were fired.

BNP activists attacked and ransacked 15 to 20 business establishments and houses of AL leaders in the area while AL activists damaged and looted some business establishments and houses of BNP leaders.

AL activists chopped off both hands of a BNP activist, Monjur Haque, of Durgapur upazila yesterday.

KHULNA

Twelve people were injured in a fierce clash between the activists of 14-party coalition and Jamaat in Kora upazila yesterday. Police fired several rounds of bullets and teargas shells to disperse the mob.

PATUA KHALI

At least 15 Judo Dal activists, youth wing of ruling BNP, were injured in a clash between AL and Judo Dal at Dumki upazila town in Patuakhali yesterday. The AL activists also sacked Jamaat's upazila unit office.

JESSORE

At least 10 persons including an upazila unit Amir of Jamaat were injured in attacks on BNP and Jamaat-e-Islami leaders and activists at Jhikargachha upazila town in Jessore yesterday.

THAKURGAON

At least 10 activists of AL were injured during clashes with BNP men in Ranishkali upazila. Angry 14-party men set fire to BNP and Jamaat offices there. Four were also injured during an AL-Jamaat clash in Haripur.

GAIBANDHA

Four Jamaat leaders and activists were injured in a clash between 14-party and Jamaat in Sadullapur upazila yesterday. Activists of 14-party later vandalised and set fire to a Jamaat office in Sadullapur and burnt a motorcycle there.

BOGRA

Angry 14-party activist yesterday vandalised HAWA Bhaban, an office of BNP in Dhunat upazila from where BNP men used to control tender biddings for construction works.

They also set fire to Chandanbaisha BNP office and captured Kutupur BNP office. Meantime, the local administration imposed section 144 in Kahal banning political gatherings there following Saturday's clash and vandalism.

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Options

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become open to questions after Iajuddin took the oath.

The question arises as to why he [President] had to assume the post of the chief adviser of the caretaker government without exploring the other options spelled out in the constitution or consulting the political parties, he added.

He should have continued the discussions with the political parties to find out a suitable caretaker chief in line with the fifth provision [of the constitution], he added.

Former cabinet secretary Mujibul Haq echoed the view of Hafiz Uddin Khan. Referring to Awami League's objection to the president's taking over as the head of the interim administration, he said, "He [President] should have placed the issue before the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court and that would have been more acceptable."

Meanwhile, Fazlul Huq, president of Bangladesh Knitwear Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BKMEA) said business leaders would like to see a peaceful environment.

"We must welcome it if all parties accept the president as the chief of the caretaker government. We have not been in favour of any particular person before and we are still," he said.

The BNP has accepted it and it would be good if AL too accepts it, the BKMEA president added.

MA Momen, president of Dhaka Chamber of Commerce and Industry (DCCI), said the business community had hoped that there would be a consensus before finalising the chief of the caretaker government, but the expectation was not fulfilled.

Only those who had been in favour of the president taking the charge of the caretaker government attended the oath-taking ceremony and there were some diplomats, he said adding that there had not been any representation from the opposition parties.

"Our efforts did not succeed and we are waiting to see the developments. Let's see how others react," he said.

UNB adds: Noted jurist Barrister Rafiqul Huq yesterday criticised President Professor Iajuddin Ahmed for taking over as the chief of the caretaker government.

"He [President] took oath to protect the constitution, but now he has violated it in the name of protecting it," the former attorney general told UNB in his reaction to the president's take-over.

Terming the decision unfortunate, Huq said the president has done so after failing to break the political impasse. "He has tarnished the country's image abroad by assuming office of the caretaker chief," he observed.

Defying the ban yesterday noon, both the parties brought out processions and clashed in front of a local Sonali Bank. Eight rounds of bullets

Chiefs of 3

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government's five-year tenure.

They expressed gratitude to the prime minister for her guidance and patronage in the activities of the armed forces as the defence minister and her government's support, cooperation, initiative and various schemes for development of the three services and welfare of their members.

The outgoing prime minister thanked the members of the three services for their role in various activities of government and building a "good image of Bangladesh in international arena with their extraordinary performance".

Khaleda urged the chiefs of the three services to keep up the effort to uphold the image of Bangladesh at home and abroad.

She also wished welfare of the three chiefs and members of the armed forces.

EU, UK, India

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an acceptable setup of the interim caretaker government, resulting in violent clashes across the country.

The United Kingdom deplored the tragic events of the last few days in Bangladesh's political arena and called for calm and an end to the violence.

"We regret the tragic events of the last few days and call for calm and end to the violence," Acting British High Commissioner to Bangladesh Stephen Bridges said in a statement yesterday.

"We encourage all parties to reach agreement on the formation of the interim administration, which is consistent with the constitution of Bangladesh," the envoy said.

Our Correspondent from New Delhi writes: India yesterday said

it wanted to see stability in Bangladesh and hoped the people of that country would be "allowed" to exercise their franchise in a "free and fair manner".

External Affairs Ministry spokesman Navtej Sarna said it is "closely watching developments in Bangladesh".

"As a friendly neighbour we are naturally interested in Bangladesh remaining peaceful and stable," he said.

Sarna said India hopes that the "people of Bangladesh will be allowed to exercise their right to choose their own government in a free and fair manner in the forthcoming elections in accordance with their constitution".

The comments came a day after Foreign Secretary Shivshankar Menon discussed the Bangladesh developments with West Bengal Chief Minister Buddhadev Bhattacharya in Kolkata on his way back from Bhutan.

External Affairs Minister Pranab Mukherjee had also held discussions with officials of his ministry about the situation in the neighbouring country.

CEC's village

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Breaking the window of Aziz's room on the ground floor on the west side of the house, they sprinkled kerosene and set fire, she said. The room is usually kept locked.

As the intruders fled the scene soon, members of the family who already woke up raised an alarm.

Locals and the family members extinguished the fire.

The family members said Aziz used to live in the house when he was a school student. He still stays in the house whenever he visits home. His cousins now live there.

When contacted, Barisal Deputy Commissioner Sheikh Alauddin said he heard that somebody set fire to a pile of hay beside the CEC's house.

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Opposition to watch

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"We will watch his activities and his activities will help us decide whether we would accept him or not," she added.

After the president's oath taking ceremony, the AL and its 13 allies held an emergency meeting at Sudha Sadan.

Hasina said their earlier announced blockade programmes and movements for reform demand will continue.

Earlier, terming President Iajuddin Ahmed 'partisan', the AL-led 14-party alliance said the 'politically appointed' president could not be the chief adviser to a non-partisan caretaker government as per the constitution.

"You [the president] are nominated and appointed by a political party. A partisan president can never be the chief adviser to a non-partisan caretaker government and it disqualifies you," 14-party coordinator Abdul Jalil told at a press conference at AL's Dhanmondi office following a meeting with the president in the afternoon.

During the meeting with the president, the AL leaders gave the president a letter in which they termed his attempt to hold discussions with major political parties an "unconstitutional move" as per the constitution's 58 Ga (5) sub-article.

In the letter, they also termed president's proposal to become the chief adviser to the caretaker government "unconstitutional". President Iajuddin Ahmed on Saturday called upon AL general secretary and BNP secretary general and told them he himself wanted to be the chief adviser to the caretaker government.

Before meeting the president, AL held an emergency presidium meeting with party chief Sheikh Hasina in the chair and finalised AL's four representatives – Amir Hossain Amu, Abdur Razzak, Tofail Ahmed and Abdul Jalil – to meet the president. Later, the leaders sat in AL's Dhanmondi office before holding discussion with president.

Reiterating that the ongoing blockade programme would continue, Jalil, also AL general secretary, urged the president not to be in such a position that makes him a controversial person.

External Affairs Ministry spokesman Navtej Sarna said it is "closely watching developments in Bangladesh".

"As a friendly neighbour we are naturally interested in Bangladesh remaining peaceful and stable," he said.

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Referring to BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia's Saturday's remarks about AL and its allies, Jalil said she only a former chief justice to the caretaker government yesterday by appointing a justice of Appellate Division who is not holding any other constitutional post, if former chief justice is not available.

"Our party and the people expect you [president] will take measures according to the constitution," the letter signed by Jalil stated.

Reiterating that the ongoing blockade programme would continue, Jalil, also the 14-party coordinator, said while addressing a meeting at the city's Zero Point arranged by the city 14-party in the afternoon.

Presided over by Mofazzal Hossain Chowdhury Maya, coordinator of the city 14-party, the meeting was also addressed by the leaders of Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal (JSD) and Workers' Party from a makeshift stage on a truck.

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"Saddly, in asymmetric warfare, when you're battling an insurgency, typically the insurgents do not play by the same rules that we would like to play by," US Gen James L Jones said.

The New York-based Human Rights Watch complained Friday that Nato's recent operations have killed dozens of civilians, but it also criticised the Taliban and other insurgents for putting civilians at risk "by using populated areas to launch attacks on Nato and Afghan government forces."

Jones, the Nato commander, expressed regret for civilian deaths but said Taliban fighters use civilians as human shields and said that in the heat of battle it can be difficult to separate the two.

The death of a civilian "is something that causes anybody in uniform to lose a lot of sleep," Jones said at a news conference at Bagram, the largest US base in Afghanistan.

His comments came four days after clashes between Nato-led troops and insurgents in the south that Afghan officials say killed 30 to 80 civilians, including women and children.

Last month, 14 military officers, including 10 generals, were killed when their small airforce plane crashed into the hills in central Baner State.</p