



Body of a Kenyan lies in an alley in the Dandora district of Nairobi, yesterday. The overall death toll from post-election violence in Kenya climbed to 328 after overnight violence yielded 22 more fatalities in the country's western towns, officials said.

Kenya violence toll climbs to 328

Tens of thousands displaced, diplomatic efforts on to end ethnic strife

AFP, Nairobi

The overall death toll of Kenya post-election violence climbed to 328 after overnight violence yielded 22 more fatalities in the country's western towns, officials said yesterday.

"Four bodies were brought in the night and four others brought in at dawn. The bodies had bullet wounds," said a mortuary attendant in the western city of Kisumu, an opposition stronghold where the riots have been severe.

Two police officers were killed in the western town of Kericho when a group of youth armed with bows and arrows attacked them, a police official told AFP.

"The officers died on their way to hospital," he said.

Some 12 more bodies were overnight taken to a mortuary in Eldoret's Moi Teaching and Referral Hospital, bringing the total number of dead people in the mortuary since polling day to 84, a hospital official said.

The 12 had been killed in the battlefields in the outskirts of Eldoret.

This brings the countrywide toll to least 328 people dead in politi-

cally related violence since December 27 polling day, according to an AFP tally compiled from police, mortuary attendants and aid workers.

A Kenyan government security document put the death toll at 177.

"At least 177 people have been killed, 209 properties destroyed and 260 people arrested," a top government official told AFP, citing an official security briefing document prepared early Wednesday.

The official, who requested to remain unnamed, said police were still collecting figures across the east African nation that has seen its worst rioting since 1982 coup attempt.

Rioting and tribal clashes intensified on Sunday after the electoral panel announced President Mwai Kibaki the winner, but opposition leader Raila Odinga has rejected the outcome.

The European Union electoral monitoring mission has said the polls fell short of international standards and called for an investigation while foreign governments have prevailed upon the rival leaders to open a dialogue.

Diplomatic efforts accelerated yesterday to seek a solution to the crisis in Kenya, where post-

election violence was threatening to escalate into a tribal war, with tens of thousands displaced and hundreds murdered.

The dispute over last week's presidential ballot -- focused on discrepancies in the counting process -- has triggered Kenya's worst urban unrest in 25 years.

The head of the African Union, Ghanaian President John Kufuor, was expected in Nairobi later Wednesday to lead a joint mediation effort with the Commonwealth, represented by the head of its observer mission, former Sierra Leonean president Ahmed Tejan Kabbah.

President Mwai Kibaki's narrow re-election and his swearing in on Sunday sparked violence across the country -- much of it along tribal lines.

Defeated opposition challenger Raila Odinga, who claims Kibaki stole the election, plans to hold a mass rally Thursday declaring himself the "people's president".

Commonwealth spokesman Julius Mucunguzi said Kabbah had met with the rival leaders and they had "agreed to his mediation".

With Kibaki belonging to Kenya's largest tribe, the Kikuyu,

and Odinga to the second largest, the Luo, the violence has taken on a distinctly ethnic hue, with tit-for-tat killings and targeted arson attacks that carry worrying echoes of other ethnic conflicts in the region.

"If no urgent step is taken to arrest the killings, Kenya is bound to sink into the abyss and join the ranks of war-torn countries like Cote d'Ivoire, Somalia, Rwanda and Sierra Leone and others which have experienced genocide on an unimaginable scale," an editorial in the Daily Nation warned yesterday.

In a statement issued in London yesterday, US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice joined British Foreign Secretary David Miliband in pressing for a resolution.

"We call on all political leaders to engage in a spirit of compromise that puts the democratic interests of Kenya first," the joint statement said.

Odinga's charges of electoral fraud were lent extra weight when the chairman of Kenya's electoral commission, Samuel Kivuitu, acknowledged the election result may have been inaccurate.

"I do not know whether Kibaki

won the election," Kivuitu told The Standard, one of Kenya's leading dailies.

Kibaki, 76, has publicly called for consultations with party leaders, but Odinga has insisted he will only negotiate if the president acknowledges he cheated.

On Tuesday, British Prime Minister Gordon Brown said he had spoken to Kufuor and Kabbah and discussed how a joint AU-Commonwealth mission could oversee the process of reconciliation.

"What I want to see is them coming together, I want to see talks and I want to see reconciliation and unity. I want to see the possibility explored where they can come together in government," he told reporters.

Western Kenya, where Odinga enjoys broad support, has witnessed some of the worst violence, and the director of the Kenyan Red Cross Society, Abbas Gullet, who visited the region, described the situation there as "unimaginable and indescribable".

"This is a national disaster," Gullet told reporters. "From the area we visited today there are roughly about 70,000 (displaced)."

VACANCY AT BFTI

The Bangladesh Foreign Trade Institute (BFTI), a trade policy think tank in public-private partnership and a national focal point for international trade related issues, invites applications from qualified Bangladeshi candidates for the following project-based positions under the EC-funded Bangladesh Trade Support Programme that ends in December 2008.

Position: Programs Director.

Job Profile:

This is a senior level position in Bangladesh Foreign Trade Institute. The position is the monitoring authority of the programs of BFTI. The key job responsibilities include:

- Providing innovative ideas to foster the international trade by leading a team of intellectual and generous researchers specialized in international trade;
- Planning the research and identifying the newest research areas;
- Outlining the priorities, trade development planning;
- Outlining the business development goals and objectives;
- Developing and suggesting tools of the trade negotiations and other aspects;
- Outlining the training program for the stakeholders and the government officials depending on the findings of research and ensure timely implementation of training courses;
- Monitoring closely the efficiency of consultancy services provided by BFTI limiting the range of services;

- Coordinating interdisciplinary activities, and ensure the information and communication flow within the disciplines through public relations and information wing and through formal official communication;
- Liaising with different government institutions and stakeholders and build a strong network with government departments, international trade bodies and institutes, international trade organizations and mass media.

Personal Profile:

- Advance university degree in Public/Business Administration, Economics, International Relations, International Trade or other related disciplines;
- Numerous publications in the reputed national and international journals;
- Skilled in computer operation;
- Training on trade negotiation, trade defense, trade safeguard measures, etc. will be an added advantage.

Experience:

- Minimum 12 years experience in human resource (HR) development of which at least 7 years should be in senior administrative management position in local/international/multicultural organization dealing with foreign trade issues;
- Considerable knowledge of Bangladesh and international trade laws and regulations;
- Strong verbal and written Bangla and English communication skills;
- Innovative problem-solving and demonstrated analytical skills;
- Experience in participatory decision-making and overcoming resistance in implementing changed decisions;
- Excellent interpersonal, mobilization, facilitation and trade negotiation skills;
- Strong ability to innovate ideas, understand and analyze foreign trade issues critically in global context and take decision thereon;
- Expertise/experience in economic diplomacy and global trade issues will be an added advantage;
- Training on foreign trade promotion/management will be an added advantage.

Position: Research Associate: 5(five)

Job Profile:

Assist the Fellow(s) in carrying out the following tasks:

- Establish, maintain and strengthen liaison with different stakeholders--trade bodies and sectoral associations, concerned government departments, trade research institutes (both local & international), donor agencies, WTO/UNCTAD/ITC/WIPO and such other bodies, trade experts, professionals in trade related field, academia, etc. to strengthen training and research activities;
- Prepare Event Calendar for Training, Research, Seminar/Roundtable, etc.
- Prepare, maintain and update a database of current and potential stakeholders;
- Provide research assistance on international trade negotiations, trade agreements, and trade-related issues to the Fellow(s) of the Research & Policy Advocacy Wing of the Institute to conduct a research on a particular area;
- Data collection, analysis and interpretation;
- Develop research methodology and terms of reference (while taking on a research) for approval of higher authority;
- Develop training modules;
- Organize programmes/events and prepare, preserve and disseminate reports on different programmes;
- Perform any other duties as may be assigned.

Personal Profile:

- Masters in Human Resources Development/International Trade/Economics/ Statistics or related discipline;
- Experience in trade-related research and/or training will be an added advantage;
- Fluent in oral and written English and Bangla;
- Ability to write good reports;
- Must be conversant with modern communication technology like e-mail and online video conferencing;
- Strong interpersonal communication skill;
- Self-starter, organized, self-disciplined and punctual.

Salary: Tk. 20,000 - 30,000 per month (consolidated) based on qualification and experience.

If your profile fits the above position(s), you are requested to send a detailed CV with two recent passport size photographs and a cover letter stating suitability for the position, addressed to: Box No. A-01 C/O The Daily Star, 19 Karwan Bazar, Dhaka-1215 or before 15 January 2008. Please mention the name of the post applied for on the top of the envelope. Only short-listed candidates will be contacted for interviews. Telephone inquiries are discouraged.



Chua Soi Lek

Malaysian minister resigns over sex video scandal

AFP, Kuala Lumpur

Malaysia's health minister resigned yesterday after admitting his role in a video showing him having sex with a female friend in a hotel room.

Chua Soi Lek, 61, the most senior member of Prime Minister Abdullah Ahmad Badawi's government, announced that he was also stepping down from parliament.

"I won't be the first and I won't be the last (politician) to be caught in such a situation," Chua, a married man with three children, told a hastily convened news conference.

"It is up to the public to judge me," he added.

Chua admitted on Tuesday that he was in the video, which has been splashed on the front pages of Malaysian newspapers since the DVD started circulating in southern Johor state last week.

Chua is vice president of the Malaysian Chinese Association, a key part of Abdullah's coalition government.

Dubai mourners join Bilawal in prayers

AFP, Dubai

The teenage son of assassinated Pakistani opposition leader Benazir Bhutto received condolences for his slain mother in the Gulf emirate of Dubai yesterday.

Dozens of mainly Pakistani expatriates paid their respects to Bilawal Bhutto Zardari at his family residence in Dubai and joined him in mourning prayers.

The newly appointed leader of the Pakistan People's Party (PPP) declined to speak to reporters and it was not clear how long he would spend in Dubai, which is a member of the United Arab Emirates feder-

ation.

The 19-year-old Oxford University undergraduate arrived in Dubai on Tuesday with his sisters following Bhutto's killing in an attack at an election rally last Thursday.

The Bhutto family, especially the children, spent much of their time in Dubai while their mother, a two-time premier, lived in exile from 1999 until October last year.

Bilawal was appointed chairman of the PPP on Sunday, although his role will be largely ceremonial for now and the running of the party will be looked after by his father, Asif Ali Zardari.

6 Palestinians killed in Israeli airstrike

AFP, Gaza

An Israeli airstrike in the northern Gaza Strip killed six Palestinian militants early yesterday, medics said, including three from the Hamas movement that has ruled Gaza since June.

The overnight helicopter strike near the border fence with Israel wounded another 11 people, Palestinian medics said.

Earlier reports indicated that the fighters were all members of the armed wing of Hamas, but in a statement released Wednesday the Islamist movement said only three of the fighters came from its own ranks.

Another two militants came from the Popular Resistance Committees, and the sixth was a member of the armed wing of the radical Islamic Jihad movement.



People dressed in black gather as they mourn the death of Thai Princess Galyani Vadhana in Bangkok yesterday.

Thailand mourns death of Princess Galyani

AFP, Bangkok

Thailand yesterday mourned Princess Galyani, only sister of revered King Bhumibol Adulyadej, whose death from cancer at the age of 84 also put a temporary halt to post-election coalition haggling.

Thousands of Thais flocked to Bangkok's Siriraj Hospital where the king's elder sister died in the early hours of yesterday after battling abdominal cancer for about six months.

Many of them were wearing black and clutching pictures of the princess, while Thai television stations interrupted their regular programming to report her death with footage showing her life. All newscasters wore black.



Bilawal Bhutto Zardari (R), son of assassinated Pakistani opposition leader Benazir Bhutto, takes part in prayers during a memorial service for his mother at their residence in Dubai yesterday.

27 militants killed in clashes in northwest Pakistan

AFP, Islamabad

At least 27 militants were killed in two days of clashes in restive northwestern Pakistan along the border with Afghanistan, a military official told the news agency yesterday.

The clashes broke out after pro-Taliban militants kidnapped four Pakistan soldiers in the troubled South Waziristan tribal district on Tuesday, the official said.

"Five militants were killed yesterday and 22 overnight," he said.

South Waziristan is the stronghold of Baitullah Mehsud, an alleged top al-Qaeda commander who was blamed by the government for orchestrating the assassination of opposition leader Benazir Bhutto last week.

Through a spokesman, Mehsud denied any involvement in her death.

The official said that the kidnapped soldiers were delivering food rations from one post to another when

militants seized them. Their fate was not immediately known.

After Pakistan forces fired at militants, five of them were killed and 20 were taken into custody, the official said.

Later a tribal peace council was convened but failed to resolve the stand-off, he said.

Both sides used heavy weaponry in tit-for-tat firing that went on through the night, resulting in the death of 22 militants with no loss of life on the army side, he said.

Pakistan's rugged tribal areas along the Afghan border are a known hub of al-Qaeda and Taliban militants who slipped into the region after the US-led invasion of neighboring Afghanistan in the wake of the September 11 attacks.

Pakistan has deployed 90,000 troops to hunt down militants in the region, which the Afghan government alleges is used as a base for cross-border attacks on Afghan and international troops based in Afghanistan.

Bomb kills 5 in Lankan capital

AFP, Colombo

Suspected Tamil Tiger rebels set off a powerful roadside bomb in the Sri Lankan capital yesterday, killing at least five people and wounding 26 others, police said.

The powerful Claymore mine -- a fragmentation bomb packed with ball bearings -- targeted an army bus transporting wounded soldiers, although hospital officials said most of the victims were civilians.

A police official at the scene said five people were killed in the attack -- three of them died instantly, while two others died en route to the hospital.

Twenty-six more were injured and rushed to Colombo National Hospital, officials said. Seven of them were in critical condition.

Hospital director Hector Weerasinghe said most of those killed or injured were civilians -- with just one soldier reported killed and 11 hurt. There were no reports of any foreign nationals among the casualties.

The mine went off as the army bus passed the low-budget Nippon Hotel in Colombo's commercial Slave Island area, where the military has several key installations, police and witnesses said.

"We suspect it was a roadside bomb," a police official at the scene said. "There are several civilian casualties. At least another civilian bus was also hit by the blast."

4 killed, 16 hurt in Iraq suicide attack

AFP, Baquba, Iraq

A suicide bomber blew himself up in the restive Iraqi city of Baquba yesterday, killing at least four people and wounding 16 in an attack aimed at an anti-Qaeda patrol, police said.

"Four people were killed and 16 injured," said police captain Mohammed Al-Bawi. "Three women were injured and also a police officer."

Among the dead was Abu Sajad, a leader of a local "Awakening Council" -- US-backed militia groups made up of Sunni fighters who have turned against al-Qaeda. An Awakening patrol with 20 members in three vehicles was the target of the suicide attack, police said.

The local hospital in Baquba, 60 kilometers (40 miles) north of Baghdad, confirmed the toll.

US and Iraqi forces are involved in massive assaults against al-Qaeda operators in the flashpoint province of Diyala, of which Baquba is the capital.

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Please send your Application and CV with passport size recent photograph within 12 January 2008 to the address below. Please do not attach copies of certificate or any other supporting papers that we will ask for only at interview from the short listed candidates. Address: Box No: A-184, The Daily Star, 19 Karwan Bazar, Dhaka-1215