

'4 killed as troops open fire on Iranian protesters'

AP, Tehran

Iranian security forces opened fire on anti-government protesters in the capital yesterday, killing at least four people in the fiercest clashes in months, opposition Web sites and witnesses said.

Thousands of opposition supporters chanting "Death to the dictator," a reference to hard-line President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, defied official warnings of a harsh crackdown on any protests coinciding with a religious observance on Sunday. Iranians were marking Ashura, commemorating the seventh-century death in battle of one of Shia Islam's most beloved saints.

Security forces tried but failed to disperse protesters on a central Tehran street with tear gas, charges by baton-wielding officers and warning shots fired into the air. They then opened fire directly at protesters, killing at least three people, said witnesses and the pro-reform Web site Rah-e-Sabz.

Witnesses said one of the victims was an elderly man who had a gunshot wound to the forehead. He was seen being carried away by opposition supporters with

blood covering his face.

The clashes marked the bloodiest confrontation between protesters and security forces since the height of the unrest in the weeks after June's disputed presidential election. The opposition says Ahmadinejad won the June election through massive vote fraud and that its leader, Mir Hossein Mousavi, was the true winner.

Reporters from foreign media organizations were barred from covering the demonstrations on Tehran's central Enghelab Street, or Revolution Street, and the reports of deaths could not be independently confirmed. Ambulance sirens could be heard near the site of the protests.

The witnesses and opposition Web site said angry protesters threw stones at security forces and set dozens of their motorbikes on fire. Police helicopters circled overhead as clouds of black smoke billowed into the sky over the capital.

Police had blocked streets leading to the centre of the capital to try to prevent thousands of people from joining the protest. Still, many opposition supporters managed to break the security wall.

Fierce clashes also broke out Sunday between security forces and opposition supporters in the cities of Isfahan and Najafabad in central Iran, the Rah-e-Sabz Web site said.

Cell phone services were down and Internet connections were slowed to a crawl, as has happened during most other days of opposition protest in an apparent government attempt to limit attention on the events.

Opposition activists have held a series of anti-government protests since the death of a dissident cleric last week.

The Dec 20 death of the 87-year-old Grand Ayatollah Hossein Ali Montazeri, a sharp critic of Iran's leaders, has given a new push to opposition protests, which have endured despite a heavy security crackdown since the election.

His memorials have brought out not only the young, urban activists who filled the ranks of earlier protests, but also older, more religious Iranians who revered Montazeri on grounds of faith as much as politics. Tens of thousands marched in his funeral procession in the holy city of Qom on Monday, many chanting slogans against the government.



Iranian opposition protesters flee during clashes with security forces in Tehran yesterday. Four protesters were shot dead by security forces in central Tehran as thousands of opposition supporters staged anti-government protests during the Shia mourning event of Ashura, a website said.

PHOTO: AFP

6 drown in new Philippine ferry disaster

AFP, Manila

At least six people died and 20 were missing after a small inter-island ferry sank in waters south of the Philippine capital, the coast guard said yesterday, the second sea disaster in three days.

The MV Baleno-9, carrying 88 passengers and crew, began listing and went down just before midnight near Batangas City, the coast guard said.

Ships in the area rescued 62 people. Six bodies were later recovered by the coast guard and 20 were still unaccounted for, a coast guard report said.

Passengers told the coast guard that the roll-on ferry began taking on water from the bow ramp.

This "severely affected the stability of the vessel causing her to badly list and eventually sink," the coast guard report said.

Search vessels and aircraft have been dispatched to find any more survivors in the area where the ferry went down.

"Hopefully, their flights will not be fruitless and they may find a few more of the missing," said coast guard spokesman Commander Armand Balilo.

He noted that the ferry had sufficient life vests and life rafts and that this may have allowed more of those on board to survive.

Japan PM says moving US base to Guam 'unreasonable'

AFP, Tokyo

Relocating a contentious US airbase from southern Japan to Guam is "unreasonable" from the standpoint of national security, Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama told a radio programme.

Hatoyama said it would not be practical to shift the whole base, which has been the subject of friction between Tokyo and Washington, from Okinawa to the US-controlled Pacific Ocean territory.

"Thinking realistically, it would be unreasonable to relocate all its functions to Guam from the standpoint of deterrence," Hatoyama told a Nippon Radio programme Saturday.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Philippine rebels burn school

AFP, Manila

The Philippine military yesterday accused the country's communist guerrillas of burning a school to mark their 41st anniversary during a government ceasefire.

Military spokesman Lieutenant Colonel Romeo Brawner assailed the communist New People's Army (NPA) for burning a high school building in Catanduan town, east of the Philippine capital before dawn on Saturday.

Bridge collapse toll rises to 45

AFP, Kota

Rescuers recovered more bodies Sunday from the debris of a partially constructed bridge which collapsed into a river in western India, killing at least 45 labourers, an official said.

Dozens of workers were presumed dead after being pinned under the rubble of the partially submerged bridge which gave way on Thursday over the Chambal river just outside the city of Kota in Rajasthan state.

Uzbekistan votes for new parliament

AFP, Tashkent

The Central Asian state of Uzbekistan voted Sunday in parliamentary elections marked by a strong early turnout, with all four competing parties supportive of the government of President Islam Karimov.

Over 17 million voters have registered for the ballot to elect the 150-seat lower house of parliament, the Oliy Majlis, with the authorities sending millions of text messages to get people out to vote.

UN chief fears for Gaza one year after war

AFP, United Nations

UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon said yesterday he feared that the underlying causes of Israel's deadly war in the Hamas-run Gaza Strip have still not been addressed a year after the onslaught.

"A year after the start of 'Operation Cast Lead,' the Secretary General is deeply concerned that neither the issues that led to this conflict nor its worrying aftermath are being addressed," Ban said in a statement posted on the UN website

on Sunday.

"The quality and quantity of humanitarian supplies entering Gaza is insufficient, broader economic and reconstruction activity is paralysed, and the people of Gaza are denied basic human rights," he added.

"There is a sense of hopelessness in Gaza today for 1.5 million Palestinians, half of whom are under eighteen (years old). Their fate and the well-being of Israelis are intimately connected," he said.

Ban said a "fundamentally different" approach to Gaza

was needed.

"The Secretary General calls on Israel to end the unacceptable and counterproductive blockade of Gaza, facilitate economic activity and civilian reconstruction, and fully respect and uphold international law.

"He calls on Hamas to bring an end to violence and fully respect and uphold international law.

"The Secretary General also calls on all Palestinians to work for unity and elections within the framework of the legitimate Palestinian Authority.

Six Ulfa leaders hold nightlong meet in jail

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE, Guwahati

Six arrested top leaders of the outlawed United Liberation Front of Asom (Ulfa), including its chairman Arabinda Rajkhowa, spent Saturday night in a huddle in the Guwahati Central Jail probably discussing strategies, officials revealed.

After a Guwahati court

Saturday remanded Rajkhowa and Ulfa deputy commander-in-chief Raju Baruah to judicial custody, the two leaders shared the same prison cell with four other senior members of the outfit already lodged in the jail.

The four are: Ulfa vice president Pradeep Gogoi, self-styled foreign secretary Sasha Choudhury, finance secretary Chitran Hazarika and pub-

licity chief Mithinga Daimary.

According to Guwahati jail sources, the six separatist leaders shared the same cell and spent the better part of the night in a huddle - all of them looked at ease and comfortable. They kept talking animatedly.

Some felt that it was probably a government strategy, to allow the six Ulfa leaders to meet inside the jail.



Standing under a banner that reads in Arabic, "Oh Hussein" Iraqi Shia Muslim women watch a play and procession marking the climax of the Ashura yesterday in the Sadr City neighbourhood of Baghdad. The 10-day Ashura rituals commemorate the killing of Imam Hussein (RA), a grandson of Prophet Hazrat Mohammed (SM), by armies of the caliph Yazid in 680, in the southern Iraqi city of Karbala.

Violence as millions mark Ashura in Iraq

AFP, Karbala

Millions of Shias across Iraq yesterday joined ceremonies marking the climax of solemn Ashura rituals, marred by a bomb attack on a procession near Kirkuk that killed five people.

Around three million people thronged the streets of the shrine city of Karbala in central Iraq for the main rituals commemorating the slaying of the revered Imam Hussein (RA) by the armies of the Sunni caliph Yazid in 680, according to provincial deputy governor Nasaeef Jassim.

"Pilgrims have gathered in the streets of the Old City of Karbala to prepare for the final part of the ceremonies," said Jassim, adding that among the three million pilgrims were some 105,000 worshippers from foreign countries, mostly from the Gulf but also including Pakistan, Canada and Tanzania.


He added that a total of six million people had passed through Karbala city during the 10-day Ashura rituals, the holiest days of the Islamic year for Shias.

Karbala police chief General Ali Jassim

Mohammed had earlier in the week announced the deployment of around 25,000 policemen and soldiers to secure the commemoration ceremonies.

Violence elsewhere in the country, however, took the gloss off the largely peaceful Karbala pilgrimage, which in recent years has been attacked by Sunni insurgents and disrupted by intra-Shia fighting.

Police said that early on Sunday a bomb ripped through a procession marking Ashura in the northern town of Taza Kharmatu, near oil-rich Kirkuk, killing five people and wounding 19.



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ঢাকা ইলেকট্রিক সাপ্লাই কোম্পানী লিমিটেড এর সন্মানিত গ্রাহক বৃন্দের সদয় অবগতির জন্য জানানো যাচ্ছে যে, ডেসকোর আওতাধীন নিম্নবর্ণিত উপকেন্দ্র সমূহের বাৎসরিক রক্ষাবেক্ষণ কাজের নিমিত্তে নিম্ন বর্ণিত তারিখ ও সময়ে সর্বশেষ এলাকা সমূহে বিদ্যুৎ সরবরাহ বিমূর্ত্ত হবে।

তারিখ	সময়	উপকেন্দ্রের নাম	যে সকল এলাকায় বিদ্যুৎ বন্ধ থাকবে
৩১/১২/০৯ ইং	সকাল ৮:০০ হতে বিকাল ৫:০০ টা পর্যন্ত	কল্যাণপুর ৩৩/১১ কেডি উপকেন্দ্র	গাবতলী গ্রাহকারী কুল হতে পূর্বচাল সিএনজি, শ্যামলী রোড-৩, শ্যামলীবাগ, তোলাবরাগ আ/এ, উত্তর তোলাবরাগ, নতুন বাজার (আবৈক), মধ্য পাইকপাড়া, দক্ষিণ পাইকপাড়া (আবৈক), পাইকপাড়া সরকারি স্টক কোয়ার্টার, কল্যাণপুর (রোড ১ হতে ১০), ইবনে সিনা মেডিকেল কলেজ, একমি ল্যাবরেটরীজ।
০১/০১/১০ ইং	সকাল ৮:০০ হতে বিকাল ৫:০০ টা পর্যন্ত	কল্যাণপুর ৩৩/১১ কেডি উপকেন্দ্র	দারুস সালাম আ/এ, ইস্টার্ন হাউজিং, বালেক হাউজিং, পৈদারটেক, হাউজ বিল্ডিং রিসার্চ ইনস্টিটিউট, দক্ষিণ কল্যাণপুর, নাজানা হাউজিং, রেডিও অফিস, এশিয়া সিনেমা হল ও তৎসংলগ্ন এলাকা, নতুন বাজার, দক্ষিণ পাইকপাড়া, আলআমিন রোড, এসপি রোড, কল্যাণপুর রোড-১।
০৫/০১/১০ ইং	সকাল ৮:০০ হতে বিকাল ৫:০০ টা পর্যন্ত	টলী-৩ ৩৩/১১ কেডি উপকেন্দ্র	মিলশেট এলাকা, টলী হাসপাতাল, হেলথয়ে স্টেশন, এস এস স্টীল, কামারপাড়া পুরাতন বাজার, হুইল, আভিয়ারা, টি এস এস ভবন ও এর পার্শ্ববর্তী এলাকা।
০৮/০১/১০ ইং	সকাল ৮:০০ টা হতে বিকাল ৫:০০ টা পর্যন্ত	কল্যাণপুর ৩৩/১১ কেডি উপকেন্দ্র	গাবতলী বাস স্ট্যান্ড এর বিপরীত দিক, বাপবাড়ি, মাজার রোড এর পূর্বদিক, মাজার রোড এর পশ্চিম পার্শ্ব (মাজার রোডের শুরু হতে ১০ নং কমিউনিটি সেন্টার গেইট), বড় বাজার, বাজার পাড়া, বালেক সিটি, লালকুঠি, দক্ষিণ বিলি, গোদামাশী, পর্বত সিনেমা হল।
১২/০১/১০ ইং	সকাল ৮:০০ টা হতে বিকাল ৩:০০ টা পর্যন্ত	টলী-১ ৩৩/১১ কেডি উপকেন্দ্র	আফতাব নগর হতে নর্কা পর্যন্ত প্রগতি সরণির পূর্বের সকল এলাকা, উত্তর বাজা, শাহজাদপুর, বিটিভি, দুতাবাস এলাকা (আমেরিকান, নেপালী, জাপানী, চায়না, থাই, কোরীয়, ইউএই), হাই কমিশন (বুটিপ, কানাডিয়ান), সোহরাওয়ার্দী এডমিনিস্ট্রি, মরিয়াম টাওয়ার-১।
১৫/০১/১০ ইং	সকাল ৮:০০ টা হতে বিকাল ৮:০০ টা পর্যন্ত	টলী-২ ৩৩/১১ কেডি উপকেন্দ্র	বিসিক এলাকা (আবৈক), মরকুম বাজার, সাতভর, পিভিবি কোয়ার্টার, আরিচপুর, বৌ বাজার, স্টেশন রোড।
১৯/০১/১০ ইং	সকাল ৮:০০ টা হতে বিকাল ৩:০০ টা পর্যন্ত	টলী-১ ৩৩/১১ কেডি উপকেন্দ্র	তলশান রোড নং-২ হতে ৩৪, ৯৫ হতে ৯৯, ১১৭ হতে ১৪১, নিকেতন, তলশান এডমিনিস্ট্রি, এ কে বন্দোপাধ্যায় সড়ক (তলশান সার্কেল-১ হতে মহাবলী ওয়ারহাউস এলাকা)।
২৯/০১/১০ ইং	সকাল ৮:০০ টা হতে দুপুর ২:০০ টা পর্যন্ত	সিভিল এডমিনেশন ১১ কেডি সুইচিং স্টেশন	ফাইনল, ন্যাশনাল টিভিস, ফুইব রোড, আউচপাড়া, মন্তপাড়া, চেরণাআলী, গাজীপুরা এলাকা, এরশাদ নগর, সাতাইশ, ভাদান, সিইআরএস, সাইকা স্টীল, তুলিয়া ইন্টারন্যাশনাল মেডিকেল কলেজ ও এর পার্শ্ববর্তী এলাকা।
	সকাল ৮:০০ টা হতে বিকাল ৫:০০ টা পর্যন্ত	দক্ষিণবান ৩৩/১১ কেডি উপকেন্দ্র	হাতিমবাগ, মহিলা কলেজ, সর্দারপাড়া, হাজী মার্কেট, সোনারখোলা, সোহানিয়া, কঁচুড়া, বড়টেক, আনল, পতিতপাড়া, বেতুলী, পোড়ামিয়া, পলাশিয়া, জাঙ্গাল, রাহুটি, জাহুরিয়া, শাহকির মাজার, চালাবাদ, মাটির বসজিল, মৌশাইর, আজমপুর, সুপার মার্কেট, দেওয়ানবাড়ী, ফারোদাবাদ, গোলাঘাটেক, ডিআইসি কলোনী, রতুলপুর।
	সকাল ৮:০০ টা হতে দুপুর ২:০০ টা পর্যন্ত	মিরপুর-৩ ১১ কেডি সুইচিং স্টেশন	আর্মি এডমিনেশন, বিএএফ অফিসার্স মেস।
	সকাল ৮:০০ টা হতে দুপুর ২:০০ টা পর্যন্ত	মিরপুর-৩ ১১ কেডি সুইচিং স্টেশন	বিআইএসএফ ফায়ারী, রাডার স্টেশন, চিড়িয়াখানা, বোটানিক্যাল গার্ডেন, মুক্তিযোদ্ধা কমন্ডের, বিসিআইসি স্টক কোয়ার্টার, আল-কামাল হাউজিং, পাছআলী থানা, শাইনপুর হাউজিং, কোকাকোলা ফ্যাক্টরী, বেরিবাথ, নওয়াবেবাথ, রূপনগর আবাসিক এলাকা (রোড-১ হতে ২৮), রূপালী হাউজিং, কর্ণার কলেজ, ২/এ, সি, ই (আবৈক), জি (আবৈক)

বিদ্যুৎ বন্ধের কারণে সম্মানিত গ্রাহক বৃন্দের সাময়িক অনুবিহার জন্য ডেসকো কর্তৃপক্ষ আন্তরিকতায়ে দুঃখিত।

ডেসকো কর্তৃপক্ষ