

IRAN UNREST MPs rage against opposition

Demonstrations banned in cities

BBC ONLINE

Members of Iran's parliament have called for opposition leaders Mir Hossein Mousavi and Mehdi Karroubi to be tried and executed.

Some 50 conservative MPs marched through parliament's main hall yesterday, chanting "Death to Mousavi, death to Karroubi", shown on state TV.

Thousands of opposition supporters had protested in Iran's capital on Monday.

An MP said two people were killed in violent clashes between protesters and security forces in central Tehran.

The BBC received reports of banned demonstrations in other Iranian cities, including Isfahan, Mashhad and Shiraz.

In the capital, dozens were detained, and opposition leaders including Mousavi and Karroubi were placed under house arrest.

Police blocked access to Mousavi's home in what the former prime minister's website said was intended to prevent him attending

the Tehran rally, which was lauded by the US administration.

Both he and Karroubi - a former speaker of parliament and a senior cleric - disputed the re-election of President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad in June 2009, which triggered protests that drew the largest crowds in Iran since the Islamic Revolution in 1979.

The authorities responded by launching a brutal crackdown.

In a statement carried by the official IRNA news agency, conservative parliamentarians said: "Mehdi Karroubi and Mir Hossein Mousavi are corrupts on earth and should be tried."

The charge "corrupt on earth" has been levelled at political dissidents in the past and carries the death penalty in Iran.

Earlier, thousands of opposition supporters had gathered at Tehran's Azadi Square in solidarity with the popular uprisings in Tunisia and Egypt, in their first major show of dissent December 2009, when eight people were killed.



Bahraini Shiites hold an anti-government protest in the town of Jidhafs, near the capital Manama yesterday, after two demonstrators were killed in clashes with Bahraini police.

Russia warns West against encouraging Mideast revolt

AFP, London

Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov yesterday warned the West it was "counter-productive" to encourage the spread of revolutions in the Middle East after fresh protests convulsed the Arab world.

Asked whether he thought the United States had been encouraging the uprisings, Lavrov called for any tensions to be resolved through peaceful agreement and warned against imposing democracy.

His comments, after talks with his British counterpart William Hague in London, came after popular uprisings toppled regimes in Egypt and Tunisia and protests spread to other countries in the region.

"I think that we need to encourage all parties to agree between each other," said Lavrov.

Father of the Nation

FROM PAGE 1
displaying the portraits of the president and the prime minister.

Suranjit Sengupta, co-chair of the parliamentary body, made the decisions public in a press briefing after the committee meeting at the Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban.

The constitution's 14th amendment act passed during the last BNP-led alliance government introduced the provision for preserving and displaying the portraits of the president and prime minister.

In 2000, the previous Awami League-led government enacted a law for preserving and displaying portrait of Bangabandhu at all government offices. But assuming office in 2001, the BNP government repealed the act.

Talking to The Daily Star after yesterday's meeting, Suranjit said if any government wants it can make provision by executive order for preserving and displaying the portraits of incumbent president and prime minister in government offices.

"But we are in favour of the provision for preserving and displaying only the portrait of the father of the nation," he said.

In another major decision, the parliamentary body also agreed to restore the current constitutional provision on nationality which said the citizens of Bangladesh shall be known as Bangladeshis.

Through amending the constitution, the first martial law regime in the country introduced this provision replacing Bangalee nationalism with Bangladeshi.

The Supreme Court in a watershed verdict cancelled the constitution's Fifth Amendment act that ratified and validated all changes brought to the country's supreme charter during the first martial law regime.

Cancellation of the Fifth Amendment act paved the way for reinstating Bangalee nationalism in the constitution after over three decades.

The apex court however retained the change in the constitution that says Bangladesh nationals will be known as Bangladeshis "for wider public interest".

In defence, the Appellate Division of the SC cited some difficulties. Regarding nationalism, it said parliament is to make decision, but if "Bangalee" is substituted in place of "Bangladeshi", all passports, identity cards, nationality certificates issued by the Government and other prescribed authorities, academic certificates, visa forms and other related documents of the government will need to be changed, reprinted or reissued.

"Moreover, the Bangladeshi nationals who will return to Bangladesh as well as those travelling abroad will also face serious complications with the immigration authorities abroad. Apart from the above and other hassles and harassments, this change of the nationality would also cost millions from the public exchequer. So for wider public interest the substituted Article 6 is to be retained," the Appellate Division observed.

FATHER OF THE NATION

Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman had already been mentioned as the father of the nation in the Fourth Amendment act passed in 1975, but the provision was not incorporated in the constitution as an article.

Section 34(b) of the 1975 Fourth Amendment act says, "Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, Father of the Nation, shall become, and enter upon the office of President of Bangladesh and shall, as from such commencement, hold office as President of Bangladesh as if elected to that office under the Constitution as amended by this Act."

Before the amendment took effect, Bangabandhu was the prime minister and the country had parliamentary form of government. The fourth amendment act is still valid as well as section 34(b).

Now, the parliamentary body opted for inclusion of an article in the constitution to this end.

RELIGION ISSUE

In the press briefing at parliament media centre, Suranjit said BISMILLAH-AR-RAHMAN-AR-RAHIM (in the name of Allah, the beneficent, the merciful) will be retained above the constitution's preamble.

The first martial law regime inserted the Arabic phrase and its meaning on top of the preamble.

Suranjit said the status of Islam as state religion will also remain in the constitution.

In that case, article 2A, which deals with the state religion, will be restructured saying that the state religion of the republic is Islam, and the state will ensure equal rights of all other religions including Hinduism, Buddhism, and Christianity.

Asked whether retention of the status of Islam as state religion conflicts with article 12 which deals with realisation of the principles of secularism, Suranjit said the committee will look into the matter while discussing article 12.

Meanwhile, the law ministry yesterday placed copies of the reprinted constitution including those articles which were either repealed or amended by the first martial law regime and ratified by the Fifth Amendment act.

BAHRAIN UNREST Protesters take control of main square

AP, Dubai

Thousands of protesters poured into a main square in Bahrain's capital yesterday in an Egypt-style rebellion that sharply escalated pressure on authorities as the Arab push for change gripped the Gulf for the first time.

Security forces have battled demonstrators over two days, leading to the deaths of two protesters.

In a clear sign of concern over the widening crisis, Bahrain's King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa made a rare national TV address, offering condolences for the deaths, pledging an investigation into the killings, and promising to push ahead with reforms, which include loosening state controls on the media and Internet.

As the crowds surged into Pearl Square in the capital of Manama, security forces appeared to hold back. The dramatic move yesterday comes just hours after a second protester died in clashes with police in the strategic island kingdom, which is home to the US Navy's 5th Fleet.

Opposition groups are calling for greater political freedom and an end to the ruling Sunni monarchy's grip on key decisions and government posts. The nation's majority Shiites have long complained of discrimination.

Many in the square which was quickly renamed the "Nation's Square" by protesters waved Bahraini flags and chanted: "No Sunnis, no Shiites. We are all Bahrainis."

After liberation

FROM PAGE 1
come to Bangladesh. Her mission is to launch some floating schools with the help of the Unicef to provide education to the underprivileged children in remote areas. Olivia is providing the fund for the schools through the Unicef from the George Harrison Fund for Children that was created in 2005.

"I wanted to leave something in his name. He [George] trusted Unicef," said Olivia Harrison in an interview at Hotel Sonargaon on Tuesday following her two-day visit to see the primary progresses of the floating school scheme.

She added, "It's in its initial stage... Sometime by the end of the year it will get a shape."

She said the floating schools may in future ultimately become the model for schools where children have no access to educational institutions.

The George Harrison Foundation carries out the legacy of Material World Foundation that the Beatles guitarist founded in 1973 to support alternative cultures to promote music of the world, especially from the Indian sub-continent.

"He had an emotional attachment to Bangladesh," said Olivia, whom Harrison first met in 1974 and married in 1978.

Being a very close friend of legendary Bengali Indian musician Ravi Shankar, who felt very strong about doing something for Bangladesh during the War of Liberation in 1971, Harrison had planned the Concert for Bangladesh.

"Ravi was very distressed... which George could not ignore," said Olivia describing how Harrison conceived the historic concert in Madison Square Garden, New York. "He [George] was in very deep water. It was only a year after his band [the Beatles] had disbanded. He was in the middle of a recording... He felt that his part of contribution [to the cause of Bangladesh] was music."

When Harrison was organising the concert with Eric Clapton, Bob Dylan, Jim Keltner, Billy Preston, Leon Russell, Ringo Starr, Ustad Ali Akbar Khan, Ustad Alla Rakha and Ravi Shankar, Olivia was a Californian resident who was travelling to Europe. "When I came to know about the concert, I was very angry that I did not know about it beforehand and I did not get the chance to see it," she said.

George was also spiritually inclined to the Indian sub-continent and, in particular with the Bengali culture. While he taught himself sub-continental musical instruments like sitar, he also took lessons on Hinduism from various spiritual gurus.

"George cooked very good Bengali food," Olivia noted, adding, she herself can cook a few good Bengali dishes.

George named his only son Dhani after the sixth musical note of Indian scale (Sa, Re, Ga, Ma...), said Olivia. Dhani was born in 1978 and is a musician.

Asked if George ever planned to come to Bangladesh, Olivia said, "His life ended too soon... I'm here. I did not expect to be here. He could have been here."

On which of Harrison's works epitomises his spirit the most, Olivia picks his 1973 studio work Living in the Material World and his first post-Beatles 1970 triple album All Things Must Pass.

On her two days of exposure to Bangladesh, Olivia said, "I spent a good deal of time in India and also visited Cambodia. There is a similarity among the three countries. Bangladesh has had a hard time and a harsh life. It's not a surprise to me. There is a great movement here among the people. It's a sea of culture."

A passionate gardener who is also busy with music, Olivia believes all grownups have a responsibility to look after the children around the world. This is her driving force to work with the Unicef to help the children.

46,000 jobs to go

FROM PAGE 20
Population and Nutrition Sector Development Programme. A draft operational plan has also been prepared.

The government and donors say the nation must have a sustainable nutrition programme, instead of a standalone one. Nutrition is a multi-sector issue and therefore, they argue, it should be part of the government's mainstream activity.

Under the 12-year-old National Nutrition Programme (NNP) the government spent Tk 1,500 crore to deliver nutrition packages at around 150 upazilas while its target was to cover at least 174 upazilas.

In the new plan, nutrition measures will receive eight percent of total Tk 23,500 crore allocated for the five-year development programme and be directed by a National Nutrition Services cell under the Institute of Public Health and Nutrition (IPHN).

Through bringing it in the mainstream, the nutrition service would be available at all of the 488 upazilas of the country, officials say.

Experts are doubtful about this plan. "The IPHN will work under the Directorate General of Health Services, which is already suffering from manpower shortage," said Prof MQK Talukder, life member of Bangladesh Nutrition Society.

Prof Tahmeed Ahmed, head of nutrition, ICDDR,B, said the design and the purpose of NNP was quite good.

NNP is important for a country like Bangladesh where 45 percent children under age five and one third of mothers suffer from malnutrition, and 80 percent young infants from anaemia, Tahmeed added.

Experts also argue the NNP never got due attention from the government and the monitoring was also defective.

"The government employed NGOs to implement the programme. Monitoring and evaluation were poor," said Prof Tahmeed.

"It's not clear how the community clinics would provide nutrition services and who will monitor it. The Area Based Nutrition Component under which the community nutrition promoters visit every mother and child will also be abolished. Even the eight percent allocation is not enough," said Prof SK Roy, a senior scientist of ICDDR,B.

On the other hand, Health Secretary Mohammad Humayun Kabir is critical of the NNP's achievements as "it could not reach targeted 174 upazilas."

He said the way the NNP was working, the government would have to employ 1.25 lakh workers to bring

the rest of the country under the programme net.

Instead, its merger with the mainstream health programme will resolve the manpower issue as the services will be delivered through community clinics, Kabir added.

SK Roy citing latest NNP report said for the upazilas under the programme infant mortality rate was 22 per thousand live births a year while elsewhere it was 54. And maternal mortality rate for the NNP areas was 1.8 per thousand live births a year and for other upazilas it was 3.2.

Mubarak in failing health Says a Saudi daily

REUTERS, Cairo

The health of Mubarak is deteriorating and he has refused to travel abroad for treatment, the Saudi-owned daily Asharq al-Awsat said yesterday.

"What is certain is that his state of health is declining drastically, in addition there is information that he is refusing to receive the required medical treatment," Asharq al-Awsat said in its online edition.

A military source told Reuters Mubarak was "breathing" but would not give details about his status.

Faculty Search Summer 2011

North South University

Center of Excellence in Higher Education

Full time Teaching positions

Attractive salary and benefits (40% house rent, medical allowance, two festival bonuses, gratuity, provident fund, group insurance.) Salary negotiable in case of deserving candidates

Applications are invited for teaching positions (mentioned ranks) in the following Departments

- School of Business**
Positions : Professors, Associate Professors, Assistant Professors
Specialization : Marketing, Finance, Management, Accounting, International Business, Business Policy and Strategy (BPS), MIS, HR & Operation Management
- Dept. of Electrical Engineering & Computer Science**
Positions : Professors, Associate Professors, Assistant Professors
Specialization: EEE & CSE, Mathematics, Statistics
- Department of English**
Positions : Professors, Associate Professors, Assistant Professors
Specialization: TESOL, Linguistics
- Department of Architecture**
Positions : Associate Professors, Assistant Professors
Specialization: Design, Urban Design, History & Theory, Construction and Service
- Department of Economics**
Positions : Professors, Associate Professors, Assistant Professors, Lecturer
Specialization: Economics
- Department of Pharmacy**
Positions : Professors, Associate Professors, Assistant Professors
Specialization: Pharmacy
- Department of Public Health**
Positions : Professors, Associate Professors, Assistant Professors, Lecturer
Specialization : Epidemiology, Health Economics, Med. Entomology, PH Nutrition, HRM&D, BCC Specialist, Medical Anthropology
- Department of Life Sciences**
Positions : Associate Professors & Assistant Professors
Specialization : Biotechnology, Biochemistry, Microbiology
- Department of Environment Science & Management**
Position : Assistant Professor/Lecturer
Specialization : Environmental Science/Environmental Management

Qualification Required

- Master degree from a reputable foreign university preferably North American University for Lecturer position.
- Ph.D. in relevant field from a reputable preferably North American University for Assistant Professor & above.
- Excellent academic background; no third class/division at any level
- Adequate teaching and research experience and publications for Associate Professor & above.

Apply by 3 March 2011 with

- Curriculum Vitae
- Attested copies of academic certificates & transcripts
- One passport size photo &
- Two recommendation letters.

Only short listed candidates will be contacted

Please apply to
The Vice Chancellor
North South University
Bashundhara
Dhaka 1229

For information please Email:
omar@northsouth.edu
or visit:
http://www.northsouth.edu