

Gunbattle in Yemen as transition deal collapses

REUTERS, Sanaa

Yemeni loyalist forces fought a gunbattle yesterday with opponents of entrenched President Ali Abdullah Saleh one day after he backed out of a Gulf-brokered accord for him to step down.

The clashes in the capital Sanaa cast fresh doubt on prospects for a political solution to a three-month crisis in which youth-led demonstrators, inspired by protests that swept aside the leaders of Egypt and Tunisia, are demanding an end to Saleh's 33-year rule.

"There is heavy gunfire and violent clashing between government forces and Sheikh (Sadiq) al-Ahmar's guards," a witness said, referring to a powerful tribal leader who has sided with protesters. No injuries were reported.

The violence followed the collapse of a transition deal that Saleh was to have signed on Sunday and would have given him immunity from prosecution, ensuring a dignified exit.

Loyalist gunmen trapped Western and Arab diplomats in the United Arab Emirates embassy for hours on Sunday and blocked

mediators from heading to the presidential palace to secure Saleh's signature on the deal.

Inside were the head of the Gulf Cooperation Council, Abdullatif al-Zayani, and the U.S. and several European ambassadors, who had to later be flown out by helicopter.

Gulf neighbours who have spearheaded efforts to mediate a transition deal withdrew their initiative, citing a "lack of suitable conditions."

Saleh apologised to the UAE yesterday but foreign governments piled criticism on him over his refusal to sign.

"President Saleh is now the only party that refuses to match actions to words," U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton said late on Sunday.

"We urge him to immediately follow through on his repeated commitments to peacefully and orderly transfer power and ensure the legitimate will of the Yemeni people is addressed. The time for action is now," she said.

France accused Saleh of being irresponsible by refusing to sign, describing the turnaround as "unacceptable."



Anti-government protestors show the "thumbs-down" as they shout demanding the resignation of Yemeni President Ali Abdullah Saleh, in Sanaa yesterday.

US urges Saleh to step down

ALJAZEERA ONLINE

US secretary of state Hillary Clinton is accusing Yemen's president of turning his back on his commitments after he rejected a deal to step down.

Clinton urged Ali Abdullah Saleh yesterday to sign the US-backed agreement in order to prevent further chaos that has consumed Yemen for the past three months.

"We urge him to immediately follow through on his repeated commitments to peacefully and orderly transfer power and ensure the legitimate will of the Yemeni people is addressed. The time for action is now," Clinton said in a statement.

Despite intense diplomatic pressure from Yemen's Gulf Arab neighbours and Western mediators, Saleh rejected the deal that would have given him immunity from prosecution.

SOLVING DEATH MYSTERY

Chile exhumes remains of late president

ALJAZEERA ONLINE

Nearly 38 years after President Salvador Allende died in a military coup and became a Cold War martyr of the international left, his body is being exhumed in a bid to determine the exact cause of his death.

The hope is that forensics can solve an enduring mystery: whether Chile's socialist leader committed suicide or was murdered by the troops who mounted General Augusto Pinochet's ferocious attack on the presidential palace.

With the Allende family's blessing, Judge Mario Carroza has convened a panel of top forensic experts: seven Chileans and five foreigners. He also seeks evidence that could support charges of crimes against humanity in the killing of hundreds of people who were tortured and disappeared in the days after the September 11, 1973 coup, including many who shared Allende's last stand.

"This will be tremendously important, because with this it will be possible to dispel any doubts or speculation," Senator Isabel Allende said recently as she went to court to ask for her father's autopsy.

Questions surfaced almost immediately after the assault on the palace, partly because Pinochet's military botched the



Salvador Allende

initial investigation and then covered up or staged details of Allende's death as it set out to expunge him from public memory.

For those who saw Allende as the world's best hope or most serious threat of revolutionary change, just how he died matters deeply. Was it suicide by AK-47 assault rifle, as maintained by the only man claiming to have witnessed that moment? Or did Allende go down fighting, as Cuba's Fidel Castro claimed?

Dr Patricio Guijon, a member of Allende's medical team, reaffirmed his account of suicide on Tuesday in an Associated Press interview, saying he still vividly recalled the instant when he saw 65-year-old Allende blow his head open.

By that point, the bombardment of the palace had gone on for hours, the noise was deafening, machine gun fire was coming down from all sides and rockets fired by fighter jets were pulverising the 18th century palace walls. Guijon said he carefully moved the weapon from between Allende's legs and set it on a nearby chair.

Guijon supports the military's claim that Allende killed himself with the AK-47 Castro had given him, and said no other bullets were fired after soldiers arrived and eventually carried off the body.

Sudan's Abyei ablaze after capture by north: UN

AFP, Juba, Sudan

Sudan's flashpoint town of Abyei was ablaze yesterday with gunmen looting properties after its capture by northern troops, the United Nations said after demanding Khartoum pull out its forces.

The UN Mission in Sudan, or UNMIS, warned Khartoum it was responsible for law and order amid reports thousands of civilians were fleeing southwards after northern Sudan Armed Forces troops and tanks overran the border town on Saturday.

"UNMIS strongly condemns the burning and looting currently being perpetrated by armed elements in Abyei town," it said in a statement.

"The Sudan Armed Forces are responsible for maintaining law and order in the areas they control," it added.

"UNMIS calls upon the government of Sudan to urgently ensure that the Sudan Armed Forces fulfil their responsibility and intervene to stop these criminal acts."

Cultured people happier, less stressed: study

AFP, Paris

People who go to museums and concerts or create art or play an instrument are more satisfied with their lives, regardless of how educated or rich they are, according to a study released yesterday.

But the link between culture and feeling good about oneself is not quite the same in both sexes, according to the study, published in the British Medical Association's Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health.

For men, passive activities such as taking in a concert or museum exhibition are associated with an upbeat mood and better health, it found.

For women, though, the link is active, in that they were less likely to feel anxious, depressed or feel unwell if they played music or created art.

Attacks kill five in Iraq

AFP, Kirkuk, Iraq

Violence in Iraq's disputed northern oil province of Kirkuk killed five people yesterday, the latest in a string of attacks in the region, as part of nationwide unrest that left nine dead.

The latest violence further raised tensions in Kirkuk, an ethnically mixed province that Kurdish leaders want to incorporate in their northern autonomous region despite opposition from its Arab and Turkmen communities, in a row US officials have long said is one of the biggest threats to Iraq's stability.

A morning car bomb targeting the convoy of a police commander in Al-Rashad, south of Kirkuk city, killed two policemen and wounded 12 other people, an officer said.

Major Ahmed al-Barzanji and four other policemen were among the wounded.

Enclave survey to be done

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enclaves while Bangladesh has 51 enclaves, which are adversely possessed.

Joint Secretary (political) to the Home Ministry Kamal Uddin Ahmed said, "Joint survey committees have nearly completed APL surveys in Assam, Tripura and West Bengal zones. And the survey will be completed in Meghalaya zone by June 15."

He said directors general of survey departments in Bangladesh and India held a meeting in Tamabeel on May 12 to finalise strategic matters for carrying out boundary survey in Meghalaya.

Kamal said, "During the joint surveys of boundary, we have been putting 'point coordinate' on the maps. After approval of the survey outcome by both governments, concrete demarcation marks will be installed there."

Kamal said the countries

are putting in relentless effort to end the dispute created decades ago by the Radcliff boundary line, created during the partition of India and Pakistan.

"We (Bangladesh-India) have utmost regard for human rights of the inhabitants in APL and enclaves because once they fall victim to misjudgement they will lose the nationality of their choice forever," he said.

APLs are around the international boundaries in four zones which are densely populated, he said adding that at ground level numerous problems arise relating to land records that required series of meetings of officials concerned of the two countries.

During the survey it was found that the Radcliff boundary goes through one's homestead segregating one's home from one's farmland

posing a dilemma, he said, adding, "So we take proper steps for mutual benefit."

He said in the third meeting of the Joint Boundary Working Group (JBWG) of November, it was decided that joint survey on APL and enclaves would be completed by January 15 but the deadline was extended twice and finally it was fixed on June 15.

Home ministry sources said they opted head counts instead of census in enclaves as many frustrated enclave dwellers might have deserted the place or moved to other convenient places selling their land.

So both the countries decided to conduct head counts, taking short list of fundamental data from the enclave dwellers.

Sources said head counts will include among other information individual's name, parents names,

amount of land possessed by the individual, religion and nationality.

The home ministry sources said once the data form for the head counts is approved by India, it will take at most 15 days to complete the head count in the enclaves.

The APL and enclaves issues will be resolved in line with the Mujib-Indira Land Boundary Agreement, 1974.

Home Secretary Abdus Sobhan Sikdar and his counterpart Gopal K Pillai in a fresh initiative had agreed to resolve the dispute at secretary level talks held in Dhaka early this year.

Home ministry sources said after completing ground level task in this regard, either Indian Home Minister P Chidambaram or Prime Minister Manmohan Singh will visit Bangladesh to sign the agreements.

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খানপুর আরসিসি জেটি (তৎসংলগ্ন ইয়ার্ডসহ) এলাকায় কার্গো ও কন্টেইনার হ্যান্ডলিং ও শুক্ক আদায় কাজের ঠিকাদার নিয়োগের
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Change of Office Address

This is to inform all concerned that office of the Deepening Medium Term Budget Framework (MTBF) and Strengthening Financial Accountability Project will be shifted on June 01, 2011 to **115 Segunbagicha, (UCEP Cheyne Tower, 2nd Floor) Dhaka 1000**. New Telephone and Fax nos. will be published later. All concerned are requested to communicate at above mentioned address from 01 June, 2011.

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