

Jamaat men

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leaders, including the nine detained on war crimes charges.

Earlier on Monday and Tuesday, more than 300 people, including 140 policemen and two journalists, were hurt in similar clashes in Dhaka and elsewhere in the country.

In the capital's Mirpur yesterday, the Jamaat-Shibir men brought out a procession demanding the release of their leaders at around 4:30pm. They suddenly started pelting running vehicles with bricks, said Ataur Rahman, officer-in-charge of Kafur Police Station.

He added that 10 people, two of them policemen, were wounded when the Jamaat-Shibir activists threw bricks at them. Police detained seven Jamaat-Shibir men from Mirpur and Kafur for assaulting the law enforcers.

In Rajshahi, at least 20 people, including five policemen, were injured when Shibir men clashed with police in the town yesterday evening. Police arrested 10 Shibir activists from the scene.

The clash began when the law enforcers intercepted a procession of about 200 Shibir activists at Jhawtala intersection around 5:30pm, reports our district correspondent.

The demonstrators threw bricks at the police, who fired around 200 teargas canisters to disperse the agitators.

Our Noakhali correspondent reports: 17 people, including a police sub-inspector, three constables and a local journalist, were hurt in pitched battles between Shibir and police at Godown Road area yesterday.

The injured sub-inspector Shahadat and constables Rubel Das, Tarek and Ajoy were admitted to Laxmipur Sadar Hospital.

Police picked up three people from the spot.

In Chandpur, 10 people, three of them police personnel, were injured when the Jamaat-Shibir men locked themselves in a clash in the district's bus stand area.

Police detained nine people in this connection, reports our district correspondent.

Amir Zafar, acting superintendent of Chandpur police, said the Jamaat-Shibir activists suddenly swooped on the law enforcers without any provocation.

In Sylhet, police fired 30 teargas shells to calm the situation after a clash with Shibir activists.

Witnesses said several hundred Shibir activists brought out a procession carrying bamboo sticks from the city's Rajgoli area at 4:30pm.

A running battle began when police intercepted the procession at Housing Estate area, reports our district correspondent.

AB Barua, Sylhet Metropolitan Police commissioner, said the law enforcers stopped the procession as the organisers had not obtained permission for the procession.

The "unruly activists" threw bricks at the police, he added.

At least 15 policemen were injured in the clash, said Rezaul Karim, deputy police commissioner of Sylhet.

Police picked up about 20 people from the area, he added.

Afghan soldiers attack Nato forces

AFP, Herat, Afghanistan

Two Afghan soldiers attacked US-led Nato forces (ISAF) in western Afghanistan yesterday, in the latest "insider" attack in the country, injuring one foreign soldier, ISAF said.

An ISAF spokesman in Kabul said that the attack by two Afghan National Army (ANA) soldiers occurred in Muqur district of Badghis province in the early hours of Saturday, which resulted in the injury of one Nato soldier and one attacker but no fatalities.

"Two ANA service members turned their weapons against ISAF forces in Badghis province. There was no fatalities, but one ISAF soldier was injured and one attacker was also wounded when ISAF troops returned fire."

Middle path

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socialism and take an erroneous path," Hu Jintao, who is also President of China, told the Congress while presenting a 46-page report at the Great Hall in Beijing on Thursday.

China's once-in-a-decade leadership changes are underway through this 18th National Congress of the CPC, the world's largest political organization with over 82 million members. The Congress, which began on Thursday with the participation of 2268 delegates, will go on till November 14.

In the sequential scheme of politics, after Mao Zedong, Deng Xiaoping, Jiang Zemin and Hu Jintao, the CPC leadership for the next decade is all but set to pass to Xi Jinping, a Politburo member of the CPC and currently vice president of the country.

As Hu underpinned the need for China's continuous pursuit of socialism through blending Marxism-Leninism and Mao's Thoughts with a socialist market economy, people in China fondly recall the visionary leadership of the great reformist Deng Xiaoping. It was his visits to some of the then smaller but vibrant economies in the Southeast Asian region that influenced China's reform era in 1978.

Now that China has unequivocally said goodbye to past rigidity and orthodoxy and remains on guard against any sudden surge in Western influence, the biggest challenge it considers is establishing social justice.

"We must safeguard social fairness and justice.....we must strive for social harmony," said Hu Jintao.

Hu's ten-year rule saw China growing from the sixth biggest to the second biggest economy of the world. The Chinese foreign ministry's Asian department head Luo Zhaohui told The Daily Star on Friday that China's GDP size stood at 7.5 trillion US dollars now with the country holding in its possession the highest amount of foreign currencies in the world - 3.2 trillion US dollars.

A survey that the state-run China Youth Daily undertook only last week shows that 75 percent of 11,000 respondents nationwide cited the wealth gap as their biggest concern in the upcoming decade for China's development.

Race on to get

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Bank, told The Daily Star that there is no policy now for appointing SOCB board directors.

Khaled, also chairman of Krishi Bank, said there should be a specific criterion for the appointments, and a sub-committee should be formed to select candidates for the job.

State-owned banks made some progress as a result of implementation of the World Bank's Financial Sector Reform Programme but it was hampered in recent times due to interference by some directors with political affiliation.

Unprofessional people, including those with political affiliation, were appointed as SOCB board directors, said Khaled.

He said the board's responsibility is to oversee whether a bank is functioning properly but the SOCB board totally failed to perform this job for wrong selection of people as board directors.

In September, a central bank report said the overall control system of state-owned banks has broken down for weak internal monitoring.

It said a number of big corruption scams, including that of Hall-Mark, have been detected in SOCBs in the recent times.

A central bank official alleged that some board members are also involved with it and the BB informed the finance ministry about this.

China's Gini coefficient, a measurement of income disparity, stood at 0.39 in rural areas last year, almost reaching the warning threshold of 0.4 set by the United Nations. China's National Bureau of Statistics also shows the figure for urban areas reaching at 0.33.

People in China, in general, support the CPC policy of pursuing socialism with a market economy blend. But at the end of the day, as things boil down to public life, they want reforms to take place in policies concerning wealth distribution and a narrowing of the gap between the neo-rich and the poor.

Chi Fulin is President of a think tank called China Institute for Reform and Development. He is involved in charting out a reform plan on income disparity.

"Enriching the poor, enlarging the middle (class) group and restricting the rich," is what Chi said was the focus of the draft policy which the CPC would take up for future consideration.

With the Bo Xilai and Liu Zhijun cases at the forefront of the graft debate, the CPC in its current Congress is attaching the utmost importance to curbing corruption and re-educating party cadres on the principles of Maoism.

Bo, a CPC Politburo Member, was stripped of his CPC membership on September 28 and was expelled from public services on suspected crimes of bribery and power abuse.

Liu, a former Railway Minister, has been under investigation since February last year when he was removed from his post on corruption allegations.

China's struggle against corruption is now not necessarily limited to the corridors of the CPC. In fact, the people of China have started to raise their voice through increased use of the social networks against graft practices. Thanks to Weibo, China's answer to Twitter, people can swiftly respond to the wrongdoing and misdeeds of public functionaries. Over a hundred million Weibo users are just a part of a growing number of Chinese netizens (internet-using citizens) who always find a way to raise their voices through one social network or the other, even if they are deprived of Facebook and Twitter.

27 killed

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massacred at the same jail by majority Sinhalese prisoners during anti-Tamil riots that had gripped the country.

The violence erupted when officers from the STF, Sri Lanka's elite police commandoes, were searching the jail for drugs and illegal mobile phones.

"When they were coming out, prisoners started to attack them with stones. The STF used teargas and the prisoners fired at the STF," Police Spokesman Prishantha Jayakody said.

Prisons Commissioner P W Kodippili told Reuters that the prisoners had obtained the weapons - some of them machineguns - by breaking into the prison armoury.

The prisons minister said inmates seized 82 weapons, including automatic assault rifles, after storming an armoury and grabbing weapons from commandos. They were all later recovered.

"The search operations are continuing to clear the place and recover the weapons and also to find the escapees," he said.

It was not immediately clear if any convicts managed to escape.

Afghan, Indian and Pakistani inmates being held at the jail were unaffected, a prison source said, adding that they were being held in a different wing.

The jail has about 4,500 inmates, including members of the former defeated Tamil rebels from the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) movement that fought a protracted war of independence, ending in 2009, but officials said it was unclear how many, if any, of them had been involved in the uprising.

Belarus PM

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This is the first ever official visit by a Belarusian prime minister since the establishment of diplomatic relations between the two countries in 1991.

The two sides are expected to sign several deals, including agreements on mutual protection of investments, visa-free travels for diplomats, agreements on military and technical cooperation and on education, agreements on cooperation in agriculture and industry.

As per the programme schedule, Myasnikov will arrive at Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport at 3:00pm. Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina will receive him.

On the first day of his visit, the Belarusian prime minister will pay homage at National Mausoleum at Savar and Bangabandhu Memorial Museum in Dhanmondi.

Agriculture Minister Matia Chowdhury and Foreign Minister Dipu Moni will call on him separately at the Sonargaon Hotel in the evening.

On Monday morning, Industries Minister Dilip Barua and State Minister for Science and Technology Yeafesh Osman will meet the visiting prime minister.

At 10:30am, he will hold talks with Sheikh Hasina and then hold a delegation-level discussion.

The talks will be followed by signing of agreements and Memorandum of Understandings (MoUs) and joint press briefing.

The Belarusian PM will attend Working Forum Meeting and lunch to be hosted by the Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FBCCI) at the Sonargaon Hotel.

In the evening, he will attend a Bangladesh-Belarus joint cultural programme and attend a dinner to be hosted by Hasina.

On Tuesday, he will address the faculty members and students of Dhaka University at its Senate Hall. He will then call on President Zillur Rahman at the Bangabhaban.

Before leaving Dhaka on a special aircraft at 5:00pm that day, Mikhail Myasnikov will visit Square Pharmaceuticals Ltd Plant at Gazipur. Foreign Minister Dipu Moni will see him off.

Science action plan

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assurance and financial recognition could attract brilliant students to science studies.

He emphasised scientific researches based on intellectual competence and not at all by the candidates taken under quota provision.

Referring to Malaysia and Ghana, he said Bangladesh must learn how they had developed through investment in science and technology.

Md Anwar Iqbal, a project implementation expert at Bangladesh Agricultural Research Council, said the council was actually a highly bureaucratic body and was dependent on the ministry for any decision.

Giving an instance, Prof Shamima Choudhury of Dhaka University said Taiwan between 2005 and 2010 had seen phenomenal economic progress with the development of computer chips.

Of the 11 strategic goals, popularising science and technology, and development of human resources for need-based researches were vital and the factors should be pursued on priority basis, she said.

Prof Mohammad Yousuf Ali Mollah, dean of Faculty of Science at Dhaka University, said South Korea without having natural resources

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Waiving tax on science research materials
- Creating local opportunities to hold back brilliant scientists
- Increasing seats for science students at public universities
- Providing adequate allocation for doctoral research programme
- Encouraging science researchers to become entrepreneurs
- Facilitating need-based scientific research
- Ensuring coordination among ministries for development of science education
- Awarding a special pay scale to scientists
- Enabling lateral entry of scientists from abroad

had emerged as the world's third largest economy through investment in science and technology.

India is a significant next-door example of how to develop on science and technology, he said.

Science studies must be well-founded in the education system and it must continue uninterrupted

despite political feuds and divisions, said Prof Ali.

Dilip Kumar Basak, additional secretary to the Ministry of Science and Technology, said although everybody admitted that science and technology was pivotal to the country's economic development, it is not reflected in the national planning.

Moderator of the discussion Prof Naiyym Choudhury, former secretary of Bangladesh Academy of Sciences, said after 1998, the National Council for Science and Technology headed by the prime minister met only last year.

Mahfuz Anam, editor and publisher of The Daily Star, said the experience worldwide showed that economic progress was impossible without an integration of scientific research and industrial enterprises.

Lutfur Rahman, former professor of Bangladesh Agricultural University; M Nurul Islam, former professor of Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology; Prof Zeba Islam Seraj of Dhaka University; Prof Haseena Khan of Dhaka University; Minhaz Anwar, managing director of Better Stories Ltd; and Tahsina Farah Sanam, lecturer at Buet, among others, attended yesterday's discussion.

Sit together, sort it out

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Senior lawyer Rafique-ul Huq said the next parliamentary elections could be held under an interim government as proposed by Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina.

He suggested that the major political parties such as the ruling Awami League and opposition BNP propose the names of some sitting MPs and a panel of three retired chief justices whose task would be to select one among the MPs as the chief of the interim government.

Constitutional expert M Amir-Ul Islam said there was no guarantee that the elections would be credible "if those are held under a caretaker government".

If the EC is sincere, powerful and impartial, he said, it could hold elections in a free and fair manner. He mentioned that all the elections conducted by the present and previous ECs had been credible.

Eminent legal expert Rakanuddin Mahmud said there was no scope for restoring the system as "the state cannot be run for a single

verdict on the 13th amendment since the government had already scrapped the caretaker government system through 15th Amendment to the Constitution.

Earlier, in its brief verdict, the SC said the next two parliamentary polls could be held under a caretaker government.

Rokanuddin also questioned the former chief justice's giving the full verdict 18 months after his retirement from office.

Another legal expert Shahdeen Malik expressed doubts as to whether the next elections would be fair and credible "if they are held under a political government".

Former adviser to the caretaker government AF Hasan Arif said people's opinions should be solicited to decide under which system the next elections would be held.

Abdul Matin Khasru, a former law minister, said there was no scope for restoring the system as "the state cannot be run for a single

moment by an unelected government".

Former election commissioner Brig M Brig Gen (retd) M Sakawat Hussein said the present EC was not independent yet. The chief election commissioner says different things at different times, he observed.

The previous EC had proposed to the government 17 amendments to the Representation of the People Order (RPO) as a way of making itself independent and strong, said Sakawat, "but the government did not approve [the proposal]".

Vice-Chairman of Bangladesh Bar Council Khandker Mahub Hossain, President of Supreme Bar Association Zainul Abedin and columnist Syed Abul Moksud called for a restoration of the caretaker government system in the interest of elections being held in a free and fair manner.

Law Reporters Forum organised the programme chaired by its President Saleh Uddin when GS Mashudul Haque also spoke.

Govt involved

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government was saying this as they do not know [how] to speak the truth," Khaleda told a rally on Khijari High School ground at Ramu in the afternoon.

The BNP chief also called upon the Hindu, Buddhist, Christian and Muslim communities to unite by forgetting all differences, and to uphold Bangladesh as a model before the world.

Khaleda left Dhaka on Friday on a three-day visit to Chittagong and Cox's Bazar to reassure the Buddhist community forty two days after the mayhem took place.

On the night of September 29 and the following day, a mob destroyed over a dozen temples and their houses in Ramu, Patiya and Ukhia. The violence was triggered apparently by a Facebook photo defaming the Holy Quran.

Several hundreds of Buddha statues were also looted from different temples and monasteries during the mayhem that led to huge criticism at home and abroad.

Khaleda said: "I want to say clearly that the Awami League and government men were behind the mayhem in Ramu. Arrest and try them. Otherwise, my government will bring perpetrators to book if we come to power at the next election."

She also urged people irrespective of their religious identity to oust the present government as "it has failed to protect people's life and ensure security of the minority people".

Khaleda visited Sima Bihar, a Buddhist temple, and assured the minority people of financial assistance to rebuild the affected temples.

In her over half-an-hour speech, the former premier questioned why the local administration had not taken any measures to prevent the attacks at 9:00pm.

"Why were the police, Rapid Action Battalion and army not sent to the spot?"

She alleged that the AL spoke about secularism but "carries out repression and attacks on the minorities and loots their wealth whenever it comes to power".

"The BNP does not talk about secularism; rather we believe in religious values so that people of all religions can freely practise their own faith," she added.

Earlier at a roadside rally at Chakoria bus stand, Khaleda warned Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, saying: "You killed people using logi-boitha in 2007. We have a record of everything."

She alleged that the government had provided firearms to the Chhatra League and Jubo League to suppress opposition leaders and activists. "But we will build strong resistance together with the people so that they do not get any scope to use them," added Khaleda.

GOVT-JAMAAT CONNECTION
In her Ramu speech, the opposition leader alleged that even though the government had always spoken against the Jamaat-e-Islami, it was trying

in clandestine manner to take the Jamaat on its side so that the key BNP ally participates in the coming polls.

"But the government is yet to see success as the Jamaat is strict [regarding the BNP-led opposition's demand for restoring the caretaker government system]."

Khaleda also said the government had always spoken about Jamaat leaders' involvement in war crimes. She demanded to know where the razzakars were and the war criminals when they [AL] waged a movement with the Jamaat in 1996 regarding the caretaker government and when they [AL] and Jamaat participated in the polls together under Ershad [regime] in 1981?"

The opposition leader is set to speak at a roadside rally at Ukhia today before leaving for Dhaka in the afternoon.

50 INJURED IN ROOF COLLAPSE

At least 50 opposition supporters were injured as a roof of Khijari High School building collapsed before Khaleda addressed a rally there, reports a correspondent, Cox's Bazar.

Of the injured, 35 were admitted to Cox's Bazar Sadar Hospital while the others were admitted to different local clinics.

Witnesses said the party supporters gathered on the roof of the school's auditorium to listen to the BNP chief's address. But the roof gave way all of a sudden due to the excessive load of hundreds of people there.

VATICAN LEAK SCANDAL

Court convicts computer programmer

AFP, Vatican City

A Vatican court yesterday convicted a computer programmer employed by the world's tiniest state for helping Pope Benedict XVI's butler engineer a series of leaks that embarrassed the Vatican.

The court handed 18-year-old Claudio Sciarpetti a suspended sentence of two months in prison with a probationary term of five years, meaning that if he respects the terms of his probation he will likely not have to go to prison.

Interpol arrests

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"The incumbent government in Bangladesh has cooperated with us so much in the security area, and there is no reason why we would not hand over the detainee."

Talking to newsmen in New Delhi yesterday, visiting Agriculture Minister Matia Chowdhury hinted that Bangladesh would formally request India to hand over Sazzad.

Our Chittagong correspondent adds: A Chittagong court on March 27, 2008 had sentenced Sazzad to death by hanging.

A resident of Bayezid area in the port city, Sazzad was carrying a forged passport bearing the name Md Abdullah as the son of one Hajji Sukkur from Barisal.

An official at the police headquarters in Dhaka said the authorities had already completed all the legal formalities to have the killer extradited from India.

The ministries of home and foreign affairs will soon send to India the papers required for his extradition, he added.

The Chittagong Metropolitan Police earlier on February 16 sent a letter to Interpol, the world's largest international police organisation, seeking his arrest.

Apart from the murder case, Sazzad is an accused in ten other criminal cases in Chittagong city.

Police arrested him on October 3, 2001, but he secured bail in 2004 and fled to Dubai.

Malala Day

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who are denied their right to school.

Malala is recovering in the UK after she and two others were shot on October 9.

Meanwhile, Pakistan government on Friday announced a scheme to attract the poorest children to school ahead of the occasion.

The Waseela-e-Taleem programme was announced in Islamabad by Pakistani President Asif Ali Zardari and Gordon Brown.

"Malala's dreams represent what is best about Pakistan," said Brown, the former UK prime minister.

The initiative aims to enrol three million of the poorest children in education in the next four years and, according to Reuters, will see poor families receive \$2 a month per child in primary school.

In his message of support for Yousafzai and girls' education, Ban said, "Malala Yousafzai is a global symbol of every girl's right to an education."

"I am adding my voice to the messages from over one million people across the globe. Education is a fundamental human right. It is a pathway to development, tolerance and global citizenship," Ban said in a brief video message posted on the UN website.

He called the international community to join the UN campaign to put education first "for Malala and girls and boys throughout the world".

Meanwhile, tens of thousands of people around the world have signed an online petition calling for Malala to be nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize.

The UK government has also been urged to back the campaign, with advocates saying she represents those denied an education.