



Govt not yet using full force against violence

Shajahan Khan tells press
STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government has not yet used its full force to clamp down on violence going on in the name of a blockade and occasional shutdowns, Shipping Minister Shajahan Khan said yesterday, dismissing accusations that the administration has failed to maintain stability.

"Violence is reported only in 10-12 out of the 64 districts," he said. "There may be some damage or losses if a tornado or storm strikes. But it is not permanent. We hope that the government together with people will overcome the

PM's anti-terror directive to deepen crisis

Says BNP; wonders whether it is a harbinger of more repression on the opposition
STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The BNP yesterday said the statement of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina directing police to "curb terrorism at any cost" would compound the present political crisis and make it difficult to resolve the problem.

"Do the premier's directives mean there will be more bodies floating in canals, wetlands and rivers, the joint force's rampage will continue in villages, and the killings of more opposition men will be passed off as deaths in shootouts?" BNP joint secretary general Rizvi Ahmed said in a statement.

On Wednesday, Hasina asked police to "do whatever needed" to prevent violence, saying she would take responsibility of their action. Denouncing immolation of civilians in petrol bomb attacks, Rizvi said the responsibility of the heinous acts was pinned on



The interior of a double-decker bus of Dhaka University after becoming a target of arsonists while parked before Shahidullah Hall yesterday.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

Have cops been indemnified by premier?

Asks Nagorik Oikya chief Manna; slams law enforcers for so-called shootouts

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Alarmed at whether the prime minister has given indemnity to police to stop the BNP-led blockade violence, Nagorik Oikya Convener Mahmudur Rahman Manna yesterday slammed the law enforcers for the so-called shootouts that have killed ten people since January 12.

"Rab, BGB and police chiefs have spoken of extremities. Has the premier given them indemnity for offence?" he told a meeting with journalists in the Shishu Kalyan Parishad auditorium in the capital.

On Wednesday, Sheikh Hasina ordered police to "do anything to stop" the violence, saying she would take responsibility of their action.

Manna said the "shootouts" were "state-sponsored" terrorism, adding, "What the BNP is doing in the name of movement is also terrorism."

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Denunciation of violence, calls for talks continue

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

People of different sections of society yesterday continued their denunciation of the ongoing violence and called on the political parties to find a peaceful solution.

They also demanded punishment for those burning civilians to death.

"Peace will be never achieved if we don't sit and talk," said Jatiya Party Chairman HM Ershad, addressing a token hunger strike before its Kakrail office in the capital.

The special envoy to the prime

minister urged the "judicious" politicians to organise a dialogue.

On Sunday, Ershad sent letters to the heads of all political parties including the BNP and the Awami League seeking a national convention but has not received any response yet.

The former military ruler asked his party leaders to say "no" to the AL and the BNP because both have "failed" to ensure peace and progress in the country.

"They can't stop the fire. I know this. We cannot have faith in them," he said. At a news conference at the capital's

Jatiya Press Club, Bangladesh Mahila Parishad (BMP) leaders said violence was restricting women's mobility on the streets.

Women's empowerment has been thwarted, they added, urging the major political parties to act responsibly.

"We hoped a bill proposing election of women to reserved seats would be placed in parliament in the winter session. But irresponsible political decisions by the parties have made it uncertain," said BMP Advocacy Director Jana Goswami.

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HC bars use of date expired stents

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday barred the use of stents past their sell-by date and issued a rule upon the government asking why the practice should not be declared illegal.

In a suomoto rule, it directed the Directorate General of Health Services director general to form a three-member committee to probe allegations of a hospital engaged in the practice and submit a report in a month. It fixed March 1 to pass further orders.

The direction came a day after Channel

24 broadcast a report stating that the National Institute of Cardiovascular Diseases had fitted a number of patients with stents past their best before dates in the last seven months.

Stents hold open narrowed down arteries and using scaffolds past their expiration date, as per health experts, pose a major risk.

Supreme Court lawyer Zahidy Hasan Khan and Deputy Attorney General Biswojit Roy placed the report before the HC bench of Justice Quazi Reza-Ul Hoque and Justice Abu Taher Md Saifur Rahman seeking necessary orders.

Faction of teachers, staff call indefinite strike at BRUR

Demand holding of admission tests immediately, removal of vice chancellor

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Rangpur

A faction of teachers, students and staff of Begum Rokeya University, Rangpur (BRUR) yesterday called an indefinite strike demanding that the postponed admission tests of the university be held immediately.

They also sought removal of the vice chancellor as, what they claimed, he was not taking proper steps to hold the tests.

They were addressing a human chain on the campus.

Dr RM Hafizur Rahman, convener of Samannita Odhikar Bastobayan Parishad and president of BRUR Teachers' Association, said they were demonstrating to avoid a session jam.

The admission tests for the first year honours programmes under 2014-15 academic session, which were scheduled for December 4, 5 and 6, have been postponed after the administrative officials resigned from their respective posts in November last year.

Contacted, VC AKM Nurun Nabi told The Daily Star that the tests could not be held immediately following the resignation of the officials.

Tuhin Wadud, president of another faction of the association known as Neel Dal, said they were in favour of holding the admission tests immediately but against the strike and removal of the VC.

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