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PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

BNP activists and police personnel in riot gear face to face on the VIP Road during yesterday's clash centring the party's rally in front of the BNP headquarters in Nayapaltan. A police officer lies motionless, *top right*, on a street in Bijoy Nagar area after he was attacked during the clash. Vehicles burn, *bottom right*, inside the Institute of Diploma Engineers, Bangladesh in Kakrail. More photos on page 3.

BNP rally foiled amid violence

Two including a cop killed, scores hurt in running battles; nationwide hartal today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Downtown Dhaka turned into a battlefield yesterday as BNP activists and police clashed, leading to the death of a policeman and a ward-level BNP leader.

Many others were injured. The opposition party has called a countrywide dawn-to-dusk hartal today, in response to the police action that forced BNP to abruptly end its Nayapaltan grand rally.

Separately, Jamaat-e-Islami has also called for a nationwide daylong strike

in protest of police action and arrests of its leaders and activists from its rally in Arambagh.

The ruling Awami League vowed to resist the hartal at any cost. It will also hold "peace rallies" across the country today.

The developments raise the spectre of violence in the lead-up to the national election slated for January.

Although the BNP programme was

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peaceful in the beginning, tension flared up as the day wore on.

At least 10 vehicles and a police box were torched while over a dozen vehicles were vandalised during

the clashes that took place in Kakrail, Nayapaltan, Bijoy Nagar, Malibagh, Arambagh areas and near Matsya Bhaban.

Dozens of people, including law enforcers, BNP activists and journalists,

were hurt in pitched battles.

The streets in those areas were strewn with brick chips and the air was thick with smoke as law enforcers lobbed hundreds of teargas shells, threw sound grenades and used firearms to disperse the BNP leaders and activists who had gathered at Nayapaltan and adjacent areas since morning.

Later at the night, three more vehicles were torched by arsonists in the Kalshi area of Dhaka city, Hemayetpur in Savar, and Konabari in Gazipur, police said.

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AL to go all out against hartal

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The ruling Awami League yesterday said it would face the BNP politically and resist its hartal throughout the country.

The party asked all its units and associate bodies to organise "peace rallies" across the country and to stay alert as the BNP Jamaat may try to create chaos.

The main rally will be held in front of the AL headquarters on Bangabandhu Avenue at 2:00pm.

The announcements were made at a peace rally next to the south gate of Baitul Mukarram mosque.

Holding banners, festoons, national and party flags, crowds of several thousand leaders and activists chanted slogans praising the government and Prime Minister

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BNP's movement to oust govt bound to fail

PM tells Ctg rally, inaugurates Bangabandhu tunnel

UNB, Chattogram

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has said that the BNP will gain nothing by issuing threats to oust her government through a movement.

"Today, the BNP wants to oust the government. They are issuing threats to launch movements. Let me make it clear that the Awami League has attained for Bangladesh the developing nation status after coming to power with people's votes. No threat will work," she said.

Hasina was addressing a grand rally at KEPZ in Chattogram's Anwara upazila yesterday. The event was organised by Chattogram north and south district units of Awami League to mark the inauguration of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman Tunnel, the country's first-ever underwater tunnel.

Slamming the BNP, the PM said the party only kills people, loot



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina pays the toll to cross Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman Tunnel yesterday.

PHOTO: PID

money and resorts to corruption.

"Khaleda Zia stole orphans' money and that's why she has been convicted. Her son Tarique Rahman is absconding abroad," she said.

Hasina, also the AL president,

said Tarique had signed a bond during the rule of then caretaker government in 2007 and left the country.

"He laundered crores of taka. He was involved in 10 trucks

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Govt devised 'master plan' to attack BNP rally: Fakhrul

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The BNP yesterday alleged that the government drew up a "master plan" to attack its rally after witnessing the enormous gathering.

Party Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir in a statement last night said the Awami League has done what it said it would do -- resist the BNP's grand rally with sticks.

He said police and "Awami criminals" launched a planned attack on the BNP's rally.

"This armed attack is a

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Jamaat to resist election without caretaker govt

Holds rally in city, vows to enforce Sharia law

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Jamaat-e-Islami yesterday held a rally in the capital's Arambagh despite police's announcement earlier that the Islamist party would not be allowed to organise any gathering.

At the rally, its leaders said they would resist any election unless it is held under a caretaker government.

The party also called for a nationwide dawn-to-dusk hartal today.

Vowing to enforce Sharia law in the country, acting Jamaat ameer Mujibur Rahman said no man-made laws would be allowed to be in force.

Earlier, Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan Kamal said Jamaat, which is not registered with

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At least 17 journos hurt

A number of them attacked by 'BNP men'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

At least 17 journalists were injured during clashes in the capital yesterday and several of them were reportedly attacked by BNP men.

Md Rafsanjani, staff reporter of the daily Kalbela, was recording video of some BNP men beating up a policeman. All of a sudden, the BNP men attacked and beat up the journalist.

This happened at Kakrail's Nightingale intersection when violence broke out near the BNP's

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