

Interim govt to stay as long as needed

Says law adviser

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Law adviser Asif Nazrul yesterday said the interim government will stay as long as it is needed.



People want reforms and the political parties want an election, he said, adding that the interim government will balance between the two and make decisions accordingly.

The tenure of the interim government had not been discussed yet, he told reporters at the Secretariat.

“Please keep two things in mind: political parties will expect an election as soon as possible and the common people desire reforms. People expect some urgent reforms from this government,” said the adviser for law, justice and parliamentary affairs.

“We have seen police, judiciary, anti-corruption commission, public universities and other institutions being used as weapons to torture and oppress people.

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Shahbagh Police Station has resumed operations on a limited scale, with Ansar and VDP personnel providing security inside the premises. Some police personnel have returned to work in casuals. The station is now accepting general diaries (GDs). Meanwhile, army troops were seen stationed outside the premises yesterday. Story on page 12.

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

Ensure the journalists' safety: CJA

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Commonwealth Journalists Association has urged Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus to ensure the safety of journalists after recent attacks, sometimes deadly, and intimidation amid an uprising.

Since July 16, a total of five journalists were killed and at least 25 others were injured in violence centring the quota reform protests that eventually turned into an anti-government movement, according to media reports.

“The Commonwealth Journalists Association strongly urges you to take swift actions to ensure the physical safety and secure working

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93 killed as Israel hits Gaza school

World condemns attack; UN rapporteur accuses Israel of ‘genocide’

AFP, Palestinian Territories

Rescuers in Gaza said an Israeli air strike on a religious school housing displaced Palestinians killed 93 people yesterday, sparking international condemnation despite Israel’s insistence that it was targeting militants.

AFP could not independently verify the toll which, if confirmed, would be one of the largest from a single strike during 10 months of war between Israel and Palestinian groups.

The bombardment of Al-Tabieen school and mosque drew criticism from across the Middle East and beyond alongside calls for a ceasefire after international mediators

invited the warring sides to resume talks towards a long-sought truce and hostage-release deal.

Civil defence rescuers in the Hamas-ruled territory said three Israeli missiles hit the complex in Gaza City while people were performing dawn prayers.

“They dropped a missile on them while they were just praying,” said one woman, mourning over a dead child shrouded in a plastic body bag.

Israel’s military said it had “precisely struck” Al-Tabieen, which spokesman Nadav Shoshani added on social media platform X housed a “military facility” with “approximately 20 Hamas and Islamic Jihad militants” including commanders.

3 medical colleges ban student politics

NSTU follows suit

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Sir Salimullah Medical College and Chittagong Medical College have banned all forms of political activities for students, teachers, and staff on campus and in dormitories since yesterday.

“All forms of politics have been banned for students, teachers, and staff on the campus and dormitories, including all kinds of political and non-political activities in lobbying and clubs,” said Md Shahadat Hossain, principal of Sir Salimullah Medical College, in a press release.

The academic council of

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Protesters attack army patrol teams in Gopalganj

4 officers, 5 soldiers hurt: ISPR

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Three officers, a junior commissioned officer, and five other army personnel were injured yesterday when protesters attacked army patrol teams with sharp weapons at Gopinathpur of Gopalganj Sadar.

According to a press release sent by the Inter-Services Public Relation Directorate (ISPR), two patrol teams of the army went to the spot after protesters blocked the Gopalganj-Dhaka highway. The teams were attacked with locally made

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Slap sanctions on Quader, ex-home boss

Urge six US lawmakers

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Six congressmen and senators have urged the US authorities to impose sanctions on Awami League General Secretary Obaidul Quader and former home minister Asaduzzaman Khan for their roles in “gross human rights violations” during the recent protests in Bangladesh.

They have sent a letter to the US Secretary of State and Secretary of Treasury Janet Yellen in this regard.

“The use of violent force against peaceful protesters exercising their freedom of expression is an unacceptable violation of human rights. The Bangladeshi leaders who orchestrated this brutal crackdown must be held accountable,” reads the letter.

Bangladeshi shot by BSF in Thakurgaon

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Thakurgaon

A Bangladeshi young man was shot and wounded allegedly by the Indian Border Security Force (BSF) near Kotapara border in Thakurgaon’s Baliadangi upazila yesterday.

The injured was identified as Naimur Rahman, 22, son of Jahangir Alam of Kalibari village under the same upazila.

The victim’s uncle said that Naimur and his uncle Alamgir went to their cropfield near the border to cut grass in the morning around 10:00am.

After a while, BSF members of the Bhelagachi camp from the other side of the border started shouting at them and abruptly opened fire in their direction, leaving Naimur injured.

Alamgir, who was unhurt, rescued Naimur and took him to the Baliadangi Upazila Health Complex, where Naimur was given first aid.

Later, Naimur was taken to Thakurgaon Sadar Hospital, where he is currently undergoing treatment.

Small plane crash in Chile kills 7

AFP, Santiago

Seven people were killed Friday when the small plane they were traveling in crashed in southern Chile, the country’s civil aviation authority said.

Contact was lost with the Piper Navajo aircraft at 9:13 am (1313 GMT), shortly after it took off from Coyhaique, some 1,700 kilometers (1,000 miles) south of Santiago.

“The pilot and his six passengers” died, the General Directorate of Civil Aeronautics (DGAC) said in a statement, without specifying the cause of the crash.

The presidential delegate for the region, Rodrigo Araya, told reporters that he had instructed the prosecutor’s office and the Forensic Medical Service to launch an investigation into the incident.

Justice Syed Refaat Ahmed appointed chief justice

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Ekushey Padak recipient, and the chairperson of the department of Islamic History and Culture at Dhaka University.

Justice Refaat obtained LLB (hons) with first class, first in order of merit from Dhaka University, BA and MA from Wadham College, University of Oxford, UK, MA in Law and Diplomacy and PhD from Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy, Tufts University, USA.

He was a Ford Foundation fellow in Public International Law at the Fletcher School.

He worked at the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees in Hong Kong and Washington, DC and as a lawyer in London.

In 1984, he became a lawyer of the district courts. He became a lawyer of the High Court Division in 1986 and a lawyer of the Appellate Division in 2002.

He was appointed as an additional judge of the High Court Division on April 27, 2003, and he was made a permanent judge of the division on April 27, 2005.

Justice Ahmed is a founder member of Global Judicial Institute on the Environment, Brazil.

He participated in international roundtables, workshops, conventions, study tours and courses held in Germany, Malaysia, the Philippines, India, Nepal, Italy, Singapore, Thailand, USA, Brazil and Myanmar.

CJ, 5 other SC judges resign

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The meeting was scheduled for 10:00am yesterday.

There was no other agenda for the meeting, he said.

But, several thousand students gathered on the SC premises around 10:30am and started demanding the resignation of the chief justice and other Appellate Division judges.

A group of pro-BNP Jamaat lawyers joined the protesters.

The demonstrations began after student leader Asif Mahmud, now the adviser to the Ministry of Youth and Sports, wrote on Facebook around 10:00am that the chief justice must resign and the full court meeting must stop.

“The chief justice of the Supreme Court, who was backed by the fascists and engaged in various misdeeds, has called a full court meeting without any discussion with the government. Any kind of conspiracy by the defeated power will not be tolerated. Lawyers have already rallied against him.

“We had earlier called for the resignation of the chief justice. If you incite the students and mass people by taking any stand against them, you will have to face dire consequences.

“Resign immediately from the post of the chief justice and stop the full court meeting.”

Soon afterwards, several thousand students and lawyers marched and held rallies at different places on the SC premises, demanding the resignation

of all the judges of the Appellate Division.

The army personnel deployed to avert any untoward incident were seen requesting the students to peacefully demonstrate without damaging properties.

At one stage, Hasnat Abdullah, a coordinator of the student movement against discrimination, declared the judges’ homes would be besieged unless the chief justice and judges of the Appellate Division resigned by 1:00pm.

When reporters drew his attention to the matter around 12:00pm, Law Adviser Prof Asif Nazrul said he was hoping the chief justice would understand that the demand raised by the masses should be honoured.

He said the outgoing chief justice had warranted controversies for several reasons.

He added that the outgoing chief justice called for a meeting, and Adviser Asif said the meeting was called without consulting anyone. “It seems like a move made by the defeated authoritarian regime,” he said.

He said there were questions about the outgoing chief justice. During the anti-government protests, Justice Obaidul asked whether a verdict can be changed by a movement. People did not take it well.

Besides, it is unfortunate that after he took charge, Justice Obaidul received a felicitation from Chhatra League men, which is a violation of the

code of conduct, said the law adviser.

He also received a golden sword from the former Detective Branch chief Harun Or Rashid. Besides, when he travelled abroad, he used to stay at the homes of Awami League leaders. “These are the reasons why there were controversies surrounding him,” he added.

Justice Obaidul subsequently resigned and the five other judges followed him.

Contacted, Justice Obaidul said, “I decided to resign considering the safety and security of the judges of the Appellate Division, High Court Division, and the lower courts across the country amid the emerging situation.”

In a video message on Facebook, Law Adviser Asif Nazrul said, “Our chief justice resigned a few minutes ago. His resignation letter reached the law ministry. We will promptly send it to the president, so that necessary measures can be taken.”

After learning around 1:00pm that lower courts in different districts were surrounded by protesting students, he urged students not to harm or disrupt court proceedings.

There is no reason for the students to lay a siege to a lower court because the demand concerns the chief justice and some other judges.

Despite the current situation, the lower court judges are working. They have promised that they will no longer make the old mistakes, he said.

supposed to be.”

Yunus also warned the students not to let their efforts be foiled by those seeking to undermine their progress. “There are many waiting to make your efforts futile. Don’t fail this time.”

Voicing his commitment to national reform, the microcredit pioneer said he would do whatever is necessary to cleanse the country of its ills. “We will clean everything. We have no relief until everything is cleaned.” He condemned the recent attacks on the religious minority communities. He asked the young people, “You have been able to save the country. Can’t you save some families?”

He urged the students to protect all Hindu, Christian, and Buddhist families from harm.

“You must say no one can harm them. They are my brothers. We fought together, and we will stay together.”

Comparing Bangladesh to a beautiful family, Yunus said, “No family is more beautiful than this. There are many countries in the world, but there is no such beautiful family.”

Normalising economy is a top priority

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activities will be on as per the normal process,” he said after a meeting with the secretary-level officials of the finance and planning ministries at the secretariat in Dhaka.

Ahmed, a former Bangladesh Bank governor, joined work yesterday following his appointment as an adviser for finance and planning of the interim government formed after the fall of Sheikh Hasina-led Awami League government on August 5 due to a mass uprising.

He did not give any directive to the officials.

Ahmed told the officials in charge to work as per the schedule, rules, regulations and norms and refrain from exercising discretionary powers, The Daily Star has learnt from people familiar with the discussions at the meeting.

Asked about the recent protests in the financial sector following Hasina’s exit and the resignations of top officials including BB governor Abdur Rouf Talukder, Ahmed said: “If anyone has engaged in any unlawful activity, appropriate actions will be taken in line with the law.”

About Talukder’s stepping down and the forced resignation of a deputy governor, he said: “All the resignations will be considered as per the process. I will not ask for accepting [the letter]. If needed, I will consult with the chief adviser.”

Earlier in the day, he said he would not take any decision alone regarding the resignation of the BB governor,

which is a ‘sensitive’ post.

“Shall I accept as soon as I get the resignation? Can I do that?”

Asked about the demand for the resignation of Abu Hena Md Rahmatul Muneem, chairman of the National Board of Revenue, from a section of revenue officials, Ahmed said: “He has been given a target to collect revenue. He will collect revenue. He will work properly.”

Before the meeting with officials yesterday, he told the media personnel that many rules and norms of the banking sector were not followed.

“Those who were supposed to enforce with rules did not do so and those who were supposed to follow the rules did not comply.”

Restoring law and order and banking and port activities is the interim government’s priority now, Ahmed said, while citing inflation as a major challenge.

“Apart from economic challenges, our policies and strategies for development were wrong. People did not benefit from the development. You have seen the benefit went to the well-off. We have seen economic growth but who enjoyed the benefit of growth?”

Asked about bringing back the laundered money from abroad, he said the interim government will take steps on that front.

“There is a process for this. Information will be needed. For this, we will contact the agencies we need to contact.”

Resignations until now

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Besides, several provosts of different dormitories at Dhaka University also stepped down yesterday.

Earlier on Thursday, the full body of DU’s Proctorial Team submitted their resignation letters.

“I spoke to an adviser to the interim government Friday night and decided not to hold my position any longer,” Prof Maksud Kamal told this newspaper.

“I discussed the matter from a place of common courtesy. My letter of resignation has already been prepared. I spent a lot of time as a student and teacher leader at this university. I believe that, considering the overall situation, my resignation

is necessary for the benefit of the students and the university.”

In the face of student protests, vice-chancellors of five public universities have so far resigned.

The first to step down were VCs of three public universities, including Jahangirnagar University, Sher-e-Bangla Agricultural University, and Mawlana Bhashani Science and Technology University.

The protestors of the quota reform movement have been demanding the resignation of many VCs since early on in their movement.

However, the VCs did not start stepping down until after the resignation of Sheikh Hasina.