

## 06 BAN 6 – 06-06-11 Dhaka

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<http://www.newagebd.com/2006/jun/02/front.html#15>

### AL, allies preparing for Dhaka siege on June 11

Staff Correspondent

The Awami League general secretary, Abdul Jalil, on Thursday said the AL-led opposition alliance is waging movement to restore the people's rights seized by the BNP-Jamaat government.

'We are demanding the people's constitutional rights through democratic movement,' Jalil, also the coordinator of the opposition alliance, told a press briefing followed by a preparatory meeting for the June 11 Dhaka siege programme.

Accusing the government of hatching conspiracy to foil the democracy, he said 'the opposition alliance believes in democratic practices not in conspiracy like the BNP-Jamaat government'.

'We are going to take all-out preparations to make the siege programme a success,' he said.

The alliance leaders of Dhaka and eight neighbouring districts attended the meeting held at the AL central office on the Bangabandhu Avenue.

AL presidium members Abdur Razzak, Matia Chowdhury and Kazi Zafar Ullah, the Workers Party president, Rashed Khan Menon, general secretary, Bimal Biswas, general secretary of a

faction of the Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal, Syed Zafar Sajjad, and Samyabadi Dal leader Dilip Barua were among the central leaders of the alliance present in the meeting.

The central leaders instructed the district level leaders to hold rallies in nine entry points of Dhaka on the day, meeting sources said.

The alliance will hold a meeting with the Dhaka city leaders today.

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<http://www.newagebd.com/2006/jun/09/front.html#3>

## **Blanket arrest continues**

Staff Correspondent

Two hundred and sixty-four people were arrested in 24 hours ending at 6:00am Thursday, as blanket arrest continued in the lead-up to the June 11 'Dhaka siege' programme of the Awami-League-led alliance of opposition political parties.



One hundred and fifty-four were shown arrested in different cases, 26 against warrants of arrest, 3 under section 54 of the Criminal Code of Procedure and 81 in different articles under the Dhaka Metropolitan Police Ordinance, section 86.

The police detained 316 people on Wednesday, 315 on Tuesday, 282 on Monday, 262 on June 4, 260 on June 3, 254 on June 2 and 236 on June 1, according to a police press release.

Although the police claimed that they did not arrest anyone without charges, relatives of many detainees alleged that the arrests had been primarily for harassment.

Lal Miah, a resident of Lalmatia in the city, told New Age on Thursday that a team of the Mohammadpur police, led by Sub-inspector Atiq, detained his son Khokon as he, along with his two friends, was smoking beside the water tank in their locality at about 9:00pm on June 5.

The police claimed the three had been taking hemp, he said.

Lal Miah said he had gone to the scene and requested the police officer to release the three and also offered Tk 1,000 in cash. The officer did not agree.

The police team took away the three but released one of them taking Tk 1,500 from him, Lal Miah alleged.

He then went to the Mohammadpur police station but failed to convince the police officer.

At about 4:00am on June 6, the police officer came to the residence of Lal Miah and asked him to contact the officer-in-charge and also asked him to pay Tk 10,000.

Lal Miah told the officer he did not have that much money.

As he went to the police station in the morning, the police officer said they could not release his son as he was a criminal and involved in the different criminal activities.

The police sent him to court and sought a five-day remand to interrogate him in a theft case, Lal Miah said.

Like him, a number of people also thronged the court on Thursday to see their near and dear ones, detained by the police.

Some of them also alleged that the police had detained their relatives as they failed to pay bribe and the police made them accused in different cases pending for long.

Even the innocent people were also branded as criminals by the police while they were produced before the court, they alleged.

## **Lawmen intensify blanket arrest**

Staff Correspondent

Lawmen intensified their drive to arrest people in the capital city as the combine of the opposition political parties vowed to make its siege of Dhaka successful. The police said they had arrested 2,731 people in Dhaka after June 1.

They arrested 283 people in 24 hours till Saturday morning. One hundred and seventy-five people were shown arrested in cases, 15 under the warrants of arrest, nine under Section 54 of the Code of Criminal Procedures and 84 under different articles of the Dhaka Metropolitan Police Ordinance.

The number of the arrested was 24 more than what was arrested on Friday when the police detained 259 people.

The police detained 264 people on June 8, 316 on June 7, 315 on June 6, 282 on June 5, 262 on June 4, 260 on June 3, 254 on June 2 and 236 on June 1, according to a police release.

The lockups at most police stations, mainly in Old Town of Dhaka, remained crowded with the people detained between 10:00pm Friday and 3:00am Saturday when they were busy watching World Cup matches on television.

The police claimed they had been conducting raids and arresting people as part of their routine work, but the relatives, who flocked to the police stations, said the arrest was made to harass them.

The Lalbagh police detained eight persons at Islambagh and the Azimpur orphanage when they were watching television.

The persons included day labourers and footpath vendors. Their relatives claimed they had no crime records.

The police said the people were implicated in a bomb case filed by Mohammad Alagir Hossain, a local BNP leader, in connection with the bombing opposite Jamal Chemical Industries Limited at Lalbagh on June 4.

The police produced the eight — Azizur Rahman, Mamun Khan, Badiuzzaman Sabuj, Khoka, Nurul Islam, Monir Hossain, Bappi and Johnnie — before the chief metropolitan magistrates court on Saturday seeking a remand for seven days.

The magistrate, Toufiqul Alam, rejected the police prayer and ordered to send them to jail.

The Kotwali police arrested one Mahamud of Sutrapur at the Gulistan Hawkers Market under the Dhaka Metropolitan Act when he was going to buy musical instrument to celebrate his 16th birthday on Friday night. The police produced him in court on Saturday, saying he was harassing girls, said Mahamud, after being released by the court.

The authorities have, meanwhile, deployed more than 15,000 personnel of law enforcing agencies, including the Bangladesh Rifles and the Rapid Action Battalion, to keep law and order in the capital city.

The inspector general of police, Mohammad Abdul Quayyum, told newsmen on Friday evening that any unruly activities and efforts to obstruct transport movement in the name of siege would be ruled with an iron hand.

## **Police clash with Opposition protesters in Bangladesh**

Dhaka, June 11 (AP): Riot police fired tear gas at thousands of stone-throwing protesters in the Bangladesh capital Sunday, leaving dozens of people injured, witnesses and news reports said.

The protesters from an opposition alliance were trying to block the entry points to Dhaka to demand the resignation of Prime Minister Khaleda Zia's Government and electoral reforms.

Clashes were reported in at least five points, according to Associated Press reporters at the scenes and private TV station ATN Bangla.

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<http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2006/06/11/world/main1699515.shtml>

## **Police, Protesters Clash In Bangladesh Protesters Demand Government's Resignation And Electoral Reform**

DHAKA, Bangladesh, June 11, 2006



Riot police baton charge an opposition activist during a demonstration demanding electoral reforms, Dhaka, Bangladesh, March 12, 2006. (AP)

charges.

(AP) Riot police fired tear gas at thousands of stone-throwing protesters demanding the prime minister resign in the Bangladesh capital Sunday, leaving dozens of people injured, witnesses and news reports said.

The protesters from an opposition alliance were fired upon as they tried to block the entry points to Dhaka as part of a campaign to pressure Prime Minister Khaleda Zia to step down and to demand electoral reforms.

The alliance, led by former Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, accuses the government of corruption and authoritarianism and of trying to use the election commission to guarantee victory in the next election due in January 2007. The government denies the

Clashes were reported in at least five points across the city, according to Associated Press reporters at the scenes and private TV station ATN Bangla.

At Kanchpur on the southeastern outskirts of Dhaka, police used tear gas and batons when about 3,000 opposition activists gathered on a highway leading to the capital, witnesses said.

The protesters responded by throwing stones.

Similar clashes were reported in Tongi and Gabtali, the two other key entry points to Dhaka in the north. Violence also broke out in Dhaka's central Dhanmandi and Kalabagan districts, close to the Hasina's office.

Authorities deployed about 20,000 security officials in and around the city of 10 million people to prevent any violence, the country's police chief, Abdul Qaiyum, said Saturday night.

"We will do whatever required to keep the law and order under control," Qaiyum told reporters.

Sunday is a working day in Muslim-majority Bangladesh.

The opposition has launched a campaign of general strikes and street protests to demand the resignation of Zia's four-party coalition government, as well as an early election and election commission reforms.

The alliance alleges that the government is using the election commission to win the next elections.

Zia has vowed to remain in power until October this year, when her government's five-year term expires.

Under Bangladesh's constitution, Zia will hand over power to a nonpartisan caretaker administration to supervise the January polls

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<http://www.edicom.ch/fr/news/international/index.php?idIndex=270&idContent=1504958>

**11 juin 2006 - 12:48**

## **Affrontements entre policiers bangladais et manifestants de l'opposition**

DACCA (AP) -- La police anti-émeute bangladaise a tiré sur des milliers de manifestants qui lançaient des pierres dimanche à Dacca, selon des témoins et des médias locaux qui faisaient état de dizaines de blessés.

Sous l'impulsion de l'ancien Premier ministre Sheikh Hasina, les protestataires ont tenté de bloquer les points d'entrée dans la capitale bangladaise afin d'obtenir la démission du chef du gouvernement actuel Khaleda Zia.

L'opposition accuse le gouvernement de corruption, d'autoritarisme et le soupçonne d'utiliser la commission électorale pour s'assurer la victoire aux prochaines élections en janvier 2007.

Des affrontements ont été signalés en une dizaine de points de Dacca, selon des reporters de l'Associated Press présents sur les lieux et la chaîne de télévision privée ATN Bangla.

A Kanchpur, à la périphérie sud-est de Dacca, la police a tiré au fusil lorsqu'environ 3.000 manifestants se sont rassemblés sur une route menant à la capitale, d'après des témoins. Elle a également fait usage de gaz lacrymogènes et de matraques. Les manifestants ont répliqué en lançant des pierres et en mettant le feu à plusieurs véhicules.

Au moins 30 personnes, dont des policiers, ont été blessés à Kanchpur, selon un journaliste de l'AP sur place.

A Savar, la police a utilisé gaz lacrymogènes et matraques pour disperser plusieurs milliers de manifestants, blessant au moins 100 personnes, selon l'agence privée United News of Bangladesh.

Des affrontements similaires ont été signalés à Tongi -où 50 personnes dont cinq journalistes ont été blessées, selon ATN Bangla- et à Gabtali -où au moins 30 personnes ont été blessées, selon UNB.

Des violences ont éclaté également à Dhanmandi et Kalabagan, deux quartiers du centre de Dacca.

«Les policiers ont attaqué des manifestants pacifiques», a dénoncé Abdus Shahid, un député de l'opposition blessé à la jambe.

D'après l'opposition, des dizaines de manifestants ont été interpellés.

Environ 20.000 policiers ont été déployés dans et autour de Dacca, qui compte 10 millions d'habitants. Samedi soir, Abdul Qaiyum, le chef de la police bangladaise, a déclaré: «Nous ferons tout le nécessaire pour maintenir l'ordre». AP

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[http://today.reuters.com/news/newsArticle.aspx?type=worldNews&storyID=2006-06-11T080002Z\\_01\\_DHA320130\\_RTRUKOC\\_0\\_US-BANGLADESH-OPPOSITION.xml&archived=False](http://today.reuters.com/news/newsArticle.aspx?type=worldNews&storyID=2006-06-11T080002Z_01_DHA320130_RTRUKOC_0_US-BANGLADESH-OPPOSITION.xml&archived=False)

## **Over 150 hurt as protesters try Dhaka blockade**

Sun Jun 11, 2006 4:00 AM ET

By Anis Ahmed

DHAKA (Reuters) - More than 150 Bangladesh opposition leaders and activists were injured in fierce battles with police while trying to stage a blockade of the capital, Dhaka, on Sunday, witnesses said.

Rock-throwing protesters fought steel-helmeted riot police at Kanchpur on the outskirts of Dhaka, in which at least 70 people, including former army chief general K.M. Shafiullah, were injured.

Police, who retaliated with tear gas and baton charges, also detained nearly 50 people at Kanchpur, on the Dhaka-Chittagong highway.

As the battle raged, hundreds of stick-wielding people from nearby villages joined the protesters, forcing police to make a temporary retreat.

The protesters burned several vehicles, including a police car. Several policemen were hurt by flying rocks, witnesses, said.

Leaders of the opposition Awami League had urged followers to gather at city entry points on Sunday to lay siege to the capital.

The opposition wants the caretaker administration that will be appointed to organize January's election to be led by a figure acceptable to all political groups, and the armed forces placed under the caretaker leader's control during the polls.

Police toured Dhaka overnight with loudspeakers declaring the High Court had banned the blockade and anyone participating could be prosecuted.

Authorities deployed more than 30,000 riot police and paramilitary troops in the capital on Sunday, home ministry officials said.

Awami general secretary Abdul Jalil said the opposition would call for an indefinite strike if the government tried to foil the siege.

"I am warning the authorities against trying to stop us by using force. The siege is our democratic right and we are going to implement it," Jalil said.

Sporadic violence was also reported from Tongi industrial area, on the city's northern fringe, where nearly 40 protesters were injured and many detained by police, witnesses said.

Witnesses said city's inter-district bus terminals looked deserted with virtually no customers. Ferries and trains moved in the early hours of Sunday, but with very few passengers.

Nearly 5,000 opposition activists and suspected criminals had been detained by police in the run up to Sunday's protest, but they spared main leaders in the swoop.

## **About 200 hurt as protesters try Dhaka blockade**

Sun Jun 11, 2006 11:06 AM BST

By Anis Ahmed

DHAKA (Reuters) - At least 200 people were hurt in street clashes between Bangladesh opposition workers and police while the activists trying to stage a blockade of the capital, Dhaka, on Sunday, witnesses said.

Rock-throwing protesters fought riot police at Kanchpur on the outskirts of Dhaka, in which at least 70 people, including former army chief general K.M. Shafiullah, were injured.

Police, who retaliated with tear gas and baton charges, detained nearly 50 people at Kanchpur, on the Dhaka-Chittagong highway.

As the battle raged, hundreds of stick-wielding people from nearby villages joined the protesters, forcing police to make a temporary retreat.

The protesters burnt several vehicles, including a police car. Several policemen were hurt by flying rocks, witnesses, said.

Street battles also erupted at three places in the city and in two areas just outside the capital. In all over 200 people, including at least 20 policemen, were hurt, and several vehicles damaged, witnesses said.

Leaders of the opposition Awami League had urged followers to gather at city entry points on Sunday to lay siege to the capital.

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<http://story.malaysiasun.com/p.x/ct/9/cid/b8de8e630faf3631/id/ee03cc6865fb805e/>

## **Protesters hurt, want action in Bangladesh**

Big News Network

Sunday 11th June, 2006 (UPI)

Rock-throwing protesters in Dhaka, Bangladesh were injured when riot police shot tear gas at them to split up a mass demonstration Sunday.

The fighting took place in various parts of the capital as protesters organized by an opposition coalition of 14 different parties reiterated their demands.

Former Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has led the call for new elections and other government reform, CNN reported Sunday.

Absdul Jalil, coordinator of the coalition and general secretary of the Awami League party, wants the election head and two election commissioners fired and an end to mass arrests of dissidents.

The group says the government has 24 hours to act or face a countrywide general strike

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[http://www.chinapost.com.tw/p\\_latestdetail.asp?id=38903](http://www.chinapost.com.tw/p_latestdetail.asp?id=38903)

## **Police clash with protesters demanding government's resignation(updated 03:12 p.m.)**

2006/6/11

DHAKA, Bangladesh (AP)

Riot police fired bullets and tear gas at thousands of stone-throwing protesters demanding the prime minister resign in the Bangladesh capital Sunday, leaving dozens of people wounded, witnesses and news reports said.

The protesters from an opposition alliance were fired upon as they tried to block the entry points to Dhaka as part of a campaign to pressure Prime Minister Khaleda Zia to step down and to demand electoral reforms.



The alliance, led by former Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, accuses the government of corruption and authoritarianism and of trying to use the election commission to guarantee victory in the next election due in January 2007. The government denies the charges.

Clashes were reported in at least five points across the city, according to Associated Press reporters at the scenes and private TV station ATN Bangla.

At Kanchpur on the southeastern outskirts of Dhaka, police fired rifles and used tear gas and batons when about 3,000 opposition activists gathered on a highway leading to the capital, witnesses said.

The protesters responded by throwing stones and setting several vehicles on fire.

At least 30 people, including policemen, were wounded in Kanchpur, according to an Associated Press reporter at the scene.

Similar clashes were reported in Tongi and Gabtali, the two other key entry points to Dhaka in the north.

At Tongi, police charged demonstrators with batons, leaving at least 50 people wounded, including five journalists covering the violence, ATN Bangla reported.

Violence also broke out in Dhaka's central Dhanmandi and Kalabagan districts, close to the Hasina's office.

Many commuters were stranded in Dhaka and around the city as the protests disrupted public transportation, news reports said.

Police officials were not immediately available to comment.

Authorities deployed about 20,000 security officials in and around the city of 10 million people to prevent any violence, the country's police chief, Abdul Qaiyum, said Saturday night.

"We will do whatever required to keep the law and order under control," Qaiyum told reporters.

Sunday is a working day in Muslim-majority Bangladesh.

The opposition has launched a campaign of general strikes and street protests to demand the resignation of Zia's four-party coalition government, as well as an early election and election commission reforms.

The alliance alleges that the government is using the election commission to win the next elections.

Zia has vowed to remain in power until October this year, when her government's five-year term expires.

Under Bangladesh's constitution, Zia will hand over power to a nonpartisan caretaker administration to supervise the January polls.

## **AL, allies flout HC ban, besiege Dhaka**

Staff Correspondent



*Demonstrators set fire to a police van after the police retreated in the face of attack at the Kanchpur Bridge in Narayanganj during the programme of Dhaka siege by the 14-party alliance led by the Awami League on Sunday.*

— Abu Taher Khokon

Thousands of angry demonstrators fought running battles with the police in the city and elsewhere on Sunday shutting the capital from the rest of the country defying a High Court ban on the siege of Dhaka.

The Awami League and its allies announced the Dhaka siege, but a High Court bench on Saturday imposed a ban on the opposition's programme.

The opposition activists took to the streets, set fire to dozens of vehicles and clashed with the police and paramilitary troopers hurling stones and brick-chunks as the law enforcers fired rubber bullets and tear gas shells to keep the demonstrators at bay.

The opposition enforced the siege to push reforms of the system of caretaker government and reconstitution of the Election Commission.

The police with loud hailers were seen urging the citizens from Sunday morning to refrain from participating in the opposition's programme as the High Court on Saturday slapped a temporary injunction on the Dhaka siege.

Several hundred people, including some opposition lawmakers, newsmen and police were injured in the clashes and the police detained more than 300 people on charge of picketing.

The opposition claimed that more than 500 leaders and activists were injured in the police action and the lawmen detained over 1,000 people.

The opposition chief whip in the parliament, Abdus Shaheed, MP, the AL central leader, Mohammad Nasim, party lawmaker, Zahid Ahsan Russel, Mahiuddin Khan Alamgir, and former lawmaker, Shafiullah, were among the injured.

In protest against the police action, the 14-party opposition combine announced demonstrations for Monday and a 36-hour non-stop hartal from 6:00am Tuesday.

The agitated opposition activists snapped rail communications at several places, either by halting trains or uprooting tracks. The opposition activists halted trains at Jamalpur, Nilphamari and uprooted tracks at Jurain rail crossing in Dhaka and in Natore.

A few motorised vehicles plied the city streets, but no inter-district transports entered or left the city. All highways approaching the city looked deserted. Launch services and air traffic, however, were almost normal.

The opposition activists fought pitched battles with the law enforcers in the city's Maghbazar, Mirpur, Russell Square, Uttara, Jatrabari, Jurain, Dhaka University campus and Nawabpur Road. Maghbazar virtually turned into a battlefield where clashes raged for about three hours from 10:00am.

The police charged batons, lobbed tear gas shells and fired gunshots while the pickets hurled stones at lawmen during the clashes. A number of vehicles were damaged during the troubles.

The authorities deployed a 20,000-strong police and security forces in and around the city and set up check-posts at different strategic points.

In many areas, the police forced their way into different houses and shops and clubbed the opposition activists. The police also beat up pedestrians and residents in different neighbourhoods.

The pickets burnt spent motor tyres and bamboo fences of road dividers to get relief from tear gas.

The major incident of clash took place at Kanchpur bridge in Narayanganj, an entry point of the capital, where several hundred opposition activists staged demonstrations from early morning.

The police initially used tear gas and batons to disperse the stone-throwing protesters. The lawmen then fired about 200 gunshots and lobbed similar number of tear gas canisters.

At one stage, the police were compelled to retreat. Former AL lawmaker, Shafiullah received head injuries.

The agitated mob vandalised and torched a number of vehicles there. Among the injured there, fish trader Zia Abu Rahman, who suffered rubber bullet wounds, was admitted to Dhaka Medical College Hospital in a critical condition.

Policewomen Tania Akhtar, 24, and Jesmin Akhtar, 24, and constables Wazed, 23, and Nitai Kumar, 25, were also admitted to the DMCH.

The Awami League leader, Mohammad Nasim, along with 30 other opposition activists, was injured at Savar when law enforcers charged batons to disperse demonstrators.

In the morning the police swooped on an opposition procession at Shah Ali Mazar Road in Mirpur leaving at least 15 people injured. Fifteen more opposition activists were injured in clashes with the police at Gabtoli.

At Tongi, more than 30 people, including journalists, received injuries when the police attacked a procession in the railway station area.

The police beat up a photojournalist of Bangla daily, Naya Diganta, Sharif Ishtiaz, and smashed his camera.

The Supreme Court Bar Association observed a sit-in demonstration in front of the court protesting the court injunction on the Dhaka siege.

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## **Countrywide 36-hour hartal from tomorrow**

*Hartal in Rajshahi today*

Staff Correspondent

The Awami League-led opposition alliance has called a countrywide 36-hour hartal from 6:00am tomorrow to press home its demands — reforms to the caretaker government system and the Election Commission, and resignation of the chief election commissioner.

The opposition combine will also stage demonstrations across the country today in protest against the police action on the opposition activists during Sunday's Dhaka siege programme.

The Awami League and its front organisations called a half-day hartal in Rajshahi for today in protest against the police attack on the Rajshahi city AL general secretary, AHM Khairuzzaman Liton, during the seize programme at Savar in Dhaka.

The Awami League general secretary, Abdul Jalil, also coordinator of the opposition combine, announced the fresh programmes of the combine at the AL central office Sunday afternoon.

‘We will continue agitation if the government does not agree to bring reforms to the caretaker government provision and the Election Commission as per the opposition proposal,’ he said adding ‘The agitation programmes would continue till the alliance government steps down.’

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## **Clashes mark siege programme outside Dhaka**

Staff Correspondent

The opposition activists clashed with the police and vandalised a number of vehicles in different districts centring the ‘Dhaka siege’ programme on Sunday.

The New Age Sirajganj correspondent reported that at least 10 activists of the opposition 14-party alliance were injured as the police charged batons and fired rubber bullets.

As part of the Dhaka siege programme, the activists put barricade on the western side of Jamuna Multipurpose Bridge and vandalised five buses at Koddar and Muhishluti areas.

Seven of the injured were admitted to Tarash Upazila Health Complex while three others to Sirajganj Sadar Hospital.

In Munshiganj, at least five activists were injured when the police charged batons and fired teargas shells during the siege programme. Three buses were also damaged by the activists.

Road communication between Dhaka and 23 southern districts remained suspended as the activists put barricade at the Nimtala bus terminal on Dhaka-Mawa-Khulna Highway under Sirajdikhan upazila.

The local leaders and activists of the Awami League-led 14-party alliance also demonstrated at Meghna Bridge spot and cut off road communication between Dhaka and all the south-eastern districts.

In Sylhet, traffic on the Dhaka-Sylhet Highway remained snapped from 10:00am to 2:00pm as the alliance leaders and activists took position at the rail crossing point in South Surma. They also brought out a procession led by the city mayor, Badar Uddin Ahmed Kamran, also president of the AL city unit, from the rail crossing area at about 12:30pm, and later held a rally.

In Jessore, two factions of the Awami League chased each other at the Nawapara Industrial Area.

In the town, the alliance blocked Jessore-Dhaka and Jessore-Jhenaidah Roads.

In Barisal, the AL district and city units observed a three-hour road blockade programme in the city from 9:00am. A rally was held at Amtala with the city convener, Advocate Shawkat Hossain Hiron, in the chair.

In Jhalakati, similar programme was observed by the opposition activists at the Jhalakati bus terminal in the morning.

In Khulna, the alliance activists vandalised at least seven vehicles at the Picture Palace crossing in the Khulna city in protest at the police action against them during the siege programme.

The angry activists brought out a procession from the Khulna AL office at around 2:00pm and vandalized a number of vehicles.

Meanwhile, the alliance city unit blocked the Khulna-Jessore Highway at the city’s Natunrasta crossing from 9:00am to 1:00pm and the Khulna-Satkhira Highway at the Dumuria upazila headquarters from 11:00am to 12:00pm. Movement of all vehicles was suspended then.

In Chittagong, the opposition alliance blocked the Dhaka-Chittagong Highway from 11:00am to 1:30pm suspending the vehicular movement.

They also held a rally which was chaired by city unit AL president, MA Mannan. The Chittagong mayor, ABM Mohiuddin Chowdhury, Enamul Haque, ATM Nizam Uddin, Mamataj Uddin, Monjurul Alam, Chandan Dhar, Moshir Rahman, Advocate Ziaul Kabir and MR Azim addressed the rally.

## **36-hour hartal begins today**

Staff Correspondent

The Awami League-led opposition alliance called a countrywide 36-hour hartal from 6:00am today demanding reforms to the caretaker government system and the Election Commission, and resignation of the chief election commissioner.

AL general secretary Abdul Jalil, also coordinator of the opposition combine, on Sunday announced the shutdown programme after the 'Dhaka siege'.

Meanwhile, the city unit of the Awami League and its front organisations brought out separate processions on Monday afternoon to drum up support for the hartal.

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## **Hartal observed in Rajshahi**

Our Correspondent . Rajshahi

A half-day hartal, called by the Rajshahi Awami League and its front organisations, was peacefully observed in the city on Monday.

The hartal was called in protest against the police attack on the city AL general secretary, AHM Khairuzzaman Liton, during the opposition's siege programme at Savar in Dhaka on Sunday.

Business establishments and educational institutions remained closed during the hartal hours. Motorised vehicles remained off on the highway, but trains ran as usual.

In protest against the attack, the city and district units of AL held a rally at Shaheb Bazaar. The city unit vice-president, Chowdhury Khurshid Bin Alam, chaired the meeting. It was addressed by district unit AL general secretary Omar Faruque Chowdhury, and district unit Krishak League president Rabiul Alam Babu.

A large number of police personnel were deployed at different key points.

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[http://today.reuters.co.uk/news/newsArticle.aspx?type=worldNews&storyID=2006-06-13T075050Z\\_01\\_SP157443\\_RTRUKOC\\_0\\_UK-BANGLADESH-STRIKE.xml](http://today.reuters.co.uk/news/newsArticle.aspx?type=worldNews&storyID=2006-06-13T075050Z_01_SP157443_RTRUKOC_0_UK-BANGLADESH-STRIKE.xml)

## **Bangladesh strike turns violent; 60 hurt**

Tue Jun 13, 2006 8:51 AM BST

DHAKA (Reuters) - At least 60 people were injured in pitched battles between police and opposition activists as a two-day strike took hold across Bangladesh on Tuesday, police and witnesses said.

An opposition alliance led by former prime minister Sheikh Hasina called the strike to try to force the government to accept demands for electoral reform ahead of next January's parliamentary election.

The demands include the removal of the election commissioner and a say in the caretaker administration to be appointed to run the country ahead of the polls.

The clashes erupted in Dhaka, nearby Narayanganj and northern Sirajganj, where police used batons and tear gas to disperse marching activists, witnesses said.

The protesters responded by throwing rocks at police.

Protesters set fire to two vehicles, including a police car, at Dhaka's Chawkbazar area, police said.

More vehicles were damaged in Narayanganj, Sirajganj and southern Chittagong port city, witnesses told Reuters.

Hundreds of riot police patrolled streets and guarded key buildings in the Bangladesh capital, Dhaka, as the strike took hold.

Ministers and senior officials went to work with heavy police escorts and traffic was generally much lighter than normal.

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<http://www.newagebd.com/2006/jun/14/front.html#19>

## **Picket-police clashes mark first day of hartal**

Staff Correspondent



*A picket walks past a car set on fire at Lalbagh in Dhaka on the first day of the 36-hour hartal, enforced by the opposition combine led by the Awami League, on Tuesday.*

*— New Age photo*

Clashes between pickets and law enforcers in Dhaka and elsewhere in the country on Tuesday marked the first day of a 36-hour hartal (general strike), sponsored by the Awami League-led alliance of 14 opposition parties.

At least 50 people were injured in the capital city as the police charged batons, fired rubber pellets and lobbed teargas canisters to disperse processions whenever and wherever there was one. Thirty-six people were also picked up from different places for picketing.

Several motorised vehicles, including a police van, were set ablaze during the skirmishes.

The alliance called the hartal to press home its demands for changes in the constitutional provision for caretaker government and the Election Commission, and also resignation of the chief election commissioner, MA Aziz.

The number of motorised vehicles on the roads in the capital city was few and far between but road and air communication continued uninterrupted.

Shopping complexes and educational institutions were closed but banks and business establishments operated with their main entrances shuttered down.

The police had virtually laid siege to the Bangabandhu Avenue central office of the Awami League with barricades since early morning. Barricades had also been put on the roads leading to the Bangabandhu Avenue area. A few pickets demonstrated inside the barricade.

The major incident of violence took place at Lalbagh where pickets had fought pitched battles with the police since morning.

The trouble began when the police intercepted and dispersed a number of AL processions. They chased the pickets and charged batons on them, sparking clashes in Chawkbazar and adjoining areas.

The police also stormed into restaurants in the locality and beat up people, including some who were eating. The pickets retaliated with stones and forced the police to retreat.

Later, the paramilitary Bangladesh Rifles joined the police and severely beat up the pickets. The police also fired rubber bullets to quell the situation. Former lawmaker of the area Hajji Selim was confined by the police in his house at Debidas Lane.

The pickets torched four trucks and a human-hauler, used by the police, at old Panghat of Swarighat.

The Awami League city unit, in a press release claimed, that at least 60 people had been injured and 19 picked up by the police from the Lalbagh area.

Juba League activists Nasir, Alamgir and Noor Islam received bullet wounds during the clash at Lalbagh. Nasir was admitted to a private clinic and later shifted to Bangladesh Medical College Hospital, says the press release.

The pickets vandalised at least five vehicles, including a police van at Motijheel.

The police dispersed and picked up opposition activists when they tried to bring out processions in Motijheel, Dhanmondi, Russell Square and Mohakhali areas.

The police used teargas to disperse brickbat-throwing pro-hartal pickets in the Mohakhali area at about 9:30am.

New Age photographer MA Raquib Khan suffered injuries during the police-picket clashes. A stone pelted by the pickets hit Raquib in the forehead. He was taken to a nearby private clinic.

At Mirpur, Awami League workers led by Kamal Majumdar clashed with the police near the Section 10 roundabout at about 11:15am. The activists damaged two vehicles there. The police arrested Juba League worker Kabir with a bottle of petrol near Purabi Cinema.

The Awami League lawmakers staged demonstration in front of the Tejgaon College at Farmgate. The AL lawmakers, who usually bring out procession and gather at Russell Square during hartal, marched towards the Farmgate crossing from the MP Hostel this time around, shouting anti-government slogans. They finally staged a sit-in.



## **Bangladesh strike turns violent, 70 hurt**

14 June 2006

**DHAKA: Clashes between Bangladesh police and opposition activists left nearly 70 people injured and transport and business were largely paralysed, the first day of a two-day strike for electoral reforms.**

An opposition alliance led by former prime minister Sheikh Hasina called the strike to try to force the government to accept demands for electoral reform ahead of next January's parliamentary election.

The demands include the removal of the election commissioner and an opposition say in the caretaker administration to be appointed to run the country ahead of the polls.

While the impoverished country remains divided over political issues, the business community says it is fed up with repeated shut downs that badly affect production and exports.

Obaidul Karim, chairman of the Orion Group of industries, said: "During hartals (strikes) we are forced to close our trade and business.

"All my factories and firms have been closed as we do not want to take any risk of their being attacked or damaged. On each hartal day, the country suffers industrial losses up to 6 billion taka (\$85 million)."

The Orion Group does business in textiles, pharmaceuticals, banking, electronics, printing, power and construction sectors.

The clashes occurred on Tuesday in Dhaka, nearby Narayanganj and northern Sirajganj, where police used batons and tear gas to disperse marching activists, witnesses said.

The protesters responded by throwing rocks at police.

Protesters set fire to seven vehicles, including a police car and three goods trucks, in Dhaka and its suburbs, police said.

More vehicles were damaged in Narayanganj, Sirajganj and southern Chittagong port city, witnesses told Reuters.

The strikers attacked and damaged two railway stations in northern Bangladesh disrupting movement of trains.

Inter-district buses were off the road, but river ferries operated with fewer than normal loads, witnesses said.

Several domestic and international flights were cancelled or delayed, airport officials said.

The country's main Chittagong port remained mostly idle with no deliveries of goods, though some ships were loaded and unloaded, port officials said.

Bangladesh's two stock exchanges in Dhaka and Chittagong were closed.

In Dhaka, hundreds of riot police patrolled streets and guarded key buildings, with paramilitary troops kept on the stand by.

Ministers and senior officials went to work with heavy police escorts and traffic was generally much lighter than normal.

Fears of fresh violence have gripped the city of 10 million after two days of clashes saw around 300 people injured and hundreds more detained at the weekend.

Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia's five-year term will end in October when the caretaker administration – appointed by the president in consultation with the government – will take over until January's election.

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<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/articleshow/1644754.cms>

## **Bangla cops clash with protesters during strike**

**[ Tuesday, June 13, 2006 09:06:17 pmAP ]**

DHAKA: Riot police used tear gas and batons on Tuesday to break up hundreds of opposition activists trying to march during a general strike to demand the government's ouster, witnesses said.

Police intervened when about 1,000 protesters tried to march into Dhaka's central Mahakhali district. Several people were injured.

The violence broke out as a 36-hour, anti-government general strike hit Bangladeshi cities and towns Tuesday. The 14-party opposition alliance, led by the Awami League party, is demanding electoral reform and that the government resign.

It also called the strike to protest a police crackdown on their supporters Sunday when anti-government street demonstrations turned violent. At least 200 people, including several policemen, were wounded in the clashes on Sunday on Dhaka's outskirts, witnesses and news reports said.

The strike from dawn Tuesday until sundown Wednesday shut down shops and schools and disrupted public transportation in Dhaka and more than 60 other cities and towns, private United News of Bangladesh reported.

In the capital, Dhaka, commuters used mostly tricycle rickshaws the strike supporters allowed to operate. A few state-run buses also operated in defiance of the strike.

Bangladesh authorities ordered riot police and paramilitary troops onto the streets to curb violence. More than 10,000 police were deployed to guard main roads and public buildings in Dhaka, a city of 10 million people, a police statement said. General strikes are a common opposition tactic

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<http://www.newagebd.com/2006/jun/15/front.html#4>

## **36-hour hartal ends amid sporadic clashes**

**Staff Correspondent**

The non-stop 36-hour countrywide hartal, sponsored by the Awami League-led 14-party opposition, which ended on Wednesday was marked by sporadic incidents of violence at different places in the capital and some other places in the country.



About 80 people, including five policemen, were injured in clashes in the capital during the hartal on the second day, and the law enforcers picked up more than 100 people in the last two days on charge of picketing.

The opposition parties called the hartal from 6:00am on Tuesday, demanding reforms to the caretaker government system and the Election Commission and resignation of the chief election commissioner for his 'blatantly partisan' attitude.

Movement of motorised vehicles was thin on the roads and streets of the city on Wednesday, but was relatively higher than the previous day, the first day of the 36-hour general strike.

Shopping malls and the educational institutions remained closed. Work in banks and business establishments, however, was carried on behind closed doors. Railway communications were almost normal.

On the second day of the hartal, the pro-hartal picketers fought the police at different places in the capital including Kamrangirchar and Mohakhali.

At Kamrangirchar at least 70 persons, including police, children and women, were injured in sporadic clashes between the police and the local people.

The clash erupted before 10:00am when the police arrested Nur Alam, the vice-president of the thana unit Awami League, from Bhai Bhai Market.

The businessmen of the market and the local people protested against the arrest and became locked in an altercation with the police, demanding his release, said eye-witnesses.

At one stage, the agitating people swooped on the policemen, prompting them to attack the local people indiscriminately. The entire area soon turned into a battlefield.

The local people attacked the police with sticks and stones when the police fired rubber bullets, lobbed teargas canisters and charged the people indiscriminately with batons.

The police also ransacked some business centres during the clashes.

The condition of four of the injured — Ali Hossain, Khairuddin, Shipon, Babu — was stated to be critical.

Later, a huge contingent of policemen went to the spot and conducted extensive search in the locality and mercilessly beat up the locals, including children and women, said eye-witnesses.

The local leaders and activists of the ruling BNP also joined the police in tracing out the AL leaders and activists. The BNP men dragged out three AL activists from their houses and beat them severely before handing them over to the police.

Police also arrested over a dozen locals including some opposition leaders and activists from the spot. Locals alleged that all the men were detained and beaten up by the BNP men before the police took them into custody.

At Mohakhali, the pro-hartal picketers fought a long pitched battle with the police from 9:30am to 1:00pm.

The picketers damaged a number of vehicles and torched a three-wheeler (Mishuk) during the clashes.

The police did not allow the opposition to take to the streets and chased them whenever they tried to bring out a procession.

The police put up barricades to stop a procession of the Awami League lawmakers at Manik Mia Avenue and attacked lawmaker Tanjim Ahmed Sohel. They also tore off Sohel's T-shirt but the lawmakers rescued him from the police.

Protesting against the attacks, the lawmakers staged a sit-in demonstration on the road and held a rally where Shahjahan Khan, Faruk Khan, Shamsur Rahman Sharif and Fazle Karim Chowdhury addressed the demonstrators, among others.

Later, top police officials arrived at the scene and beg the pardon of the lawmakers for such

unwarranted violence by policemen.

'The police officer on duty in the area is a Jamaat cadre who personally instructed his forces to attack me,' Sohel told New Age after the attacks.

The AL and its front organisations also held a rally at Russell Square.

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## **AL, allies to besiege EC on June 20**

**Staff Correspondent**

The Awami League-led opposition alliance on Wednesday announced a series of agitation programmes, including railway, road and waterway blockade on July 2, to push for its demands.

The alliance leaders at a meeting at the Awami League chief's Dhanmondi office announced the programme as part of its non-stop movement to realise the demands, including reforms of the caretaker government system and the Election Commission.

The other programmes included rallies in the capital city on June 16, countrywide rallies on June 17, mass contact in the capital city during June 18-19, laying siege to the Election Commission in Dhaka and district election offices across the country on June 20 and countrywide mass contact by the opposition alliance during June 22-30.

'We decided to continue the agitation programme to ensure the voting rights of the people and to strengthen the democratic practice,' the Awami League president, Sheikh Hasina, also leader of opposition in parliament, told a news briefing after the meeting.

The schedules of the fresh programmes have been fixed, taking into consideration the ongoing Higher Secondary Certificate examinations, she said, adding that tougher programmes would be announced later.

'The BNP observed hartal for 303 days, including 96-hour non-stop hartal, during the five-year rule of the Awami League, but the AL-led alliance would consider the sufferings of the poor in taking up such programmes,' she said.

Although agitation programmes cause sufferings for the people, they should express solidarity with the programmes as the programmes will be observed to ensure their rights, Hasina said.

He urged all to take part in the movement by ignoring temporary sufferings in the greater interest of the nation.

Senior leaders of the Awami League and its allies also attended the briefing.

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<http://www.thedailystar.net/2006/06/15/d6061501022.htm>

## **Cops go marauding as 36-hr hartal ends**

**3 opposition lawmakers assaulted; 150 hurt in clashes**

**Staff Correspondent**

2006/06/15

Over 150 people including 20 policemen were injured in violent clashes between police and hartal supporters in the capital yesterday as the 36-hour shutdown enforced by the Awami League (AL)-led 14-party opposition combine ended at 6:00pm.

The law enforcers also assaulted at least three AL lawmakers on Manik Mia Avenue as a procession of over 20 opposition MPs were heading towards Farmgate. The victims are Ekabbar Hossain, Tanjim Ahmad Sohel Taj and Mohammad Ali.

The legislators have demanded stern action against the police personnel responsible for the incident.

Police arrested at least 80 activists of the AL and its allies in the capital on charge of violent picketing during the shutdown.

Pro-hartal pickets set fire to more than 10 vehicles and damaged at least 15 more in the city since Tuesday midnight.

The opposition combine called the hartal to press home its demands for electoral reforms, resignation of the chief election commissioner (CEC) and two 'politically appointed' election commissioners, and to protest 'police atrocities' on opposition leaders and workers during the Dhaka siege on Sunday.

The countrywide shutdown disrupted normal life, affecting communications and economic and other activities.

Educational institutions, business establishments, markets, shops and many private offices remained closed during the hartal.

Motorised vehicles kept off the roads but rickshaws plied as usual in Dhaka and other major cities and towns. Bus communication between the capital and districts remained suspended while train and launch services operated normally.

More than 20 AL lawmakers brought out a procession from the NAM flat area at about 10:00am yesterday and started marching towards Farmgate. Police intercepted the procession on Manik Mia Avenue. As the lawmakers tried to proceed on, police resisted them and this continued for more than one hour and a half.

At one stage, police assaulted Ekabbar Hossain and tore off T-shirts of Tanjim Ahmad Sohel Taj and Mohammad Ali. Protesting the police assault, they sat on the street and demanded punishment of the cops involved in the incident. They held a brief rally demanding immediate implementation of electoral reforms.

Talking to The Daily Star, Sohel Taj said they would raise the issue in parliament. "We will demand formation of a House body to probe the incident, and consequent firing of the police personnel responsible for this."

When asked, DMP Assistant Commissioner Mizanur Rahman, who was on the spot, denied the allegation.

Around 125 people including 20 policemen were injured in a clash between police and opposition workers and locals at Kamrangirchar. Officer-in-Charge of Kamrangirchar Police Station Sarwar Jahan Sarker was among the injured cops.

The clash erupted when police arrested thana unit AL Vice President Nur-e-Alam from a local market. Hundreds of AL workers and locals requested police to release him but in vain. Then they attacked police with sticks and brickbats. Police retreated in the face of the mob attack.

On information, several hundred policemen in riot gear rushed to the spot from different police stations and charged baton on the mob.

The agitated people built up resistance to police action piling up sand bags and taking cover behind that. They continued throwing brickbats at the law enforcers during the nearly two-hour mayhem that started at 10:30am. Hundreds of women from different houses also pelted stones at police.

Police fired gunshots and rubber bullets and lobbed teargas shells to disperse the mob. More than 100 opposition workers and locals received minor injuries.

Being dispersed, the demonstrators took shelter in different by-lanes and houses and continued pelting brickbats at police. At one stage, police entered the by-lanes and houses while firing rubber bullets and lobbing teargas shells to end the violence.

Police lobbed more than 100 teargas shells blanketing the area with toxic smoke.

Later, about 200 ruling BNP men rushed to the spot, joined police and chased the AL workers. The ruling party men caught many of them and handed over to the law enforcers.

The BNP loyalists took control of the area and brought out a procession.

The mob set afire a three-wheeler and a rickshaw and damaged two pick-up vans, protesting the police action.

Kamrangirchar police said they arrested 11 people on charges of obstructing their duties and violent picketing. Lalbagh police also arrested eight people for picketing and damaging vehicles.

Some 10 people including journalist Rafiqur Rahman Reku of the Amar Desh were injured in a clash between police and pickets near Government Titumir College at Mohakhali. The clash broke out as police intercepted an opposition procession led by 14-party leaders Tofail Ahmed, Dilip Barua and Syed Zafar Sazzad.

The activists set afire to a three-wheeler and damaged about 10 vehicles. Police charged baton and lobbed teargas shells to disperse them.

Being dispersed, the picketers took shelter at different by-lanes and continued pelting brickbats at police for more than one and half-hour.

Police intercepted a procession led by AL lawmaker Asaduzzaman Noor near Shapla Chattar at Motijheel. As the opposition men pelted brickbats, police clubbed and chased them. At least five persons including a police official were injured. Police picked up three persons.

The AL central office on Bangabandhu Avenue and the adjacent areas including Noor Hossain Square were virtually under police siege since Monday midnight as the law enforcers put barbed wire fences on the roads.

A procession led by Motia Chowdhury was intercepted by police at different points while it was coming towards the AL central office.

Opposition loyalists held a brief rally on Bangabandhu Avenue under police vigilance.

Police also cordoned off the Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal (JSD) office after dispersing a party procession at about 7:30am near it.

Around 7,000 police, Rab and BDR were deployed in the capital to avert untoward incidents.

## **CHITTAGONG**

Our Chittagong office reports: The hartal passed off peacefully in the port city yesterday.

Educational institutions, many business establishments and commercial houses remained closed.

Delivery of goods to and from Chittagong port remained suspended but activities inside the port continued normally.

Government offices remained open while bank transactions and activities in some private offices also started in the afternoon.

Train service and Biman flights operated as usual and long distance vehicles started plying in the afternoon.

### **Barisal**

Stray incidents of violence marked the opposition-called hartal, leaving at least 30 people injured in the district yesterday.

Supporters and opponents of the hartal brought out separate processions at Babuganj upazila headquarters that led to clashes between the two sides.

The incident left around activists of the ruling BNP and opposition parties. As police resorted to baton charge to bring the situation under control, five of them including a sub-inspector were injured.

Tension was mounting in the area and security was stepped up.

Meanwhile, Barisal City AL Convener Showkat Hossain Hiron alleged that Police and BNP cadres had earlier raided houses of AL leaders and workers and threatened them not to take active part in the shutdown.

Police patrolled the city roads to avert untoward incidents.

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[http://www.hindustantimes.com/news/7598\\_1724142,000500020001.htm](http://www.hindustantimes.com/news/7598_1724142,000500020001.htm)

## **100 injured in Opposition campaign for poll reforms**

**Press Trust of India**

Dhaka, June 20, 2006|17:31 IST

Over 100 people, including policemen, were on Tuesday injured when Bangladesh police fired rubber bullets and tear gas at stone-throwing opposition activists trying to take out a march in the capital Dhaka to press for electoral reforms.

Witnesses said two spots in Dhaka turned into a battlefield as activists and police fought pitched battles.

The police was trying to prevent activists of the 14-party opposition alliance led by opposition leader and former Premier Sheikh Hasina Wajed from taking out a march to the election chief's office.

Major clashes were reported from Agargaon area, close to the poll chief's office, and in Dhanmandi area where the house of the main opposition leader is located.



Police used rubber bullets, tear gas and batons to disperse the stone-throwing activists in pitched battles that also spread into alleys of Dhanmandi residential area, witnesses said.

The incidents left at least 50 people, including police and activists injured while the rest were injured in clashes in two other Bangladesh districts.

Police were deployed at three points of the city where the opposition is set to assemble before marching on to their destination.

Election offices in 64 districts of the country would also come under the opposition action.

Hasina's main opposition Awami League-led 14-party alliance is campaigning for electoral reforms and resignation of the Chief Election Commissioner Justice MA Aziz.

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<http://cnews.canoe.ca/CNEWS/World/2006/06/20/pf-1642989.html>

June 20, 2006

## **Bangladesh police clash with protesters**

By JULHAS ALAM

DHAKA, Bangladesh (AP) - Riot police used batons and tear gas Tuesday against thousands of stone-throwing protesters who tried to march in Bangladesh's capital to press for election reforms and the resignation of the country's top election officials.

The clashes came when demonstrators tried to overrun barbed-wire police barricades around the Election Commission headquarters in northern Dhaka, according to local newspaper reporter Shariful Islam.

Associated Press reporters on the scene estimated there were about 7,000 protesters.

Police put up the barricades after a 14-party opposition alliance asked its supporters to converge on the commission's heavily guarded office, a police official said. Several people were injured, the official said on condition of anonymity due to policy.

Senior opposition leader Mohammad Nasim, who is also a former home minister, alleged that police with batons charged into his Dhaka residence after some supporters took shelter there during the clash.

Police said they had to enter his home because the protesters had started throwing stones at them.

Authorities deployed more than 6,000 security forces, who closed roads around the election office. The closures and violence caused huge traffic snarls in parts of the city of 10 million.

Clashes were also reported in the central Bangladesh city of Mymensingh, and in southern Bagerhat district, TV channel ATN Bangla reported. It said more than 50 people were injured in those places.

The alliance accuses Chief Election Commissioner M.A. Aziz and his two deputies of being loyal to Prime Minister Khaleda Zia's government, and of trying to help ensure its victory in the next election, due in January 2007.

It alleges the commission compiled a new electoral roll that excludes many known opposition supporters as voters.

Aziz has denied the allegations and vowed to make the polls free and fair.

"We are an independent constitutional body. We have taken a vow to remain neutral and we shall remain so," Aziz told reporters Monday.

The opposition has held a series of strikes and street protests in recent months, trying to force Zia's resignation and demanding an early election as well as election commission reforms.

Zia has vowed to stay in power until her five-year term expires in October, when she is constitutionally required to hand over power to a neutral caretaker administration that will supervise the polls.

The opposition alliance has vowed to boycott the election unless it gets a role in the appointment of the caretaker administration and election officials.

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[http://www.fibre2fashion.com/news/apparel-news/newsdetails.aspx?news\\_id=18677](http://www.fibre2fashion.com/news/apparel-news/newsdetails.aspx?news_id=18677)

## **Bangladesh : RMG workers again on rampage**

June 20, 2006

At an industrial belt at Dhaka Export Processing Zone at Savar, about 35 km from Dhaka city, nearly 100 workers of garment industry and 10 policemen were injured on Sunday last, in a series of clashes.

Workers of four closed factories in DEPZ staged demonstrations in front of the factories on finding their factory-gates locked.

They prodded nearby factory workers to join them but the later with the police appearing on the scene and a clash with the former group, culminated in a riot like situation.

Policemen later charged batons on the rioting workers and drove them out of the boundaries of the high-security zone.

Similar situation arose at the new EPZ zone.

Later, the workers banded together on the Nabinagar-Kaliakoir road and started damaging over 50 cars and blocked traffic on the busy road for three hours.

Policemen had to charge baton and fire teargas shells to disperse the protesters.

At least 10 policemen were injured in the clashes as the workers threw brickbats on them.

Demanding better wages, payment of salary arrears and other benefits the textile workers near Dhaka have been setting several factories on fire and have damaged over 250 others.

Dépêche reçue le 02/07/06 à 13:02

## **Deux morts dans une manifestation en faveur de la réforme électorale au Bangladesh**

De violents affrontements entre police anti-émeutes et lanceurs de pierres au cours d'une manifestation pour la réforme électorale ont fait deux morts dimanche au Bangladesh, un policier et un manifestant, selon la police.

Les partisans de l'opposition étaient descendus dans la rue à Dacca et dans une dizaine d'autres villes pour réclamer des réformes et la démission de responsables électoraux. La police a riposté à coups de gaza lacrymogènes à la foule qui lui lançait des briques et détruisait les autobus.

A Dacca, un manifestant est mort, frappé par un tir tendu de grenade lacrymogène selon des témoins, ce que la police n'a pas confirmé, évoquant la possibilité d'une crise cardiaque. Le policier est mort des suites de blessures infligées par des jets de pierre.

Des dizaines de personnes ont été arrêtées, alors que l'opposition a appelé ses partisans à bloquer les transports en commun, y compris les trains et ferrys sur les rivières, pour réclamer des réformes avant les élections générales de janvier 2007. Ils exigent aussi la démission du patron de la Commission électorale et de ses deux adjoints, qu'ils accusent d'être à la solde du Premier ministre Khaleda Zia et de tout mettre en oeuvre pour garantir sa victoire lors du prochain scrutin.

L'alliance de l'opposition affirme aussi que la commission a concocté des listes électorales avec de faux électeurs et excluant nombre de partisans connus de l'opposition.

Malgré les nombreuses manifestations de ces derniers mois réclamant son départ et des élections anticipées, Khaleda Zia s'est jurée de terminer son mandat de cinq ans. AP

### **Two killed in Bangladeshi protest**

Last Updated: Sunday, 2 July 2006, 10:56 GMT 11:56 UK

Two people have been killed and dozens injured in clashes in Bangladesh between police and opposition supporters demanding electoral reform.

A protester and a police officer died in the violence in the capital Dhaka and a nearby town.

The opposition Awami League had called on supporters to blockade transport links to press for electoral changes.

Millions of people are reported to have been stranded as trains, buses and ferries failed to operate.

Riot police used batons and tear gas shells to battle stone-throwing demonstrators during the unrest.

The Awami League said the protester died after being hit by a tear gas shell in Dhaka, but police said he may have died of a heart attack, the Associated Press news agency reports.

Outside Dhaka, a policeman was killed after being pelted with stones in the town of Sonargaon.

## **2 dead in Bangladesh political violence**

Bangkok Post, Thailand - Jul 3, 2006.

Dhaka (dpa) - A six-hour blockade of Dhaka enforced by the opposition Sunday, isolating Bangladesh's capital city from the rest of the country, was marked by escalating violence which left two people, including a policeman, dead, witnesses said.

Thousands of opposition leaders, activists, lawyers and other professional groups joined to set up barricades on highways and key rail links to mount pressure on the ruling Nationalist-Islamist coalition to accept reforms in the caretaker government and the Election Commission for purposes of holding fair elections.

A 14-party opposition combine called the blockade cutting off also approaches by river ferries to the bustling metropolis of over eight million residents.

Witnesses said an opposition activist was shot dead by police in Dhaka's semi-industrial zone of Mahakhali where security forces opened fire on demonstrators attacking transports and forcing shops and other businesses to close.

A policeman was killed after he was hit by stones pelted at security forces by protesters in Sonargaon district on the outskirts of Dhaka.

Opposition sources claimed more than 200 people were injured in the street violence that rocked the capital. They also claimed about 500 activists were rounded up by police since late Saturday.

The opposition, led by the Awami League of former premier Sheikh Hasina, is also demanding the resignation of Chief Election Commissioner M A Aziz and the reconstitution of the three-member Election Commission for its controversial role in the preparation of voter rolls.

The governing coalition of Prime Minister Khaleda Zia has so far refused to hold talks with the opposition on the reform proposals ahead of January 2007 parliamentary polls.

The blockade was clamped from 9 a.m. (0300 GMT ) amid tight security in the capital with the authorities deploying nearly 8,000 additional paramilitary border troops and police in riot gear to keep order during the opposition's latest anti-government protests.

The blockade also affected life and businesses in the principal port of Chittagong in southern Bangladesh.

## **2 killed, 300 injured in Bangladesh during opposition's blockade program**

Two people were killed and over 300 people wounded in clashes between the police and opposition activists in the capital and elsewhere in Bangladesh during a countrywide opposition-sponsored road-rail-waterway blockade Sunday.

According to private news agency UNB, an opposition worker Golam Mostafa Milan died during a clash with police at about 10:30 a.m.(04:30 GMT) in the capital Dhaka.

His party sources claimed he succumbed to his rubber-bullet wounds, as police fired a barrage of teargas shells and rubber bullets at different places to contain violence.

Police Sub-Inspector Abul Bashar, who suffered serious head injuries from brickbats, died in Narayanganj district, about 20 km southeast of Dhaka.

Abul Bashar suffered the injuries during massive clashes between police and opposition workers on the Dhaka-Chittagong highway on the outskirts of Dhaka.

The Awami League-led 14-party opposition combine enforced the countrywide siege to the road, rail and water routes to press their demand for reform of the caretaker government and the election commission for ensuring a fair election at the upcoming polls.

The six-hour blockade, enforced across the country from 9 a.m.( 03:00 GMT), also demanded resignation of the three-member election commission headed by Chief Election Commissioner Justice MA Aziz for his controversial role, especially in preparing a new voter list.

In Dhaka city, police and opposition activists fought pitched battles at different areas from 10 a.m. (04:00 GMT). The activists damaged a number of passing vehicles and hurled brickbat missiles at police during the sporadic clashes.

The blockade cut off road-rail networks across the country.

A Railway official was quoted as saying that train communications in different regions were disrupted as the activists put up barricades at different stations.

Most schools, shops, business centers and private offices in the capital were closed and the situation gave the look of a hartal. Traffic movement in the capital was also disrupted as most buses trucks and private cars went off the streets fearing trouble.

The authorities deployed more than 6,000 riot police, armed battalion and Bangladesh Rifle personnel to maintain order during the opposition program.

*Source: Xinhua*

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<http://www.theherald.co.uk/news/65194-print.shtml>

## **Thousands clash with police in political protests**

FARID HOSSAIN, Dhaka

July 03 2006

RIOT police clashed with thousands of demonstrators in Bangladesh yesterday, leaving a protester and a police officer dead.

Violence broke out in the capital Dhaka and a nearby town after opposition party supporters took to the streets to demand electoral reforms and the resignation of officials.

Police used batons and tear gas shells to battle mobs, who threw bricks and smashed commuter vehicles.

A protester died when he was hit by a tear gas shell in Dhaka's Mahakhali district.

At Sonargaon town, 20 miles east of Dhaka, a police officer died from head injuries after he was pelted with bricks thrown from a crowd of 5000 protesters. Clashes were reported in a dozen other towns.

Police detained dozens of protesters.

The opposition alliance has urged its supporters to block nationwide public transportation, including trains and river ferries in the delta nation.

Protesters squatted on railroads to stop trains in several districts. Long-distance buses also stopped. The opposition alliance, led by former Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, has been pressing for the ouster of the Chief Election Commissioner MA Aziz and his two aides, and for reforms ahead of the general election, due in January 2007.

The alliance accuses election officials of being loyal to Prime Minister Khaleda Zia's government, and of trying to help ensure its victory in the next polls.

The alliance also alleges that the commission compiled an electoral roll that contains fake voters and excludes many known opposition supporters. Aziz and the government have denied the allegations.

Opposition parties plan a nationwide strike tomorrow to press their demands.

Zia has vowed to stay in power until her five-year term expires in October, when she is constitutionally required to hand over to a neutral caretaker administration that will supervise the polls.—AP

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<http://www.liberation.fr/actualite/economie/197623.FR.php>

## Mondialisation

### Textile : A l'autre bout de la chaîne



Atelier de couture au Bangladesh. REUTERS

**Ils sont des millions à travers le monde à être exploités, mais les premiers signes de craquement apparaissent. Reportage au Bangladesh après les émeutes de juin.**

Par Pierre PRAKASH

QUOTIDIEN : Mardi 8 août 2006 - 06:00

Dacca envoyé spécial

Pour rencontrer les dizaines de milliers d'ouvriers du textile de la capitale bangladaise, il faut se rendre, la nuit, dans les bidonvilles insalubres des quartiers nord. Avant neuf, voire dix heures du soir, la plupart sont en effet à l'usine, comme en témoignent les centaines de façades illuminées à travers la ville des bâtiments pour beaucoup décatés où les machines à coudre s'alignent par milliers, sur plusieurs étages. *«Je travaille au minimum douze heures par jour, sans jamais toucher*

*toutes les heures supplémentaires», explique ainsi Salma, 18 ans, qui habite un labyrinthe de cabanon en briques. «Que faire ? Si on proteste, on est viré, or ma famille ne peut pas se passer de mon salaire, et je ne trouverai jamais un autre emploi.»*

### **Les chaussures de Zidane**

Tel est le sort des 2 millions d'ouvriers bangladais employés dans la confection, véritable poumon économique puisqu'il représente les trois quarts des exportations (5 milliards d'euros en 2005). De Gap à H & M en passant par Wal-Mart, Zara ou encore Nike et Reebok, toutes les grandes marques occidentales se fournissent au Bangladesh, l'un des pays les plus pauvres du monde. En juin dernier, la révolte de ces ouvriers a rappelé, s'il en était besoin, les dures conditions de travail de ces *sweatshops* («ateliers de la sueur»). Et si c'est dans ce pays que la rébellion a été la plus massive, il ne se passe pas une semaine sans que des ONG ne signalent des éruptions de colère, de l'Indonésie au Nicaragua en passant par le Sri Lanka. Fin juillet, en Chine, à Dongguan, un millier d'ouvriers d'une usine de jouets travaillant notamment pour McDonald's ont violemment affronté les forces de l'ordre pour obtenir, selon China Labor Watch, ONG basée à New York, de meilleurs salaires. Tout cela au péril de leur emploi et parfois de leur vie.

Selon un rapport d'Oxfam, publié en mai, la plupart des ouvriers travaillant pour de grandes marques de sport ont été virés ou menacés de violences lorsqu'ils ont voulu mettre en place des organisations syndicales. Ce fut le cas chez Panarub, l'entreprise indonésienne où Adidas fait fabriquer les chaussures Predator, précisément celles que portaient Zinédine Zidane ou David Beckham pendant le Mondial. Aujourd'hui, Oxfam attend d'Adidas qu'il intervienne auprès de son fournisseur pour la réintégration des 33 leaders syndicaux. De fait, les multinationales sont de plus en plus sollicitées pour influencer sur les conditions de travail des *sweatshops*. Les audits sociaux qu'elles mènent désormais (lire page 4) y contribuent. Mais l'intérêt des marques ne rejoint pas toujours celui des populations qui sous-treatent : l'objectif n'est-il pas de faire fabriquer au meilleur coût ?

### **Attaques d'usines**

Le Bangladesh est un cas d'espèce. Le pays ne produit que peu de tissu, ce qui augmente les coûts de production puisqu'il faut l'importer. Mais le coût du travail y est si peu cher que l'opération reste rentable. A 930 takas (moins de 10,50 euros), le smic dans le textile n'a pas été réévalué depuis 1994. Or, entretemps, le coût de la vie a considérablement augmenté, si bien que les ouvriers, souvent des paysans venus en ville, vivent dans une misère absolue. «*Nous ne mangeons plus jamais de viande ou de poisson, juste des légumes et du riz*», se lamente Shahina, devant les rangées de cabanes en tôle où s'entassent des milliers d'ouvriers de la zone industrielle de Sarvar, à une heure de la capitale.

Après s'être longtemps résignés, les ouvriers ont donc fini par se rebeller. Partie le 22 mai d'une entreprise de la région de Sarvar, la contestation s'est propagée comme une traînée de poudre jusqu'à la capitale, des milliers d'ouvriers enragés attaquant les usines à coups de pierres. Après une légère accalmie, de nouveaux troubles ont éclaté dans la zone franche de Dacca, début juin, obligeant toutes les unités à fermer près d'une semaine. Un mort, des centaines de blessés et des dizaines d'usines endommagées pour que les droits du travail les plus basiques s'appliquent enfin à ceux qui, de l'autre côté de la planète, fabriquent pour un salaire de misère les vêtements destinés à nos centres commerciaux...

Fin juin, un accord a été signé entre patronat, syndicats et gouvernement, pour que la législation du travail soit enfin respectée. Entré en vigueur début juillet, il ne concerne paradoxalement que des droits déjà prévus non seulement par la législation nationale, mais aussi par diverses conventions du Bureau international du travail que Dacca a ratifiées. A l'exception de quelques grosses entreprises, ils n'ont jamais été appliqués.

L'an dernier, des centaines d'employés sont morts dans des incendies d'usine, parfois parce qu'il n'y avait pas d'issue de secours, ou parce qu'ils étaient enfermés à l'intérieur.

**«Comme des esclaves»**



Sous la pression de leurs clients occidentaux, certaines entreprises traitent mieux leurs employés. Mais, dans la grande majorité des cas, le congé hebdomadaire n'existe toujours pas, le congé maternité non plus, et ceux qui tentent de se syndiquer sont systématiquement renvoyés. Les maltraitances verbales, voire physiques, sont courantes problème qui, selon les ouvriers, est moins lié aux propriétaires qu'au staff intermédiaire. *«Ils sont traités comme des esclaves, accuse Abu Hussein, de l'Alliance nationale pour la protection des ouvriers et de l'industrie du vêtement. Parce que c'est une industrie jeune, et que nous avons affaire à une première génération d'entrepreneurs qui n'a aucune conscience sociale. Et parce que les ouvriers sont eux aussi une première génération et n'ont aucune conscience de leurs droits.»* Sans compter que 80 % des effectifs sont des femmes.

#### **«Nous ne savions pas»**

*«Les clients ne s'intéressent qu'aux prix, accuse Nazma Akter, présidente du SGSF, l'un des nombreux syndicats du secteur. Et le gouvernement a toujours fermé les yeux, d'une part parce que les exportations de vêtements représentent la première source de devises étrangères, et d'autre part parce que beaucoup de nos politiques sont directement liés à ce secteur.» «Le textile relève du secteur privé, nous ne savions pas ce qui se passait dans les usines avant les émeutes»,* tente d'argumenter le ministre du Commerce, Hafiz Uddin Ahmad, tout en concédant que les salaires actuels sont *«bien trop bas»*.

Une commission tripartite doit ainsi rehausser d'ici à la fin du mois le salaire minimum. Les syndicats réclament qu'il soit fixé à 3 000 takas (33,60 euros) par mois, mais les patrons affirment déjà que c'est *«impossible»*. *«Si nous acceptons ne serait-ce que 2 000 takas (22,50 euros), la moitié des usines fermeront leurs portes»,* affirme ainsi Tipu Munshi, président de l'Association des fabricants et exportateurs de vêtements du Bangladesh, qui fédère quelque 3 000 entreprises du secteur. *«Et les clients devront accepter qu'elle soit en partie répercutée sur les prix, sinon nous ne survivrons pas.»* Selon lui, les salaires représentent en effet *«50 à 60 %»* du coût de production. Selon des estimations indépendantes, il se situerait en fait entre 5 et 10 %.

#### **«Ils sont moins agressifs»**

Habités aux manipulations, les syndicats restent toutefois dans l'expectative avant de crier victoire au sujet de la mise en place des réformes, notamment celle touchant à l'autorisation de la présence syndicale dans les usines. Des accords similaires ont en effet déjà été signés par le passé sans être honorés. *«La différence, cette fois-ci, est que la pression n'est pas venue des syndicats, mais des ouvriers eux-mêmes»,* souligne Nazma Akter.

La violence des émeutes semble en effet avoir sorti patrons et autorités de leur torpeur. A Dacca comme dans la zone industrielle de Sarvar, la plupart des ouvriers affirment que depuis, l'attitude du management a changé. *«Ils sont moins agressifs, les heures supplémentaires sont payées normalement et nous avons maintenant droit à un jour de congé par semaine»,* témoigne ainsi Priya, couturière de 26 ans, qui n'en revient toujours pas d'être payée pour une journée non travaillée.

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<http://www.liberation.fr/actualite/economie/197622.FR.php>

## **Mondialisation**

### **Des syndicats inefficaces et désunis**

Par Pierre PRAKASH

QUOTIDIEN : Mardi 8 août 2006 - 06:00

Si les ouvriers bangladais du textile sont si mal lotis, c'est certes en raison des abus du patronat, mais aussi, en bonne partie, parce que les syndicats qui sont censés les représenter sont d'une inefficacité redoutable conséquence de l'affiliation aux partis politiques, mais aussi de l'ambition personnelle des leaders. Près d'une quarantaine d'organisations différentes se disputent en effet la représentation de ce secteur fort de 2 millions d'employés. Résultat : les leaders passent plus de temps à se battre entre eux plutôt que pour l'intérêt des ouvriers. Bizarrement, la grande majorité

des syndicalistes ne sont pas issus de l'industrie concernée et n'ont donc jamais travaillé dans une usine. A leur décharge, ce manque de liens avec la base tient aussi au fait que les leaders syndicaux ne sont pas tolérés dans les usines et travaillent donc exclusivement de l'extérieur. Ce qui n'excuse pas le fait qu'un bon nombre d'entre eux sont corrompus, situation qui, au-delà du problème éthique, facilite grandement le jeu des organisations patronales, qui, elles, sont par contre très soudées.

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<http://www.liberation.fr/actualite/economie/197619.FR.php>

## **Mondialisation**

### **Des sous-traitants sous surveillance**

#### **En Inde, les multinationales multiplient les audits sociaux sur les conditions de travail.**

Par Pierre PRAKASH

QUOTIDIEN : Mardi 8 août 2006 - 06:00

New Delhi de notre correspondant

Au-delà des discours sur l'éthique, comment les marques occidentales s'y prennent-elles pour vérifier ce qui se passe chez leurs fournisseurs à l'autre bout du monde ? En Inde, par exemple ? Comment s'assurer que les employés n'y sont pas exploités, l'environnement saccagé ? Depuis quelques années, la plupart des marques de la grande distribution multiplient les «audits sociaux», des inspections plus ou moins régulières qui visent à s'assurer que leurs sous-traitants respectent, au minimum, les conventions du Bureau international du travail. *«Désormais, la plupart de nos clients réclament ces audits, soit par réelle inquiétude, soit par peur d'être montrés du doigt»*, affirme Aristide Samuel de Find Agencies, centrale d'achat basée à New Delhi qui fournit des clients comme les Galeries Lafayette, Casino ou la Blanche Porte. Face à la demande, l'entreprise a d'ailleurs monté sa cellule d'inspection.

**Présence de mineurs.** Dans la majorité des cas, les multinationales s'en remettent cependant à un intermédiaire spécialisé. *«Nous sommes un parti tiers, sans intérêt d'un côté ni de l'autre»*, explique Claude Lanouhe, directeur régional du groupe SGS, numéro 1 mondial de la certification, qui effectue en Inde les audits sociaux de *«plus d'une centaine d'entreprises étrangères. Notre expertise mondiale fait de nous une valeur sûre, et nous avons les capacités de travailler partout dans la langue locale, ce que le client, lui, ne peut pas faire»*. *«Nous faisons en moyenne 30 à 40 audits sociaux par mois*, précise Mayank Kaushik, qui dirige l'équipe d'une vingtaine d'inspecteurs formés à l'étranger. *Les critères pour chaque inspection varient, car il y a différentes normes selon les pays, les secteurs, voire les clients.»* SGS gère notamment les inspections des membres de la Fédération des entreprises du commerce et de la distribution, qui regroupe tous les grands noms du secteur, lesquels ont créé une norme spécifique, l'Initiative clause sociale (ICS).

Présence de mineurs, travail forcé, hygiène et sécurité ou encore salaire, horaires de travail et droits syndicaux, tout est passé au crible par les employés de SGS, qui ont l'autorisation de discuter en aparté avec les ouvriers. Afin de les mettre en confiance, les auditeurs ont pour consigne de ne pas venir trop bien habillés, et la présence d'une inspectrice est obligatoire quand l'usine emploie du personnel féminin. En cas d'entorse, SGS suggère un plan d'action à l'entreprise, qui bénéficie d'un délai pour obtempérer.

Pour les clients, ce procédé permet d'avoir la conscience tranquille. *«100 % de nos usines sont inspectées, au maximum tous les deux ans»*, explique Alexis de Villepin, directeur en Inde de la filiale de Carrefour chargée de l'approvisionnement. *«Nous n'avons pas trop de mauvaises surprises, car la majorité de nos 70 fournisseurs indiens travaillent pour d'autres marques internationales, et se sont donc déjà alignés sur des normes proches de l'ICS»*, poursuit-il.

Contrairement à d'autres normes, les inspections ICS sont toutefois annoncées à l'avance, ce qui pourrait laisser le temps à l'usine de faire place nette. *«Ce n'est pas qu'une inspection visuelle, nous*

*épiluchons les fichiers de l'entreprise et parlons directement avec les ouvriers. Il est très difficile de nous cacher quoi que ce soit», assure Mayank Kaushik.*

Reste cependant les risques de corruption. Comment être sûr qu'un inspecteur indien, payé entre 300 et 400 euros par mois, ne va pas accepter un pot-de-vin pour fermer les yeux sur telle ou telle pratique illégale ? *«C'est effectivement un risque, concède Claude Lanouhe. Il nous est déjà arrivé de nous séparer d'un employé pour de tels motifs. Mais nous avons aujourd'hui mis en place un maillage très difficile à percer.»* A l'embauche, les inspecteurs commencent ainsi par signer un «code d'intégrité», tandis que la rotation évite qu'ils ne développent des relations de copinage. Ils font aussi l'objet d'audits internes, voire d'inspections surprises pendant qu'ils sont eux-mêmes en train de visiter une usine.

**Heures supplémentaires.** Si le système n'est pas efficace à 100 %, son utilité est prouvée. Mais tous les secteurs ne font pas les mêmes efforts. Dans l'habillement, l'une des plus importantes exportations indiennes, la mobilisation est loin d'être totale. *«Il y a eu un léger réveil il y a deux ans, mais aujourd'hui ça se rendort»,* affirme Mylène Wilks de Partners Agency, un agent textile qui gère les productions indiennes de marques européennes telles que Mango, Promod ou Okaidi. *«A l'exception des marques pour enfants, qui sont plus impliquées, la grande majorité des clients ne posent aucune question sur les conditions de travail chez leurs fournisseurs»,* ajoute un autre agent textile sous couvert d'anonymat. Parfois parce que ces marques inspectent elles-mêmes les usines avec l'inconvénient de ne pas pouvoir interroger les ouvriers directement, barrière linguistique oblige, parfois parce qu'elles s'en remettent à un tiers comme SGS, mais aussi, parfois, parce qu'elles ne s'en soucient pas. *«Certains clients, notamment les plus petits, se fichent des audits sociaux, ils ne s'intéressent qu'aux prix, à la qualité, et aux délais de livraison»,* avoue ainsi Aristide Samuel. Et *«ceux qui font des efforts ne sont pas pour autant prêts à payer les produits plus cher, ajoute Mylène Wilks. D'ailleurs, un fournisseur qui joue le jeu des audits sociaux n'est pas sûr de remporter la commande pour autant. Parfois, le client opte au final pour le fournisseur le moins cher, sans tenir compte des efforts faits par un autre.»*

L'utilité des audits sociaux est cependant incontestable. En Inde, la plupart des violations ne concernent plus que les heures supplémentaires excessives ou pas assez payées et des problèmes mineurs d'hygiène, de sécurité ou de formation. Les violations les plus graves, comme le travail des enfants ou le travail forcé, ont été en grande partie éradiquées. Du moins dans les usines qui travaillent pour l'export.

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<http://english.aljazeera.net/NR/exeres/07D198EE-9A27-425A-AE08-D7D2D2043F66.htm>

## **Clashes at Bangladesh reform protest**

Wednesday 06 September 2006, 12:58 Makka Time, 9:58 GMT

**Riot police in the Bangladeshi capital, Dhaka, have fired tear gas on stone-throwing protesters trying to march on the election commission office to demand electoral reforms.**

Several people were reportedly injured in the clashes in Dhaka's Dhanmandi district.

Violence erupted after 5,000 protesters tried to overrun barbed-wire barricades that police had erected blocks away from the election commission office.

The protesters took to the streets defying a ban that police imposed on any gathering in the area.



**Dhaka has been hit by weeks of opposition protests (File)**

Tofayel Ahmed, an opposition spokesman, said: "It's our democratic right to stage such protests. Police can't stop us."

Police detained more than 20 protesters, a security official said.

Nearly 7,000 security forces were deployed around the election commission to enforce the ban and prevent protesters from laying siege to the office.

In recent months, opposition supporters have staged a series of anti-government strikes and street protests in Bangladesh, many of which ended in violent clashes with security forces.

### **Fraud allegations**

The protest was called by Sheikh Hasina, the opposition leader who has threatened to boycott general elections scheduled for January unless reforms are undertaken.

Hasina's Awami League party and its 13 smaller allies have planned a series of protests this month against Khaleda Zia, the prime minister, to press their demands, including Wednesday's plan to seize the election commission.

Zia's five-year term expires next month and a non-party caretaker government is to take over to hold elections in 90 days.

But the alliance accuses the MA Aziz, the chief election commissioner, of favouring Zia's government.

It also says the commission included fake voters in a recently compiled electoral roll. Aziz and the government have denied the allegations.

The opposition alliance also wants a role in appointing the chief of the caretaker government.

The post usually goes to the immediate past chief justice of the country, but the opposition says he is unacceptable because he was a member of Zia's Bangladesh Nationalist party before being appointed chief justice.

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<http://www.thedailystar.net/2006/09/07/d6090701011.htm>

Vol. 5 Num 812

Thu. September 07, 2006

### **Police go wild to thwart EC siege attempt**

100 hurt as they club opposition MPs, leaders; critically injured Saber may be taken abroad  
Hasan Jahid Tusher

Riot police indiscriminately clubbed senior opposition leaders, lawmakers and the activists of Awami League (AL)-led 14-party opposition coalition to thwart their attempt to lay siege to the Election Commission (EC) Secretariat in the capital yesterday, injuring around 100 including Saber Hossain Chowdhury.

Every single attempt by the opposition leaders and activists to approach the vicinity of the EC Secretariat was met by police firing teargas shells and charging batons indiscriminately that left Leader of the Opposition Sheikh Hasina's Political Secretary Saber Hossain Chowdhury critically injured.

A road march of a newly formed opposition alliance of several political parties, National Unity Front (NUF), towards the EC Secretariat, was also intercepted by police near Bangla Motor intersection where leaders of the alliance announced a seven-day ultimatum to CEC MA Aziz and three other election commissioners to resign from their posts.

The 14-party coalition yesterday announced a countrywide dawn to dusk hartal scheduled for Sunday and countrywide demonstrations today protesting the police atrocities.

As several thousand opposition activists reached a police barricade on Mirpur Road near Road No 27 intersection in Dhanmondi and tried to defy the government's ban on any gathering near the EC Secretariat area yesterday, the law enforcers all of a sudden began clubbing the marchers indiscriminately although State Minister For Home Affairs Lutfozzaman Babar on Tuesday had asked the law enforcers and the opposition to restrain themselves. Saber, also an organising secretary of AL, had been admitted to Bangladesh Medical College Hospital first, where doctors declared his condition as critical, but later was shifted to Apollo Hospital. AL sources said he might be taken abroad soon for better treatment.

The 14-party coalition announced last Friday a programme of laying sieges to the EC Secretariat and election offices across the country to compel the BNP-Jamaat-led four-party alliance government to accept the proposed reforms to the system of caretaker government and the EC. But the government on Monday imposed a ban on all kinds of gatherings and rallies in the areas adjacent to the EC Secretariat in a bid to thwart the programme. No untoward incident however took place in other areas of the country where the opposition laid sieges to district election offices. Other senior opposition leaders including Shajahan Khan MP, former lawmakers Haji Mohammad Selim, and AL leader Sheikh Bazlur Rahman were also injured during the police attacks in the capital.

A number of AL and its front organisation leaders were also injured critically including Moniruzzaman Monir, Abdul Halim, Raju, Mohammad Hasan, Abul Kalam Azad, Mamunur Rashid Shuvro, Arifur Rahman Tipu, Shohel Shahriar, SM Abdur Rahim, Sadiqur Rahman Monir, Mosharraf Hossain Pappu, Jewel Miah, Anwar Hossain, Abu Siddique, Mamunur Rashid Mamun, Rajon, and Rakib. Around 15 police personnel including Officer-in-charge of Mohammadpur Police Station Zahir were also injured during 2-hour long sporadic clashes between the opposition activists and the law enforcers in the areas adjacent to Road No 27 in Dhanmondi and on Satmasjid Road.

During the clashes angry demonstrators damaged at least 20 vehicles on Satmasjid Road, Road No 27 in Dhanmondi, and on different lanes. Police arrested at least 30 demonstrators on charges of violating the ban.

### **HOW CLASHES ERUPTED**

The clashes erupted at about 12:45pm when several thousand opposition leaders and activists tried to break through the law enforcer's barbed-wire barricade on Mirpur Road near Road No 27 intersection in Dhanmondi.

Before marching towards the EC Secretariat at about 12:30pm from Russel Square in Dhanmondi, the 14-party opposition coalition held a rally there vowing to resist the upcoming parliamentary election if the electoral reforms are not implemented before the polls. Senior leaders Amir Hossain

Amu, Abdur Razzak, Tofail Ahmed, Obaidul Quader, Rashed Khan Menon, Hasanul Haque Inu spoke at the rally among others. Earlier, hundreds of opposition activists from different metropolitan areas began arriving in Russel Square and in front of Kolabagan playground in processions since 10:00am. As the combined opposition procession approached the police barricade on Mirpur Road, the law enforcers began announcing through bullhorns, "A ban has been imposed, you (opposition) should not violate the ban and should not throw brickbats at police," prompting the demonstrators to shout back at police with advice to stop the announcement. As the demonstrators broke through a section of the barbed-wire barricade defying the ban, police dragged at least eight Jubo Mohila League workers into a prison van making the rest of the demonstrators angrier, who soon broke through the entire barricade.

At that point while senior opposition leaders including Saber, Mohammad Nasim, Maya and Selim were trying to calm down their followers, police in full riot gears descended on the demonstrators, clubbing who ever they found on their way.

### **SABER TARGETED**

Saber stepped aside from the crowd along with a small group of his followers as the clash flared but police chased the group to an isolated spot and started clubbing and kicking Saber, leaving him unconscious on the street, according to eyewitnesses. Saber's followers were repeatedly requesting the attacking law enforcers not to beat him by saying that he is the political secretary of Leader of the Opposition Sheikh Hasina. But police kept pummeling him until he fell on the street and continued kicking and clubbing until he became unconscious, eyewitnesses said. Doctors at BMCH said Saber has injuries all over the body and the head. Until 3:00pm Saber was unconscious in the Intensive Care Unit (ICU) of BMCH. Dr Abdur Rauf Sarker of BMCH told journalists that they apprehend damage to Saber's kidneys, gall bladder and lungs. Opposition leaders alleged that Saber was targeted for a beating as part of the government's 'plan to kill him'. Police also charged batons on Mohammad Nasim MP and Abdus Shaheed MP during the clash and did not allow the march to go beyond the point of encounter. At one stage the demonstrators began pelting police with brickbats prompting the law enforcers to charge batons more aggressively. Riot police charged batons randomly not even sparing the female demonstrators. The opposition activists who took shelters inside different shops and business offices and who fled onto different neighbourhood lanes also could not avoid police beatings. Then several hundred opposition demonstrators fought pitched battles with police in riot gears on Dhanmondi Road No 27 and on adjacent lanes for more than two hours. The demonstrators set fire to a human hauler requisitioned by police. In retaliation, police fired around 20 teargas shells to disperse them.

### **CLASH AROUND BMCH**

While the sporadic clashes were going on in the adjacent areas of Dhanmondi Road No 27, hundreds of opposition activists, who rushed to BMCH hearing the news that Saber had been injured, went on a rampage on their way there on Satmasjid Road.

They damaged at least 20 vehicles before police rushed to the spot. As riot police chased the demonstrators firing teargas shells and charging batons, they pelted the law enforcers with brickbats turning the area into a battlefield. Later additional police arrived and attacked the opposition activists who took shelter in BMCH. As police tried to enter BMCH by clubbing their way through, the opposition activists and doctors of the hospital reacted sharply and chased the law enforcers off the premises. At least 10 opposition activists were injured during the clash at BMCH before AL leaders Opposition Chief Whip Abdus Shaheed and Asaduzzaman Noor MP brought the situation under control by calming down their followers and by persuading the police to leave the spot.

### **POLICE VERSION**

Talking to The Daily Star, a senior police official on duty yesterday said they had instructions to

prevent the opposition from marching towards the EC Secretariat. The official preferring not to be named also said they attacked the marchers on instruction from the high ups of the government and that the opposition had also provoked them into clashes. The law enforcers yesterday kept the EC Secretariat cordoned off from 11:00am to 1:00pm.

### **AGARGAON SPOT**

Leaders and activists of the 14-party opposition coalition started a march towards the EC Secretariat through Rokeya Sarani from Mirpur area at 10:30am but were obstructed at Agargaon intersection as police put up barbed-wire barricades there. Several hundred demonstrators held a rally there where Motia Chowdhury, Kamal Ahmed Majumder and Segufta Yasmin spoke.

No untoward incident took place there before the leaders ended the programme at 1:00pm as Motia fell ill.

### **COUNTRYWIDE SIEGES**

The 14-party opposition coalition also laid sieges to district election offices (DEO) across the country while some of their attempts were foiled by police, according to reports of our correspondents. Police foiled the opposition coalition's DEO siege programme yesterday in Khagrachhari, reports our correspondent from there. As the district unit opposition coalition brought out a march towards the DEO, police intercepted it at Shaplachattar. Our Satkhira correspondent reports that police intercepted opposition activists as they tried to enter the DEO there. The demonstrators then put up a barricade at the main entrance of the office and held a rally there.

The coalition however laid sieges to DEOs in Chittagong, Rajshahi, Tangail and Gaibandha successfully, according to our correspondents.

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<http://www.irna.ir/en/news/view/menu-239/0609118208105557.htm>

## **40 injured in sporadic clashes in Bangladesh**

New Delhi, Sept 11, IRNA

### **Bangladesh-Clashes**

Sporadic clashes between picketers and the police in the Bangladeshi capital marked the start of a dawn-to-dusk hartal or shutdown enforced countrywide by the Awami League (AL)-led opposition on Sunday.

At least 40 leaders and activists of the opposition alliance were injured in clashes with the police during hartal hours in the capital Dhaka, while the shutdown passed off peacefully in other parts of the country, according to New Age correspondents.

The opposition combine called the hartal on Wednesday in protest against police attacks on its leaders and activists during the Election Commission siege program that had left at least 50 people injured, including AL leader Saber Hossain Choudhury, in the capital on Wednesday and also to push their reform demands, New Age reported from Dhaka.

In the capital, picketers damaged some vehicles, set fire to a CNG-run taxicab and exploded crackers during the shutdown.

Police, in riot gear, foiled attempts by opposition activists to bring out processions at a number of places including Jurain, Mohakhali, Pallabi, Dhanmondi and Motijheel during the hartal hours.

Whenever the opposition activists tried to bring out a procession, the police promptly intercepted and dispersed demonstrators by charging batons.

The situation turned worse when the opposition activists hurled two cocktails at the police leaving two constables injured. But a sudden cloudburst drove both the crowd and the police away.

Traffic was very thin in the capital and markets, business establishments and educational institutions remained closed during the shutdown.

Inter-district buses remained off the road. However, rail and river communications and flight operations from Zia International Airport were normal during the hartal hours, said officials at Sadarghat terminal, Kamalapur railway station and Zia International Airport.

Meanwhile, the shutdown passed off peacefully in Chittagong, Rajshahi, Khulna, Moulvibazar, Mymensingh, Jamalpur, Kishoreganj, Netrakona, Gazipur, Comilla, Jessore, Jhenaidah, Kushtia, Satkhira, Bagerhat, Barguna, Jhalakati, Rangpur, Bogra and Rangpur.

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<http://www.hindu.com/thehindu/holnus/003200609130355.htm>

## **Police, protestors clash in Dhaka**

Dhaka, Sept. 13 (AP): Riot police used tear gas and batons on Tuesday to battle thousands of protesters trying to march into the Prime Minister's office to demand electoral reforms, witnesses said.

At least 100 people including more than a dozen police were injured in the clashes in Dhaka's Dhanmondi, Bangla Motor, Mahakhali and Agargaon districts - just blocks away from the Prime Minister's office, according to Associated Press reporters at the scenes and the local media.

Violence erupted as more than 6,000 stone-throwing opposition activists tried to overrun barbed-wire barricades in a bid to march into Prime Minister Khaleda Zia's well-guarded office in central Dhaka.

At least three homemade bombs - tin pots filled with explosives - went off at Mahakhali before police fired tear gas shells, said a reporter at the scene.

Over a dozen police were injured in Dhanmondi when the protesters started throwing stones.

The injured protesters included former Home Minister Mohammad Nasim, and Asaduzzaman Noor, a lawmaker from the opposition Awami League party.

Security officers declined to comment on the violence.

Authorities deployed 10,000 police around the Prime Minister's office after an alliance of 14 Opposition parties vowed to defy a ban on demonstrations and march into the building to press for electoral reforms.

The security forces manned barbed-wire barricades erected to prevent the protesters from going anywhere close to their target. Streets in the area were closed to public vehicles, causing huge traffic snarls in the city.



From New Nation Online Edition

## **FRONT PAGE**

### **US citizens advised to avoid CHT visit**

By UNB, Dhaka

Fri, 15 Sep 2006, 10:24:00

The US citizens in Bangladesh have been advised to avoid travel to the Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) and also downtown Dhaka on Fridays citing the country's security situation volatile.

A US State Department consular notification also urged the US citizens to check with the Embassy in Dhaka for the latest information.

The notification said: "Nationwide strikes or hartals are widely employed as a means of political pressure in Bangladesh. These hartals often result in the virtual shutdown of transportation and commerce, and sometimes attacks on individuals who do not observe the hartals. Clashes between rival political groups during hartals have resulted in deaths and injuries."

"American citizens are therefore urged to avoid all political protests, demonstrations, and marches. During hartals, American citizens should exercise caution in all areas and remain inside their hotels, residences, schools, or workplace whenever possible," it added.

Referring to kidnappings and other security incidents, including those involving foreign nationals, the Department also advised the US citizens against traveling to Khagrachari, Rangamati and Bandarban Hill Tracts districts.

"Additionally, the US Embassy continues to receive reports of incidents of kidnapping, arms and narcotics smuggling and clashes between local Bangladeshis and Rohingya refugees in areas near Rohingya refugee camps in the areas of Teknaf, Kutupalong, Ukhia, and Ramu of Cox's Bazar district," the notification said adding that the US Embassy also recommends against travel to these areas.

Individuals who choose to visit these districts are urged to exercise extreme caution, it said.

A terrorist bombing campaign in the second half of 2005 and several subsequent threats to US and Western interests led to increased security around U.S. Government facilities in and around Dhaka.

On August 17, 2005, a banned Islamist terrorist group, Jamaatul Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB), claimed responsibility for nearly 500 coordinated small bomb blasts in virtually every part of Bangladesh that killed two persons and injured several dozen.

Subsequent JMB bombings and suicide attacks killed approximately 30 Bangladeshis, including judges, court workers, police officers, and bystanders, and wounded nearly 200 Bangladeshis.

JMB statements call for the imposition of strict Islamic law in Bangladesh, justify the indiscriminate use of suicide attacks, and condemn Western social and political concepts as un-Islamic.

They also identify the governments of the United States and the United Kingdom as alleged

enemies of Islam. The most recent JMB bombing occurred on December 8, 2005, and the Bangladeshi government has subsequently apprehended the known senior leadership of JMB. Seven JMB leaders have already been convicted of complicity in JMB attacks and sentenced to death.

There are unconfirmed reports that JMB remnants remain active and are regrouping with a view to resuming violent activities, perhaps in the days leading up to and after the national elections expected in January 2007. The potential for continued JMB violence, in Dhaka and elsewhere, should continue to be considered real and serious.

Political confrontations manifested in demonstrations, rallies, and marches are unpredictable and have the potential for violence. In general, demonstrations occur on Friday afternoons but may take place at any time and any place. However, most demonstrations occur in downtown Dhaka, approximately five miles south of the U.S. Embassy. Protesters have used physical force, rocks, guns, and explosive devices during confrontations.

In the past, police have used rubber bullets, tear gas, live ammunition, water cannons, and other riot equipment when confronting protesters. The U.S. Embassy continues to see anti-American rhetoric and sporadic anti-American protests following Friday prayers at the national mosque, most recently in the context of the war in Lebanon.

Americans are urged to avoid travel to the downtown Dhaka area on Fridays whenever possible. Visitors to Bangladesh should check with the Consular Section at the U.S. Embassy in Dhaka for updated information on political demonstrations or other activities.

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[http://www.hispanidad.com/noticia\\_ep.aspx?ID=20060921083430](http://www.hispanidad.com/noticia_ep.aspx?ID=20060921083430)

## **Bangladesh.- Al menos 30 heridos por enfrentamientos entre policías y opositores en el centro de Dacca**

DACCA. 21 (EP/AP)

Al menos 30 personas resultaron heridas hoy después de que la Policía antidisturbios se enfrentara con porras contra cientos de manifestantes de la oposición que les lanzaban piedras en la capital de Bangladesh, Dacca, según informaron testigos presenciales.

El enfrentamiento se produjo en el centro de la capital en el curso de una huelga general convocada por la oposición para reclamar reformas de cara a las elecciones generales que se celebrarán el próximo año, según informó un periodista de Associated Press presente en el lugar.

La huelga ha sido convocada por una coalición de 14 partidos políticos de la oposición, liderada por el que fuera primer ministro Sheikh Hasina.

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<http://www.thedailystar.net/2006/09/22/d6092201044.htm>

Committed to PEOPLE'S RIGHT TO KNOW  
Vol. 5 Num 826 Fri. September 22, 2006

**Sporadic clashes mark hartal: 80 hurt**  
**Police beat up opposition activists**

## Staff Correspondent

Police in riot gears resorted to indiscriminate clubbing to disperse the Awami League (AL)-led 14-party opposition demonstrators in the capital yesterday during the countrywide dawn-to-dusk hartal that left some 80 wounded in the capital and in Netrokona.

Every single attempt by the opposition workers to bring out processions amid heavy rainfall during the 12-hour shutdown was met with tough police actions leaving Swechchhasebak League President AFM Bahauddin Nasim, General Secretary Pankaj Debnath, Organising Secretary Shohel Hazari and assistant secretary of AL's sub-committee Mrinal Kanti Das, severely injured among others. Meanwhile, some 21 opposition workers were wounded in police baton charges and ruling BNP men's attack in Netrokona town.

Besides, four homemade bombs were exploded at city's Mohakhali area during the hartal hours. The demonstrators also vandalised at least 50 vehicles, including several buses, CNG-run three wheelers and cabs. Police picked up around 20 opposition men from different parts of the capital.

The 12-hour countrywide shutdown was enforced by the opposition combine demanding reforms in the systems of caretaker government, Election Commission (EC) and electoral laws.

Educational institutions, markets, shops and many private offices remained closed during the hartal hours. Motorised vehicles mostly kept off the roads while rickshaws moved unhindered in the capital and other major cities. Bus communications between the capital and other districts remained suspended while rail and launch services operated as usual.

The law enforcers went wild on two separate processions of Awami Swechchhasebak League and Jubo Mohila League near Russell Square in Dhanmondi. The unprovoked and indiscriminate baton charge left at least 20 opposition leaders and workers, including Bahauddin Nasim, Debnath, Hazari and Das, severely wounded. Police arrested five workers from the spot.

Immediately after the police action, the female activists ransacked at least 10 vehicles on the Mirpur Road but the law enforcers kept silent.

Many of the wounded opposition leaders and workers were rushed to Trauma Centre in Shyamoli and Shamorita Hospital at Panthapath.

Meanwhile, AL Parliamentary Party led by Opposition Chief Whip Abdus Shaheed brought out a procession and held a rally at Russell Square where they demanded punishment to the police personnel responsible for the attack.

In Mirpur, at least 15 AL workers were wounded in an unprovoked police action on a procession led by Ilyas Uddin Mollah at Pallabi. One activist was picked up from the spot. Police also charged batons indiscriminately on another AL procession near Mirpur-10 roundabout led by Kamal Ahmed Majumder leaving about 10 activists, including former lawmaker Kamal, injured.

An AL procession from Nawabpur road led by Omar Ali also came under police clubbing at Roth Khola Intersection that left at least five activists injured.

Immediately after the first cracker was blasted near a rally in Mohakhali led by AL leaders Maj Gen (ret'd) Subid Ali Bhuiyan and Shahara Khatun, police furiously charged batons on it wounding at least eight activists. Police also arrested two AL activists from the rally.

Three crackers went off when AL leader Rahmat Ullah brought out a procession near Titumir College. The law enforcers clubbed and dispersed the procession.

The AL and its front organisations also brought out processions in Bangabandhu Avenue, Gulistan, Mohammadpur, Jatrabari, Golapbagh, Khilgoan, Mirpur-1, Sabujbagh, and other parts in the capital in support of the hartal, but almost all of them were either barricaded or chased by the police.

Meanwhile, ruling BNP activists attacked an opposition procession with sharp weapons at Patpatti area in Netrokona town that left six opposition activists injured, reports our correspondent from Netrokona.

The pickets damaged two buses and a truck in protest against the attack.

Ten other opposition workers were wounded when police charged batons on a procession in Barhatta metropolitan area. The angry demonstrators damaged three buses and several three-wheelers at Kadamtoli.

The law enforcers clubbed and dispersed another procession in Durgapur metropolitan area leaving at least five AL activists injured.

According to our correspondents, hartal passed off peacefully in other districts of the country.