

# Political assassinations

**FROM PAGE 1**  
make sure they are in the field during the next general elections also put Babar's 'good name' in question.

**CHRONOLOGY OF EVENTS**  
After taking office in October 2001, the BNP-led government made a number of police officers OSD (on special duty) and awarded punishment postings to many others, identifying them to have links with the then main opposition Awami League. Several of these OSD officers did not have any job to do in most of the last five years.

The year 2002 saw a sharp rise in incidents of human rights violation, which encompassed all levels of life and surpassed in magnitude similar instances in the previous years. Misuse of such controversial legal provisions as Section 54 of the Code of Criminal Procedure (CrPC) and Special Powers Act also rose. Human rights violation by the army, the paramilitary Bangladesh Rifles, and the police only added to the difficult situation in 2002.

Arrest and torture during detention of several eminent leaders, journalists and columnists including Shahriar Kabir, Muntassir Mamoon, Saleem Samad, Picilla Raj, Tofail Ahmed, Sabar Hossain Chowdhury, Bahauddin Nasim without any specific charge drew strong flaks at home and abroad.

Horror chilled the country when the army-led Operation Clean Heart began on October 15, 2002. Fifty-four people died during the controversial operation that ended on January 9 next year. The government indemnified the army from being tried for killings of the people and the victims' relatives were deprived of legal steps for the killings of their family members.

Sabekun Nahar Sonny, a BUET student, was killed in crossfire during a shootout between two factions of Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD), student wing of BNP, on the university campus on June 2003. That year also saw killings of at least 19 people in powerful blasts in four cinemas in Mymensingh on December 7.

Law and order slide worsened in 2003 despite sporadic government efforts to bridle crimes. Hardcore criminals remained beyond the reach of law despite the government initiatives for speedy trials by setting up tribunals, which handed down capital punishment to scores of convicts in murder cases in an unprecedented short span of time.

Gunmen killed Khulna city Awami League president Monzurul Imam on August 25, while Chittagong business magnate and BNP leader Jamal Uddin Ahmed Chowdhury was abducted in the mid-2003. His remains were recovered on August 14 last year.

The mystery still remains unsolved as to who smuggled in one lakh bullets of Chinese rifles and powerful explosives which were recovered from an abandoned truck and from a political activist's house in Kahalu of Bogra in June, and four AK47 rifles, two revolvers, 20 hand grenades, four time bombs, a huge quantity of ammunition of AK47 rifles and explosives which were found in Kuril Badda in Dhaka in November.

Ten truckloads of arms and ammunition were seized in Chittagong on April 2, 2004. The cache included 690 7.62 millimetre (mm) SMG-T-56-1, 600 7.62mm SMG T-56-2, 400 9mm automatic carbine, 100 tommy automatic rifles and 150 40mm rocket launchers. But the case of the country's biggest ever arms haul is also still unsolved.

The country witnessed an alarming escalation in human rights violations, especially with the introduction of law enforcement agency-sponsored murders in 2004.

**'CROSSFIRE'**  
The government introduced well-trained crime-busting forces of Rab, Cheeta and Cobra alongside police the same year, but hardly succeeded in improving the law and order.

Their actions added a new semantic dimension to the word 'crossfire' - an excuse to kill. The same old story of the victims' being caught and killed in crossfire during operations to recover illegal firearms at deserted places, mostly in the small hours, has turned into a cliché.

As many as 317 people were killed in Rab actions until October 31. Another 389 people were also killed in 'crossfire' incidents during police operations since June 24, 2004, according to rights watchdog Odhakar.

The home ministry turned but a deaf ear to the human rights organisations at home and abroad who, being alarmed and deeply worried at such a high frequency of extra-judicial killings, asked the government to stop it.

Although top underworld kingpins like Pichchi Hannan, Killer Bhutto, Molla Shamim, Golakata Mojibar and Tokai Mizan, David, Jane Alam, Ahmudya, outlawed partisan BDR Altaf and prime accused of journalist Shamsur Rahman killing Asaduzzaman Litu were killed in 'crossfire', several innocent people including children fell victim to such actions.

Following the deaths of a number of their leaders and activists in an anti-outlaw operation dubbed Spider Web and later in operations by Rab, BDR and police, underground communist parties tried to re-organise. But Rab killed their top political think-tank and founder of Purba Banglar Communist Party (PBCP-ML) Mofakkar Hossain

alias Mahamud Hasan in crossfire in Kushiha on December 17, 2004.

**ATTEMPT ON HASINA**  
In a most harrowing grenade attack on an Awami League rally attended by party chief Sheikh Hasina in the capital on August 21, 2004, 23 people including senior AL leader Iy Rahman were killed and 300 others were maimed.

Although the government has so far failed to arrest the perpetrators or dig up the motives, a government judicial commission pinned the blame on a 'foreign enemy' without naming it. The Criminal Investigation Department (CID) of police attempted in vain to create sensation by arresting and producing one George Mia, who linked some top criminals with the attack in his judicial confession.

The investigators are yet to submit the charge sheet in the case and the probe remains a stalled one.

**KILLING SPRÉE**  
The northeastern city of Sylhet turned into a killing field as assassins bombed five people to death at Hazrat Shahjalal Shrine on January 12, 2004 and another grenade attack at the same place on May 21 the same year killed three people and injured British High Commissioner Anwar Chowdhury. The law enforcers recently arrested four people in connection with the latter attack.

Two near-simultaneous bomb explosions in as many cinemas killed a street urchin on August 5, two days before a car bomb killed AL leader Mohammad Ibrahim on August 7, while another blast on September 5 killed two others in the divisional city.

An arson attack on a double-decker bus at Shahbagh in the capital killed 10 people on June 4.

Gunmen hired by Tongi Jubo Dal leader Nurul Islam assassinated AL lawmaker Ahsanullah Master at a public meeting on May 7 in Tongi.

Khulna-based eminent journalist Manik Saha was bombed to death on January 15, 2004. Khulna Press Club president and Daily Janmabhumi editor Humayun Kabir Balu died in a similar attack on June 27.

Noted linguist and writer Humayun Azad came under a deadly attack on Dhaka University campus on February 27.

The Appellate Division of the Supreme Court on December 7 upheld a High Court verdict that had slapped a Tk-2,000 fine or one-month imprisonment on the then inspector general of police Shahudul Haque for contempt of court.

On January 27 last year, terrorists killed five people including former finance minister and AL lawmaker Shah AMS Kibria, hurling grenades at a meeting in Habiganj. Investigators have submitted the charge sheets in two cases file in this connection, but there is controversy over their reports.

The most appalling development in 2005 was the official manifestation in Kahalu of the JMB through the August 17 countryside bomb blasts and the deadly suicide bomb attacks that followed.

**POLITICISATION OF POLICE**  
After curtailing the basic training programme at Sardah Police Academy in 2005, the government has placed 821 sub-inspectors (SI) at different police stations, ignoring their required field level training for one and a half years to ensure their election duty.

Breaking the police regulation, the government has exempted the SIs of training at the circle offices for three months, courts for six months and at the police lines for three months, and directly posted them at the police stations across the country.

Forced retirement, contractual appointment, promotion and posting on political grounds in the last four years seem to have demoralised the police administration.

**RISE OF MILITANCY**  
Infamous militant group of Siddiqui Islam alias Bangla Bhai openly launched a killing mission in Rajshahi region under a self-styled vigilance operation against communist outlaws in 2004, a year after it had spread its terrorist wings in Rajshahi, Chapainawabganj, Naogaon and Natore.

Despite media reports with pictures of people killed and hanged from trees by the militant outfit, Babar, like other top government office-bearers, denied Bangla Bhai's existence. The media, by probing JMB operations, drew only anger from the ruling four-party alliance that termed the militant operations commander a media-created 'myth' and 'detected' a plot in it to tarnish the country's image.

However, the government finally banned the Jagrata Muslim Janata, Bangladesh (JMMJB) and its associate JMB on February 23 last year in face of a mounting pressure from the international community and rights organisations. Earlier in 2004, the government in first ever such steps banned Islamist outfit Shahadat-al Higma, which was active in Rajshahi.

An orchestrated JMB bomb attack on 63 out of the 64 district headquarters on August 17 that killed three people traumatised the country. Thirty people including two judges were killed and many others injured later in JMB's suicide bomb attacks in Jhalakathi, Chandpur, Chittagong, Gazipur, Laxmipur, Brahmanbaria, Sylhet and Satkhira.

However, the law enforcers managed to capture militant Don Abdur Rahman at a Sylhet house on March 2 and Bangla Bhai in

Mymensingh four days later. Other Shura Members - Ataur Rahman Sunny, who is also the military commander, Abdul Awal, Khaled Saifullah, Hafez Mahmud and Salahuddin - were also netted and were charged for the bomb attacks.

After the trial court awarded death penalty to seven including Rahman, Bangla Bhai, Sunny, Awal, Khaled and suicide bomber Iftekhar al Mamun, the High Court on August 31 confirmed the death penalty. But the execution was postponed as the convicts appealed against the verdict.

Meantime, law enforcers also captured Mufti Abdul Hannan, operations commander of Harkatul Jihad (HuJI), on October 1 last year at Badda in the capital and banned HuJI 16 days later, terming it an identified terrorist organisation and its activities sensitive. After his arrest, the militant kingpin admitted to planting a 76-kg bomb at a meeting venue of the then prime minister Sheikh Hasina in Kotlailpara on July 20, 2000 in an attempt to kill her.

**PERSECUTION OF AHMADIYYA**  
Islamist extremists who redoubled their anti-Ahmadiyya move in November 2003 forced the government to ban Ahmadiyya publications on January 8, continued hate campaigns against the sect across the country, attacked their places of worship and houses and excommunicated the community members.

Encouraged apparently by the publication ban, the zealots allegedly patronised by Jamaat-e-Islami and Islami Oikya Jote continued with the persecution of the Ahmadiyyas. Different rights organisations and the civil society at home and abroad urged the government time and again to rescind the ban on the publications and to take action against the religious bigots in vain.

**MOBILE COURTS**  
Consumers in general hailed Babar's step that saw formation of mobile courts, which started operation on October 2 last year, to detect and curb food adulteration as well as sub-standard or unhygienic food processing. Initially, two mobile courts took to the streets in Dhaka on June 16 in 2005 after The Daily Star ran a report on spraying of chemicals on fruits to artificially ripen them.

As people and the media hailed the mobile court activities and started cooperating with them, the ministry increased their numbers.

**LOGISTIC PERK, SPL CELLS, HIGHWAY COPS**

Babar allotted funds for modernisation and increasing logistic facilities of all its forces and departments. Those are (1) Bangladesh Police, Rab, Special Branch and CID; (2) Bangladesh Rifles; (3) Ansar and Village Defence Party (VDP); (4) Department of Narcotics Control; (5) Prisons; (6) Metropolitan Magistracy; (7) Fire Service and Civil Defence; (8) Department of Immigration and Passport; and (9) Bangladesh Coast Guard.

The law enforcers, who had been using age-old firearms and equipment for a long time, now are well equipped. To cope with the rising crimes in the capital, Babar also hyped up the logistic facilities of Dhaka Metropolitan Police and raised the number of police stations in the capital.

The ministry has also formed a 2,000-strong Highway Police to clamp down on rampant highway robbery and mugging.

## BNP wants

**FROM PAGE 1**  
Mannan Bhuiyan said the two advisers failed to maintain neutrality by holing talks with 14-party leaders, and he also alleged, "Sultana Kamal was a member of Jatiya Oikya Mancha led by Dr Kamal Hossain". He hoped that the president would take action in this regard.

On the council of advisers' move to restructure the EC, Bhuiyan said, "How will you constitute it. They should not do anything beyond the constitutional provisions."

Criticising the AL, the former LGRD and cooperatives minister said they (AL) want to realise their demands through pressure and threats. The interim government will act as per the constitution, not yield to pressure, he hoped.

"BNP is a big political party. We can also announce programmes, if needed," he said without giving details.

"Asking them (chief election commissioner and election commissioners) to resign is against the constitution," the former minister said in reply to a question.

Former law minister and BNP standing committee member Moudud Ahmed told the briefing, "It is their (caretaker government) duty to help the EC to hold a free and fair election".

Former health minister Khandaker Mosharrif Hossain said, "There is no provision in the constitution to take any step against the CEC and the Ecs."

BNP Standing Committee member Khandaker Mahub Uddin Ahmad and Joint Secretary General Nazrul Islam Khan were also present at the briefing.

# Advisers met Hasina

**FROM PAGE 1**  
our unanimous decision that we'll consult all political parties, civil society members and professional bodies to reach a consensus on reconstitution of the Election Commission in a week. We [the advisers' council] felt the need for such exchanges of opinions especially after we could not find a solution in the last two days' meeting," Adviser Dr Akbar Ali Khan told The Daily Star yesterday, urging all not to dispute the matter.

"Time is very short. We have to take a decision on restructuring of the Election Commission. If the disputes go on, we'll not be able to work smoothly towards the conduct of a free and fair election," noted Akbar Ali, a former cabinet secretary.

He also said they do not have enough time to go through all the formalities in seeking opinion from the political parties and civil society. "It will take a long time to follow the conventional ways to meet them," he added.

"We have already communicated with some other major political parties about the issue," the adviser for finance, planning, commerce and post and telecommunications said without mentioning any name.

Talking to The Daily Star, Adviser M Azizul Haque said Sultana Kamal and Shafi Sami met the AL leader on a consensus among the advisers. "They did not go there in their personal capacity," he added.

Referring to the 14-party alliance's extension of deadline by a week, the adviser said, "You see... hasn't the meeting brought a good result?"

Azizul Haque, also a former inspector general of police, said they will keep trying for a consensus among the political parties regarding reorganisation of the EC.

When contacted, Adviser Yasmin Morshed said the interim administration has a very little time to create an environment conducive to free and fair conduct of the next general election. "We will have discussions with the political parties and civil society personalities measures to ensure an

# 14-party extends

**FROM PAGE 1**  
of these advisers otherwise?" she said.

On the chief adviser's holding the portfolios of nine ministries, she questioned how he would perform this huge task in addition to his duties as the president.

Eminent jurist and Gono Forum President Dr Kamal Hossain in his speech echoed the same sentiment. He alleged the immediate past government is controlling the president behind the scenes and said the previous home secretary is now controlling the police administration.

"You [president] are BNP-partisan. You could never be a neutral person. They [BNP-Jamaat] will not let you be neutral and alive. So you have only one way to escape yourself to be alive," he said.

"Please appoint a non-partisan person as the chief adviser as per the constitution to hold a free and fair election," Dr Kamal, also a senior leader of the 14-party alliance, added.

AL presidium member Suranjit Sengupta urged the president to appoint a new chief adviser without delay. "Otherwise, the president's takeover of the office of chief adviser would be declared unconstitutional and thousands of writ petitions would be filed against him," he said.

The AL president in her speech also demanded transparent ballot boxes in polling stations, a voter list with voters' photographs and cancellation of appointments of district, upazila and thana election officers, who were appointed on political considerations.

She demanded that the caretaker government publish a white paper of corruption by the previous BNP-Jamaat government after ousting party loyalists from the ACC.

She also put emphasis on investigation into corruption of every former ministers and lawmakers by forming impartial investigation committees at every ministry.

Hasina stressed making a list of those who plundered money, the amount of money and where those were plundered. She said if use of black money continues, there would be no free and fair elections in the country.

Hasina, supreme leader of the 14-party alliance, also demanded that the chief adviser should carry out impartial and international investigations into the rise of militancy.

"Find sources of finance, arms and ammunition and its patrons and bring them to justice."

She also asked the president to transfer the death convict top militant leaders from the sub-jail to condemn cells immediately.

Referring to BNP Chairperson

## Somali Islamists

**FROM PAGE 16**  
western-backed interim government for peace talks.

Both sides' fighters are now facing off just 30km (19 miles) from the administration's sole outpost, Baidoa town. The Islamists say they are also facing thousands of Ethiopian troops who had invaded to prop up government forces.

"The onus is on us to start the fight. We will be the first to strike," one senior Islamist commander, Maalim Hashi Ahmed, told Reuters by telephone.

"If someone takes your shirt, it's upon you to repossess it. That is what we plan to do," he said. "Ethiopia has invaded us so it is our responsibility to remove them from our land. We intend to carry out this obligation as soon as possible."

Residents of Buur Hakaba, a strategic hill town near the frontlines, said hundreds more Islamist fighters were deployed overnight, and fired heavy weapons early on Friday.

"The Islamic troops tested missiles this morning," one local, Yusuf Hassan, told Reuters. "It was really terrifying."

acceptable election," she said.

Adviser Shafi Sami yesterday told The Daily Star, "I was sent there on a specific assignment according to a consensus decision of the council of advisers."

Adviser Sultana Kamal said, "I went there (residence of AL chief) on advice of President and Chief Adviser Iajuddin Ahmed."

"If communicating with a political leader means I have lost my neutrality then it happened much before my meeting with the 14-party leader when Mr Bhuiyan himself had contacted me over telephone the day before," she told The Daily Star, referring to her telephone conversation with BNP Secretary General Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan on Wednesday.

"I believe in dialogue rather than in confrontation to solve problems," she added.

"I'm not afraid of doing anything that might help to avert any undesirable situation," said Sultana Kamal, also an eminent human rights leader.

At Thursday's meeting, Chief Adviser Iajuddin Ahmed expressed concern over the AL-led alliance's ultimatum to meet their 11-point demand by November 3, a number of advisers told The Daily Star yesterday.

The president at the adviser's council meeting assigned the two advisers to meet the AL chief and request her not to opt for any programmes that might set off violence, meeting sources said.

Besides, through the two advisers Iajuddin communicated to the 14-party alliance the message that his government has initiated measures to reorganise the EC. The meeting also decided to seek opinions from other major political parties, civil society and professional bodies.

## Oikya Mancha

**FROM PAGE 16**  
Sultana Kamal, daughter of Poet Sufia Kamal, was involved with Dr Kamal Hossain-led Jatiya Oikya Mancha.

Bhuiyan hoped Adviser Sultana Kamal would resign as she belonged to a political party. Jamaat-e-Islami, in a press conference yesterday, also alleged that Adviser Sultana Kamal was involved with Jatiya Oikya Mancha.

## Ershad

**FROM PAGE 16**  
Ruhul Amin Hawlader were not present.

"No body opposed me in the meeting as they know whatever decision I take will be good for the party", Ershad told reporters after the meeting.

"It will be considered as a betrayal if I don't join the BNP-led alliance as I was benefited by them," he added. He however said he will take a few more days to join.

JP sources said Ershad faced strong opposition from his party senior leaders, as they demanded that he finalises what BNP will concede to them in the next election.

"It will be foolish of us to join the BNP-led alliance before finalising a strategy," Kazi Zafar Ahmad told the reporters after the meeting.

The meeting also decided that JP will participate in the upcoming general election.

"The overall responsibility of maintaining liaison and having discussions with the alliance is vested in the party chairman - his decision will be considered final," said the presidium decision.

Ershad told the reporters that no member of the presidium opposed him but they suggested him to take time for more negotiation.

Denying the existence of any dissent inside his party Ershad said GM Quader is not active in the party anymore. "I hear he is going to float a party. Let us see what he can do," he said when asked whether any disciplinary action will be taken against Quader, younger brother of the former dictator.

The Jatiya Party chairman expressed hope that he will be able to bargain for a good number of four-party nominations for his party leaders. "I will negotiate our demands."

On Thursday, Ershad suspended a two-day extended meeting of the presidium, which was scheduled to begin on Saturday, apparently to avoid a debate on his decision to join the alliance.

He dismissed the speculations that he is under pressure to join the four-party alliance before the verdict of a case against him is delivered on November 7.

## 43 hurt in AL

**FROM PAGE 1**  
seriously injured and several business centres and houses ransacked and torched by BNP activists in different parts of Matiranga upazila in the district yesterday.

The injured AL activists are Mohammad Badal, 23, Mizanur Rahman, 20, and Mohammad Ali, 50.

Matiranga upazila BNP President Abdul Mannan Munnapp led the attack, AL and security sources said.

Police arrested five people - three of AL and two of BNP.

Clashes continued in different parts of the upazila as of filing this report in the evening.

## Adviser Sufia

**FROM PAGE 1**  
the persons who are (a) qualified for election as members of parliament. And article 66(2) (c) states a person shall be disqualified for election as or for being member of parliament who acquires the citizenship of, or affirms, or acknowledges allegiance to, a foreign state.

## US embassy

**FROM PAGE 16**  
address its demands and to continue the suspension of its country-wide agitation.

A spokesman for the embassy said all democratic parties should pursue their objectives through democratic means, not violence or intimidation.

"It is the responsibility of all parties and the caretaker government to create a positive framework for free, fair, non-violent, and credible elections," he said.

Earlier on the day, Awami League President and leader of the 14-party combine Sheikh Hasina extended her ultimatum by seven days for the caretaker government to meet her 11-point demand that include complete recasting of the Election Commission.

Addressing a public rally at Paltan Maidan, she warned that non-stop siege would be enforced throughout the country from November 12 if their demands were not met.

## LDP

**FROM PAGE 16**  
"The chief adviser has made arrangements to guard the residences of members of parliament and ministers of the immediate past ruling party but he did not do the same for LDP leaders who had been attacked by BNP goons," alleged the LDP leader.

Meanwhile LDP President AQM Badruddoja Chowdhury yesterday demanded resignation of Adviser to the Interim Government Fazul Haq.

He was addressing another ceremony on the occasion of some more people joining LDP in KC Memorial in Baridhara.

# Israel mounts

**FROM PAGE 16**  
disperse the crowd as Israeli ground fire boomed out across Beit Hanun.

An army spokeswoman said that large demonstrations of around 3,000 people, mostly women, had been orchestrated by Hamas in order to provide cover for gunmen wanting to escape from a mosque in the town.

"There are a number of incidents in which the forces identified armed gunmen and fired at armed gunmen. We are checking claims that women were hit in these demonstrations. At the moment we can't confirm anything," she said.

Before dawn, four members of Hamas's armed Ezzedine al-Qassam Brigades, blacklisted as a terrorist organisation by Israel and the West, were killed in a pre-dawn air strike in eastern Gaza City.

The strike, one of four overnight aerial attacks against what the military called "terror cells" in the Gaza Strip, earned a revenge call from Hamas.

"We will respond vigorously to these assassinations of the sons of Hamas. These assassinations will only make our resistance stronger," threatened Brigades spokesman Abu Obeida.

A fifth Hamas member, a bodyguard to refugees minister Atef Edwane, was shot dead in Beit Hanun, where Israeli forces have reoccupied the town since Wednesday, on a mission to stop rocket attacks against the Jewish state.

Of the 24 Palestinians killed since the offensive began on Wednesday, at least 13 have been militants. A four-year-old boy also died from wounds sustained on the first day of the operation.

More than 80 people have been

wounded and around 100 Palestinians detained since the launch of Operation Autumn Clouds in Beit Hanun, which Israel says had become a launchpad for militants firing rockets into the Jewish state.

But troops have failed to stop the rocket fire, an almost constant curse in communities bordering the Gaza Strip since Israel left the Gaza Strip last year in an historic operation that had closed the curtain on a 38-year occupation.

Moderate Palestinian president Mahmud Abbas and the head of the Islamist-led government, prime minister Ismail Haniya, have both condemned the offensive as a "massacre", the latest in four months of Israeli operations in Gaza following the late June abduction of an Israeli soldier by Gaza militants.

In the West Bank, Haniya's public works and housing minister, 46-year-old Abdelrahman Zidane, was arrested by troops at dawn from his home in the territory's political capital Ramallah, Palestinian security sources said.

An Israeli army spokeswoman said only that a "Hamas terrorist in Ramallah" had been arrested, without providing any further details.

Deputy Prime Minister Nasserredine al-Shaer, who was arrested by Israeli troops as part of a massive clampdown against the ruling Hamas movement in August and released in September, confirmed his colleague had been detained.

# Big powers try

**FROM PAGE 16**  
these programmes and prevent them from travelling except for special events.

Friday's talks among the six powers are the first in more than a week. All but Germany, a key negotiator, are permanent Security Council members with veto power.

Russia's objections are expected to include softening the sanctions and redefining an exemption for a nuclear reactor Moscow is building for Iran, according to council members who were speaking on condition of anonymity because of the sensitivity of the talks.

The draft resolution exempts from sanctions the \$800 million Bushehr reactor in southwestern Iran, expected to go into operation next year.

But it says Russia must check with a Security Council committee if it delivers material that can be used for weapons, such as a fuel cycle.

Russia has objected to including Bushehr in the resolution in the first place, saying it was a legal power plant under the 1970 nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty.

"It has nothing to do (with the resolution) because it's a peaceful nuclear facility which we have been helping Iran to build in full conformity with the Nonproliferation Treaty," Moscow's UN Ambassador Vitaly