

Congratulations to the people, the interim government, the Election Commission and all the political parties for holding a free and fair election.

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## Inside today

### International

**60,000 Iraqis, 126 Allied troops killed**



Figures for Iraqi casualties may never be known with certainty, but according to a computer model, they could top 60,000 dead and wounded. **Page 5**

### Feature

#### Education

Investment in education can help sustainable development—by Prof Shamsul Huq. **Page 6**

### Metropolitan

#### Dhaka Day by Day

**Of eucalyptus and paddy fields**



No less a person than Zainul Abedin saw movement in Asma Kibria's strokes. Qamrul Hasan saw potentialities in her paintings. **Page 3**

### Business

#### Rebuilding Kuwait

Kuwait has signed rebuilding contract with 100 companies all over the world to reconstruct the country. **Page 8**

## NEWS BRIEFS

### Saddam seeks asylum

PARIS, March 1: The French newspaper Le Monde reported from Algiers today that Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein had decided to step down and had asked Algerian authorities for asylum, reports Reuter.

Algeria's Ambassador to the United States denied here today that Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein had asked his government for asylum.

### No US assurance on asylum

WASHINGTON, March 1: Secretary of State James Baker said today the United States knew nothing about a report Saddam Hussein was seeking asylum in Algeria and declined to give any assurance the Allies would not pursue Saddam in exile, reports Reuter.

### Flag raised over US embassy

KUWAIT, Mar 1: Helicopters on Friday delivered the new American envoy to the US Embassy compound in liberated Kuwait City, where he raised the same flag that had flown before the embassy was evacuated in December, reports AP.

# JS session after election of 30 women members : Shahabuddin

## No immediate formation of Council of Ministers

By Staff Correspondent

Acting President Justice Shahabuddin Ahmed on Friday night expressed his gratitude to Almighty Allah for peaceful and successful holding of the parliamentary (Jatiya Sangsad) polls, and called upon people and students in particular to help the elected government in running the country and administration and keep a vigil on the democratic rights.

In a nationwide address over Radio and Television, the Acting President congratulated the newly elected members of parliament and also those who had failed to come out successfully but contributed to the democratic process. He appealed to them to cooperate with the majority party or parties showing respect to the people's verdict.

The Acting President said as no party commands the support of the majority members of (Jatiya Sangsad) parliament, he saw no possibility of immediate formation of council of ministers. He said it is not clear which elected member enjoys the support of the majority members of the house.

The said as per Article 58

of the Constitution, it was not possible for him to form council of ministers at the moment since it requires at least 166 members for absolute majority in the 330-member parliament, including 30 seats reserved for women.

The Clause 3 of the Article 58 of the Constitution says the President shall appoint as prime minister the member of parliament who appears to him to command the support of the majority of the members of parliament, he said.

The Acting President also appealed to the parliament-elect to bring necessary amendments to the Constitution so that he could submit his resignation to the speaker and leave his office.

Explaining the relevant constitutional provisions, he said, without such an amendment, the Acting President would not be able to leave his office until a new president is elected and joins his office.

Justice Shahabuddin said, right from the beginning of his tenure he was saying that he would go back to his original post and if there had been no constitutional obstacles, he



Acting President Justice Shahabuddin addressing nation on Friday.

would have gone at once.

He said under Article 51 of the Constitution, vice-president can submit his resignation to the president and the president can do so to the vice-president. If the offices of both the president and the vice-president fall vacant, the speaker would act as president under Article 55 of the Constitution, he explained.

Explaining more on this, the Acting President said, under the new constitutional provision, whether he would be acting as president or not, can submit his resignation to the speaker.

He advised the political parties to choose their leaders and deputy leaders in parliament so that he could keep in touch with them in dealing with country's overall situation, including administration, economic affairs and various other problems.

He said eight months of the current fiscal year had already passed and the parliament members would have to keep watch on the situation.

He said the first session of the parliament would be held only after election of the 30 women members. They will

have to be elected to parliament by members-elect, according to the Representation of People (Seats for Women Members) Order, 1973.

The Acting President said the election of the women members would be held only after the completion of polling on March 14 and 28 in two constituencies where elections were countermanded due to deaths of two candidates.

The members-elect will have to take oath from the speaker of the previous parliament any time before the first session of the new parliament, he said. Polling in some of the 24,200 polling centres was suspended on Wednesday and those will be held soon.

The Acting President said, there was apprehension among the people in early January whether the election would be held at all. Therefore, he added, he had firmly announced in his address to the nation on January 15 that election would be held on February 27 and non but Allah could stop holding of the polls.

He said the foreign observers had expressed the

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## BNP will go for coalition if necessary: Khaleda

By Staff Correspondent

BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia said if necessary, her party would go for coalition with the democratic and nationalist forces to form government. She however said she would have consultations with her party leaders when they would return from their constituencies.

Speaking at an unscheduled

brief press conference on Friday at the Banani office of her party, Khaleda Zia said her party had waged a relentless struggle to achieve a free and fair election under a neutral and caretaker government so that people could exercise their franchise without any interference. She said the election was held in a free and fair

atmosphere and people voted for BNP. She said, if the voters list prepared in February, 1990 could have been updated and the names of the genuine voters could be enrolled, BNP would bag two-third majority in the Just-concluded elections.

She thanked people, the

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## Power transfer may take three months more

By Reazuddin Ahmed

Bangladesh will remain under the administration of the caretaker government at least for another two to three months until either the Constitution is amended to return to parliamentary system or the presidential election is held.

The president's address to the nation clearly indicated that the Parliament can not go into session until middle of April.

The president is likely to summon the Parliament after the completion of election in Munshiganj 3 and Kushtia 2 seats by March 28.

The 67 returning officers have started preparing the final results from Friday. The returning officers notified all the candidates or their agents to be present during the official counting at returning officers office.

The Election Commission expects the final results from the returning officers within a

couple of days.

An Election Commission source told the Daily Star that the results of 294 seats will be published in gazette soon.

Meanwhile, Khaleda Zia has instructed her constitutional experts Justice Maktumul Hakim to examine the president's speech about the transfer of power.

The constitutional group is likely to start working within a couple of days.

Meanwhile parleys have started with the like-minded parties and independent candidates to get their support to elect of 30 women members.

Election Commission has started delimitation of constituencies for election of women members. One woman MP will be elected from 10 constituencies. According to the Representation of People Order 1972 the women members from reserve seats are

elected indirectly by the members of the parliament.

The political parties will submit the list of the women candidates to the speaker and he will call for vote.

After the election of 30 women members with the help of BNP allies it is likely that BNP will secure absolute majority in the 330 member parliament. BNP needs 166 members out of 330 to prove their majority in the House. BNP has secured 140 seats out of 294 and with 30 women seats BNP will get 170. BNP is expecting at least three seats from rest of six seats from where results have not yet been declared. Besides BNP is expected to get the support of independent members and one member of Islami Oikya Jote.

The political analysts strongly believe that BNP will be able to form the government with clear majority.



Leader of the British poll observer group Peter Shore and BNP chief Khaleda Zia exchanging views at BNP Banani office Friday. — Star photo

## Ershad may contest presidential election

CHANDPUR, Mar 1: Acting Chairman of Jatiya Party Mizanur Rahman Chowdhury today hinted that former President Hussain Muhammad Ershad will contest the presidential election.

"We have our formidable candidate to contest the (presidential) poll", he said.

Talking to UNB local correspondent, Mizan Chowdhury said Jatiya Party believes in presidential form of government and will continue to play a positive role both in and outside parliament.

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## Polling was free, fair, say observers

By Staff Correspondent

British and Japanese parliamentary observers and the observers from non-governmental group of four SAARC countries said that the February 27 parliamentary election was on exemplary one. The election was conducted in a free fair peaceful and orderly manner, they added.

The British parliamentary observers in a press conference Friday afternoon said that in all 59 polling stations they had visited on the election day

in both Dhaka and Sylhet, they found a notably calm and peaceful atmosphere, orderly and meticulous procedure voting. They said that the co-operation and goodwill between the election officials and party agents was beyond question.

Leader of the observers group Peter Shore in his written statement said that the only complaints they received were the absence of certain

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## BNP, Awami League poll 31 pc votes

By Staff Correspondent

Each of Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) and Awami League (AL) got 31 per cent votes polled throughout the country although AL has bagged 56 seats less than that of BNP out of 298 parliament seats, where elections were held on Wednesday.

According to the unofficial results, BNP candidates won in 140 constituencies while AL in 84.

On the other hand, Jatiya Party (JP) and Jamaat-e-Islami got 12 per cent votes each though JP candidates won 35 seats as against 18 bagged by Jamaat.

These facts were revealed by the computer analysis of the election results telecast by Bangladesh Television BTV on Friday night.

According to the BTV telecast unofficial results, BNP led in Dhaka division, Chittagong division, and Rajshahi division while AL led in Khulna division.

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## BNP for immediate Sangsad session

By Staff Correspondent

Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) Friday night urged the Acting President to call Parliament immediately to solve all national problems, pointed out by him in his address to the nation over radio and television at 7 in the evening of Friday, reports BSS.

Giving its reaction to the address, BNP said, "the address appears to us misleading when the nation is expecting the process of handing over power to the elected representatives will be hastened."

BNP said the Acting President had pointed out that Parliament could not be called on the plea of postponement of election in two seats. BNP said it was not correct because Parliament election meant

general election, not postponed election.

"The Acting President has given a figure to prove majority in Parliament including women's seats but it is not possible unless Parliament is called to elect women members and to achieve the requisite majority," the party said.

Referring to the Acting President's speech where he had pointed out that no party achieved the majority in the election, BNP said it was not correct. In fact, it said, BNP has won the majority and if necessary, it will prove its majority in Parliament.

BNP said people's opinion was reflected in the elections, held in a free and fair atmosphere under a caretaker Government following the ousting of the autocratic government through the nine-year anti-autocracy movement.

BNP congratulated the Acting President, Election Commission and others concerned for holding the elections in a free and fair atmosphere.

### HOLIDAY NOTICE

The Offices of the Daily Star will remain closed on Saturday, March 2, on account of Holy Shab-e-Barat.

Therefore, there will be no issue of The Daily Star on Sunday, March 3.

# Iraqi, Allied commanders meet today

LONDON, Mar 1: Iraqi and Allied military commanders will meet for the first time on Saturday at an undisclosed military installation in Iraq, a senior British government source said Friday, reports AP.

US President George Bush on Thursday gave the Iraqis a 48-hour deadline to nominate military commanders for a meeting.

"The 48-hour deadline would now appear to have been met," said the British source, speaking on condition of anonymity.

The talks will focus on the release of Allied prisoners of

war and of thousands of Kuwaitis taken hostage by fleeing Iraqi troops as the Allies closed in on Kuwait City.

The British officials said the Allied commanders would be led by US Gen Norman Schwarzkopf.

He added that "political talks will be held separately," but could give no details.

Reuter from Nicosia adds: Iraq's victorious enemies clamoured for Saddam's downfall on Thursday while military commanders from both sides in the Gulf War prepared to discuss terms for a permanent ceasefire.

- ★ 'Victorious enemies' clamour for Saddam's downfall
- ★ Bush and Allied leaders stress Mid-East security arrangements
- ★ Baghdad will now comply with all Allied demands: Bush
- ★ White House plays down thoughts of an overnight withdrawal
- ★ Nearly a year can be required for pullout: UK
- ★ France ready to rapidly withdraw troops or to stay to help keep peace under UN leadership.
- ★ Iran blames Saddam for Gulf war but wants US-led forces' immediate withdrawal.

The battlefield ceasefire, called on Thursday after a four-day Allied blitzkrieg which routed Iraqi forces, went into its second day with only a few minor skirmishes. Kuwaiti troops killed 22 Iraqis who refused to surrender in Kuwait City.

Allied leaders said they wanted an early return home for their 750,000 coalition forces but that some units would have to stay in the Gulf for months.

Iran laid the blame for the Gulf War firmly with Saddam but said the Muslim World would not allow Western

troops to stay in southern Iraq. Iranian Radio said Iraqis would soon break their silence and call Saddam to task for their country's overwhelming defeat by the US-led coalition.

Radio Tehran said Iraqis were part of the Islamic nation, which "will not allow America to continue its occupation of Iraq."

President George Bush issued another implied call for the Iraqi people to topple Saddam.

At a meeting with Saudi Arabia's Washington Ambassador he said, "let's hope that

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## Shab-e-Barat tonight

By Staff Correspondent

The Holy Shab-e-Barat will be observed tonight. Muslims all over the country will offer special prayers seeking divine blessings for a better future.

Special arrangements have been made in all mosques to facilitate saying of prayers by devotees.

Newspapers have published special articles and features highlighting the significance of the night. Radio Bangladesh and Bangladesh Television are putting up special programmes.

All newspaper offices will remain closed today (Saturday) in observance of the night. All offices will remain closed tomorrow.

## Khaleda's solidarity with Muslim Ummah

By Staff Correspondent

BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia in a statement on Friday congratulated people and expressed her good wishes on the occasion of holy Shab-e-Barat today.

She urged people to observe the day with due solemnity.

Expressing her solidarity with the Muslim Ummah she prayed for peace and prosperity of the Muslim world.

### Public meet

BNP will hold a public meeting next Tuesday March 5 at Manik Mia Avenue at 3 pm. BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia will address the meeting.

## Hasina's call to struggle for accountable govt

By Staff Correspondent

Awami League leader Sheikh Hasina Friday called for continuing the struggle for an accountable government through restoration of parliamentary system and rule of law by felling all conspiracies, reports UNB.

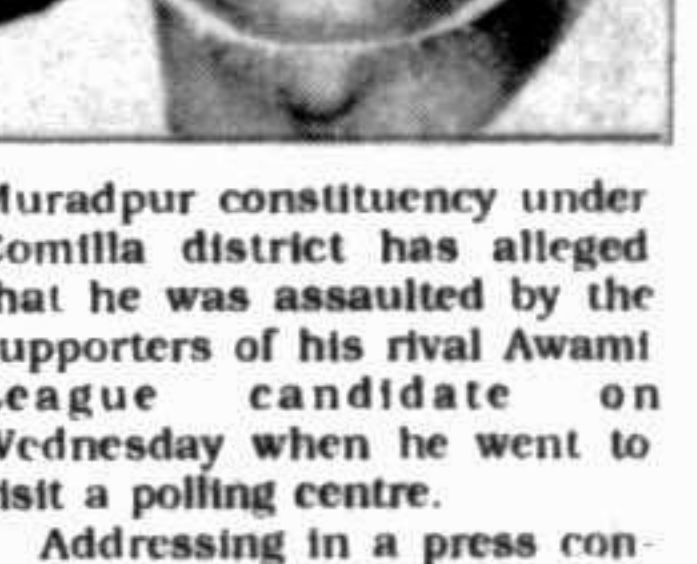
In a message on the eve of

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## AL attack on Barrister Rafiq alleged

By Staff Correspondent

Barrister Rafiqul Islam Miah BNP MP elected from



Muradpur constituency under Comilla district has alleged that he was assaulted by the supporters of his rival Awami League candidate on Wednesday when he went to visit a polling centre.

Addressing in a press conference on Friday at the Jatiya

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## Kaifu happy over peaceful elections

By Staff Correspondent

TOKYO, Mar 1: Japanese Prime Minister Toshiki Kaifu on Thursday expressed satisfaction at the peaceful elections, reports UNB.

Kaifu told outgoing Ambassador AKM Hedayetul Huq, who made a farewell call to the Japanese premier Thursday afternoon, he was happy to see the successful democratic pro-

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## France happy over peaceful elections

By Staff Correspondent

France expressed Friday her satisfaction at the holding of Parliamentary elections in Bangladesh in a peaceful and democratic manner, according to the French Embassy press release in Dhaka, reports BSS.

The press release said the spokesman of the French Foreign Affairs Ministry said in Paris Friday that France attached great value to the development of Bangladesh. It followed with great attention the way the parliamentary elections were held.

Reaffirming France's sup- See Page 10 Col 6