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Post-polls carnage leaves six dead in city

Armed terrorists gunned down six men and wounded many others in a post-election violence at Nawabganj, Ward No-59, in the city yesterday.

According to the local people, the gunmen, allegedly led by a defeated ward commissioner candidate, Alhaj Abdul Aziz, 38, attacked the supporters and workers of ward commissioner-elect Humayun Kabir of the Awami League at around 10:30 in the morning. Abdul Aziz was a BNP nominee for Sunday's DCC polls. Police arrested six people, including 66-year-old Abdul Majid, father of Abdul Aziz, after the killings.

The Awami League called a day-long hartal in the area today to protest the killing. The ten Left parties' alliance has supported the hartal call.

The dead were identified by local people as the supporters of Humayun Kabir. They are: Delwar Hossain, 24, Hafizuddin, 25, Ramzan Ahmed Gazi, 18, Anwar Hossain Anu, 22, Nazrul Islam, 19, and Mohammad Rafiq 35. Nineteen seriously injured persons were admitted to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) while the condition of one Mujibur, 15, admitted to the Chest Diseases Hospital, was said to be critical. He received bullet wounds in his neck and chest.

Witnesses and family members said the gunmen, in their first phase of attack, killed Delwar and Hafizuddin who were on the roof-top of two adjacent buildings — hardly a hundred yards from the Nawabganj police outpost. The terrorists, wielding



Wailing relatives of the victims of yesterday's carnage at Nawabganj, Lalbagh, in the city that left six people killed and twelve others injured. — Star photo

BNP urges city dwellers to resist terrorists

Leaders of the Dhaka city unit of the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) last night called upon the city dwellers to rise their voice unitedly against terrorist activities of a particular party and resist all evil efforts in foiling the present democratic process, reports BSS.

They also demanded of the authorities concerned to take effective legal steps against the identified terrorists.

In a joint statement Lt Gen. (Retd) Mir Shaukat Ali and Salahuddin Ahmed, president and general secretary of the city unit of the BNP, said three BNP workers suffered bullet injuries when a gang of armed terrorists led by labour secretary of the Dhaka city unit of the Awami League Lutfar Rahman suddenly attacked the leaders and workers of the BNP who were supporters of a commissioner candidate for DCC Ward No 90 Shahabuddin Ahmed, at the Alam Market in Jurain Sunday night.

They said two persons received bullet injuries when the supporters of a defeated Awami League ward commissioner attacked a victory procession of the BNP supported

Unfortunate incident: Press Note

Six persons were killed and 12 others injured in a post-election violence at Nawabganj area under Lalbagh police station here yesterday, a government Press Note said, reports BSS.

The Press Note issued by the Ministry of Home Affairs said, "An unfortunate incident of post-election violence between two groups of agitated people took place at Nawabganj area under Lalbagh police station of the metropolis at 11 am yesterday.

During the clashes, the mob used sticks, bombs and other lethal weapons and fire arms against each other. As a result, one person was killed on the spot while other five persons died at the Dhaka Medical College Hospital. Twelve more persons are undergoing treatment at the DMCH.

On hearing the sudden outbreak of this incident in a very densely populated area of the Dhaka city, the Metropolitan Police in cooperation with the Bangladesh Rifles and battalion police was engaged in maintaining law and order and succeeded in bringing the situation under control with tear gas, baton charge and blank firing. Police arrested six persons from the spot and are

Political parties concerned

Different political organisations yesterday expressed their deep concern over the post-poll violence at Nawabganj in the city.

General Secretary of the Bangladesh Workers Party Rashed Khan Menon alleged that the BNP commissioner candidate in Nawabganj was responsible for the murders of Awami League supporters.

He said, "During the campaign, we warned of violence during the polls as the terrorists of the Ershad regime were nominated for ward commissioner posts in different areas."

"Begum Zia and other BNP leaders were have to bear the responsibility of these deaths," Menon added.

Meanwhile, different left parties' leaders including Menon, Hasanul Haq Inu, Mujahidul Islam Selim, Manjurul Ahsan Khan, Shahidullah Chowdhury, Moyeenuddin Khan Badal and Shirin Akhter visited the families of those who were killed in the city.

Paying homage to the deceased, they expressed their solidarity with the half-day hartal called by the people in the Lalbagh thana area.

The left leaders also urged the city dwellers to participate in the Namaj-e-Janaza of the deceased persons at the Baitul

AL, BNP share 4 mayoral posts

The ruling Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) and the largest opposition Awami League shared the country's four mayoral posts equally in the four city corporation elections held Sunday.

According to the unofficial results released by the Election Commission (EC), Mohammad Hanif and ABM Mohiuddin Chowdhury of the AL won the elections of the Dhaka and Chittagong city corporations while the BNP nominees Mizanur Rahman Minu and Sheikh Tayebur Rahman won the Rajshahi and Khulna corporation polls.

However, the EC has so far announced the complete unofficial results of only three corporation polls — Chittagong, Rajshahi and Khulna. It has announced the results of 704 out of 737 centres of the Dhaka City Corporation.

The Election Commission has cancelled voting in 26 centres of the Dhaka City Corporation on grounds of deterioration of law and order at these centres.

Cabinet approves proposal on coal extraction

The cabinet yesterday approved the proposal on surface mining for exploration and extraction of coal in the northern region of the country, reports UNB.

The approval was given in the regular weekly meeting of the cabinet held at Bangabhaban with Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia in the chair.

An official announcement said the cabinet also approved the framework of Convention on Climate Change and amendment to the Post Office Act 1898.

BNP should accept people's will: Hasina

Awami League chief Sheikh Hasina hoped yesterday that the ruling BNP would accept the people's mandate expressed through the city corporation elections on Sunday.

We have accepted our defeats in Khulna and Rajshahi because we believe in democracy," the Opposition leader said.

But the BNP, she said, "has failed to accept the election results in Dhaka and Chittagong where our candidates have won despite rigging by the ruling party."

At a crowded press conference at her Minto Road official residence last night, Hasina accused BNP-backed armed hoodlums of murdering six persons in the capital because they did not vote for the BNP nominees.

There is victory and defeat in every election. There will be no democratic practices in the country unless defeat is accepted easily, the AL leader reminded.

She held a cabinet minister responsible for yesterday's killings at Lalbagh and also accused the policemen of giving shelter to the murderers. The government-backed armed men were also threatening other people at Lalbagh for not voting for the BNP candidates, she further alleged.

Such incidents will harm the democratic atmosphere in the country, she said.

The AL chief said, her party's mayoral candidates in Dhaka and Chittagong had won the polls but the authorities were dilly-dallying in announcing the results. The AL mayoral nominee in Dhaka, Mohammad Hanif, had secured 4,15,036 votes against his BNP rival Mirza Abbas who had bagged 3,39,836 votes in 704 out of 737 centres, she announced and alleged that the Election

PM thanks residents of 4 cities

Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia yesterday felicitated the residents of four metropolis for their spontaneous participation in the city corporations elections, reports BSS.

Begum Zia in a statement congratulated the newly elected mayors of the respective cities and hoped that they would be able to work in conformity with the aspirations of the city dwellers.

The Prime Minister said the city residents for the first time directly elected the mayors in the process of flourishing democracy in all tiers of the society.

Noman charges AL with fixing CCC polls

CHITTAGONG, Jan 31: Abdullah Al-Noman, president of the Chittagong city BNP and Minister for Fisheries and Livestock, today accused the Awami League of resorting to terrorism and rigging in the Chittagong City Corporation election held on January 30, reports BSS.

"We wanted a full democratic and terror free atmosphere in the city corporation elections to enable the people to exercise their franchise fearlessly. But the Awami League created terror in about 25 polling centres in order to deprive the BNP supporters of their franchise", he said.

Addressing a press conference at the Nasim Bhaban office of the BNP, he said that election coordinator of the city BNP Advocate Badrul Anwar was chased and his vehicle was attacked by Awami League workers. He also alleged that a top Awami League leader interrupted polling at a Bakolla centre where the BNP was certain to bag a vast majority of the votes.

Noman said the BNP had

News Analysis: High time to remove export barricades

Over the last three years the economic policy framework in Bangladesh has gone through a major overhaul to get higher export-led growth pioneered by the private sector.

This overhaul started with a strict demand management based stabilisation of the economy. Taxes were increased to raise revenue collection and government departments were forced to work under increasingly tighter budget constraint.

Restructuring of manufacturing and non-manufacturing public enterprises started in the next phase, leading to retrenchment of 25,000 public sector employees in 1992-93 alone.

The change that has been most painful was forced on the private sector. The inward looking industrialisation policy, which formed the basis of private sector investment over the last two decades, was dismantled at a breakneck speed

NEWS BRIEFS

3 Indian troops killed in blast
 NEW DELHI, Jan 31: An explosion at an army ammunition depot in the western Indian state of Rajasthan killed at least three Indian soldiers and injured 14 today, the United News of India said, reports Reuter.

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US okays UN plan for air strikes against Serbs

WASHINGTON, Jan 31: The Clinton administration Monday endorsed a report by UN Secretary General Boutros Boutros-Ghali that gives the go-ahead for air strikes against Bosnian Serbs if they attack peacekeeping operations in two key Bosnia towns, reports AP.

"We've endorsed that report," Secretary of State Warren Christopher said. "That could lead to the use of air power if there's not an agreement for the replacement of the Canadian troops at Srebrenica or for the opening of the airport at Tuzla."

In a letter Friday to the UN Security Council, Boutros-Ghali said he had instructed top UN officials to move "actively" with plans to open the Tuzla airport for relief supplies and to relieve Canadian units at Srebrenica with Dutch peacekeepers.

Boutros-Ghali said he would leave the final decision to launch air strikes with his special representative in the Balkans, Yasushi Akashi. The decision to use force would need the approval of the North Atlantic Council.

Those matters will play out over time," Christopher said as the Clinton administration pursued what could be the last concerted diplomatic effort to settle the bloody conflict in Bosnia before the NATO allies implement a plan to attack the Serbs.

UN troops kill 8 Somalis
 MOGADISHU, Jan 31: US troops opened fire here today, killing eight Somalis and injuring 13 others, the Somali National Alliance (SNA) of south Mogadishu warrior General Mohamed Frah Aided charged, reports AFP.

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