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## Future of peace process in doubt

# Peres defeated

JERUSALEM, May 31: Opposition leader Benjamin Netanyahu rode a wave of anger over Islamic suicide bombings to victory today over Prime Minister Shimon Peres in an Israeli election that will shape the future of the Middle East, reports AP.

The close results — Netanyahu won by just 29,517 votes out of 3 million cast — underscored how deeply divided

Israelis are over peace negotiations with the Palestinians and the Arab world.

Peres called his rival after the Central Election Commission announced the unofficial results this afternoon, just before the start of the Jewish sabbath.

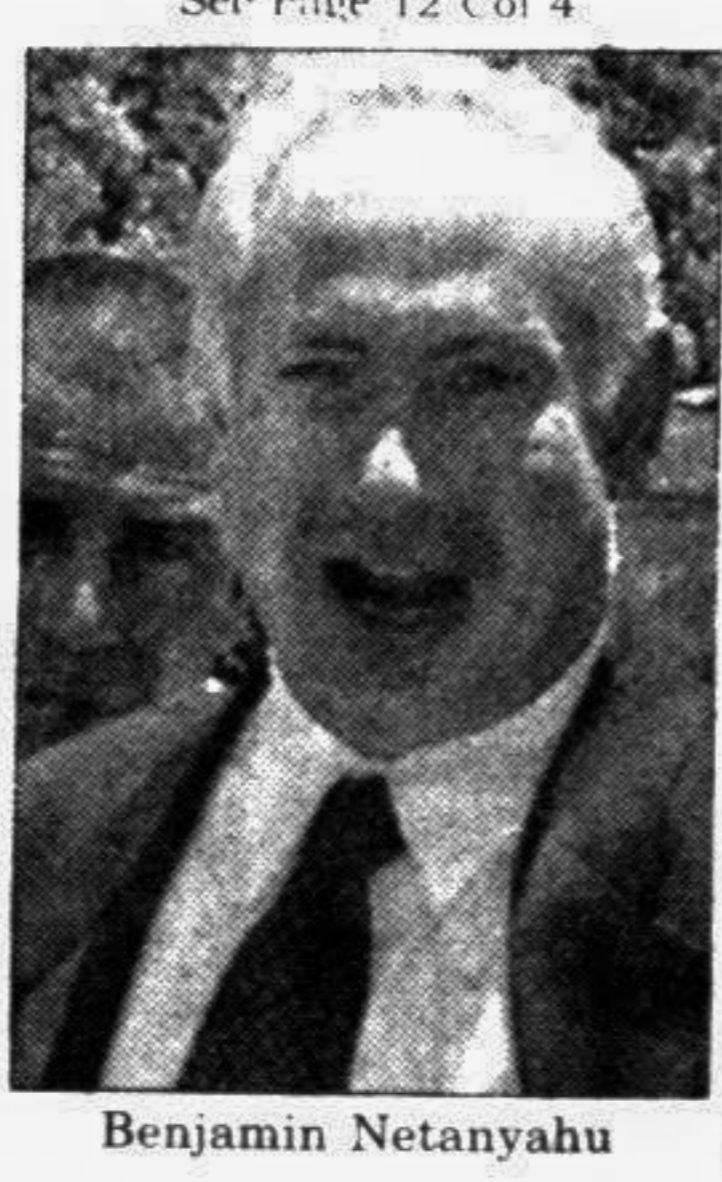
Peres, who won a Nobel Peace Prize for his breakthrough autonomy agreements with Yasser Arafat, was ready

Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin by a right-wing militant who wanted to stop the peace process.

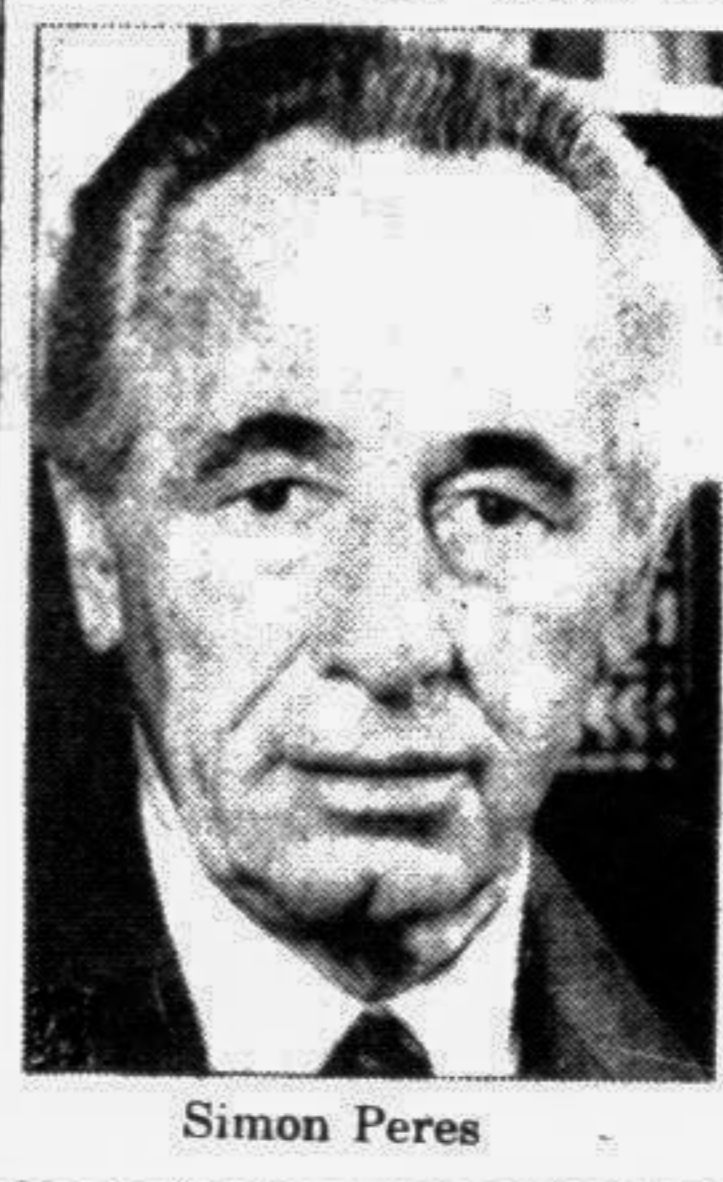
Fear was a major theme in the Netanyahu campaign, with the opposition leader saying he would make people feel more secure.

Arafat, who attended noon prayers at a Gaza City mosque, refused to comment on the

WASHINGTON, May 31: President Bill Clinton telephoned Israeli prime minister-elect Benjamin Netanyahu today, congratulating him on his election victory and pledging continued US support for Israel, the White House said, reports AP.



Benjamin Netanyahu



Simon Peres

to give up most of the West Bank and Gaza Strip, which Israel captured in the 1967 Mideast war.

Netanyahu, head of the opposition Likud Party, has said he would make Israeli security his top concern and give troops a free hand against Palestinian militants who set off four suicide bombs in Israel this Spring.

The attacks, which killed 59 victims, wiped out the 16-point lead Peres held after the November assassination of

## Japan, ROK to co-host WC soccer finals

ZURICH, (Switzerland), May 31: After an unprecedentedly bitter contest between two long-time political rivals, Japan and South Korea will be the first countries to co-host the World Cup soccer finals, reports AP.

FIFA President Joao Havelange said Friday the soccer body's executive committee had unanimously agreed the proposal at a meeting in Zurich.

The dramatic turnaround came after Japan's soccer federation, which had bitterly resisted co-hosting, wrote to Havelange saying that it was now ready to join its neighbour and rival in organizing the prestigious tournament.

We had been preparing all our efforts to ward an independent candidacy. But we will respect FIFA's decision, said Ken Naganuma, head of Japan's organizing committee.

This World Cup will be the world's first to be co-hosted and the first in the 21st century and the first in Asia. We believe it must be a success for FIFA and all the soccer fans around the world, Naganuma told a press conference.

It will be a great festival for the whole world because it represents Asian unity and solidarity. I also hope it can be a catalyst for global peace, said South Korea's Chung Mong-joon, a FIFA vice president.

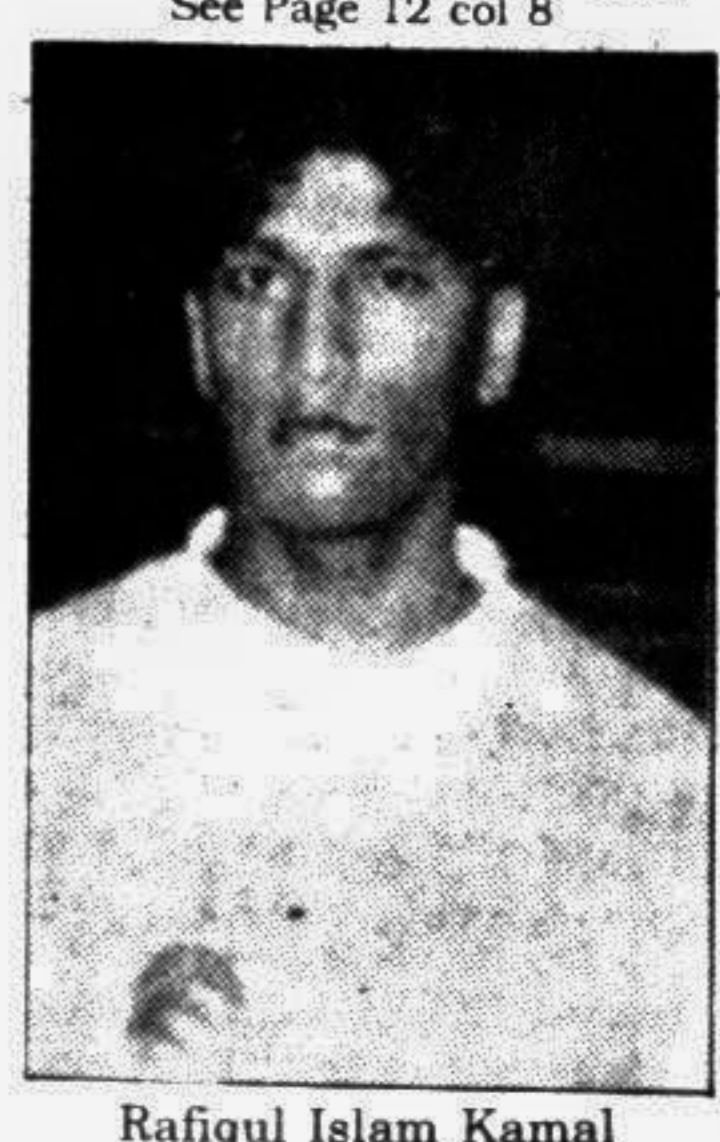
## Junior Asia Cup Hockey Bangladesh grind Singapore down

Rafiqul Islam notched a hat-trick as Bangladesh holding on to their lead in a start crushed hosts Singapore 7-1 in the Asian Junior Asia Cup hockey tournament yesterday.

Rafiq who had scored both the goals in Bangladesh's stunning 2-1 victory over fancied India on Wednesday sounded the board five times against the unfancied opponents yesterday.

Although the relatively inept Singaporeans pulled back one mainly because of the complacency of the Bangladesh boys there was no chance for a comeback.

See Page 12 col 8



Rafiqul Islam Kamal

## Foreign polls observers start arriving tomorrow

By Staff Correspondent

Around 150 foreign observers have confirmed that they would monitor the June 12 parliamentary polls, according to sources concerned.

Already the government has set up a cell for international election observers for coordinating matters concerning them.

Most of the observers, the sources said, would start arriving in Bangladesh tomorrow. Some foreign observers have already arrived after making an assessment of the pre-poll situation.

Information received last night indicated that a 30-member team of international observers based in New Delhi would arrive on June 7. A three-member Swedish team and a seven-member Cambodian team are also due on the day.

The first team comprising three monitors from Norway is due tomorrow while a 20-member team of Commonwealth observers is scheduled to arrive on June 5.

A 40-member South Asian non-governmental team of observers has intimated their intention to monitor the polls in Bangladesh. The team's efforts are being coordinated from Colombo and it is due to

### Special Article

Prof Rehman Sobhan strongly argues for a national consensus on our policy towards India, and suggests ways as to how it can come about.

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### Polls tidbits

By Staff Correspondent

With the parliamentary elections nearing, campaign in the city is taking various forms.

In Jhigatola, where supporters of three major political parties have set up election camps, likely voters can hardly escape their notice. One such voter, with a broken leg and using crutches, was also a target of the campaigners.

The voter was passing by the camps when some of the activists politely approached him. "bhai, please have a cup of tea with us." He smilingly declined. But the campaigners continued to insist. At one stage, they started pulling one of his crutches. The voter at last had to scream to get his road clear.

In Sobhanbag colony area yesterday evening, BNP supporters staged a cultural programme consisting of songs in support of sheaf of paddy and recorded speeches of late President Ziaur Rahman etc.

One of the songs was appreciated by many in the locality. The singer sang it with utmost devotion in the tune of a popular song of the Seven.

## City AL leader shot dead in Agargaon

By Staff Correspondent

A city Awami League leader and ward commissioner A S M Shahabuddin was shot dead by some armed youths at West Agargaon in the city yesterday.

The youths called him out of his residence at about 3:45 pm, fired shots in the chest, head and arms from a close range and fled away. He was rushed to the nearby A-100 Hospital and then to the Holy Family Hospital. He was later shifted to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) where doctors declared him dead, his family sources and police said.

Shahabuddin, 45, Information Secretary of the city AL, was commissioner of Ward No 41 covering Agargaon, Taltaala and parts of Shyamoli.

Killing of Shahabuddin, which follows the killing of another AL ward commissioner about three months back, sparked off widespread protests in the locality as well as in the Dhaka-9 constituency.

This correspondent came across at least five big protest processions in Agargaon, Dharmadoli and Mohammadpur areas last evening. Hazrat Abdul Alim, commissioner of Ward No 62 (Lalbagh-Azimpur areas) was shot dead in February last.

The connecting road between Shyamoli and Taltaala was sealed off by police for more than five hours from 4:30 pm to avoid traffic jam and violence, on duty policemen said. Police in riot gear were seen on the main road as well as on the narrow lanes leading to the 253 B, West Agargaon residence of the slain commissioner Shahabuddin.

Father of three, Shahabuddin was taking rest after a busy campaign for the AL candidate contesting from the Dhaka-9 constituency when a young man knocked at his door at about 3:20 pm, local people

## 5 killed in Calcutta police firing

NEW DELHI, May 31: Two people were killed and two others injured today in the eastern city of Calcutta as police fired at rioters after coming under bomb attack from angry Muslims on the second day of violence, officials said, reports AP.

Officials in Calcutta, capital of the communist-ruled state of West Bengal said the police opened fire in Ekbalpore district, where the violence broke out first on Thursday during a Muslim festival.

The United News of India (UNI) news agency quoted West Bengal's Home Minister Buddhadeb Bhattacharya as saying that the rioters lobbed a large number of bombs at the police, necessitating the firing.

The rioters broke curfew regulations and attacked the police, officials said. Police opened fire killing two people on the spot, an official said.

The Indian army was on Thursday called out in Calcutta after hundreds of Muslims, determined on staging a religious procession through a prohibited zone, attacked a police station, triggering fierce street battles.

Three protesters were killed and several injured in police firing Thursday. The violence today erupted despite the army deployment. West Bengal, a state of 67 million people bordering Bangladesh, has been ruled by communists since 1977.

## Elect AL for economic self-reliance: Hasina

GAZIPUR, May 31: Awami League President Sheikh Hasina today urged people to elect the party which she said made commitments before election only to cling to power, reports UNB.

"That party did nothing to improve the lot of common-man. What it did after coming to power was to improve their own fate," she said while addressing an election projection meeting in Tongi industrial area in the morning.

Hasina said that before the 1991 polls, the BNP made pledges to open the mills and factories shut down due to variety of reasons, including mismanagement and financial bungling.

The BNP also promised to eliminate the problem of unemployment, but instead did the contrary, she added.

Hasina said: "Closing the mills and factories and the dismissal of workers can by no means make the public sector profitable. Alternative jobs must be ensured for the workers before the closure of any factory."

In this context, she referred to the reported closure of about 5,000 mills during the 5-year rule of the BNP.

The Awami League chief urged people to elect her party candidates to enable it to restore peace and stability in the country, get rid of terrorism, and ensure food and clothing for the oppressed masses.

She reiterated her party's commitment to run the affairs of the country on the basis of national consensus.

Hasina said if elected, her party will not nationalise any private sector mills or factory.

Awami League government will try to make the existing non-profitable public sector industries profitable and take effective steps to increase production in the state-owned mills and factories.

She said if voted to power, her party will also formulate a pragmatic policy for rapid industrialisation in the private sector and invite foreign investments in the country to generate employment for the unemployed youths.

"We will ensure economic emancipation of the country by

## Don't fall prey to sweet words again: Khaleda

NARAYANGANJ, May 31: BNP Chairperson Begum Khaleda Zia, today cautioned against 'vengeance' of a party which she said was kept out of power by the people for its past misdeeds, reports UNB.

That party is now out to deceive the people by sweet words and polite behaviour in their bid to appease the people on the eve of the election as they are 'desperate to go to power by any means,' she said, without naming the Awami League.

Addressing a public meeting at the local launch ghāt in the afternoon, Begum Zia said: "Their behaviour and attitude are totally false and misleading." She called upon the people not to be swayed by their sweet talks.

People of the river port and from adjoining areas joined the meeting in their thousands to listen to the former prime minister who addressed a series of election meetings during the day in different parts of Narayanganj district and also in the capital.

The day's election meetings, addressed by Begum Zia, included those held at Nayapur Bazar in Sonargaon, Arahazar, Chittagong road crossing and Godnail in Narayanganj, and Jatabari and Dolakhal areas in the capital.

Addressing the meetings, the BNP chief continued her trade against the Awami League, accusing it of plundering national wealth while in power immediately after the liberation. It had smuggled out wealth to another country and created a famine that claimed thousands of lives, she said.

As a result of their misrule and unprecedented corruption, Bangladesh was turned into a basket case, Begum Zia said and sounded a note of warning that the party, if given a chance, would again make the country a bottomless basket.

In her speeches, the former prime minister said that here political opponents had destroyed scores of industries, particularly in the readymade garments sector, and destabilised the economy by enforcing a "so-called" non-cooperation.

## Downward trend in DSE trading

By Rafiq Hasan

A downward prevailed at the Dhaka Stock Exchange (DSE) last week mainly due to a feeling of uncertainty among the investors as the parliamentary elections are nearing, market operators said.

On an average, 54 issues incurred losses daily while only 34 issues gained and 8 remained unchanged during the five days of business in the week, DSE floor remained closed on Wednesday due to holy Ashura.

The price index and market capitalisation also fell from the previous week's positions.

The price index lost 14.81 points dropping to 864.87 points on Thursday last, the closing day of the week, from previous week's 879.68 points.

Market capitalisation lost more than Tk 100 crore, standing at Tk 5872.44 crore, as against the previous weeks Tk 5973 crore.

Although the turnover in volume remained almost the same as the previous week's average position but the average turnover in value declined.

On an average, 1 lakh 36 thousand shares and debentures worth Tk 2.92 crore exchanged hands daily last week while the average turnover in the previous week was 1 lakh 36 thousand in volume and Tk 3.01 crore in value.

Market Operators said the trading was also influenced by money crunch in the market, early profit taking attitude of a section of investors, rising call money rate and tight credit policy of the government which shrunk the money supply in the market.

Intiaz Hossain, chairman of the DSE said that a downward trend prevailed in the market as the prices of a number of blue chips shares went down recently.

But, he said, the market is still steady.

He pointed out that the coming elections is affecting the market, which also caused fall of market indicators.

The DSE chairman, however, hoped that the share market would boom after the

## Election dialogue

By Staff Correspondent

Only two out of six contestants from Dhaka-9 constituency of the Jatiya Sangsad showed up at an election dialogue session held in the city yesterday.

The first ever such dialogue, organized by the Narayanganj, however, evoked much enthusiasm and the session was attended by a large number of voters of Dharmadoli-Mohammadpur area.

The two contestants who attended the session — Dr Kamal Hossain of Gano Forum and Kazi Feroz Rashid of Jatiya Party — responded to voters' queries relating to the June 12 parliamentary polls. The questions ranged from party policies and ideologies to national interests.

Talking to The Daily Star, some voters attending the dialogue said such sessions would help increase accountability of the candidates to their electorate. Such programmes should be held in other constituencies also and all the candidates should face their



BNP nominee in Dhaka-6 constituency Mirza Abbas seeking votes in South Mugdopara (L) while his Awami League opponent Saber Hossain Chowdhury making door-to-door campaign in Hazipara area (R) yesterday. — Star photo

## A day-long visit to Dhaka-6 Female party workers visit door to door

By Reaz Ahmad

Female workers of candidates have started door-to-door campaign in Motijheel-Sabujbagh area (Dhaka-6) as election fever gripped the city with only 10 days left for the hustings.

During a day-long visit to the areas yesterday, this correspondent found groups of female workers of both BNP and Awami League visiting residences of the voters, particularly female ones. They were distributing leaflets and projecting identities and pledges of their respective party candidates.

Although 23 candidates are contesting from the Dhaka-6 constituency, the most talked-about candidates are BNP's Mirza Abbas, a former mayor of Dhaka city and Awami League's Saber Hossain Chowdhury, an industrialist and a sports organiser. There are three and a half lakh voters in the area. Saber is a new face in politics compared to Mozaffar Hossain Paltu who was also an aspirant of AL ticket for contesting in the constituency.

Saber, who also owns a well-circulated vernacular

## Hasina's election meeting in Lalbagh today

By Staff Correspondent

Awami League chief Sheikh Hasina will address an election meeting at Asrabad Madrassah, Kamrangirchar in the city's Lalbagh area at 4 pm today.

According to a party press release, the AL president is scheduled to begin a two-day campaign tour of Comilla, Feni, Noakhali and Chittagong districts tomorrow. This tour would be followed by another two-day electioneering tour of Barisal, Jhalakathi, Protopur, Madaripur and Faridpur districts from June 4.