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## By-elections to 15 JS seats today

By Staff Correspondent

The country's two major political parties, Awami League (AL) and Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP), face each other in the by-elections to 15 Jatiya Sangsad (JS) seats today.

The two parties have meanwhile reached a tacit general understanding with their smaller political partners to contest the by-polls, according to sources in the parties.

The seats were vacated by Awami League, BNP and Jatiya Party legislators who were elected from more than one constituencies in the June 12 general elections.

Of the 15 seats, four — Bogra 6 and 7, Laxmipur 2 and Chittagong 1 — were vacated by BNP chairperson Begum Khaleda Zia, four — Rangpur 2, 5 and 6 and Kurigram 3 — by JP chair-

man HM Ershad, two — Khulna 1 and Bagerhat 1 — by Prime Minister and AL chief Sheikh Hasina, one — Sylhet 4 — by Saifur Rahman of BNP, one — Chittagong 13 — by Oli Ahmed of BNP, one — Sariapur 1 — by Abdur Razzak of Awami League, one — Sirajganj 1 — by Mohammad Nasim of Awami League and one — Perojpur 2 — by Anwar Hossain Monju of the Jatiya Party.

A total of 26,23,711 voters are scheduled to exercise their franchise in 1,256 polling centres in the 15 constituencies. Some 73 candidates — 50 from different political parties and 23 as independents — are contesting the by-polls.

Awami League and BNP have set their candidates in all the 15 constituencies, while the JP has set candidates in 10 constituencies and the Jamaat-Islami in only one constituency.

The ruling Awami League, Jatiya Party and Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal (JSD) led by Shipping Minister ASM Abdur Rob have meanwhile reached a tacit electoral understanding against the BNP candidates, sources in the parties said separately.

An office bearer of the JP told The Daily Star Tuesday night that the issue of facing the September 5 by-elections came up for discussion when Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, JP chairman HM Ershad and JSD chief ASM Abdur Rob met briefly on August 19 last. The

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## Arsenic poisoning 11 die, 100 fall sick drinking tubewell water in Pabna

PABNA, Sept 4: At least 11 people have died in a village of the district after drinking tubewell water bearing arsenic gas, health officials here said today, reports UNB.

They said another 100 people had fallen sick due to the poisonous effect of the gas in different areas of the district.

The dead were identified as Taslima, 22, Moksed Ali, 45, Majbar Rahman, 55, Bazur Rahman, 35, Baby, 25, Jahannara Khatun, 15, Kanak, 12, Siddique Rahman, 40, Almas Ali, 22, Mohir, 10 and Nishat, 16, of Charrupur village.

A six-member team led by civil surgeon Dr AKM Fazlul Huq confirmed that they had died due to the poisonous effect of arsenic in tubewell water.

"They fell sick by drinking

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## I K Gujral speaks to Daily Star 'I want to open a new chapter in Indo-Bangladesh relations'

By Mahfuz Anam, back from New Delhi

"India is determined to solve the water issue with Bangladesh, and I am coming to your country with an open mind and an open heart on this issue. However it must be kept in mind that India has its own limitations".

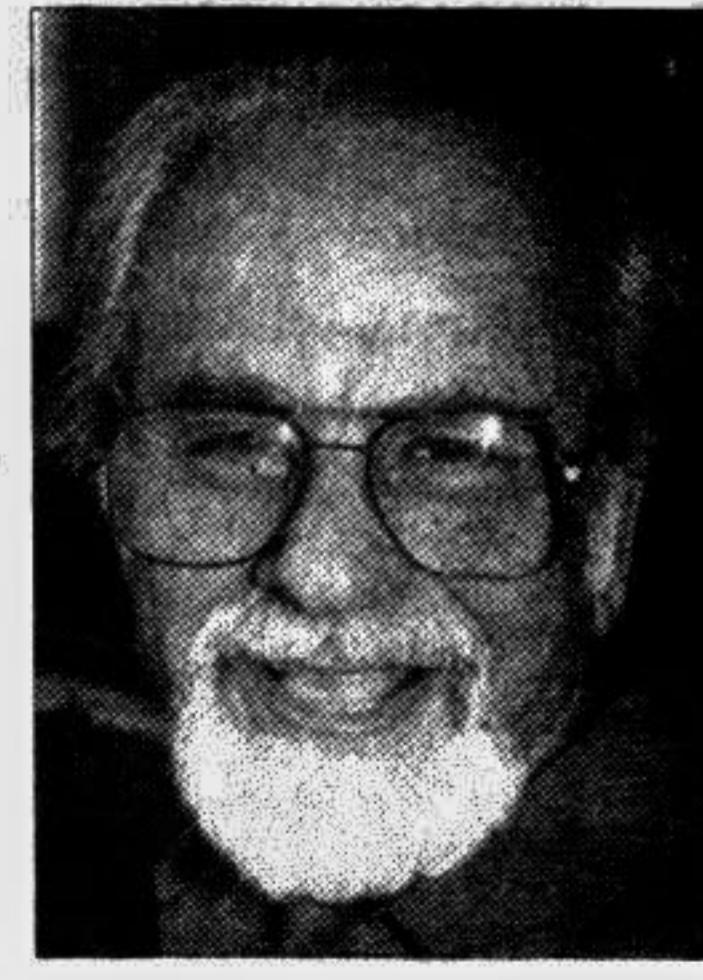
This was stated by the Indian Foreign Minister in an exclusive interview with The Daily Star on 30th August at the former's office in the Indian parliament. "We cannot live up to every expectation of Bangladesh. However within our limits, I intend to go all the way to solve the problems. I am coming to Bangladesh to open a new chapter in Bangladesh-India relations. It is also the wish of the Indian Prime Minister."

"It is my dream to see, during my tenure in the foreign office, that Bangladesh and India join hands in a whole range of cooperative relationship leading to prosperity for both."

Bangladesh and India must look at a wide range of possibilities and not make their a "one issue" relationship, he said. The attitude of "All or Nothing" in any one area has produced no results in the past several years leading to missed opportunities in many other areas.

Bangladesh, India, Nepal and Bhutan can form a dynamic area of growth he said. "Poverty of this region is unnatural because we have everything — enormous natural resources, huge reservoir of skilled and unskilled manpower, and also a huge market", the Indian FM

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I K Gujral

## US missiles strike Iraq again

BAGHDAD, Sept 4: Air raid sirens blared before dawn today as the United States launched cruise missiles at Iraqi air defense sites for the second time in two days, reports agencies.

In Washington, US officials said 17 missiles were fired from three ships and one submarine in the Gulf, targeting Iraqi air defense systems in southern Iraq. The targets weren't destroyed in the first strike, they said.

Though the targets were well south of the Iraqi capital, air raid sirens went off shortly before sunrise at 5:30 am (0130 GMT).

The purpose of the attacks is to "suppress Iraq's air defense capability in the south as the United States and its Western allies widen a no-fly zone in southern Iraq today to the 33rd parallel, closer to Baghdad from the 32nd parallel, a US official said.

Large explosions were heard in Baghdad this evening.

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Women and their children passing by a house destroyed by US missile attacks in southern Iraq on Tuesday. —AFP photo

## 9 killed, 30 injured in Rangpur road accident

RANGPUR, Sept 4: At least nine persons were killed, five of them on the spot and thirty others injured in a road accident here early today.

The accident occurred at around 4:30 am when a Chilmari-bound night coach from Dhaka made a head-on collision with a truck on the Rangpur-Kurigram road at Dhar-

meswar, 12 kilometres from Rangpur town.

Four of the victims died at the Rangpur Medical College Hospital (RMCH). Of the injured, ten persons were admitted to the RMCH while others released after first aid.

Eye witnesses and Kaunia thana police said, the coach RS Paribahan with at least fifty passengers on board was moving in high speed. Suddenly a truck coming from the opposite direction collided head-on with the night coach. The coach that was completely damaged skidded off the road. The truck was partially damaged.

Police could not identify the deceased. Hospital sources, however, identified two of the deceased as Sajju, 32, driver of the ill-fated night coach and Abdul Hye, 34, a passenger.

The bodies have been sent to the RMCH morgue for autopsy.

## Indian FM arrives tomorrow

By Staff Correspondent

Indian External Affairs Minister I K Gujral's four-day official visit to Dhaka is expected to "break new grounds" in bilateral relations between Bangladesh and India.

Gujral arrives in the capital on a special flight tomorrow evening.

Describing the visit as "very significant", a high official of the foreign ministry said, "it is part of the process that have been initiated by the two new governments to promote friendly cooperation and understanding at the political

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## Yasmin murder case comes up in court today

From Reaz Ahmad

BOGRA, Sept 4: The Yasmin murder case comes up in the District and Session Judges Court, Dinajpur tomorrow.

The court will decide if the Yasmin murder case will be shifted to any other district judge court.

Investigating Officer (IO) of the case Mahfuzur Rahman told The Daily Star today that if the case is not transferred, then a date is likely to be fixed for hearing.

Yasmin, 14, a maid, was al-

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## Law & order in Barisal Divn reviewed River police, coast guard will be strengthened: PM

BHOLA, Sept 4: Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina today said that the river police and the coast guard will be strengthened to protect the fishermen and others from the clutch of the pirates, reports BSS.

Addressing a review meeting on law and order and development initiatives in Barisal Division at the Bhola Circuit House, the Prime Minister said that her government was pledge-bound to ensure safety and security of the life and property of the people as well as free society from the curse of terrorism.

The Prime Minister said while her party was in the Opposition, it move the River Police Bill in the House on a Private Members Day and it was passed through vote on January 9, 1993. But subsequently the BNP government did not take appropriate measures to materialise the bill. Meanwhile, another bill for formation of coast guard was also passed but it was still to be materialised properly.

Commerce and Industry Minister Tofael Ahmed, Agriculture, Food, Relief and Disaster Management Minister Motia Chowdhury, Home Minister Rafiqul Islam Bir Uttam, Major (ret'd) Hafizuddin Ahmed, MP also spoke on the occasion.

Nargis Ara Haq MP, Mrs Mahmuda Sagor MP, Secretary to Prime Minister Dr Mohiuddin Khan Alamgir, Inspector General of Police Azizul Haq and senior officials were present.

Among others, Divisional Commissioner of Barisal, DIG of Barisal Range and Deputy Commissioners and Police Superintendents of Barisal, Bhola, Patuakhali, Barguna, Perojpur and Jhalakathi apprised the Prime Minister of various aspects of law and order as well as development works in their respective districts.

The prime minister once again directed the authorities to recover illegal arms and nab terrorists irrespective of their identity. "Take drastic action against such anti-social elements whoever he might be or whatever powerful or influential he is", the prime minister told the officials.

Sheikh Hasina made it clear that her government was sincere in recovering arms and nabbing criminals and no interference would be made from the side of the government in this regard. "If any of my party members requests any of you in the administration to release any arrested criminals do not hesitate to tell me directly," she said but added "be cautious so that nobody in the name of arms recovery, is harassed unnecessarily."

Criticising the role of the Opposition Sheikh Hasina said that the situation in various educational institutions including that of Dhaka University was being vitiated in a very planned way. "We have seen many bloodbath in Dhaka University. But neither the Vice-Chancellor resigned nor the classes were suspended," she said adding that today such things were being happened for obtaining political gain. She, however, expressed the hope that good sense would prevail and the Opposition would place national interest over party gains.

Turning to local problems, the Prime Minister said necessary steps would be taken to

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## AL worker stabbed to death in Luxmipur-2

From Mizan Ali

LAXMIPUR, Sept 4: Tension mounted in Luxmipur-2 constituency and its adjacent areas following the death of Abdus Sattar, an Awami League worker who was stabbed during a clash Tuesday, at the Sadar Hospital.

During the day today, AL brought out a mourning procession blaming the BNP for the killing.

Refuting the allegations, Shamsul Alam, President of BNP district committee, alleged that the AL workers had beaten

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## AL desperate to win bypolls: Khaleda

BNP chairperson and Leader of the Opposition Begum Khaleda Zia expressed her doubts about the fairness of by-elections today saying the administration has been asked to do everything for the ruling party's victory, reports UNB.

Addressing the bank employees at her official residence in the city yesterday, she warned the government of launching street movement if repressions against the people, particularly her partymen, are not stopped.

"Don't push us to the streets. Stop repression and harassment on the people," Begum Zia said adding that the BNP would

decide its next course of action after judging neutrality and fairness of the by-election.

She termed the by-election a test for the government and said, "We will see how they pass this test."

The Leader of the Opposition said that the ruling party has become desperate to win the by-election. "It has been harassing the BNP workers by filing false cases against them at places where BNP's position is strong."

She alleged that BNP workers are not even allowed to stay in their houses due to police harassment so that they cannot play their role as election

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## JCD, BCL agree to restore peace at DU

By DU Correspondent

Leaders of different student bodies including the Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) and the Chhatra League (BCL) in a joint meeting last night reached a consensus that normal academic activities at the Dhaka University would be resumed tomorrow, meeting source said.

JCD leaders agreed that they would withdraw its indefinite strike that forced suspension of classes and other academic activities at the DU from August 25. Following the JCD enforced strike, the university authorities had postponed all examinations till September 12.

The consensus was reached in a joint meeting of JCD, BCL and Ganatantrik Chhatra Oikya (GCO) with acting Vice Chancellor Prof Shahidul Hossain

Ahmed. The four-hour peace meeting which began at about 8pm was attended by central leaders of the student organisations and the acting proctor of the university, Dr Nurunnabi Khan, meeting sources said.

Leaders of the GCO had taken an initiative for a joint meeting at the requested of the acting VC to resolve the ongoing crisis that began following a series of clashes between the JCD and BCL in the middle of last month.

The joint meeting also agreed that the resident students who were staying outside their halls would be rehabilitated in their respective halls.

To rehabilitate the "genuine" resident students in their dorm-

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## Flood situation worsens further in N-dists

By Staff Correspondent

The overall flood situation in Rajshahi, Chapainawabganj, Pabna and Kushtia has further worsened with more areas going under water.

Our Rajshahi correspondent reports: The flood situation in Rajshahi and Chapainawabganj districts has now become alarming. Village after village is being inundated as the water-levels of the Padma, the Mohanada, the Punarvaba, the Pagla and the Baranai continued to rise.

Two-thirds of the Chapainawabganj town are under water. The Judge Court and the Sadar Hospital area were flooded this afternoon.

Four unions of Gomostapur and Nachol thanas were inundated yesterday. The army has been deployed to rescue the ma-

roofed people. The district administration has opened eleven centres where some 3882 people have taken shelter.

Two town protection embankments were washed away by the strong current of the flood water.

All educational institutions in Chapainawabganj Sadar and Shibganj thanas have been closed for an indefinite period.

In Rajshahi, vast areas of 17 unions of four thanas were inundated.

Some forty families took shelter in a centre opened today in Godagarj thana. About one thousand people took shelter in Khademul Islam School, Badurtoia Madrasa, Riverview School and in some other areas in the city corporation area.

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**How an automobile contract makes way for realizing your long...long dream for a NEW CAR...**

Recently a contract was concluded between Korea's famous automobile manufacturing industry Kia Motors and Meghna Automobiles (a subsidiary of Meghna Group) of Bangladesh. The contract was signed by MR. YOU, JAI BHUM, Manager Overseas Sales Dept. of Kia Motors and MR. MD. MIZANUR RAHMAN, Managing Director of Meghna Group.

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