

# 3 killed, 130 injured in pre-election clashes

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Three persons were killed and at least 130 others injured in pre-election clashes between the activists of AL and BNP in different parts of the country yesterday and on Tuesday night.

Two of the dead were AL activists and the others was a BNP supporter.

AL activists, identified as Ahmed Ali and his son Babul Mandal, were killed in a clash between the activists of two rival political parties at Khamarpaikagachha in Sadar upazila of Sirajganj district.

The BNP supporter, Mangal Matbar, 50, was killed in a clash at Nagarkanda upazila in Faridpur district.

Our Sirajganj Correspondent quoting family and police sources said Ahmed Ali and his son Babul Mandal were chopped to death by BNP activists during the clash that ensued over tearing of BNP candidate's posters in Khamarpaikagachha area at 1 pm. At least 22 others were injured and 10 houses ransacked during the clash.

The injured were admitted to Sirajganj General Hospital and Ibn Sina Hospital.

District administration has deployed police, BDR personnel in Khamarpaikagachha area.

A murder case was filed with sadar thana. Police

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# AL's 5-year rule golden era, says Hasina

REAZ AHMAD, from Rangpur

Awami League President Sheikh Hasina yesterday said that the five-year rule of her party was a "golden era" in the history of Bangladesh.

"Not a single person died from hunger. We produced 25 lakh tonnes of surplus foodgrains in the country," she said.

The immediate past prime minister was addressing a series of election meetings for her party candidates in Rangpur, Kurigram and Lalmonirhat districts till late into the night. She also addressed some roadside meetings.

On the second day of her three-day campaign, Sheikh Hasina spent some time at Pirganj under Rangpur-6 constituency from where she is contesting the coming elec-

tion. She spent about an hour at her husband's paternal home at Fatehpur village in Pirganj, offered fateha at the graves of her father-in-law and mother-in-law, met her in-laws and relatives and had lunch there.

She told the electorate that if her party is voted to power this time, none would remain homeless in Bangladesh.

"All the past governments talked long and worked less. My government worked more and talked less".

At every meeting in Pirganj, Hasina made allegations against Jatiya Party (Ershad) candidate Noor Mohammad Mondal, her main rival in Rangpur-6.

"My government had sanctioned crores of taka for development of

Pirganj but the former MP (Mondal) misappropriated substantial amounts from the funds. He is now spending the funds for his election campaign.

"He (Mondal) is a betrayer. He assured me that he would contest from Pirganj on Awami League ticket this time. But he left Jatiya Party (Manju) to join JP (Ershad) and is now contesting with 'plough' election symbol."

Hasina alleged that Mondal changed many parties. "You (people) should remain alert against such a politician."

Hasina addressed a huge public meeting at Pirganj Government High School ground, summing up her over three-hour mass contact in her constituency.

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## PCJSS to resist Oct 1 polls in 3 hill districts

UNB, Rangamati

Parbatya Chattagram Jano Sanghati Samity (PCJSS) will hold a grand rally at the local stadium Friday to rally support for resisting the October 1 parliamentary elections in three hill districts.

PCJSS President and Chairman of CHT Regional Council Jyotirindra Bodhipriyo Larma alias Santu Larma will address the rally as main speaker. PCJSS central leader Rupayan Dewan will preside.

Presidium member of Gono Forum Pankoj Bhattacharya and convenor of Sammilito Samajik Andolon Ajoy Kar will be present as special guests.

It is learnt that PCJSS will announce a tough programme from the rally to officially reject and resist the election in three hill districts.

## US appreciates Dhaka's stand

UNB, Dhaka

The United States of America highly appreciated Bangladesh's positive response to the US request for possible assistance regarding the situation arising out of the recent terrorist attacks in New York and Washington.

US Ambassador Mary Ann Peters stated this while talking to Chief Adviser Latifur Rahman when she called on him at his office yesterday.

"Washington took a special notice of Bangladesh's position which will have good impact on future bilateral relationship," said adding "to have a friend like Bangladesh at this hour is very important for America and particularly gratifying."

The US envoy regretted some isolated incidents in the United States in the aftermath of the terrorist attacks and said adequate protection had been taken for mosques and other vulnerable places.

About the upcoming general election in Bangladesh, she said, "The USA is very optimistic that the elections would be held in a free, fair

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## Dengue: One more dies in city, 53 hospitalised

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

One more dengue patient died and 53 were admitted to different city hospitals and clinics in 48 hours till 6 pm yesterday.

The dead was identified as Tofael Ahmed, 50. He was admitted to Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) on Sunday and died on Monday night.

Death toll from Dengue Haemorrhagic Fever stood at 15 and 914 patients were hospitalised since the outbreak of dengue fever in May this year.

Of the 53 dengue patients hospitalised in 48 hours, DMCH admitted 11, Dhaka Shishu Hospital five, Holy Family Red Crescent Hospital 19, Shaheed Suhrawardy Hospital three, Central Hospital nine, Samorita Hospital four and Ali Care Hospital two.

Meanwhile, Dhaka City Corporation (DCC) has geared up its cleanliness drive in areas identified as 'risk' areas. Experts, however, said this is not enough.

Except a few, all the 90 wards of DCC have high density of Aedes mosquito which transmits dengue

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# Move to save 'dying' sugarcane industry

## BSIDF places recommendations

REAZ AHMAD

The caretaker government is considering a check on the staggering revenue loss the country incurs due to cross-border smuggling of sugar.

Finance Advisor Hafizuddin Khan yesterday told The Daily Star that the issue was brought to his notice; and the Bangladesh Sugarcane Industry Development Forum (BSIDF) submitted a paper with recommendations to save the limping, yet prospective sugarcane industry.

"An inter-ministerial consultation is needed to address this issue of national and economic interests," Khan said.

According to an expert estimate, Bangladesh incurs a loss of Tk 350 crore in revenues a year thanks to

the smuggled sugar that meets almost half of the demand.

At least half a million metric tons of smuggled sugar enters the Bangladesh market each year due to wide disparity in prices between the smuggled and the domestically produced sugar, noted experts.

The cost of production of sugar in the state-run mills stands at Tk 45 per kilogram, which is sold at Tk 27.50, which amounts to a loss of Tk 17.50 per kilogram or Tk 175 crore for the production of one lakh MT at home.

The loss is subsidised by the government from Tk 225 crore in revenues earned through import of some two and a half lakh MT of sugar from external markets.

Although the government imports sugar at a much cheaper

rate, it sells the product at a higher price to protect the domestic sugar industry, but penalising consumers.

The experts said it is difficult to keep smuggling of sugar in check, as the smuggled produce is cheap, compared to the domestic and the imported ones.

A delegation of BSIDF recently held two meetings with the finance advisor and handed him a set of recommendations. Former secretary of the government and present president of the BSIDF Nazrul Islam and ex-DG of the Bangladesh Agriculture Research Institute (BARI) and current Secretary General of BSIDF Mohammad

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Members of the Council of Advisors led by Chief Advisor Latifur Rahman called on President Shahabuddin Ahmed at the Bangabhaban yesterday.

# People will bury AL thru' ballot, says Khaleda

REZAUL KARIM AND AMINUL ISLAM, from Mymensingh

BNP Chairperson Khaleda has said people of the country are now waiting to 'bury Awami League politically' through ballot in the October 1 general election.

The people will not vote for the 'corrupt, terrorist, repressive and fascist' Awami League (AL) again and will reject it in the polls, she said while addressing a mammoth election meeting at Mymensingh Circuit House ground yesterday.

Tens of thousands of people from far and near converged on the meeting venue to listen to the former prime minister. They started gathering at the venue since morning.

Amid repeated clappings and applause, the BNP chief said the four-party alliance led by her party would form the next government after the polls. No 'evil force' would be able to resist victory of "sheaf of paddy" (BNP's election symbol) this time.

The meeting was organised in favour of BNP candidate in Mymensingh-4 (Sadar) constitu-

ency Delwar Hossain Khan Dulu on the concluding day of her two-day electioneering in greater Mymensingh district. She also introduced other BNP and alliance candidates in the district at the election meetings.

"I wish to visit all the 300 constituencies in the country, but I am not being able to do so due to shortage of time. I believe that this time people are not waiting for me ... They are waiting for October 1 to give a befitting response to AL misrule," she said.

The AL came to power in 1996 not through voting but by rigging polls, capturing polling centres and through administrative coup. But this time the people are highly alert and will not allow the 'evil forces' to rig polls and snatch victory of the BNP-led alliance, Khleda said.

"If voted to power, we will put corrupt Awami League men on trial and take account of the public wealth and money looted by them while in power."

Khaleda said that instead of creating job opportunity for the youths, AL rulers had given arms

and phensidyl to them to destroy the backbone of the nation.

In this context, she said if the alliance is voted to power, it would create employment opportunity for the youths and women by setting up IT village and IT institutions in each district, providing loans for self-employment and setting up industries. "We will also take up such programmes under which youths could get good jobs abroad."

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## BTV, ETV to telecast polls results live

UNB, Dhaka

Election Commission finally decided that Bangladesh Television and Ekushey Television would jointly telecast the election results live from its Secretariat.

It was decided at a meeting of the EC with representatives of the state-owned BTV and private ETV amid differences among two major political parties on the issue.

Awami League was demanding that the private channels be allowed to directly telecast results while BNP was in favour of only BTV for what it said to avoid any confusion.

Chief Election Commissioner MA Syed presided over the meeting that, for the first time in country's history, allowed a private channel to telecast live the results from EC control room.

The meeting emphasised ensuring transparency and reliability in disseminating election results and took the decision of joint telecast by the BTV and ETV.

Three Election Commissioners, senior officials at the EC Secretariat and representatives of the BTV and ETV were present. They will meet again today to chalk out modalities of the transmission.

Briefing newsmen a spokesman at the EC Secretariat said there would be a common booth and common presenters for the two TV channels for live telecast of the election results.

Replying to a volley of queries as to why a private channel is being allowed for live telecast from the EC control room he said the decision was taken much earlier as all media should have access.

"Only change that took place is

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## 2 Bangladeshis gunned down by BSF

UNB, Panchagarh

Two Bangladeshis were gunned down by BSF at Bodhgaoon border in Atuari upazila Tuesday night, triggering fierce tensions in the frontier areas.

They were identified as Shahidul, 25, and Dailur Rahman, 30, of Nadidangi village.

Locals said an Indian Border Security Force patrol team under Kamarganj BOP opened fire on the victims taking them for smugglers. "Both died instantly in the firing."

Officials said BDR in a flag meeting with BSF yesterday at demarcation pillar no 403 at Bodhgaoon strongly protested the killings.

At the talks, BSF agreed to hand over bodies of the Bangladeshi nationals, which were kept at Royganj morgue in India, BDR sources said.

Both sides strengthened patrolling the frontier as tensions were heightening.



Army personnel preparing to camp at Lauhajang in the trouble-torn Munshiganj district. Government on Tuesday deployed army in four districts.

# Trouble-torn Munshiganj Army deployment restores confidence among people

MUSTAK HOSSAIN Back From Munshiganj

Deployment of army has restored confidence among people of trouble-torn Munshiganj that they would be able to cast vote without fear in the coming election.

"We welcome our army brothers in our district. We are very happy. We hope we will be able to cast vote without fear," said Pear Mohammad at Tungibari.

Incidents of violence will be reduced now, he said.

Another person at Baligaon preferring anonymity said, "We were afraid that we would not be able to cast our vote. But now we feel confident".

Businessman Salehuddin said, "We also need Navy personnel here because the area is surrounded by rivers and crisscrossed by canals."

Local leaders of arch rivals Awami League and BNP have also welcomed deployment of army.

Four-party alliance candidate in Munshiganj-2 constituency Mizanur Rahman Sinha said, "I hope law and order will improve in the district following deployment of

army and people will be able cast vote freely."

Expressing the same sentiment, BNP candidate for Munshiganj-3 seat and former information minister M. Shamsul Islam said there is still a huge number of illegal arms in the district. The administration should take immediate steps to recover those.

Local Awami League leaders also welcomed deployment of army and said this will reduce polls-related violence.

Mohammad Haider Ali, Deputy Commissioner of Munshiganj, said deployment of army will help reduce incidents of violence in the district.

"This was essential in Munshiganj, one of the most violence-prone districts of the country," Ali told The Daily Star yesterday.

Asked about recovery of illegal arms and arrest of terrorists, the DC said there has been substantial progress and the drive will continue till September 30.

Maj. M Towhid Hossain, in charge of the army camp

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