

## Stern measures: EC

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the expenditures for the following purposes like printing of poster with more than one colour, on imported paper and as per EC's prescribed size, erection of gate, erection of pandal measuring not more than 400 square feet and making of banner.

The circular mentioned that electoral laws do not allow use of more than three loud speakers in one constituency at a time, setting up of more than one election camp in each union or municipal ward and one central election camp or office in each constituency.

It said the rules also prohibit entertainment of voters, use of truck, bus, car, taxi, motor cycle, speed boat etc., hiring any transport or water vessel for carrying voters, illumination, use of candidate's

portrait or election symbol with more than one colour, display of election symbol larger than the EC prescribed size and wall writing.

The size of the election symbol will not exceed five metres and the size of poster 23"x18".

Violation of the RPO would be considered as "corruption and crime" under Article 73 and the punishment for this is two to seven years' imprisonment, the circular said.

The EC has instructed all concerned to erase all the wall writings immediately and said candidates would be solely responsible for violation of the code of conduct.

It instructed election officials and law enforcing agencies to take action as per rule for strict implementation of the code of conduct.

## Delhi reacts sharply

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have centuries-old historical and cultural links, the terrorism emanating from Afghanistan has affected India. "So, it is quite legitimate that India has interest in whatever is happening in Afghanistan."

Analysts here attribute Musharraf's diatribe against India in yesterday's speech to his bid to hard-sell his regime's decision to extend "unstinted cooperation to the US to go after bin Laden in the face of mounting opposition from radical" jihadi groups in Pakistan, which resented Islamabad's extending any kind of support to Washington in its mission.

The easiest way to try and mollify the radical groups is to play the anti-India card in Pakistan, the analysts said.

Meanwhile, India has launched a diplomatic initiative to reach out to the Islamic world when External Affairs Minister Jaswant Singh spoke to his Iranian counterpart Kamal Kharazzi on telephone yesterday and sought Tehran's support for the global coalition against terrorism. Iranian ambassador to India Mohammed Moosavi had a meeting with Home Minister Lal Krishna Advani.

Singh is understood to have impressed upon Kharazzi that Iran's participation in an international

alliance against terrorism would ensure that it was not aimed at targeting Islam.

"Islam can simply not be equated with terrorism and India and Iran need to work together that this does not happen," Singh told the Iranian minister, sources say. Singh also conveyed to Kharazzi that the battle against terrorism was not confined to any individual but against a system that breeds extremist violence.

Analysts here feel Iran's joining the global coalition against terrorism can lead to a thaw in relations between Tehran and Washington frozen since the American hostage crisis in 1979. The mayor of Tehran is reported to have sent a message to his New York counterpart, condoling the deaths in September 11 terror strikes in New York and Washington. This, the analysts said, was the first official-level contact between the US and Iran since 1979.

US Secretary of State Colin Powell, in his press briefing in Washington recently, appeared to take a positive note of the message from Tehran's Mayor saying this was a change from Iran's traditional posture towards the United States and Washington's long-held view of Iran.

## Stiff challenge

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act of terrorism" on their supporters and campaigners and for torching election camps.

In the last one week, two political activists were killed in separate incidents. They were Manjur Rashid, AL nominee's official proposer in the election, and Nadeem, a BNP activist. Apart from the two killings, the law enforcers termed the situation "almost normal".

In their campaign, pledges of the two main contenders are almost same. Terming Keraniganj a "dark behind the light", Bipu and Aman have promised voters that if elected, their prime task would be to turn Keraniganj into a satellite town with modern facilities.

Infrastructure development, construction of more bridges linking the upazila with the capital city from more points and construction of a river port at Pangaon are their common pledges.

Aman expressed his dismay over the existing law and order situation and demanded deployment of troops, BDR and adequate number of police personnel at every polling station for a free and fair election. "We are only depending on the administration for help during polls," said Aman.

On the other hand, Bipu branded Aman as a 'god father' of terrorist and said the former MP gave Keraniganj nothing but terrorism.

"People are now hostage in the hand of terrorists and Aman who is accused in at least 63 cases".

The AL candidate also alleged that Aman's men are continuously threatening some 68,000 minority voters, known as Awami League's vote bank in the area.

He alleged that Aman increased the number of voters by falsifying the voter list in Hazratpur union, where the former MP's village home is located. Out of 24,000 inhabitants there, some 23,000 were enrolled as voters, he claimed.

According to local people, most of the general voters are yet decide whom to vote for. "We will see for some days more," said Abul Hasan, a businessman.

### Govt denies

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seaports and airfields for possible multinational action to combat terrorism," the official announcement on Tuesday said. The two governments will work out the procedural details in this respect, it was decided.

Sam's reaction came in response to reports published in a section of the press that US fighter planes might land in Dhaka airport in a day or two to examine the facilities available here.

Sam, who hosted a lunch for the diplomatic correspondents at the state guesthouse "Padma" here yesterday, said that Bangladesh government, did not receive any such request from the US government. "When such request comes, we will let you know," he told the newsmen.

## Laden too poor

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ideologue who helped President Omar al-Beshir attain power in a 1989 coup, told AFP that bin Laden "has squandered all of his money and has become penniless."

Mahdi, sister of former prime minister Sadek al-Mahdi, said bin Laden "usually does not deny any act he carries out."

She expressed astonishment at why the Israeli intelligence agency Mossad was not accused of the attacks.

Bin Laden, a disowned member of a wealthy Saudi family which runs a construction empire, lived in Sudan for about five years until 1996 when he was deported for undeclared reasons.

Though he was never seen in public, bin Laden had extensive businesses in Sudan, including the Al-Muhajir construction company which built the Khartoum-Atbara highway and began work on a huge commercial complex project in Khartoum centre which now stands incomplete.

He also ran trading enterprises, including Taba Commercial Company, likewise in Khartoum, as well as a vast agricultural project in Gezira State, central Sudan.

But he reportedly had many other business that were not public knowledge.

Sudanese officials say that all of bin Laden's businesses have been

liquidated since his departure.

In Washington, a US State Department spokesman said Thursday that the US government is seeking evidence linking bin Laden with the gum arabic industry in Sudan.

Gum arabic is imported into the United States under special licences and is a key ingredient in many soft drinks, food products, inks and glues.

Reports dating back years have alleged that in the 1990s, bin Laden held a stake in The Gum Arabic Co. of Sudan Ltd., which controls all gum arabic exports from Sudan. It denies any connection to him.

### BIWTA

**FROM PAGE 1**  
Jahangir Alam, Abdul Malek, Giasuddin Khandokar, Faruq Khan and Shah Newaz. The BIWTA has a list of 222 illegally constructed houses which will be demolished soon.

Meanwhile, Narayanganj Pourashava also evicted more than 100 wayside structures at Fatullah which at one stage led to a hot altercation and scuffle between the officials of the pourashava and shopkeepers resulting in injury of 10 persons. The injured were treated locally.

### Samad Azad

**FROM PAGE 12**  
dent Syed Abu Nosor, the rally was conducted by the district General Secretary ANM Shafiqul Haque, with AL nominee for Sylhet-1 constituency AMA Muhith as the special guest. Among others, district Joint Secretary Iftekhar Hossain Shamim and district BCL President Shaful Alam Khan Nadel addressed the rally.

Awami League would win all 19 seats of four districts in Sylhet, he predicted.

AMA Muhith said, "I have a dream to establish an enlightened Sylhet."

Babul Hossain Babul, a former chairman of Sylhet Sadar upazila and Sylhet Pourashava, also once general secretary of Sylhet district Chhatra League, fought the 1996 parliamentary election on a JP ticket and secured the 3rd position. This time round, he tried hard to get JP nomination, but to no avail. He also tried to join the BNP, but failed. Babul joined the BNP in the period of Ziaur Rahman. Later, he was with the JP. This time after 20 years, he joined the AL.

### 3 Bangladeshis

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His identification was not immediately known.

Meanwhile, BSF troops opened fire killing Haque and Quddus at Dabri frontier in Haripur upazila of Thakurgaon district while they were going to work in a farmland.

"Later the BSF personnel took away the bodies into India," a report reaching here said.

Earlier on Tuesday night, two Bangladeshi nationals were killed in BSF firing at Bodhgaoon frontier in Atwari upazila of Panchagarh. Their bodies were handed over to BDR yesterday.

### Banners

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can set up a central office and a camp in each ward. The parties agreed to remove the additional camps.

"It is a very positive sign that the candidates agreed to follow the law of the Election Commission," another police officer said.

A large number of camps create troubles among the rival groups, he said.

"Now if we find any banner and more than one camp in a ward, we will demolish them."

### ME ceasefire

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peace process, can only meet Ararat after 48 hours of total calm.

The premier's spokesman Ranaan Gissin reiterated Israel's refusal to negotiate under fire, calling Ararat's ceasefire declaration a "tactical rather than strategic decision."

"In that tactical decision he thought he could get away with some level of violence which would enable him to show he has managed to drag Israel to negotiate under fire. And that of course will never happen," Gissin stressed.

And he warned Israel would not put up with the attacks for much longer.

"We are not going to tolerate for long a situation where we sit idly by and they keep shooting at us. If we see that this continues we will take the necessary action in our self defence," a clear threat to attack Palestinian militants.

### Govt response

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General Rashid had worked in UN peace keeping missions and was the Chief Military Observer in Georgia for nearly two years.

He was in East Timor recently to see the performance of Bangladesh peacekeepers there. On his way back, he attended a security seminar in Malaysia.

Bangladesh now tops the list of UN peacekeepers in several troubled areas of the world.

### EC determined

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be possible to send those to the Returning Officers (ROs) well ahead the schedule," he said. This time the EC is printing some 7.5 crore ballot papers and some 3,00,000 postal ballots at the Government Printing Press and the Security Printing Press.

The Commission asked the ROs concerned to send their representatives (district election officer or a magistrate) to collect ballot papers. Distribution of ballot papers would continue for three days September 25, 26 and 27.

Other election materials have been procured while some more would be procured by the ROs and presiding officers concerned where necessary, EC officials said.

Regarding law and order, the EC spokesman said it is improving following deployment of army in some vulnerable areas. Asked about the number of vulnerable areas, he said the home ministry did not send any such list.

## AL totally failed: Khaleda

**FROM PAGE 1**  
Khaleda said the ensuring parliamentary election is very crucial and urged the people to cast their vote judiciously.

"You have to decide whether you want misrule, terrorism and corruption or peace, security and development,"

She alleged that AL leaders and activists during the party's five-year rule misappropriated public money and unleashed terrorism.

She said, if elected, her party will take stringent measure to improve law and order and remove corruption.

She also pledged that programmes will be undertaken for setting up of industries in northern districts to remove unemployment. Abdul Latif is contesting against AL nominee Asaduzzaman Noor and Jatiya Party (Ershad) candidate Joinal Abedin.

Later addressing another rally at Jaldanga, the BNP Chairperson sought vote for another Jamaat candidate in Nilphamari-3.

"Vote for 'scales' (Jamaat's polls symbol). We will ensure development and peace for you," she told the meeting.

She alleged that during AL rule, teachers were neglected and university dormitories were captured by "Awami League 'terrorists'". Adoption of unfair means in public examinations was common, she claimed.

Khaleda claimed that, while in power, BNP met all demands of teachers. If voted to power this time, more schools will be set up, private primary schools will be nationalised and education for girls up to class 12 will be made free, she said.

Addressing two big public meetings at Dimla High School ground and at Domar High School ground, she sought vote for BNP candidate and her nephew Shahrin Islam Tuhin who is contesting from Nilphamari-1 against JP (Ershad) candidate NK Alam Chowdhury and AL nominee Dr Hamida Banu Sova.

"If you want to live in peace, remove corruption and ensure

development of your area, vote for sheaf of paddy".

She also reiterated her pledge to reduce prices of diesel and other agri-inputs.

She said Jatiya Party chief Ershad has been barred from contesting the election as he plundered peoples' money. "Don't vote for his candidate"

She also addressed public meetings in Debiganj, Thakurgaon and Biral and a number of wayside rallies in those areas.

When this report was filed at about 9 last night, the BNP chief was still to address scheduled meetings at Bochaganj, Fulbari and Panchbibi in Joipurhat district and at Dinajpurtown.

After an overnight stay at Joipurhat, Khaleda is scheduled to address public meetings at Joipurhat Sadar, Naogaon, Patnitola, Badalgachi and Manda today.

## US rejects proposals of clerics

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mously resolved to declare jihad, or holy war, in the event of US military strikes.

An edict issued by the clerics, or ulema, expressed "anguish and sorrow" over last week's attacks, but that declaration apparently did nothing to mollify Washington, where Bush declared bin Laden "wanted: dead or alive."

"The president has demanded that key figures of the al-Qaeda terrorist organisation including Osama bin Laden, be turned over to responsible authorities and that the Taliban close terrorists camps in Afghanistan, and the United States stands behind those demands," said Fleischer.

"This is about much more than any one man being allowed to leave voluntarily, presumably from one safe harbour to another safe harbour," said the spokesman, who declared that Afghanistan's rulers had only themselves to blame for any US military response.

"Anybody who harbours them will find themselves in harm's way," he said, echoing the US administration's position that it will not discriminate between terrorists and the nations that harbour them in its response to last week's attacks.

Bush has ordered US military deployments as Washington steps up preparations for retaliation as well as a coming global campaign against terrorism - dubbed "Operation Infinite Justice."

Asked whether Bush was prepared for the potentially high cost in civilian lives of any strike on bin Laden in Afghanistan, Fleischer replied: "There has already been a tremendous cost of innocent lives that's been paid with American blood and foreign blood from the many nations who lost their lives at the World Trade Center."

"The president has been very clear about the course that he intends to take," the spokesman said as both sides escalated a war of words over the fate of bin Laden, whom the Taliban have sheltered as a "guest" since 1996.

"This Shura of Islamic scholars demands from the Islamic Emirate (Afghanistan's Taliban regime) that Osama bin Laden should voluntarily leave Afghanistan for a place of his choice at an appropriate time," the edict said.

It went on to warn: "If America does not show restraint even after the above decisions, a jihad (holy war) will become incumbent in accordance with the principles of Shariat (Islamic law) and the entire Muslim community should support this."

Taliban Education Minister Amir Khan Mutaqi said the militia's supreme leader Mullah Mohammad Omar would act on the ruling but said it could take some time for bin Laden to get out of Afghanistan.

How much time the country has was not clear but US Army units were ordered deployed overseas and hundreds of US fighter planes were Thursday moving into positions from which they could carry out a massive attack on what is one of the least developed nations in the world.

## Army: Public confidence

**FROM PAGE 1**  
purpose and procedural plans for full deployment of army prior to the October 1 general elections in an exclusive interview with The Daily Star at his office at the Army Headquarters (AHQ) on Wednesday.

He said the primary task of each of his men will be to maintain full vigilance so that that troubles could be prevented.

"We will take steps to clear any hurdles or obstacles on the election day so that peaceful polling can take place. Any one trying to intimidate the voters or obstruct the polling process will be resisted by our officers and soldiers," he said.

The General went on, "My parameter is different. Our force will try to create such conditions so that -people- men and women will feel safe and be encouraged to cast their vote," said the commander of the 1,10,000 strong Bangladesh Army.

"We have tried to orient our officers and soldiers to the election task. They will be engaged in carrying out reconnoitering activities to familiarise themselves with their assigned areas."

"Our main task is to work in aid of the civil administration and extend our ground support through our presence. Whenever the civil administration will ask for our help, we will respond to their call. It should enable the regular law enforcing agencies to discharge their duties properly."

He said nearly 55,000 army personnel would be deployed in the field for election duty. That includes officers, warrant officers and soldiers.

Speaking about some army movement ahead of the actual deployment from tomorrow (September 22) he said, "We are only moving to places where law and order is likely to deteriorate."

General Rashid said Bangladesh Army has contributed to the growth and strengthening of democratic institutions.

"We are proud of our role and we are happy to see democracy flourish and people exercise their franchise."

When asked if there are any differences between the 1991 and 1996 elections and the one scheduled for October 1, he said, "Those two elections were held in different perspectives. This election is being held in a different perspective. Two different governments have completed their terms. Besides, army has been given extra power to arrest the election offenders on voting day. In that sense it is different."

Asked how such a large number of army personnel can stay out of their cantonments till October 6, he replied, "We are always ready for war. Our task is not to stay in barracks. Our logistics and administrative system will enable us to stay outside for 15 days very easily," said General Rashid, an infantry corps officer.

"People want presence of the army. This would give them a sense of safety and encourage them to cast their votes."

"We are going at the request of the people and in support of the people," he said.

### Global warming

**FROM PAGE 12**  
General of Commonwealth Environmental Journalist Association Nina Ratulele, FEJB General Secretary Mafizur Raman, Resident Representative of UNDP Jorgen Lissner addressed the session.

Abdul Mueyed Chowdhury, who inaugurated the conference, said, "We should find out ways and means to deal with management of water in response to today's increasing climate variability."

He stressed the need for an integrated water resource management to get adapted to additional uncertainties created by climate change.

The FEJB chairman said it is high time the experts addressed the environmental issues and created public awareness to ensure a sustainable future for mankind.

Economist and former finance advisor to the caretaker government Prof. Wahiduddin Mahmood chaired yesterday's technical session where Ambassador of the Netherlands in Dhaka Sijf zermans and Professor Serajul Islam Chowdhury were present as special guests.

Prof. Serajul Islam said the climate change is a man-made problem involving politics and economy. "We are victims of capitalist aggression, profit and individual pleasures."

"People want presence of the

## AL, BNP detached

**FROM PAGE 1**  
Dhaka University student Taufique Hasan Tamal, 22, has strong reservation about Jamaat or any government having Jamaat as an ally.

"Jamaat was and still is an anti-liberation force. It killed millions of Bangladeshi people. If the four-party alliance form the next government, anti-liberation forces of Jamaat and its youth wing Islami Chhatra Shibir will get the licence to do any thing."

"Across the country, Shibir's armed activists are killing people, creating violence almost in every educational institution. Bangla-desh will be like Afghanistan if the alliance comes to power. We don't want to see our country turn into a terrorist nation. The Jamaat manifesto heavily emphasised on religion. Whereas Bangladesh traditionally is a secular country and we are happy to live in a secular society."

Nineteen-year-old Nitalie Islam, a DU student, also expressed her reservations about the four-party alliance, especially Jamaat.

"I cannot accept the politics of Jamaat. I don't want to wear veil. I am a religious person but why should I have to do something that I don't like to do. The BNP has made a big mistake in picking them as a partner and I think they will pay for it

in the coming election."

Sohana Parveen, 20, of DU feels that the terms 'pro-liberation' and 'anti-liberation' are political weapons of the AL and some cultural bodies backed by them.

She says that the immediate-past AL government has divided the country in two parts - with the supporters of the AL being dubbed pro-liberationists and activists of the BNP and its allies anti-liberationists.

Ashraf-ul-Arefin, 21, a student of BUET, says that he has no reservations about the four-party alliance. "If the alliance forms government, it would not be any different from an Awami League government."

"Jamaat was allowed to enter politics of Bangladesh many years ago. It was also allowed to contest in the elections. Where is the problem if they are elected and share power with the BNP?"

He, however, added, "I don't think Jamaat will be able to get more than 5/6 seats. Moreover, I think the BNP would not give Jamaat any ministerial position. Even if they do, I have no problems with that. In the Awami League, there are lots of anti-liberation leaders who are competing. Even during the AL tenure, there were one or two ministers who had opposed the war of liberation."

DU student Saidra Johra Shammii, 19, wants to see new faces in power.

"We have seen the BNP, the AL and the Jatiya Party in power before. They couldn't do anything for the country. On the other hand, violence and corruption have increased. Now I want to see Jamaat in power, but not in total authority. That's why I am supporting the four-party alliance."

"I am aware of Jamaat's negative role in 1971. But it is in the past now. As they have not been tested in power, they should be given a chance to prove their patriotism and capability."

Sharmin Sony 21, of DU, said: "After passing 30 years since independence, we should not be discussing the political stances of Jamaat too much. It is about time we started working unitedly. All Jamaat followers are not against the country's liberation. There are many die-hard activists of the party who were born after the liberation war. Jamaat is a political party. So what is the problem if it shares power with another political party. All parties are presently using religion covertly or openly in their political campaign."

## Khaleda, Ershad

**FROM PAGE 1**  
them again to see return of corrupt regimes."

Seeking votes for AL candidates in the constituencies she visited yesterday, Hasina urged people to give their verdict this time in favour of 'honest and efficient contestants.' She made a fervent call to all pro-liberation forces to put up a united fight against 'razakars' and 'vote thieves' who had 'ganged up to protect killers of the Father of the Nation.'

If AL is voted power again, court verdict in the Bangabandhu murder case would be executed, she said.

Addressing a huge gathering at Altafunessa play ground in Bogra town in the evening, the former prime minister recalled that in the past people of Bogra did not vote for AL. "You vote for us this time, we will ensure gas supply to Bogra," she said.

Since early afternoon, thousands of people kept on waiting at the meeting venue to listen to her.

Bogra is a stronghold of BNP where AL failed to bag even a single

seat out of the seven in the 1996 parliamentary polls.

Earlier on the day, Hasina did her own electioneering in Pirganj (Rangpur-6) from where she is contesting this time. Her brother-in-law Wahed Mia was AL candidate in the last election. She addressed two rallies at Shanerhat and Madarganj in Pirganj.

Then she proceeded to Gaibandha to address rallies at Sadullapur, Gaibandha Sadar, Govindaganj, Dholbhangra and Palashbari before gong to Shibganj in Bogra.

Addressing the rallies in Rangpur and Gaibandha constituencies, Hasina said, "You cast votes for 'plough' (polls symbol of Ershad's party) all the time. But what has plough given you?"

She said her party, if voted to power, would make plough redundant by replacing it with power tillers and tractors. "If you vote for AL, we will give you peace, ensure food for all and economic emancipation of the people."

## 200 hurt as AL, JP clash

**FROM PAGE 12**  
Police and witnesses said the at least 10 election camps were ransacked during the troubles.

Our Correspondent from Pabna reports: At least 28 people were injured in a series of clashes between AL and BNP activists in different areas of Sujannagar upazila yesterday.

Of the injured, eight, were admitted to Sujannagar thana health complex while 14 to Pabna General Hospital the rest of the injured were released after first aid.

The injured are to Pabna Sadar hospital are Ismail Hossain, 10, Tarek Biswas, 40, Akbar Ali, 20, Abdur Razzag, 20, Uzzal, 20, Hakimuddin, 25, Abdus Salam, 20, Quddus Mollah, 20, Kanu, 22, Latif Sheikh, 25, Ratan, 18, Abdul Momin, 29 and Ayesha, 38.

The injured admitted in Suzannagar health complex are: Anwar Hossain, 28, Rafiqul Islam, 23, Bonder Mollah, 30, Fero