

President may address the nation soon
SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

President Shahabuddin Ahmed is expected to address the nation soon over state-run television and radio.

With the parliamentary election only a week away, the president is learnt to have decided to make a public appearance to assure the nation of a free and fair election on time, sources said.

The president is consulting with his aides about the draft of his proposed speech.

"The speech of the president will instil the much-required confidence in the people to create a much-desired congenial, pre-polling atmosphere," said a ranking official.

During the tenure of the caretaker government, Chief Advisor Latifur Rahman addressed the nation twice and the chief election commissioner once.

It is likely that both will appear on the national electronic media once again prior to the October 1 polls.

Businessman stabbed to death in city
STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Muggers stabbed to death a businessman and took away Tk 3.5 lakh from him in the city last night.

The incident occurred in front of Isphani Bhaban in Motijheel area, hospital sources said.

A gang of three waylaid Abul Hossain, 35, and asked him to give what he had with him. On his refusal, they stabbed him and took away the money.

Fatally injured, Abul Hossain was rushed to the Chest Disease Hospital, where the doctors declared him dead.

Motijheel police said none went to the police station to file any case.

**WTC attack
Bangladeshi at NY hospital**
STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A Bangladeshi admitted to Staten Island Hospital in New York with severe burn injuries in the attack on the World Trade Centre is yet to be contacted by his relatives and friends.

The hospital authorities have identified him as Tushar, his first name.

Tushar was shifted to the hospital on the day of the incident, an e-mail message received here yesterday from New York said.

Tushar is in the intensive care unit (ICU) now. The e-mail said nobody contacted the hospital asking for him till now. Anyone knowing a person with this first name who is missing in the US has been requested to contact the hospital immediately.

Dacoity at ex-minister's house
STAFF CORRESPONDENT

An armed gang looted about Tk 30 lakh in cash, gold ornaments and other valuables from the residence of a former state minister in Sangsab Bhaban area in the early hours of yesterday, police said.

The gang entered the bedroom of Dr Saida Amanullah, wife of former state minister for health Dr Amanullah, on the first floor of the house.

They tied up members of the family, took away key of the almirah and looted Tk 13 lakh, 130 tolas of gold ornaments and other valuables.

Dr Amanullah was in his constituency - Valuka - for election campaign.

On information, he came back and filed a case with Tejgaon thana in this regard.

Transport strike in Barisal
STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Barisal

Barisal Road Transport Workers Union enforced an indefinite strike from today demanding withdrawal of the case filed against union's secretary Sultan Mollah.

Sultan Mollah have been sued in connection with the killing of Jubaile Asgar Mollah.

Road communications on 11 routes connecting Barisal remained suspended due to the strike.

Khaleda is biased to India as she was born there

Hasina tells Rupganj rally

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Awami League President Sheikh Hasina has accused her arch rival BNP chief Khaleda Zia of lying on different national issues.

"Telling lies is both her addiction and profession," Hasina said referring to Khaleda's recent allegation that the AL government had failed to protect Bangladesh's borders with India.

Addressing a huge election rally at Rupganj in Narayanganj yesterday, the AL leader said the BNP chief had claimed that Bangladesh would become part of India after signing of the CHT peace agreement and the Ganges water-sharing agreement.

"Had it be so, she (Khaleda) would have contested for a Lok Sabha (Indian parliament) seat.

"In fact, she (Khaleda) is always biased to India due to the fact that she was born in Shillong of India ... She dreams of India every now and then, but her dream will never come true," Hasina said. "We were born in Bangladesh and our roots are very much here in Bangladesh."

The immediate-past prime minister accused her predecessor Khaleda Zia of surrendering the country's interests to India by signing an accord enabling India to push its nationals into Bangladesh. Furthermore, the Khaleda government made the country a market of Indian goods by reducing import taxes from 300-400 per cent to 30-40 per cent.

"Those who do not believe in the concept of Bangladesh and those who committed genocide during the nation's struggle for independence will find no place on the soil of the country," she told the cheering crowd, urging them not to allow razakars to come to power.

Referring to Khaleda's promise of a Bangladesh free of corruption and terrorism, Hasina wondered how she would do so because she and others in her cabinet were accused in corruption cases and she patronised terrorists in her party.

"She (Khaleda) even resorted to falsehood regarding her date of birth ... She does not have any accurate date

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Pre-election clashes leave 174 injured

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Pre-election clashes involving activists of rival political parties left at least 174 injured in different parts of the country yesterday and the day before.

Of them, 30 people were injured in Sirajganj, 9 in Chittagong, 5 in Gaibandha, 11 in Narsingdi, 20 in Bhola, 25 in Shariatpur, five in Madaripur, and 24 in Munshiganj.

Our Sirajganj correspondent reports: At least 30 people were injured in a series of clashes between the supporters of two rival parties.

In retaliation, the AL activists attacked the BNP candidate's main election office at Fazlul Haq road in the town, injuring two BNP workers.

Witnesses said rivals attacked Tuku's motorcycle while he was returning to Sirajganj after election campaign at Aminpur. They also

clashed with police, leaving six persons including two policemen injured.

Police rescued Iqbal Hasan and brought him to Sirajganj town. Later, activists of four-party alliance brought out a procession in the town and attacked the main election office of AL candidate Mohammad Nasim at SS Road.

They also clashed with AL workers and damaged a number of shops.

Police charged batons to bring the situation under control. At least 15 persons were injured during the clash between the supporters of two rival parties.

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A tense situation is prevailing in the town. Police, BDR and Army personnel are patrolling the streets in the town.

Tuku filed a case with Sadar thana accusing 25 persons.

The district Awami League leaders, however, denied the allegation.

Our Correspondent from Chittagong writes: At least five persons were injured in a clash between the activists of Awami League and BNP at Chandanai in the district Friday evening.

Section 144 has been imposed in Dohazari area under the thana for 24 hours from 2 pm yesterday (Saturday) as both the parties called protest rallies at the same venue at the same time.

Sources said, the trouble erupted when a protest rally of local unit of Awami League at Saburia came under attack, reportedly by BNP activists, in the afternoon. AL was

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President visits site of Poet Nazrul University at Trishal

UNB, Mymensingh

President Shahabuddin Ahmed yesterday visited the site of proposed Poet Nazrul University at Trishal, 95km away from the capital.

The proposed cultural-cum-general university will be built on 15 acres of land, of which five acres had been donated by the local people and five acres purchased by the proposed University Trust.

The organisers are trying to take the rest from the government to make the project a success.

Welcoming the President at the site, members of the university trust briefed him about the initiative and showed the map of the master plan.

They said some local intellectuals, educationists and social workers have taken the initiative to build the university at Trishal after the name of the national Poet Kazi Nazrul Islam.

The government should recognise and come forward to build the university at the place connected

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Alleged mugger beaten to death in city

BSS, Dhaka

An alleged mugger was beaten to death by local people in Goalnagar area in old city on Friday night.

Police and hospital sources said one Chan Miah, 29, was caught by people in the area at about 11 pm when he along with his accomplices was reportedly snatching money and valuables from a passerby.

The locals beat him up and handed over to police. He was admitted to Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) and later shifted to Orthopaedic Hospital as his condition deteriorated.

Police said Chan Miah, who claimed himself an employee of a shop at Fulbari Adarsha Hawkers Market, died at the hospital at about 3 am.

No case was filed in connection with incident.

Empower army to arrest terrorists, recover arms

Khaleda demands at Bogra rally

ABUL KALAM AZAD, From Bogra

BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia said yesterday army should be empowered to arrest terrorists and recover illegal firearms to ensure a free, fair and peaceful general election.

"Deployment of army only is not enough. Rather, they should have been given the authority of arresting criminals and recovering illegal arms to create an atmosphere conducive to holding of the election," she said.

The former prime minister was addressing a mammoth public meeting at Alfatunnesa playground in Bogra town.

She said the environment for a peaceful election has not been created as yet since a large number of illegal arms are still in the hands of the Awami League terrorists. Moreover, the unlicensed arms are yet to be submitted to the authorities. The BNP chief said it was not enough that army deployed to improve law and order would remain inside the camps.

The four-party alliance chief alleged that sensing a debacle in the coming election AL started unleashing

terror across the country, attacking BNP men, killing people and ransacking polling centres. "Election would not be held if such a situation continues," she cautioned.

She also said many AL men are still holding various important posts in the administration. "They should be transferred before the election so that they can't influence the polls."

Tens of thousands people started pouring onto the meeting venue since noon carrying sheaf of paddy and portraits of Khaleda in their hands. The meeting was scheduled for a 3pm start but Khaleda arrived there at 5:30pm.

During the half-an-hour speech in her own constituency (Bogra-6), she said a massive wave has been created in favour of sheaf of paddy and the four-party alliance across the country. She pledged that if voted to power, her party along with its partners in the alliance would root out terrorism and corruption from the country, restore peace for all and ensure fair prices of all agri

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CMCH authorities to open 'fair price medicine shop' this week

NURUL ALAM, Ctg

Chittagong Medical College and Hospital (CMCH) authorities will open a 'fair price medicine shop' on the hospital premises this week.

Director of CMCH Brig Zillur Rahman told this correspondent that the shop will cater to needs of the patients admitted to the hospital.

All life saving drugs will be available in the shop at cheaper prices, he said.

CMCH is the first government hospital in the country to have such a medicine shop to help patients buy medicine at cheaper price, he mentioned.

All other government hospitals will gradually have similar medicine shops, sources said.

CMCH got government approval for the shop this year after a feasibility study by a committee headed by Prof Dr A Q M Sirajul Islam, head of skin and VD department.

A private drug trader was engaged through tender recently to run the shop. Security money of Tk 10 lakh was collected from the trader, who agreed to sell medicine at prices 12 to 15 per cent less than market prices. Besides, he will be required to pay Tk 20,000 every month to the 'patients welfare fund' as a sort of donation, the CMCH director said.

The initiative for a fair price medicine shop was taken as patients at the hospital were forced to buy medicines from pharmacies nearby at exorbitant prices, he said.

	Sun Rises	Sun Sets
Sept 23		5-54 pm
Sept 24	5-48 am	

Prayer Timings

Sept 23

	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	4-45	5-15
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	4-30	4-45
Magrib	6-01	6-07
Esha	7-45	8-15

Source: Islamic Foundation

JCD activists set fire to 'anti-communal' cartoons in city

DU CORRESPONDENT

Activists of Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD), student wing of BNP, vandalised an 'anti-fundamentalist and anti-communal' cartoon exhibition on the premises of the Institute of Fine Arts (IFA) of Dhaka University yesterday.

The activists set fire to cartoons on display at the exhibition. The National Flag at the venue was also burnt. Then they entered the Institute and damaged windowpanes of Zainul Gallery where an art exhibition is being held, campus sources said.

The day-long exhibition organised by students of IFA was inaugurated in the morning as a campaign against the alliance of fundamentalist, communal and anti-liberation forces' contesting the coming parliamentary elections, one source said.

The attackers also beat and injured coordinator of the exhibition and general secretary of Awami League-backed Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) unit at IFA Mir Muztaba Ashraf Joseph. He was rushed to Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH).

Police were seen near the spot but they did not try to stop the attackers.

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Tension prevails in Bagerhat-2 Torture, setting houses on fire alleged

QUAZI AMANULLAH, Khulna

Tension is prevailing in Bagerhat-2 (Sadar-Kachua thana) constituency where nine candidates are contesting the ensuing general election.

The candidates include Sheikh Hafizuddin of Awami League and Bagerhat district BNP president business tycoon A.H.M Selim of four-party alliance.