

## Mostafa Mohsin Montu joins BNP

BSS, Dhaka

Hundreds of leaders and workers of different front organisations of Bangladesh Awami League and Gano Forum led by former parliamentarian and veteran freedom fighter Mostafa Mohsin Montu yesterday joined the BNP.

Presided over by BNP central leader Jamal Sharif Hiru, the joining ceremony held at Kalabagan Cricket Ground here last night was attended by founding secretary general of BNP Dr A Q M Badruddoza Chowdhury as the chief guest.

Speaking on the occasion, Montu said liberation war is not the sole property of any individual or party and added that it is the property of all and "that is why I have taken the decision to join BNP."

Montu who was the organising secretary of Gano Forum alleged that some quarters had long been trying to split the nation in the name of the spirit of war of independence. But, he said, we want to establish the ideals of liberation war under the leadership of BNP Chief Khaleda Zia."

Dr A Q M Badruddoza Chowdhury welcoming the new entrants said they took the right decision at this critical juncture of the nation.

## Kidnapper held, child rescued

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Police hunted down a kidnapper and rescued a four-year-old child unhurt in the small hours of yesterday.

Farhan Nayeem, son of Dr Sarder A Nayeem and grandson of Prof Sirajul Islam of Dhaka University, was kidnapped from a house at Uttara on Sunday, and within eight hours of the incident, police went on a manhunt in different places of the city.

Detective Branch (DB) of Police and Uttara police in plain clothes, led by Assistant Commissioner (DB) S M Aktaruzzaman and Investigation Officer Nasirullah of Uttara Police Station, acted promptly by launching a combined operation.

The kidnappers demanded a Tk 20 lakh ransom from Dr Nayeem for release of his son.

The gang was eventually spotted in front of the Pritom Hotel at

SEE PAGE 11 COL 3

## Hasina begins Comilla, B'baria, Sylhet tour today

BSS, Dhaka

Awami League President and immediate-past prime minister Sheikh Hasina will address at least 21 public meetings and a good number of way-side rallies as part of her election campaign in Comilla, Brahmanbaria and greater Sylhet in the next two days beginning today.

She will start her two-day election campaign programme today from Bhoberchor in Munshiganj at 10am and will proceed to Daudkandi to address a public meeting at 11 am.

Hasina will also address public meetings at Chandina, Nimsar, Shuagazi, Choudagram, Nangolkote, Laksam, Barura, Comilla, Debidar, Muradnagar (Companiganj), Cosba to finish the first day's programme at Brahmanbaria.

The AL chief will start her greater Sylhet campaign on September 26 from Sarail at 11am. The other meetings are expected to be held at Chunarughat, Bahubal, Sreemongal, Moulvibazar, Bishwanath and Companiganj. She will complete the tour by offering ziarat and munazat at the Mazar of Hazrat Shahjalal (r) and Hazrat Shah Paran (r) before leaving for Dhaka.

## Rejoinder

The assistant vice-president of National Bank Limited, Feni branch, has denied "giving any interview" to "any correspondent" regarding a news item published in The Daily Star on September 19, titled "National Bank had to act as per wish of Hazari's men."

According to the news item, having spent Tk 8 lakh on refurbishment of new office premises, the NBL had to cancel its plan as Hazari's men disapproved the idea.

**Our response:** Mohammad Nizam Uddin, while informing the deputy commissioner of Feni about the NBL headquarters' decision to comply with the wishes of Hazari's men, disclosed the matter to this correspondent. We stand by our story.



President Shahabuddin Ahmad listens to Mozafer Hossain Paltu during yesterday's meeting with an Awami League delegation at the Bangabhaban.

## Hasina promises to build 'New Dhaka' if voted to power

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Awami League President Sheikh Hasina has promised to build a "New Dhaka" to lessen the burden of population pressure on the capital if her party returns to power.

"We've a plan to build a new Dhaka city adjacent to the capital and the proposed city will be developed in a planned way to provide modern civic amenities," the former prime minister told a huge election meeting in the city yesterday.

Hasina disclosed her plan while highlighting the development works her government had done in the metropolis. "We need your support to further ease the problems you are facing," she told her audience promising them a better living in the capital. She also cautioned them against those who remained absent from the areas for years and appeared at this election season with huge money.

The meeting at the Mohammadpur Town Hall ground was organised to woo votes for AL candidate in the Dhaka-9 (Dhanmondi-Mohammadpur)

constituency Mockbul Hossain. With Hossain in the chair, the meeting was also addressed, among others, by Dhaka Mayor Mohammad Hanif.

Thousands of jubilant people in large processions thronged the meeting venue chanting slogans for boat, the AL election symbol. They came from different city areas, mainly from the Dhaka-9 constituency, beating drums and singing election songs in chorus. The huge Town Hall ground and its adjoining roads were crammed with cheering crowd. Besides, a large number of people were atop buildings surrounding the meeting spot to listen to the AL chief.

The huge audience burst into cheers, raised full-throated slogans welcoming Hasina and gave her a standing ovation as soon as she reached the spot. A smiling Hasina waved to the crowd.

Speaking on the occasion, the former prime minister said that her government had increased civic

SEE PAGE 11 COL 4

## AL sins to sink boat in Oct 1 election, says Khaleda

REZAUL KARIM, Sylhet

Khaleda Zia has said the 'boat' will sink in the October 1 general election for the sins and misdeeds the Awami League had committed during its five years in power.

"With only seven days left for the polls, the boat has already started sinking and there is no way to keep it afloat," the BNP chairperson told a series of meetings in Sylhet and Moulvibazar on the second day of her three-day election tour yesterday.

In five years of the AL "misrule", mothers lost their sons, wives their husbands and sisters their brothers, she said, adding that women were raped in front of their parents, brothers and husbands. "The AL now has to pay for the sins committed by its men."

The "fascist AL" did not even allow people of different creeds to perform their religious rites in peace, she said. "They (the AL) imposed Section 144 and fired on devotees praying inside the Baitul Mukarram National Mosque. They plundered temples and grabbed

## AL apprises President of Sunday's bomb attack

UNB, Dhaka

Awami League yesterday apprised President Shahabuddin Ahmed of Sunday's bomb attack on the party's election rally at Mollarhat and blamed "fundamentalists" for perpetrating such acts to foil the upcoming general election.

"The fundamentalists are trying to foil the election and capture state power through all such means," the immediate-past ruling party complained.

A five-member delegation led by its election coordination committee

SEE PAGE 11 COL 2

## Feni Jubo League leader killed, 100 hurt in pre-polls clashes

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A Feni Jubo League leader was killed and over 100 injured when Awami League and BNP activists clashed in different parts of the country yesterday and Sunday.

Of the injured 50 were in Sirajganj, nine in Feni, four in Khulna, 12 in Barisal, two in Natore, 20 in Jhenidah, and 12 in Rajbari.

Our Feni correspondent adds, a Jubo League leader was killed and nine Awami League leaders and activists were injured when terrorists attack them at Ukilbari Daroja when they were going to Sonagazi from Feni town by a microbus yesterday.

Local AL blamed BNP leader Mosharaf Hossain, BNP candidate for Feni-3 constituency, for the attack which BNP denied BNP leaders said agitated people attacked them.

The dead was identified as Ehtesham Ibrahim, union Jubo League president.

Of the injured, six were identified as Faizul Kabir,

Sonagazi thana AL president and Bogadhana UP chairman, Mohammad Ilias, Char Darbesh UP chairman, Advocate Nasiruddin, the chief election agent of AL candidate Mahbubul Alam Tara, Jubo League leaders -- Nasiruddin, Kazi Badal and Adar.

The armed terrorists intercepted the microbus at Ukilbari Daroja at about 12:15 pm. They beat and stabbed them indiscriminately. They also took away Tk 3 lakh in cash, a licensed revolver of Advocate Nasiruddin and mobile telephone set.

Ehtesham succumbed to his injuries on way to Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) at about 6:30 pm. Faizul and Nasiruddin were also shifted to DMCH in critical condition.

The rest were admitted to Sonagazi Health Complex and Feni Sadar Hospital. AL brought out a procession in Feni town yesterday evening protesting killing of Ehtesham.

Meanwhile, police havildar Ahjad Hossain was shot

SEE PAGE 11 COL 3



Police arrested Rakib Hossain Miron (handcuffed), an activist of the Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL), from the Gabtoli bus terminal with a consignment of firearms on Sunday night.

## BCL activist held with arms, ammunition

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Detective police recovered a consignment of arms, ammunition and bomb making materials and arrested an activist of Awami League's student wing BCL from the city's Gabtoli bus terminal on Sunday night as he was taking those to Gaumadi in Barisal, police said.

The consignment includes four revolvers, one pistol, one cut rifle, 40 rounds of ammunition and two kg of bomb making powder.

BCL activist Rakib Hossain Miron loaded it into the luggage box of a passenger bus which was scheduled leave for Barisal at 10 pm. Three others who were to accompany him did not turn up.

Acting on an information that those were being taken to Gaumadi for use during the ensuing general election, a DB team led by Assistant Commissioner Mahbub Alam went to Gabtoli and made the recovery and arrest.

Miron initially did not admit to the DB team his involvement in the mischief.

But on further queries, he said

that he was one of the four who were to take the arms and ammunition to Gaurnodi.

A case was filed with Mirpur police in this regard. Besides, detectives along with Motijheel police arrested two members of the notorious "Picchi" Hannan ganggroup after gun fight at Paltan in the city's Motijheel area in the late hours of Sunday, police said.

The arrested were Mohammad Nitul and Mosharraf Hossain. According to police sources BNP candidate Khandoker Mahbub Uddin Ahmed called the detectives saying that a gang of robbers were encircled his house, they noted.

A DB team immediately went to the spot and arrested the two after shoot out with the gang. During the fight a sub-inspector Baset was beaten by the miscreants, they also took away his revolvers and a mobile phone, they added.

Police, however, managed to recover the revolver but could not trace his mobile phone that was snatched away from the policeman.

A case was filed with Motijheel police station in this regard.

## TIB meetings 'Vote for honest, qualified candidates'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Transparency International, Bangladesh (TIB), yesterday organised two meetings in Mymensingh to create awareness among people to vote for honest and qualified candidates in the October 1 general election.

The meetings, held at the bar association building at Mymensingh town and at Madhupur upazila, were addressed by some local candidates from different parties.

The candidates pledged that they would help the authorities to maintain law and order during the election and work for development of their areas even if they fail.

The meetings were organised with the help of Conscious Citizens' Committee (CCC), a local organisation.

The meeting at Mymensingh town was addressed by, among others, Motiur Rahman of Awami League, Delwar Hossain Khan Dulu of BNP, Anil Bandhu Das of Jatiya Party (Manju), Sheikh Siddique Rahman of BASAD, Shah Asaduzzaman of CPB, Nasreen Monayem Khan (independent) and M. Kawser Hossain Harun (independent), all candidates for Mymensingh - 4 seat. Prof. Shamsul Islam was in the chair.

The meeting at Madhupur was addressed by candidates Dr. Abdur Razzak of AL, Fetema Khan of JP and Khandoker Abdul Gafur Montu (independent). TNO of Madhupur M. Enamul Huq presided.

## Use of airspace by US Govt decision challenged

BSS, Dhaka

A writ petition was filed yesterday challenging the caretaker government's decision to allow the US to use Bangladesh's airspace, naval territory, airports and refuelling facilities in its action against international terrorism.

Supreme Court Advocate Mohammad Ruhul Quddus (Babu) filed the writ petition in the High Court Division of the Supreme Court yesterday.

Defense secretary and foreign secretary have been made respondents.

After a brief hearing, a vacation bench of the High Court comprising Justice MA Aziz and Justice Sikder Maqbul Huq adjourned the hearing for one week.



Moderate to heavy rain induced inundation of the road in front of the T&T and AGB Colony at Motijheel in the city yesterday.

## One stabbed to death in city

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A garment employee stabbed to death his colleague in the early hours of yesterday, following a row over the proposal of love to a female colleague.

On the night of the incident, Abdul Matin, 22, son of Bisharat Ali, an employee of Paragon Sweater at Mailbagh, had had an altercation with Sukkur Ali over the proposal of courtship, and at one stage Sukkur stabbed him indiscriminately.

Critically injured, Matin was rushed to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital where the on-duty doctor declared him dead in the early hours.

On Saturday afternoon, Matin on his way back to his residence for lunch proposed to Ruma. But she turned down the offer and complained to Sukkur, her alleged lover.

A case was filed with Khilgaon Police Station in this regard. Arrested was Sukkur.

## News Analysis

## India lukewarm to Bush's decision to lift sanctions

PALLAB BHATTACHARYA, New Delhi

US President George W Bush's decision to lift sanctions on India and Pakistan, imposed following their tit-for-tat nuclear tests in May 1998, has induced less than enthusiastic response in New Delhi. There is a general view that the decision would benefit Pakistan much more than India.

Government circles, mainstream political parties and major industries believe that the sanctions on American economic assistance to India lost much of their bites in the last two years when the US administration under President Bill Clinton had begun removing them in phases.

It is felt that lifting of the sanctions would acquire real meaning if they related to removal of curbs on use of high technology for the dual purposes of industrial and military uses. That is the key area where India has been looking forward to waiver of the punitive measures as substantial economic sanctions had already been done away with by the Clinton administration in 1999.

By contrast, Pakistan stands to gain more because restrictions on the activities of US Exim Bank, Overseas Private Investment Corporation and the Trade and Development Agency have now been lifted.

However, the bar on military sales, transfer of high technology,

which could be put to military as well as industrial uses, and assistance through international financial institutions remains.

Officials and industrial circles in New Delhi expect that the decision would enable India to once again seek help from multilateral agencies that had stopped funding since May 1998 following sanctions by developed countries like US, Japan and Canada.

Expectations are also rife that after the latest waiver 149 Indian entities, mostly companies and some research organisations, can deal with their American counterparts without obtaining special clearance. This will lead to industrial

SEE PAGE 11 COL 7