

Deaths in countrywide political violence double in last 75 days

SHAIKH NAZRUL ISLAM

At least 131 people were killed in political violence across the country during the 75 days of the caretaker government against 68 in the previous 75 days of Awami League government.

Most of them were killed in shooting during clashes between activists of Awami League and the BNP-led four-party alliance.

During the periods, the number of victims belonging to Awami League and its front organisations was more than double that of BNP and its fronts, according to newspaper reports.

Of the 131 killed during the tenure of the caretaker government, 69 were leaders and activists of Awami League and 29 of BNP and its front organisations.

More than 600 political clashes took place during the period, in which several hundred people were also injured.

Killings and incidents of violence increased despite an ongoing special drive involving police and BDR to recover illegal arms and arrest terrorists. Army deployment across the country also began on September 22 to ensure peaceful holding of election.

Even after reshuffle in the police administration, satisfactory progress could not be made in arresting listed terrorists and criminals.

Of the 68 killed during the last 75 days of the Awami League government, 42 were leaders and activist of Awami League and 17 of BNP and its fronts, according to the reports.

During the tenure of the caretaker government, the highest toll of 13 was in Bagerhat.

Political clashes during the period left 11 people killed in Dhaka, eight in Feni, seven in Sylhet, five each in Fatikchhari, Kushtia, Khulna and Bhola and three each in Noakhali, Sirajganj, Chittagongj, Barisal, Jhenidah and Jamalpur.

One policeman was killed in Feni when law enforcers tried to quell a clash between AL and BNP activists.

In the Chittagong Hill Tracts, three activists of United Democratic Peoples Front (UDFP) were killed in clashes with those of Parbattya Chattagram Jana Sanghati Samity (PCJSS). Three members of an outlawed party were killed in Khulna, Kushtia and Jhenidah.

The victims included one activist of Workers Party and one of Jatiya Chhatra Samaj, students' wing of Jatiya Party led by HM Ershad.

During the last 75 days of the AL government, the highest number of

Road accident kills 7 in Trishal

BSS, Mymensingh

At least seven people were killed and 51 others injured in a road accident at Bagan Raghmara on Mymensingh-Dhaka highway near Trishal upazila headquarters yesterday, police and hospital sources said.

The accident took place when a Netrokona bound passenger bus from Dhaka skidded off the road and fell into a roadside ditch at about 11 am.

Five passengers died on the spot while the rest succumbed to their injuries at Mymensingh Medical College Hospital (MMCH). Of the injured, 45 were admitted to the MMCH.

Of the dead, three were identified as Parveen, 30, Shahana, 55, and Idris, 30, the driver of the ill-fated vehicle. The bodies were sent to MMCH for autopsy.



BNP chairperson and leader of the 4-party alliance Khaleda Zia addressing a rally at Mondolpara in Narayanganj yesterday.

Elect BNP to give Awami League a befitting reply: Khaleda

BSS, N'ganj

BNP chairperson Khaleda Zia urging people to vote for the alliance candidates in the October 1 elections yesterday said if voted to power, BNP, by the will of Allah, would present the nation a terrorism-free and corruption free Bangladesh.

Khaleda Zia said people had already decided to reject AL after having witnessed their misrule and repression for five years. And sensing the defeat AL has started conspiring to hijack ballot boxes and resort to violence. She said, "if you want to give a befitting reply to the misrule and repression of AL, guard the polling centres as vanguard of democracy till the announcement of the results."

Addressing a mammoth public meeting at Mondalpara, the biggest ever in recent memory, the alliance leader said amid thunderous slogans and applause, "cast your vote for sheaf of paddy, we shall Insha

Allah, give you peace and progress."

Khaleda Zia said, "Boat, election symbol of AL, is sure to sink without any chance of resurfacing as people across the country including those of Narayanganj suffered at the hands of AL during its five year rule." That party caused so much miseries and sufferings to mothers and sisters, that boat is sure to sink under the burden of its own sin," she observed.

She said if voted to power, the alliance government would undertake massive development programmes for Narayanganj including Shitalakhya bridge and turn Siddhirganj into a pourashava. She said the alliance government would take steps for opening the mills and factories that had been closed down during AL rule.

According to eye witnesses, the meeting was attended by people in thousands converging to the venue from far and near and chanting slogans in favour of sheaf of paddy,

BNP and its chairperson Khaleda Zia. Held at Mandalpara, the meeting area stretching for over two kilometres up to Chashara level crossing was full of people.

Khaleda Zia spoke for about 40 minutes amid thunderous slogans and applause. People of all ages, both male and female, were seen in large numbers listening to the BNP chief standing on roof-tops and balconies of high-rise buildings on both sides of Bangabandhu Avenue, DIT Road, Tanbazar Road, Sirajuddowla Road, Kalirbazar and Chashara.

As her motorcade passed through the area, she was greeted by the crowds and the entire city wore a festive look. The traffic in the city was very thin and shopping establishments were kept mostly closed as people started reaching the venue since noon with banners and posters in their hands chanting various slogans in favour of BNP and its

SEE PAGE 11 COL 1

Moscow airport detains plane with explosives

REUTERS, Moscow

A cargo plane carrying eight tonnes of explosives and hundreds of detonators was detained at a Moscow airport on Thursday night, an airport spokesman said yesterday.

Russian news agencies said the An-12 plane, making a scheduled stop at Domodedovo airport, was held when customs officials noticed its permits were printed on Soviet-era notepaper. They said the aircraft's licence to fly the goods over Russia had expired in August.

The airport spokesman said the explosives were part of the regular cargo flown to the Kazakh mining town of Dzhezkazgan and the plane was due to fly out later in the day. "We expected the plane to land in Moscow, it is a regular flight," he added.

The incident took place amid heightened security at Russian airports after the suicide attacks in

SEE PAGE 11 COL 2

Families of six war heroes urge people to elect pro-independence forces

UNB, Dhaka

Family members of six 'Bir Shrestha' heroes of the Liberation War, yesterday made a fervent appeal to the people to vote on 'Boat,' the symbol of independence, to defeat the razakars and their associates once again like in 1971.

In a passionate appeal, they said the identified anti-liberation forces and collaborators of Pakistan -- razakar, Al-Badr, Al-Shams -- are trying to capture state power in the name of four-party alliance.

"If these forces are voted to power, the lives sacrificed by the Bir Shrestha freedom fighters will be meaningless," they said in the joint appeal for rejecting those "identified enemies" of the country.

Their request came from an interactive meeting organised by the Muktijuddher Chetona Bastobayan O Ekatturer Ghatok Dalal Nimrul Jatiya Samonnoy

Committee with the journalists at a city restaurant yesterday noon.

Hasan Imam, convenor of the Jatiya Samonnoy Committee, read out the written statement on behalf of the group.

The statement was signed by Mosammat Mokidunnesa (mother of Bir Shrestha Shaheed Lance Nayek Munshi Abdur Rouf), Mosammat Kayedunnesa (mother of Bir Shrestha Mohammad Hamidur Rahman), S M Mostafa Kamal (son of Bir Shrestha Shaheed Lance Nayek Noor Mohammad Sheikh), Mosammat Fazilatunnesa (wife of Bir Shrestha Shaheed Lance Nayek Noor Mohammad Sheikh), Parveen Akhter Mukti (daughter-in-law of Bir Shrestha Shaheed Mohammad Mostafa Kamal) and Abdul Motalab Hawlader (father of Bir Shrestha S h a h e e d C a p t

SEE PAGE 11 COL 1

People leaving city for homes to cast vote

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The capital looked deserted yesterday as many city dwellers have left for their homes where they will exercise their franchise on October 1 general election.

There were remarkable crowds at the railway station and bus and launch terminals.

"The number of homebound passengers at Kamalapur railway station was significant yesterday. The rush of people was similar to that of Eid festival, said a railway official.

Many people of southern districts connected by river routes were also found at the Sadarghat launch terminal yesterday.

There was also heavy rush of passengers in the bus terminals and some buses bound for Tangail and Mymensingh were overcrowded.

As many city dwellers want to include their names in the voter list of their own constituencies, they

SEE PAGE 11 COL 3

C'wealth summit postponed

AP, London

The Commonwealth summit scheduled next month in Brisbane, Australia has been postponed, the group's secretary-general said yesterday. It was feared many leaders would have stayed home following the terrorist attacks in the United States.

A statement from the Commonwealth Secretariat in London said the international meeting had been postponed due to the "likely absence of a significant number of leaders, due to unforeseen circumstances."

In the written statement, Secretary-general Don McKinnon said he had been in consultation with leaders of countries across the Commonwealth, including Canada, Britain, India, Jamaica and Nigeria, as well as the host Australia. He said the meeting had been deferred "purely for practical reasons."

"It is with a huge feeling of disappointment that I announce this decision, a feeling that I know will be shared right across the Commonwealth and beyond,"

McKinnon said.

"In these uncertain times it is easy to understand the desire of political leaders to be with their own people, in their own countries," he said, in an apparent reference to the global political situation in the wake of the Sept 11 terror attacks on the United States.

McKinnon said the Australian Prime Minister John Howard had

SEE PAGE 11 COL 3

	Sun Rises	Sun Sets
Sept 29		5-58 pm
Sept 30	5-50 am	

Prayer Timings		
Sept 29		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	4-45	5-20
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	4-30	4-45
Maghrib	5-58	6-05
Esha	7-45	8-15
Source: Islamic Foundation		