

Hasina's vow to boycott JS runs counter to her pledge: Carter

UNB, Dhaka

Former US president Jimmy Carter has cautioned that in the given international situation right now it would be damaging and destabilising for Bangladesh to enter into a protracted post-electoral political crisis.

He made the observations in reference to Awami League's threat of boycotting the newly elected parliament and launching movement for fresh elections on allegation that the October 1 general election was rigged.

Jimmy Carter's remarks came in a letter congratulating the Bangladesh Election Commission and its chief on their conducting the eighth parliament elections in a free, fair and peaceful manner.

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Shazneen case Hearing adjourned till Oct 25

COURT CORRESPONDENT

The Special Court for Prevention of Women and Children Repression, Dhaka yesterday adjourned the hearing of Shazneen rape case till October 25 following a time petition by the prosecution lawyers.

Judge Mohammad Shah Alam Miah adjourned the hearing as Mojibur Rahman, ASP of CID, first prosecution witness and complainant in the case, could not appear before the court due to his illness.

After hearing both sides, the court granted time.

Shazneen Tasnim Rahman, 15, youngest daughter of Latifur Rahman, Chairman of Transcom Group, was raped and murdered at their Gulshan residence on April 23, 1998.

Latifur Rahman filed a murder case with Gulshan thana on April 24, 1998.

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19 NGOs term election free, fair

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Nineteen non-governmental organisations (NGOs) termed the October 1 general election free and fair.

As many as 2,321 NGO-based observers visited 98 constituencies and observed the polling.

The observers at a meeting at the office of Human Development Service Society (HDSS) on Friday said the election would be a milestone in the country's democratic process. Unprecedented was the turnout of women voters.

Although some candidates tried to snatch ballot boxes and to create panic among voters sensing their defeat, the law-enforcement officials sprang into action and brought the situation under control, they observed.

They also urged all political parties to accept the election results to sustain the democratic process in the country.

The NGOs include CREED, HDSS, VIDA, JSKS, GREEN, SRJONI, SEEP, BCVD, SMSS, SB, SPD, FFH, N RUSH, FDF, SP, ASHUK, MS OPO and BCCW.

DU offices reopen

DU CORRESPONDENT

The administrative activities of Dhaka University resumed yesterday after 64 days of unscheduled vacation due to the non-stop strike enforced by the Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD).

The academic activities of the university will resume on October 10.

Different offices and libraries of the university were open and the transport services resumed yesterday. However, the attendance of the common students was poor, campus sources said.

On Sunday, an emergency meeting of the university Syndicate with Vice Chancellor Prof. AK Azad Chowdhury in the chair decided to resume all activities following the JCD decision to call off the strike.

Meanwhile, a tense situation is prevailing on the campus due to internal feud of the JCD factions.

Sources said, a large number of outsiders have gathered in different male dormitories allegedly under the leadership of Mostafizul Islam Mamun, general secretary of the DU unit of JCD.

12 AL, BCL men killed in post-polls violence

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Twelve leaders and activists of Awami League and its student front Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) were killed in post-polls violence in different parts of the country yesterday and the day before.

Of them, six were killed in Chittagong, three in Feni while the rest in Bagerhat.

In Chittagong, BCL leaders Tajul Islam, 26, and Faruk, 24, were abducted allegedly by Shibir activists while they were returning homes from a wedding party at village Rangamati in Fatikchhari upazila in the early hours of yesterday.

Police recovered the bullet-riddled bodies of the two from Thurangal, 9 km off the upazila headquarters yesterday afternoon.

At Mirersarai, nine BCL activists received bullet injuries in a gunfight between the armed cadres of BCL and JCD yesterday morning, UNB quoting police said.

Of the injured, Hasmat Ali, BCL leader and VP of Mirersarai College, died at Mastannagur Health Complex at 11 am.

Jubo League worker Ramiz Ali and BCL activist Mohammed Yasin succumbed to their injuries at Chittagong Medical College Hospital on Saturday. They were injured in post-polls violence at Dohajari in Chandanaish upazila on Friday.

BCL activist Abul Alam, 22, of Bagichahat, succumbed to his injuries at Chittagong Medical College Hospital yesterday evening.

Medical sources said Alam was critically injured when JCD activists attacked him at Bagichahat in Chandanaish on the election day.

Our correspondent from Feni reports: Three persons were killed in post-election violence in the district on Saturday.

Of them, two were BCL activists and the other was an AL worker. BCL activist, Masud, 25, of village Palgiri under Sonagazi thana was abducted allegedly by JCD men from his grandfather's house at Char Kakra on Saturday afternoon.

They beat him to death and left the body at Char Sahabichari. A murder case was filed with Sonagazi

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Violence, capture of different organisations worry 4-party

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Leaders of the four-party alliance yesterday expressed grave concern over the post-polls violence and capture of different organisations and institutions across the country.

The leaders in a statement denied any connection of the alliance with the incidents.

They demanded investigation into the incidents and punishment to those responsible.

The statement was issued by BNP Secretary General Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan, Jamaat-e-Islami Secretary General Ali Ahsan Mohammad Mujahid, Jatiya Party Secretary General Kazi Firoz Rashid and Islami Oikya Jote Secretary General Mufti Fazlul Haq Amini.

AL leaders from Gazipur allege 'post-election terrorism'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Awami League MPs-elect and party leaders from Gazipur yesterday alleged that law and order situation in the district deteriorated due to post-election "terrorist activities" by BNP workers.

The elected members of parliament claimed that they won the election despite rigging by officials in most of the centres with the help of police.

They were addressing a press conference at the Jatiya Press Club in the city.

Advocate Md Rahamat Ali, elected from Gazipur-1, alleged that "terrorists" belonging to BNP are attacking members of minority community and forcing them to leave their villages.

"BNP candidate Tanvir Ahmed Siddiqi who lost the election has directed his workers to take revenge for his defeat", Rahmat Ali said.

"Their torture has already crossed that of anti-liberation forces in 1971. It is increasing day by day in the area".

He said, "They are not only attacking members of minority communities but also freedom fighters. The election was con

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Kazi Zafar released

UNB, Dhaka

Kazi Zafar Ahmed, leader of Bangladesh Jatiya Party (BJP), was released from jail yesterday.

A former prime minister under Ershad, Kazi Zafar was convicted and sentenced to jail in absentia in a corruption case.

He was taken to custody on his return home from Singapore after the caretaker government took over power and was thrown into jail.

Zafar, who was suffering from serious ailment, was transferred to Bangabandhu Medical University Hospital from where he was released yesterday evening.

He faces four other cases but got bail from the court in all those cases.

On his release, Zafar briefly addressed a rally of his supporters in front of the hospital.



MPs-elect of the four-party alliance offer *munajat* after a reception at Sheraton Hotel in the city yesterday.

Attacks on AL activists, minorities continue

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Terrorist attacks unleashed on the Awami League activists and the religious minorities across the country, allegedly by supporters of the BNP and the Jamaat-e-Islami, continue unabated.

According to newspaper reports, at least 30 people were killed and more than 1,000 others injured in the recent spate of terrorism following the electoral victory of the BNP-led four-party alliance.

BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia's repeated appeal to party workers to exercise maximum restraint and not to victimise their opponents appears to have fallen on deaf ears.

Over the last one week, activists of the alliance, with BNP in the forefront, has also attacked houses and business establishments of members of the Hindu community and looted their valuables. There have also been reports of forcible occupation of educational cam-

pus, bus terminals, shopping centres, party offices, toll centres, public toilets, etc, which were earlier in control of the AL.

A group of BNP MPs-elect have illegally captured some posh rooms of the MP Hotel at Sher-e-Bangla Nagar even before the oath taking, not to speak of fresh allocation by the authorities. The MPs include some leaders known for their terrorist activities.

Their houses torched, ransacked and in cases grabbed, many Hindu families have reportedly fled the areas they belong to and are now staying in the capital. Many other Hindu families are under threat to leave their homes. The hoodlums also attacked temples in many areas.

Reports have it that local administration has measurably failed to check the wave of violence. In cases, police have been accused of s i d i n g

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BNP leader shot in city

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A BNP leader was shot by miscreants at Shewrapara in the city's Kafrul area yesterday morning.

The victim, Akhter Hossain Zillur, 40, BNP assistant organising secretary of 95 ward, was shot while he was sitting at his shop at Shewrapara in the city.

Three men equipped with revolver and machete entered Zillur's construction material shop at about 9:45 am and shot him in his chest, chick and shoulder. Zillur was reading a newspaper, police said.

Critically injured Zillur was rushed to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital where he was operated upon and kept at the post-operative section, sources said.

Three Awami League activists came on a motorbike and shot him, a family member said.

Shamsur Rahman, manager of the shop, filed a case with Kafrul thana in this connection. But none was arrested till filing of this report last night.

Rehabilitation of Ghorashal units

PDB set to get a raw deal

STAR REPORT

The energy ministry is set to issue an order, which will compel the Power Development Board (PDB) to accept heavy power equipment from a Russian company, without any effective contract, to rehabilitate 30-year old Ghorashal power units 1 and 2.

Technopromexport has been trying to almost force the PDB into accepting the equipment, which were imported in February.

However, the contract with the Russian company, signed last year and suspended for several months due to gross procedural violation, is yet to be made effective.

Meanwhile, from February this year, a strong business lobby started pushing hard to make the PDB accept the equipment. At one point, the Russian envoy to Bangladesh also advocated in favour of Technopromexport.

The PDB, however, stuck to its claim that the contract was still ineffective, as Technopromexport had neither submitted any bank guarantee nor fulfilled other obligations.

In addition, it could not decide on accepting the equipment since it was not sure if these were quality

machinery. Technopromexport claims that some reputed Russian companies have manufactured the imported machinery. But the PDB found out none of these companies was ready to vouchsafe for the equipment.

Quoting correspondence with Leningradsky Metalucheskyy Zavod, a PDB source said, "Technopromexport has claimed that this company was providing the spares. But Leningradsky wrote to us that it had no link with Technopromexport."

Now, the energy ministry wants to resolve the matter anyhow. According to sources, while the issue of Technopromexport's bank guarantee and guarantee of equipment remains unresolved, the ministry is likely to ask the PDB to accept the machinery.

Back in March-April, the PDB was put in an embarrassing situation when the Russian company brought in some 10 experts to install the imported heavy equipment. "A contract needs to be made effective first before a contractor, upon giving its performance guarantee, would open its Letter of Credit (LC) and import necessary equipment and bring in experts," said a source, adding that the root of the problem

lay in the signing of contract.

The PDB signed a 17.7 million US dollar contract bypassing the Economic Relations Division (ERD) for the Ghorashal power units 1 and 2 rehabilitation project on supplier's credit scheme in May 31 last year. Following this signing, an irritated ERD issued a letter raising questions about the PDB actions.

On the basis of the ERD objections as well as allegations by others against former PDB chairman Quamrul Islam Siddique, who had pursued the deal, the government in August last year formed a nine-member inter-ministerial probe committee.

The committee was assigned to investigate three areas. These were a. whether or not the PDB authorities directly contacted any donor country or any donor organisation;

b. in which areas did the PDB violate the "Rules of Business between May 1, 1999 and May 31, 2000 and what were the violations; and c. whether the PDB tender committees were formed as per the existing rules and regulations and what were the professional profiles of the mem

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Awami League activists wait outside the party central office at the Bangabandhu Avenue yesterday as a joint meeting of the party's city unit is underway.

Intra-party feud

Two Shibir cadres shot dead in Ctg

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Two Shibir activists were gunned down by their rivals in the pro-Jamaat student front at North Rangamati in Fatikchhari on Saturday night.

Police recovered the bodies at around 12.30 pm yesterday from near the bank of Dhurong Khal, 9 km off North Rangamati and sent those to the CMCH morgue for autopsy.

The dead were identified as Tajul Islam alias Tajul, 26, leader of Tajul group and Md. Faruque, 25. Both were Shibir cadres and reportedly listed terrorists.

Police quoting witnesses said, both Tajul and Faruque went to North Rangamati on Saturday evening to attend a marriage ceremony at the residence of one Nabidur Rahman.

Top bosses of BB, NCBs asked to send their particulars to Finance Ministry

UNB, Dhaka

In an apparent move to keep the upcoming government abreast of the financial administration, top executives of key institutions of the sector have been asked to send their particulars to the finance ministry immediately.

The finance ministry is now procuring and processing the basic data of the chief executives and their deputies in all premier banking and financial institutions, including Bangladesh Bank, NCBs and National Board of Revenue (NBR), sources said.

"All these top financial bosses have been asked to send details of their service records, dates of joining or promotion and in case of contractual appointment the date of ending contracts," one official told UNB.

The move came against the backdrop of an imminent change in state power with BNP and its allies poised to take over defeating the immediate-past ruling party Awami League in the October 1 general election.

Taliban deploy extra troops, people from around Pak airport removed

Fresh exodus as fears of US strikes grip Kabul

AGENCIES, Kabul

Afghanistan's ruling Taliban said yesterday US deployments in Uzbekistan had forced them to move an extra 8,000 fighters to the border and more Kabul residents fled a day after anti-aircraft guns tried to hit two planes circling the capital.

Meanwhile, thousands of Afghan refugees were forcibly removed yesterday from settlements around Quetta airport in southwest Pakistan amid speculation the United States is about to launch a strike against Afghanistan.

Refugees told AFP that they had been given until 6.00 pm local time yesterday evening to find alternative accommodation.

Between 20,000 and 30,000 long term Afghan refugees and Kuchis Afghan nomads had set up camp near the airport about five years ago. The airport also houses Pakistani military aircraft.

Fears of US strikes intensified in Kabul after US President George W Bush told the Taliban that time was running out for the fundamentalist Islamic movement to hand over the world's most wanted man, Saudi-born militant Osama bin Laden.

Reclusive supreme leader Mullah Mohammad Omar, heading the world's most isolated country, has given every sign the Taliban are prepared to face the world's most modern military with only outdated weapons and 1,300-year-old fundamentalist ideals.

The Taliban had decided to reinforce its northern border with Uzbekistan with several thousand more troops in the face of US troop movements in the Central Asia republic, Taliban Education Minister Amir Khan Muttaqi told Reuters.

"We have deployed our forces there at all important places. This is the question of our self-respect and we will never bow before the Americans and will fight to the last," Pakistan-based Afghan Islamic Press (AIP) said, quoting an unidentified Taliban defence military source.

The Taliban on Saturday threatened to attack Uzbekistan if it allowed US forces to launch strikes on Afghanistan from its territory. Uzbekistan's President Islam Karimov has said an air base would be made available for US humanitarian and rescue operations.

Some 1,000 US soldiers have been sent to Uzbekistan in an unprecedented deployment of US forces in the former Soviet republic.

In Kabul, scores of people prepared to leave the beleaguered Afghan capital, a day after blazing anti-aircraft guns tried to hit a spy plane circling high overhead amid renewed fears of imminent US military strikes.

"Well, until recently some who could afford to go stayed with the hope that there may not be a war," one resident said.

"But the refusal of the Taliban's conditional offer and Bush's weekly radio message all show that soon there will be a war and when the first plane flew over Kabul Saturday people became more scared that their city will be a main aim sooner or later," he added.

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