

Azad not out of danger

FROM PAGE 1 students, teachers, writers, Azad's relatives, well-wishers and fans thronged there to see him.

When Leader of the Opposition Sheikh Hasina went there to visit Azad, army men at the main entrance sent her back in an action that applied to all other visitors.

Unknown assailants savagely stabbed the outspoken author who has penned over 50 books of poems, novels and essays with butcher's knives while he was returning to his Fuller Road house at 9:35pm and his family blamed fundamentalists for the attack.

With one stab at the left of his head, two in the left side of his face and one in the shoulder and some of his teeth lost, a profusely bleeding Azad was first rushed to Dhaka Medical College Hospital from where he was shifted to the CMH.

DEATH THREAT

Prof Azad's brother Monjur Kabir, who filed a case with Ramna police accusing unknown 'miscreants' for the attack, said the perpetrators were threatening the victim's family with death if they did not cease to demand justice.

Smita confirmed the death threats, but said: "We don't want to give details of the threats by telephone at this moment."

Monjur in the case said the goons employed by a vested quarter swooped on him with butcher's knives and axes to kill him and melted in the dark of Suhrawardy Udyan after the attack.

DU students who were placing wreaths at the painting of the attack scene propped up on the spot yesterday noon, found a 14-inch knife and a tooth there.

They linked the tooth to Azad. **PRE-PLANNED ATTACK** Commissioner of Dhaka Metropolitan Police Ashraful Huda last night said police might find out the attackers and uncover their motives once Prof Azad came round.

"Since we have information that he talked to them for several min-

utes, I have reason to believe that he knows them," he said.

"The evidence gathered so far suggests the attackers were not merely snatchers, but executors of a well-orchestrated scheme to kill him."

Ehsan, an assistant commissioner of police (Patrol) went to the scene to take the knife, but incensed DU students assaulted him and handed over the sharp weapon to Vice-Chancellor SMA Faiz.

Faiz later gave the knife to Khan Sayeed Hasan, deputy police commissioner of Dhaka's south zone. Police retrieved another butcher's knife from the spot on Friday night.

Ramna police arrested Abbas alias Boma Abbas, joint secretary of DU's Sir AF Rahman Hall unit of BCL in Central Shaheed Minar area yesterday.

"We have information about his presence near the spot before and after the incident and as there was a bomb explosion during the attack, he might be involved in the crime," Officer-in-Charge of Ramna Police Station Mahbubur Rahman said.

He alleged that Abbas had a history of bomb-bombing.

Two witnesses -- Suman alias Babu, 13, a chatpati (local delicacy) seller and Meer Jahan, 34, a vegetable vendor -- told police they saw two youths stabbing Prof Azad and fleeing the area through Suhrawardy Udyan blasting a bomb.

"I'll identify them if I see them again," Suman said.

Metropolitan Magistrate Nani Gopal Biswas recorded their statements before their release.

Washington, Dhaka

FROM PAGE 12 to take necessary steps to deal with it."

Khan said human right is an abstract issue that changes with the change of time. After the September 11 event, some people raised violation of human rights by some big countries.

Attack on Dr Kamal

FROM PAGE 12 LGRD minister Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan, to consult with all CHT groups to ensure peace there. The Parbatya Jana Sanghati Samity, UPDF and Samo Adhikar Andolon have geared up their agitation for their demands.

Eminent jurist Dr Kamal escaped unscathed when an anti-CHT peace agreement group attacked his motorcade in Kawkhali upazila on way to Rangamati on February 23 and Moni Swapon Dewan was barred from visiting Khagrachhari on February 22.

Both Dr Kamal and Moni Swapon blamed the pro-government Parbatya Samo Adhikar Andolon led by ruling BNP lawmaker Wadud Bhuiyan for the incidents.

"We should be embarrassed for this attack and the persons responsible should be brought to book immediately," meeting sources said quoting Moazzem Hossain Alai, a ruling BNP lawmaker and committee member.

Echoing Alai's sentiment, Moni Swapon told the meeting how Parbatya Samo Adhikar Andolon, an organisation of Bengali settlers, barred his visit to Khagrachhari.

Wadud Bhuiyan chaired a meeting of the organisation at Chittagong on February 15 that declared 3-day road blockade in the hills region demanding cancellation of CHT peace agreement and removal of

Shantu Larma from the post of the CHT regional council chairman, sources said.

But talking to The Daily Star yesterday Wadud claimed he has no association with the organisation. "I don't patronise the organisation. They invited me and I attended it, as I am the local MP."

Besides, a parliamentary sub-committee was formed to probe alleged irregularities against Diponkar Talukdar, chairman of the task force on refugee rehabilitation, during the Awami League regime.

Present task force chairman Samiran Dewan raised the allegation and the sub-committee was asked to submit its probe report by next two months.

Ruling BNP MP Mosharaf Hossain at the Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban chaired the meeting.

Kushtia-1

FROM PAGE 1 by-election saying it would not be fair.

The contestants in the by-polls are ruling alliance nominee BNP candidate Reza Ahmed Bachchu,

Abdul Halim (JP-Manju), Nazrul Islam (NAP-Bhasani), M Korban Ali (JP Nazir-Firoj), Azibur Rahman (JSD-Rob), Nazrul Islam (Muslim League), Rezaul Huq (JSD-Inu) and Shahidul Islam (independent).

Chaos grips CHT

FROM PAGE 1 as the chairman of the CHT Development Board as a violation of the pact that prefers a highlander in the position.

Ethnic leaders in Larma's rival camp also share the same view. "The government would have surely scrapped the treaty if the UNDP (United Nations Development Programme) or the donors were not watching the whole thing," said a leader of the United People's Democratic Front (UPDF).

Back in 1997 when the deal was signed, the BNP and the Jamaat-e-Islami, key constituents of the current coalition government, vehemently opposed it, terming it as a serious threat to Bangladesh's independence and sovereignty. After taking office, they did not change their views and sat on the deal implementation.

The stagnation has eroded 25 lakh hills people's trust in the peace agreement. Over the years, the anti-peace deal outfit UPDF has found support among the ethnic communities amid a law and order slide.

At the same time, seven lakh Bangalee settlers emerged as 'specially preferred' community in the eyes of the hills people. The settlers launched their own movement, Parbatya Samo Adhikar Andolan (Equal Rights Movement), for permanent settlement and cancellation of the agreement.

Even the Deputy Minister for the CHT Affairs Moni Swapon Dewan says he is not clear whether the government wants to implement the deal or not. "Prime Minister Khaleda Zia has directed Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperatives Minister Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan to look into the issue," he said.

"Let us see, what happens. I'm just trying to develop my constituency with my limited powers and resources."

Mannan Bhuiyan, also chairman of the cabinet committee on the CHT affairs, declines to comment on the deal.

The signing of the peace agreement raised the spirits of the indigenous people who thought it would change their fate and uphold their rights.

But hopes soon gave way to despair as the past AL government and the present coalition paid little attention to the implementation of the pact in the last six years.

In the last two and a half years after taking office, the present government sat with the leaders of the PCJSS for talks, especially with Shantu Larma who threatened to launch a continued movement in last December on the eve of the sixth signing anniversary of the pact.

The PCJSS came up with a set of demands that included proper implementation of the CHT peace accord, removal of Wadud, withdrawal of security camps from the CHT region and appointment of a full minister to the CHT affairs ministry.

The government agreed to hand over three institutions of the CHT region -- the vocational training institute, cotton development board and primary education training institute -- to the district council in line with the peace agreement in a decision which is yet to be implemented.

Hills people allege that local BNP and Jamaat-e-Islami have put up Samo Adhikar Andolan at the instigation of Wadud to counter the demands of pro-peace deal ethnic group. But the four-party alliance and the government keep mum about the platform or their activities.

The only tangible result of the pact is the setting up of some offices including the regional council, Chittagong Hill Tracts Refugee Rehabilitation Affairs and land commission.

Nation in fury

FROM PAGE 1 parliament alleged Azad came under attack as he used his mighty pen against those who wanted to make the country dependent once again and were resorting to rape, harassment, torture and killing.

Azad was brutally chopped with butcher's knives Friday night in front of Bangla Academy.

The atrocity, allegedly committed by religious bigots, outraged the entire nation, especially its civil society, progressive political quarters and intelligentsia.

A number of political parties,

numerous organisations and eminent personalities yesterday tersely condemned the gory attack and blasted the government for failing to contain the ever-increasing violence.

Communist Party of Bangladesh (CPB) in a protest rally in the city demanded stern punishment of the attackers. Speakers at the rally said the attack was not merely on Azad but also on the democratic and progressive forces of the country.

Blaming the BNP-led coalition government for harbouring communal forces, they demanded immediate resignation of the home minister. Former president AQM Badruddoza Chowdhury in a statement said: "Repeated attacks on politicians, journalists and intellectuals have proved that the current coalition government have failed to failed to maintain the country's law and order." He also urged the government to abstain from indulging the terrorists in order to protect human rights of the people and save their life and property.

Gano Forum President Dr Kamal Hossain and General Secretary Saifuddin Ahmed Manik blamed communal forces for the attack and said the government could not avoid its responsibility for the terrorist act.

Left leaning 11-party alliance at a protest rally in the city demanded punishment of the culprits and alleged criminals were being encouraged due to the government's failure in taking punitive actions against the terrorists like the killers of journalist Manik.

Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal (Inu) said the terrorist act proved that the coalition government miserably failed in maintaining the country's law and order.

Jatiya Party Chairman HM Ershad in a statement said such dastardly attack on a writer of free-thinking stirred our conscience. Terming the attack pre-planned and designed to kill Azad, he remarked it proved that there was no security for anyone in the country.

In separate statements, Supreme Court Bar Association President Rokanuddin Mahmud and General Secretary M Mahbub Ali, State Minister for Cultural Affairs Selima Rahman and DU Vice Chancellor (VC) SMA Faiz condemned the attack and demanded immediate arrest and exemplary punishment of the criminals. The DU VC also sought financial assistance from the government for better treatment of the victim.

Law Minister Moudud Ahmed said such heinous attack on one of the country's noted linguist and researcher was unfortunate. "We will have to vigilant so that such incidents

Indo-Pak

FROM PAGE 1 Robin Singh's boys in blue is that Ambati Rayudu, their capatin, will be missing.

ICC match referee John Morrison handed down a one-match ban on the player for excessive time wasting during the last group match against Sri Lanka. Wicketkeeper-batsman Dinesh Karthik will take over as skipper for the day.

The absence of Rayudu however will not hamper the impressive Indians with Shikhar Dhawan gunning for his fourth century in the tournament.

But the Indian run-machine will have to deal with the threat of Pakistan paceman Riaz Afridi, the tournaments joint highest wicket-taker.

The game will also feature the contrasting strength of the two titans with the young Indians relying on their traditional batting prowess against the destructive Pakistan bowling.

No class at DU

FROM PAGE 1 Calling an emergency meeting at DU Club in the evening with DUTA President AAMS Arefin Siddique in the chair, DUTA members asked the home minister to step down.

It also asked the university authority to bear medical expenses for the renowned linguist and send him abroad for the best possible treatment.

It threatened to resist any government move to protect the real culprits. It further demanded a security circle around the campus for the safety of DU teachers and students.

The DUTA also announced to bring out a protest procession on campus today.

Meanwhile, DU syndicate, the highest body of the university, at an emergency meeting at Registrar's Building with Vice-chancellor Prof SMA Faiz in the chair, demanded immediate arrest and punishment of the criminals who ran butcher's knives on Azad in front of Bangla Academy Thursday night.

It urged the government to take necessary steps to send Azad abroad for treatment.

Syndicate members also urged all to cooperate for maintaining congenial atmosphere on the campus.

do not occur again," he added.

Our Rajshahi University (RU) correspondent adds: The RU Teachers Association (RUTA) in a statement protested and condemned the 'cowardly' attack and demanded from the government immediate arrest and exemplary punishment of the attackers.

Our Narayanganj correspondent reports: Local cultural activists held a rally yesterday at Narayanganj Press Club and will form a human chain today in front of the club to protest the assault.

Renowned poets, artists, litterateurs and intellectuals of the country condemned the outrage in a joint statement, the signatories to which include Khan Sarwar Murshid, Kabir Chowdhury, Arefin Siddique, Gazul Haque, Shamsur Rahman, Syed Shamsul Haque, Muztasir Mamun, Shahriar Kabir, Anisuzzaman, Faiz Ahmed, KM Sobhan, Kalim Sharafi, Rafiqul Islam, AK Azad Chowdhury, Quaiyum Chowdhury, Ramendu Majumder, Rafiqunnabi, Hashem Khan, Rabiul Hussain, Belal Chowdhury, Rafiq Azad, Asad Chowdhury, Mamunur Rashid, Nirmalendu Goon, Muhammad Samad and Anisul Haque.

Our Jahangirnagar University (JU) Correspondent adds: Students of the varsity yesterday brought out a procession and held a rally on the campus to protest the attack and decided to form a human chain this morning in front of Amar Ekushey.

The JU Teachers Association (JUTA) also condemned the attack, terming it an intimidation to the democratic people, and demanded immediate punishment of the assailants. The JUTA will take out a silent protest procession tomorrow on the campus.

Among a horde of other organisations that condemned the attack were Workers Party of Bangladesh, Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal (Rob), Left Democratic Front, Ekkatarer Ghatok Dalal Nirmul Committee, Bangladesh Manobadhikar Samonny Parishad, Bangladesh Human Rights Commission, Dhaka Union of Journalists, Bangladesh Lekhok Shibir, Bangladesh Mahila Parishad, Odhikar, Bangladesh National Women Lawyers Association, Bangladesh Engineering University Teachers Association, Bangladesh Democratic Lawyers Association, Bangladesh Book Publishers and Sellers Association, Jatiya Samajtantrik Sramik Jote, Jatiyatabadi Peshajibee Parishad and National Poetry Parishad.

The others who addressed the rally included Prof Ahmed Kamal, Prof Hanun-ur-Rashid, Dr Qudrat-e-Khuda and SM Lutfur Rahman.

Kamal Hossain said unbelievable incidents are taking place one after another. What happened to Azad was an onslaught on constitutional rights of people.

He regretted that certain quarters are resorting to criminal activities and corruption in the name religion.

Motia, scores hurt

FROM PAGE 1 government.

In Chittagong, some 10 people were injured and 20 picked up amid pitched battles between police and pickets.

The law-enforcers drove away pro-hartal pickets planning to take out processions at different parts of the city including AL's central office at Bangabandhu Avenue, Dhaka University campus, Motijheel, Dhanmondi and Nazira Bazar of old town. No major violent incident in the city during the hartal hours was reported.

The general strike brought normal life and business to a grinding halt and shops, schools, business centres and private offices were closed while most of the automobiles stayed off the streets.

At about 7:20am, a large contingent of police, both male and female, clubbed the pickets in front of the AL central office and asked others to disperse. As they refused, police manhandled and dragged 31 women pickets to nearby police vans leaving some of them partially stripped.

Former women lawmakers Zinatunnesa Talukdar, Tahura Ali, Bharati Nandi Sarkar and Jahanara Khanam were among them. However, police released the former lawmakers in the evening but they went to court on their own to protest the arrest of their fellow demonstrators.

Police produced 27 women AL leaders and activists before the Court of Chief Metropolitan Magistrates on charges of blocking the streets and interfering in police activities. The court granted bail to nine of them but put 16 inside the jail.

Police threw up barbed-wire fences to seal off all entrances to Bangabandhu Avenue (road in front of the AL headquarters) from the early hours. They did not allow anyone inside the cordoned area.

The law-enforcers also chased demonstrators in a procession led by former home minister Mohammad Nasim and Abdur Razzak MP near Russell Square in Dhanmondi and arrested 12 at about 11:30am.

Nasim and about 15 others sat down on the street protesting the police action. Later, AL leaders Abdul Matin Khasru, Abu Sayeed, Faruq Khan MP and Asaduzzaman Noor MP joined them.

In Motijheel commercial district, Noor, also AL publicity secretary, tried to bring out a procession at around 1:00pm, but police foiled the move. Police also dispersed a small gathering of pro-government activists hurling abuses at Noor at the same place.

Police picked up about a dozen leaders and workers of Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL), including its Dhaka University chapter General Secretary Hemayet Uddin Khan Hinu, from Teacher-Student Centre (TSC) and Central Shaheed Minar areas at around 9:30am. The BCL men were planning to bring out processions.

In old Dhaka, police barged into the residence of former Dhaka mayor hopeful and AL leader Sayeed Khokon

DU swells with protest

FROM PAGE 1 At a largely attended rally on the campus yesterday condemned the attack on writer and linguist Humayan Azad and demanded immediate arrest and stern action against persons involved in the incident.

Speakers at the rally viewed the attack on Azad as an onslaught on free-thinking and called for united resistance against such an unhealthy trend.

Unidentified assailants stabbed and critically injured Humayan Azad, also professor Bangla at the DU, with butcher's knives in front of Bangla Academy on Wednesday night.

The rally held at the foot of Aparajeya Bangla was addressed by a number of teachers and students.

Eminent jurist and Gano Forum President Dr Kamal Hossain also addressed the rally.

A procession was brought out later, which marched to the spot where the Humayan was Azad was attacked. Participants placed flowers placed flowers there.

A bloodstained butcher's knife was found at the place and handed over to Kamal Hossain, some students said. The agitated students assaulted a police official for their failure to nab the attackers.

The procession then moved to the Central Shaheed Minar where a brief rally was held. The rally demanded immediate resignation of the home minister.

The DU students and teachers will also bring out a procession wearing black arm bands and badges, form a human chain and stage a demonstration on the campus today at 11 am to press their demands.

Addressing the rally, AAMS Arefin Siddique, president of Dhaka University Teacher's Association, said, the attack on Azad is an attack on free-thinking and secularism. He demanded quick action against the elements involved.

Former DU vice chancellor AK Azad Chowdhury said a lawmaker's speech provocative speech in parliament on the free thoughts of Azad encouraged the attackers.

Prof Sirajul Islam Chowdhury said writers, journalists, teachers and others are being oppressed but no one is being brought to justice for this. Rather, the persons responsible are getting shelter from powerful quarters and they are moving freely, he regretted.

The others who addressed the rally included Prof Ahmed Kamal, Prof Hanun-ur-Rashid, Dr Qudrat-e-Khuda and SM Lutfur Rahman.

Kamal Hossain said unbelievable incidents are taking place one after another. What happened to Azad was an onslaught on constitutional rights of people.

He regretted that certain quarters are resorting to criminal activities and corruption in the name religion.

"Politics in this country has become unhealthy due to lack of respect for human rights. But people have now started to stand up against such politics," the legal expert noted.

Meanwhile, different student bodies and cultural organisations also brought out processions and held rallies on the DU campus yesterday demanding immediate arrest and punishment of the attackers.

They also demanded resignation of the home minister.

Addressing a rally at the Teacher Student Centre (TSC), Sammilita Sangskritik Jote leaders blamed fundamentalists and extremists for incidents like the attack on Aazd since independence.

The jote also formed a human chain on the Bangla Academy premises.

Chaired by President of the jote Nasir Uddin Yusuf Baschu, the rally was addressed by Golam Kuddus, Mamunur Rashid, Muhammad Samad, Asaduzzaman Noor MP and Justice KM Sobhan.

The Dhaka University Sangskritik Okkya (DUSO), a cultural body, also protested the attack.

Publishers taking part at the Amar Ekushey Book Fair also staged a protest rally on the Bangla Academy premises. Speakers called for resisting the fundamentalists across the country.

The student bodies which held separate rallies and processions included ruling BNP-backed Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal, the Awami League's student wing Bangladesh Chhatra League, left leaning Bangladesh Chhatra union, Samajtantrik Chhatra Front and Jatiya Chhatra Dhara.

Rubbish rip-off

FROM PAGE 1 commissioner in Dhanmondi, who obtained approval from Faruque for door-to-door collection, said he should not be forced to pay taxes. Bablu claims his workers, often as young as 10, keep all money they collect from houses.

On why his workers do not appear flush with cash, he said: "I don't know what happens to the huge amount."

A fellow ward commissioner disagrees. "People are fighting over territory. The DCC must do something immediately to lay out guidelines," said Rizia Alim, commissioner of ward No. 22 in Nayabazar.

It could be a good source of income for the cash-strapped city corporation, she added.

Land-grab

FROM PAGE 12 regulations," he stressed.

Local farmers say the district administration would need a long time to clear the mess as new owners who bought their property from encroachers, especially from forest bandits, were trying to fog clear boundaries for fear of losing lands or paying taxes.

The local people, including civil society members, have urged the district administration to ensure proper distribution of land for shrimp farming to create jobs.

Noakhali seaboard is the fifth largest shrimp-growing region in Bangladesh.

B Chy

FROM PAGE 12 public gathering where the formal announcement regarding the launch is expected to come.

The former president, also the founding secretary general of the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP), stepped down from his job following an estranged relationship with his party in 2002.

His recent public criticism of "the deteriorating law and order and widespread corruption" during the first two years of the BNP-led alliance government triggered intense political speculations in the country.

Petroleum crisis

FROM PAGE 1 loss in addition to the existing 1.9 percent sales commission.

"There is a tendency on the part of the pump owners to pilfer and adulterate petroleum to make up for the loss due to evaporation and operation," Nazmul said, "But we intend to put an end to such malpractice of deceiving people by getting the commission."

President of Bangladesh Petroleum Dealers' Association Abdur Rahman however alleged that Nazmul was pursuing an arbitrary programme to make a quick buck creating an artificial petroleum crisis. He added the state minister committed to grant transit loss at a meeting on February 25 and to address the other demands on March 10.

Prominent demands of the petroleum dealers association include correct measurement of petroleum in the depots, setting up of a testing laboratory to detect adulteration, even diesel and kerosene rates and protection against extortionists.

Responding to the allegation, Nazmul said they had no intention to create petroleum crisis adding that an unscrupulous quarter in the dealers' association is active to trigger a crisis. He alleged Abdur Rahman runs government-owned Rahman Pump near the Daily Ittefaq paying a rent of Tk 10, 000 only whereas the usual rent for a petrol pump in the city is Tk 2 to 2.5 lakh.

Though most of the city petrol pumps yesterday remained closed during the daylong opposition-called hartal, petrol pump owners in Tejgaon and Kakrai areas said their lorries went to various depots to bring petroleum.

The book

FROM PAGE 1 eliminate all opposition to his beliefs and establish a Taliban-style Bangladesh.

The title of the book was taken from the Pakistani national anthem and symbolises repression of the Pakistani rule till the 1971 War of Liberation. The militant hero of the book wants to take Bangladesh back to the middle ages by creating a 'distorted Pakistan'.

"Pak Sar Zamin Saad Baad" was first published in the 2003 Eid supplement of Dainik Ittefaq. The progressive community hailed the novel while fundamentalists denounced it, demanding a ban on it. The novel came out in the form of a book in December last year and its second edition was just released in February.

A monologue of the book's hero reveals his past as a militant leftist involved in the politics of Sarbahara Andolon (an extremist movement) and then "purified his spirit" by the words of Abul A'la Moududi and Ayatullah Ruhullah Khomeini.

An excerpt of the monologue goes: "We are not alone, our brothers all over the world are doing their work. If they fly an airplane into a building somewhere, if some car crashes into a hospital or hotel, or if a bomb blast kills 300 people in some recreational centre, then we know it's the work of our brothers; in other words, it is our work. This is Jihad."

"There is no sin in killing in the name of Islam," is one of the teachings of the militants, Azad describes in his novel.

An activist of the 'Jama'-e-Jihad-e-Islam Party', the hero does not believe in democracy but approves the killing of poets, writers and intellectuals who are viewed as infidels.

One of the characters in the book Karim Ali Islampuri says, "We must seize power. Right now, we are with

the power and the main party. At some point, power will come to us, we will become the main party. We are entering everywhere. Islam will be established. Pakistan will be created. There won't be any infidels, Hindus. There won't be any Hindu or Jew under the guise of Muslim. There won't be any university. Universities are places for illegal sexual activities where men and women sit together, walk and the devil lurks among them ..."

The book then goes on to the issue of minority repression and describes many related criminal acts.

Azad drops a bombshell toward the end of the book when the militant undergoes a dramatic change of heart -- he suddenly finds himself in love with a Hindu woman and decides to abandon his militant career.

Dr Humayun Azad is a professor of Bangla at Dhaka University with over 60 books to his credit. He is often referred to as the last outspoken person in the contemporary literature for his bold statements.

Hepatitis-B

FROM PAGE 12 through body fluids, sexual contacts, unsafe blood transfusion and sharing of needles. Sweat, saliva and other body secretions do not pose any serious threat if one practises safety measures.

Anybody infected with the virus may develop liver cancer or cirrhosis that damages liver.

An estimated 10 lakh of about 50 lakh people chronically infected with the virus in Bangladesh are at risk of dying from liver cirrhosis and cancer, the World Health Organisation says.

Govt won't step down

FROM PAGE 1 of Awami League's pre-hartal violence."

Expressing her sorrow over such an attack, she said the government took up all-out measures for the proper treatment of Azad and wished the author of over 50 books early recovery.

Addressing a mammoth public rally at Bashabo playground, Khaleda asked the AL to give up such violence in the run-up to 'mindless' shutdowns.

On the AL's demand for snap polls, she said: "People elected us for five years and we will not hand over power even an hour before completion of the term... election will be held in due time according to the constitution."

The AL would not be able to force the government from power by enforcing hartals, creating indiscipline and unleashing violence in the streets, she told the rally, the second of eight such gatherings chalked by the BNP.