

## Hasina vows to keep essentials

**FROM PAGE 1**  
political parties as well as the contestants in the polls.

Analyzing the ruling parties' electoral pledges one by one, Hasina said, "In last four years, the present government failed to solve even a single problem of the people, rather they themselves [ruling alliance] have turned out to be a huge problem for the nation."

"Lack of governance, state patronisation of the criminals, and rise of militants with government knowledge and support have pushed the country into sheer uncertainty," she observed.

"We want to say categorically that Awami League will not let anyone turn the country into a failed state," the former prime minister said, adding, "We will establish a modern, secular and democratic Bangladesh based on the spirit of the Liberation War."

She said, "We never wanted the BNP-Jamaat-led alliance to fail as we knew that failure of any government would mean misery of the people, which now seems to be the order of the day."

Reiterating the demand of the 14-party opposition combine for immediate resignation of the government, she said, "Otherwise we will force the government to quit through united movement."

Before spelling out the 16-point commitment, Hasina detailed what she said were misdeeds of the four-year rule of Khaleda Zia.

### PRICE SPIRAL OF ESSENTIALS

Giving a comparison between the prices of essentials when she left office in July 2001 and those now, Hasina blasted the alliance government for 'falling miserably' to check the price spiral.

Citing from a comparative chart of prices, she claimed prices of rice shot up by 65-100 percent, lentil by 60 percent, soybean oil 114 percent, flour 67 percent, salt 80 percent, sugar 50 percent, powder milk 100 percent, onion 167 percent, green chilli 400 percent, egg 64 percent, ginger 243 percent, beef 71 percent, mutton 50 percent, fish 90 percent, vegetables 40 percent, kerosene 113 percent, diesel 100 percent and petrol 83 percent between July 2001 and October 2005.

Transport cost has been raised 90 percent during the same period, she added.

### LAW AND ORDER SLIDE

The opposition leader said BNP in its last election manifesto had pledged to improve law and order, but after four years of its rule BNP-Jamaat regime and terrorism have become 'synonymous'.

She said the president granted clemency to a double-murder convict because he is a BNP leader. Besides, ministers had recommended release of militant kingpin Mufti Hannan, accused of planting bomb in

Kotalipara.

Hasina said, "In last four years, terrorism rose to extreme heights as the countrymen witnessed grenade and serial bomb blasts across the country, recovery of huge stock of firearms in Bogra, Chittagong and Kuril in Dhaka."

"How come the government claim that law and order situation is under control when a record 500 blasts have left the entire nation rattled?" the former prime minister questioned.

**UNABATED CORRUPTION AND FAILURE IN POWER SECTOR**  
"Eliminating corruption was BNP's second most important pledge before the last polls, but after coming to power corruption has become their one and only policy," the AL chief said adding, "Bangladesh became world champion in corruption not for once but for three consecutive years under the present regime."

She said "electricity for all" was the coalition's third electoral pledge, but in reality the government in last four years has managed to add only 80 MW power.

"During the last Awami League rule, power production rose by about 2700 MW," she added.

### PLOT TO RIG NEXT ELECTION

Hasina said the level of failure and misuse of the government is so pronounced that the ruling coalition is 'trying to come to power by circumventing people's mandate through election engineering'.

She alleged that government has extended the retirement ages for judges just to get a loyal person as the chief of the caretaker government. Without consulting the opposition parties, it has already appointed another faithful as the chief election commissioner. Besides, a large number of BNP-Jamaat activists have been appointed election officers as part of a bigger plot to rig the next election in alliance's favour, she observed.

Referring to the opposition's proposals for reforms in the caretaker government and the electoral systems, she said those have become the pre-condition for good governance.

**ABSENCE OF GOOD GOVERNANCE**  
The former prime minister said politicisation under the present government has crippled the administrations.

Independence of judiciary is yet to be given when the integrity of the High Court has been undermined with the appointment of controversial people as judges, she said.

"Politicisation in the judiciary is so grave that one incumbent district judge has been participating in BNP's meetings regularly," she alleged.

"Bangladesh has been branded as a terrorist state under the present regime while the UN has termed it a vulnerable country," Hasina said on the government's performance in foreign relations.

### THE OTHER COMMITMENTS

The opposition leader's charter of

pledges include implementing education policy adopted by the previous AL government, ensuring education and legal protection for the women and poor, and building up a pro-people health sector.

She also promised to arrange low-interest loans to finance rural industries, commerce and agriculture, ensure adequate irrigation facilities and fertilizer supply for farmers, energy supply to the rural areas, and increase agricultural subsidy.

Implementation of an employment plan in coordination with the private sectors to create employment opportunities for the unemployed youth is another pledge that Hasina made in her address.

She also promised to reduce government involvement in trade and commerce.

Bringing back the people's money that had been siphoned out from the country and introduction of e-governance to ensure accountability of the administration too figure among the pledges.

## Robber killed in 'crossfire'

OUR CORRESPONDENT, N. ganj

A notorious robber of Arahazar upazila in the district was killed in a 'crossfire' during a shootout between the Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) and a gang of criminals early yesterday.

According to Rab-3 sources, a Rab team arrested Rawshan Ali, 35, a listed criminal, at Nayapur Bazar in Sonargaon upazila on Monday night. Following his statement, the team took him to Noikahon area to arrest his accomplices and seize arms at around 3:00am.

When they reached Nayapur Bazar, robbers opened fire and the Rab men retaliated against the attack. Rawshan, hit by bullets in the crossfire, was declared dead when he was taken to a local hospital, a Rab source said.

Rab seized one pistol, one gun, six bullets and machete from the scene.

Rawshan and his accomplices used to commit robbery on the Dhaka-Sylhet and Dhaka-Chittagong highways and in Rupganj and Arahajar upazilas.

## Tata for skipping

**FROM PAGE 16**  
sought government guarantee for buying its power and fertiliser for 30 years.

Bangladesh officials at the meetings with Tata representatives yesterday disagreed on the proposals and said these issues would be decided after discussion with the ministerial committee on Tata investment.

Tata sources said their officials found the government procurement system a lengthy and cumbersome one, which they would not like in case of selling their product to the government.

Three separate meetings at the Ministry of Industries, Petrobangla and Power Development Board (PDB) were held yesterday. Bangladesh officials tagged fixing Tata's power and fertiliser tariff with the government's coal and gas prices.

"We want to maintain an equitability for gaining a win-win situation with industrial giant Tata Group in fixing the tariff of gas and coal as well as fertiliser and power," said a government high official, who led the team at one meeting.

The prices could not be fixed before the receipt of the government-recruited consultant's report, he told The Daily Star, seeking anonymity.

At the meeting with PDB officials, Tata representatives proposed using the agreement for power purchase from Meghnaghat plant as a yardstick for power purchase from Tata. But the PDB team disagreed with them saying that Meghnaghat plant is a gas-fired one while Tata plans setting up two coal-based power plants.

At the Petrobangla meeting, Tata officials demanded construction of a gas pipeline from Chittagong to the proposed fertiliser factory with the government funding it.

They also proposed to relocate its fertiliser plant from Banshkhal to some other area as Banshkhal is too far from a river jetty.

Earlier, we did not consider this aspect. So, we now want to relocate our fertiliser factory from Banshkhal as it is located around 18 kilometres from a jetty," a Tata official said.

The government side agreed on the relocation and suggested to Tata two other places for its fertiliser factory.

The Tata team at its meeting at the industries ministry sought government guarantee for 30 years for procuring its fertiliser, and an international trade agreement. Ministry officials disagreed on such a guarantee.

The present third round negotiation has been suspended for five days from today and is scheduled to resume on October 16.

During the break, the two sides will take up the issues with their respective higher authorities, sources said.

The wrap-up meeting of the third round negotiation will be held on October 17 at the Ministry of Communications.

## Schroeder

**FROM PAGE 16**

party in a coalition.

In time, history may judge Schroeder as a chancellor who hung on too long, chasing a third term even after his Social Democrats won fewer seats and votes than their conservative rivals in elections on September 18.

A deal with Angela Merkel's Christian Democratic Union is likely to see him shut out of Germany's future coalition government, after early speculation that he was considering being vice-chancellor or foreign minister.

## Militants plan blasts

**FROM PAGE 1**

Abdul Awal, son-in-law of JMB chief Abdul Rahman, would lead the squad and has already set out for border areas to collect explosives, the source added.

Several JMB activists have also left the district on the same mission.

The source also said the suicide squad members will be sent to all the major districts to 'free' their fellows arrested in Bogra, Gaibandha and Naogaon.

The bomb attacks would be 'well planned', the source continued, adding that 'Ehsans' would play a vital role and be honoured as 'shaheed' if they die.

Meanwhile, intelligence agencies suspect female activists of the banned organizations may take part in future bombings. Police have recently seized a military cap from a female madrasa at Naruri.

Intelligence sources said students of the madrasa might have been trained as militants to take part in any attack.

The daughter of Abdul Rahman and wife of Faruq, responsible for August 17 blasts in Gaibandha, was a trainer at the madrasa, the sources added.

Meantime, Mamunur Rashid, popularly known as Faruq and accused of attacking police at Moheshpur in Joypurhat, is living in Bogra shaving off his beard, sources said.

**KHULNA**  
The Huji has threatened to blow up key installations in Khulna if Mufti Hannan was not released, reports our staff correspondent in Khulna.

"We are just waiting for orders from the high command to bomb the targets in cooperation with JMB," the caller told heads of different key installations over phone, sources said.

Police and intelligence sources said Huji may target KMP headquarters, offices of the divisional commissioner and superintendent of police, Rupsha Bridge, BTB substation, temples, Khulna station of Bangladesh Betar, power station, BTB office, newspaper offices, press club, courts and other key installations.

The commissioner of Khulna Metropolitan Police (KMP) said he knows about the threats, adding that a security blanket has already been thrown on the city.

**DRIVETO NAB JAMAAT LEADER DHIRA**

Police launched a fresh drive in Khulna Division to arrest Jamaat-e-Islami leader Shahabuddin Lashkar alias Dhira, a suspected mastermind behind the killing of Khulna Bureau chief of Dainik Sangram Shaikh Belaluddin.

Intelligence agencies learnt Mufti Hannan hid at Dhira's house after planting a bomb near the meeting venue of the then prime minister Sheikh Hasina at Kotalipara in 2000.

Dhira went into hiding soon after the arrest of Hannan.

He is the alleged head of Khulna divisional unit of a Huji bomb squad and suspected mastermind behind planting bombs at a meeting venue of Sheikh Helal, MP in 2001.

Meantime, JMB cadre Shahidullah alias Lokman, 18, in his confessional

statement named 12 Islamist extremists as masterminds and bombers in Khulna.

They are Abdul Rahman, Bangla Bhai, Maolana Arif, Palash, Feroz, Mahmud, Musa, Suman, Munna, Masum, Mintu and he himself.

Shahidullah told the court he fled to Dhaka from Khulna after the bomb blasts.

He said two people -- Suman and Faruque -- took him to Saikhra by motorcycle to carry a bag to Khulna.

They gave him Tk 1,000 in advance near Tablig Mosque at Nirala in 2003.

He said Arif taught him how to carry out destructive activities and join jihad for establishing Islamic rules. Arif played a key role in placing the bombs and sent other JMB cadres early on August 17 to explode the bombs.

**NETRAKONA**  
Our Netrakona correspondent adds: Detained JMB member Sanaullah admitted to police that six cadres were assigned to explode bombs at six points in Netrakona on August 17.

Sanaullah was arrested on Thursday and told investigators the bombs were made outside Netrakona and given to the bombers on August 16.

Kawsar Alam Suman, a top JMB leader of greater Mymensingh, coordinated the bombings and led a team to supply the bombs.

Sanaullah and the six took shelter in Lito's house in Kurpur in Netrakona in early June and left the place on August 17, police sources said.

## More areas

**FROM PAGE 16**

have gone under rushing water that entered through the breaches of Karotoa flood control embankment at Bagularia and Taraf Manu.

Flood affected people of remote areas, now crowding along flood control embankments and nearby educational institutions for shelter, are suffering for want of food and drinking water.

About 35,000 people of badly affected Keshoregari and Hossainpur unions under Palashbari upazila have remained marooned by floodwater that breached five points on the Karotoa embankment, said Palashbari upazila nirbahi officer.

At least 25 villages of Kamalerpara, Kachua, Bonarpara unions under Shaighata upazila and Badiakhal under Gaibandha sadar upazila have been affected by floodwater.

A portion of embankment at Ratanpur under Gaibandha sadar upazila collapsed and floodwater engulfed a vast tract of croplands.

Treatment at Gobindaganj Upazila Health Complex is seriously disturbed as the ground floor of the health complex has gone under knee-deep water.

Meanwhile, restoration of traffic movement on Gobindaganj-Dinaipur highway remains uncertain as surging water badly damaged the road.

Our Rangpur correspondent adds: Fresh areas in Pirganj and Mithapukur upazilas in the district have been inundated as rivers are overflowing.

Flood situation in Badarganj upazila has slightly improved.

## 2 share Nobel economics prize for game theory analysis

AFP, Stockholm

Robert J. Aumann, an Israeli-US citizen, and American Thomas C. Schelling yesterday won the 2005 Nobel Economics Prize for using game theory to explain conflict resolution, the Nobel jury said.

Using game theory -- interactive decision scenarios -- the laureates focused on why some people and countries manage to cooperate, while others suffer from conflict.

Their work has helped understand all kinds of conflict and cooperation, from trade fights, organized crime, political decisions and wage negotiations to outright shooting wars.

American Schelling, now 84, produced his main work during the Cold War, which pitted the United States against the Soviet Union, when he used game theory methods to explain the era's most vital issues, global security and the arms race.

## Stop lighting

**FROM PAGE 1**

In view of the situation, the authorities urged the owners to cease from lighting the shopping malls on the occasion of Eid-shopping binges.

State Minister for Power Iqbal Hassan Mahmood explained the measures taken in a meeting with the managers of different power stations at his ministry.

"We'll enforce law if the owners fail to comply with government orders," he told reporters.

Against the backdrop of countrywide electricity crunch, the power ministry convened the meeting of the general managers and chief engineers of different power stations to discuss away out.

The chief executives of the state-owned power stations informed the meeting that about eight large power plants across the country remained out of operation for various reasons, resulting in 800 MW to 1000 MW shortages in electricity supply.

They said all the power stations were either forced to shutdown by mechanical breakdown or for maintenance work. The plants need at least three to four weeks time to repair and resume operation.

"Most of the power stations lack expertise and skilled manpower, causing the delay in repairs and maintenance works," they were quoted as saying.

Chairman of the Power Development Board (PDB) ANH Akhtar Hossain told the meeting that the problem related to shortage of skilled manpower has been persisting for the last 15 years. But this was not properly addressed.

The state minister directed the chiefs of power stations to make special effort to bring all the closed plants back into operation within next two weeks.

"You have to increase generation to 3800 MW from 3200 MW," the minister told power-station managers.

The meeting was informed that if all the closed plants resumed operation, it would add about 360 MW electricity to the national grid, easing the present crisis situation.

Secretary of the Power Division Nazrul Islam and Chairman of Dhaka Electric Supply Authority (Desa) A Bab were also present at the meeting.

## BSF kills

**FROM PAGE 16**

The identity of the injured could not be known.

Mofazzul Hossain Dulal, chairman of the Sixth Aulapur Union Parishad (UP), quoting villagers said 200 Battalion of BSF opened fire on the victims taking them for smugglers near Lalchandpur camp of India.

The two young men died on the spot. The BSF sent the bodies to Balurghat for autopsy yesterday afternoon after keeping the bodies inside their camp for almost a day.

Sources from the victims' families said the young men were going to their relative's house in India.

Following the incident, 14 Battalion of Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) of Khanpur border outpost (BOP) sent a strong letter of protest. The situation around the border area is still tensed as the BSF is yet to return the bodies.

Other accused are AHM Shamim, 23, Zakaria alias Jewel, 21, Nur Azam Siddique alias Yeasir, 27, Belal Hossain alias Tamim, 21, Aleya Ferdous, 27, and Akramul Islam, 23.

All of them except Aatur were arrested earlier and gave confessional statements to magistrates on different dates.

In the charge sheets, the investigation officers (IOs) said the main objective behind the blasts was to establish Islamic law in the country.

They also prayed for issuing arrest warrant and attachment of movable property against Aatur.

Earlier on September 8, Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) arrested five of the accused, including the woman, at a house in East Basabo.

Aatur rented the house four to five months ago using pseudonym Hassan alias Sunny and coordinated the countrywide serial blasts. The law enforcers believe he narrowly escaped arrest.

The Rab also seized firearms, 60 CDs containing militant training manuals, 700 capacitors alike to those used in the August 17 blasts, 92 books and four audiocassettes on jihad, one computer, two printers and 10 floppy disks from the house.

Intelligence officials said Aatur used to carry out all the subversive activities from the six-storey house on Patwari Lane in East Basabo.

Other seized items include one electric blower, 17 masks, three receipt books for raising funds for madrasa, three diaries, nine books of district maps, one motorcycle and Tk2 lakh in cash.

## Over 10,000 communal

**FROM PAGE 16**

Jamaat-e-Islami, Nezam-e-Islam and Muslim League," said the white paper.

Admitting that torture of minorities has seen a low now, the white paper said the country's constitution says that neither it nor the country is for the non-Muslims. "How can a country having such a communal constitution be a good example of communal harmony?" it asked.

It is impossible to establish communal harmony unless the state and the government are secular, it said.

Repression of religious minorities, which began in mid-July of 2001 after the caretaker government took over, rose widely after the general elections. No single day could be found in the first three months of the coalition government's taking power when repression of minorities did not take place.

Incidents of physical torture, looting, setting fire to households, forced extortion and rape were more than the number of killings, the white paper said.

The victims of murder included people of different ages, from newborn babies to 70-year-olds. Even priests of temples, Buddhist monks and elderly scholars could not escape murder.

In some cases, Hindus were forced to convert to Islam, while Muslims or ethnic people who converted to Christianity willingly were tortured and even killed.

Terminating the coalition government as pro-Islam, the white paper said BNP's political philosophy is Islamic nationalism, like that of the Muslim League, although it does not introduce itself as an Islamist party like the Jamaat-e-Islam and Islami Oikya Jote.

The white paper said local activists and supporters of the four-party alliance started attacking, torturing, terrorising and even killing minority religious sects, especially Hindus, at different parts of the country from mid-July of 2001. They worked to ensure that Hindus do not go to voting centres and, if they do, do not cast their vote for anyone other than the alliance candidates.

A study of 1,500 days of repression on minorities shows that these efforts aimed mainly at turning Bangladesh into a religiously monolithic country like Afghanistan.

Blaming the government for its continual denial of the repression from the very beginning, the white paper said the local administration did not take any effective steps against the torture due to the government's denial. Complaints of the victims were not even recorded at police stations, it added.

The white paper blamed former chief advisor of the caretaker government, Justice Latifur Rahman, for his

denial from the very beginning that communal violence took place anywhere in the country. "Like him, the coalition government also continued denying it since its taking power."

To make the government happy, the police administration at times forced the victims to say that no incidents of repression took place anywhere.

Knowing that the government will act in favour of them, the perpetrators were encouraged for further repression of minorities, it said.

Coming to power, the coalition government ignored the implementation of the hill treaty, which resulted in continual repression of hill people by the military and Muslim settlers, said the white paper.

Besides political vengeance, economic factors acted behind the torture of minority people. However, an overall study shows that in most cases, the perpetrators had an aim to oust the Hindus from the country.

Communal thoughts are growing even in the Awami league, the pioneer of Bangali nationalism and follower of secularism, the white paper noted.

"The minority people who fled the country for life in 1971 returned afterwards. But many of the victims of communal repression who left the country during this coalition rule have told me and the BBC that they would never come back," Shahrir Kabir said in the white paper.

Although the degree of repression of minorities during the coalition rule was higher than that of any other past reign, the opposition failed to take effective steps to stop it, the paper noted.

The white paper recommended five steps for immediate implementation and six for long-term implementation. The immediate steps include formation of a high-profile commission comprising a Supreme Court judge, joint-secretary-level representatives from home and law ministries and human rights organisations to make inquiries into reported incidents of minority repression in the last four years. The commission will submit its report in six months and make recommendations for stopping torture and discrimination of minority sects.

The long-term recommendations include creating mass awareness and implementation of a secular constitution like that of 1972.

Presided over by Prof Kabir Chowdhury, the function was addressed, among others, by AL leader Abdur Razzak, Bangladesh Community Party President Manjurul Ahsan Khan, Workers Party President Rashed Khan Menon, Prof Muntassir Mamoon, Prof Ajay Roy, Prof Nim Chandra Bhoumik and Political Secretary of Parbatya Chattagram Jana Sanghati Samity Usha Kar Talukder.

## Quake toll may go

**FROM PAGE 16**

ransacked military trucks which had just arrived in the city and took food, tents, blankets and medicines, an AFP photographer at the scene said.

Others broke into a petrol station to get fuel to burn wood for cooking and warmth.

"Everything is gone, people are buried alive, nobody is helping us to find them," local resident Akram Shah said.

Major General Sultan said the authorities late Monday had succeeded in reopening the mountain roads leading to Muzaffarabad and Balakot, which had been blocked by landslides, speeding up the relief effort.

International rescue teams with sniffer dogs and specialist equipment have begun arriving in Pakistan and setting up field hospitals to cope with the tens of thousands of injured.

Offers of aid have also begun pouring in from around the world. The United States said it had provided \$50 million, the World Bank offered \$20 million and the Asian Development Bank pledged \$10 million.

Survivors were facing an array of problems -- freezing overnight temperatures, rain, landslides, scarce food, little shelter, no communications networks and almost non-existent healthcare.

The United Nations said more helicopters were needed urgently to

## DU will never

**FROM PAGE 1**

sations and Pragatishil Chhatra Jote (PCJ), a combine of six left-leaning student organisations, took out separate processions and held rallies in front of the registrar building to press home their demand.

The activists of the seven organisations ransacked flower