

# 12 killed, 2,000 hurt

**FROM PAGE 1**  
The AL activists vandalised BNP offices at Rajarhat and Rournari upazilas and set fire to Juba Dal office in Kurigram town.

They clashed again at Ghoshpara in the evening leaving four activists wounded.  
**MAGURA**  
An associate member of Jamaat's town committee was killed and 95 others injured in a clash between BNP and 14-party men at Magura bus stand yesterday afternoon.

Arafat Hossain, 45, was standing on a rooftop near the bus stand when he was bullet-hit. He died on the way to Dhaka.

**NARSINGDI**  
Haziur Union Parishad Chairman Saiful Islam Sarkar and his younger brother Ripon Sarkar were shot dead while four others of the same family were seriously injured yesterday afternoon as AL activists allegedly stormed into their house and opened fire.

The two died while being rushed to Narsingdi Sadar Hospital. The injured are Mahe Alam, 45, Shamim, 30, Hannan, 35, and Elem, 33.

**BAGERHAT**  
A local BNP leader and former municipality ward commissioner, Asaduzzaman, 38, was chopped to death and 20 others were injured in a clash between AL and BNP activists in the town last night, reports UNB.

Witnesses said the AL and BNP activists locked in a bloody clash at 7:15pm. Police found the body of Asaduzzaman in front of the Light Cinema Hall.

Earlier in the afternoon, the AL men damaged and set on fire six BNP offices, some business houses owned by BNP men. Sporadic clashes left over 50 people wounded.

**NARAYANGANJ**  
Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) organising secretary of Murapura union Motiur Rahman Panna, 25, died at Dhaka Medical College and Hospital after he was injured in a clash between JCD and Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) in Narayanganj Friday night.

**RANGPUR**  
At least 60 activists of 14-party and four-party alliances were injured in a series of attacks and counter-attacks in Rangpur town yesterday after BNP and Jamaat activists attacked 14-party leaders at Jahajcompany point.

The BNP-Jamaat men ransacked AL office and Mercantile Bank on Station Road. They also set fire to a stage made by the 14-party combine and the house of a Jubo League leader.

The 14-party men set fire to the daily Juger Alo office owned by Rahim Uddin Bharsa, president of Rangpur district unit BNP, on GL Roy Road. They also burnt two autorickshaws, a microbus and a bus owned by Asadul Habib Dulu, deputy minister for food and disaster management of the outgoing government.

**RAJSHAHI**  
Ten people, including three policemen and president of Rajshahi Photojournalist Association Asaduzzaman Asad, were injured in Rajshahi city during an agitation programme of the 14-party at Shahab Bazar Zero Point yesterday.

The agitators ransacked BNP offices in Chapainawabganj sadar upazila and district town and damaged a business centre owned by a BNP leader and the house of Doctors' Association of Bangladesh President Dr Moyez.

Sonamasjid Land Port became inoperative as barricades were set up at different points on the Chapainawabganj-Sonamasjid highway.

**TANGAIL**  
At least 100 people including 10 policemen were injured in a fierce clash between BNP and 14-party workers at Nirala intersection in Tangail town yesterday.

The 14-party activists also vandalised BNP offices in Dhanbari and Basail upazila headquarters in the district while 20 people were injured during chase and counter-chase in Madhupur upazila.

**SIRAJGANJ**  
At least 35 persons including policemen were injured in a clash between AL and BNP activists at Ullapara yesterday after the BNP attacked an AL procession.

The 14-party workers blocked the highway and railway at different points and damaged at least seven vehicles during their demonstration programmes.

**SATKHIRA**  
Workers of the 14-party alliance burnt Jamaat offices in the town and in Shyamnagar. They also damaged the office of Islami Insurance Division in the town.

**BOGRA**  
Seventy-five people were injured in clashes between the workers of 14-party combine and four-party alliance in Bogra town and adjacent areas yesterday. BNP men vandalised the offices of the AL, Jubo League, JSD and Workers Party and attacked the house of former municipality chairman Rezaul Karim Motin, an AL leader.

Twenty-five people were injured in another clash between AL and Jamaat workers at Dhnat upazila while unknown people set fire to the house of Sonatola upazila BNP President Abu Taiyab Zaki.

Witnesses said Zaki opened fire on the agitated AL men during the incident, injuring three.

**NETROKONA**  
At least 55 people were injured in three upazilas of Netrokona. Besides, 15 people were wounded in AL-BNP clash in Durgapur and 20 in Mohanganj upazila when BNP activists swooped on an AL procession.

**DINAJPUR**  
At least 120 workers of four-party and 14-party were injured and a number of party offices burnt as they got locked into battles over establishing supremacy in areas of Dinaipur, Thakurgaon and Panchagarh.

AL workers set fire to Chirbandar upazila BNP office and assaulted former MP Md Akhteruzzaman.  
**PATUAKHALI**

At least 30 activists of BNP and AL were injured in clashes at different places in Patuakhali district.

BNP cadres ransacked district offices of AL and NAP (National Awami Party), prompting AL activists to vandalise district BNP office.

They also attacked the house of district BNP vice-president and president of district Krishak Dal and Sramik Dal office in launch ghat area.

**KHAGRACHHARI**  
At least 25 AL men including AL district committee adviser Dina Bandhu Sarker were injured, many business centres and many government offices ransacked and torched in sporadic clashes between AL and BNP over getting supremacy at different parts of the hill district yesterday.

The clashes ensued after BNP cadres led by district Organising Secretary Mostafizur Rahman Millat attacked an AL procession.

AL activists later ransacked a number of offices including the press club, Sramik Dal office, several vehicles and furniture shops while BNP men set fire to AL activists' houses at Shalbagun village.

Bangladesh Rifles men were deployed later.

**NOAKHALI**  
Thirty people including the officer-in-charge (OC) of Sudharam Police Station were injured during clashes between the AL and BNP at Town Hall intersection in Majidi yesterday evening.

The BNP workers later vandalised AL and Jubo League office, a shop and four motorbikes.

Meantime, 45 others of the rival groups were injured in Hatia upazila. The AL men vandalised 20 shops owned by BNP men and their supporters.

**FARIDPUR**  
Twenty people including the OC of Faridpur Police Station were injured in a clash between the workers of 14-party and Jamaat in the town. The clash began after some people from Jamaat office hurled stones on AL procession.

Later a mob ransacked the BNP office.

**MYMENSINGH**  
Nineteen people were injured during clashes between 14-party and BNP men in the district. The 14-party workers ransacked vehicles and shops and set fire to district Sramik Dal office.

**JHENIDAH**  
Forty people were injured in clash between BNP and AL activists in the district. The AL activists of Kaliaganj set fire to a BNP office, hurled bomb at a police van leaving four constables injured.

**KISHOREGANJ**  
Over 55 people including a journalist were injured when AL workers ransacked two BNP offices and a Zia Parishad office and put barricade on the highway.

**PABNA**  
Thirty people were injured and offices of different political parties and 25 shops ransacked during clash between AL and BNP men in the district yesterday.

**GAIBANDHA**  
At least 15 people including three policemen were injured when 14-party workers attacked a BNP office and set fire to the house of BNP leader Hamidul Huq Chhana in Munsipara.

They also ransacked Jamaat and BNP offices at Bonarapara.

**BARISAL**  
Fifty people including four police constables were injured when the AL men vandalised over 100 establishments including houses of BNP leaders and activists and offices of the BNP and Jamaat in Barisal town yesterday morning.

Although they had control on the town the whole day, Jubo Dal and Chhatra Dal activists led by City Mayor Mujibur Rahman Sarwar entered the town at 5:00pm.

With police escort, they were firing gunshots while entering the town and re-established their supremacy.

**KAPASIA**  
Twelve AL men were bullet-hit in a sudden attack by BNP men yesterday afternoon.

Former state minister for jute Hannan Shah led the attack on an AL procession near Ikhola, said former MP Tanjim Ahmed Soheli Taj.

**SYLHET**  
Ten people including the president of the Sylhet district unit of Islami Chhatra Shibir sustained injuries in clashes between the activists of four-party alliance and AL-led 14-party in Sylhet city yesterday.

The 14-party activists forced away the Shibir and Jamaat men, who were preparing for a rally in city's court point area.

Shibir men vandalised at the AL office at Ibrahim Smriti Sangsad and five shops and injured Jubo League activist Tapan Mitra.

## Ershad

**FROM PAGE 16**  
Ershad told reporters yesterday morning that a negotiation had been going on with the four-party alliance leaders regarding his joining the alliance.

"But the final decision is not taken and I am observing the overall situation of the country," he said.

Ruhul Amin Hawladar said the Jatiya Party will hold a meeting of presidents and general secretaries of all units on November 5 at Diploma Engineers Institution and "the decision will be taken after consulting with the grassroots-level leaders".

## 8 journals

**FROM PAGE 16**  
Janakantha, Akhter Hossain in the Bangladesh Today and Sanaul Haq from the New Age.

The police damaged two digital cameras of The Daily Star and one video camera of ATN Bangla.

Following the incident, the journalists present at the scene protested the barbaric attitude of the police. Later, a police member reluctant to introduce himself apologised to the journalists, witnesses present on the spot said.

## Sri Lankan peace talks under way

**BBC ONLINE**

Sri Lanka's government and Tamil Tiger rebels have begun talks in Geneva in an effort to avert a slide back into war.

Violence between the two sides has soared. Since July, 372 security force members, 128 civilians and many rebels have died, the government says.

Correspondents say expectations from the talks are close to zero.

The best scenario, many believe, is that the two sides agree on another date for another round of negotiations.

The talks began with a strained handshake between the leaders of the Sri Lankan government and Tamil Tiger delegations, says the BBC's Imogen Foulkes, in Geneva.

They had been instructed to shake hands by Norway's minister for development, Erik Solheim, who had expressed his frustration at the delays in getting the factions to the negotiation table.

"We have shown a lot of patience and we are prepared to show more, but the people in Sri Lanka and the international community will be impatient," he said.

Swiss diplomats also reminded the Tamil Tigers and Sri Lankan government of their obligations under the Geneva Convention.

The talks are the first time the two sides have met in eight months.

On the eve of the talks, the rebels said the road linking northern Jaffna peninsula with the rest of the country should be opened to facilitate further negotiations.

Spokesman Daya Master told the Associated Press news agency that the rebels would not agree to any future meetings with the government if the demand was not met.

## Top businesses

**FROM PAGE 16**  
been deteriorating rapidly during this period of handing over power of a democratic government to a caretaker government, they observed.

The business leaders also noted that all these uncertainty and political violence are seriously damaging the country's image abroad and the economy of the country is about to suffer a severe negative impact.

"It is necessary to put an end to this unexpected situation immediately. Under the circumstances, we urge all political leaders and workers to refrain from creating chaos," the statement said.

"The country is above all else and you are the key drivers of it. Please listen to what the people of the country say and take initiative to return to a peaceful coexistence. Let peace and relief be showered on the despair-hit people," it went on.

Mir Nasir Hossain, president of Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FBCCI), Mahbubur Rahman, president of International Chamber of Commerce-Bangladesh (ICCB), Latifur Rahman, president of Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce and Industry (MCCI), M A Momen, president of Dhaka Chamber of Commerce and Industry (DCCI), AK Azad, president of Bangladesh Chamber of Industries (BCI), A K M Fazlul Haque, president of Bangladesh Knitwear Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BKMEA), M A Awar, president of Bangladesh Textile Mills Association (BTMA), and Saifuzzaman Chowdhury, president of Chittagong Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CCCI) signed the statement.

## Country

**FROM PAGE 1**  
insecurity engrossed the city dwellers who eyed an uncertain future. Many important points of the city turned into battlefields.

"You see the appalling situation," a city dweller said, "My nephew started at 8:00am from Comilla but the bus had to go back from Meghnaghat."

Commercial establishments and most of the markets were kept closed.

Inter-district buses suspended their service. Schedules of Chittagong-bound trains Mahanagar and Godhuli were changed, while other trains stood still on the half-way. Chittagong-bound train Subarna was pelted with stones and there were rampant vandalism at Tongi, Ashuganj, Ghorasal and Sylhet stations.

Steamers started plying from Badamtoli Ghat but the number of passengers was much less.

Port city Chittagong was paralysed as the 14-party combine put barricades on the main points.

Mills and factories remained closed, only a few vehicles plied, and loading and unloading at the seaport were done in a limited scale.

Earlier Chittagong City Mayor ABM Mohiuddin Choudhury called hartal in the port city for today.

An uneasy calm prevailed in the crowded areas of Mymensingh town. No inter-district bus entered the town as of evening yesterday.

Train services were disrupted as AL activists halted Dhaka-bound Ekota Express from North Bengal at Goyeshwar and Jamuna Express at Maheshkhali.

# Downtown Dhaka

**FROM PAGE 1**  
and taken inside the party bastion and beaten to meatballs.

The Jamaat men were seen producing pistols and long-barreled guns from under their flowing Panjabi and firing quick shots at the AL workers. AL men were buzzing around most with sticks and some with long swords. At around 1:00pm, an AL worker was whisked away with a bullet wound in his chest. The man – many identified him as Faruk – gasped for breath.

At around 2:00pm, an AL supporter dropped to the ground with half his skull blown away by a single bullet.

The man writhed slowly and winked aimlessly as he was being handcuffed. A few minutes later, he died.

The AL men immediately chased and caught a Jamaat man and started beating him with wooden oars. For half an hour, the thrashing continued.

As everybody thought he was dead, the man in white panjabi now smeared with blood unsteadily got up on his feet and staggered across the road. The oars fell in rhythm on his head and face, but he had vowed not to fall down again to certain death.

Finally, a policeman took the initiative to save the Jamaat man. The cop grabbed his hands to steady him and quickly pulled him before the Paltan police box. The enraged policemen still attempted to hit the man whose half the skull was gone and who was bleeding profusely.

Then an AL man was carried through the crowd with his head and face drenched in blood. The man tried to keep his head high and was too dazed to know what he was doing. His head bobbed almost independent of his nervous system.

At around 2:15pm, some AL leaders were seen urging the policemen to take action against the Jamaat. They were exchanging heated words with the police officers. But the cops just gave them a dead fish's look, as if they were there holidaying.

As the noon turned high, the party men were too tired to continue and the intensity of the clash died down. After about two hours' rest, at around 5:00pm, a number of big bombs were blasted close to the Jamaat bastion as Jamaat chief Matiur Rahman Nizami was at the tail end of his speech.

Immediately hell broke loose as bullets were fired indiscriminately from Jamaat position. It took the AL a few minutes to reorganise and fire back.

AL leaders on a truck parked near Mukhtang asked its supporters over loudspeakers not to retreat in the face of Jamaat attack and to retaliate with firearms. A little later, three AL supporters were rescued from the melee with a bullet in the head.

Probably tired of the attacks and counter attacks that produced no clear victory, police finally stepped in and took action between the two feuding factions. As the dusk approached, the both sides called it a day and walked away.

**PALTAN MAIDAN BATTLEFIELD**  
The clashes between AL activists and police began when the activists tried to take control of Paltan Maidan defying a police ban on holding rallies there. The clashes began in the morning and continued for about five hours.

Although AL men took control of Paltan Maidan to hold their prescheduled rally, police drove them away at about 3:00am yesterday which angered the AL activists.

Hundreds of AL activists with sticks, oars and brickbats yesterday morning gathered around Paltan area to break through the barbed wire police barricade, sparking battles with the law enforcers.

As police barred a procession trying to enter the area, the activists ransacked a police van in front of Bhasani Hockey Stadium at about 11:45am, triggering chase and counter chase between themselves and the law enforcers.

Smaller battles then spread to adjacent areas of Paltan and contin-

ued for three hours leaving more than 50 injured including seven journalists.

The policemen also got locked in altercation with journalists who they had assaulted and later apologised to.

Thousands of AL activists from Manikganj, Kamrangir Char and different parts of the city then reached Paltan to attend the rally. The sheer show of manpower inspired the activists and compelled the police to retreat.

The clash then spread to different places including the area surrounding Mayor Bhaban, Nababpur, and Golap Shah Mazar which continued simultaneously for two hours.

Police fired rubber bullets and teargas shells to disperse the AL activists, leaving many innocent pedestrians and bystanders injured also.

**DEMRA AND DHAKA-CHITTAGONG HIGHWAY**  
AL activists took control of Demra area and Dhaka-Chittagong highway on Friday evening and continued blocking the highway for 36 hours at a stretch yesterday.

BNP activists tried to recapture the area yesterday noon by bringing out a procession there but AL activists chased them away leaving several injured.

Two army vehicles were seen patrolling Sayedabad area yesterday, which calmed down the fighting activists for sometime.

Operatives of both the parties again locked in a face to face battle, but AL leaders stopped their followers and took them towards Bangabandhu Avenue to attend the rally at Paltan.

**KERANIGANJ**  
Clashes between AL and BNP activists left 70 people injured including three journalists in Keraniganj area yesterday, 25 BNP offices were also ransacked there.

## KM Hasan

**FROM PAGE 1**  
unfortunate that the situation has come to this when the political parties cannot resolve their differences through dialogue.

The release did not mention anything about his 'sickness' while Bangabhaban had earlier claimed that Justice KM Hasan was sick. The police officials deployed at his residence also told the journalists that the justice was sick, but could not say the nature of sickness. No doctor visited his house during the whole day.

"The people of this country deserve better. I was prepared to serve in national interest but the level of mistrust between the political parties has made my position untenable," the press release said.

The former chief justice said he, along with the whole nation, was looking forward to a positive outcome of the dialogue between the two major political parties, but the dialogue collapsed making it obligatory for him to come to this decision.

Hasan said, "It is best I should stand aside rather than be a hurdle to the political process. I am making this gesture to bring in a peaceful atmosphere for the people of Bangladesh and to show my solidarity with them."

"I am doing this in the interest of the people and as one who loves his country," he said.

Justice Hasan said he has taken the decision to facilitate the political process. "There will be people who will be unhappy with this and there will be people who will be pleased."

"I say to them that it is not you in my mind, I have made this decision for the people of Bangladesh. I have always served my country to the best of my ability."

He further said: "I have never shirked my responsibility but I have weighed all the options, given the matter a great deal of thought and consideration and it is not a decision I have come to easily."

# Accept whatever

**FROM PAGE 1**  
will not stay in office even for a single day beyond the tenure.

"We will leave power but we know how to control everything with the help of the people," she said adding that she was made prime minister from the streets and she will get back to the people again after handover of power.

"Thousands of our workers across the country are now united and ready to face those trying to create anarchy," Khaleda told the rally.

Criticising Awami League (AL) she said they (AL) have no trust in the people and the democratic means. But they should know that they will not succeed in winning the upcoming election by their stick and oars. They have failed to perform their duties while both in power and opposition.

Claiming that they have ruled the country successfully in the last five years, she urged the people to vote her again to ensure prosperity of the country.

BNP senior secretary general Tarique Rahman said the alliance government will hand over power to a caretaker government today (Saturday).

"Inshallah, we will hand over power today," he said calling on the people to resist those who are

engaged in violence at different places.

Everyone should come out of their house with whatever they have at their disposal and resist the ones trying to create chaos at the transition period, he said.

Earlier, the BNP leaders, workers and supporters in their thousands gathered in front of the party office. They chanted slogans expressing their support for the party leadership.

Before the rally, members of the BNP cultural wing Jatiyatabadi Samajik Sangskritik Sangstha organised a cultural programme to continue till late at night with a break for the rally.

Presided over by Sadek Hossain Khoka, the rally was addressed among others by BNP Secretary General Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan, Saifur Rahman, Khandakar Mosharrar Hossain, Mirza Abbas, Aman Ullah Aman, Major (retired) Kamrul Islam, Nasir Uddin Pintu, and AS Khaleque.

Moudud Ahmed, Salauddin Quader Chowdhury, KM Obaidur Rahman, Khandakar Mahubuddin Ahmad, Aminul Haque, MK Anwar, Hafiz Uddin Ahmed, Shahjahan Siraj, Lutfozzaman Babar were also present.

## DMCH struggles

**FROM PAGE 16**  
only two wards could be allocated where over a hundred injured patients had to be crammed in.

Shortage of blood, medicine and beds at DMCH turned acute following influx of the injured from the recent clashes between the major parties.

The doctors said many patients are still losing blood and at least 50 bags of blood are urgently required.

The authorities were having a hard time to handle the chaotic situation in the wards crowded with more than one patient on the same bed along with hundreds of visitors, journalists, camera crew from TV channels, members of law enforcement agencies and curious citizens.

AL central leader advocate Shahara Khatun was seen with a megaphone -- requesting visitors to vacate the wards in a bid to help the authorities get a grip of the situation.

The DMCH authorities gave assurance of providing necessary medicines to the injured from the DMCH Emergency Store, but admitted of having no arrangement of blood storage in the Emergency Store.

However, relatives of many patients were seen buying medicines from stores outside.

Patients without any relative or attendant were found laid down on their beds being treated only with saline.

Masud Alam Rasel, 34, member of Dhaka district Jubo League, was shot in the chest and was bleeding profusely.

Doctors said he urgently needed four to five bags of blood. His relatives were seen looking for blood frantically.

Many patients were seen leaving DMCH for other hospitals and clinics.

Relatives of many activists of different political parties also gathered at DMCH to find out if anyone they know has been injured.

## Corrupt ministers

**FROM PAGE 16**  
rejected its price," LDP Executive President Col (ret'd) Oli Ahmed told journalists at a press conference.

He urged the people to capture the corrupt ministers and MPs and hand them over to the police.

The LDP leader said about 50 MPs of the BNP and the Jatiya Party were in touch with them to join their newly floated party.

Replying to a query, Oli said LDP is yet to decide whether it will contest the coming elections alone.

About the current crisis over the caretaker government, Oli said LDP will lend its support to the president if there is any constitutional crisis.

LDP Secretary General Major (ret'd) Abdul Mannan, Shaikh Razzak Ali, Redwan Ahmed, Anwarul Kabir Talukder, Alamgir Kabir, Mohammad Ali Jinnah and Mahi B Chowdhury were, among others, present at the press conference.

## Ctg port

**FROM PAGE 16**  
BGMEA president said, "Already 270 garment units became sick and we do not want to see any more sick industries in the sector."

The garment factories face tremendous difficulties as the banks never give any waiver of high interest rate even though the garment export is hampered due to political disturbances in the country, he said.

## Politically divided

**FROM PAGE 16**  
after hurling a bomb at on-duty police there.

None were hurt in the incident and the arrestees were sent to Shahbagh Police Station.

Meanwhile, Dhaka University Teachers' Association (Duta) in a press release yesterday expressed its concern about the deteriorating security on the campus. The Duta said students are scared as armed cadres of a student organisation continue to show-off its power.

Meanwhile, Bangabandhu Prakuoshali Parishad, an AL-backed organisation of engineers, yesterday burned all pictures of BNP chief Khaleda Zia at the Institute of Engineers, Bangladesh (IEB).

The Parishad led by its leaders Ataul Mahmud and Kabir Hossain also burned photographs of Secretary to the Ministry of Power and IEB President ANH Akter Hossain and former IEB president QI Siddique.

## 2 outlaws killed

**FROM PAGE 16**  
One ASP (assistant superintendent of police) was bullet hit at this time, the statement said.

Then the Rab asked the Khulna Range of Police for more troops and a fierce gunfight ensued at about 7:30pm that lasted for nearly three hours. Both sides exchanged around 500 shots during the shoot-out. At one stage, the Rab team set fire to the house.

After the fight was over, Rab found two dead bodies in a room of the house. They also recovered one US made M-16 rifle, one shutter gun and 60 rounds of bullet from the spot.

Hailing from Jadabpur village in Alamdanga upazila in Chuadanga, Abir Hasan alias Nashar joined the PBCEP in 1999. He was made operations commander in 2003 after another top PBCEP leader Shueb died.

A most wanted criminal in the police list, Abir was accused in 60 different cases and also admitted responsibility for at least 50 murders in the region at different times.

# Iraqi PM, Bush agree to speed up security training

**REUTERS**