

## JP aboard AL

**FROM PAGE 1** Meanwhile, AL could not yet finalise seat distribution among its partners in the 14-party coalition. It might hold another round of meeting with the combine today.

Sources said the party might leave around 10 seats for its 14-party allies that include Workers Party, Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal, National Awami Party, Gonoantrik Party, Gono Azadi League, Samyabadi Dal, Gonoantrik Mazdur Party and Communist Kendra.

No key leaders of the components would be deprived of nomination, said a senior AL leader seeking anonymity.

**AL-IP MEETING** "We'll participate in the election and form government together," HM Ershad told reporters after meeting the AL chief and other senior leaders.

Echoing the former military strongman's words, AL spokesman Syed Ashrafur Islam said expert teams from both sides would work out a seat sharing formula.

He said AL and JP want the polls to be held on December 18 no matter what.

Ershad said, "We are saying time and again that the election must be held on December 18. If that doesn't happen, the prospect of an election being held in near future would be little."

He however said it would be better if all political parties take

## Kader Siddiqui

**FROM PAGE 16** not present at the yesterday's launching programme of the alliance held at a local hotel.

Kader Siddiqui led KSIL was involved with the alliance partners and he was also present at its announcement programme on November 9.

But the conflict over the proposed name of the new alliance started when Dr Kamal Hossain earlier proposed its name 'Juktfront' like in 1954 and Kader Siddiqui suggested it 'Juktfront' like in 2005 while B Chowdhury wanted other new names, sources said.

Kader Siddiqui kept himself outside from the alliance as his proposal on inclusion of the history of 'Juktfront' in 2005 as well as KSIL's 'contribution' in the preamble of the new electoral alliance was ignored.

But the leaders of BDB and Gono Forum terms Kader's proposal as 'illogical'.

Speaking at the launching programme of the new alliance, Dr Kamal Hossain said they formed the alliance comprising BDB, Gono Forum, Bangladesh Kallyan Party, Islami Shasantantra, Liberal Party, Zaker Party and Forward Party for establishing the country free from corruption, terrorism and poverty.

BDB President AQM Badruddoza Chowdhury and Bangladesh Kallyan Party Chairman Major General (ret'd) Syed Muhammad Ibrahim, among others, spoke on the occasion.

Earlier on November 9 Dr Kamal Hossain formed an electoral alliance with Badruddoza Chowdhury led BDB after breaking away from Awami League (AL) led grand alliance.

## 9 militants killed

**FROM PAGE 16** The fighting in the scenic Swat valley erupted a day after a suicide bomber killed at least three troops when he rammed an explosives-packed vehicle into an army checkpoint in the area.

"Security forces pounded artillery on hideouts of rebels in the Kabal area of Swat, which triggered exchange of fire, killing seven militants," army said in a statement.

Separately, one soldier was killed in another gun fight in the region when a patrol of security forces came under attack by militants linked to Taliban and al-Qaeda in Kanju area.

"Twenty seven suspected militants were also arrested during a search operation in Kanju area," the statements said. It added that two more militants were killed and five others wounded during clashes with the security forces in Mian Keley village bordering Mohmand tribal region.

The mountainous Swat valley was until last year a popular tourist destination, featuring Pakistan's only ski resort.

But the region has been turned into a battleground since Maulana Fazlullah, who has links to Pakistan's Taliban movement, launched a violent campaign for the introduction of Islamic Sharia law.

Earlier at least 10 people have been killed in gun battles between Taliban militants and pro-government tribal leaders in a northwestern Pakistani tribal town, officials said Tuesday.

The militants intercepted a convoy carrying 12 pro-government Mamoun tribe elders in Bajaur district near the Afghan border on Monday as they headed for talks with offi-

partin the polls.

Replying to a query, he claimed AL and JP had an agreement in the run-up to the cancelled election of January 22 last year that he would be picked as the country's president provided the grand alliance wins the polls. But that issue did not come up for discussion yesterday.

AL leaders Amir Hossain Amu, Abdur Razzak, Tofail Ahmed, Suranjit Sengupta, Maria Chowdhury and Abdul Jalil and JP leaders Kazi Zafar Ahmed, Ziauddin Babilu and ABM Ruhul Amin Hawlader were present at the meeting.

Queried about the JP boss's claim, Ashraf said he does not know of any agreement.

JP leader Anisul Islam Mahmud said the decision as to which party would be in the grand alliance rests with AL.

Later in the evening, JP presidium met at its chairman's office in Banani.

Briefing newsmen after the meeting, Ershad said JP and AL will submit nomination papers separately.

## AL discards

**FROM PAGE 1** candidate ignoring grassroots leaders' proposal for nominating AKM Jahangir Hossain.

In Chandra, leaders and activists of the AL and its front organisations vandalised party offices protesting nomination of Shafiqur Rahman for Chandpur-4 constituency.

They burnt an effigy of Shafiq, held rallies and formed human chain in the district town, demanding party ticket for Shamsul Haque Bhuiyan.

In Jhenidah, aggrieved leaders and activists of the party ransacked the district and Moheshpur upazila AL offices, and locked them up.

Police arrested five of the grassroots leaders.

The demonstrators alleged that the AL leadership nominated candidates who are close to some party high-ups, and demanded re-considering the nominations.

Reports from Rajshahi says hundreds of AL men held protest meetings, formed human chain, and observed a token hunger. They deplored ignoring the grassroots' selection of candidates, and threatened to 'nominate' them.

In Dinajpur, thousands of protesters barricaded Dinajpur-Bochaganj road for hours demanding party ticket for Shafiq Chandra Roy from Dinajpur-2 constituency.

In Noagao, leaders of upazila AL yesterday declared the nominated candidate from Noagao-4 constituency "unwanted" and threatened to resign if the nomination is not changed.

A report from Bogra said AL leaders and activists formed human chain and observed token hunger strike protesting nomination of candidates for Bogra-2, 3 and 5 constituencies, ignoring the grassroots decisions.

Moreover, reports of similar protests were received from Sylhet, Mymensingh, Narail, Khulna, Satkhira, Pabna, Kushtia, Shairatpur and Nilphamari and some other districts.

## Warrant issued

**FROM PAGE 1** different areas on September 19 this year, found that the Mou Enterprise had been importing Sweet Baby-2 from China and marketing it in Bangladesh without approval of the government.

Earlier on November 11, the home ministry in a letter had requested the secretary of the Health and Family Planning Ministry to take legal actions against the companies responsible for committing the offences.

In another case, the complainant mentioned that Allway Company had been importing powdered milk Yashili-1 and Yashili-2 from China and marketing those in Bangladesh without approval of the government.

She said the company does not have registration and shows no manufacturing and expiry dates on the container. The home ministry also requested the secretary of the Health and Family Planning Ministry to go for action against the company responsible.

Earlier, upon a writ petition filed by Human Rights and Peace for Bangladesh (HRPB), a High Court (HC) bench on October 23 ordered the government to stop sale and display of eight brands of milk powder, including Yashili-1, Yashili-2 and Sweet Baby-2, found tainted with melamine.

The Supreme Court (SC) on Monday directed the health ministry to send samples of all brands of powdered milk available in domestic markets to any European country through World Health Organisation (WHO) for laboratory test and submit the reports to the High Court (HC) by December 31.

Meantime, the government yesterday banned import of three Chinese powdered milk brands--Yashili-1, Yashili-2 and Sweet Baby-2.

## Massive hunt

**FROM PAGE 1** (village head) of the village Rai Nong Mro, 50, and Chong Doi Mro, 34.

Local people suspected that the killing took place in revenge for giving assistance to government forces in rescue operation after abduction of Danida official Shahid Sumon from Thanchi Kaobori Para on June 24 last year.

A local journalist of the upazila told The Daily Star that terrorists had been threatening to kill 'mouja headman' Pai Thoi U and some other persons since Danida official Sumon's rescue.

Seriously ill Danida official Sumon could be rescued by government forces on July 9 after 16 days of his abduction with the cooperation of Pai Thoi U and local peace-loving people.

Following the incident, the armed terrorists killed six indigenous people, including four of a family at Mra Wa Para on December 14 last year.

An eyewitness said while fleeing after the shootings, the terrorists threatened that they would kill one by one all who have worked against them following Sumon's abduction.

No official version was available despite repeated attempts in the 24 hours after the killings.

## War leaders

**FROM PAGE 1** Marshal (ret'd) AK Khandker and Chief Coordinator Lt Gen (ret'd) Harun-ur Rashid termed inviting war criminals--the identified Razakars, Al-Badrs and their patrons--to a national programme "disrespect" to the nation and the three million martyrs of the Liberation War.

"The nation has long been demanding trial of the war criminals," AK Khandker said.

"The armed forces were born through the great Liberation War. Now that the day has become a symbol of pride for the nation, how can we invite people who are responsible for killing 3 million people and raping 4 lakh women during the Liberation War?" Khandker said.

Speakers at the press conference also urged the government to set up a special war crimes tribunal to try the war criminals of 1971 and involve the international community and the United Nations in the process.

Sector commanders Maj Gen (ret'd) KM Shafiqullah and Lt Col (ret'd) Abu Osman Chowdhury, among others, were present at the press conference.

Sector Commanders Forum is a platform of the 11 sector commanders who led the Liberation War against Pakistan occupying forces in 1971.

## Better rice

**FROM PAGE 16** report says that only 22,155 tonnes can meet the total requirement of seeds and save Tk 55.39 crore using the tweaked traditional seed processing technology, said Zakaria.

"Rice Self Sufficiency Index (RSSI) shows that the traditional seed processing method can ensure cent percent food security in the country," said Zakaria.

"It was learnt that the video on traditional seed processing technology showed to the farmers of the 10 villages increased Boro and Aman production of 100 farmers and ensured food security," he added.

Farmer Noor-Ul-Islam, 54, of Kanupur in Sherpur upazila in Bogra, said he produced 7.20 tonnes of Boro per hectare after following the procedures shown in the video.

He used to get only 4.50 tonnes per hectare before. "The tweaked traditional seed processing technology ensured food security in my family," he said.

Mohammed Santu Khandker, 28, of Sharbarampur in Raninagar

upazila in Naogaon, said he grew 11.40 tonnes Boro on one hectare of land. He used to get 7.50 tonnes before he switched to traditional seed processing technology.

Another farmer Shahajan Ali, 48, of Garhmohastan under Shibganj upazila in Bogra said he got 4.50 tonnes of Aman per hectare following the newly introduced seed processing method. He used to get 1.50 tonnes less before.

The research report says that in the 10 villages farmers would use 62.44kg of seeds to cultivate one hectare of land. Now they can do that using just 27.71kg.

They used to harvest 3,184kg Aman per hectare on an average. Now they achieve 3,934kg per hectare. The production of Boro increased by 861kg per hectare on an average.

According to FAO calculation of food security, the people of the 10 villages scored 147.24 on an average before they had watched the video on tweaked traditional seed processing technology. Afterwards their average score went up to 294.54, said Zakaria.

## Religion exploited

**FROM PAGE 1** "So, saying the date of election fixed by the Election Commission would not allow the hajis to cast their votes would infuriate voters of the families of those hajis and thereby would fetch their votes in favour of that party," Justice Rabbani said.

The electoral law experts said the four-party alliance is discriminating against religions by speaking only for Muslims performing hajj this year.

The party has not said anything about any non-Muslim voters staying outside the country during the polls, they said.

According to a provision stipulated in the Representation of the People Order, a registered political party cannot discriminate against religions, they added.

On Monday, BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia issued a 48-hour ultimatum to the caretaker government to meet the alliance's four-point demand, including rescheduling of the parliamentary election so that hajis do not miss it, to ensure its participation in the polls.

A registered political party may be fined up to Tk 50,000 for violating the code of conduct, which took effect on September 18 for the ninth parliamentary election and will remain effective until the election results are published in official gazettes.

However, the EC has remained silent over the matter. The commission rather collected information of hajj pilgrims from the religious affairs ministry yesterday to see when they return home.

## Westmont

**FROM PAGE 16** through issuing fictitious bills against its electricity sales.

"Westmont plant's actual generation capacity is 69 MW, but it billed the Power Development Board (PDB) for 90 MW," he said in his complaint.

Arif Niazi alleged that his former employer has dodged the payment of tax through import of fake equipment.

Earlier at a press conference, the Westmont authorities had accused Niazi of misappropriating company's funds.

When his attention was drawn to the company's complaint against him, Niazi refuted the allegations.

## AL ticket

**FROM PAGE 1** Azam, Mymensingh: 3-Capt (ret'd) Mojibur Rahman, 6-Adv Moslem Uddin, 7-Reza Ali,

11-Dr Amanullah, Manikganj: 1-Engineer Anwarul Haq, 3-Zahid Malik Swapin, Dhaka: 3-Nasrul Hamid Dipu, 5-Habibur Rahman Molla, 6-Mizanur Rahman Khan Dipu, 10-Adv Rahmatullah, 18-Adv Shahara Khatun, 20-Benazir Ahmed,

Faridpur: 1-Abdur Rahman, Shariatpur: 3-Abdur Razzak, Sunamganj: 1-Engineer Moazzem Hossain Ratan, 4-Matiur Rahman, 5-Mahibur Rahman Manik, Moulvibazar: 1-Shahabuddin Ahmed, 4-Principal Abdus Shaheed, Habiganj: 3-Adv Abu Zahir, Comilla: 1-Maj Gen (ret'd) Subid Ali Bhuiyan, 6-Kazi AKM Bahar Uddin, 10-Tajul Islam, Chittagong: 9-Dr Afsarul Amin, 16-Dr Jamal Uddin.

## Serial blasts

**FROM PAGE 16** Haque alias Meshba of Bochaganj upazila in Dinajpur.

Additional and district judge Sharif Mohammad Lutfar Rahman delivered the verdict after examining 40 witnesses of the case.

The prosecution story is that the members of banned Jamia'tul Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB) planted six bombs near DC office, judge court, Chourangi intersection, Bazar Traffic Intersection and Bappur More in the district town and some of the bombs were blasted on August 17, 2005.

Just after the bombing, police filed the case and the accused were arrested from different districts. Charges were also framed against them on July 2 last year under sections 3, 4 and 6 of the Explosives Act.

Prosecution lawyers blamed poor investigation and lack of confessional statement for their acquittal.

## Bank borrowing

**FROM PAGE 16** Though foreign aid and revenue earning growth were good this year, the increase in the bank borrowing was due to a rise in the revenue expenditures, the sources add.

According to statistics, net foreign aid inflow in the first two months was \$228 million this year which was only \$28 million in the corresponding period in the last fiscal year.

In the first three months the revenue growth was 20 percent, which is near the target.

On the other hand, sales of National Savings Certificates also increased substantially this year compared to last year's. In the first three months, national savings instrument worth Tk 758 crore was sold. It was Tk 344 crore last year during the corresponding period.

The planning ministry says though this time only nine percent of ADP was implemented it was higher than last year's seven percent.

According to IMED statistics, in the total nine percent expenditure the share of local component was 10 percent of allocation or Tk 167 crore and project aid was nine percent or Tk 1,021 crore.

Of the 48 ministries and departments, nine ministries failed to spend a single taka in the three months. Besides, expenditures in most of the ministries ranged from one percent to seven percent.

The fisheries and livestock ministry spent the highest 30 percent, Rural Development and Cooperative Division 22 percent, and the social welfare 18 percent.

## Kamal

**FROM PAGE 16** at the LGED auditorium in the city.

The eminent lawyer however said the demand for allowing convicts to contest the elections goes against the tenets of rule of law.

"We must be on the lookout that no godfathers and the black money holders are allowed into the election," he said.

Dr Kamal said the alliance of Gono Forum and Bikalpadhara Bangladesh wants the national polls be held as scheduled on December 18, adding that all political parties, big and small, must respect the will of 15 crore people.

If any party tries to hamper the election, all should unite to resist them, he said. "This is not a monarchy."

He said he does not intend to take part in the polls, rather wants competent and committed leaders to contest and come in winners.

## Sajeda, Shamsul

**FROM PAGE 1** Mahub stayed the proceedings against Sajeda in the case filed on charge of amassing illegal wealth and concealing information about it.

Sajeda, Shamsul Islam and Anwar earlier got bail from the HC in the cases.

On February 26, the ACC filed the case against BNP Chairperson and former premier Khaleda Zia and 15 others, including Shamsul, Anwar and Mosharraf, for graft in awarding Barapukuria coal mine operation contract to a Chinese company.

On July 10, ACC Assistant Director Mozahar Ali Sarder filed the case against Sajeda, AL presidium member, on charge of amassing wealth worth Tk 13.84 lakh illegally and concealing information about it from the ACC.

## Hillary to accept

**FROM PAGE 16** well placed to become the country's dominant voice in foreign affairs, replacing Condoleezza Rice. Since being elected senator for New York, she has specialised in foreign affairs and defence. Although she supported the war in Iraq, she and Obama basically agree on a withdrawal of American troops.

Clinton, who still harbours hopes of a future presidential run, had to weigh up whether she would be better placed by staying in the Senate, which offers a platform for life, or making the more uncertain career move to the state department.

As part of the coalition-building, Obama yesterday also reached out to his defeated Republican rival, John McCain, to discuss how they could work together to roll back some of the most controversial policies of the Bush years. Putting aside the bitter words thrown about with abandon by both sides during the election campaign, McCain flew to meet Obama at his headquarters in the Kluczynski Federal Building, in downtown Chicago.

Obama, speaking before the meeting, said: "We're going to have a good conversation about how we can work together to fix up the country." Asked by a reporter whether he would work with Obama, McCain, who favours a bipartisan approach to politics, replied: "Obviously".

Sources on both sides said Obama did not offer McCain a cabinet job, but focused on how the senator for Arizona could help to guide legislation that they both strongly favour through Congress.

Given Obama's status as president-in-waiting, the two met in a formal setting, a room decked out with a US flag, and were accompanied by senior advisers. Although the two clashed during the election campaign over tax policy and withdrawal from Iraq, they have more in common than they have differences. They both favour the closure of the

## Obama

**FROM PAGE 16** For Obama, cordial ties to two of the nation's most famous and successful politicians might smooth the launch of an administration confronting an economic crisis and two wars.

Before Monday's meeting, Obama said he and McCain would talk about "how we can do some work together to fix up the country." He thanked McCain "for the outstanding service he's already rendered."

In a joint statement after the meeting, they vowed to work together to reform government and promote bipartisanism in Washington.

Meanwhile, Hillary Clinton, who returns to Congress as a fairly junior senator with no immediate prospects for a leadership post, appeared very much in the running for secretary of state. Transition officials said she and her husband, former President Bill Clinton, were cooperating with a vetting process, although there were other contenders for the job.

Bill Clinton's finances and business relationships could pose a conflict of interest for his wife if she became the nation's top diplomat. Since leaving the White House in 2001, he has amassed a multimillion-dollar fortune and built a large international foundation through his ties to corporations and foreign governments.

As for Obama and McCain, they expressed similar views on a number of issues during the campaign, such as the dangers of climate change and a need to ease US dependence on fossil fuels.

Aides familiar with Monday's meeting said the two men spoke of working together on that broad issue, as well as on comprehensive immigration revisions, an effort McCain helped spearhead in the Senate in 2006.

The measure collapsed, and Obama will face difficult decisions in how far to push changes in immigration laws in a Congress dominated by Democrats.

They also discussed the US detention camp at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, which both men have criticised and Obama has vowed to close.

Obama also praised a proposal McCain has championed to establish a commission to reform corporate welfare," aides said.

Guantanamo Bay detention centre, an increase in US troops to Afghanistan, immigration reform, stem cell research and measures to tackle climate change, and oppose torture and the widespread use of wire-tapping.

After the meeting, they issued a joint statement saying: "At this defining moment in history, we believe that Americans of all parties want and need their leaders to come together and change the bad habits of Washington so that we can solve the common and urgent challenges of our time. We hope to work together in the days and months ahead on critical challenges like solving our financial crisis, creating a new energy economy and protecting our nation's security."

Although Democrats made gains in the Senate in the November 4 elections, they fell short of the 60 seats that would have allowed them to override Republican blocking tactics and will need Republican allies to get Obama's plans through. This was highlighted yesterday when the Democratic leadership in Congress announced that a broad economic stimulus package Obama sought was not likely to be passed because of Republican opposition.

Obama confirmed at the weekend that he would offer jobs to some Republicans. One of the names that crops up most often is Chuck Hagel, the former Republican senator who is a specialist in foreign affairs and a critic of the Iraq war.

## Govt goes

**FROM PAGE 1** the final one and there will be more of that in the coming days.

After an hour and a half parley, Commerce and Education Adviser Hossain Zillur Rahman told reporters that they discussed the four-party's four-point demand announced by its leader Khaleda Zia.

"She made a positive statement yesterday that BNP and its allies had decided to participate in the poll, but raised some issues too, and we have come here to discuss those," he said.

BNP Secretary General Khandaker Delwar Hossain echoed the adviser saying more discussions will follow.

"He [Zillur] has told us that the government wants to hold an election with participation of all parties," Delwar told reporters.

He reiterated that the BNP-led alliance is a parliamentary alliance. "We want to participate in the election, but it has to be free, fair and credible."

LGED Adviser Anwarul Iqbal, Law Adviser AF Hassan Arif, Communication Adviser Ghulam Quader and Foreign Adviser Iftekhar Ahmed Chowdhury were also in the government delegation, while BNP Standing Committee Member Dr Khadaker Mosharraf Hossain, and Joint Secretary General Nazrul Islam Khan were also among the BNP delegates.

## DELWARTHREATENED OF MOVEMENT

Earlier, BNP Secretary General threatened to launch a movement if the government does not meet their demands.

"What is the problem with deferring the poll," he questioned while talking to reporters in his party's central office in Nayapalton of the capital, adding, "The sky will not fall if the election is postponed to enable all parties to participate."

He also said it will not be possible for his party to submit nominations by November 20, the last date for filing those, so the government must take necessary steps so they can submit their nominations.

## JAMAT PARLIAMENTARY BOARD MEETS TODAY

Meanwhile, although the BNP-led alliance demanded deferment of the December 18 election its key component Jamaat-e-Islami is scheduled to hold its parliamentary board meeting today to finalise its list of nominees for the upcoming parliamentary poll.

## HOSSAIN ZILLUR ON FOUR-PARTY'S DEMAND

Adviser Hossain Zillur said the government took the four-party's demands very positively.

Talking to reporters in Retired Army Officer's Welfare Association (RAOWA) Club, he said the government's stand is quite clear regarding the matter and that all problems will be solved through discussions.

About the ultimatum he said 48-hour is not an insignificant amount of time and many things can be done within that period.