How have we landed in such an imbroglio? There is a vacuum in the legal system centring the next general election, and according to the Constitution, the 10th parliamentary election is supposed to be held anytime in between October 27 to January 24 next year. It means that we have only six full months ahead of the battle of the ballots. And after six months, the Election Commission will ring the bell by officially kicking off the process of holding the polls through which people will determine the fate of the political parties and the politicians. The five-year-long wait for the opposition parties to go to power by obtaining people's verdict is now close to an end.

Therefore, major political parties like the ruling Awami League and BNP are supposed to start their election work, including carrying out a field survey to pick competent candidates, to find out their weaknesses, to assess people's expectations and to conduct research to prepare an election manifesto to woo the voters.

But what does reality say? Is the country ready for the battle of the next parliamentary election? Or is the country heading towards a grave political crisis centring the election?

For the People?

Instead of taking preparations for the electoral battle, both the ruling Awami League-led alliance and BNP-led opposition parties are taking preparations to face each other in a fatal fight on the streets. The underlying reason for the fight between them is nothing but to grab power. People's welfare is not that important, rather their lives and properties are going to be put at stake.

How are they taking the preparations to retain power or to return to it?



Streets of fire. PHOTO: ANURUP KANTI DAS

In a whimsical move, the AL-led government has abolished the caretaker government in June 2011 by amending the constitution, long before the 10th parliamentary election, unsettling the country's political situation. The cancellation of the election time caretaker government, which was an outcome of violent street agitations by the AL and other opposition parties in 1996, has paved the way for the ruling AL to remain in office during the next parliamentary election. Not only that, the latest constitutional amendment has made it possible for present MPs to remain in office when they will seek re-election in the next polls.

It doesn't take a political scientist to understand that if a partisan government remains in