



PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN  
The daughter of pro-Awami League transport leader Khairul Mollah, killed by unknown criminals, mourns his death at Dhaka Medical College morgue yesterday.

## Transport leader killed in city

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accompanying Khairul, said, "We went to meet Samabaya Bank Chairman Mohiuddin Ahmed around 3:45pm.

"During our stay there, former vice-president of ward-75 AL and Sayedabad Bus Terminal Transport Workers Union leader Tayeb Ali joined us."

He went on, "The three of us came out of the room around 5:45pm. Khairul told me to walk ahead. He was talking with Tayeb standing outside the chairman's room."

Babul said he was going down the stairs. All of a sudden he heard a scream and soon three to four people pushed him aside on the way

downstairs. He rushed upstairs and found Khairul lying in a pool of blood. Tayeb was not there at that time.

The chairman also came out of his room. Khairul was whisked off to Dhaka Medical College Hospital in the chairman's car.

Doctors declared Khairul dead around 6:50pm, DMCH sources said, adding the body bore five stab marks in the abdomen.

This correspondent saw a running CCTV camera aimed at the spot. Asked whether police have gathered any CCTV footage, Ashrafuzzaman, deputy commissioner (Motijheel zone) of Dhaka Metropolitan Police, refused to disclose

## Pope to receive Putin on November 25: official

AFP, Vatican City

Pope Francis will receive Russian President Vladimir Putin on November 25, the Vatican said yesterday, as the Roman Catholic Church seeks to improve ties with the Russian Orthodox Church.

Putin has previously met the pope's predecessor Benedict XVI as well as late pope John Paul II and there are hopes for what would be an historic meeting between a pope and a Russian patriarch.

Putin's predecessor Dmitry Medvedev, who is now the prime minister, met with Benedict XVI in 2011.

During another visit by Medvedev in 2009, the two states re-established full diplomatic ties which had been severed during Soviet times.

Relations between Russia and the Vatican have improved since the coming to power in 2009 of Patriarch Kirill, who headed up the Russian Orthodox Church's diplomatic arm for years.

## Vote parties that will return

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His comments came two days after parliament ratified the Grameen Bank Act, 2013, replacing the Grameen Bank Ordinance, 1983.

The passage of the new law, said the founder of GB, was very unfortunate for Grameen Bank, which was created as a bank owned and managed by poor women.

"Its legal structure didn't allow any government interference of any kind, except for regulatory oversight. But the new law has created scopes for the government to interfere," mentioned Yunus.

The only alternative left for the supporters and well-wishers of the bank is to convince people that a major mistake was committed through the enactment of the new law, he added.

"We'll have to tell people that we have to correct this mistake. They should elect such parties that will make this wrong right. There is no other alternative."

Yunus, however, said he does not think that the bank's function would come to a halt immediately just because of the new law, which, many believe, would ensure the government's total control of the bank.

"But the bank's activities will be disrupted whenever the government exercises its power. Then the bank will not be able to operate in the way it has operated so far."

"And gradually the bank will move towards destruction. So, we will have to try hard to return the bank to its previous shape," he added.

There would have been no problem had the government just translated the ordinance into Bengali and made a new law keeping the provisions unchanged, as has been done in the cases of some other ordinances. But the government has not done so, mentioned Yunus.

He is now in the Malaysian capital to join the fifth Global Social Business Summit. The three-day annual event opened in the Kuala Lumpur Convention Centre yesterday on the theme "Social business to change the world".

This year, 600 participants from around 40 countries, including 100 from Bangladesh, are attending the programme.

According to constitutional provisions, the next parliamentary election should be

## Hasina, Khaleda open to Ashraf-Fakhrul talks

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Yet, political analysts are skeptical about the outcome of the talks, particularly when the two sides seem rigid on their stance on the polls-time government, which is at the centre of the stalemate.

They cited the parley held in October 2006 between the then BNP secretary general, Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan, and the AL general secretary, Abdul Jalil, to resolve a similar crisis. The talks had failed as the two sides stuck to their guns.

This time around too things do not look any different. While Hasina seems all set to form an "all-party" government under her leadership, Khaleda demands a non-party government headed by a "reputed person" to be chosen by political parties through consensus.

And with time running out, there is no sign for an amicable solution to the crisis.

To make matters worse, the BNP last night decided to call a two-day or three-day hartal either form Sunday or Monday.

Khaleda will decide on the duration and the dates of the hartal after she speaks with Jamaat, a key component of the alliance. The announcement is expected to come today afternoon from Khaleda's Gulshan office after a secretary general-level meeting of the alliance, according to top BNP leaders.

The alliance has already enforced 120 hours

of countrywide shutdown in two spells in less than two weeks.

Worried, top businessmen have been seeking to broker a dialogue between the two rival camps, but have so far failed.

As part of the move, they met Khaleda on November 2 and proposed holding a secretary general-level dialogue, to which Khaleda agreed, according to sources.

Yesterday, when the business leaders met Hasina, she told them that her invitation to the BNP chief for talks was still there.

"The prime minister has asked us to continue our initiative so that a dialogue can take place," said Kazi Akram Uddin Ahmed, president of the Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry, who led a 50-member delegation.

The FBCCI chief said their efforts would continue.

On the secretary general-level talks, Hasina told the businessmen: "I have already given the responsibility to one of my leaders for the talks. Our party has a general secretary, but they [BNP] have no secretary general."

She also questioned BNP acting secretary general's authority to make a decision, meeting sources said.

At one stage, the businessmen requested Hasina to make another phone call to Khaleda,

inviting her to the talks. The PM then said she might do so, but added that she was not sure if Khaleda would respond positively, sources told The Daily Star.

One meeting source quoted former FBCCI president Abdul Awal Mintoo as telling the prime minister: "Give us a time, whenever you desire, I will bring Khaleda Zia to you." 'DON'T BOYCOTT'

Meanwhile, the European Union yesterday urged the BNP not to boycott the election and instead engage in a dialogue to find a way forward for holding a transparent, inclusive and credible election.

In response, Khaleda said it would be "futile" to participate in the polls if it were not acceptable to the people.

Talking to a EU delegation that included eight ambassadors and high commissioners stationed in Dhaka, she said the BNP as a "responsible party" would continue its movement for establishing people's aspiration for an acceptable election.

EU Ambassador William Hanna, who led the delegation, told reporters after the meeting: "We encourage the opposition to engage in dialogue and not to mount a boycott."

"We urge the opposition to refrain from further hartals which are jeopardising the country's growth and hurting the most vulnerable parts of the population."

## Big demand from AL's

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to contest 50 seats, Workers Party 40, Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal (JSD) at least 30, Gonotantri Party 39, NAP at least 22, Samyabadi Dal 10 and Communist Kendro wants one seat.

The Gonotantric Majdur Party is yet to make any decision in this regard, while the Gono Azadi League would not seek any seat.

Jatiya Sangsad has 300 electoral seats. In the last national election on December 29, 2008, the AL had sacrificed only four seats for the JSD and three for the Workers Party. The Jatiya Party had contested 50 seats, including AL candidates in 13 of them. The other partners of the alliance didn't get any seats.

Though the combine is called 14-party alliance, in reality, there are only nine parties - Awami League, JSD (Inu), Workers Party, Bangladesher Samyabadi Dal (Marksbadi-Leninbadi), Gonotantri Party, Communist Kendro, Gono Azadi League, National Awami Party (NAP-Mojaffor) and Gonotantric Majdur Party. Of them, the last three have no representation in parliament.

The JP is in the grand alliance, not in the 14-party combine.

Sources in the JP said if the main opposi-

tion BNP boycotts the election, it would contest the polls independently. The JP has initially picked 200 candidates for contesting as many seats.

Talking to The Daily Star, AL presidium member Nuh-ul-Alam Lenin said they would finalise the seat sharing with the alliance partners soon and hoped there would be no problem in managing its allies.

About seat sharing with the Jatiya Party, he said the JP was yet to clarify its stance on whether it would contest the election with the alliance or independently. "After receiving a green signal from the Jatiya Party, we will settle the issue," he added.

The Gonotantri Party has already prepared a list of 39 candidates to fight the election, said its General Secretary Nurur Rahman Selim.

In the last national election, the NAP had demanded 22 seats from the alliance. The number would increase this time around, mentioned NAP General Secretary Enamul Haque.

The Communist Kendro wants to contest the poll from Gopalgonj-2 constituency, said its Joint Convener Asit Baron Roy.

## Woman in Mozilla

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Now a student of computer science at the private university, Tanha was first drawn to Mozilla through a friend's Facebook profile. "I noticed that one of my friends mentioned on his Facebook page that he is a contributor to Mozilla. When I asked him what that involved, he told me that he answered questions on the browser forum from the users who were facing problems," she said.

"I began to take an interest and started my own contributions. I also started blogging about Mozilla and eventually applied and was chosen to be a representative."

As a rep, Tanha has organised events at educational institutes such as BRAC University and

Maple Leaf School in the capital, promoting the browser and encouraging students to take interest in web technology and understand it better. "There are so many people who use Facebook or Twitter every day but don't know how these sites work. Most of them don't know how to create a website. Part of our role as representatives is to create that awareness," she explained. The Mozilla representatives of Bangladesh are also trying to create student clubs at various universities, an initiative that has been met with great enthusiasm from different student bodies.

Aside from her role as a representative and a marketing ambassador, which entails coordinating marketing campaign activities in this region

in collaboration with the browser's marketing team, Tanha is a part of WoMoz, a community dedicated to improving women's involvement with Mozilla.

"Very few people in Bangladesh are interested in computer technology, and far fewer of them are women. Mozilla would like to see more female contributors from around the world, and that is what my interest in WoMoz stems from," said Tanha.

"After seeing the work I have done with Mozilla and the recognition I received, many young women have approached me with interest to know more about my work, which I find gratifying."

## Cops' role comes

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Home Shamsul Hoque Tuku in Bonogram.

"Ministers belong to political parties but you [the police] are neutral so arrest the real culprits," Mizanur said.

ASP Baker told the NHRC chief that none of the attackers identified by the paper were named as accused in the two cases filed in connection with attack last week.

The Daily Star in its yesterday's report did not mention that the people it identified were named as accused in any case filed in connection with the attack. The paper said several locals came forward and identified them as the culprits.

The case Babul Saha had filed after the assault accused only 20 identified people but 2,000-3,000 unidentified people.

Regarding arrests, Pabna Superintendent of Police Md Miraz Uddin said police was investigating and trying to arrest the "real" culprits. He said, "State minister for home Shamsul Hoque Tuku had asked district police to arrest the real

culprits irrespective of their political identity."

He said police had identified a few hundred attackers based on victims' statements but they had fled.

On last Saturday, a mob, allegedly led by BNP-Jamaat men, attacked the Hindus and vandalised over 100 houses and shops at Bonogram Bazar.

Coinciding this, another group of men blocked the Pabna-Dhaka highway and attacked law enforcers. They demanded Rajib Saha's, Babul Saha's son, execution claiming that he had disrespected Prophet Mohammad (pbuh) on a facebook page.

The Daily Star has not found any link between Rajib and any post or website that disrespected the Prophet.

Rajib's father Babul Saha, a leading trader in Bonogram Bazar, had earlier refused to pay "protection money" to a local gang of extortionists.

Pabna district unit of BNP leaders yesterday visited the victims and distributed rice among them.



Showing a photo of a person identified as an alleged perpetrator of communal violence on yesterday's The Daily Star issue, National Human Rights Commission chief Mizanur Rahman asks Pabna additional superintendent of police why they had not arrested the person. Mizanur was visiting the affected Hindus of Bonogram in Pabna yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR