

## Another AL man killed 'by Jamaat'

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Unlike the previous blockades, there was not much violence yesterday except for some stray incidents of crude bomb explosions and vandalism in some districts.

People had a brief respite of four days from the opposition's blockade since November 26. The fresh blockade dealt a further blow to almost all sectors, and common people, especially daily earners.

In the capital, blockaders blasted four crude bombs in front of the deputy commissioner's office in Old Dhaka around 3:00pm. Police picked up a lawyer from the spot on suspicion of having links with the blasts.

Opposition activists exploded several crude bombs while marching in procession from the Jatiya Press Club to Dainik Bangla intersection between 7:00pm and 7:30pm. They also vandalised two vehicles, said Abdul Jalil, inspector (investigation) of Shahbagh Police Station.

In Satkhira, a joint team of law enforcers went to Bishnupur union to remove the barricades put up by blockaders on Kaliganj-Baliadanga road around 12:00noon.

Local AL leader Moslemuddin Ali, also president of Manobadikar Bastobayan Sangstha in Kaliganj upazila, accompanied the team.

As the law enforcers started for nearby Krishnanagar village for conducting a drive Moslemuddin parted with them around 2:00pm.

He along with local AL activist Hossain Ali headed for their homes in Chachaigram by a motorbike, said Ali Azam, officer-in-charge of Kaliganj Police Station.

When they reached Choumohoni in the upazila, Jamaat-Shibir men intercepted them and swooped on the two with sharp weapons, leaving Moslemuddin dead and Hossain seriously injured, he said.

Sheikh Ohiduzzaman, president of Kaliganj upazila AL unit, alleged that Jamaat-Shibir men killed Moslemuddin in a planned way.

He expressed surprise at the attack on the two AL men while a drive by law enforcers was going on nearby.

Kaliganj Jamaat unit Ameer Moslem Uddin, however, refuted the allegation, and said the local AL leader might have been killed because of an intra-party feud.

In the meantime, law enforcers arrested 17 leaders and activists of the Jamaat-e-Islami and the Jatiyatobadi Chhatri Dal in several drives at Tala, Assassuni and Kaliganj in the district.

In Laxmipur, police recovered the bodies of BNP activists Abdul Mannan, 32, of Uttar Jamiltoli, and Zahirul Islam, 30, of Chatkhil upazila in Noakhali, from the banks of a canal at Battoli around 7:00am.

## Moudud sued for 'grabbing govt land'

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denied status, and arranged a deal to buy it for his brother, Harunur Rashid told The Daily Star.

The ACC lodged the case after an investigation that started during the period of caretaker government in 2008, he added.

Moudud, who is behind bars now, was arrested along with four other BNP leaders on November 8 for "attempting to murder cops and creating violence in the capital". His brother Manjur is now living in London.

According to the case statement, the land was enlisted as the government's abandoned land in 1972 after Pakistani couple Mohammad Ehsan and Inge Maria Flatz left the country before 1972.

Ehsan received the possession of the land in 1961 from now-defunct DIT [now Rajdhani Unnayan Kartirpakkha], the case statement said, adding the land was transferred to Flatz in 1965.

Moudud falsely showed that Flatz issued a power of attorney in favour of him on August 2, 1973.

Harunur said Moudud grabbed the land and its establishment, and started living there showing him as a tenant of Flatz. But the ACC investigation found no record that says that she visited Bangladesh after the independence of the country.

Moudud became a minister of Major Ziaur Rahman's government in 1978. He also became deputy prime minister of Hussain Mohammad Ershad's government

Mannan and Zahuril were accused in a number of cases filed with Sadar Police Station, said Iqbal Hossain, OC of the police station.

Ismail Hossain, brother of Mannan, claimed that his brother and several others had been missing since Rab personnel launched a crackdown on opposition activists in the upazila on Sunday.

Locals saw the two bullet-riddled bodies on the banks of a canal near the Palli Bidyut office yesterday and informed police, he added.

During Sunday's drive, Asaduzzaman Babul, BNP joint secretary general of Dighulia union unit, and his supporter Khorshed Alam Sumon were killed in a "shootout".

Mainuddin Reaz, president of BNP Sadar upazila unit, claimed that both the victims were active members of the party.

Meanwhile, Jamaat activist Abdur Rahman, 45, who had been injured in a gunfight between his party men and law enforcers at Puranpoli in Joypurhat, died from wounds in a private hospital in the capital.

Shamsul Alam, assistant secretary general of Jamaat's Joypurhat district unit, said Rahman, also ex-UP member of Poranpoli union, was buried in his village home of Tulat after an autopsy.

Rail communication remained suspended for 18 hours in Lalmonirhat, as blockaders removed fishplates from railway tracks on Lalmonirhat-Burimari route on Monday night. Train service resumed at 2:55pm yesterday.

In Jamalpur, opposition men also removed four decking plates from a Bailey bridge over the Jhenai river, halting road communication between the district headquarters and Madarganj upazila for three hours from 5:00am.

A group of 10 Shibir activists hacked a Chhatri League leader while he was chatting with his friends at a tea stall about 2:00pm in Sylhet city.

Injured Saikat Chandra Rimi, president of Sylhet Polytechnic Institute BCL unit, was whisked off to Sylhet MAG Osmani Medical College hospital, said police.

In Joypurhat, Jamaat-Shibir men beat up an AL leader, leaving him critically injured, said police.

Wounded Hafizur Rahman Happy, member of Joypurhat district AL committee, was taken to Joypurhat Modern Hospital.

Blockaders vandalised two covered-vans and exploded crude bombs on Dhaka-Chittagong highway at Mahipal in Feni. Four people were injured as police opened fire to disperse the blockaders.

Law enforcers arrested 15 leaders and activists of the Jamaat and the BNP in Pabna, Netrakona, Jhalakathi and

after being elected as lawmaker in 1979.

During the periods, he influenced concerned government departments to cancel abandoned status of the land [NW(H) 6, Holding-159, Gulshan Avenue of Gulshan residential area], according to a source in the ACC.

On June 21, 1980, he abused his power, and forced the then public works and urban development ministry to prepare an illegal document showing re-allotment of the plot to Flatz.

Moudud did it to show Flatz as legal owner of the land so that he could use her in grabbing the land, Harunur said.

On March 25, 1984, he showed that Flatz issued another power of attorney in favour of one Mohsin Darbar against the land, the case statement said.

The statement added that Mohsin signed a deal on August 10, 1985 for selling it to Moudud's brother Manjur after the death of Flatz on March 3, 1985.

The government published a gazette on September 23, 1986 showing the land as abandoned one. In spite of that, Moudud's law firm "M/S Moudud and Associates" issued a letter to Bangladesh Bank on April 20, 1987 to deposit the rents of the land.

Moudud, however, did not deposit any money as rent, though BB gave instructions in response to his law firm's letter, the statement added.

Harunur added that Flatz was an Australian national who never came to the

country.

Moudud became a minister of Major Ziaur Rahman's government in 1978. He also became deputy prime minister of Hussain Mohammad Ershad's government

## Bomb kills two Sunni Muslims in Pakistan

AFP, Peshawar

A bomb explosion yesterday killed at least two Sunni Muslim tribesmen and wounded two others in a restive Pakistani tribal region bordering Afghanistan, officials said.

The incident took place in Shiite-dominated Pawaar area of Kurram tribal region in what appeared to be a targeted sectarian killing.

"A vehicle hit a landmine in Pawaar leaving two Sunni Muslims dead and two others wounded," a local intelligence official told AFP.

He said the area had seen sectarian violence in the past and the bomb was planted on a route that Sunni Muslims use for transportation.

Another local intelligence official also confirmed the incident.

Kurram, which is one of the seven semi-autonomous tribal regions, has a history of sectarian clashes between Sunnis and the minority Shiite community.

There has been a rise in sectarian violence in Pakistan after several deadly clashes between Sunni and Shiite Muslim groups near the capital Islamabad in November.

## 'Detained' Ershad

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allocate his party's electoral symbol, plough, to anyone, since his party had decided to boycott the polls.

JP sources alleged that ever since Ershad announced on December 3 quitting the race citing the lack of atmosphere for an inclusive election, the government has been pressing him in different ways to change his mind.

Law enforcers, on government instructions, yesterday foiled an effort by Ershad's followers to bring out processions in the capital's Banani and Kakrail, demanding his release. Police also charged batons to disperse the JP activists, they alleged.

Kazi Firoz Rashid, JP presidium member, criticised the law enforcers' role, and said they were not allowed to hold a peaceful programme.

Protesting Ershad's "detention," two JP factions in Rangpur yesterday called a 24 and 48-hour hartal beginning this morning in Rangpur division.

### UNCONTENDED POLLS CHALLENGED

The government plan to hold the January 5 election suffered a further blow yesterday, as a JP leader took the issue to the High Court, challenging the legality of 154 candidates being elected unopposed.

The HC may hear the petition on January 2, just two days before the election, said Hassan MS Azim, counsel for the petitioner, JP Vice-chairman Khandakar Abdus Salam.

Salam had filed nomination paper to contest the polls from a Gazipur constituency, but it was rejected.

In the petition, he sought the court's directives on the Election Commission not to issue any notification declaring the 154 unopposed candidates elected as MPs.

Citing constitutional provisions, he stated in the petition that every lawmaker must be elected by the people through direct voting.

The chief election commissioner, secretary to the EC, cabinet secretary and law secretary are respondents to the petition.

Asked to comment on the issue, Inu said he welcomed the petition. "Now the legality of the election will be determined by the court."

The legal challenge came amid the international community's concern about the record number of candidates being elected without a single vote being cast.

Recently, a number of European Union envoys stationed in Dhaka told The Daily Star that they were concerned that the government was going to hold the election.

Diplomatic sources say the crucial question before them is how much representative the new government will be, given it will be formed through a one-sided and uncontested polls.

Meantime, US Ambassador in Dhaka Dan W Mozena yesterday met Finance Minister AMA Muhith to discuss the election process and recent violence, among other things.

"The United States is waiting for an official explanation from the Bangladesh government on the January 5 election," Muhith quoted Mozena as saying in the meeting.

### HAJJAJ FORCED TO LEAVE?

The government has allegedly forced Bobby Hajjaj, who had been keeping communications with Ershad and delivering his messages to the press for the past few days, to leave the country on Monday night.

"I was forced to leave the country," Hajjaj told a staff of Jatiya Party Research and Strategy Wing over the phone from London last evening.

Contacted, the information minister refuted the allegation, saying Hajjaj was not such an important person that his presence would threaten the security of the country.

### ANOTHER DRAMA?

In another development, Ershad's lawyer last night withdrew a legal notice that he had served earlier in the day on the government to immediately release Ershad.

Barrister Rafique-ul Huq, Ershad's counsel, told The Daily Star citing Raushan Ershad last night that Ershad had not been detained. Therefore, the notice was withdrawn.

Earlier in the day, Rafique served the notice asking the government to release Ershad or produce him before the court to satisfy the court that Ershad was not being held illegally.

## 48 dead

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was trapped inside the burning vehicle. I thought I would die," Shimul murmured to the correspondents.

Arson victim Mohammad Rubel, driver of a CNG-run three-wheeler from Comilla, had no savings and had to work every day to send his son to school.

He was burned inside his three-wheeler by pickets for showing the "audacity" of hitting the roads with his vehicle on a blockade day.

"My son is taking the Primary School Certificate examination. The examination centre is quite far away and I had to give him transport fare every day. I do not know how he is going to his exam centre now," wailed Rubel lying in the burn unit of DMCH.

Mannan, who suffered 19 percent burns in an arson attack on a bus in Rayerbagh, grieved, "Were I not physically challenged, I could have got out of the bus like many other passengers."

At least nine children had their hands blown away after picking up crude bombs thinking those as tennis balls wrapped in red tape. All these bombs were abandoned in public places.

The children are from needy families that cannot afford toys for them. They were initially excited at the prospect of having a new toy when they had seen the attractive red "balls".

Eight-year-old Surma and Lal Miah, 7, of Chittagong were rag pickers who sifted garbage for a living. When they saw the red ball-like object, both of them rushed to it, excited to have found a toy. Their hope was soon dashed when the "toy" exploded leaving them with splinter injuries.

Similarly, rag pickers Rony and Milton of Bogra were left reeling in pain after their new-found "toy" exploded.

Three-and-a-half-years-old Lima, daughter of a garment worker, has had her right hand amputated after she picked up a crude bomb because some irresponsible pickets had thrown it and run away.

Mohammad Asif Chowdhury

Deputy Director (P&P)

For Director General

## Dhaka protests Pak resolution

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was not right for Islamabad to do so.

The high commissioner went to the foreign ministry around 5:00pm and had to wait for about 25 minutes before meeting Mustafa Kamal, secretary (bilateral) of foreign ministry.

While handing over the aide-memoire, Kamal referred to the campaign of genocide launched against innocents by the Pakistani army and its cohorts like Quader Mollah on the midnight of March 25, 1971, and the reign of terror unleashed in the subsequent months.

The secretary told Qureshi that the establishment of the war crimes tribunals was Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's pledge in the 2008 election manifesto, according to a press release.

"The war crimes trials are not being conducted with any specific intention to rake up the memories of 1971 as misconstrued by some quarters in Pakistan but to put a legal closure to the injustice and pain suffered by the victims' families and the Bangladeshi nation as a whole," Kamal said.

The trials have been the longstanding demand and aspiration of the people of Bangladesh, he said during the meeting, which lasted around 25 minutes.

Briefing reporters, Foreign Minister Abul Hasan Mahmud Ali said Dhaka had conveyed to Islamabad its strong protest.

Responding to a question on Bangladesh's position regarding concerns raised by the United Nations and the European Union over the execution, the minister said, "That is a different issue."

He said there is no relation between the EU or UN position and the issue of Pakistan.

"We're conveying our position to everyone in the world."

Referring to those who protest the death

penalty to the war criminals on human rights grounds, the foreign minister questioned where their humanity was when Pakistanis carried out genocide against Bangladeshi people.

Earlier, talking to reporters, Information Minister Hasanul Haq Inu said, "The statement of the Pakistan National Assembly shows the country has neither corrected itself nor moved away from its 1971 policy."

Denouncing Islamabad's stance on Mollah's execution, Inu said Pakistan has acted beyond diplomatic norms by adopting the resolutions.