

10 killed in UP violence

Five of them killed in firing by law enforcers in Pirojpur; AL candidates set to win landslide; huge turnout, festivity marred by violence, irregularities

STAR REPORT

Widespread violence left at least 10 people dead and around a thousand others wounded in the first phase of union parishad elections yesterday.

The festive mood of the polls to the lowest tier of local government was largely marred by electoral irregularities and incidents of clashes between supporters of rival candidates.

Storming of polling stations and ballot stuffing -- mostly by those loyal to the ruling Awami League favourites -- were reported in many of the UPs.

Mathbaria upazila of Pirojpur saw the deadliest violence in which at least five people were killed and several others injured in firing by law enforcers.

Apart from this, two people were killed in Cox's Bazar

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

Acceptable, peaceful

CEC on UP polls

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Chief Election Commissioner Kazi Rakibuddin Ahmad yesterday claimed that the first phase of the union parishad polls was "acceptable" as voting was "peaceful" in most of the polling centres.

SEE PAGE 11 COL 2



Alleged Awami League men storm a polling station in Barisal and take ballot boxes yesterday. Ballot boxes and torn up ballots after 15 to 20 people stormed the Narayanpasha Primary School polling station in Kanakdia of Patuakhali and took five boxes. The boxes were later found in a pond. More photos on page 2, 12.

PHOTO: STAR/BANGLAR CHOKH

Polls free, claims AL
BNP blasts EC for 'partisan role'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The ruling Awami League has claimed that the union parishad election was held in a free, spontaneous, and transparent manner while its political opponent BNP termed the polls "farical under a partisan Election Commission".

The main opposition in parliament, Jatiya Party, claimed that the ruling party-men were engaged in vote rigging, capturing ballot boxes, and had driven away Jatiya Party polling agents from over 35 election stations.

"This union parishad polls was peaceful, spontaneous, and transparent than any other polls in the past," AL Joint General Secretary Dipu Moni told reporters at a briefing, held at AL president's Dhanmondi office yesterday.

SEE PAGE 11 COL 4

BLASTS RATTLE BRUSSELS

Around 35 killed in terror attacks on airport, metro station; Islamic State claims responsibility; it's violation of Islamic teachings, says leading Muslim body Al-Azhar

AGENCIES

A series of explosions claimed by the Islamic State group ripped through Brussels airport and a metro train yesterday, killing around 35 people in the latest attacks to bring bloody carnage to the heart of Europe.

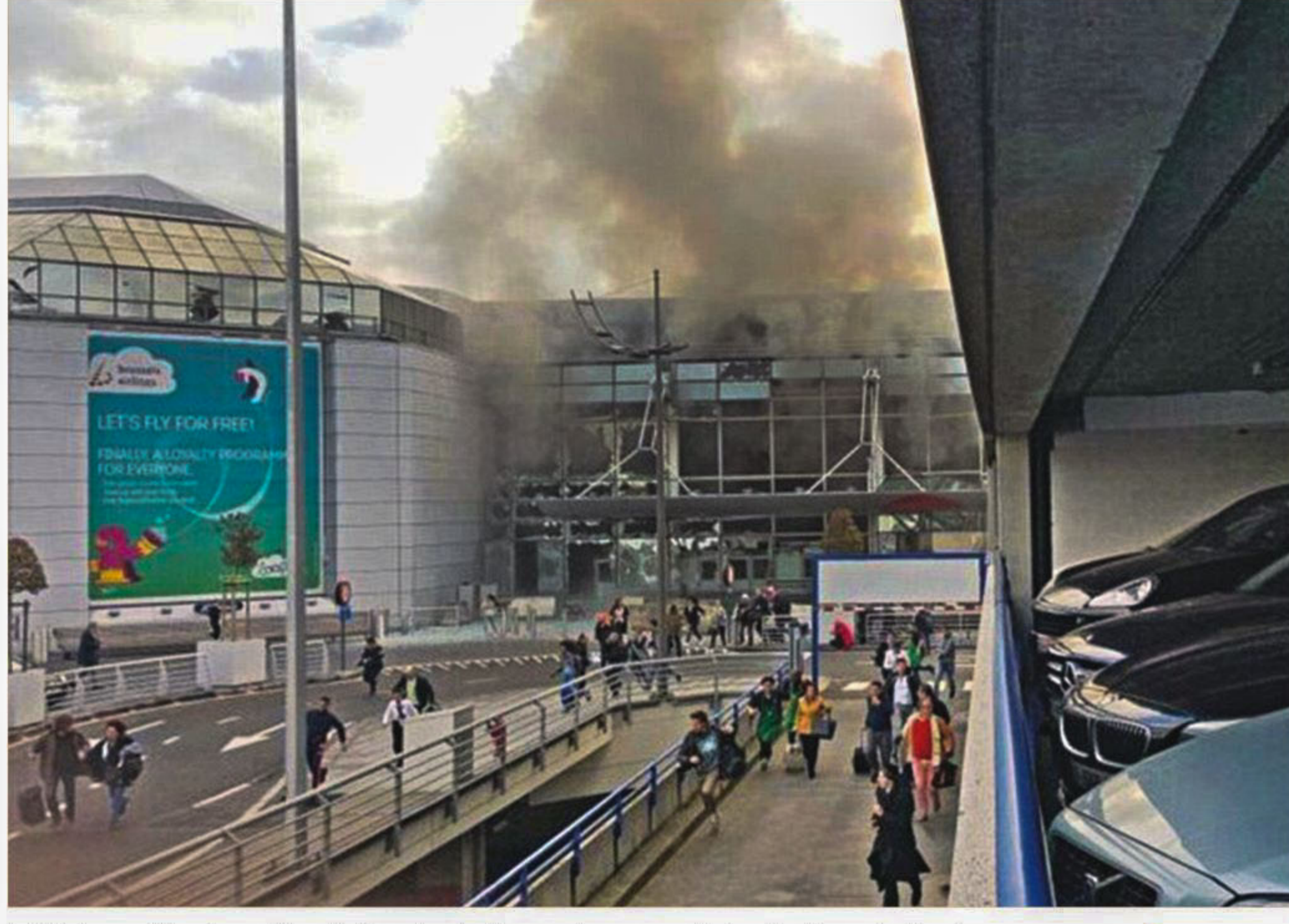
Two huge blasts, at least one of which prosecutors said was likely caused by a suicide bomber, rocked the check-in hall at Zaventem Airport, strewing the scene with blood and mangled bodies and sending hundreds of terrified travellers fleeing in terror.

The fact that extremists were able to hit high-profile targets in Brussels, Europe's symbolic capital, just months after Islamic State (IS) group militants killed 130 people in Paris, will raise fresh questions about the continent's ability to cope with the terror threat.

More than 200 people were wounded in the bloodshed, which came just four days after the dramatic arrest in Brussels of Salah Abdeslam -- the prime suspect in the Paris attacks -- after four months on the run.

MORE ON PAGE 8

SEE PAGE 11 COL 5



In this image taken from video shot by a bystander, people are seen fleeing the Brussels airport immediately after the blast at the airport.

PHOTO: DAILY MAIL



A passenger takes cover under a check-in desk moments after explosions at Brussels airport.

It was total panic, blood everywhere

AFP, Brussels

Victims lay in pools of blood, their limbs blown off, as the smoke cleared to reveal a scene of horror after twin explosions ripped through the main terminal at Brussels airport, witnesses told AFP.

The normally bustling departure hall at Zaventem was wrecked by the morning rush-hour blasts, with part of the ceiling collapsing near the check-in desks and many of the huge plate glass windows blown out by the attack.

"A man shouted a few words in Arabic and then I heard a huge blast," airport baggage security officer

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

TOP QUOTE

"Ballot stuffing took place in some polling centres at night, which is not acceptable. In two places, [law enforcers] opened fire. In one place, two injured people were arrested. But they [law enforcers] did not take any action in many places."

CHIEF ELECTION COMMISSIONER KAZI RAKIBUDDIN AHMED AFTER THE END OF FIRST PHASE UP VOTING YESTERDAY

Tigers expect batting upsurge

Face India in do-or-die clash today

AL-AMIN from Bangalore

Mathematically Bangladesh are still in the running for a place in the last four of the ICC World T20 despite two consecutive defeats against Pakistan and Australia. But the reality before today's clash against India at the Chinnaswamy Stadium in Bangalore is that they will fight for a lost cause in the context of the tournament, but for a very important cause as far as their own pride is concerned.

Will they be fifth time lucky against one of the best teams in the world after four defeats, including twice in a month, when they promised a lot but came unstuck in the final hurdle. It is quite difficult for Bangladesh to outsmart an Indian team that has been in fabulous form for the last three months at home and abroad.

Dominant at home of late, Bangladesh have not beaten a big team in a T20 World Cup since their victory over West Indies in the inaugural edition in 2007. Besides, on Indian soil it will be like 'mission impossible' to spoil the home party. The job in hand turned even harder after the suspension of their two performing bowlers -- Taskin Ahmed and Arafat Sunny -- for illegal bowling actions.

The good news however is that opener Tamim Iqbal, who sat out the Australia game due to a stomach upset, has been recovering well and is set to make a comeback on a wicket that promises a lot of runs.

The Tigers did not train yesterday but spent a lot of time reflecting on the small mistakes they had committed

SEE PAGE 2 COL 6



First case of Zika found in 2014

Says state minister for health

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Medical researchers in Bangladesh have detected the first case of Zika virus, ringing alarms for the authorities to take strong preventive measures at the early stage.

"The trace was found in the blood sample taken in 2014 from a sexagenarian man in Chittagong," State Minister for Health Zahid Maleque told a press briefing at his office yesterday.

"The person is now at home and is doing fine," said Prof Mahmudur Rahman, director of the Institute of Epidemiology, Disease Control and Research (IEDCR).

He had given his blood sample to test for dengue, which came out negative.

Tests of 159 blood samples taken from people who came to his contact, however, suggest that the virus has not apparently

SEE PAGE 11 COL 2

Responses from NY banks were sluggish

Says Bangladesh Bank document

REJAUJ KARIM BYRON and RAFIUL ISLAM

The Bangladesh Bank was denied prompt responses from the intermediary banks and due diligence from the Federal Reserve Bank of New York, which would have raised the stakes of recovering a major chunk of the \$81 million stolen by hackers.

Although the New York Fed blocked 30 transactions amounting \$850 million from the BB's account because of a lack of beneficiary details, it let another five transactions, totalling \$101 million, to go through.

"We view this as a major lapse on the part of the FRB NY," said a BB document dated March 13.

And the three New York-based intermediary banks -- Citibank, Bank of New York Mellon, Wells Fargo -- were sluggish with their responses to the central bank's desperate pleas to stop the fund transfers on February 8.

Other than the SWIFT message on February 8, the BB also sent four more requests to Citibank NA until February 14 but to no response.

Then after a month, the Citi Anti-Fraud Department replied and even then, the response was ambiguous.

The Bank of New York Mellon wrote back a day after it received the SWIFT message from the BB, but said it was unable to locate the transaction in question.

The bank asked for further information on the beneficiary, which the central bank provided. Four more requests were sent until February 14 but no response.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

