



Palestinian demonstrators run for cover as Israeli forces fire teargas shells during a protest against the shifting of the US embassy to Jerusalem. The picture was taken at the Israel-Gaza border in the southern Gaza Strip yesterday.

30 DAYS TO GO



The countdown begins

STAR SPORT DESK

The domestic football leagues of Europe and elsewhere are yet to be completed, the finals of the UEFA Champions League and UEFA Europa League are still in the offing, but the focus has shifted to even bigger things as the countdown to next month's FIFA World Cup 2018 in Russia is well and truly underway.

Yesterday, May 14, was

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## KHULNA CITY POLLS

# AL, BNP set for tough contest

*The two camps trade allegations of violation of electoral code as the city votes today*

RASHIDUL HASAN, MOHAMMAD JAMIL KHAN and DIPANKAR ROY from Khulna

Amid allegations and counter allegations about violation of electoral rules and possible vote rigging by both the Awami League and the BNP, the high-voltage battle of ballots in Khulna City Corporation takes

place today to decide which camp is having the last laugh.

The voting starts at 8:00am and will continue until 4:00pm without any break to elect the city mayor and 41 councillors for the next five years.

Despite the heated political situation, the

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Khaleque



Polling hour: 8:00am-4:00pm  
Voters: 4.93 lakh  
Polling stations: 289  
Wards: 31  
Mayoral candidates: 5  
Councilor candidates: 148  
Reserved seats for women: 10  
Candidates for reserved seats: 35



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## Israeli troops kill 55 in Gaza

*Bloodshed of Palestinians marks opening of US embassy in Jerusalem; 2,700 injured; Abbas condemns 'massacre'*

REUTERS, Gaza/Jerusalem

Israeli troops shot dead dozens of Palestinian protesters on the Gaza border on Monday as the United States opened its embassy to Israel in Jerusalem, a move that has fuelled Palestinian anger and drawn foreign criticism that it undermines peace efforts.

It was the bloodiest single day for Palestinians since the Gaza conflict in 2014. Palestinian Health Ministry officials said 55 protesters were killed and 2,700 injured either by live gunfire, teargas or other means.

The bloodshed drew calls for restraint from some countries, including France and Britain, and stronger criticism from others, with Turkey calling it "a massacre".

The White House declined to join in urging Israel to exercise restraint and pinned the blame squarely on Gaza's ruling Hamas group -- backing Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, who described the Israeli military's actions as self-defence of his country's borders.

In contrast to the scenes in Gaza, Israeli dignitaries and

guests attended a ceremony in Jerusalem to open the US Embassy following its relocation from Tel Aviv.

The move fulfilled a pledge by US President Donald Trump, who in December recognised the holy city as the Israeli capital.

Netanyahu thanked Trump for "having the courage to keep your promises".

"What a glorious day for Israel," he said in a speech. "We are in Jerusalem and we are here to stay."

Palestinians seek East Jerusalem as the capital of a state they hope to establish in the occupied West Bank and the Gaza Strip.

Israel regards all of the city, including the eastern sector it captured in the 1967 Middle East war and annexed in a move that is not recognised internationally, as its "eternal and indivisible capital".

Most countries say the status of Jerusalem - a sacred city to Jews, Muslims and Christians - should be determined in

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## Fresh demo over quota

*Students block roads disrupting traffic, begin strike in universities, colleges; PM unhappy over movement, ultimatum despite her assurance to scrap quota system in public service*

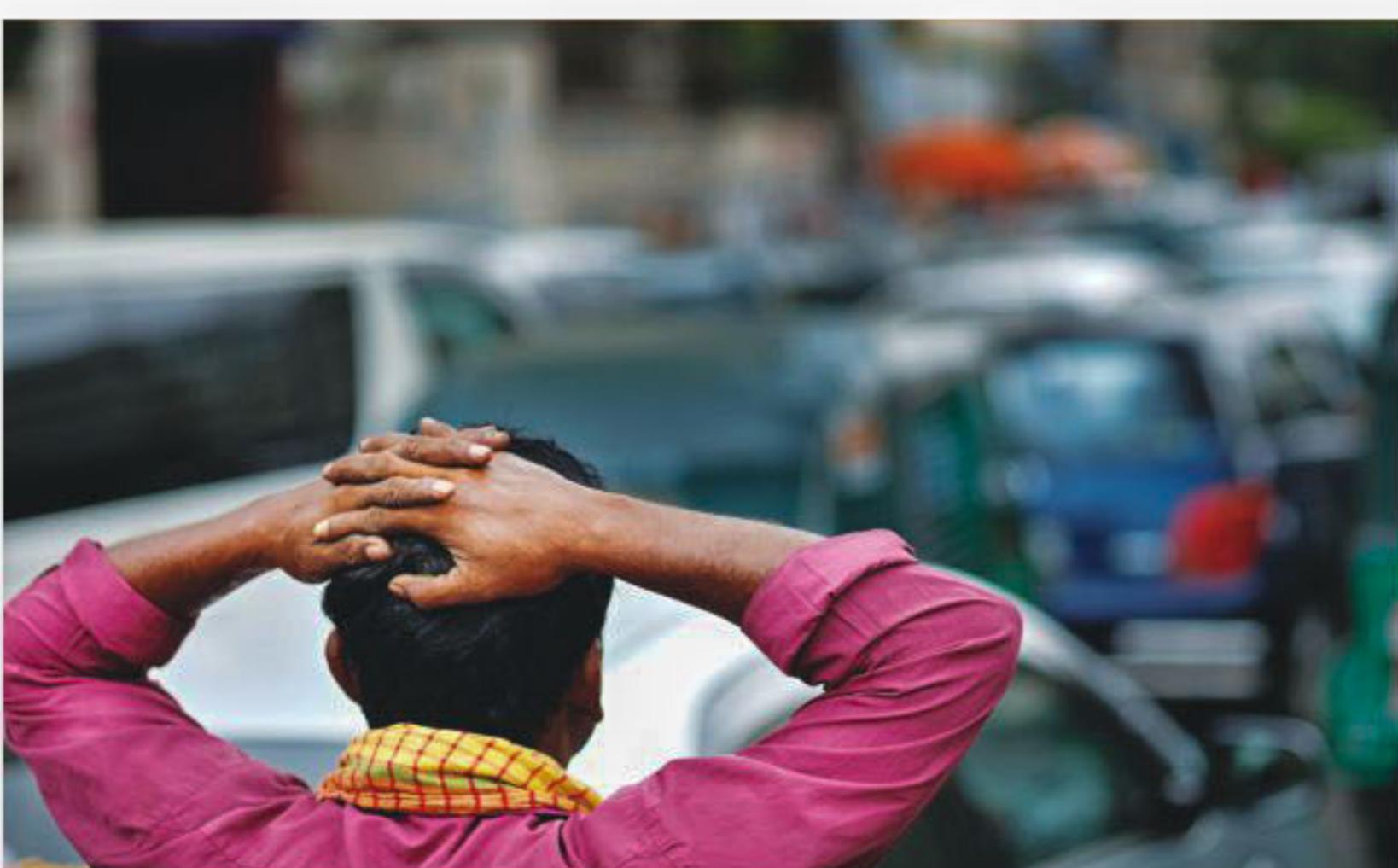
STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Demanding immediate gazette notification on abolition of quota system in government jobs, the quota reformists took to the streets again, beginning an indefinite strike at universities and colleges across the country yesterday.

In the capital, the protesters blocked the busy Shahbagh intersection for six hours from around 1:00pm, obstructing vehicular movement and causing sufferings to commuters.

They left the streets around 7:00pm respecting the assurance from the prime minister, said Nurul Huq Nur, joint convener of Bangladesh Sadharan Chhatra Adhikar Sangrakshan Parishad, the platform spearheading the movement.

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RELATED STORY, PHOTOS ON PAGE 3



*Stuck in a nagging traffic jam, a rickshaw-puller helplessly watches rows of vehicles near the capital's Shahbagh intersection. As quota reform demonstrators blocked the intersection for almost six hours from around 1:00pm yesterday, tailbacks spilled onto the roads in adjacent areas.*

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

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