



"If our demands are not accepted before the polls schedule, there will be a storm of protest. That storm will pave way for a free and fair"



"Veteran leaders joined the Oikyafront's rally in Sylhet, but they could not create any stir among the people."  
ROAD TRANSPORT AND BRIDGES MINISTER OBAIDUL QUADER. [PAGE



"With President Xi Jinping, I would like to carve out a new era for China and Japan."  
JAPANESE PRIME MINISTER SHINZO ABE. [PAGE 8]

## AL rebels to be expelled for life

Hasina cautions party aspirants, asks leaders to cement ties with Islamic parties, not to criticise Hefajat

PARTHA PRATIM BHATTACHARJEE

With multiple aspirant candidates already campaigning hard in almost all constituencies, Awami League President Sheikh Hasina last night issued a tough warning to those looking to contest the election as rebels.

"Once a rebel, forever a rebel," three sources quoted Hasina as telling at a joint meeting of the party's central working committee, advisory council and the AL Parliamentary Party at the Gono Bhaban.

If anyone goes against the party decision to run in the election, they will be expelled from the party for life, the sources added, quoting the prime minister.

Hasina also asked her party leaders to throw their weight behind the party-nominated candidates in the upcoming election.

The party may change its candidate even on the last date of nomination withdrawal. Party leaders must accept that decision and demonstrate a mentality of sacrifice, she told the meeting.

Losing the election will mean dangerous consequences for AL leaders, she warned, asking them to keep that in mind and work



together to avoid such consequences.

In almost each of the 300 constituencies, there are four, five or even more aspirants. This has caused a major headache for the party high-ups already, as multiple candidates in the same constituency could affect the election results.

In almost all local government elections in the last 10 years, dissidents were the main problem for the party. In many places, AL candidates lost because of their party rivals.

Under the AL constitution, leaders can be expelled for running against party candidates. Despite the threat, however, party rebels did exactly that in recent years.

More than a dozen AL dissidents won in the January 5, 2014, national election that was boycotted by major political parties. One of them even beat an AL presidium member. But the party did not take any disciplinary action against the rebels.

Intra-party conflicts remain a thorny issue for the party. Over the last four years, leaders of the AL and its affiliated organisations clashed with each other, often violently.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 5

## Oikyafront rally today in Ctg

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

The newly formed Jatiya Oikyafront is going to hold a rally in the port city today, amid widespread fear of arrest among its activists.

Over a hundred leaders and activists have been arrested in the last seven days ahead of the programme, leaders of the alliance alleged.

City BNP President Shahadat Hossain told The Daily Star that Chittagong Metropolitan Police granted them permission to hold the rally at Kazir Dewri, in front of the BNP office, five days after they had applied to hold the event at Laldighi Maidan.

He regretted that the law enforcers didn't let the alliance organise the event on the spacious field of Laldighi Maidan.

"All large political parties hold rallies at Laldighi Maidan, but the BNP has not been allowed to do that in the last 10 years," he said.

Asked, CMP Commissioner Mahbubur Rahman said the

SEE PAGE 12 COL 2



Transport workers and locals blocked Dhaka-Mawa road and fought with police during a protest against the toll hike at the First Bangladesh-China Friendship Bridge (Buriganga 1) in Dhaka's Hasnabad yesterday. A worker was killed as police opened fire, and several vehicles were damaged during the incident. PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

## BNP likely to offer 100 seats to partners

MOHAMMAD AL-MASUM MOLLA

If the BNP joins the upcoming national polls, it is likely to set aside around 100 out of the 300 parliamentary seats for its alliance partners, party insiders say.

The party will finalise the issue through talks with its partners soon after announcement of the election schedule.

BNP insiders said the party has already assured the leaders from the 20-party alliance and the Jatiya Oikyafront that decisions on the candidates would be made based on competence and popularity.

BNP high-ups would "honour" those who had boycotted the 2004 January 5 election and has been with the party despite all types of pressure, said a standing committee member.

Party insiders said Jatiya Samajtantrik Party President ASM Abdur Rab was likely to run in the election from Lakshmpur

SEE PAGE 12 COL 2

## TRESPASSING CHARGES Salahuddin cleared

Indian court orders govt to send the BNP leader back to Bangladesh

STAR REPORT

An Indian court yesterday acquitted BNP leader Salahuddin Ahmed in a case filed against him over trespassing into India more than three years ago.

"We have been awarded justice. The verdict proves he [Salahuddin] is innocent. Now there is no bar for him to return to Bangladesh," Salahuddin's lawyer SP Mohanta told our Kolkata correspondent.

East Khasi Hill District and Sessions Judge's Court in Meghalaya delivered the verdict yesterday afternoon and directed the authorities to send Salahuddin, a BNP standing committee member, to Bangladesh.

Talking to The Daily Star by phone from Shillong, the BNP leader said, "I have been awarded justice. Now I want to return to Bangladesh as soon as possible."

He is waiting for an official copy of the verdict.

He said he was provided all kinds of supports, including treatment, during his time in jail, and expressed his gratitude to the Indian government.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1



## Trouble over toll

One killed as police open fire on transport workers, locals protesting Buriganga-1 bridge toll hike; 100 hurt in clash

SHAHEEN MOLLAH

A youth was killed yesterday as police opened fire during a clash with transport workers and locals protesting the toll hike at the First Bangladesh-China Friendship (Buriganga 1) Bridge in Hasnabad of Dhaka.

The two-and-a-half-hour battle also left about a hundred people injured. They include 25 policemen and a number of workers and locals.

Sohel Hawlader, 25, a truck helper, was taken to Ikuria General Hospital with bullet injuries. Doctors declared him dead around 10:30am, said agitators and hospital staff.

Morgue sources at Sir Salimullah Medical College said a bullet pierced Sohel's back and came out through his chest.

Siddik, 40, Billal Hossain, 20, and

Monikul Islam Akash, 24, were being treated at Dhaka Medical College Hospital for bullet and pellet wounds yesterday. They said they were neither transport workers nor involved in the protest.

The rest suffered minor wounds, being hit with batons or brick chips. Sixteen policemen took treatment at Ikuria General Hospital and Central Police Hospital in Rajarbagh.

Locals and workers, mostly truck drivers and helpers, fought several hundred police who were allegedly backed by supporters of the lessee of the bridge.

The clash ensued around 8:00am after police baton-charged over a thousand agitating workers who had kept the southern entrance to the bridge blocked since 6:00am, demanding cancellation of toll.

The blockade caused huge traffic congestions.

The workers started to throw stones and brick chips while police fired gunshots. The alleged supporters of the lessee also launched an attack with brick chips and sticks, witnesses said.

At one stage, the news of the death and injuries spread like wildfire making the workers and locals furious.

A brick-loaded truck rammed into the Ansar camp on the premises of Bangladesh Road Transport Authority (BRTA) office in Ikuria, said an Ansar member, Abul Kalam Azad, who was present on the spot.

The incident led to the collapse of part of a wall but caused no injury or casualty.

Chased by workers, several policemen took shelter inside a restaurant

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

## Soumya, Imrul seal whitewash

MAZHAR UDDIN from Chattogram

It was a series where Bangladesh had a lot to prove as they were playing without two of their most experienced players in Tamim Iqbal and Shakib Al Hasan.

However, everything went perfectly for the Tigers as they rode on twin centuries from Imrul Kayes and the returning Soumya Sarkar to seal a whitewash over Zimbabwe, winning the third and final ODI comprehensively by seven wickets at the Zahur Ahmed Chowdhury stadium in Chattogram yesterday.

The series witnessed the rise of a consistent Imrul, the transformation of a once-struggling Soumya and the emergence of a pace-bowling all-rounder in the form of Mohammad Saifuddin. Most importantly, it was a collective and clinical approach from the Tigers that bucked a recent trend of individual brilliance making up for collective frailty.

Bangladesh cruised to the challenging target of 287 set by Zimbabwe without any difficulty, despite losing Liton Das off the first ball of the innings. After Mohammad Mithun hit a six to win the second ODI on Wednesday, Mushfiqur Rahim staged a repeat as he smashed a maximum when the Tigers required five runs to win and took them home with 47 balls to spare.

Bangladesh broke quite a few records in the process -- Imrul and Soumya's 220-run second-wicket partnership was the highest for the Tigers for that wicket and second-highest for any wicket. The previous record for the highest second-wicket partnership was the 217-run stand between Tamim and Shakib against West Indies this year.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 3



SOUMYA RETURNS: In his first match back in the ODI side, Bangladesh batsman Soumya Sarkar is overjoyed after scoring a sublime, six-filled century during the hosts' seven-wicket win in the third match against Zimbabwe at the Zahur Ahmed Chowdhury Stadium in Chattogram yesterday.

PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

## Sri Lanka in turmoil

President Sirisena sacks Wickremesinghe, appoints Rajapaksa as PM; Sirisena's party quits ruling coalition

AGENCIES

President Maithripala Sirisena installed Sri Lanka's controversial former strongman leader Mahinda Rajapaksa as the country's new prime minister yesterday, in a surprise move announced moments after the incumbent premier was sacked plunging the country into constitutional crisis.

Visuals of the former president Rajapaksa taking oath as the premier were released to media and was shown on TV channels.

The sudden development came after Sirisena's broader political front United People's Freedom Alliance (UPFA) announced that it has decided to quit the current unity government with ousted PM Ranil Wickremesinghe's United National Party (UNP).

Sirisena ended a nearly decade-long rule of Rajapaksa by defeating him in 2015 election with Wickremesinghe's support on a



SEE PAGE 12 COL 5