

## Police

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report from Sir Salimullah Medical College. Police found no belongings along with the body of Abu Bakar, also vice president of Jashore district BNP. Sources at the medical college said police handed over the body to the BNP leader's family around 4:30am yesterday. He was buried at his family graveyard in Jashore's Keshabpur in the afternoon.

Meanwhile, Chief Election Commissioner KM Nurul Huda yesterday said he would ask the law enforcement agencies to bring those involved in the incident to justice. Awami League General Secretary Obaidul Quader at a press briefing at the party president's Dhanmondi office said the "killing" of Abu Bakar might be a result of the BNP's internal feud. He said his party was not involved in the incident. "In no way the Awami League wants to keep the BNP away from the national election."

Earlier on Thursday night, BNP Senior Joint Secretary General Ruhul Kabir Rizvi alleged that Abu Bakar, a four-time chairman of Majidpur Union Parishad in Keshabpur upazila, was killed after he was picked up by law enforcers from the capital.

Abu Bakar was on the list of the five BNP nomination seekers that the party gave to the Election Commission on Wednesday saying they were detained by law enforcers.

Talking to journalists in Jashore on Thursday, Abu Bakar's nephew Ashikuzzaman said his uncle came to the capital last week to collect a nomination form for contesting the December 30 parliamentary polls from Jashore-6.

He was "abducted" from the capital's Bijoy Nagar area around 8:30pm on Sunday, a day before he was supposed to be interviewed by the BNP's nomination board, according to the family and local party leaders.

As per the abductors' demand, relatives gave them Tk 1.7 lakh, but yet they killed him, Ashikuzzaman said.

Abu Bakar was staying at room-413 of the Metropolitan Hotel in Palatan area. The hotel's CCTV footage showed that the BNP leader left the hotel around 7:30pm on Sunday with two bags, said Abdul Mannan, manager of the hotel.

## Pilot killed

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Rasulpur, and immediately caught fire, killing the pilot on the spot, Shafiqul Islam, officer-in-charge of Madhupur Police Station, told our Tangail correspondent.

Members of the air force, police and fire service rushed to the scene after the crash, said the OC.

Air Chief Marshal Mashuiuzzaman Serniabat visited the spot following the incident, he added.

## Make an all-out

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Such steps would allow the refugees to make independent assessments of conditions in Rakhine State, the statement said.

The UNHCR is prepared to support such visits and work with all stakeholders to find a sustainable solution that will offer a decent future to the refugees and all other communities in Rakhine State, it added.



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina exchanges views with a group of youths at a discussion titled "Let's Talk with Sheikh Hasina". Centre for Research and Information (CRI) organised the programme at the Gono Bhaban yesterday.

PHOTO: CRI

## PM interacts with youths

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opportunities, quality of education, women empowerment, entrepreneurship and research, fighting the menaces of corruption and violent extremism and ensuring transparency in governance.

Taking up this opportunity, the participants also enquired about the

struggles the PM had to endure throughout her life, including the tragic event of August 15, 1975, her days as an opposition leader and her time in prison after the 1/11 change-over.

Hasina recalled her fond memories of her childhood and the lessons of her own youth to encourage the young

minds of today.

In a segment titled "What would you do if you were the prime minister?", the young participants articulated their priorities for the country, including equitable development of regions, education for rural youths, welfare of specially-abled persons and so on.

Following the discussion, the youngsters were given an opportunity to take photos with the PM at the Gono Bhaban.

A number of ministers and lawmakers had previously taken part in various editions of Let's Talk, culminating in this special event with the prime minister.

## The knots yet to unravel

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Wednesday, and the party's nomination board finalised candidates for around 250 seats, apparently leaving the rest 50 seats for its partners in the Jatiya Oikyafront and the 20-party, which the BNP leads.

But Jamaat-e-Islami, a key component of the 20-party alliance, collected 61 nomination forms for its candidates and gave the list to the BNP. BNP leaders held a series of meetings with Jamaat to settle the matter, but they failed to reach a consensus, party sources said.

"A BNP team is negotiating with the alliance partners. We hope to resolve the matter in a day or two," BNP Standing Committee Member Moudud Ahmed told this paper yesterday.

After party nomination is finalised, candidates will have to return to their constituencies to submit the nomination papers to the Returning Officers. The ROs will then scrutinise the papers and accept or reject their bid to run in the December 30 polls.

THE JP FACTOR

JP aspirants had collected 2,865 nomination forms. Of them, 780 were called for interviews on Tuesday.

But instead of interviewing them, JP Chairman HM Ershad, a deposed military ruler, asked his party leaders to leave the matter to him.

Ershad, now a special envoy to Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, wrote twice to her, requesting the PM to settle the issue. But he did not get any response yet, JP sources said.

"I will make the decision if the party needs to go for another alliance on political grounds," an apparently frustrated Ershad told his party colleagues and nomination-seekers on Tuesday.

Initially, the JP had sought 100 seats, but the AL rejected the demand. The JP then tried to persuade the AL to give it 50 seats. The ruling party is willing to offer up to 35, according to sources in both parties.

The JP leadership is unhappy that the AL is taking this long to settle the matter, party sources said.

Ershad is likely to hold a meeting with Hasina today to discuss it, said JP

Secretary General ABM Ruhul Amin Howlader.

"We hope to get 50 to 60 seats and the issue will be resolved by tomorrow [today]," he told The Daily Star yesterday.

GM Quader, co-chairman of the party, said the matter should be settled by today as their candidates needed time to prepare the documents for nomination submission.

10 FOR JAMAAT?

Jamaat leaders cannot contest under their party banner as the Election Commission has cancelled the party's registration following a High Court verdict.

However, they can run as independents or under the banner of alliance partners. Sources say they remain open to both options.

In the past few weeks, Jamaat and BNP leaders sat thrice to discuss seat-sharing.

In the first meeting, the BNP agreed to offer the Islamist party five seats against its demand for at least 40. In the second meeting on Monday, the

BNP doubled its offer but Jamaat stuck to its demand. The two allies sat again on Wednesday, but the meeting ended without a decision, BNP sources said.

Jamaat leaders are also in talks with BNP acting chairman Tarique Rahman, now living in London, by phone, added the sources.

In a recent interview with BBC Bangla, Jamaat Secretary General Shafiqur Rahman said they would like to get 50 to 60 seats.

In 2008, Jamaat contested in 39 constituencies under the BNP-led alliance banner, winning only two.

"This time, we hope to get more seats and we will settle the matter through talks," Golam Parwar, Nayeb-e-Ameer of Jamaat, told The Daily Star recently.

However, a senior BNP leader said that much had changed since 2008. In the current situation, there is no scope to offer Jamaat more than 20 seats.

The BNP also needs to set aside some seats for its allies in the Jatiya Oikyafront and Liberal Democratic Party. In all, it wants to offer 50 seats to its partners.

## Transfer

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On the withdrawal of the officials, he said the Oikyafront made the demand to achieve "political mileage".

"Any change in the administration will make it weak and they [Oikyafront] will have a chance to hatch a conspiracy," the letter said.

Dilip then said the Oikyafront was trying to raise question over the civil and police administrations "as part of its hidden agenda".

Asked about it, he said, "They want to demoralise the civil administration by bringing bizarre allegations against it. They are doing it to fish in troubled waters ... They want to make the constitutional bodies and the civil administration unstable."

Referring to BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhru Islam Alamgir's recent call to his party men to guard polling centres on the polling day, Dilip alleged that Fakhru wanted to lead the election to the path of confrontation.

He also alleged that the BNP on one hand was saying it would participate in the polls and on the other was trying to foil it.

The letter said the BNP was coming up with "imaginary" complaints that returning officers were briefed at the PMO. In reality, no one was called to the PMO, it said.

"They are deputy commissioners, they go to different offices for official purposes. One or two such returning officers can go to the PMO for office work," it said.

The 14-party alliance also questioned the role of BNP acting chairman Tarique Rahman in the party's nomination process.

Tarique's involvement in the process was a violation of the electoral code of conduct and the existing laws as he was a fugitive convict, the letter said.

The Oikyafront also violated the electoral rules by holding a daylong rally of lawyers on the Supreme Court premises on November 17, the letter read.

## No backing

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"The system will save time and is less expensive."

He urged those who oppose the system to send their technical team to examine the machines. "We believe we will be able to convince them."

President Abdul Hamid on October 30 promulgated the "Representation of the People Order (amendment) Ordinance, 2018", paving the way for using EVMs.

The Executive Committee of the National Economic Council on September 18 approved Tk 3,825.34 crore for procuring 1.5 lakh EVMs.

In the EC's electoral dialogues last year, 35 of the 40 registered parties, including the BNP and its allies, opposed the idea of using EVMs in the coming election.

However, the AL and four of its allies supported it.

EVMs were first used in Chittagong City Corporation election in 2011. The EC had not used the system between 2013 and 2017 due to some technical faults.

The EC said an improved EVM was later used on a limited scale during city corporation polls in Rangpur, Rajshahi, Khulna, Barishal, Sylhet and Gazipur.

## Batsmen rain on Nayeem's parade

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Indies' Shimron Hetmyer.

Like on the first day, the last session of the day changed the complexion of the match. While Taijul Islam and Nayeem Hasan's 56-run ninth-wicket stand wrested the initiative back in the hosts' favour on Thursday, yesterday they surrendered it by losing five wickets for 55 runs after Nayeem's five for 51 had secured a 78-run first innings lead.

West Indies had started the session -- during which nine of the day's 17 fell -- on 187 for six and Dowrich was intent on the attacking mindset that Hetmyer had set before the break. He smoked a six off Mehedi in the second over of the session, but that gain was offset by Nayeem -- bowling with the wiles of a veteran -- in the next over as the beat Devendra Bishoo's attempted sweep and trapped in front with a slightly quicker delivery and got rid of Kemar Roach, also leg-before. From 205 for eight Jomel Warrican helped Dowrich take West Indies to 225 before he was castled by arguably the best delivery of the day. Nayeem looped one up outside the off stump and it spat back through the gate to hit middle stump.

Dowrich then added a four and six off Nayeem's next over before hitting another maximum in the next over by Shakib, which also yielded the wicket of Shannon Gabriel, who was caught at slip to signal the end of West Indies' innings with 246 runs on the board. Dowrich was unbeaten on 63.

Far from driving home the advantage, however, Bangladesh opener Imrul Kayes set the tone in the second over of their second innings by driving left-arm spinner Warrican against the turn and losing his stumps. Soumya Sarkar took the cue and played an airy waft to off-spinner Roston Chase in the

next over and was caught at slip. First-innings centurion Mominul Haque was not much better -- after hitting Chase for four through midwicket in the seventh over, he played across the line in the last ball of the over to be trapped plumb in front. Skipper Shakib Al Hasan, when he should have been looking to take the side safely to the close in the fading light, slog-swept Warrican off the second ball he faced to be caught at deep square leg. The quintet was completed when Mohammad Mithun, who continues to look out of his depth at number four, played needlessly back to a Bishoo delivery and was bowled off his pads, ending an 18-run stand with Mushfiqur Rahim. Instead of Mahmudullah Riyad, Mehedi came out and along with Mushfiqur took the team to the close without any further damage.

Earlier, Bangladesh's innings lasted just 4.4 overs for the addition of nine runs after lower-order batsmen Taijul Islam and Nayeem Hasan resumed the day on 315 for eight. It was time enough for Taijul to unfurl a cover drive off Roach that would have made a top-order batsman proud, but Nayeem's staunch resistance ended in the 93rd over, when he pushed at a delivery outside off stump from left-arm spinner Warrican and got an edge that was gobbled up by slip. Last man Mustafizur Rahman lasted just two balls as he was trapped in front, giving Warrican figures of four wickets for 70 runs.

Answering a first-innings score of 324 on a pitch that was already turning square was always going to be difficult for a side not famous for their facility against spin. Kieran Powell was the first to fall in the 11th over when he missed the line of a ball from left-arm

spinner Taijul and was trapped leg before.

Shai Hope left in the very next over when skipper Shakib, bowling his first ball back from a finger injury, got the ball to turn sharply from outside the right-hander's leg stump and Hope played a poor shot all around the line of the ball to be bowled.

In the same over, new batsman Sunil Ambris was dropped behind the wicket by Mushfiqur, but Shakib was compensated for that by the wicket of his counterpart Kraigg Brathwaite, who pushed at a dipping delivery and was caught well at slip by Soumya Sarkar. Mustafizur then dropped Roston Chase off Shakib in the over before lunch, the 19th, allowing the visitors to reach the break on 54 for three.

After lunch, Nayeem found his groove immediately after coming in to the attack in the 26th over. He almost had Ambris stumped down the leg side with a big-spinning delivery, but Mushfiqur failed to get the bails off at the first attempt.

Nayeem got his maiden Test wicket as he had Chase caught off a forward defence at short leg for 31, leaving his side on 77 for four in the 30th over.

With unsure defence not bearing any fruit, new batsman Hetmyer chose attack instead. In a half-century partnership with Dowrich, Hetmyer hit 63 off 47 balls with five fours and four sixes. On 180 for five in the 46th over, Mehedi produced the ideal ball to draw Hetmyer forward and, although the left-hander did not push at it as his teammates had done, took a healthy edge for Mushfiqur to take a sharp reflex catch. Storm Hetmyer was over and normal service resumed as West Indies went to tea on 187 for six in 50 overs.



Banners and posters made of non-degradable plastic being piled up by a city corporation staffer at Bastuhara in Khulna on Tuesday after they were removed in compliance with an Election Commission directive. The authorities are yet to decide what to do with these discarded campaign materials.

PHOTO: STAR

## No fix yet for their disposal

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No dumping yard in the country has incinerators that burn rubbish and waste materials at high temperatures. The only way to dispose of plastic banners is to burn them, said Hanifur Rahman, conservancy officer of Sylhet City Corporation.

Plastic banners made of polyvinyl chloride (PVC) generate highly toxic chemical compounds called -- dioxins -- when burnt at below 1,000 degree Celsius, said Mominur Rahman, associate professor of environmental pollution management at Buet in an earlier interview with The Daily Star.

Human development, reproduction, and immune systems are highly sensitive to dioxins.

Abdul Karim, general secretary of Bangladesh Paribesh Andolon (Bapa), Sylhet, said the price of such materials should be raised to discourage people from using them.

Since any plastic materials, including PVC, are not degradable, those are mostly being burnt after collection.

Aminul Islam Jahangir, administration officer of Mymensingh City Corporation, said the authorities removed banners and posters by Tuesday.

Now cleaners were burning those at open places, including Kachary ferry and Puratan ferry ghats, Aminul added.

Barisal City Corporation (BCC) threw all election materials into BCC

storage area at Amanatganj, turning it into a garbage ground. The disposal of those is awaiting a decision by the authorities, said Dipok Lal Mridha, BCC conservancy officer.

Pirojpur municipality feared another issue other than environmental damage from disposing of the materials.

"Festoons and banners have photos of Bangabandhu, prime minister and top political leaders," said Panna Laal, an employee of the municipality. "If the authorities burn or damage those in any other way, they may be harassed."

Until any decision is taken, Abu Ali M Sazzad Hossain, deputy commissioner of Pirojpur, said, "We will keep them stored in a place."