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## NATIONAL POLLS

# EC in full gear with key issues unresolved

Plans to hold talks with political parties next month

MOHIUDDIN ALAMGIR

The Election Commission is making all-out preparations to hold the polls in January, though some crucial political and administrative issues still remain unresolved.

The 90-day countdown to the 12th parliamentary election begins in a week, but the political stalemate over the nature of the polls-time government has yet to end.

In its work plan for the election, the EC has identified "gaining political parties' confidence" as a major challenge. But with time running out, the commission has made little progress to that end.

Besides, it is still indecisive about the

timing of sending the ballot papers to the polling stations.

The EC is in favour of sending the ballot papers on the election day morning to prevent possible ballot stuffing on the night before. But some police and administration officials are opposed to this idea due to the enormous logistical challenge involved.

The decision about appointing EC officials as Returning Officers also remains pending.

"We will decide on the issue of appointing Election Commission officials as Returning Officers before the announcement of the election schedule. The issue of sending ballot papers to the

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Sinu Begum, 75, squatting from exhaustion while waiting in line for hours in front of an OMS truck near the Sheikh Abu Naser stadium in Khulna yesterday. Struggling to cope with the hike in the prices of essentials, she, like many others, has to buy necessary commodities at subsidised prices from such trucks.

PHOTO: HABIBUR RAHMAN



**End wars for a better future  
PM urges global leaders in Brussels**

UNB, Brussels

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday appealed to the global leaders to take steps to end wars, conflicts, and arms race to build a better future.

"Connectivity is the lifeline for peace and progress. We need to prepare better for future crises," she said.

The premier was addressing the opening plenary session of the

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## FIXING THE ECONOMY BB drawing up roadmap to tackle 3 key challenges

REJAUL KARIM BYRON and AHSAN HABIB

Bangladesh Bank is preparing a roadmap for the next government to address the three major issues of exchange rate instability, high inflation and high defaulted loan ratio bearing upon the economy.

The development comes after a directive from Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina such that she can hit the ground running on addressing the key ailments of the economy should the Awami League get elected in the polls, due in January next year.

Addressing the three challenges identified by the BB would entail drastic measures and the current government is loath to rock the boat ahead of the elections, The Daily Star has learnt from central bank officials informed with the proceedings. They spoke on the condition of anonymity due to the sensitivity of the discussions.

The central bank is now holding meetings with economists to get their opinions on how to address the three challenges. The series started last month with noted economist Wahiduddin Mahmud. The BB will sit with Mohammed Farashuddin, a former central bank governor, and Zahid Hussain, a former lead economist of the World Bank's Dhaka office, this week.

On Monday, the BB sat with Selim Raihan, executive director of the think-tank SANEM.

Raihan told The Daily Star after the meeting that he asked the BB

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**Ansars won't get powers to arrest  
Says home minister amid opposition from police**

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan yesterday ruled out any chance of empowering Ansar members to make arrests.

"You have some misinformation and misconceptions. Your question is based on the misconceptions. The Ansar members have never had the authority to make arrests, and it will not be given to them. By [existing] law, we don't have the power to do so," he said.

The minister made the statement in response to a reporter's query after a law-and-order meeting at the Secretariat.

He emphasised that all law enforcers must operate within the boundaries of the Criminal Code of Procedure. There is no room for actions beyond the existing legal framework, the minister said.

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## Holding peaceful rally will be challenging

Say BNP leaders, cite 'provocations' from ruling party, 'obstruction' by police

MOHAMMAD AL-MASUM MOLLA

Amid "provocations" by the Awami League and police "obstruction" of BNP activists, it will be challenging to hold a peaceful rally on October 28, said party leaders.

They said BNP leaders and activists have started arriving in Dhaka for the rally that they are determined to hold in front of the party's Nayapaltan headquarters.

BNP senior leaders have been holding a series of meetings with leaders of its front, associate, and district units about the rally, they said.

AL General Secretary Obaidul Quader on Tuesday said AL leaders and activists should be present on every street of Dhaka and if anyone attempts to create unrest on that day, they would be dealt with.

Sources in the AL said instructions have been given to its leaders and activists to carry sticks so that they could defend themselves if attacked.

"Ruling party leaders are provoking

our leaders and activists continuously. But we have sent a clear message to our party leaders and activists that we will not be provoked by the aggressive behaviour of the ruling party leaders and activists," Amir Khosru Mahmud Chowdhury, standing committee member of the BNP, told The Daily Star yesterday.

Sources said the BNP has taken a number of steps to hold a peaceful rally, including the formation of a volunteer team that will work on that day at the rally venue.

Letters were sent to all district units of the party asking the activists to join the event spontaneously and be in their localities the day after the rally.

The BNP asked its activists to travel in small groups and avoid hotels near the BNP office. It advised carrying their work ID cards and not to wear anything with images of BNP leaders or the electoral symbol by which they could be identified as BNP activists.

It also asked the activists to be

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## AL ready to counter BNP on streets

**DMP may let 2 parties hold rallies in open space to avoid violence**

PARTHA PRATIM BHATTACHARJEE and MOHAMMAD JAMIL KHAN

The Awami League is fully prepared to prevent the BNP from resorting to violence centring the October 28 rally, ruling party leaders said.

The leaders and activists of the AL's Dhaka city, district and thana units have been instructed to take position on the streets and entrances to the capital from early Saturday, said AL insiders.

Meanwhile, police are considering granting permissions to the rival parties for holding rallies that day in open spaces, instead of any street "to avoid possible violence".

The BNP has sought the Dhaka Metropolitan Police permission to have the rally in Nayapaltan, while the AL at the south gate of Baitul Mukarram.

Jamaat-e-Islami had sought permission to hold a rally at Shapla Chattar the same day, but it has been denied.

Yesterday, Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan said the BNP has announced through newspapers and social media that its leaders and activists from across

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Glenn Maxwell celebrates his 40-ball century – the fastest in World Cup history – during Australia's record 309-run victory against the Netherlands at the Arun Jaitley Stadium in New Delhi yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

## Records galore as Aussies thrash the Netherlands

AFP, New Delhi

Glenn Maxwell's fastest World Cup century off 40 balls and 104 by David Warner led Australia to a record World Cup 309-run rout of the Netherlands on Wednesday for their third straight victory at the tournament.

Maxwell's 106 off 44 balls laced with nine fours and eight sixes fired Australia to 399-8, a total their bowlers defended easily as the Dutch were dismissed for just 90 in 21 overs in New Delhi.

It was records galore on Wednesday as Maxwell's blitz bettered the record of South Africa's Aiden Markram who blasted a century off 49 balls against Sri Lanka just 18 days ago at the same venue.

He smashed Bas de Leede for two fours and three sixes on successive balls to achieve the feat before departing in the final over.

Warner, who clubbed 163 last time out against Pakistan, reached his second successive ton off 91 balls with 11 fours and three sixes to set the tone for his team's dominance.

Warner pulled level with India batting great Sachin Tendulkar with six

World Cup centuries, but it was Maxwell who stole the show at Delhi's Arun Jaitley Stadium.

The left-handed Warner led the batting with aplomb after Australia elected to bat first.

Australia lost Mitchell Marsh, for nine, in the fourth over before Warner and Steve Smith hit back in a stand of 132 against a Dutch side who had stunned South Africa earlier in the tournament.

Smith scored his first fifty of this edition before he fell for 71 off spinner Aryan Dutt, but Warner stood firm in another stubborn partnership of 84 with Marnus Labuschagne.

Labuschagne raised his fifty before he fell for 62 off Bas de Leede.

Warner raised the noise with his 22nd ODI hundred at a stadium where he captained the Delhi Capitals in the Indian Premier League.

Logan van Beek sent back Warner after the batsman attempted a paddle towards fine leg but was caught out.

Maxwell started with a string of boundaries including three in one over off De Leede and despite losing partner Cameron Green to a run out played the opposition attack.

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## Shakib on a solo mission?

MAZHAR UDDIN from Kolkata

Bangladesh team reached Kolkata yesterday after their hopes of a semifinals berth in ICC World Cup was all but dashed in Mumbai following a crushing 149-run defeat against South Africa.

What could have been



a trivial team-arrival story but, courtesy of Bangladesh captain Shakib Al Hasan and the overly cautious team management, it ended up not being a dull affair; in sharp contrast to the Tigers' show over their last four matches.

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