



## Stray bullet kills woman as fresh violence erupts in Narsingdi

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Narsingdi

A woman was fatally shot yesterday afternoon as fresh violence erupted following Thursday's clash between rival groups in Alokballi union of Narsingdi Sadar upazila.

The deceased is Ferdousi Begum, aged around 35-45, said Narsingdi Additional Superintendent of Police Sujon Chandra Sarkar.

Locals said Ferdousi did not have any political affiliation.

The incident took place in Birgaon village, a day after a man was shot dead in Muradanagr village.

According to locals, two groups are fighting over establishing dominance in the union. One group is led by Shah Alam Chowdhury, convener of BNP's Alokballi union unit, and the other by Abdul Kaiyum Miya, expelled member secretary of the same unit.

On Thursday morning, Kaiyum's supporter Idan Miya, 55, was fatally shot during a clash between the two groups. Locals said on the day, the Shah Alam

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Palestinians from Gaza City move southwards with their belongings, on the coastal road near the Nuseirat refugee camp in the central Gaza Strip, yesterday. PHOTO: AFP

## No alliance with major parties for now: Nahid Says NCP doesn't want PR for lower house

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

National Citizen Party (NCP) Convener Nahid Islam yesterday said his party is not considering any alliance with major parties at this moment.



"We will move forward with our independent political agenda," he said while talking to reporters after National Coordination Meeting of the party in Dhaka.

Nahid also said NCP is not part of the Jamaat-e-Islami-led protests as they oppose the proportional representation (PR) system in the lower house of the parliament in the upcoming general election. "We want PR only in the upper house and an effective upper house to ensure accountability," he said.

Nahid's comments came a day after he met Hefazat-e-Islam Ameer Shah Muhibullah Babunagri in the capital. The NCP said it was an "informal courtesy meeting" where no political issues were discussed, according to media reports.

Nahid also said discussions with the National Consensus Commission on ways to implement constitutional reforms were still underway. "We are not supporting the ongoing protests [for PR] because we do not think the time has come yet to hit the streets, ignoring the consensus commission."

Asked about recent processions organised by the Awami League and its affiliated bodies, Nahid alleged they were being held with the "indulgence of the government and the state machinery."

About the Jatiya Party, Nahid said its Chairman GM Quader and the party were "accomplices of the fascist Awami League" and should be brought under the law.

He also demanded an investigation and trial of the AL as a party.

### GAZA CITY OFFENSIVE

## Israel threatens to use 'unprecedented force'

AFP, Gaza City

The Israeli military yesterday warned it would operate with "unprecedented force" in Gaza City, telling residents to flee southwards as it presses its ground offensive on the territory's largest urban centre.

Israel has pummelled Gaza City with strikes and tank fire in its bid to seize it, nearly two years into the war that has devastated the Palestinian territory and left the Gaza City area gripped by a UN-declared famine.

The assault comes ahead of a planned move by several Western countries, including France and Britain, to recognise a Palestinian state next week at a UN summit.

The military launched its major ground offensive on Tuesday and has for days been telling residents to head south, but many Palestinians say the journey is prohibitively expensive and they do not know where to go.

The United Nations estimated at the end of August that about one million people were living in Gaza City and its surroundings.

The military on Friday said it estimated 480,000 of them have fled since late August.

Yesterday, the military's Arabic-language spokesman announced the closure of a temporary evacuation route opened 48 hours earlier, saying the only way south was via the Al-Rashid coastal road.

AFP footage from Al-Rashid street on Thursday showed long lines of Palestinians heading south on foot or in vehicles piled high with meagre belongings.

Nivin Ahmed, 50, fled south from Gaza City to the central city of Deir el Balah on Thursday, walking with seven family members.

"We walked more than 15 kilometres (nine miles), we were crawling from exhaustion," she said.

"My youngest son cried from fatigue. We took turns dragging a small cart with some of our belongings."

Mona Abdel Karim, 36, said she had been unable to secure transport south and had

been sleeping with her family on Al-Rashid street for two nights waiting for a driver.

"I feel like I'm about to explode. We can't walk on foot -- my husband's parents are elderly and sick, and the children are too weak to walk," she said.

Israeli fire killed at least 22 people across the territory yesterday, including 11 in Gaza City, according to a tally of figures given by Gaza hospitals contacted by AFP.

In a statement, the Israeli military said its troops continued to "expand their activity" in Gaza City, adding it had "dismantled more than 20 military infrastructure sites" over the past day.

▶ Israel military says around 480,000 Palestinians have fled Gaza City

▶ US again vetoes UN Security Council Gaza ceasefire call

▶ At least 22 more Palestinians killed

The US-backed offensive on Gaza City came as a United Nations probe accused Israel of committing "genocide" in the Gaza Strip, saying Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and other senior officials had incited the crime.

Israel rejected the findings and slammed the probe as "distorted and false".

The United States on Thursday again vetoed a UN Security Council resolution calling for a ceasefire in Gaza, shielding its ally Israel from diplomatic pressure.

Since October 7, 2023, Israel's military campaign has killed at least 65,174 people, also mostly civilians, according to figures from the territory's health ministry that the United Nations considers reliable.

## Case filed over shrine attacks in Cumilla

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Cumilla

A case was filed yesterday against unidentified individuals over the vandalism and arson attacks on three shrines and an akhra in Asadpur village of Cumilla's Homna upazila.

Rafiqul Islam, officer-in-charge of Homna Police Station, told The Daily Star that Sub-inspector Tapas Sarker filed the case.

Locals and police said Md Mohsin, 35, of Asadpur village, posted "derogatory comments about Islam" on Facebook on Wednesday.

Following protests by locals, Mohsin was detained, and a case was filed later against him.

Around 10:30am on Thursday, a group of people under the banner of "Tawhidi Janata" vandalised two shrines and set fire to another and an akhra (a place for spiritual gatherings), said police.

The sites attacked include the shrines of Kafil Uddin Shah, Abdu Shah, Kalai (Kanu) Shah, and the akhra of Hawali Shah.

Mohsin is the grandson of Kafil Uddin Shah.

Sub-inspector Mir Hossain, who visited the sites yesterday, said those involved in the attacks would be brought to book. Additional police personnel have been deployed in Asadpur village to prevent any further untoward incident.

## DSCC tops in dengue deaths, Barishal in cases

HELEMUL ALAM

Dhaka South City Corporation (DSCC) has recorded the highest number of dengue-related deaths this year, while Barishal tops the country in terms of dengue cases until yesterday.

The DSCC reported 83 deaths from the mosquito-borne disease, with 19 deaths reported in Dhaka North City Corporation, according to data from the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS).

Among the divisions, Barishal and Chattogram saw 22 deaths each, followed by 10 in Rajshahi.

Khulna and Mymensingh reported 5 and 4 deaths, respectively, while two deaths were recorded in Dhaka division outside the city corporations.

No deaths have been reported this year from Sylhet and Rangpur divisions.

When it comes to reported cases, Barishal leads with 11,927, followed by Chattogram with 6,256.

The DSCC recorded 6,270 cases, DNCC 4,290, and Dhaka division outside the city corporations 5,894. Rajshahi reported 2,781 cases, Khulna 2,074, Mymensingh 822, Rangpur 278, and Sylhet 114.

According to DGHS data, the total number of deaths stood at 147 and cases at 40,709 this year, as of yesterday.

Experts stressed the urgent need for stronger control measures against Aedes mosquitoes, alongside community engagement for sustainable results.

▶ 147 deaths, 40,709 cases recorded so far this year

▶ 83 deaths reported in DSCC

▶ 11,927 cases in Barishal

▶ Experts warn of October outbreak

▶ Lack of national mosquito control programme blamed



Entomologist Kabirul Bashar said districts like Barishal, Rajshahi and Khulna are facing higher case numbers, while Sylhet and Rangpur remain significantly lower.

He attributed Sylhet's low prevalence partly to the naturally smaller Aedes mosquito population in the region.

Bashar also warned that the outbreak's peak, delayed earlier by heavy rains, is now expected in October.

He urged for a community-driven mosquito control initiative, including the distribution of Insect Growth Regulator (IGR) tablets and school involvement, as municipal measures alone are inadequate.

Entomologist GM Saifur Rahman said lower case counts in Sylhet and Rangpur are linked to less commercial activity and reduced need for water storage, unlike southern coastal areas where storing water is common.

He noted that higher case numbers in other areas are partly due to larger populations of susceptible individuals with no prior dengue exposure.

He also criticised the absence of a systematic national mosquito management programme, calling it a key obstacle to long-term dengue control.

Explaining the high death toll in Dhaka South, Dr HM Nazmul Ahsan, associate professor at Shaheed Suhrawardy Medical College Hospital, said many critically ill patients are referred from outside the capital.

"They are infected in other districts but die in Dhaka hospitals. Delays in referral are another major factor. A patient from Barishal or elsewhere may need hours to reach Dhaka, and if already in shock, the delay can be fatal," he said.

Dr Ahsan urged district-level hospitals to strictly follow national dengue treatment guidelines and treat patients locally, transferring only those in severe condition.

He warned that premature referrals and failure to stabilise patients before transfer often result in deaths from decompensated shock.

## Fundamentalist forces trying to delay polls

Says CPB president at party's 13th congress

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Fundamentalist forces are gaining ground in the country and are trying to delay the upcoming election, alleged Communist Party of Bangladesh (CPB) President Shah Alam yesterday.

"If the election is not held on time, the fundamentalists will become more consolidated, and the country may head towards a Taliban-style state," he said at the inaugural session of CPB's four-day 13th Congress at the Engineers Institute in Dhaka.

Speaking after the session, the CPB president said an elected government must be formed immediately to safeguard people's voting rights. "Today, in the name of Islam, radical groups are rising in Bangladesh -- this is something we must take into account," he said.

Although last year's mass uprising toppled an authoritarian government, it

did not change the class character of state power, Shah Alam said.

CPB General Secretary Ruhin Hossain Prince said, "Ultra-right communal forces are growing in the country. At the same time, imperialist powers are aggressively trying to impose their dominance over us."

Prince said the interim government's main duty was to quickly hand over power to an elected government through free, fair, and acceptable elections.

"But instead, it is wasting time by initiating constitutional changes, creating new crises," he said.

He warned, "If any crisis emerges due to delay, the interim government will have to take responsibility."

The four-day congress will run until September 22. On the final day, the CPB delegates will elect the party's new leadership including the president and general secretary.



This makeshift charging rig for battery-run autorickshaws on a pavement poses a risk of electrical short circuits and electrocution, potentially leading to accidents involving pedestrians. The photo was taken recently in the capital's Tejgaon Industrial Area. PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

## Comics slam 'censorship' after Kimmel pulled off air

AFP, Washington

Late-night TV comics skewered US President Donald Trump and denounced "blatant censorship" after Jimmy Kimmel's late-night show was pulled off air over his comments on the murder of right-wing activist Charlie Kirk.

Network ABC's decision to suspend Kimmel "indefinitely" came after Federal Communications Commission chairman Brendan Carr threatened licenses of ABC affiliates that broadcast his show.

Trump, on his way back from a trip to Britain, again condemned evening shows on network television, saying "all they do is hit Trump."