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Play your due role

PM asks armed forces on
maintaining democratic,
constitutional stability

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday asked the armed forces to play the due role in advancing the nation as well as maintaining democratic and constitutional stability in the country.

"Bangladesh Armed Forces are making significant contributions to peacekeeping in various countries under the emblem of UN mission. The armed forces will also have to play an important role in the progress of the nation and in maintaining democratic and constitutional stability so that we can keep up the country's ongoing trend of development," she said.

The PM made the comment while addressing the graduation ceremony of Defence Services Command and Staff College (DSCSC) 2018-2019 at Sheikh Hasina Complex of Mirpur Cantonment in the city.

The armed forces have earned name and fame in foreign land with their honesty and professional efficiency, she said, adding that the forces are the symbol of the country's independence and sovereignty.

Alongside the noble responsibility of protecting our sovereignty, members of our patriotic armed forces are also making significant contributions to the fields of tackling



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This Bailey bridge collapsed when an overloaded truck was crossing it in Sunamganj's Bishwambarpur upazila yesterday. Two people in the truck were killed.

KILLING OF SELIM
War heroes
demand
justice

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Pabna

Around 60 freedom fighters and locals yesterday took to the streets in Pabna protesting the murder of war hero Mostafizur Rahman Selim with the victim's family alleging that he was killed for being vocal against corruption.

On Wednesday, 70-year-old Selim was shot by two unidentified persons near his home around 9:30pm in Ishwardi upazila of the district. Later, he died around 10:30pm on the way to Rajshahi Medical College Hospital.

After conducting an autopsy at Pabna Medical College Hospital, the body was returned to the family. He was buried at a local graveyard in Pakshey yesterday evening.

People of all walks of life protested the killing and demanded justice for war hero Selim. The protesters blocked the Dhaka-Kushtia highway at Rooppur intersection in Pakshey around

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Amnesty has
'toxic' work
culture

Says report authorised
by organisation itself

FOX NEWS ONLINE

Amnesty International, a leading human rights NGO, is facing criticism after a damning report revealed the organisation is suffering from a toxic work environment and is in a "state of emergency" due to rampant bullying, sexism, racism and overworking. The report, written by the KonTerra Group, found an "us versus them" dynamic and breakdown of trust between senior management and other staff members. Numerous instances of bullying and public humiliation by the management were also found.

"As organisational rifts and evidence of nepotism and hypocrisy become public knowledge they will be used by government and

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One tough year

BNP down with Khaleda in jail

MOHAMMAD AL-MASUM MOLLA



BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia has been in jail for a year and the party is "facing the most difficult time in its history" in her absence.

The party has failed to reorganise following its defeat in the December 30 general polls. Its leaders and activists have been demoralised and there are no fresh protests to boost their morale.

To add to their woes, many senior leaders have become inactive after the election fearing harassment, said party sources.

Apart from the party's own organisational weakness, the government's tough stance has rendered the BNP unable to fight back and those at the grassroots don't see any hope of overcoming the situation right now, the sources said.

A huge number of BNP men are facing cases and are busy securing bail from courts, they added.

Upon conviction in a corruption case, the former prime minister, Khaleda, was sent to jail on February 8 last year. It is still not clear when she will walk out of jail.

Since its formation in 1978, the party for the first time participated in a parliamentary election on December 30 with Khaleda in jail.

She joined politics in 1982 after the assassination of her husband and party founder Ziaur Rahman. Under her leadership, the party took part in the movement against military dictator HM Ershad in the 80s and contested five parliamentary elections since 1991. She led her party to victory in three of those polls. But in this parliamentary election, the party secured only six seats.

Alleging massive rigging by the ruling Awami League, the BNP rejected the polls result. It, however, refrained from announcing any tough action, saying their first priority was Khaleda's release and the party's regrouping.

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FREEDOM HOUSE REPORT
Bangladesh saw
decline in
civil liberties

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh continues to suffer a decline in political rights and civil liberties, according to a report of Freedom House.

With an aggregate score of 41 out of 100, the Freedom in the World-2019 report has categorised Bangladesh's freedom status as "Partly Free".

The country scored five out of seven in freedom rating, political rights and civil liberties.

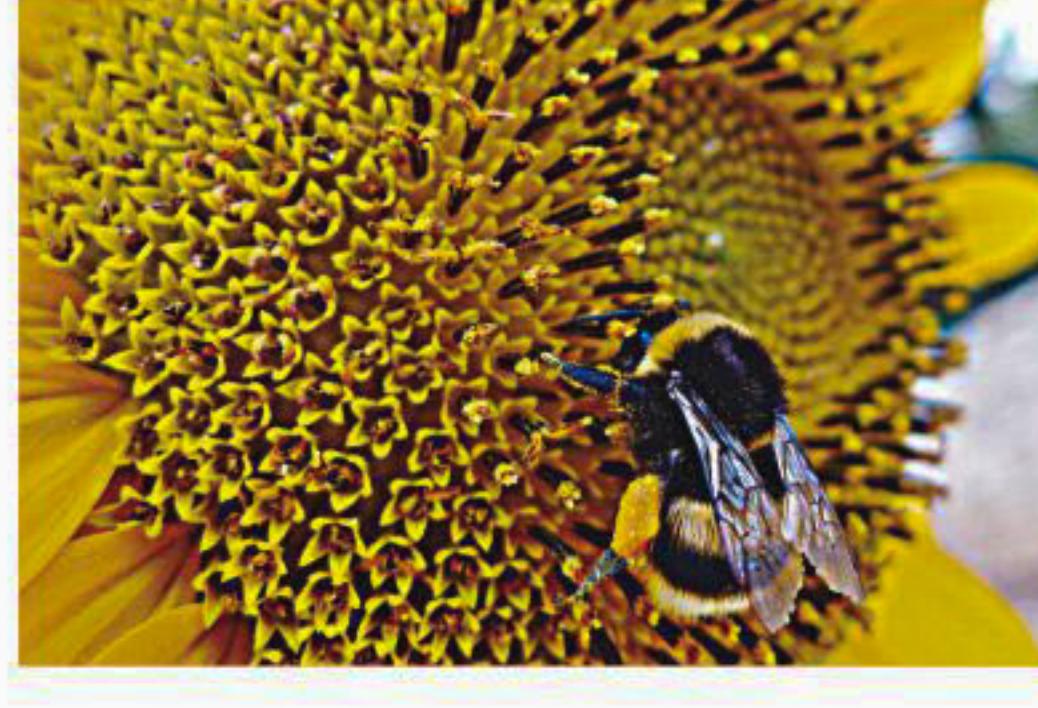
Comparing the aggregate score, the report showed a declining trend in the country's democracy in three years since 2015. Its aggregate scores were 49, 47 and 45 in 2016, 2017 and 2018 reports respectively.

The report titled "Democracy in Retreat" said global freedom declined for the 13th consecutive year in 2018.

Democracy is facing an alarming fall throughout the world as more countries move towards authoritarianism, said the report released on Monday by US-based independent watchdog Freedom House.

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Bees have brains
for basic math



INDEPENDENT.CO.UK

Bees are able to grasp basic mathematical ideas, according to a new study, which suggests a small brain may not mean low intelligence.

After training a group of the pollinating insects, scientists at the French National Centre for Scientific Research found they were able to perform addition and subtraction.

These abilities require animals to carry out intricate processes in their brains, remembering complex rules while applying them to new situations.

Maths was therefore long thought an ability unique to humans, but in recent years experiments have shown the skill is found across the animal kingdom.

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Last 4 years
hottest on
record: UN

AFP, Paris

The last four years were the hottest since global temperature records began, the UN confirmed in an analysis that it said was a "clear sign of continuing long-term climate change."

The UN's World Meteorological Organization said in November that 2018 was set to be the fourth warmest year in recorded history, stressing the urgent need for action to rein in runaway planetary warming.

On Wednesday, it
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PRAYER TIMING FEBRUARY 8

Fazr Juma 5-30 12-30 4-15 5-52 7-15
AZAN 5-30 12-30 4-15 5-52 7-15
JAMAT 6-05 1-15 4-30 5-56 7-45

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION



Elephants
face 'time
bomb' in
Bangladesh

REUTERS, Cox's Bazar

Standing atop an elephant watch-tower on the outskirts of the sprawling Rohingya refugee settlement in Cox's Bazar, Nur Islam takes great pride in keeping his people safe.

Dressed in a uniform of blue T-shirt, navy trousers and a neon yellow vest, Islam is one of 570 Rohingya on the Elephant Response Team, known locally as the tusk force, who are on duty every night to look out for

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Fight against IS
will continue

Promises US as 70 countries meet
to decide next steps; Trump eyes
100pc defeat of the group in a week

AFP, Washington

The United States promised Wednesday to stay focused on permanently destroying the Islamic State group but asked concerned allies to contribute more, as President Donald Trump boasted that the extremists will soon have lost all their territory in Syria.

Trump addressed officials from more than 70 countries who came to Washington to discuss ways ahead in the battle Islamic State, also known as IS, after Trump stunned many of them in December by declaring victory and ordering all 2,000 troops out of Syria.

Speaking at the State Department, Trump said that US-led troops and their Kurdish allies had "liberated virtually all of the territory" from the jihadists who once controlled a vast stretch of Syria and Iraq in a self-styled caliphate.

"It should be formally announced sometime next week that we will have 100 percent of the caliphate," Trump said.

"Remnants -- that's all they have, remnants -- but remnants can be very dangerous," Trump said.

"Rest assured, we'll do what it takes to defeat every ounce and every last person within the ISIS madness and defend our people from radical Islamic terrorism," he said.

The conference comes amid behind-the-scenes efforts to manage the unintended consequences of the US pullout, including keeping peace between Turkey and Kurdish fighters and finding a solution for hundreds of foreign jihadis jailed in Syria who Washington says should be repatriated by their home countries.

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