

CONFLICT IN SUDAN Evacuation of Bangladeshis to start early next month

PORIMOL PALMA

Around 500 Bangladeshis, who have applied for their return to the country, will be evacuated early next month as it has become unsafe for them to stay in conflict-ridden Sudan.

Many other countries, including the US, the UK, China, France, Saudi Arabia, and international organisations have been evacuating their diplomats and citizens as the Sudanese military and paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF) have been fighting in the capital Khartoum and surrounding areas since mid-April.

A disagreement had been fomenting in recent months between the two groups over military security reforms.

The conflict has already left at least 459 people killed and 4,072 injured, according to the World Health Organization.

Charge De Affaires (CDA) of the Bangladesh Embassy in Sudan, Tareq Ahmed, and his family moved out of Khartoum on April 23 and are living some 240km away from the capital, as his residence along with the embassy building came under attacks.

On April 15, the CDA's residence, which close to Khartoum International Airport, had machine gun bullets hitting and piercing through the windows.

On April 22, the Bangladesh embassy building was hit by the bullets, damaging the third-floor wall.

However, no one was hurt in either incident.

The next day, the CDA, along with other officials and staffers, moved out of Khartoum and have been residing at the guest house in a cotton factory owned by a Bangladeshi expatriate there.

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Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and her Japanese counterpart Fumio Kishida shake hands at the latter's office yesterday.

‘Japan has a special place in our hearts’

Ties now elevated to strategic partnership,
says Hasina at meeting with Japanese PM

AGENCIES

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday said Bangladesh and Japan successfully elevated their bilateral relations to a strategic partnership.

“We are happy that Bangladesh and Japan have successfully elevated the bilateral relations to a ‘Strategic Partnership’ from the existing ‘Comprehensive Partnership’,” she said in a joint statement after a meeting with her Japanese counterpart Kishida Fumio in

Tokyo, reports UNB.

The two sides signed eight agreements and memorandums of cooperation on agriculture, metro rail, industrial upgrade, ship recycling, customs, intellectual properties, defence cooperation, and ICT and cyber security, reports BSS.

At the meeting with the Japanese prime minister, Hasina mentioned how the presence of a large number of Rohingyas in Bangladesh was affecting the lives and livelihoods of the

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- ✓ Dhaka, Tokyo sign eight deals
- ✓ Japan to provide Tk 2,400 crore as budget support
- ✓ Agreement on ICT and cyber security signed
- ✓ Bangladesh to be turned into an industrial and connectivity hub

BNP goes for all-out boycott of five city polls

Warns party men not to
run even for councillor

MOHAMMAD AL-MASUM MOLLA

The BNP will go tough on its leaders and activists who will run for councillor in the city polls and those who will patronise them.

Though the councillor election is non-partisan in nature, some grassroots leaders, especially the current councillors, want to contest the polls, causing discomfort for the party.

This is the first time that the party is taking a headline on joining councillor polls. It has already announced the

According to the Election Commission, the last date of nomination submission for Gazipur City Corporation polls is April 27 (today), Khulna and Barishal May 16 and Rajshahi and Sylhet May 23.

decision to boycott the upcoming mayoral elections to five city corporations.

“It’s a decision. Nobody is allowed to contest the polls. We are in a movement. When the regime’s legitimacy is in question, how can we join the polls? So none is allowed to run the polls,” Amir Khasru Mahmud Chowdhury, standing committee member of the party, told The Daily Star.

Soon after the announcement of the election schedule, BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir told journalists that they would not walk into any trap this time by joining any polls.

But even after this stance of the party, some leaders showed interest in running the polls, “either under pressure or willingly”, party sources say.

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As workers are still enjoying their Eid holidays, containers full of goods lie idle at the NCT Gate-1 of the Chittagong Port in Saltgola Crossing area as loading and unloading have not yet begun. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: RAJIB RAIHAN

GAZIPUR CITY POLLS Nomination forms bought for Zahangir, his mother

STAR CORRESPONDENT

Two nomination forms to run for mayor in the upcoming Gazipur city polls have been collected in the names of suspended Gazipur mayor Zahangir Alam and his mother.

Zahangir confirmed the matter to The Daily Star last night.

The city polls will be held on May 25. The deadline for collecting and submitting nomination forms expires today.

Over the phone, Zahangir said, “My followers and well-wishers have collected nomination forms for me and my mother. I work for

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Facebook ads no longer available for businesses

Dollar crunch compels Httpool to suspend
advertisement sales in Bangladesh

MAHMUDUL HASAN

Httpool, Meta’s sales partner in Bangladesh, has suspended services after it failed to repatriate funds following curbs on dollar outflows, in what can be viewed as a crushing blow to local businesses.

The development, which follows similar complaints from foreign airlines and shipping companies, will be particularly damaging for women-owned businesses and SMEs, which are inextricably reliant on Meta’s social media platforms Facebook, Instagram and WhatsApp to advertise their goods and services.

As of January, there are more than 43 million Facebook users in Bangladesh, making the country the ninth largest in terms of audience, according to global

data firm Statista.

In a letter to clients on April 25, Httpool said its services related to the Meta platform will be temporarily unavailable or reduced until further notice.

“This is due to the lack of USD currency available and difficulties with remittances abroad,” said the letter signed by Sunny Nagpal, director of Httpool Bangladesh.

Subsequently, there will be limited availability of ad space on the platform offered by Httpool, which may affect the clients’ upcoming campaigns and the possibility of rejection/blockages of the current and upcoming campaigns.

“This is a necessary measure that we must take in light of the current economic conditions, that are an

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A Heartfelt Tribute
on
2nd Death Anniversary of a great Business personality and visionary



Deen Mohammad
(1938 – 2021)
Death : 27-04-2021

Founder : Phoenix Insurance Company Limited

You will always remain our inspiration
You were a great source of our strength
Your moral values always indicated us to move forward.

May Allah grant you eternal peace in Heaven

Phoenix Insurance Family



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