



## No free, fair polls possible without a neutral govt

**Fakhrul tells EU envoy**  
STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir has told European Union Ambassador to Bangladesh Charles Whiteley that a free and fair election cannot be held without a non-party neutral government.

He made the remark while talking to journalists after holding a closed-door meeting with Whiteley at the BNP chairperson's political office in the capital's Gulshan yesterday.

"You [journalists] must know that an expert team of the European Union will visit Bangladesh next week. That team will hold talks with different political parties and civil society members. We have discussed that issue today."

The BNP leader said they discussed the next

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Palestinian people flee the Jenin refugee camp in the occupied West Bank during an ongoing Israeli military operation yesterday. PHOTO: AFP

## Jenin raid close to completion

**Says Israel; Palestinian death toll rises to 10; thousands flee homes**

REUTERS, Jenin

Israel is close to completing its Jenin operation, a senior aide to Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said yesterday after the fiercest fighting in the flashpoint West Bank town in more than two decades killed 10 Palestinians and forced thousands to flee.

Launched early on Monday, the raid involving hundreds of commandos and air strikes prompted the internationally backed Palestinian administration to say it was suspending contacts with Israel.

Codenaming the operation in Jenin's tenement-like refugee camp "Home and Garden", Israel says the objective is to uproot Iranian-backed Palestinian factions behind a surge in gun and bomb attacks.

A Palestinian wounded during the house-to-house clashes died overnight and another body was found in the morning, bringing the death toll to 10, with around 100 wounded, the Palestinian health ministry said.

The operation "is close to completing the achievement of the goals set," Israeli National Security Adviser Tzachi Hanegbi told Kan radio after a relative lull in the clashes overnight.

The Palestinian Red Crescent said it had evacuated 500 families, or around 3,000 people, from the camp, where some 14,000 people live in less than half a square kilometre and which has been one of the focal points of a wave of violence that has swept the West Bank for more than a year.

## Ctg landowner selling banned fish feed

**Substance was 'destroyed' by Ctg customs**

MOHAMMAD SUMAN

A landowner has been extracting and selling banned meat and bone meal (MBM) from a dumping station in port city, posing a serious health risk to humans.

On September 24 last year, Chattogram Customs House (CCH) discarded about 9,770 tonnes of seized MBM imported under false declaration between 2019 to 2021 at a rented dumping station in the port city's Anandabazar area.

The MBM was buried as intact sacks, and the CCH withdrew the Ansar guards from the facility a week after dumping the hazardous good, The Daily Star has learnt from people informed on the proceedings.

Soon after the guards were removed, Abdul Mannan, who rented the land to CCH, began digging out the buried MBM to sell to fish feed traders in Cumilla, Feni, Netrokona, Lakshmipur, Noakhali and Chattogram districts, according to police and customs.

MBM is a processed by-product of cattle, poultry and swine slaughterhouse leftovers such as bone, meat, organs, tissues and fat. It is used as animal feed including fish.

Commerce ministry banned the import and sale of MBM on December 26, 2018 following a Bangladesh Food Safety Authority report that found it harmful and carcinogenic.

On November 8 last year, Bandar Police seized 12 dump trucks loaded with MBM and six excavators from the dumping station.

"From speaking with the drivers and helpers present, it

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## Nur denies meeting Safadi

STAR REPORT

Gono Odhikar Parishad Member Secretary Nurul Haque Nur yesterday refuted reports of meeting Israeli citizen Mendi N Safadi.

He told this to The Daily Star a day after Prothom Alo reported that Safadi in a text message sent on June 26 had confirmed meeting Nur.

Nur said Safadi had met several ruling Awami League leaders, and photos of those meetings were doing the rounds on social media.

"This means he is serving the interest of the ruling party. Since we are doing anti-government politics, the government can make Safadi come up with such a claim. Had any such meeting taken place, they [the ruling AL] would have evidence like video footage. They would have presented that," he said.

When The Daily Star approached Safadi through a phone number mentioned on the Facebook page of Safadi Center for International Diplomacy, Safadi said, "I am not

interested in giving any press interview for now."

A rift within the Gono Odhikar Parishad has made headlines recently after its convenor Reza Kibria alleged that Nur had secretly met Safadi abroad.

Nur maintains that no such meeting ever took place.

Many have asked who Safadi is, the level of his influence, and what he has to do with Bangladesh.

**WHO IS SAFADI?**

Safadi's name first came to the fore in Bangladesh in May 2016 when Aslam Chowdhury, a BNP leader, reportedly met him at an event in India. Aslam was jailed for an "anti-state plot" centring the meeting.

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A man named Shipan Kumar Basu had arranged the meeting.

Shipan is the founding president of World Hindu Struggle of which Safadi was an adviser.

In a Facebook post of Safadi Center for International Diplomacy on April

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## Dress rehearsal for Asia Cup, WC starts today

SPORTS REPORTER

When it comes to playing ODIs, Bangladesh have held sway over their Asian rivals Afghanistan by winning a majority of the games. However, Afghanistan have also been able to spring some surprises of their own and, ahead of the first ODI at Zahur Ahmed Chowdhury Stadium today, the series is shaping up to be a dress rehearsal for the upcoming ties between the two sides in two key tournaments: the Asia Cup and the World Cup.

The Tigers have won seven games and lost four against Afghanistan in the ODI format. They have also triumphed in both the ODI World Cup games that they played against Afghanistan.

Bangladesh will also be playing their opening World Cup fixture in India against Afghanistan and ODI skipper Tamim Iqbal opined the series would be just as hard as the last one,

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## Android robot takes podium as orchestra conductor

CNN ONLINE

An android robot, Eve R 6, took the conductor's podium in Seoul on Friday evening to lead a performance by South Korea's national orchestra, marking the first such attempt in the country.

The two-armed robot, designed by the Korea Institute of Industrial Technology, made its debut at the National Theater of Korea, leading musicians in the country's national orchestra.

The robot, with a humanoid face, first bowed to the audience and started waving its arms to control the tempo of the live show.

"Movements by a conductor are very detailed," Choi Soo-yeoul, who led Friday's performance alongside the robot, said. "The robot was able to present such detailed moves much better than I had imagined."

But Eve R 6's "critical weakness," Choi said, is that it cannot listen.

Lee Young-ju, an audience member who studies traditional Korean music, said the robot's moves, though impeccable in keeping the rhythm, lacked "breath" — or the ability to keep the orchestra ready to engage collectively and instantly — which he said was essential in performance.



## Approval must for arresting govt officials

**JS passes bill**

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Permission has to be taken from the government or the appointing authorities concerned for arresting the officers of autonomous, state-owned and local government bodies before a court accepts the charge sheets in criminal cases filed over carrying out their duties.

The parliament yesterday passed the Public Service (Amendment) Bill-2023 keeping this provision.

The bill was passed by voice vote.

Clearance from the Finance Division was made mandatory for the autonomous, legislative and local government bodies for financial expenditures.

Participating in the discussion on the bill, Gonoforum MP Mokabbir Khan said several provisions of the bill contradicted the constitution and laws of the land.

He said it has been seen that the secretary, additional secretary or joint secretary of some ministries do not work properly.

Jatiya Party MP Pir Fazlur Rahman said any citizen can be arrested prior to pressing of charges in a criminal case. No permission is needed for this, he added.

But prior permission would be needed for arresting government officials, which is contrary to the principle that all citizens have equal rights, Fazlur said.



Although vehicles are not supposed to stop on this flyover, opened to traffic last month, buses often drop off passengers near Tongi College Gate area. People then jaywalk to their destinations, disrupting traffic flow and putting themselves at risk. The photo was taken yesterday. PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

## ROHINGYA GENOCIDE CASE

## Make efforts to finish it as soon as possible

**Momen to ICC prosecutor**

UNB, Dhaka

Foreign Minister AK Abdul Momen has sought efforts from the International Criminal Court (ICC) to finish the case related to the Rohingyas as soon as possible — to ensure that genocide never happens again anywhere in the world.

"You should put in efforts to finish the case as fast as possible. Justice delayed, justice denied," he said to ICC Prosecutor Karim AA Khan QC yesterday.

In November 2019, the International Criminal Court judges granted a request to open a full investigation into alleged atrocities committed against the Rohingyas within the jurisdiction of the court.

This authorisation to open an investigation is seen as a "significant development" for the pursuit of justice and the establishment of the truth, in particular for the victims of alleged crimes in this situation.

Investigators from the Office of the Prosecutor are now carefully and thoroughly seeking to uncover the truth regarding what happened to the Rohingya people in Myanmar which forced them to flee to Bangladesh.

Foreign Minister Momen said those involved in Rohingya genocide should be held accountable. "We say genocide never again."