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Govt can be changed only thru vote: PM

BSS, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday said a government can only be changed through vote.

“We want to protect the voting rights of the people ... and the government can only be changed through vote,” she said while inaugurating the sale of Awami League’s nomination forms for the 12th parliamentary election at the party’s central office.

Hasina said people have the right to vote and choose their candidates in elections.

The PM hoped that people would resist those who try to take away their voting rights through unleashing arson terrorism.

“We have established voting rights of the people through a long struggle.... So, people have to remain vigilant.

“Political parties which don’t have trust in the people, and are not organised are trying to foil the election,” Hasina said.

AL Advisory Council member Kazi Akram Uddin Ahmed collected a nomination form on behalf of Hasina for Gopalganj-3.



A farmer of Khulna’s Batiaghata upazila trying to straighten out his Aman plants that were bent out of shape by the strong winds of Cyclone Midhili. The wind, coupled with heavy rain, badly impacted the semi-ripe Aman plants on many fields in the coastal district and surrounding areas. Farmers are now fearing that their semi-ripe paddies will rot due to rainwater.

PHOTO: HABIBUR RAHMAN

Cyclone Midhili ruins crops on 2.16 lakh hectares

STAR REPORT

At least 2.16 lakh hectares of Aman, early winter vegetables, and Boro seedlings across 11 districts in Khulna, Barishal, and Chattogram divisions have been fully or partially damaged by cyclone Midhili.

Fish and shrimp worth crores were also washed out of enclosures by the cyclone’s intense downpour, which mostly affected the coastal districts.

Officials from the Department of Agricultural Extension (DAE) in the affected districts, however, said the total extent of the loss was yet to be calculated.

In Khulna, around one-third of the total Aman paddy cultivated on 90,000 hectares, 28 hectares of the total early winter vegetables on

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BNP, allies’ 48-hr hartal begins today

Four buses torched in capital; 3 train carriages set on fire in Jamalpur

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The 48-hour nationwide hartal called by the BNP and its allies to protest the Election Commission’s announcement of the polls schedule begins at 6:00am today.

This is the second round of hartal called by the BNP since October 28. It has also enforced five rounds of blockades in the last 20 days.

The strike has also been called to put pressure on the government to step down, hand over power to a non-partisan administration, and release all BNP leaders and activists, including its secretary general Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir.

The Jamaat e-Islami and some other opposition parties, including the Ganatantra Mancha and Gono Odhikar Parishad, will also enforce the hartal.

Four buses were torched in the capital’s Taltola, Gulistan, Dhanmondi, and Mirpur, and one in Cumilla; a pickup was also set on fire in Joypurhat last night, according to the fire service.

Besides, two vehicles caught fire in

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80 killed in Israeli strikes on Gaza camp

Says Hamas health official

AFP

A Hamas health official said more than 80 people were killed yesterday in twin strikes on a northern Gaza refugee camp, including a UN school used as a shelter for people displaced by the Israel-Hamas war.

Social media videos -- which AFP was unable to immediately verify -- showed bodies covered in blood and dust on the floor of a building, where mattresses had been wedged under school tables in Jabalia, the Palestinian territory’s biggest refugee camp.

Israel has vowed to destroy Hamas in response to the October 7 attacks which Israeli officials say killed about 1,200 people, most of them civilians in southern Israel.

The army’s relentless air and ground campaign has since killed 12,000 people, including 5,000 children, according to the Hamas government which has ruled Gaza since 2007.

“At least 50 people” were killed in an Israeli strike at dawn on the UN-

run Al-Fakhura school in the camp, which had been converted into a shelter for displaced Palestinians, an official at Gaza’s Hamas-controlled health ministry told AFP.

A separate strike yesterday on another building in Jabalia camp killed 32 people from the same family, 19 of them children, the official said. The ministry released a list of 32 members of the Abu Habal family it said had died.

Contacted by AFP, the Israeli army did not immediately respond to requests for comment on the two strikes.

Yesterday, hundreds of people fled on foot after the director of Gaza’s main hospital said the Israeli army ordered evacuation of the facility where some 2,000 people were trapped.

Columns of sick and injured -- some of them amputees -- were seen making their way out of Al-Shifa hospital towards the seafont without ambulances along with displaced

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Total death toll reaches 12,000, including 5,000 children



Deadly air strikes continue to hit central, southern Gaza

Mysterious death of girl who sued AL leader for rape

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Tangail

The 17-year-old girl, who had accused Golam Kibria Boro Moni, vice president of Tangail city AL, of raping her, was found dead in her house yesterday afternoon.

According to the statement of the case, in which Boro Moni was accused, the girl, who was an orphan, had gotten pregnant from the rape incident. After giving birth, she was living on the second floor of her three-storeyed ancestral home in her village with an infant son and a domestic help.

Golam Kibria Boro Moni is elder brother of Tanvir Hasan Soto Moni, AL lawmaker of Tangail-2 (Gopalpur-Bhuanpur).

Around a month ago, a six member bench of the Appellate Division, headed by Chief Justice Obaidul Hassan, had granted bail to Boro Moni after a DNA test showed he was not the father of the baby.

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BANGABANDHU’S ASSASSINATION

Nur Chy taking advantage of legal loopholes in Canada

Says CBC investigative report

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Nur Chowdhury, a convicted killer of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, ducked a question about the assassination and sped off when a Canadian journalist approached him in Western Toronto.

This was seen in a 42-minute investigative report in the segment “The Fifth Estate” by Canada’s public television CBC, broadcast yesterday morning.

This was the first time Nur was caught on video in Canada where he has been living since 1996.

The report details how the former army officer continues to get protection in Canada.

The episode explored the circumstances of the Nur case and included interviews with many prominent figures, including Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, Law Minister Anisul Huq, Bangladesh High Commissioner to Canada Khalilur Rahman, Canadian legal experts, and a CID official in Dhaka, who is involved in the case.

Following a trial which was opened after a long hiatus, five convicts in the Bangabandhu assassination case were hanged in 2010; one convict died in Zimbabwe and six others have been absconding.

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RMG SECTOR 5 int’l labour bodies urge PM to reassess minimum wage

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Five international organisations, which work on labour rights and international trade, wrote a letter to Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina to reassess the declared minimum wage for garment workers.

The five organisations are amfori, Ethical Trading Initiative (ETI), Fair Labour Association (FLA), Fair Wear, and Mondiaal FNV.

They have voiced concerns regarding the recently announced minimum wage for the Ready-Made Garment (RMG) sector in Bangladesh, amfori, a leading global business association for sustainable trade, said in a statement Wednesday.

The letter, addressed to the PM, highlights crucial issues and calls for a reconsideration of the decision.

Bangladesh plays a pivotal role in the global RMG sector, and the commitment

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A Palestinian man carries a child as he and others flee north Gaza and move southward, as Israeli tanks roll deeper into the enclave yesterday.

PHOTO: REUTERS

SpaceX Starship launch fails minutes after reaching space



REUTERS, Boca Chica, Texas/New York

SpaceX’s uncrewed spacecraft Starship, developed to carry astronauts to the moon and beyond, failed in space shortly after lifting off yesterday, cutting short its second test but making it further than an earlier attempt that ended in an explosion.

The two-stage rocketship blasted off from the Elon Musk-owned company’s Starbase launch site near Boca Chica in Texas, helping boost the Starship spacecraft as high as 90 miles (148 km) above ground on a planned 90-minute test mission to space and back.

But the rocket’s Super Heavy first stage booster, though it achieved a crucial manoeuvre to separate with its core Starship stage, exploded over the Gulf of Mexico shortly after detaching, a SpaceX webcast showed.