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Nomination of 731 aspirants scrapped

They can file appeals with EC by December 9

MOHIUDDIN ALAMGIR and MD ABBAS

Candidatures of at least 731 aspirants out of 2,716 have been cancelled by returning officers across the country.

Election Commission Additional Secretary Ashok Kumar Debnath disclosed the statistics yesterday evening.

The nominations were scrapped on various grounds, including defaulted loans and taxes, and failure to submit the signatures of one percent of voters by independent aspirants.

Of the 731 cancelled nominations, at least 182 were filed by independents and several by Jatiya Party nominees, according to EC data.

The ratio of cancelling candidatures has slightly increased this time compared to the last national election in 2018, when 786 out of 3,065 nominations were scrapped, sources in the EC said.

About 27 percent of nominations have been cancelled this time, compared to around 25.64 percent in 2018.

The highest 13 candidates each will run for Mymensingh-3 and Bogura-7 in the January 7 elections. The lowest two candidates would vie for Sherpur-2.

The EC, in a statement yesterday, said aspirants whose

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Bangladesh women's football team players pose for a photograph following their 8-0 thrashing of Singapore in the second FIFA Friendly match of the two-match series at the Birshreshtha Mostafa Kamal Stadium in Kamalapur yesterday. Story on Page 11. PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

31 more BNP, Jamaat men jailed

COURT CORRESPONDENT

Another 31 leaders and activists of BNP, Jamaat and their front organisations were yesterday sentenced to different jail terms in four cases filed years ago over political violence in the capital.

They were convicted in the cases filed between November 2013 and November 2018 on charges of illegal gatherings, arson, vandalism, and assaulting police and obstructing them from discharging their duties.

Since November 7 this year, at least 477 BNP-Jamaat leaders and activists have been jailed in 23 cases filed between December 2012 and November 2018 over political violence in Dhaka.

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Inflation fell slightly last month



REJAUL KARIM BYRON

Inflation decelerated by 44 basis points to 9.49 percent in November led by a decline in both food and non-food prices.

Last month, food inflation stood at 10.76 percent, down from 12.56 percent in October, while non-food inflation dropped 14 basis points to 8.16 percent, according to data published by the Bangladesh Bureau

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Israel bombs areas where it tells Gazans to flee

Dozens of tanks enter southern part of Gaza; death toll nears 16,000 in the Palestinian enclave

AGENCIES

Israel ordered people out of swathes of the main southern city in the Gaza Strip yesterday as it pressed its ground campaign deep into the south, sending desperate residents fleeing even as it dropped bombs on areas where it told them to go.

Israel's military posted a map on X yesterday morning with around a quarter of the city of Khan Younis marked off in yellow as territory that must be evacuated at once. Three arrows pointed south and west, telling people to head towards the Mediterranean coast and towards Rafah, near the Egyptian border.

The Israeli military's chief Arabic-language spokesperson later said in a post on X that the central road out of Khan Younis to the north "constitutes a battlefield" and was now shut.

Access would be permitted on the western outskirts of the city, while in Rafah, a short "tactical suspension of military activities" was due to allow access until yesterday afternoon.

In Rafah, bombing at one site overnight had torn a crater the size of a basketball court out of the earth. A dead toddler's bare feet and black trousers poked out from under a pile of rubble.

Men struggled with their bare hands to move a chunk of the concrete that had crushed the child.

The latest violence took place despite calls from the United States — Israel's closest ally — for Israel to limit harm to Palestinian civilians in the new phase of its offensive, focused on the south.

Israel's military yesterday issued a situational update, in which it claimed that "ground

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Israel breaking every rule of war in Gaza

Says MSF; calls for immediate ceasefire

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

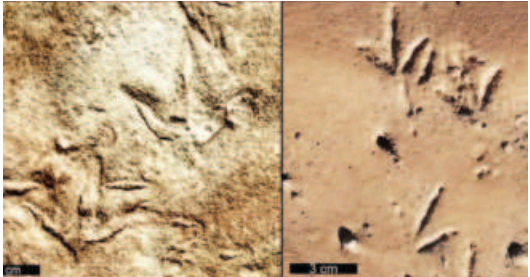
Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF), also known as Doctors without Borders, has called for an immediate and sustained ceasefire in Gaza to stop killing of civilians and allow for the delivery of desperately-needed humanitarian aid.

It has also called for the implementation of secure and long-lasting medical evacuation routes to third countries for people suffering from severe injuries, as fighting resumed after a seven-day truce that ended on Friday.

The global humanitarian medical care organisation also decried the fact that world leaders, including the permanent members of the UN Security Council, have been complicit, either by providing Israel with diplomatic cover, by

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READ MSF LETTER ON PAGE 9

Animals with bird-like feet roamed planet 200m yrs ago



INDEPENDENT.CO.UK

Animals with bird-like feet were roaming the planet more than 200 million years ago, scientists say.

Analysis of ancient footprints, which experts were calling Trisauropodiscus, suggest these creatures were likely to have been three-toed. It is unclear who made the track marks, but experts speculate they may have come from a dinosaur or a reptile.

But they said the findings, published in the journal Plos One, showed bird-like feet evolved much earlier than thought, possibly by 60 million years, and could help shed new light on how birds came into existence.

The authors wrote: "Birds are one of the most diverse groups of animals on Earth with 10,000 extant species, yet their early evolutionary history is still shrouded in mystery."

Climate finance takes centre stage at talks

UAE banking sector pledges \$270bn in green finances by 2030; Saudi leaders skip flagship event

REUTERS, Dubai

Money pledges stacked up at COP28 in Dubai yesterday as delegates sought to address the huge gap between what is needed in climate finance and the amounts so far on offer.



The United Arab Emirates, the host of this year's conference, pledged to mobilise \$270 billion in green finance by 2030 through its banks, and several development banks announced plans to increase their funding efforts, including by agreeing to pause debt repayments if a climate-related disaster hits.

But leaders of the region's biggest economy and biggest OPEC oil producer Saudi Arabia have so far not attended the UN summit, in contrast to their participation in last year's COP27 conference in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt.

Yesterday, Prince Abdulaziz bin Salman, energy minister and the key climate negotiator, for the kingdom, was a no-show at the Saudi Green Initiative, a side event showcasing the country's clean energy plans.

De facto ruler Crown Prince Mohammad bin Salman also did not deliver a speech to world leaders as scheduled on Friday.

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Palestinians gather at the site of an Israeli strike, amid the ongoing conflict between Israel and Hamas, in Rafah, in the southern Gaza Strip yesterday. PHOTO: REUTERS

BNP announces 48-hour blockade from tomorrow

Arsonists set fire to 5 vehicles in 3 dists

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The BNP yesterday called for a fresh 48-hour nationwide blockade starting 6:00am Wednesday in protest of the Election Commission's announcement of the polls scheduled.

The party will also organise human chain demonstrations in cities and district towns across the country on December 10 — the International Human Rights Day, said BNP Senior Joint Secretary General Ruhul Kabir Rizvi.

Families of BNP leaders and activists, who have been victims of enforced disappearances, killings, arrests in fictitious cases, and human rights violations, will attend the programme, said the BNP leader while announcing the programme at a virtual press briefing after the party's ninth round of 48-hour blockade ended amid arson attacks on public transport.

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