

কর্মজীবনের শেষে অবসরকালীন  
আর্থিক নিরাপত্তা নিশ্চিত করতে

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## Not 21,000, rather 11,000 BNP men in jail: Quader

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Awami League General Secretary Obaidul Quader yesterday said 11,000 BNP activists are in jail, instead of the 21,000 claimed by the opposition.

"They [BNP] say that 21,000 of their activists are in jail. I am challenging you, I have learned that there are 11,000 [BNP activists] in jail. Of them, 2,000 have been released on bail today. The number 21,000 is 'fake'. They have lied about it," said Quader while speaking at a victory procession of AL.

Quader also claimed that 70 percent people of the country are ready to vote for "boat".

"The final will be played on January 7. On that day, 1,896 people (total number of candidates) will play. BNP left the game on the 28th (October 28) after receiving a red card," he said.

"Twenty seven political parties are contesting, so the polls will be competitive. Those who say the election will not be competitive, are liars," he added.

The "victory procession" was held with hundreds of leaders and activists of AL and its associate bodies.

Even though the programme was scheduled to start at 2:30pm at the Institute of Engineers Bangladesh in the capital, the Awami League leaders and activists began to throng the venue around 1:30pm.



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Ambassador of Qatar to Bangladesh, Seraya Ali Mahdi Saeed Al-Qahtani, hands over an invitation letter to Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina to attend the 8th Doha International Maritime Defence Exhibition and Conference at Gono Bhaban yesterday. The event will be held on March 4-6, 2024, in Qatar.

PHOTO: PID

## 'Arsonists in guise of passengers set Tejgaon train on fire'

### Says DMP chief; Rizvi demands judicial probe

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka Metropolitan Police Commissioner Habibur Rahman yesterday said police have learnt that arsonists in the guise of train passengers carried out the attack on a train in Dhaka's Tejgaon, that left four people dead.

A political party is destroying lives and property in the name of hartals and blockades and the arson attack on the train is a part of it, he told reporters at Dhaka Medical College and Hospital.

The DMP chief said in accordance with directives from their leader residing abroad, local agents of the party are executing the attacks.

Police are trying to identify and arrest those involved in the arson attack, Habibur said.

The attack was made at a time when the BNP and its allies called for a nationwide dawn-to-dusk hartal yesterday.

Meanwhile, in a press release issued following the incident, BNP's joint secretary general Ruhul Kabir Rizvi demanded immediate arrest of those involved in torching the train, and a judicial probe into the incident.

"There is deep skepticism among people as to whether this is a ploy to divert public attention away from the ongoing democratic movement. This is a case of well-planned sabotage," he said.

## Include CHT accord in polls manifesto

Speakers urge political parties to ensure its implementation



Speakers at the dialogue at The Daily Star Centre yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a dialogue yesterday called upon political parties to include the agenda of implementing the Chittagong Hill Tracts Peace Accord in their election manifestos.

The speakers expressed their discontent with the peace accord not being fully implemented even after 26 years and demanded its quick implementation.

"The political parties competing in the

upcoming election have to include the agenda of implementing the CHT peace accord in their manifestos, and the party that will form the next government must announce a time-bound roadmap for the next 365 days on how to implement the treaty," said Prof Mizanur Rahman, former chairman of Bangladesh Human Rights Commission.

He made the remark while addressing a national-level dialogue on "Strengthening the

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## 28 percent children under five stunted

### Speakers urge for inclusion of child nutrition in election manifesto

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Child nutrition should be included in the election manifestos of candidates to address undernutrition in children under five, said speakers at a dialogue yesterday.

The event, jointly organised by Bangladesh Shishu Adhikar Forum (BSAF) and Right2Grow Consortium Bangladesh, was held at the capital's The Daily Star Centre.

Around 28 percent children aged under five is stunted while 24 percent are underweight and 12 percent are "wasted", according to Right2Grow Consortium Bangladesh data.

The numbers were derived through the regular monitoring of 8,348 children under five.

WHO defines "wasting" as low weight-for-height due to inadequate food intake or prolonged illnesses. Meanwhile, "stunting" denotes low height-for-age due to chronic or recurrent undernutrition, usually associated with poverty, poor maternal health and nutrition, and inappropriate feeding and care in early life.

"In the 2022-23 fiscal year, 5.43 percent of the total budget was allocated to the health sector. However, there was no specific allocation

### RECOMMENDATIONS

» Revising national budget

» Further research

» Awareness campaigns

» Monitoring mechanism

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## TIB denounces arson attacks

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Transparency International Bangladesh yesterday denounced arson attacks as a means of advancing political agendas or protests by political parties.

**The act of burning people alive can never be a means of promoting political agenda. It is unjustifiable to try to serve a political purpose capitalising on violence.**

Dr Iftekharuzzaman  
TIB executive director

The recent horrifying incidents involving the murder of four individuals, including a three-year-old, in an arson attack on a train, fire assaults on public transport, and sabotage on rail tracks, have prompted TIB to call for an immediate cessation of destructive political manoeuvres that result in the loss of innocent lives and state assets, it said in a statement.

The tragic incident at the Tejgaon rail station where miscreants set fire to three compartments yesterday killing four individuals, is of grave concern, added the statement.

TIB emphasised that such incidents cannot be isolated, and any arson attacks, sabotage of rail

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## 304 children living with mothers in 68 jails

Says Child Rights Coalition

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

As many as 304 children are currently held in custody alongside their mothers across 68 jails in the country, said Child Rights Coalition in Bangladesh yesterday.

In a press statement, the coalition highlighted that prisons are unsuitable for children, and the rights of children with convicted mothers are overlooked, resulting in unjust punishment alongside their mothers.

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## Will scrap candidacy for repeated violations

### Warns EC Ahsan Habib

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Election Commissioner Ahsan Habib Khan yesterday warned that if candidates repeatedly breach the electoral code of conduct, the commission will take steps against them including scrapping their candidacy.

He told this to reporters after holding a views-exchange meeting with candidates and election officials in Kushtia.

"All candidates are equal in the election race. ROs and AROs have been instructed not to be biased towards any candidate," he also said.

Habib said police have also been instructed to refrain from unnecessary arrests or filing harassment cases ahead of election, except when someone is truly involved in criminal activities.

Ahsan Habib urged the candidates not to act out of vengeance against anyone, while refraining from arson attacks, activities obstructing electioneering and voters from casting their votes.

Meanwhile, CEC Kazi Habibul Awal yesterday said a fair and neutral election cannot be held if the candidates do not show respect towards each other and abide by the electoral code of conducts.

He said this at a dialogue with the candidates and election officials in Rangpur.

Referring to the arson attack on a train in Dhaka's Tejgaon that left four people dead, EC Md Alamgir in Narayanganj yesterday said it is not possible to resist the election through violence.



PHOTO: HABIBUR RAHMAN

Holding books, five-year-old Azizul and his three-year-old sister Muskan walk back home on a cold winter morning in Rajabdh area of Khulna's Botiaghata upazila yesterday. At dawn break, the two set off every weekday to attend Arabic lessons at a local madrasa.

### PRAYER TIMING

DECEMBER 20

Fazr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib	Esha
AZAN 5:20	12:45	3:45	5:22	7:00
JAMAAT 5:55	1:15	4:00	5:25	7:30

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

