

INTERNATIONAL

Early voting starts in 3 US states

AFP, Arlington

With more than a month before the November 5 presidential election, some Americans are already lining up to cast their ballots in this tightly contested race.

Early in-person voting kicked off Friday in the US states of Virginia, South Dakota, and Minnesota as voters pick between Vice President Kamala Harris and former president Donald Trump.

"You just feel that we're part of the process," said 56-year-old Tom Kilkenny, who came to a polling station in Arlington, Virginia, where people were lining up before it even opened early in the morning.



His wife Michelle, 55, said she was happy to set a good example for her friends and neighbours by voting early.

"When you... speak with them, I can myself say 'I voted already' and then start spreading the word," said Michelle Kilkenny, whose blue T-shirt was covered in Democratic Party pins.

Each of the country's 50 states has its own voting procedures: early voting by mail or in person, election day voting or a combination of the three.

For some Americans casting their ballot as soon as it becomes possible is a family tradition.



Rescuers sift through the rubble at the scene of an Israeli strike that targeted Beirut's southern suburbs a day earlier, as search and rescue operations continue in Lebanon yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

Two top Hezbollah leaders killed in Israel's Beirut strike

Lebanon says 35 more killed; Gaza rescuers say strike on school kills 21

AFP, Beirut

Lebanon's Hezbollah movement, which has been exchanging fire with Israel for months, yesterday announced that two commanders of its elite operations unit had been killed by an Israeli strike on Beirut, which authorities said left 37 people dead.

Health Minister Firass Abiad said three children were also killed in Friday's strike on an underground meeting room, which AFP journalists said left a huge crater in a densely populated neighbourhood of the capital's southern suburbs, a Hezbollah stronghold.

Lebanese Prime Minister Najib Mikati in a statement yesterday, decried "horrific massacres" and said he had cancelled a trip to the United Nations General Assembly "in

light of the developments linked to the Israeli aggression on Lebanon".

Israel's military said it also targeted a Hamas command centre in Gaza City that it alleged was "embedded inside" a school, where rescuers said 21 people were killed in adjacent buildings used as a shelter.

Friday's strike also followed sabotage attacks on pagers and two-way radios used by Hezbollah on Tuesday and Wednesday, which killed 39 people. Hezbollah blamed Israel, which has not commented.

Israeli troops and Hezbollah fighters have battled each other along the Israel-Lebanon border since the Israeli invasion of Gaza.

Hezbollah says it is acting in support of Hamas.

Months of near-daily cross-border

exchanges have killed hundreds in Lebanon, mostly fighters, and dozens in Israel and the annexed Golan Heights, forcing tens of thousands on both sides to flee their homes.

GAZA SCHOOL STRIKE

Yesterday, Gaza's civil defence agency said an Israeli strike on Al-Zaytoun School C, which had been turned into a displaced shelter, killed 21 people including 13 children and six women, one of them pregnant.

In late August, the United Nations said Israel had struck at least 23 school shelters since July 4. Israel's retaliatory military offensive has killed at least 41,391 people in Gaza, most of them civilians, according to figures provided by the Hamas-run territory's health ministry.

Iran unveils new drone, missile amid rising tensions

AFP, Tehran

Iran unveiled a new ballistic missile and an upgraded one-way attack drone at a military parade yesterday, state media said, amid soaring regional tensions and allegations of arming Russia.

Iran stands accused by Western governments of supplying both drones and missiles to Russia for use in its war with Ukraine, a charge it has repeatedly denied.

The solid-fuel Jihad missile was designed and manufactured by the aerospace arm of Iran's Revolutionary Guards and has an operational range of 1,000 kilometres (more than 600 miles), state news agency IRNA said.

The Shahed-136B drone is an upgraded version of the Shahed-136, with new features and an operational range of more than 4,000 kilometres (2,500 miles), it added.



New President Masoud Pezeshkian attended the annual parade in Tehran, commemorating the 1980-88 war with Saddam Hussein's Iraq.

"Today, our defensive and deterrent capabilities have grown so much that no demon even thinks about any aggression towards our dear Iran," he said.

"With unity and cohesion among Islamic countries... we can put in its place the bloodthirsty, genocidal usurper Israel, which shows no mercy to anyone, women or children, old or young."

Supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei delivered a similar tirade against Israel to delegates to an annual meeting of Muslim clerics hosted by Iran, calling on Islamic countries to "completely cut off their economic relations" with Israel and "weaken political ties."

Student bodies oppose ban on politics at DU

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in 2007 by Paribesh Parishad, a platform comprising the DU authorities and representatives from 35 student bodies.

The DU authorities, however, did not invite Chhatra League at yesterday's meeting that also discussed issues related to the resumption of classes at the university from today.

Classes and exams resume at DU today after a closure of over three months.

However, classes for first-year students will resume on September 30.

DU Proctor Saifuddin Ahmed said, "Classes and exams will resume tomorrow [today] as per the decision of the Dhaka University syndicate [on September 12]."

The DU dormitories reopened on August 6.

The previous Awami

League government closed all schools, colleges, and universities on July 16 amid the quota reform protests.

Students of DU went on Eid holidays in early June and the university was supposed to reopen on July 1. But it did not happen as on July 1 teachers went on work abstention demanding reinstatement of their previous pension scheme.

SHIBIR IN, BCL OUT
Current and former activists of different student bodies said this was the first time Shibir openly attended a meeting with the DU authorities since the 2007 political changeover.

In another development, DU student Shadik Kayem in a Facebook post yesterday declared himself president of Shibir's DU unit.

Sources said Shadik and Rezaul Karim Shakil

attended yesterday's meeting as Shibir representatives.

Contacted, DU Proctor Saifuddin Ahmed said they invited Shibir as the organisation participated in meetings with different student platforms during the recent mass uprising that led to the ouster of Hasina.

He said they did not follow the Paribesh Parishad's list while inviting representatives from student organisations since Chhatra League was part of the Parishad.

Asked why Chhatra League was not invited, he said, "We did not invite them as they opposed the mass uprising and acted against the movement."

During the meeting, Chhatra Dal leaders called for abolishing the culture of "gono room, guest room and ragging". They also demanded that safety, security, and residential

facilities for all students be ensured.

Chhatra Federation leaders demanded the authorities expel those students found involved in criminal activities and take legal action against them.

Many student leaders at the meeting also called for the current DU syndicate and senate body to be dissolved, claiming that those were responsible for the attacks on students during the quota reform protests in July.

Student organisations who took part in the meeting included a faction of Chhatra Union, Samajtantrik Chhatra Front (Marxist), Samajtantrik Chhatra Front (BSD), Biplobi Chhatra Jubo Andolan, Ganatantrik Chhatra Council, Biplobi Chhatra Maitree, and Islami Chhatra Andolan, among others.

One dead, seven missing as flood hits central Japan

AFP, Tokyo

One person was killed and at least seven were missing yesterday, officials said, as "unprecedented" rains triggered floods and landslides in Japan's quake-hit region of Ishikawa, where authorities told tens of thousands to evacuate.

A dozen rivers in the region, on the west coast of central Japan that was hit by a large quake on New Year's Day, had burst their banks by 11:00am (0200 GMT), land ministry official Masaru Kojima said.

One person was killed, three people were missing and two people were seriously injured in Ishikawa, the region's government said in a statement, with two of the missing reportedly carried away by strong river currents.

Infighting rears up in BNP after Hasina's fall

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and his men attempted to gain control of a human hauler terminal.

The clash happened over extortion money, which used to be collected by AL leaders, they said.

Shamsunnahar, elder sister of the victim, said AL men in the last 15 years beat up his brother several times, even broke

his arms and legs on one occasion.

"But this time my brother was brutally killed by BNP men... I want justice," she said.

In Narail's Lohagara upazila, two brothers -- Miran Sheikh, 30, and Ziaur Sheikh, 40, -- were killed and five others injured in a clash between two rival groups of BNP on

September 10.

They were supporters of Ferdous Sheikh, joint general secretary of Narail district BNP.

Biswas Jahangir Alam, president of Narail district BNP, said they have already directed the upazila level leaders so that such incidents do not recur.

"We have already talked

to the central leaders. We will take steps to dismiss such leaders," he told The Daily Star.

Some opportunists are now committing crimes including extortion and giving the BNP a bad name, he added.

A leader from another district said a section of leaders and activists have become BNP's own rival.

Yunus, Biden meet in New York Sept 24

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UNGA for a short time and does not hold any bilateral meetings. The fact that he would be meeting Yunus there is significant, the source added.

The US president never held bilateral meeting with Bangladesh head of government in New York, diplomatic officials said.

The US and Bangladesh relations were strained during the Awami League regime.

The US imposed sanctions on Rab in December 2021 and announced visa restrictions in May last year against those who it deemed undermined democratic elections.

After the elections, Washington said the elections were not free, fair or participatory.

Two ammo depots struck in Russia: Ukraine

AFP, Kyiv

Ukraine said yesterday it had successfully struck two Russian weapons depots in the southern Krasnodar and western Tver regions, with Moscow announcing more than 1,000 evacuations.

Kyiv regularly hits

Russian infrastructure with drones as Moscow's offensive drags on for more than two and a half years.

The Ukrainian army said it had hit a depot near the city of Tikhoretsk in Krasnodar, calling it one of Moscow's "three largest ammunition storage bases" important to the

Russian army's logistics for its Ukraine invasion.

It also said it struck an arsenal in Tver region's Oktyabrsky village, resulting in a "fire and detonation".

The governor of the Krasnodar region, Veniamin Kondratyev, announced the evacuation of 1,200 people after a

drone attack had caused a fire that "spread to explosive objects" near Tikhoretsk.

Videos on social media showed a massive explosion in the dark resembling fireworks at first before blowing up loudly, with online reports that an ammunition depot was struck.

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