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# Overhaul info commission, amend RTI act

## Urges TIB, makes suggestions to ensure access to information

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Transparency International Bangladesh yesterday called for overhauling the Information Commission and amending the Right to Information Act.

In a statement marking the International Day for Universal Access to Information 2024, the anti-graft watchdog made 13 recommendations to ensure universal right to information, information accessibility, and transparency.

### INT'L DAY FOR UNIVERSAL ACCESS TO INFORMATION

TIB Executive Director Dr Iftekharuzzaman said the nation was optimistic following the student-people uprising, unprecedented sacrifices and the fall of the authoritarian regime.

"Freedom of speech, the right to dissent, and the unrestricted flow of information are integral aspirations of this New Bangladesh," he said, adding that ensuring

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# Larma bazar still reeks of destruction

## Members of indigenous communities recount horrors of mob violence

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, back from Dighinala, Khagrachhari

Bibhash Tripura still shudders at the memory of his shop being burned down at Larma Square bazar in Dighinala, Khagrachhari. This market has been his place of business for the last 10 years. In a mere instant, his livelihood was reduced to ashes on the afternoon of September 19.

"I can't describe that afternoon; the memory still haunts me. I lost everything in that moment," said the man in his mid-30s. Without a shop, he has now resorted to selling chickens on the road like a street hawker.

"Before they torched my shop, they stole my chickens, money from the cash register, and even my digital weight machine. They took everything from me."

Like Bibhash, many small traders from indigenous communities lost their only sources of income during the clash between indigenous people and Bangalee settlers on September 19.

During a visit to the area around Larma Square yesterday, this correspondent found the area still bore the scars of the violence. Ashes and blackened debris littered the bazar, while some workers began to rebuild. Even the monument built in memory of Manabendra Narayan (MN) Larma, a prominent indigenous leader, wasn't spared from the destruction.

Narrating how the events unfolded, Bikash Chakma, a local fish trader, said, "The bazar was calm as usual in the afternoon. Suddenly, the quiet was broken by a loud protest procession brought out by the settlers around 4:00pm.

"Protesters were shouting aggressive slogans against

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# Japan's ruling party picks Shigeru Ishiba as next PM

AFP, Tokyo

Japan's next prime minister Shigeru Ishiba yesterday outlined his ideas to reshape the nation's military alliance with Washington, after winning the conservative ruling party's leadership race.

The seasoned 67-year-old former defence minister beat arch-nationalist Sanae Takaichi -- who would have been the country's first-ever woman leader -- in the final round.

The Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) has governed almost uninterrupted for decades and holds a majority, meaning Ishiba will be elected premier by parliament on Tuesday.

In a press conference

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Shigeru Ishiba



Bangladesh skipper Najmul Hossain Shanto gets dismissed lbw by India all-rounder Ravichandran Ashwin on rain-interrupted Day 1 of the second Test at the Green Park stadium in Kanpur yesterday. Following Shanto's dismissal, Mominul Haque (40\*) and Mushfiqur Rahim (6\*) took the Tigers to 107 for three before play was suspended due to inclement weather for the day that saw just 35 overs bowled. PHOTO: AFP

# Those who carry out genocide can't do politics

## Says Jamaat ameer

UNB, Khulna

Shafiqur Rahman, ameer of Bangladesh Jamaat-e-Islami, has accused the Awami League of committing genocide, saying that such actions disqualify any party from participating in national politics.

He made this statement yesterday while addressing a gathering at Rukon Conference organised by Jamaat Khulna Metropolitan unit at the Al Faruq Society in Sonadanga.

He said political leadership should stem from the will and aspirations of the people, not through external intervention or violence. He emphasised that politics must serve the interests of the country's citizens and be rooted in their desires.

Shafiqur also urged the interim government to implement an inclusive process to shape the

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# Israel hits Hezbollah HQ in Beirut with heavy airstrikes

## Four buildings destroyed; Netanyahu at UN says ceasefire discussions will go on

REUTERS, Beirut

The Israeli military said it had targeted Hezbollah's central headquarters in Beirut's southern suburbs yesterday in an attack that shook the Lebanese capital and sent thick clouds of smoke over the city.

Hezbollah's al-Manar television reported that four buildings were destroyed and there were many casualties in the multiple strikes, which marked a major escalation of Israel's conflict with the heavily armed, Iran-backed Hezbollah.

In a televised statement, Israeli military spokesperson Daniel Hagari said the central command centre was embedded deep within civilian areas.

The strikes hit Beirut shortly after Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu vowed to continue Israel's attacks on Iranian-backed fighters in Lebanon in a closely watched United Nations speech. He also said that Israel will press on with discussions on ceasefire proposals for Lebanon in the days ahead.

Earlier in the day, an Israeli strike yesterday killed nine members of a family, including four children, in the Lebanese border town of Shebaa, mayor Mohammad Saab told Reuters. Lebanese health ministry said Israeli attacks have killed more than 700 people in Lebanon since Monday.

Hezbollah said it had fired rockets into Israel at Kiryat Ata near the city of Haifa some 30 km from the border, and the city of Tiberias, declaring the attacks a response to Israel strikes on villages, cities and civilians.

Though Israeli air defences have shot down many of Hezbollah's rockets, limiting the damage they've done, the group's attacks have shut down normal life across much of northern Israel as more areas fall into its crosshairs.

The Israeli military said it had intercepted four unmanned aircraft that crossed from Lebanese territory into the maritime space off the coast of Rosh Hanikra at the Lebanese border.

Meanwhile, Yemen's Iran-aligned Houthis said yesterday they had targeted Israel's cities

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- » Hezbollah fires rockets at town near Haifa
- » Yemen's Houthis claim missile attack on Tel Aviv
- » Over 700 people killed in Lebanon since Monday

# Rain damps spirits of big turnout

ABDULLAH AL MEHDI  
from Kanpur

With schools only half closed, an expectant crowd at Kanpur's Green Park Stadium had rallied around to make it appear a brilliant occasion on the opening day of the second Test between Bangladesh and hosts India yesterday.

Bad weather, however, played spoilsport for the most part. The anticipation was huge in the morning despite overnight rain making for a delayed start. The crowd would have loved seeing India bat.

"I want to see [Jasprit] Bumrah in action, but I want India to bat first," a student named Mayank, who was perhaps taking advantage of school being closed till 12 pm to allow students to watch the game, told The Daily Star in the morning.

But Rohit Sharma opted to bowl. That was

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# US ELECTION Harris has narrow lead over Trump in swing states

## Shows Bloomberg poll

REUTERS

US Democratic presidential candidate Kamala Harris holds a narrow lead over Republican rival Donald Trump in six US swing states and is tied in a seventh, according to a Bloomberg poll of likely voters released yesterday.

Her leads in individual states are within the poll's statistical margin of error, underscoring that the November 5 contest could be decided by the narrowest of margins, it said.

The Bloomberg News/Morning Consult poll shows Harris leading by 7 percentage points in Nevada, 5 points in Pennsylvania, 3 points in Arizona, Michigan and Wisconsin, and 2 points in North Carolina. The two are tied in Georgia.

Across the seven states, Harris is ahead by 3 percentage points among

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Rescuers search through the rubble following an Israeli airstrike in the southern Lebanese village of Shebaa yesterday. PHOTO: AFP

# AI uncovers 300 ancient etchings in Peru's Nazca desert

AFP, Lima

Japanese scientists have used artificial intelligence to uncover 303 new etchings in Peru's Nazca desert -- doubling the amount of known geoglyphs made some 2,000 years ago by a pre-Inca civilization.

The fabled Nazca lines, a series of massive incisions on the desert floor depicting animals, plants, imaginary beings and geometric figures, have fascinated scientists ever since they were first discovered around a century ago.

Best viewed from the air, the lines situated some 220 miles south of Lima are one of Peru's top tourist attractions.

Announcing the new discoveries in Lima, archaeologist Masato Sakai, from Yamagata University, said: "The use of AI in research has allowed us to map the distribution of geoglyphs in a faster and more precise way."

He said the findings were the fruit of collaboration between his university's Nazca Institute and the research division of the technology company IBM.

