



Blood on the Barred Walls

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We must remain alert to conspiracies

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Israel to face tooth-breaking response: Khamenei

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'Minorities matter'

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\$12-15b laundered every year during the AL rule

TIB chief Iftekharuzzaman says BB, BFIU helped send money abroad

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Between \$12 billion and \$15 billion was siphoned out of the country every year over the last 15 years, said Iftekharuzzaman, executive director of Transparency International Bangladesh.

Iftekharuzzaman also gave a partial breakdown of the laundered money in a year. For instance, of the \$15 billion laundered, \$3 billion was sent abroad by trade mis-invoicing and foreign citizens working in the country.



Getting the money back possible but extremely difficult

Politics, bureaucracy, businesses played vital role in money laundering

Over \$3b was laundered by trade invoices, foreign citizens

More than \$7.5b was laundered through MFS

More than \$2.2b was laundered for obtaining visas, work permits

Some countries making it easy to send money there

Bangladesh began talks with the US, EU, UK to bring back laundered money

“But it will be a surprise if the interim government can bring back even \$100 million during its tenure. Even a single penny returned will be a surprise.”

IFTEKHARUZZAMAN

Moreover, \$2.2 billion was laundered by unscrupulous manpower brokers who sent money abroad to get visas and work permits for seekers of overseas jobs.

Apart from the two, \$7.5 billion was laundered every year through mobile financial services, he said at a seminar held at the office of the Economic Reporters' Forum (ERF) in Dhaka yesterday on laundered money and how to recover the money.

Regarding the recent remark by Bangladesh Bank Governor Ahsan H Mansur that tycoons linked to the former administration of Sheikh Hasina siphoned off \$17 billion from the banking sector during her rule, he said the total amount laundered would be much more as \$17 billion was taken out with direct help of the central bank.

The other means of laundering were not mentioned, said Iftekharuzzaman, who also heads the Anti-Corruption Reform Commission formed by the interim government last month.

Hundi was also used for money laundering and expatriate Bangladeshis laundered money for buying assets abroad too. People travelling abroad for health services laundered money.

The BB, the Anti-Corruption Commission, and the Office of the Attorney General were used to facilitate money laundering.

He also criticised some countries that are attracting laundered money by introducing golden visas and second-home options.

In Bangladesh, if any foreign citizen wants to buy a luxurious home in Dhaka's Gulshan, they won't be able to make the purchase.

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Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus poses for a photograph with members of SAFF Women's Championship winning team Sabina Khatun, Ritu Porna Chakma, Rupna Chakma, head coach Peter Butler and manager Mahmuda Akter Ananya in presence of Sports Adviser Asif Mahmud at state guesthouse Jamuna during a reception yesterday. Story on page 2.

PHOTO: PTD

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Nagorik Committee to form upazila chapters

Members must be aged below 50

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Jatiya Nagorik Committee yesterday announced that it would form upazila-level chapters.

Members of upazila committees cannot be aged more than 50, says one of the nine directives issued by the Jatiya Nagorik Committee, which was formed after the fall of the Awami League government amid a mass uprising.

Those aged over 50 will be able to be involved as advisers, according to Facebook posts made by Nasiruddin Patwary and Samantha Sharmin, convener and spokesperson of the committee.

Each upazila-level committee will be known as a "representative committee" and members will be "thana representatives".

Within 60 days of its formation, each representative committee

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Harris, Trump in frenzied final push

AFP, Washington

Kamala Harris and Donald Trump enter the final weekend of the most tense US presidential campaign of modern times with a flurry of swing-state rallies that will test their stamina — and ability to persuade the country's last undecided voters.

Harris, bidding to become the country's first woman president, will use rallies in Georgia, North Carolina

and Michigan to drive home her message that Trump is a threat to US democracy.

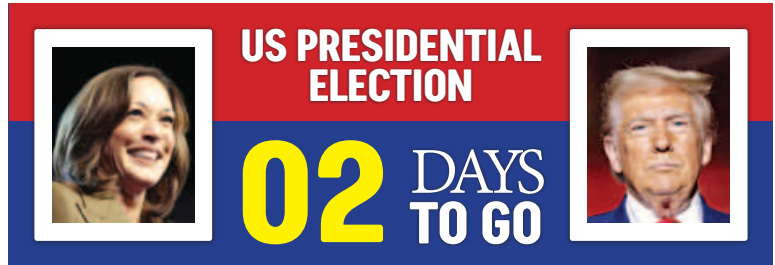
Trump — seeking a sensational return to the White House after losing in 2020 and then becoming the first presidential nominee to have been convicted of crimes — promises a radical right-wing makeover of the government and aggressive trade wars to promote his policy of "America first."

In an interview with Fox News yesterday morning, Trump took a

swipe at the state of the economy under the Biden-Harris administration, calling the disappointing job numbers released Friday "a gift to me."

The candidates' frantic schedules will run right into Monday, culminating with late-night rallies — in Grand Rapids, Michigan, for Trump and Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, for Harris.

Election Day is Tuesday, but Americans have been voting early for weeks, with more than 72 million



ballots already cast — including a record four million in Georgia, where Democrats seek to pull out all the stops to keep the state in their column.

Opinion polls continue to show a tied race, particularly in the seven battleground states likely to determine the result in the US Electoral College system, leaving the Republican businessman and his 60-year-old Democratic rival fighting hard to peel

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BNP against banning any political parties

Fakhrul reiterates

UNB, Dhaka

BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir yesterday expressed his party's opposition to banning any party by the interim government.

"Who are we to ban political parties? It's the people of the country who will decide this," he said.

Fakhrul made the remarks as journalists sought his comments about a quarter's demand for banning the Jatiyo Party.

He said making an issue out of everything was part of a new plot to destabilise the country and put its future in uncertainty.

Earlier, he joined a memorial programme at BRAC Center Inn, marking the second death anniversary of Sabihuddin Ahmed, a former adviser to BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia.

Fakhrul said Sabihuddin, as a patriot and a man of nationalist ideals, will always be remembered with respect and love.

He said Sabihuddin worked for the people and democracy of the country all his life.



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Journo killing on the rise

Says Unesco report

UNB, Dhaka

Over 1,700 journalists were killed worldwide between 2006 and 2024, with about 85 percent of these cases never reaching the courts, according to a report by Unesco.

This grim statistic underscores the risks journalists face, particularly highlighted each year on November 2, recognised as the International Day to End Impunity for Crimes against Journalists.

This year, the day

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Vehicles are caught in a long tailback on the Basila bridge-Mohammadpur road near the capital's Mohammadpur Beribandh intersection. Shops mostly selling construction materials and a makeshift auto-rickshaw stand have occupied a large part of the road. The photo was taken recently.

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

Star INTERVIEW

AL policy favouring oligarchs dampened economy

Says former central bank chief economist Birupaksha Paul

SOHEL PARVEZ and AHSAN HABIB

The Awami League government favoured the super-rich who controlled capital and laundered the funds abroad, dampening the country's economy.

Meanwhile, ousted prime minister Sheikh Hasina had announced a zero-tolerance policy towards corruption, which is the "biggest mockery of the century", former central bank chief economist Birupaksha Paul has said.

The professor of economics at the State University of New York at Cortland in the US discussed disproportionate economic growth, tampered data, the link between democracy and development, and many other issues in a virtual interview with The Daily Star last week.

He said the AL's economic policy was gradually being biased towards the super-rich who already occupied means of production, capital, and land in this land-scarce country.

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