

Govt sets four criteria for selecting secys

BAHARAM KHAN

The interim government is seeking out individuals who maintain financial integrity, demonstrate competence and uphold professionalism while selecting secretaries within the administration.

Besides, those who are financially dishonest and abused political power will face forced retirement, The Daily Star has learnt from people within the cabinet division and public administration ministry who are involved with the proceedings.

Those who are not financially corrupt but were beneficiaries of political favouritism will be made officers on special duty (OSD).

Lastly, the incompetent officers who were promoted to the position of secretary will be transferred to less important positions or remain OSD.

Currently, there are $55\ \text{ministries}$ and divisions in the government structure, out of which 24 have received new secretaries following the appointment of the interim administration led by Muhammad Yunus.

However, eight ministries and divisions are without secretaries.

However, the secretaries for the Economic Relations Division; Implementation, Monitoring and Evaluation Division; Defence (IMED); Post and Telecommunications; Science and Technology; Election Commission; agriculture; Environment and Forests; and Medical

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People queue up to buy a dozen eggs, 3kg of potatoes, a kg each of onions and taro tuber, and a bottle gourd for Tk 350 from a Department of Agricultural Marketing truck near Boyra PMG Colony in Khulna yesterday.

Cybercrimes continue

to scourge women

PCSW received 979 complaints

15,895 complainants out of

40,280, since Nov 2020, did

41% of the complaints so far involved posting doctored

images with personal details

Absence of witnesses delayed

trial; out-of-court settlement

resulted in poor conviction

not want to continue the case

in September alone

BNP to ensure their presence on streets from Nov 7

MOHAMMAD AL-MASUM MOLLA

The BNP plans to maintain a sustained presence on the streets starting November 7 to put pressure on the interim government to hold the next general election within a reasonable time and to foil any attempt to destabilise the country, insiders said.

On that day, the party will organise programmes nationwide to mark the National Revolution and Solidarity

The BNP has already announced a 10-day programme, including a rally in the capital on November 8, on the occasion of the day. Rallies will also take place in the district towns and divisional cities.

For more than a decade, the party has been unable to "properly" commemorate the day due to the obstacles created by successive previous Awami League governments.

Amid political turmoil, soldiers and civilians freed then army chief Ziaur Rahman from captivity in

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BANGLADESH CONSTITUTION Must be updated to prevent autocratic rule

Dr Kamal says country at historic crossroads

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Dr Kamal Hossain, emeritus president of Gono Forum, yesterday recommended updating

He made the recommendation Constitutional Reform Commission members, led by

its chief Prof Ali Riaz, called on him at his office at the capital's Motijheel, said a press release of the commission. The process for reform was also discussed at the meeting. At a separate programme, Dr Kamal said Banglades

stands at a turning point in history.

"We secured our rights through struggle," he said, adding, "Before these rights were inscribed in our constitution, they were deeply rooted in our hearts. Similarly, in 1971, the constitution was framed based on the rights earned through the Liberation War, highlighting the importance of eradicating inequality and upholding secularism.

'We are indeed at a critical juncture. It is imperative to recommend constitutional amendments that eliminate the possibility of authoritarian rule," he said. The event held at Dhaka University's RC Majumdar

Auditorium was jointly organised by the Reading Club Trust and aynerkotha.com in the afternoon.

Following the Liberation War, Dr Kamal, then serving as the law minister, led a committee to draft the constitution. The draft was adopted by the Constituent Assembly on November 4, 1972, and put into effect on

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7 DU COLLEGES Students to boycott classes, exams

for two days STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Students of seven colleges affiliated with Dhaka yesterday announced a boycott of classes and exams today and tomorrow in protest against the government's refusal to form a commission for establishing a separate university for them.

At a press conference held at the Dhaka College, also declared demonstrations and rallies on their campuses.

"The students of the seven colleges firmly reject the statement made by the [chief adviser's] press secretary," Zakaria Bari, a student of Kabi Nazrul Government College, said at the press conference.

"We won't backtrack on our primary demand for an autonomous university for the seven colleges. Our demand for a unified, independent university will remain unchanged," said Zakaria.

The protesting students announced the fresh programmes two days after Shafiqul Alam, press SEE PAGE 6 COL 4

MOHAMMAD JAMIL KHAN and EMRUL HASAN BAPPI

Neela Akter (not her real name), a homemaker, $received\ a\ Whats App\ message\ from\ an\ unknown$ number last week.

The sender demanded money after sending her her personal photos, saying he would share those with her relatives and on social media if she refused to pay the amount.

Shocked confused, Neela insisted she did not share those photos with anyone and they were only stored in her mobile phone. She immediately filed a general diary and a complaint with the "Police Cyber Support for Women [PCSW]" of the Police Headquarters.

Upon investigation, the PCSW was able to apprehend a suspect. Investigators said the suspect -- a deliveryman -- managed to gain access to Neela's phone while delivering a

product.

claimed he needed to check a One-Time Password (OTP). When he got hold of her phone, he managed to get information of Neela's email account and consequently, was able to access her cloud

Neela's case is just one of thousands, as women are increasingly targeted as victims of cybercrimes. Despite many women coming

forward to report or file complaints, the frequency of such incidents still seems to be on

Many, however, are reluctant to file complaints due to pressure from family or the society. Some even withdraw the cases out of fear and shame.

Law enforcers have claimed the lack of followthrough on these cases give the perpetrators the scope to evade legal consequences.

Legal experts, however, said the system lacks

victim-centric support and specialised lawyers to handle such cases, discouraging further from seeking women justice.

Data from PCSW shows a marked increase in complaints.

complaints were filed in August alone and the number rose to 979 in the following month. Since PCSW was

established on November 16, 2020, a total of 40,280 complaints have been registered till September 30 this year. Between November

16, 2020, and November 15, 2022, PCSW received 22,304 complaints. Between November 16, 2022, and September 30 this year, another staggering 17,976 complaints were filed.

Out of the total complainants, 15,895 chose not to proceed with the legal battles after PCSW's initial intervention and arrests of suspects.

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10 die of dengue in a single day

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

At least 10 dengue patients died and 966 patients were hospitalised in 24 hours till yesterday morning.

Four deaths were reported in Dhaka city, three in Barishal division, and one each in Mymensingh, Khulna, and Dhaka divisions.

With the new deaths and cases, the death toll has risen to 310 this year,



and the total number of dengue cases rose to 63.165.

According to the Directorate General f Health Services (DGHS), 1.705 a deaths were recorded in 2023, marking the highest annual death toll to date. In comparison, there were 281 deaths in 2022 and 179 in 2019.

Currently, 4,126 dengue patients are undergoing treatment at different government and private medical hospitals and facilities across the A total of 58,729 patients have

been released till yesterday.

According to DGHS monthly data, the country witnessed the highest number of patients in October 30,879. In September, the number was 18,097, and in August, 6,521.

Within the first two days of November, 1,348 new dengue cases were reported, according to DGHS.

Israel strikes 'apocalyptic' north Gaza

AFP, Palestinian Territories

Israel yesterday again carried out deadly air strikes on north Gaza, where the UN calls conditions "apocalyptic", as Lebanon's Hezbollah intensified rocket fire near Israel's commercial hub of Tel Aviv, on Israel's second

Since late September Israel has been engaged in full-scale war against Iran-backed Hezbollah in Lebanon while fighting continues against the Palestinian armed group Hamas.

The war has threatened to spiral even further after Israel and Iran attacked each other over the past few months. Iran's supreme leader yesterday vowed a further response to attacks against the Islamic republic and its allies.

Since October 6 Israeli forces have carried out a major air and ground assault on north Gaza, centred on the Jabilia area, vowing to stop attempts by Hamas militants to regroup.

The health ministry in Hamasrun Gaza said yesterday that at least 43,314 people have been killed in the year-long war between Israel and SEE PAGE 6 COL 6



A group of men carry a body inside a blanket in Beit Lahia in the northern Gaza Strip on Friday.

Voyager 1 wakes up billions of miles away

CNN ONLINE

The 47-year-old Voyager 1 spacecraft is back in touch with NASA – but not out of the woods after a technical issue caused a days-long communications blackout

> with the historic mission, which is of miles away in

interstellar space. Voyager 1 is now using a radio transmitter hasn't relied on since 1981 to stay in contact with

its team on Earth while engineers work to understand what went wrong. As the spacecraft,

launched in September 1977, ages, the team has slowly turned off components to conserve power, allowing Voyager 1 to send back unique science data from 15 billion miles (24

billion kilometers) away. The probe is the farthest spacecraft from Earth, operating beyond the heliosphere — the sun's bubble of magnetic fields and particles that extends well beyond Pluto's orbit - where its instruments directly sample interstellar space.

PHOTO: AFP