



## Let's unite to protect nation's sovereignty

Political parties reach consensus in meeting with chief adviser

MD ABBAS and SAJJAD HOSSAIN

Leaders of political parties yesterday agreed to unite and set all their differences aside when the country's sovereignty, existence, independence, and dignity are threatened.

They also proposed forming a national political council to combat any sort of misinformation, said Prof Asif Nazrul, law adviser to the interim government, after a meeting between the parties and the chief adviser at the Foreign Service Academy around 4:30pm.

- » Proposal made for forming a national political council
- » Parties ask govt to set up a public relations cell
- » BNP seeks roadmap for elections
- » Jamaat asks govt to start talks with India on propaganda



"This nation is not dead, nor has it weakened. We are a powerful nation, ready to fight. They believe we have lost our vigour, but I have not. Our spirit remains as vigorous as ever. We had heard the police say, 'Sir, if one falls, four rise'. We now know that not just four, but forty will stand up."

Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus

At the meeting, Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus urged all political forces in the country to unite and fight the falsehood.

He thanked the parties that responded to his call and said, "Through the uprising of students and the masses, we managed to lift the crushing stone off our chest..."

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## Dhaka, Delhi likely to hold secretary-level talks on Dec 9

Says Touhid; Indian foreign secy may fly in the same day

UNB, Dhaka

Foreign Adviser Md Touhid Hossain yesterday said Bangladesh wants good relations with India and hinted that the Foreign Office Consultations between the two countries might take place on December 9, a day ahead of schedule.

"It is very clear that we want good relations, but it should be reciprocal. We need to work to that end," he told reporters while responding to a question at the foreign ministry.

Asked about the FOC, the adviser said it may take place one day before the schedule, or it will be held on December 10 in Dhaka.

Indian Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri

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OF CRONIES AND CRIMES

## Zahir: A lawyer who terrorised Habiganj

MINTU DESHWARA

Md Abu Zahir, a former Awami League lawmaker, gained notoriety for orchestrating an extensive network of land grabbing and extortion throughout Habiganj. His reign of terror in the district was so intense that any news that could displease him was nearly impossible to publish in local and national media.

Zahir, originally an income tax lawyer, spent one and a half decades mulling the media by harassing journalists with lawsuits and suppressing dissent through intimidation to establish dominance. His deep involvement in Awami League politics diverted his attention from his professional career, significantly reducing his



fortune. He gradually became a lawmaker on an Awami League ticket, and his wealth boomed.

Zahir began his political career with Chhatra Union and soon joined Bangladesh Chhatra League to become the president of the latter's Habiganj district unit. Following the Awami League's return to power in 1996, he became the organising secretary of the party's Habiganj district unit.

Injuries Zahir suffered in a grenade attack that killed former finance minister Shah AMS Kibria in 2005 marked the beginning of another chapter in his political prominence. Three years after surviving the attack, Zahir was elected as an MP for the Habiganj-3

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## Refrain from controversial activities

Tarique urges party leaders, activists

UNB, Dhaka

BNP acting chairman Tarique Rahman yesterday asked his party leaders and activists to stay away from any negative or controversial activities that could damage public confidence, as the next general election would be a "very tough" challenge for the party.

"Let's vow to avoid doing anything that would harm public confidence [in BNP]," he told the party leaders and activists at a workshop in Chattogram.

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## INTERNET OUTAGE IN JULY Unity among journos played crucial role in publishing news

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Local journalists faced immense risks during the July uprising but displayed unity and resilience, which led them to continue reporting despite the internet blackout imposed by the then government, speakers said at a discussion yesterday.

Despite the Awami League-led government's efforts to control the media or halt their work, non-partisan journalists explored every possible way to publish and broadcast news, journalists said at the discussion, "Blackout Chronicles: How Journalists and Activists Navigated the Blackout", organised by The Daily Star.

The event, part of the weeklong programme "36 Days of July: Saluting the Bravehearts," was held at the Daily Star Centre in the capital.

Speaking at the event, Tanvir Chowdhury, correspondent for Al Jazeera English, said the internet blackout made it challenging for most journalists to report from the ground and send stories to their offices.

"Being part of an international media outlet with better equipment, we were able to send reports even during the blackout. But for local journalists, it wasn't that easy -- they faced significant risks."

"The unity among journalists played a crucial role during the clashes and the blackout. Local journalists routinely shared warnings about

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## DNA test finally cracks Harris Chy mystery

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A DNA test report submitted to the High Court has revealed that the body buried in a madrasa graveyard in Dhaka's Savar under the name of Mahmudur Rahman is that of BNP leader Abul Harris Chowdhury.

His DNA matches that of his daughter Samira Tanzeen Chowdhury, according to the report submitted by the Criminal Investigation Department.

Following a court order, Harris' body was exhumed on October 16 this year, and the DNA test was conducted at the laboratory of CID,

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Advertorial

### MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING (MOU) SIGNING CEREMONY

On 27 November 2024, the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was signed between Nippon Steel Trading Corporation (NST), Japan represented by Mr. Kazuyuki Isobe, Director, Member of the Board & Managing Executive Officer and McDonald Steel Building Products Limited (MSBPL), represented by Mr. Md. Sarwar Kamal, Managing Director at the Headquarters of Nippon Steel Trading Corporation, Nihonbashi Tower, Tokyo, Japan. The purpose of MOU is to expand the business of civil engineering and construction materials of NST and MSBPL in Bangladesh and Southeast Asia. Among other senior officials, those were present at the ceremony, namely Mr. Kazuhide Sakai, General Manager, NST; Mr. Norio Nambu, Country Representative, NST Dhaka Office; Mrs. Nelofer Kamal, Director, MSBPL; Ms. Erum Kamal, Deputy Managing Director, McDonald Group; and Engr. Sayeed Ahmed, Managing Director, Nippon & McDonald Steel Industries Limited (NMSIL).

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