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From PM to UP member will be made accountable

Says Tarique

UNB, Dhaka

BNP acting chairman Tarique Rahman yesterday said that the party's primary objective is to ensure accountability in Bangladesh, where everyone -- from the prime minister to union parishad members -- will be accountable to people for their actions.

"We want to create an atmosphere of accountability in the country. As a political party, this is our main objective... Everyone, from the prime minister to union parishad members, upazila chairman, ministers, MPs, and all other levels, must be accountable to people" he said while virtually addressing a workshop in Faridpur.

He also said everyone at all levels in government and semi-government offices and institutions should be held accountable for their actions.



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Palestinians inspect the damage after an Israeli strike on the Nuseirat refugee Camp in the central Gaza Strip yesterday. A new round of negotiations for a Gaza truce and hostage release deal will "most likely" begin in the coming week, a source close to the Hamas delegation told AFP yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

Faulty media reports portray Bangladesh unfairly

Says CA's press secretary

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Chief Adviser's Press Secretary Shafiqul Alam said yesterday that the minority issue in Bangladesh has been misrepresented in international media and influential nations' top parliamentary hearings due to faulty reports by certain minority groups.

In a statement posted on his verified Facebook account, he urged secular newspapers and international rights groups to open probes into the alleged religious violence cases here to find out the truth.

"When the Netra News debunked the Bangladesh Hindu Buddha Christian Unity Council's report on the attacks on the Hindu community in the post-revolution days, I expected the group to make a statement," he said.

"After all, they were challenged by a



Shafiqul Alam

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'16 DAYS OF ACTIVISM'

Daring to dream

A rape survivor's tale of trials and determination

NILIMA JAHAN

At 20, Ritu (not her real name) is determined to break free from her past and rewrite her life's narrative.

After spending a decade in the Bangladesh National Women Lawyers Association (BNWLA) safe home -- a haven for survivors of gender-based violence, including rape, trafficking and domestic abuse -- Ritu now wants to become self-reliant.

She wants her dream of becoming a nurse to come true.

"Becoming a nurse has always been my dream -- a dream my mother and I shared," said Ritu, whose mother used to work as a hospital attendant.

However, before Ritu had learned to dream, she had her childhood shattered at the age of 10, when her own father raped her.

"It was overwhelming to accept that something so unimaginable had happened to me -- and even worse, that it was my own father who had done it," she said as her voice trembled.

"It was overwhelming to accept that something so unimaginable had happened to me -- and even worse, that it was my own father who had done it."

20-yr-old rape survivor

The incident happened one night in 2014 when Ritu's mother was working the night shift at the hospital. When she returned home, Ritu gathered the courage to tell her what her father did.

"I still remember the day my mother decided to leave our house for good. She took me and my younger brother to my maternal uncle's home. From there, she started our fight for justice.

"My mother believed me when no one else did and showed incredible strength by filing a case against my father at the local police station."

A forensic examination provided irrefutable evidence, confirming Ritu's account and setting the wheels of justice in motion.

But the ordeal didn't end there. "My father kept relentlessly searching for me, telling everyone I was lying, and even beating my mother when he couldn't find me," she recalled.

Eventually, Ritu was placed in the BNWLA safe home where she received years of psychological counselling and

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BD-WI 1ST ODI

Tigers look to extend streak

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

It has been nearly six years since Bangladesh lost any 50-over game against the West Indies and the Tigers will be looking to continue that trend when the two sides meet in the opening match of a three-match ODI series at the Warner Park in St Kitts today.

Despite their struggles in Tests and T20s, the Tigers have won four successive ODI series against the West Indies and enjoy a 11-match winning streak over their Caribbean opponents, with the last defeat coming way back in December, 2018 in Mirpur.

The Bangladesh team that travelled to St Kitts from Jamaica feature almost half of the members who were part of the Test squad that salvaged a 1-1 Test series win recently with a 101-run win in the second Test.

Pacer Nahid Rana, who played a crucial role in that Test win in Jamaica, expressed his confidence about giving his best in the limited-overs series as well.

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BRT SERVICE

Finally begins on Dec 16 but with 5-yr-old BRTC buses

TUHIN SHUBHRA ADHIKARY

Failing to procure specialised buses for launching dedicated bus service on Dhaka-Gazipur Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) corridor, the authorities are now introducing BRTC buses on the route, a deviation from the original plan.

Officials said the state-run BRTC would start the special service with 10 AC buses from December 16 initially on Gulistan-Airport-Gazipur route, which includes 20 km-long corridor formally known as BRT Line-3.

The move comes over a decade after the project was undertaken in November 2012 to introduce the country's first dedicated rapid bus service aimed at reducing congestion on the busy corridor.

But the project deadline was revised on several occasions, escalating the cost. After 12 years, when the infrastructure

is almost ready, the authorities failed to purchase the buses required for launching the service.

In this situation, buses of Bangladesh Road Transport Corporation (BRTC), which are already in operation since 2019, are going to be introduced on the route, following the directives of Road Transport and Bridges Ministry Adviser M u h a m m a d Fouzul Kabir Khan, the officials said.

When the government took up a project to construct the 20.50km road dedicated for buses between Dhaka airport and Gazipur's Shibbari, the plan was to operate spacious and comfortable articulated buses.

But Dhaka Bus Rapid Transit Company Ltd (Dhaka BRT), a state-run company formed to provide the service, later decided to operate electric

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Arson attack on family Temple in Turag

Idols damaged

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A family-owned temple was set on fire in the capital's Turag area early yesterday, police said.

The incident happened in the Dhour area around 3:00am, when the neighbourhood was fast asleep, said Inspector Nuruzzaman of Turag Police Station, citing a complaint.

Babul Chandra Ghosh, who filed a case with Turag Police Station, wrote in the First Information Report that he was woken up by footsteps on the tin roof of Sree Sree Mohavagya Lakshmi Narayan Mandir which is next to his room.

Upon stepping outside, he saw the temple on fire and put out the flames with water. Afterwards, he found a shopping bag covered in oil and a 2-liter water bottle.

He wrote that it seemed the bottle had been used to

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Gunmen kill six Pak soldiers near Afghan border

AFP, Islamabad

Gunmen attacked a Pakistani army base near the border with Afghanistan and killed six soldiers, the army reported yesterday.

The soldiers exchanged "intense fire" with the gunmen at a military base in the Thall district of northwest Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, the army said, without identifying the attackers.

It said the soldiers killed three of the gunmen.

Jihadist and separatist groups regularly target the army and police along the mountainous border with Afghanistan.

In November, at least 20 soldiers were killed in separate incidents over less than 24 hours in the province.

The Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), also known as the Pakistani Taliban, claimed responsibility for one of these attacks, which killed eight soldiers and nine militants.



Winter has set in and temperatures are dropping in Thakurgaon. The days are mostly overcast, with dense fog persisting well into the morning. Weather officials say it's expected to get colder in the coming days. The photo was taken last morning in the Chandipur village in Thakurgaon Sadar upazila.

PHOTO: QUAMRUL ISLAM RUBAIYAT

ENERGY SECURITY

Dependency on imports have to be reduced

Say speakers at seminar

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Local gas exploration and production, replacing the furnace oil-based power plants with renewable energy plants, upgrading the national grid, and making all gas connections metered are the prime solutions to the problems plaguing the energy and power sectors, experts said at a seminar yesterday.

They also said reducing import dependency should be the main focus for the country's energy security.

The Dhaka Chamber of Commerce and Industry (DCCI) organised the seminar at its office titled "Predictable Energy Pricing and Supply Stability".

In the keynote paper, Mohammad Tamim, professor of petroleum and mineral resources engineering at Buet, said the devaluation of the Bangladeshi taka against the US dollar increased power generation costs over the last couple of years.

Besides, he also blamed high inflation, system inefficiency, dependency on furnace oil, increasing fuel imports, unnecessary capacity payments, corruption, and international energy price hikes for the high cost.

In 2020-21, the average cost of coal import was Tk 6.5 per kilowatt-hour (kWh) which escalated to Tk 9.17 per kWh in FY23-24 due to taka devaluation.

Prof Tamim presented a comparative analysis of fuel-based power generation cost for 2023-24 fiscal year.

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