Abdul Momen made ACC chairman STAFF CORRESPONDENT

government reconstituted the Anti-Corruption Commission by appointing a chairman and two commissioners today.

Former senior secretary to the Public Security



The Cabinet Division today issued a gazette regarding notification appointments this afternoon.

(Retd) Hafiz Ahsan Farid as

commissioners.

SEE PAGE 7 COL 4

NATURE MAGAZINE Yunus among top 10 personalities

UNB, Dhaka

Nobel Laureate Prof Muhammad Yunus has been named among the top 10 personalities in 2024 by the prestigious scientific journal Nature.

The publication described him as a "Nation Builder" for his impactful contributions to society.

The Nature Top 10 list highlights key developments in science and the people who have driven these advancements over the past year.

According to its website, the list is curated by Nature's editors to reflect important trends in science, technology, engineering, and medicine and to

recognise people shaping the world. This year's achievements span a range of remarkable contributions, from redefining weather forecasting to

leading a nation. Yunus, born in Chattogram during British-occupied India, witnessed significant geopolitical changes in his

After the partition of India in 1947, Chattogram became part of East Pakistan. During the 1960s, Yunus pursued his studies in the United States, where he was mentored by Nicholas Georgescu-Roegen, a pioneer in ecological economics. This field seeks to understand the relationship between economic systems and the natural world.

SEE PAGE 7 COL 4

Al-Bashir now Syrian caretaker PM

Syrian media claim Israeli troops near Damascus

REUTERS, Damascus

An Israeli military incursion into Syria has reached about 25 km (16 miles) southwest of Damascus, Syrian security sources and media reports said yesterday, after Israel seized a buffer zone in southern Syria and launched air strikes on Syrian army and air bases overnight.

Israel's military operation into Syria comes two days after the lightning overthrow of president Bashar al-Assad by a rebel alliance left Syrians, regional countries and world powers nervous about what comes next.

Meanwhile, Mohamed al-Bashir has been appointed caretaker prime minister of the transitional Syrian government until March 1, 2025, state media said yesterday.

Al-Bashir ran the rebel-led Salvation Government before the 12day lightning offensive swept into

A Syrian security source said Israeli troops reached Qatana, have condemned the incursion. which is 10 km (six miles) into Syrian territory east of a demilitarised zone separating Israeli-occupied Golan Heights from Syria.



"The reports circulating in the media about the alleged advancement of Israeli tanks towards Damascus are false," an Israeli military official said. "IDF troops are stationed within the buffer zone, as stated in the past."

George JM Das

(1940-2009)

Egypt, Qatar and Saudi Arabia Saudi Arabia said the move would "ruin Syria's chances of restoring security".

Regional security sources and officers within the now fallen Syrian army said heavy Israeli airstrikes continued against military installations and airbases across Syria overnight, destroying dozens of helicopters and jets, as well as Republican Guard assets in and around Damascus. The rough tally of 200 raids had left nothing of the Syrian army's assets, they

The United Nations Security Council met behind closed doors late on Monday, and diplomats said they were still in shock at how quickly Assad's overthrow unfolded over 12 days, after a 13-year civil war that was locked in stalemate for

Camp location: Shibbari in

Gangarampur, West Bengal.

Jamalpur upazilas in Dinajpur.

A group of freedom fighters along with their trainers at the Shibbari

Recent photo of Ramsagar Dighi in Dinajpur. Here George Bahini

Timeframe: March — December.

Freedom fighters trained: At least

Operation areas: Birol, Hakimpur,

Ramsagar, Khanpur, Saraswatipur, and

Bangladesh elected VP of **UN Human Rights Council**

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh has unanimously elected vice president of the UN Human Rights Council responsible for promoting and protecting all human rights around the globe.

decision has The been made on Monday, according to a statement of the Bangladesh Permanent Mission to the UN in Geneva yesterday.

Bangladesh will be vice president for entire 2025.

The bureau of the Human Rights Council consists of one president and four vice presidents representing each of the five UN regional groups.

This is the first time Bangladesh is going to serve as VP since the Human Rights Council was established in 2006.

'Joy Bangla'

FROM PAGE 1

policy decision and the judiciary cannot interfere in this issue, he added.

Last month, the government filed the leave to appeal petition with the SC seeking stay on the HC verdict that on March 10, 2020, declared "Joy Bangla" as the country's national slogan and ordered the government to take necessary steps so that the slogan is used at all state functions and academic institutions'

On December 1 this year, the apex court stayed another HC verdict that justified August 15 as the national mourning day and public holiday.

The full bench of the Appellate Division headed by Chief Justice Syed Refaat Ahmed passed the order following a leave to appeal petition filed by the government challenging the HC judgement.

On August 13 this year, the advisory council of the interim government took the decision that there would be no national holiday on August 15.

Wear masks outdoors

FROM PAGE 1

With an air quality index (AQI) score of 241 at 9:00am, Dhaka ranked first in the list of cities with the most polluted

An AQI between 151 and 200 is said to be "unhealthy" while 201 and 300 is considered "very unhealthy", and 301 to 400 is considered "hazardous", posing serious residents.

Vietnam's Pakistan's Lahore, Hanoi, and India's Delhi occupied the second, third, and fourth places with

AQI of 219, 194, and 191 respectively. In Bangladesh, the AQI is based on five criteria pollutants -- Particulate Matter (PM10 and PM2.5), NO2, CO, SO2 and Ozone.

Dhaka has long been grappling with air pollution issues. Its air quality usually turns unhealthy in winter and improves during the monsoon.

As per the World Health Organization (WHO), air pollution kills an estimated seven million people worldwide every year, largely as a result of increased mortality from stroke, heart disease, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, lung cancer, and acute respiratory infections.

Arakan Army

FROM PAGE 1

Outpost commander Brig Gen Thurein Tun, was captured while attempting to flee the battle, Khaing Thukha said.

The situation in Maungdaw could not be independently confirmed, with access to the internet and mobile phone services in the area mostly cut

Myanmar's military government did not immediately comment.

Maungdaw, about 400 kilometers (250 miles) southwest of Mandalay, Myanmar's second-largest city, has been the target since June of an Arakan Army offensive. The group captured Paletwa and Buthidaung, two other towns on the border with Bangladesh, earlier this year.

Since November 2023, the Arakan Army has gained control of 11 of Rakhine's 17 townships, along with one in neighbouring Chin state.

Ann, a town in Rakhine that hosts the strategically important military headquarters overseeing the western part of the country, appears to be on the verge of falling entirely to the

Arakan Army. The group said in a statement posted on the Telegram messaging app late Friday that it had taken more than 30 military outposts, except the army's western command, which controls Rakhine and the southern part of neighbouring Chin state, as well as the country's territorial waters in the Bay of Bengal.

Shibbari Youth Camp & George Bahini

FROM PAGE 12

the support of George and other political leaders and organisers, a training camp known as the KBM College Camp was set up at Gadagari Hat in South Kotwali.

On the afternoon of March 27, George joined the Bangalee soldiers at the EPR headquarters in Kuthibari after they had revolted. As the Pakistani soldiers retaliated with gunfire, George and the Bangalee soldiers formed a counter-resistance. After forcing the Pakistani soldiers to retreat, George, along with the Bangalee soldiers, students, and youth, raided the Kuthibari armoury.

On March 31, after four days of intense fighting, the Pakistani army was completely driven out of Dinajpur, the book reads.

After the victory, George started training young recruits at Dinajpur Stadium and a temporary camp in Baluadanga.

DINAJPUR FALLS

On April 12, as the Pakistani army advanced towards Dinajpur from Saidpur Cantonment, freedom fighters put up a resistance. A group of freedom fighters led by George also participated in this battle.

Anwarul Kadir Jewel, second in command of Shibbari camp, said, "However, due to the overwhelming firepower of the Pakistani army, Dinajpur fell on April 13."

Subsequently, George and his team **DEPLOYMENT IN WARZONE** retreated to India, seeking refuge at Under the leadership of captain Idris, the Rajibbur Missionary Church in Gangarampur, West Bengal.

TRAINING IN INDIA In late April, George resumed training freedom fighters on a smaller scale near the Rajibpur Missionary Church.

Jewel said, "We started with training 18 individuals at the Rajibpur church. But as the number of freedom fighters grew, we moved the camp to Osman Gani's estate and mango orchard in Shibbari."

Initially, the freedom fighters received food supplies from Rajibpur church. However, as their number increased, the supplies became insufficient.

"We raised funds by going door-todoor and performing songs on local trains. With just one meal a day, we continued training," said Jewel.

During this period, George visited refugee camps in neighbouring areas

to encourage students and youth to join the war effort. As a result, the number of freedom fighters in Shibbari camp steadily increased. In the first phase, 18 trained freedom fighters were sent to Siliguri for advanced training.

To accommodate the increasing number of freedom fighters, training was expanded to the Nimtola field near the camp.

Between June and July, the number of youths joining the Shibbari camp surged, leading to space constraints. So, many were sent to 12 other camps, including Patiram, Pransagar, Dangarhat, Kusamandi, Panihati, Raiganj, Katla, Malan, and Bateshwar.

The Shibbari camp and Geroge Das maintained regular communication with these camps.

Tarani Kanta Roy, one of the first trainers at Shibbari camp, said, "We started with just three trainers. However, within a month, our team expanded to 13. After three months of training, I led a group of 100 people to Patiram, as Shibbari was becoming overcrowded with recruits."

Rajendranath Roy, a Shibbari camp trainee, who fought under the Malan sub-sector in Chapainawabganj, told this newspaper, "We, the trainees of the Shibbari camp, including those trained under George, were deployed to various sub-sectors after completing our training."

Bir Bikram, freedom tighters were engaging the enemy forces in several areas under the region including Birol and Hili in Dinajpur and Kansat in Chapainawabganj since May.

In July, the areas came under the jurisdiction of the Hamzapur subsector (Sector-7).

Freedom fighters trained at the Shibbari Youth Camp were initially deployed to the Hamzapur sub-sector. In August, floods and landslides disrupted the operations of Sector 7





fought the Pakistani army in 1971.

Youth Camp in Nimtola field in 1971.

Panihati Youth Camp. At that time, the increasing instances of torture and killings within the country led to a surge in refugees seeking shelter across the border. Many young people also arrived at the Shibbari Youth Camp for training.

Jewel said, "They came to the camp and declared, 'We're not here for food; we're here to fight. Train us!' Over a Madras Regiment."

headquarters in Taranngapur and the month, the Indian Army trained more than 500 young recruits.

PHOTO: AHMAD ISTIAK

PHOTO: ANWARUL KADIR JEWEL

In late October, the Hamzapur sub-sector announced plans to deploy trained vouth for operations within the warzone, he added.

Jewel said, "In early November, a group of 41 trained freedom fighters from the Shibbari camp were selected to join a suicide squad alongside the

In phases, other groups of freedom fighters trained at Shibbari entered

Under George Das's leadership, over 100 freedom fighters participated in battles at various locations, including Birol, Hakimpur, Ramsagar, Khanpur, Saraswatipur, and Jamalpur in Dinajpur, he added.

INDIGENOUS FIGHTERS

Individuals from various ethnic minority groups across the country actively participated in the war, many of whom fought under George.

Villages like Halja, Raghudevpur, Achutia, and Jhenaikuri in Ranipukur union of Birol upazila were home to various ethnic minority groups, including Santals, Mundas, Koras, Oraons, Mahalis, and Turis. Many individuals from these communities participated in the war under George.

In recent decades, many members of these ethnic minority groups have migrated to India.

Kina Kora is one of the few surviving freedom fighters from the Kora community who participated in the war. He fought alongside George in the operation to destroy a bridge in Jhenaikuri village.

Speaking to this newspaper, Kina said, "We used 40kg of explosives to destroy the bridge in Jhenaikuri village. This stopped the Pakistani soldiers from crossing it to attack our villages near the border."

Not only members of small ethnic groups but also many Christian residents of Dinajpur town fought in the war under George and his force.

Vincent Marandi, a Christian freedom fighter, said, "Dinajpur had a significant Christian population at the time. As George himself was Christian, he had the loyalty of the local Christian community."

GEORGE'S BROTHERS

According to the books, all four brothers of George actively participated in the war.

James M Das Lewis, a former EPR member, fought alongside George in Kuthibari. Robert RN Das served as a relief officer for the Mujibnagar government. John SK Das and Anthony NN Das were active combatants alongside George Das. Anthony fought with George in the battles of Birol and Ghughudanga.

Translated and edited from Bangla by Subrata Roy.

Try Hasina, Awami League

Hasina's Bangladesh. If necessary, we will go to the border. You cannot present Bangladesh in a bad light to the world through lies."

Nahid emphasised the need for unity to hold the Awami League accountable. "Everyone must rise above ideological differences and

Calling for an end to misinformation about Bangladesh in Indian media, he said, "Awami League members attacked minorities during their rule at various times. Despite witnessing this, India remained silent."

Jatiya Nagorik Committee spokesperson Samantha Sharmin said Hasina must face trial both domestically and internationally.

BNP Joint Secretary General Shahid Uddin Chowdhury Anee said, "We endured the horrors of a fascist regime for 15 years... Many among us are torture survivors. I want all involved in the atrocities to be brought to justice."

Student leader Hasnat Abdullah said, "Those who helped former prime minister Sheikh Hasina flee the country must also be found and held

Many of the AL leaders who fled the country after August 5 have reportedly taken refuge in India. Hasnat said, "India must not

become a haven for terrorists." Another student leader Sarjis

Alam urged police to be cautious, stating that cases are being filed and withdrawn for money over crimes committed in July. "We will prevent any attempts to

of religion or ethnicity. We will stand together to stop it," he said. BNP Standing Committee member Abdul Moyeen Khan said that in July, people "sacrificed their lives to save

carry out extremist acts in the name

democracy". "We need reforms within our own selves... We are united when it comes to the country's independence and sovereignty," he said.

BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir and representatives from Human Rights Watch, Amnesty International, and Robert F Kennedy Human Rights expressed solidarity with the victims in video messages.

Family members broke down in tears as they recounted how their loved ones were taken from them. Children who lost their parents spoke. Some who suffered life-changing injuries at the hand of police and AL activists attended the event. Many of them had lost sight.

Rasheda Begum, mother of a protester shot dead on July 18, said her son Sohel Rana got shot in Jatrabari. "He was buried as unknown at Rayerbagh graveyard. Will I not get my son's body? My son is not an unclaimed corpse. Why was he buried as an unclaimed body?'

Jamaat leaders Mia Golam Porwar, Hamidur Rahman Azad; Nagorik Mahmudur Oikkyo President Manna; Ganosamhati Rahman Andolon leader Zonayed Saki; Biplobi Workers Party General Secretary Saiful Haque, AB Party member secretary Mojibur Rahman Monju; Hefazat leader Mufti Monir Hossain Kashemi; Nagorik Committee member Akhter Hossain; Hummam Quader Chowdhury, son of BNP leader Salauddin Quader Chowdhury; Huma Khan, senior human rights adviser at the UN Resident Coordinator's Office; and Mayer Daak members Hajera Khatun and Sanjida Islam Tulee spoke at the event.

A brutal murder

FROM PAGE 1

said Nur used to live in the factory, while his family lives in Mymensingh's Gafargaon.

Miraj, who was employed 20 days before the murder, used to live in another room in the factory.

"My father-in-law went to bed early on Thursday night as he was supposed to visit the family the next morning. But he woke up as the killers were making noise.

a pit, placed his dismembered body inside, and sealed the pit with plaster to cover up the murder," he said.

Ataullah added, "My mother-in- morgue for an autopsy.

law received a phone call from her husband around 4:35am. When she which he set up a year ago in answered, no one spoke, but she Kamrangirchar's Hasan Nagar area, could hear noises and shouting from the other end. She suspected that something might have happened at the factory."

The next morning, as Nur did not return home, the family tried calling him and found his phone switched off.

They then sought help from police. OC Amirul said they heard the description of the phone call on the night of the incident and analysed "After killing him, the killers dug other evidences, leading to the arrest Miraj and two others. "We're trying to

arrest the other killer." Nur's body was sent to hospital

764 retired civil servants

An analysis of the committee's report reveals that it recommended fourstep promotions for nine, threestep promotions for 34, two-step promotions for 126, and one-step

promotions for 595. Other members of the committee, formed on September 16, 2024, are from the Cabinet Division, public

administration, finance division, and justice division. It held 28 meetings to come up

with the report before the 90-day deadline.

ABM Abdus Sattar, convener of an employee forum against discrimination, said he hoped the report would lead to fair treatment of officials deprived earlier.

accountable." wrong. I tell India: this is not Sheikh