

Abdul Momen made ACC chairman

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

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

Former senior secretary to the Public Security Division of the home ministry Dr Mohammad Abdul Momen has been appointed as the new chairman, while Miah Mohammad Ali Akbar Azizi and Brigadier General (Retd) Hafiz Ahsan Farid as commissioners.

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



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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 early life.

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.

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 12-day lightning offensive swept into Damascus.

Al-Bashir now Syrian caretaker PM

Syrian media claim Israeli troops near Damascus

A Syrian security source said Israeli troops reached Qatana, 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.”

Egypt, Qatar and Saudi Arabia have condemned the incursion. 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 said.

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 years.

Bangladesh elected VP of UN Human Rights Council

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

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

The decision has 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’

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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’ assemblies.

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

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

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 health risks to residents.

Pakistan’s Lahore, Vietnam’s 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

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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 off.

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

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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 Buaadanga.

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 retreated to India, seeking refuge at the Rajibpur 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-to-door 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.”

DEPLOYMENT IN WARZONE

Under the leadership of captain Idris, Bir Bikram, freedom fighters 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 sub-sector (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



Camp location: Shibbari in Gangarampur, West Bengal.

Operation areas: Birol, Hakimpur, Ramsagar, Khanpur, Saraswatipur, and Jamalpur upazilas in Dinajpur.

Timeframe: March – December.

Freedom fighters trained: At least 2,500.

A group of freedom fighters along with their trainers at the Shibbari Youth Camp in Nimtola field in 1971.

PHOTO: ANWARUL KADIR JEWEL



Recent photo of Ramsagar Dighi in Dinajpur. Here George Bahini fought the Pakistani army in 1971.

PHOTO: AHMAD ISTIAK

headquarters in Tarannagpur and the 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

month, the Indian Army trained more than 500 young recruits.”

In late October, the Hamzapur sub-sector announced plans to deploy trained youth 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 Madras Regiment.”

A brutal murder

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said Nur used to live in the factory, which he set up a year ago in Kamrangirchar’s Hasan Nagar area, 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.

“After killing him, the killers dug 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-

law received a phone call from her husband around 4:35am. When she answered, no one spoke, but she 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 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 morgue for an autopsy.

764 retired civil servants

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An analysis of the committee’s report reveals that it recommended four-step promotions for nine, three-step 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.