



WITH MORE CAPACITY, WE ARE MORE READY TO BUILD TOMORROW'S BANGLADESH





HAT-TRICK OF Superbrands AWARD

AL can join polls unless govt or court bans it: CEC

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) AMM Nasir Uddin yesterday said unless the government or the court imposes a ban, there is no legal barrier for the Awami League to participate in the upcoming elections.



The CEC made the remarks during a meeting on "Voter List Update and the 13th National Parliament Election" at the Chattogram Circuit House.

"Everyone saw how the last three elections were held. This time, the Election Commission is functioning entirely independently, free from internal or external pressure. We are committed to ensuring a credible election that is acceptable to all," he added.

In response to another question, the CEC said, "We aim to eliminate

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PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

All-rounder Mahedi Hasan shone with the ball in hand to help Rangpur Riders to a convincing 40-run win over Dhaka Capitals in the second game of the Bangladesh Premier League's opening day at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur yesterday. Mahedi was the wrecker in chief, picking up four for 27 runs to restrict Dhaka to 151 for nine after Rangpur set a daunting 192-run target.

Progress in sport setbacks, and a call for reform

KHALID HOSSAIN

It was, once again, a mixed bag for Bangladesh sports in 2024. While there were moments of bold strides, the year was also marked by lingering struggles and a desperate search for fresh beginnings.

In women's football, the national team gave their best in retaining the SAFF Women's Championship title, yet the limitations imposed by a lack of resources, international fixtures, and minimal pre-tournament preparation remain glaring. This victory, like their success in 2022, highlighted an important truth: it's time -- if not past time -- for the Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) to focus on raising its sights beyond the South Asian level.

In cricket, the men's team offered glimpses of brilliance, clinching a historic 2-0 Test series victory in Pakistan and a T20I whitewash over the West Indies to cap off the year. However, the Tigers' closing performance at the T20 World Cup was marred by disappointment.

The year was marked less by the results on the field and

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Dentist 'taken' from home by her stalker Father was also abducted, but later released

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bogura

A female dentist and her father were allegedly abducted by her stalker and his associates from her home in Rajshahi city yesterday morning.

The criminals later released the father, but the dentist remained traceless till the filing of the report around 9:00pm.

Family members said the kidnappers also injured the victim's mother when she was trying to protect her daughter.

They also alleged that one Tanjeem Khan Nirab, 42, had long been stalking the 24-year old dentist, who had recently completed her Bachelor of Dental Surgery (BDS) degree from a private medical college hospital in Rajshahi.

Speaking to The Daily Star, the victim's uncle said, "Nirab identified himself as a magistrate to get into a relationship with my niece. In 2018, we realised he was lying.

"Nirab had also sent a marriage proposal, but we rejected it. He had since been stalking her and even threatened to kill her and her parents if they didn't agree to the proposal."

He added, "Today [yesterday], my brother-in-law [the victim's father] went out for Fajr prayers. On his way back home, six people, including Nirab, forced him into a microbus. They then entered the home and

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Major changes coming to Bangla, English textbooks

MOHIUDDIN ALAMGIR and ARAFAT RAHAMAN

Bangla and English textbooks for primary and secondary educational institutions are set to see some major changes, including the dropping of some contents related to Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

Contents on the student-led mass uprising are likely to be included in the Bangla and English textbooks for classes five to nine, said sources at the National Curriculum and Textbook Board (NCTB). Six texts and proses on Sheikh Mujibur Rahman will be dropped from English textbooks of classes six to nine, while four write-ups on the July uprising are to be added in those.

Three proses and poems on Sheikh Mujibur Rahman might be dropped from Bangla textbooks of classes 6 and 7, and four write-ups on July uprising are likely to be added in their stead.

A content each on Maulana Abdul Hamid Khan Bhashani and Titumir will be removed from the class six Bangla textbook.

It has also been decided that five contents written by Selina Hossain, two by Prof Muhammad Zafar Iqbal, one each by Syed Shamsul Haque, Rokonzaman Khan,

Nirmalendu Goon and former bureaucrat Kamal Chowdhury, along with others, will be removed.

Asked, NCTB Chairman Prof AKM Reazul Hassan, said, "Exaggerated contents about Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman are being removed from the textbooks. One leader, one country -- that's not what it is. There were other leaders, such as Sher-e-Bangla AK Fazlul Huq, Maulana Bhashani, and Ziaur Rahman, and there is no scope to underestimate their contributions."

He added that some contents on Bangabandhu, such as on the 1969 mass uprising, the 1970 election, and the March 7 speech in 1971, still remain in many of the textbooks.

About the removal of contents on Maulana Bhashani, he said, "It might have been removed from one textbook, but was included in another."

Regarding the removal of content on Rokeya Sakhawat Hossain from a class seven textbook, he explained, "Another piece on her has been added but in a different textbook."

CHANGES IN ENGLISH TEXTBOOKS

Two texts -- "Son of the soil" and "Mujib in School days" -- on Sheikh Mujib, adapted from "Unfinished Memoirs", an

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CONFLICT IN RAKHINE Dhaka in touch with both the Myanmar govt, Arakan Army Says home adviser

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Cox's Bazar

Dhaka is maintaining contact with both the Myanmar government and the Arakan Army -- the rebel group that is now controlling the border with Bangladesh -- to protect national interests, said Home Adviser Lt Gen (ret'd) Jahangir Alam Chowdhury.

"The 271-km land and river border with Myanmar is now controlled by the Arakan Army completely. However, the country is officially run by the Myanmar government. Now, [given the situation] we have to maintain contact with both parties," he said in response to a journalist's question at the Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority's jetty at Damdamia on the banks of the Naf River in Teknaf, Cox's Bazar, yesterday afternoon.

"In order to protect our interests, the communication between the Myanmar government and the Arakan Army is being maintained from the beginning," the adviser said.

The adviser said that around 60,000 Rohingyas have entered Bangladesh with the help of some unscrupulous Bangladeshi brokers.

He said the government has not yet decided on the registration of the newly arrived Rohingyas. There was

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43RD BCS RESULTS 168 candidates excluded

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government has cancelled the gazette published on October 15 for the 43rd Bangladesh Civil Service (BCS) recruitment and issued a new one, which excludes 168 candidates from various cadres.

According to the new gazette from the Ministry of Public Administration issued yesterday, 1,896 candidates recommended by the Public Service Commission (PSC) have been appointed to entry-level positions in various cadres.

Appointed candidates have been directed to report to their assigned offices under respective ministries by January 15, it read.

"If they do not join on the scheduled date, it will be considered they will not join the job and their appointment letter will be considered cancelled," the notification also read.

On October 15, out of the 2,163 candidates recommended by the PSC, the ministry appointed 2,064 candidates for cadre posts and put on hold the results of 99 candidates.

Now, 168 candidates have been further excluded.

Among those excluded, 26 were previously selected for the administration cadre, eight from the police cadre, and three from the foreign cadre.

With the latest exclusions, a total of 267 candidates have now been left out of the 43rd BCS recruitment.

On December 26, 2023, the PSC published the final results of the 43rd BCS, recommending the recruitment of 2,805 cadre and non-cadre candidates.

However, after the fall of the Awami League government on August 5, the interim administration began re-evaluating the background of 255 candidates.

The circular for the 43rd BCS exams was floated on November 30, 2020.

On October 29, 2021, over 435,000 candidates took the preliminary BCS exam across various centres across the country. The results were published on January 20, 2022, with 15,229 candidates passing the preliminary.

The written exams were held in July that year, and 9,841 candidates passed the written test.

Stop attacks on Gaza hospitals

WHO chief calls on Israel; 27 Palestinians killed in IDF strikes

REUTERS, Zurich

The head of the World Health Organization yesterday called for an end to attacks on hospitals in Gaza after Israel struck one and raided another in the past few days.

"Hospitals in Gaza have once again become battlegrounds and the health system is under severe threat," WHO Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said in a post on X.

"We repeat: stop attacks on hospitals. People in Gaza need access to health care. Humanitarians need access to provide health aid. Ceasefire!" he added.

The Israeli military said Hamas members were the targets of a strike on Gaza City's Al Wala hospital on Sunday, which the Palestinian civil defence said killed seven people.

Israeli forces also detained more than 240 Palestinians including dozens of medical staff from Kamal Adwan hospital on Friday, among them its director Hussam Abu Safiya, according to health authorities in the enclave and Israel's military.

The health ministry in Hamas-run Gaza said yesterday that 27 people were killed in separate strikes from Israeli Defence Forces (IDF) in the Palestinian territory in the past 24 hours, taking the overall death toll of the offensive to 45,541.

Tedros, who last week was caught up in an Israeli strike against Yemen's main airport that he said might have cost him his life, called for Abu Safiya's immediate release and said the Al-Ahli hospital had also faced attacks.



Retail traders buying winter vegetables from the Karwan Bazar wholesale market early in the morning yesterday. Vegetables from all over the country arrive at the Karwan Bazar market, from where they go out to the rest of the capital.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

Hasina sued at ICT for enforced disappearance of Mikel Changma

DU CORRESPONDENT

UPDF spokesperson Mikel Changma yesterday filed a written complaint with the International Crimes Tribunal accusing former prime minister Sheikh Hasina and eight others of involvement in enforced disappearance.

The ICT Chief Prosecutor's Office received the written complaint and evidence in support of his allegation, said Abdullah Al Noman, a



Mikel Changma

prosecutor at the tribunal. The leader of UPDF, an organisation based in the Chattogram hill tracts, went missing in April 2019 from Dhaka and returned home two days after the fall of Sheikh Hasina-led government on August 5 this year.

He says that he had been abducted and kept at a secret prison.

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