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## EC to verify voter list

It'll start door-to-door campaign Jan 20; will publish updated list Jan 2, 2026; BNP terms the move 'absurd'

MOHIUDDIN ALAMGIR

The Election Commission has said it will verify the information of the country's 12.36 crore voters ahead of the next national election -- a decision the BNP terms absurd.

The EC will visit people's homes from January 20 to June 30 in order to update the list, a draft of which will be published on January 2, 2026, Election Commissioner Brig Gen (retd) Abul Fazal Sanauallah told journalists while sharing the data on voter list at the EC office yesterday.

He added that the finalised list would be published on March 2, 2026.

Checking the entire list is the only way to know whether the information is correct, he said.

"Verification of the voter list is one of the main purposes of our door-

**Brig Gen (retd) Abul Fazal Sanauallah, election commissioner, says some of the problems in the current list are names of dead people have not been erased; foreigners are on the list; and some people are named more than once.**



to-door campaign," he said.

Ever since the Election Commission decided on December 2 to send representatives to people's doorsteps, the BNP has been criticising it.

"There is no need to go door to door to make an accurate voter list for 180 million people. It is time consuming, unnecessary, and the risk of making errors is high," Abdul Moyeen Khan, BNP standing committee member, told The Daily Star.

"Individual verification of such a large number of people is an absurd idea in this age, because the Election Commission already has the data on the entire population," he said.

Modern technology and AI can automatically update the list and make door to door visits unnecessary, he said.

Shipping Adviser Brig Gen (retd) M Sakhawat Hussain, also a former election commissioner, said verifying the information of all voters would take a long time because the EC would need to find out the voters.

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**THE HARSHNESS OF WINTER ...** With the fire to keep her warm put out, an elderly homeless woman makes do with a thin blanket near the capital's Rayer Bazar. As temperatures began plummeting since Wednesday, the poor and destitute have been bearing the brunt. The photo was taken around 1:30pm yesterday, when the temperature in the capital was around 21 degrees Celsius. At night, it dropped below 14.

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

## Army chief meets Khaleda Zia

UNB, Dhaka

Chief of Army Staff General Wakeruz-Zaman visited BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia last night.

The army chief, accompanied by his wife, visited the BNP chief's Gulshan residence, Firoza, around 8:30pm, and stayed there for 40 minutes, said Sayrul Kabir Khan, a member of the BNP media cell.

During the courtesy meeting, the discussion primarily revolved around the health condition of the former prime minister, Sayrul said.

He said the army chief enquired about Khaleda's well-being and wished her a speedy recovery.

## PROPORTIONAL REPRESENTATION

## It's unlikely to be recommended

Says member of polls reform body

MOHIUDDIN ALAMGIR

The Electoral Reform Commission is likely to refrain from recommending a proportional representation system, ignoring the proposal of most political parties.

The commission is expected to submit the report to Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus soon.

"We are not going to recommend the introduction of a proportional representation system," said a member of the commission, requesting anonymity.

Proportional representation is an electoral system in which the

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Mercury may continue to dip over next few days

STAR REPORT

A cold spell has been sweeping over the capital since the first day of the year, disrupting lives, as the gap between the day and night temperatures has narrowed.

According to Bangladesh Meteorological Department's forecast, the temperature is expected to fall further in the coming days of the month, as one or two moderate to severe cold waves are about to begin in the western, northwestern, northern and northeastern regions of the country.

Meanwhile, two to three mild to moderate cold waves are expected elsewhere, shows the Met's outlook for January, published yesterday.

Temperatures ranging from 8.1 to 10

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## BUSINESS

### Exports rose by 8.3% to \$50b in 2024

Bangladesh's exports hit \$50 billion in 2024, buoyed by a sharp spike in December, providing the much-anticipated breather for an economy facing multiple headwinds including external account pressures.

Of the amount, exporters earned \$4.62 billion in December alone, an 18 percent increase compared to the same month in the previous year.

STORY ON BI



People mourn over the bodies of Palestinian children, killed in an overnight Israeli strike on a makeshift displacement camp in Mawasi Khan Yunis in the southern Gaza Strip, in the yard of the Nasser hospital yesterday. The overnight Israeli air strike killed at least 11 people, including the chief of the territory's now dismantled Hamas police force, said Gaza officials.

PHOTO: AFP

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## Govt officially declares Nazrul national poet

STAR REPORT

The government has issued a gazette notification, officially recognising Kazi Nazrul Islam as Bangladesh's national poet.

The cultural ministry made the announcement, formalising a recognition that was considered long overdue, reports UNB.

The decision came on December 24, following on from a December 5 advisory council approval to a proposal to retroactively put into effect the national poet status from May 4, 1972.

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## Disclose AL govt's power, energy deals

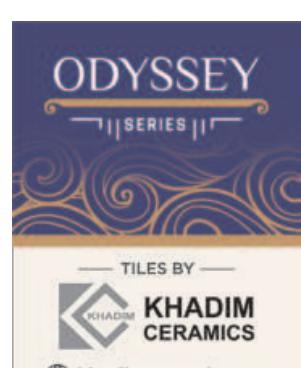
BNP urges interim govt

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The BNP yesterday demanded public disclosure of all the power and energy sector agreements made by the ousted Awami League government.

"The interim government's first job should have been to make public the agreements so that the people can know how the Awami League gave contracts with public money without any tendering process or without following the public procurement rules," said Iqbal Hasan Mahmud Tuku, a standing committee member of BNP.

The AL government realised that money could be made quickly from the sector without any accountability as electricity is invisible, he said at a press



conference at the BNP chairperson's Gulshan office.

"They played a magic show in this sector and mobilised money by pickpocketing the people and siphoning the money abroad," said Tuku, who served as the state minister for power during the BNP-led government in 2001-06.

It seems that the power and energy sector was the most corrupt during the 16 years of AL rule, said BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir in his opening remarks.

If the BNP wins the election, the party will review all the issues in the power and energy sector. "We will do what is necessary after reviewing," he said.

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