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## Voters deprived in past elections: CEC

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Voters were deprived of exercising their rights in past elections because decisions were made to serve the rulers' interests, said election commissioners yesterday.

"Our commitment is to deliver a free, fair, and credible election to the nation, which has been absent for so long," Chief Election Commissioner AMM Nasir Uddin said while inaugurating a training programme for trainers for the upcoming voter list update drive, scheduled to begin on January 20.

"I want to eradicate the pain of those who have been denied their voting rights. We stand by our commitment and seek everyone's cooperation," he said.

EC Abdul Rahman El Masud stressed the importance of an accurate voter list, calling it a prerequisite for a free and fair election.

EC Begum Tahmida Ahmad reflected on the failures of previous commissions, attributing them to the influence of those in power. EC Anwarul Islam Sarker vowed that the current commission would do whatever is necessary to restore the credibility of elections.

Meanwhile, the commission in a statement yesterday said enumerators will visit homes from January 20 to February 3, to collect data of citizens to update the electoral roll.

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Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus witnessing the manoeuvre exercise of an infantry brigade at Rajbari Military Training Area yesterday. Bangladesh Army's 55 Infantry Division organised the event, attended by Chief of Army Staff General Waker-Uz-Zaman, Chief of Naval Staff Admiral M Nazmul Hassan and Chief of Air Staff Air Chief Marshal Hasan Mahmood Khan.

PHOTO: ISPR



## NCTB prints wrong date for Abu Sayed's death in textbook

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Two new NCTB textbooks for classes nine and ten feature two different dates of the killing of Abu Sayed, the student leader in Rangpur whose death led to the July mass uprising spreading like wildfire across the country.

This apparent error has caused confusion among many.

Abu Sayed, a student leader of Begum Rokeya University in Rangpur, was shot dead at close range by police on July 16 while he stood with his arms outstretched in defiance against police brutality.

The pictures of his death became an iconic image of defiance of the July uprising, drawing people from all corners of the country onto the streets.

The new English for Today textbook for students of classes nine and ten, published by the National Curriculum and Textbook Board (NCTB), has a section on Abu Sayed.

A write up titled "Graffiti" says that on July 17, 2024, Abu Sayed, an unarmed organiser of the students' protest, was killed.

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## BNP to strengthen national unity against fascism Says Salahuddin

UNB, Dhaka

BNP senior leader Salahuddin Ahmed yesterday said their party's acting chairman has instructed them to make every possible effort to maintain national unity to resist the rise of fascist forces in the country.

He made the comments while speaking to reporters at Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport after his return from London.

In response to a question about the message Tarique Rahman sent through him, Salahuddin said, "Our acting chairman has instructed us to make every effort to keep the nation united, as otherwise, we understand that fascist forces and their associates could be emboldened."

"I believe our ultimate challenge should be to foster the anti-fascist national and mass unity that has developed in Bangladesh as a political culture. Otherwise, fascism could rear its ugly head again," he said.

When asked about Tarique's possible return, he said they had not yet been able to create the necessary environment for his return. "It will take some more time, but he will definitely return home," he said.

The BNP leader said it may not take much time for the institutional, legal, and political environment to be restored.

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## 'We are paying for past policy errors'

Finance adviser tells event

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

The interim government aims to establish a reform legacy to guide future administrations, said Finance Adviser Dr Salehuddin Ahmed yesterday.

"We are here for one and a half years or so. We will not stay long but want to leave our footprints, good examples," he said, speaking at the launch of a report titled "Enhancing Saudi-Bangladesh Economic Engagement: Trends, Key Challenges & Long-term Growth Prospects".

Referring to ongoing reforms, Salehuddin said, "It will be like having a rural road that can connect the highway." He highlighted the detrimental impact of corruption and policy missteps during the previous Awami League government, which deterred major foreign investments.

"Corruption and policy mistakes in the past have cost us. Many foreign investors could not invest due to policy shortcomings," he said, citing irregularities in the share market under the previous regime.

Saudi Ambassador Essa Youssef Essa Al Duhaillan said Saudi oil giant Aramco is interested in building a refinery in Bangladesh, potentially enabling exports to China, India, and beyond. He criticised past neglect, saying Aramco delegations visited Bangladesh thrice between 2016 and 2018 but were not engaged.

He emphasised addressing procedural barriers for foreign investors, adding that Saudi renewable energy company ACWA Power is keen to invest \$3.5 billion in Bangladesh.

Foreign Affairs Adviser Md Touhid Hossain highlighted the need for skilled migrant workers, while Foreign Secretary Md Jashim Uddin emphasised the importance of systematic mechanisms to unlock untapped economic potential between Dhaka and Riyadh.

Bilateral trade between Bangladesh and Saudi Arabia currently stands at \$2.1 billion, with Saudi FDI at \$232 million in 2023.

Secretary (East), Ministry of Foreign Affairs Dr Md Nazrul Islam delivered the welcome address, while M Masrur Reaz, chairman of Policy Exchange, presented the report.

**We are here for one and a half years or so. We will not stay long but want to leave our footprints, good examples.**

## BFIU seeks bank account details of 21 more journo

STAR REPORT

The Bangladesh Financial Intelligence Unit (BFIU) yesterday sought the bank account details of 21 more journalists.

A senior official of BFIU confirmed the matter to The Daily Star.

Saiful Alam, editor of the Daily Jugantor; Pranab Saha, sacked editor of DBC News; Hasan Zahid Tusher, former deputy press secretary to ousted prime minister Sheikh Hasina; M Shamsur Rahman, editor-in-chief and CEO of Independent TV; Mamun Abdullah, head of news at Independent TV; Animesh Kar, special correspondent of Independent TV; Md Ruhul Amin Russell, managing editor of Bangladesh Pratidin; and Mahmud Hasan, deputy editor of Bangladesh Pratidin are among them.

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## Dismissed trainee SIs protest in front of Secretariat

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Hundreds of dismissed trainee sub-inspectors (SIs) protested in front of the Secretariat yesterday, demanding reinstatement to their jobs.

The protesters are part of the 40th Outside Cadet batch and were dismissed from the Bangladesh Police Academy in Sardah, Rajshahi. They were accused of breaching discipline during their training.

However, many of the trainees have alleged that the accusations were baseless or unjustified.

Sheikh Farid, a protester, highlighted the financial strain caused by his dismissal.

"My father, a farmer, borrowed Tk 5,000 every month to support me during training. After a year of hard work and without receiving a salary, I've lost my job," he said.

The protesters have called on higher authorities to review their cases and provide accountability.

The grievances of the dismissed trainees stem from their expulsion on October 23 last year, just a month before their scheduled graduation.

A total of 252 trainees were expelled for alleged breaches of discipline. On November 4, an additional 58 trainees faced similar dismissals.

Later, 11 more trainee SIs were dismissed, including eight members on January 1.

Subir Roy, one of the coordinators of the protest, said the government should take steps to restore the dignity of the dismissed trainees.

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**কম খরচে এবং নিরাপদে ক্যাশ আউট করুন রকেটে**

**ডাচ-বাংলা ব্যাংকের**

ATM/CRM থেকে ক্যাশ আউট চার্জ **৯ টাকা** হাজারে মাত্র

যেকোন শাখা, উপশাখা থেকে প্রতিবার ক্যাশ আউট চার্জ **১০ টাকা** মাত্র

এছাড়াও এজেন্ট থেকে ক্যাশ আউট চার্জ **১৬.৭০ টাকা** হাজারে মাত্র

১৬২১৬  
দিন-রাত ২৪ ঘণ্টা এই কোড এসএম থেকে

ডাচ-বাংলা ব্যাংক  
আপনার বিশ্বস্ত সহযোগী