



## ADMINISTRATION REFORMS

# Zila parishad's abolition may be proposed

BAHARAM KHAN

The Public Administration Reform Commission is likely to recommend abolishing the zila parishad and strengthening the upazila parishad.

The commission may make the recommendation as the deputy commissioners' offices and the zila parishads do not cooperate and coordinate in their tasks, said multiple sources in the reform commission.

Besides, the tasks done by the zila parishads can be done by the offices of the deputy commissioners and others, they added.

To empower the upazila parishad, the reform commission may propose doing away with a legal provision that allows lawmakers to "interfere" in the upazila parishads as advisers.

It may propose appointing an officer of the rank of senior assistant secretary to the upazila parishad.

The Upazila Nirbahi Officer's office will deal with law and order, disaster management, public examinations, and mobile courts while the upazila parishad will handle development programmes, secondary education, NGOs, cooperatives and some other matters.

The reform commission members believe that these steps would put an end to the tension between UNOs and upazila chairmen.

However, some experts say this proposal may conflict with Article 59(l) of the constitution which states that elected representatives should be entrusted with the governance of every administrative unit of the republic.

Besides, some may ask why zila parishad should be abolished while upazila parishad remains.

Additionally, the commission is likely to propose discontinuing direct elections for upazila chairman. The proposal may include the abolition of the two vice-chairman positions in upazila parishads.

Currently, a single Circle assistant superintendent of police (ASP) is responsible for overseeing two to three upazilas. The commission may recommend appointing one Circle ASP for each upazila.

### NO CAR LOANS

The administration reform commission is set to recommend scrapping the interest-free car loans and car maintenance allowances for deputy secretaries and higher officers.

Officers of the ranks of deputy secretary and above currently get a loan of Tk 30 lakh to buy a car and a monthly allowance of Tk 50,000 to hire a chauffeur and bear the maintenance costs.

Members of the Commission want to end the benefits to save large sums of taxpayer money and because these are "discriminatory to officers who are not in the administration", said a source with knowledge of the development.

The car loan for admin officers was introduced in 2017. Officials of the

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## LIKELY PROPOSALS

- End MP's interference in upazila parishad
- No direct voting for upazila chairman
- Appoint ASP in every upazila
- Scrap admin's car loan, maintenance allowance



Students of Titumir College stop a train in the capital's Mohakhali around 3:45pm yesterday, demanding that the college be upgraded to a university. The blockade was withdrawn around 9:30pm following discussions between the protesters and government officials. More photos on page 3.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

# 'Stay alert as if we're in a war-like situation'

Yunus tells law enforcers about bids to create chaos; central command to be set up for coordination between law enforcement agencies

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus has directed the law enforcement agencies to stay on high alert and treat the current situation as a war-like situation.

"We have to be as alert as if we were in a war-like situation. This year is a very critical year for the country. We must not allow anyone to create chaos and anarchy," he said during a review of the country's law and order at a high-level meeting with chiefs of different law enforcement agencies at state guesthouse Jamuna yesterday.

According to the statement of the CA's press wing, Prof Yunus instructed the law enforcers to establish a central command centre for close monitoring of law and order.

The meeting was attended by Home Adviser Lt Gen (retd) Jahangir Alam Chowdhury, Special Assistant to the chief adviser Khuda Baksh Chowdhury, Senior Secretary of the home ministry Nasimul Gani, and the chiefs of police, Border Guard Bangladesh, Rapid Action Battalion, Dhaka Metropolitan Police, Coast Guard, and Special Branch.

Prof Yunus stressed the need for the agencies to utilise the latest communication technologies for rapid

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"Our global image will be badly damaged if we can't protect our religious minorities. We will have to be very transparent in this regard."

PROF MUHAMMAD YUNUS

# USAID to be shut in cost-cutting drive

## Says Elon Musk

REUTERS, Washington

Billionaire Elon Musk, who is heading US President Donald Trump's drive to shrink the federal government, gave an update on the effort early yesterday, saying work is underway to shut down the US foreign aid agency USAID.

Musk, who is also CEO of Tesla and SpaceX, discussed the Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE) in a social media talk yesterday on X, which he also owns. Trump has assigned Musk to lead a federal cost-cutting panel.

The conversation, which included former Republican presidential candidate Vivek Ramaswamy and Republican Senators Joni Ernst and Mike Lee, began with Musk saying they were working to shut down the United States Agency for International Development (USAID).

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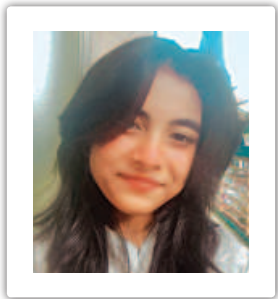
US FUND CUTS TO WORSEN ROHINGYA CRISIS: TOUHID - PAGE 3



PHOTO: HABIBUR RAHMAN

Women are waiting in front of an OMS shop to buy rice at a subsidised price at Kazdia Bazar of Khulna's Rupsha upazila around 11:30am yesterday. Low-income people from different villages come to the place to purchase the staple as its price remains high.

# 11-yr-old girl goes missing in the capital



Arabi Islam Suba

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

An 11-year-old girl went missing from the capital's Mohammadpur area on Sunday evening.

Arabi Islam Suba, a class-6 student at a school in Barishal, came to the city with her family for the treatment of her mother, who is battling lung cancer.

Suba's family started living in a house in the Mohakhali area as her mother initially received treatment at a private hospital in Gulshan, said Suba's uncle Maidul Rakib.

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# 47<sup>th</sup> Death Anniversary

(Abul Company) The founder of Abul Khair Group noted industrialist and social worker

Late Janab ABUL KHAIR



Death: 4<sup>th</sup> February, 1978

In accordance with the will of Almighty Allah the Beneficent, you left this mundane world, leaving us and many of your relations overwhelmed by grief. In our everyday life your bright ideals serve as beacon. You are immortal in your death. We pray to Almighty Allah for the salvation of your departed soul.

May Allah the Beneficent bless you with the eternal bliss of paradise. Ameen.

Your loving  
Sons, Daughters and Relatives