

## Modi to meet Trump during US visit on Feb 12-13

AGENCIES

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi will visit the United States from February 12 to 13 and hold talks with President Donald Trump, Indian Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri said yesterday.

Misri told reporters that Modi's visit will "give further direction and impetus to this very important partnership".

Asked if the Bangladesh issue would come up during Modi's talks with Trump, Misri said that "I cannot prejudge right now," reports Firstpost online.

"But there will be discussions on regional and international issues and I imagine it might be one of the issues that will come up," he added.

India, a strategic partner of the United States in its efforts to counter China, is keen to enhance trade relations with the US and make it easier for its citizens to get skilled worker visas.

## Hezbollah must not be in Lebanon govt Says US envoy

AFP, Beirut

A senior US official visiting Beirut said yesterday that Hezbollah's presence in Lebanon's new government was a red line, calling the Iran-backed group "defeated" in its war with Israel.

The visit by US Deputy Special Envoy for the Middle East Morgan Ortugas comes as prime minister-designate Nawaf Salam struggles to form a government amid political pressure from Hezbollah and its allies.

Lebanon is desperate for funds to rebuild after the conflict and a prolonged economic crisis. "We have set clear red lines in the United States that they (Hezbollah) won't be able to terrorise the Lebanese people, and that includes by being a part of the government," Ortugas said after meeting President Joseph Aoun.



Pro-Palestinian protesters attend a rally against US President Donald Trump's recent remarks on Gaza in Sydney, Australia, yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

# Trump's Gaza plan derails Saudi-Israel ties: analysts

AFP, Riyadh

US President Donald Trump's plan to take over Gaza will imperil attempts to forge landmark ties between Saudi Arabia and Israel and fuel anti-American sentiment in the oil-rich kingdom, analysts said.

Trump's proposal to redevelop Gaza and oust the more than two million Palestinians living in the territory prompted a global backlash and enraged the Arab world, making it difficult for the Saudis to consider normalisation.

"If this is going to be his policy, he shut the door on Saudi recognition of Israel," James Dorsey, researcher at the Middle East Institute of the National University of Singapore, told AFP.

Recognition of Israel by Saudi Arabia is seen as a grand prize of Middle East diplomacy intended to calm chronic tensions in the region. But Saudi Arabia, the world's biggest oil exporter and the Middle East's largest economy, now faces

the spectre of instability on its borders if neighbouring Jordan and Egypt suddenly house large numbers of Gaza exiles.

At the same time, Riyadh must maintain cordial relations with Washington, its long-time security guarantor and bulwark against key regional player Iran.

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"When it comes to security, Saudi Arabia has nowhere to go but to Washington," Dorsey said. "There's nobody else. It's not China. They're not willing and they're not able. And post-Ukraine, do you want to rely on Russia?"

The Saudis were engaged in tentative

talks on normalisation via the United States until the outbreak of the Gaza offensive, when they paused the negotiations and hardened their position.

They reacted with unusual speed to Trump's proposal, made during an appearance with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu in Washington.

About an hour after his comments, at around 4:00 am Saudi time, the foreign ministry posted a statement on X that "reaffirms its unequivocal rejection of... attempts to displace the Palestinian people from their land".

In the same statement, the Saudis rejected Netanyahu's comment that normalisation was "going to happen", repeating their insistence there would be no ties without a Palestinian state. Trump's plan carries real risks for Riyadh, which is throwing everything at an ambitious post-oil economic makeover that relies on stability to attract business and tourism.

## NEW NUCLEAR DEAL

### Khamenei warns against negotiating with US

AFP, Tehran

Iran's Supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei said yesterday that there should not be negotiations with the United States, days after US President Donald Trump called for a new nuclear deal.

"You should not negotiate with such a government, it is unwise, it is not intelligent, it is not honourable to negotiate," Khamenei said during a meeting with army commanders.

The United States had previously "ruined, violated, and tore up" a 2015 nuclear deal, he said, adding that "the same person who is in power now tore up the treaty". On Wednesday, Trump suggested striking a "verified nuclear peace agreement" with Iran, adding in his social media post that Tehran "cannot have a Nuclear Weapon".

Trump, who returned to the White House on January 20, reinstated on Tuesday his "maximum pressure" policy towards Iran over allegations the country is seeking to develop nuclear weapons.

Iran insists its nuclear programme is solely for peaceful purposes and denies any intention to develop atomic weapons. Following the policy's reinstatement, Washington on Thursday announced financial sanctions on entities accused of shipping hundreds of millions of dollars' worth of Iranian crude oil to China.

## Flight carrying 10 reported missing in Alaska: police

AFP, Washington

A small commercial flight carrying 10 people was reported missing Thursday in the northwestern US state of Alaska, according to law enforcement.

Alaska state police said a Bering Air Caravan with nine passengers and one pilot on board was reported overdue on a flight from Unalakleet to Nome at 4:00 pm Alaska Standard Time (0100 GMT).

The two cities are located roughly 146 miles (235 kilometers) apart from each other across the Norton Sound.

Search and rescue crews "are working to get to the last known coordinates" of the flight, authorities said in a statement.

The missing flight is the latest incident in a string of aviation disasters in the United States.

On January 30, a passenger jet collided midair with a US Army helicopter in the capital city of Washington, killing all 67 people aboard.

The disaster was followed closely by the crash of a medical plane into a busy Philadelphia neighborhood, killing seven and injuring 19.

## Govt will move soon to ban Awami League Renaming education cadre proposed

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He emphasised that the consensus among political parties would make it easier for the government to implement such a decision.

When asked whether the government was taking immediate steps to ban the Awami League, Asif Mahmud responded, "We -- the common people and political parties -- represent the people of this country. Prioritising their aspirations and demands should be our main goal."

"From that perspective, I would like to applaud the BNP for raising the demand to ban the Awami League," he added.

Apart from the judicial process, he noted that the government has

four laws under which it can take action against any party through an executive order. However, he clarified that the government had yet to decide on the specific legal framework it would follow in this matter.

The adviser said the Awami League's involvement in the July-August massacre must be proven through the judicial process. Once established, this would allow the government to take necessary actions, including banning the party as a political entity and revoking its registration.

However, he reaffirmed that the government would follow due legal procedures in any move to ban the party.

"I want to assure everyone that

the government will take immediate steps in this regard to reflect the aspirations of the people," he said, without specifying a timeframe.

Regarding the formation of a new political party by students who led the July mass uprising, Asif Mahmud said the idea arose out of necessity.

"We have seen in the past that the gains of mass movements were often lost because their organisers could not play a role in subsequent state affairs," he said, referring to the movement against the autocratic regime of General Hussain Muhammad Ershad in 1990.

Considering these factors, he explained, the idea of forming a new political party led by the leaders of the July uprising had gained traction.

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educators meet strict research criteria for promotion. A teacher would be required to publish at least three original research papers in indexed journals for promotion to associate professor, while those being promoted to professor would need to publish five. These publications must be featured in both national and international journals.

The report also suggests a structured promotion system for BCS General Education Cadre officers, ensuring their progression from Grade 9 to Grade 1. The commission calls for a transparent, merit-based promotion policy, with decisions based on competence, performance, experience, and academic qualifications. Promotions should follow a standardised examination and evaluation process under the newly proposed "Education Service Commission", the report reads.

As part of this, the commission recommends that at least 5 percent of education cadre professors be promoted to Grade 2 of the national pay

scale. Eligible professors would need to have a PhD and serve for at least five years.

The commission also says that the current student-teacher ratio is below international standards. It calls for increasing the education sector's budget and swiftly filling vacant teaching positions. For technical education, the report suggests introducing technical subjects from Class 8, expanding technical institutions, and recruiting qualified teachers.

The report highlights the diminished role of the National University (NU), which currently oversees over 2,200 colleges. Given the growth of public universities across various divisions, the commission recommends affiliating degree-level colleges with their respective regional universities. It also proposes selecting one leading college in each division and district and developing it into a specialised higher education institution comparable to university-level institutions.

To further enhance education, the

commission recommends establishing specialised higher education and women's madrasas in each division, as well as madrasa teacher training centres. It also suggests extending primary school facilities to Extended-day-level students, improving the monitoring and investment in private madrasas with strong performance, and implementing a policy for hiring qualified principals and teachers.

The commission also advises that managing committees for private colleges and secondary schools be led by government officers instead of political figures, aiming to reduce issues related to political involvement.

Additionally, the commission proposes that the National Technical Resource Centre (NTRC) recruit teachers from Chattogram and the Chattogram Hill Tracts based on local recommendations. It also suggests establishing residential schools in selected areas of hill tracts and using VSAT technology to enable online schooling in these remote regions.

## Barishal retain BPL title with thrilling win

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heroic knock to bring Barishal close to the title again, but when it got tight, Rishad prevailed.

With Barishal needing eight off the last over, the first delivery from Hussain Talat sailed over long-on for a six to get Barishal into breathing space. Needing one in three deliveries, Talat bowled a short one that went over Tanvir Islam's head, and although the batter could not complete a single, he rejoiced as the umpire signalled wide. Rishad remained unbeaten on a six-ball 18 as Barishal celebrated yet another BPL triumph.

Tamim showed the full array of his strokeplay against the new ball, finding boundaries with immaculate timing. He smashed Binura Fernando for three fours in the first over of the Barishal chase to show the quality of the batting surface.

Shoriful produced a double breakthrough in the ninth over, first with Tamim getting holed out at long-off before scalping David Malan out leg before. Tawhid Hridoy had been playing second fiddle to Tamim but when he departed to Naeem Islam, out for a 28-ball 32, Barishal were slipping.

Mayers, Barishal's hero in last BPL final, first strung a 14-ball 34-run stand with Mushfiqur Rahim and a 29-ball 42-run stand with Mahmudullah Riyad, to bring Barishal into the driving seat. Shoriful brought further

life back into the game, removing Mayers after a 28-ball 46 and then bagging Mahmudullah.

In the end, Rishad's two sixes, one off Binura and then off Talat in the final, proved to be the difference.

Earlier in the first innings, Khawaja Nafay and Emon propelled the opening partnership with a lot of authority from early in the innings. In the process, the Chittagong opening duo produced the highest-ever opening stand in a BPL final with a 121-run stand, overtaking the 76-run stand by Tamim Iqbal and Mehedi Hasan Miraz in last year's BPL final.

The Powerplay saw Emon take control, hitting Kyle Mayers for boundaries to get the innings motoring along. He would hit left-arm spinner Tanvir for two big sixes in the fourth over to put real momentum to the innings. As the Powerplay finished at 57 for no loss, Nafay finally came to the party after a slow start.

With Emon completing a 30-ball fifty, Nafay hit Rishad for back-to-back sixes to complete his own fifty. After 12 overs, Chittagong were 115 for no loss and it looked like they would get over 200 in the all-important final.

Ebadot Hossain broke the partnership with the wicket of Nafay, out for a 44-ball 66, nicking a delivery to wicket-keeper Mushfiqur Rahim. However, the acceleration in the

death overs was slightly stifled by Barishal bowlers.

Emon and Graham Clark picked off Tanvir for a 22-run over but Mohammad Ali bowled the 17th and 20th overs, conceding just 10 runs. Despite Emon's unbeaten 49-ball 78 and Clark's 23-ball 44, Chittagong reached 194 for three with Ali being the pick of the Barishal bowlers with 21 for one in four overs.

Barishal captain Tamim was adjudged the man of the final for his 29-ball 54 while Khulna captain Mehedi Hasan Miraz was adjudged as the player of the tournament for 355 runs and 13 wickets.

## Swachhchhasebak Dal leader

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Mamun was rushed to Narayanganj 300-bed hospital, where doctors declared him dead.

The family suspects that a long-standing business dispute with the family of a local Awami League leader could be a possible motive behind the murder.

OC Shariful said the exact reason behind the murder was still unknown. "However, we have spotted two individuals in hoodies in CCTV footage, and efforts are underway to identify them."

A murder case was expected to be filed in connection with the incident, he added.

## Dr Muhammad Shahidullah's role

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its Principal linguist Dr Muhammad Shahidullah played a crucial role in organising the protests in Bogura for Bangla as a state language.

On February 27/28 of 1948, in the wake of the opposition of Muslim League members to a proposal to recognise Bangla as a state language in the Pakistan Constituent Assembly, a huge procession led by Azizul Haque College Chhatra Federation leader Abdul Matin marched around the city and reached its heart, the Satmatha intersection.

Several student leaders were injured when Muslim League leaders and activists attacked the protesters, according to the book *Bhasha Andolan Kosh Part 1*, written by M Abdul Alim.

On that day, a Sarbodoliyo Rashtrobhasha Sangram Committee (All-Party State Language Struggle Committee) was formed with Ataur Rahman, a senior student leader of the college, as the convener and Dr Muhammad Shahidullah as the adviser. The members included Gaziul Haque, Abul Fazal Siddiqui and Saleha Khatun.

On March 11, a huge procession led by Dr Muhammad Shahidullah was brought out in support of the Language Movement. People from all walks of life participated in this programme. After the procession, Dr Muhammad Shahidullah presided over a rally at

Bogura Zilla School field.

In continuation of the protests in 1948, the Language Movement stirred up in 1952. According to the book *Bhasha Andolan Teknaf Theke Tutulia* by Ahmed Rafiq, on January 27, 1952, when the government declared Urdu as the state language of Pakistan, the angry students and public of Bogura erupted in protests. At a protest rally at Edward Park on February 12, Majiruddin Ahmed, farmers' leader Abdul Aziz Kabiraj, labour leader Subodh Lahiri, and others spoke in favour of Bangla as a state language.

On February 17, a Sarbodoliyo Rashtrobhasha Sangram Committee was formed with student leader Golam Mohiuddin as the convener, Majiruddin Ahmed president, and Abdul Aziz Kabiraj as the vice president. The other members included student leader Abdus Shahid and labour leader Subodh Lahiri. It was decided to form similar committees in every Thana.

A general strike was observed on February 21. On that day students and the public took out a peaceful protest procession from Azizul Haque College, chanting the slogan "Rashtrobhasha Bangla Chai (We want Bangla as State Language)". At a rally at Altafunessa Maidan that afternoon, speakers demanded the resignation of the members of the East Bengal Legislative Assembly.

The news of the killing of students in police firing in Dhaka reached Bogura on February 22. Bogura was seething with anger at that time. At a rally at Edward Park, all the educational institutions were declared shut indefinitely.

According to the book *Bhasha Andolan Teknaf Theke Tutulia*, on February 23, agitating students organised a huge rally attended by around 10,000 people at Jagannath Maidan in Bogura amid a full-day strike. A huge procession of students and the public gathered for the rally after marching around the city.

On February 24, another spontaneous strike was observed with shops and business establishments completely shut. Gradually, all administrative activities in Bogura came to a standstill as the agitation spread to the remote towns and rural parts of Bogura.

## India has 'no role to play'

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responsible for the persistent negativity."

According to Jaiswal, "While the government of India will make efforts for a mutually beneficial relationship, we expect that Bangladesh will reciprocate similarly without vitiating the atmosphere."