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AMAR EKUSHEY-19

This year marks the 73rd anniversary of the 1952 Language Movement. Drawing on research based on various published books, this 21-part series tells the story of the historic struggle for our mother tongue.

Feb 21 gets its first poem in port city

AHMAD ISTIAK

"Ekhane jara praan diyechhe Ramna'r urdhomukhi krishnachur toloy, jekhane aguner phulkir moto ekhane shekhane jolchhe oshongkho rokter chhaap

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Last-minute preparations for Amar Ekushey underway at the Central Shaheed Minar yesterday, with Dhaka University fine arts students painting motifs on the altar. For the motifs this year, the DU Faculty of Fine Arts has chosen red symbolising revolution, white representing fairness and black, the colour of mourning.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

DC CONFERENCE-2025

Focus on law and order, price hike, and polls

Govt tells commissioners on concluding day

BAHARAM KHAN

Deputy commissioners yesterday returned to work following the DC Conference-2025 with some key instructions from the government: maintain law and order; prevent corruption; curb price hike of essentials during Ramadan; and prepare for the upcoming national election.

At the three-day conference, which concluded on Tuesday, the DCs promised prioritising these issues while carrying out their duties.

The Daily Star spoke to DCs from at least seven districts regarding the conference outcomes.

The annual DC conference, organised by the Cabinet Division and held at the capital's Osmani Memorial Auditorium, facilitates face-to-face discussions among the government, policymakers, and divisional and deputy commissioners.

This year, the conference featured 34 sessions, in which ministry and departmental advisers discussed field-level operations based on the DCs' proposals.

Sources said policymakers placed their highest priority on the aforementioned key instructions and urged the DCs to perform accordingly.

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NEW PARTY BY UPRISING ACTIVISTS

Launch likely on Feb 26

Announcement may come from rally on Manik Mia Avenue

ASHIK ABDULLAH APU

Student leaders who spearheaded the July uprising are gearing up to announce their political party with February 26 in mind as the possible date.

They are considering the formal announcement at a rally on Manik Mia Avenue in the capital.

In the first meeting of the preparatory committee held last night, key leaders asked the committee members to prepare themselves with February 26 in mind, four meeting participants told The Daily Star.

The preparatory committee, comprising members of the civic and student platforms, Jatiya Nagorik Committee, and Students against Discrimination, sat at the Nagorik Committee's office at the capital's Banglamotor.

The meeting, which continued till 10:30pm from around 4:00pm, discussed holding a rally and gave responsibilities to individuals for mobilising the people.

It also formed three subcommittees on cultural, medical, and media affairs to oversee different aspects of the announcement ceremony.

Another subcommittee was also constituted to analyse and evaluate the opinions of people collected in the recently launched campaign regarding the new political party.

According to a meeting insider, the new party will be declared at the rally, but its charter may not be revealed.

The discussion on the formation of a new political party, helmed by those who spearheaded the July uprising, came to the fore in September last year.

Adviser Nahid Islam is almost certain to be the convener of the new party while discord has surfaced over

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BGB, BSF TALKS

Killings at border can't be justified

Bangladesh tells India, discusses fencing

OUR CORRESPONDENT, New Delhi

On the second day of the biannual BGB-BSF talks yesterday, Bangladesh reiterated the urgent need to ensure that no border killings take place.

The 55th meeting between the director generals of India's Border Security Force and the Border Guard Bangladesh in Delhi was the first since the fall of the Hasina-led regime.

According to meeting sources, Bangladesh argued that while Dhaka has no objection to trying border transgressors under existing laws, the killings cannot be justified.

"This is a sensitive issue for Bangladesh," the visiting delegation said at the meeting.

Meanwhile, the Indian delegation stated that implementing the coordinated border management plan is necessary to stop organised crime at the border,

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Bangladeshi climate migrants end up in modern slavery

MOHAMMAD AL-MASUM MOLLA

For thousands of Bangladeshis fleeing climate disasters, migration offers a desperate escape but at a grievous cost.

According to a survey by the International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED), almost every person who has migrated abroad from Bangladesh's climate-vulnerable regions has suffered at least one form of modern slavery while working.

The IIED study, "Exposed and Exploited: Climate Change, Migration and Modern Slavery in Bangladesh," published yesterday, states that modern slavery takes many forms. Those surveyed reported experiencing wage withholding, restricted movement, abusive conditions, threats, intimidation, and even physical violence.

The study surveyed 648 households across 33 villages in 19 unions – 10 in Pirojpur's Mathbaria and nine in Sylhet's Gowainghat – selected for their high climate vulnerability. Of these, 70.06 percent were migrant households (internal and international), while 29.94 percent were non-migrant.

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» 99pc intl migrants report at least one form of modern slavery, 81pc face over five

» Climate disasters have doubled in six decades

» 88pc families sent relatives abroad, mostly to harsh working conditions in the Gulf

» Homes facing higher climate risks are 214pc more likely to send migrants abroad

The survey was conducted in 2023 and 2024 by IIED and Oibashi Karmi Unnayan Program (OKUP), with funding from the UK Home Office's Modern Slavery Innovation Fund.

The report states, "Among internal migrants, 92 percent experience at least one form of modern slavery, with more than 52 percent enduring more than three forms. For international migrants, the prevalence of modern slavery is even more alarming, with 99 percent reporting at least one form and 81 percent experiencing more than five forms."

The crisis is rooted in climate change, it adds.

Over the past six decades, climate-related disasters in Bangladesh have nearly doubled, rising from four per year before 1990 to seven per year after.

Cyclones, river erosion, and saltwater intrusion have destroyed crops, drowned livestock, and wiped out savings, leaving several families with no choice but to move, the report states.

"In some of the hardest-hit areas, like Pirojpur and Sylhet, 99 percent of residents report rising temperatures, while 90 percent say river erosion has worsened."

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'Govt may not be sincere in holding polls'

Says BNP

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The BNP has expressed doubts about the interim government's sincerity in holding the next national election.

Pointing the finger at the advisers of the government, the party also said that if they allow "fascists" to participate in the national polls for their own interests, the people and the BNP will not accept it.

The BNP said while it welcomes the formation of a new political party, it cannot accept the advisers remaining in power to float the party. It urged the head of the government to address the issue immediately and take appropriate action.

"The people of the country want to return to a democratic environment. However, even after seven months, we have not been able to achieve that because the interim government is trying to complete some tasks before holding the polls," said BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhru Islam Alamgir.

"But in the meantime, some doubts have arisen among the people – whether they [the government] are sincere about the polls," he added

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More foreign financing to fuel this FY's budget

Revised budget to slash bank borrowing

REJAUL KARIM BYRON

The government has planned to increase foreign financing by around 15 percent and reduce bank borrowing by 28 percent in the revised budget for this fiscal year to tame inflation.

In the revised budget, the bank borrowing target has been brought down by 28 percent to Tk 99,000 crore, while the foreign financing target has been bumped up by 15 percent to Tk 109,000 crore, The Daily Star has learnt from finance ministry officials involved with the proceedings.

"If the government can materialise the plan, then it will be good – the available statistics that we saw so far shows that borrowings from banks increased significantly," said Selim Raihan, executive director of the South Asian Network on Economic Modelling.


If the government wants to implement its plan, it must reduce its bank borrowings significantly in the coming months, he said.

In the first five months of the fiscal year, the government borrowed Tk 25,138 crore from the banking system, according to central bank statistics. A year earlier, it stood at Tk 3,188 crore.

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New Zealand batter Tom Latham raises his bat after reaching his century against Pakistan in the opening match of the ICC Champions Trophy at the National Stadium in Karachi yesterday. Latham's unbeaten 104-ball 118, complemented by opener Will Young's 107 and an unbeaten 61 from Glenn Phillips, helped the Black Caps post a challenging total of 320 for five. Defending champions Pakistan, however, were bundled out for 260 in 47.2 overs as they lost the contest by 60 runs.

PHOTO: REUTERS



Tigers look to remain 'calm' in India contest

SAMSUL AREFIN KHAN FROM DUBAI

Bangladesh will be looking to remain calm on the field and execute their plans well to get off to a winning start in the ICC Champions Trophy when they square off against India in the opening Group A fixture at the Dubai International Cricket Stadium today.

Despite not having had an ideal preparation for the tournament with a loss against Pakistan Shaheens in the only warm-up game and having last played a 50-over game two months ago in the Caribbean, the Tigers will be hoping to get into the groove of the format quickly in a bid to upstage favourites India, who have featured in four out of the eight finals in the tournament's history.

However, Bangladesh's quest of beating India in a major ICC event for the first time since 2007 would be a tall ask, especially given the opposition's 3-0 home series win against England recently.

"Of course, there is a lot of

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