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141 ex-DCs now in govt crosshairs

BAHARAM KHAN

The government yesterday forced 22 more officials into retirement, raising the number of disciplined bureaucrats to 67 for their questionable role as deputy commissioners in the 2014 and 2018 sham elections under the Awami League regime.

These 67 officials are on a list of 208 former DCs; many of the remaining 141 are also likely to be punished.

On Wednesday, the public administration ministry placed 33 officials on special duty. Previously, it did the same to 12 other former DCs. Special duty in this context is perceived to be a disciplinary measure.

The ministry is currently reviewing the records of the officials on the list, and most of them are likely to face punishment, according to officials with knowledge of the developments.

Mokhles Ur Rahman, secretary at the ministry, said disciplinary actions will be taken in phases. Those who were DCs during the 2024 election will face action in the last phase.

"The actions will send the current DCs a message that they should work during the upcoming election without fear," he told reporters yesterday.

Those forced to retire yesterday include Zakia Sultana,
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Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus pays homage to the language martyrs with a floral wreath at the Central Shaheed Minar shortly after midnight on International Mother Language Day.
PHOTO: PTD

The youth ready to lead the world

Yunus says at Ekushey Padak ceremony

BSS, Dhaka

Chief Adviser Professor Muhammad Yunus yesterday said the country's young generation wants to build a new Bangladesh and lead the world too.

He said this while conferring Ekushey Padak 2025.

"We are now stronger, more energetic and more creative than ever before. The dreams of our young generation are more courageous than the dreams of any generation in the past," he said at the award distribution ceremony at Osmani Memorial Auditorium.

"The young people want to create a new Bangladesh... They want to take the lead in creating a
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INSIDE A FALLEN DICTATOR'S PALACE

A walk through the relics of power and paranoia

PARTHA PRATIM BHATTACHARJEE and ZYMA ISLAM

It took the Ansar members guarding the Gono Bhaban quite a few tries before they could locate the keys and unlock the main gate of what was the most strictly guarded citadel inside the capital until only six months back.

Gone are the days when Special Security Force officers armed with assault rifles used to shoo away pedestrians trying to use the pavement flanking the thick boundary walls of the premises.

Even the ominous brass nameplate at the entrance is gone -- hauled away for resale the day of the proverbial storming of the "palace". A person new in the city would hardly recognise it as having once been the



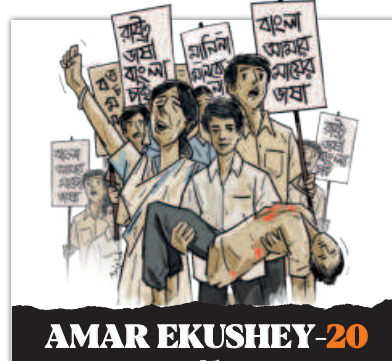
central command centre of an elaborate autocracy.

Upon entering through the gates, the first thing one would see is a pile of damaged, charred vehicles, an emblematic reminder of the public's intense anger

towards Sheikh Hasina.

A massive collection of heavy wood furniture and household items stood collecting dust in front of the entrance of the house like a garage sale gone wrong -- all items too large to be taken away on the day taxpayers lay claim on their money's worth.

The first room inside is a large hall where the former prime minister held her infamous press conferences from where she had rung her regime's death knell by calling the protesters "razakars". Only those able to shower her with flowery praises were allowed inside this room. It is mentionable that The Daily Star was not allowed to enter the Gono Bhaban or cover any of her programmes for over a decade, and we were never given an official explanation.
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AMAR EKUSHEY-20

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.

The seed of independence

AHMAD ISTIAK

"Amar bhai er rokte Rangano ekushey February, Ami ki bhulite pari? Chhele-hara shoto maa er osru Gora-e February, ami ki bhulite pari?" (Tainted with the blood of My brother is February 21. Can I forget?
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Star INTERVIEW

Inferiority complex hinders practice of Bangla

The three-part book, "Turbo Banglar Bhasha Andolan O Tatkaleen Rajneeti", by **Badruddin Umar** is considered a key document of Language Movement history. The renowned researcher, writer, theorist and communist leader recently discussed the 1952 movement, the use of Bangla and different other matters with Star's **Ahmad Istiak**.

TDS: Why have you added the politics of that time in your book on the Language Movement?

Umar: Look, the Language Movement was never a spiritual, cultural or singular movement. Since it was a political movement from the beginning, I felt that its history would not be complete without highlighting the political context of the time.

TDS: You mentioned two phases of the movement in your book. The first in 1948 and the second in 1952. What differences have you noticed between these two phases?

Umar: Although the goal and objective were the same, there were vast differences between the two stages. The movement of 1948 was limited to students and
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Reports of attacks on minorities exaggerated

Says BGB chief in New Delhi

OUR CORRESPONDENT, New Delhi

Bangladesh Border Guard (BGB) Director General Maj Gen Mohammad Ashrafuzzaman Siddiqui yesterday said the issue of border fencing was extensively discussed during a meeting with his Indian counterpart in New Delhi.

"The fencing issue was discussed at length in the meeting. We've requested a joint inspection wherever there are issues," Siddiqui said during a joint media appearance with India's Border Security Force (BSF) DG Daljit Singh Chaudhary at BSF headquarters, where the three-day talks concluded.

This was the first high-level meeting between the border security forces of the two countries since the fall of the Awami League-
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Bangladesh's Towhid Hridoy thanks the almighty as Taskin Ahmed approaches the batter to congratulate him on his maiden ODI ton in their Champions Trophy Group A game against India at the Dubai International Cricket Stadium yesterday. Hridoy's 118-ball 100, however, went in vain as India won the contest by six wickets. Courtesy of Shubman Gill's unbeaten 129-ball 101, India chased down the Tigers' 228 all out with 21 balls to spare.
PHOTO: AFP

2 shot dead in 'gunfight' with jt forces in city

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Two persons were killed allegedly in a gunfight between crime suspects and the joint forces in the capital's Mohammadpur area early yesterday, marking the first such incident since the fall of the Hasina regime.

They were identified as Miraz Hossain, 25, and Md Jummon, 26. Both had criminal records, according to police and family members.

The incident harks back to the practice of extrajudicial killings during the Awami League rule and before.

Jewel Rana, additional deputy commissioner of Mohammadpur zone police, said the shootout took place during a raid at Chand Udyan by the joint forces.

The team, which included members of the army and police, had gone there acting on a tip-off.

The Inter-Services Public Relations, in a press statement, said, "Based on the information that a group was preparing to mug people in Mohammadpur's Chand Udyan, a joint forces team conducted an operation at the location around 12:30am on Thursday.

"During the operation, the joint forces members took position on either side of an alley when the criminals suddenly opened fire on them from the roof of a one-storey building. The team immediately retaliated in self defence and managed to detain five people with weapons."

It added, "Upon searching the house, they recovered two bodies from the roof. They also seized a pistol, four rounds of bullets, and a machete from those detained ... The detainees were handed over to Mohammadpur Police Station for legal action."

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