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Kiwis dash Tigers' hopes

STAR SPORTS DESK

Bangladesh's hopes of making it to the semifinals were reduced to dust after they suffered a five-wicket defeat to New Zealand in their second Group A match of the ICC Champions Trophy at the Rawalpindi Cricket Stadium yesterday, courtesy of a scintillating century from Rachin Ravindra.

With two defeats in two matches, having earlier lost to India in their opening game by six wickets, Bangladesh are now out of contention for a spot in the semifinals while visitors New Zealand and India have made it through to the semifinals from Group A.

Bangladesh's defeat also ended Pakistan's chances of making it to the semifinals. Just like the Tigers, Pakistan are winless after having lost to New Zealand and India.

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A fire swept through Sajek Valley, a popular tourist spot in Rangamati's Baghaichhari upazila, yesterday, destroying over 140 establishments, including resorts, shops, and homes. The blaze that broke out around 12:30pm was brought under control after nearly four hours.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

**EC won't be ready
for local govt polls
by June: CEC
Says nat'l election schedule
has to be announced in
Oct for Dec polls**

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Chief Election Commissioner AMM Nasir Uddin yesterday hinted that it is not possible to hold the local government elections by June as the voter list updating work is underway.

He said that their target is to conduct the national election in December. "If it is to be held in December, we must announce the polls schedule in October."

The CEC made the remarks at an event at the Electoral Training Institute auditorium in Agargaon, organised on the occasion of the new committee of Reporters Forum for Election and Democracy taking charge.

Regarding the local body polls, the CEC said, "The Local Government Reform Commission has suggested that elections can be held in June. That would be possible only if 1.6 million deceased voters are not removed and the elections are conducted without including new voters. The voter list updating process will be completed in June."

The reform commission has made the proposal from its perspective. They [the commission members] are learned and knowledgeable people. The CEC has no comments on this. There is already a political debate on the matter, and the Election Commission does not want to get involved in it."

The CEC stated that they do not want to make any comments in advance. They are proceeding with the election preparations as per the chief adviser's announcement.

He said that several applications regarding the re-demarcation of parliamentary constituencies are pending. Due to legal complexities, they are unable to resolve them.

"The commission has already proposed amendments to the relevant laws to the government."

Third party to reevaluate ongoing mega projects

Decides high-level meeting led by CA; task force report on economy discussed

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The interim government has decided to reevaluate the country's ongoing mega projects through a third-party, citing political influence led to an average 70 percent overvaluation of mega projects undertaken during the Awami League rule.

Chief Adviser's Press Secretary Shafiqul Alam said this at a media briefing at the Foreign Service Academy about the decisions of a high-level meeting on the country's economy held at the office of Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus yesterday.

Yunus chaired the meeting.

Shafiqul said due to the overvaluation of the mega projects, public money worth about \$14.24 billion was lost. Finance Adviser Dr Salehuddin Ahmed, Industries Adviser Adilur Rahman Khan, Planning and Education Adviser Wahiduddin Mahmud, Commerce Adviser Sheikh Bashir Uddin, Food Adviser Ali Imam Majumder, Principal Secretary to the Chief Adviser Md Siraj Uddin Mia, BIDA Executive Chairman Chowdhury Ashik Mahmud Bin Harun, Finance Division

Secretary Dr Md Khairuzzaman Mozumder and Bangladesh Bank Governor Dr Ahsan H Mansur were present, among others, at the meeting on the country's economy.

At the meeting, they discussed the report recently submitted by the task force on re-strategising the economy and mobilising resources for equitable and sustainable development.

The report identified corruption in development projects, irrational avoidance of taxes, and flaws in supply chain management as major factors of corruption during the last regime.

As such, the government has decided to introduce e-filing at all its offices, aiming to make its tasks smooth and check corruption.

Citing the examples of other countries, the press secretary said the e-filing helps bring down corruption to a minimal level.

The task force also made a number of recommendations, including in the areas of economy, education, health, social protection and employment, agriculture, fisheries and animal

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**CTG LOAN COURT
'Lauded'
judge
abruptly
removed
Bank officials
express concerns**

STAFF CORRESPONDENT,
Ctg

Joint District Judge Mujahidur Rahman of the Chattogram Money Loan Court has been removed from his post and attached to the Law and Justice Division of the law ministry without being given any specific charge.

The transfer order was issued yesterday by the Law and Justice Division.

Judge Mujahidur gained popularity for his bold decisions, including imposing travel bans on loan defaulters, issuing arrest warrants, ordering the bringing back of fugitive defaulters to the country, appointing receivers for mortgaged properties, and questioning the Election Commission for allowing defaulters to contest upazila elections.

He had passed orders and issued arrest warrants against major loan defaulters such as Saiful Alam of S Alam Group; Convict Jemy

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Bangladesh must adjust

**Rehman Sobhan says about
changing global context**

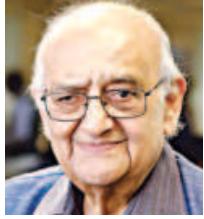
STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Considering the current and upcoming international political context, Bangladesh needs to focus on improving bilateral trade relationships with a wide range of countries, noted economist Rehman Sobhan said yesterday.

Certain countries, particularly the powerful ones, are now using various tariffs and economic sanctions as political instruments, he said at the inaugural session of the two-day conference styled "Recommendations by the Task Force on Re-Strategising the Economy".

"First, the US, then the EU, and now the other countries are also slowly employing this. This world is now changing. So how does a country like Bangladesh adjust to this? We are sitting around with our tongues hanging out, thinking that since tariffs are going to be raised on Chinese exports, we will automatically be able to step in and fill that vacuum. But I don't really think that's how the game is going to be played."

Bilateral relationships will prevail between the big



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**ABRAR MURDER
Condemned
killer fled from
jail on Aug 6**

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Muntasir Al Jemy, sentenced to death for the murder of Buet student Abrar Fahad, escaped from prison on August 6 last year, but the authorities kept the information from Abrar's family until yesterday.

The revelation came as Jemy's lawyer failed to appear in court for legal arguments, raising suspicions.

Abrar's younger brother, Abrar Faiyaz, addressed the matter in a Facebook post yesterday evening, expressing outrage over the delayed disclosure.

Deputy Attorney General Md Jasim Sarker confirmed the news to The Daily Star, saying that Jemy fled on August 6 last year. At least 209 prisoners escaped that day from Kashimpur Central Jail in Gazipur during a jailbreak.

Contacted, Jannat Ul Forhad, assistant inspector general (Development and Media) of the Department of Prisons, confirmed to The Daily Star that Jemy escaped from Kashimpur prison on August 6 last year.

"The prison authorities filed a case with the Konabari Police Station the same night. Jemy is one of the named accused in the case," he added.

"Jemy was supposed to be held in a condemned cell. How did he escape?" Faiyaz said.

"The fact that this information was withheld for so long only proves that no attempts have been made to recapture Jemy," Faiyaz added.

Meanwhile, the High Court is set to deliver its verdict any day on the death references and appeals of the convicts in the Abrar murder case.



Convict Jemy

SEE PAGE 7 COL 3

**RIFT ON UKRAINE
Macron, Trump
vow to work
together**

AFP, Washington

French President Emmanuel Macron and Donald Trump sought to smooth over a transatlantic rift on Ukraine yesterday, with the US president eyeing a deal to end Russia's invasion "within weeks" backed by European peacekeepers.

Hosting Macron at the White House on the third anniversary of the Russian invasion, Trump also said he expected Ukraine's Volodymyr Zelensky to visit this week or next, to sign a deal giving Washington access to Kyiv's minerals.

Trump hailed Macron as a "very special man" as they shared one of their trademark macho handshakes in the Oval Office -- with the French president seeking to use his ties with Trump to shore up support for Ukraine.

"I think we could end it within weeks -- if we're smart. If we're not smart, it will keep going," Trump said.

The US president added that Russian President Vladimir Putin was ready to "accept" European troops deployed in Ukraine as guarantors of a deal to end the fighting.

Macron said that both leaders wanted a "solid long lasting peace," proclaimed that Europe was ready to "step up" defense spending and reiterated that Europe was ready to deploy peacekeepers.

But he said he wanted "strong" US involvement in any such plan.

Both Macron and British Prime Minister Keir Starmer -- who is visiting the White House on Thursday -- have said their countries are ready to contribute peacekeeping troops in Ukraine if there is a deal.



Family members of victims of the Gazi Tyre Factory fire on August 27, 2024, form a human chain in front of the Jatiya Press Club in Dhaka, demanding that the government let them know the whereabouts of their missing loved ones.

**EU suspends
key sanctions
on Syria**

AFP, Brussels

The European Union yesterday eased sanctions on Syria's energy, transport and banking sectors in a bid to help the country's reconstruction after the fall of Bashar al-Assad.

Syria's new leaders have been clamouring for the West to ease sanctions imposed to target Assad's regime during the civil war.

But Europe and other powers have been reluctant to move before clear signals from the new Islamist-led rulers in Damascus that they are serious on having an inclusive transition.

The step approved at a meeting of EU foreign ministers in Brussels includes suspending sanctions on the energy and transport sectors, as well as allowing transfers to five banks and making funds available to Syria's central bank.

"The EU aims to facilitate engagement with Syria, its people, and businesses, in key areas of energy and transport, as well as to facilitate financial and banking transactions associated with such sectors and those needed for humanitarian and reconstruction," the bloc said.