



Nahid resigns to 'helm new party'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Nahid Islam yesterday resigned as the information adviser to almost certainly lead the upcoming new political party.

After submitting his resignation, the leader of the Students Against Discrimination said that his role outside the government and on the streets would be more significant to fulfilling the aspiration for democratic change and consolidating the strength of those who participated in the mass uprising.

"The companions who are out there also desire this. Therefore, I have submitted my resignation," said Nahid, who was the adviser for Posts, Telecommunications and Information Technology and Information and Broadcasting.

"I have always tried to fulfil my responsibilities under your leadership despite various challenges. But in the current context, I feel that I should be present in the ranks of the people and students for the greater interest of the country and the nation," he said in his resignation to Chief Adviser Muhammad Yunus.

Nahid's resignation came amid speculation that he might leave the cabinet to lead the new political party mainly consisting of July uprising activists.

The party is set to launch on February 28 at a grand rally on Manik Mia Avenue in Dhaka. Nahid is expected to be the convenor of the new political party as its convener.

"Yes, I have a wish to participate in the new political



SEE PAGE 6 COL 3



Army personnel check motorists, mostly motorcyclists, on Manik Mia Avenue late last night amid a recent spate of street crimes in the capital and other places.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

NEW PARTY LAUNCH
Uprising leaders want rally of 3 lakh people

New student body to be floated today

ASHIK ABDULLAH APU

Participants of the July uprising are aiming for a massive turnout of 3 lakh people on Manik Mia Avenue this Friday for the official launching of their political party.

Members of the preparation committee, comprising over a hundred leaders from the Nagorik Committee and the Students Against Discrimination, are now contacting their grassroots units to achieve their target gathering.

Meanwhile, the new student body helmed by the coordinators of the Students Against Discrimination is set to be launched at Dhaka University's Madhur

SEE PAGE 6 COL 4



Abdullah Al Noman dies

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Former minister and BNP vice-chairman Abdullah Al Noman passed away yesterday.

He was 82.

The veteran politician fell ill at his Dharmundi home around 6:00am. He was rushed to Square Hospitals, where doctors declared him dead, said Shamsuddin Didar, BNP chairperson's media wing member.

Noman, who took part in the Liberation War, was involved in left politics before joining the BNP.

The BNP leader, who is survived by his wife, a son and a daughter, was scheduled to address a rally of Chattogram Uttar Zila BNP yesterday as the chief guest in Chattogram city's Kazir Dewri area. The event was postponed following his death, said Golam Akbar Khandaker, convener of Chattogram Uttar Zila BNP.

His first namaz-e-janaza was held in front of BNP's Nayapaltan central office around 5:00pm, where hundreds of BNP

SEE PAGE 6 COL 4

Weak banks may face closure

Says BB governor; Abdul Awal Mintoo irked by suggestion

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Bank Governor Ahsan H Mansur's comment that some ailing banks may face closure drew flak yesterday.

"We are trying to keep the troubled banks running, but not all of them will survive," he told a conference titled Recommendations by the Task Force on Re-strategising the Economy.

"We are trying, but it is difficult to keep some banks operational," Mansur said, adding, "We all know that the banks have been systematically looted."

A decision regarding the weak banks would soon be made in consultation with the government and other stakeholders, he said.

"Out of the 11 restructured banks, Islami Bank Bangladesh and United Commercial Bank have recovered and are performing well."

However, his remarks drew sharp criticism from BNP leader Abdul Awal Mintoo, chairman of National Bank, at the conference.

"I thank the government for appointing a knowledgeable person as the Governor of Bangladesh Bank. But he should talk less," Mintoo said. "As long as he keeps talking about shutting down banks, there will be no improvement in the sector."

Acknowledging the financial challenges facing National Bank, Mintoo added, "It is unwise to keep saying the weak banks will be closed. If you plan to shut down banks, why not shut down the entire economy?"

He further questioned the central bank governor's stance on printing out taka: "He always says he won't print more taka to give to the banks. Do we even know how much has already been printed or how much should be printed in relation to the GDP?"

Monzur Hossain, a member of the Task Force on Re-strategising the Economy, said the unbridled printing of money and the single-digit interest rate on lending have contributed to

Govt beefs up security on streets

CA's Press Wing says checkpoints, patrols increased

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

To improve security and stability, the Law and Order Core Committee has taken nine key initiatives, including operations in targetted locations, crime-prone areas, and areas suspected of harbouring criminals by a joint task force comprising members of the army, various police units, and the BGB.

The Chief Adviser's Press Wing announced the decisions in a press release yesterday, stating that they were made during a high-level meeting on Monday, presided over by Home Affairs Adviser Lt Gen (retd) Jahangir Alam Chowdhury.

Law enforcement agencies will increase the number of checkpoints in key locations across the capital, with additional patrol teams being deployed. To further strengthen security, the Bangladesh Navy will introduce an additional patrol unit on key roads,

SEE PAGE 6 COL 1

UKRAINE VOTE AT UN Russia praises 'more balanced' US position

Talks up mineral trade opportunities with Washington

AFP, Moscow

The Kremlin yesterday praised Washington's "balanced position" after the US voted with Russia at the United Nations to avoid condemnation of Moscow's campaign against Ukraine.

The United States sided with Russia in two votes in New York on Monday, signalling a seismic shift as US president Donald Trump stakes out a drastically new position on Ukraine.

"The US is taking a much more balanced position which is really aimed at trying to resolve the Ukraine conflict. We welcome this," Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov told reporters.

Peskov said comments from European leaders "do not signal balance", adding: "But, perhaps, as a result of contacts between the Europeans and the Americans, somehow Europe will gravitate towards greater balance".

The Kremlin also said that it sees potential for

SEE PAGE 6 COL 6

SUSPECTED MUGGERS
Mobs beat one dead, injure 2 others

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A young man was killed and two others brutally beaten up on suspicion of being muggers in separate mob-lasted incidents in Gazipur's Tongi and Dhaka's Uttara last night.

In Gazipur's Tongi, a youth was beaten to death on suspicion of being a mugger in the Mashimpur area of Tongi, Gazipur.

The incident took place around 10:30pm. Police are yet to identify the deceased.

Faridul Islam, officer-in-charge of the Tongi East Police Station, told The Daily Star, "We are trying to verify the youth's identity by matching his fingerprints with the national database with the help of the CID crime scene unit."

Quoting locals, Faridul said a mob caught the youth near Tongi Station Road around 7:30pm, while he was allegedly trying to snatch a phone. The mob chased him.

"The youth took shelter in an alley. The angry locals

SEE PAGE 6 COL 3

Aus-SA match washed out BD-Pak under threat too

SAMSUL AREFIN KHAN
from Rawalpindi

The Champions Trophy Group B fixture between Australia and South Africa in Rawalpindi was abandoned without a ball bowled on Tuesday due to persistent rain.

Both teams have won their opening matches - South Africa beating Afghanistan by 107 runs and Australia winning by five wickets against England. However, South Africa top the pool on net run-rate.

England and Afghanistan meet in Lahore today, with the top two teams in each group advancing to the semifinals.

The same venue, meanwhile, is scheduled to host Bangladesh's last Group A match against hosts Pakistan on Thursday - a dead rubber after both teams lost their opening



Students of Begum Badrunnesa Government Girls' College at a rally near Raju Bhaskar on Dhaka University campus demanding punishment of rapists and sex offenders.

SEE PAGE 6 COL 6

\$29M USAID FUNDING US president's claim incorrect: Dismislab

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Dismislab, an independent online verification and research platform, has said US President Donald Trump's claim regarding the \$29 million USAID funding is incorrect, and the Department of Government Efficiency's statement is misleading.

"The \$29 million did not go to a two-person Bangladeshi firm. Instead, the Strengthening Political Landscape (SPL) project was implemented by Democracy International (DI), a US-registered organisation with ongoing projects and staff in various countries," said Dismislab in a report yesterday.

"Furthermore, canceling the project did not result in the entire \$29 million being saved, as was falsely claimed."

The platform came up with the report after Trump's claim last Friday that \$29 million USAID fund landed with an obscure firm that he said was "a little outfit" with just two employees in Bangladesh.

At another event in Maryland on Saturday, Trump again accused the agency of funneling \$29 million to prop up a "radical left communist" in Bangladesh.

Meanwhile, Finance Adviser Salehuddin Ahmed said he will raise the issue with the US authorities during his visit to Washington in April this year.

According to the Dismislab, the SPL project launched in 2017 aimed to enhance political party skills, improve engagement between political parties and the public, and reduce political violence.

In Bangladesh, the organisation has carried out at least 12 projects, and records from the SPL project list five

SEE PAGE 6 COL 6