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Home opposes idea of police commission

Says century-old laws for cops good enough, refuses to relinquish power over law enforcers

SHARIFUL ISLAM

Ignoring calls for holding police accountable through a separate commission, the home ministry refuses to let go of its control over the law enforcers.

Formation of an independent body, as the Police Reform Commission recommends, is unnecessary because the ministry is already doing what an independent body would be doing, says the ministry.

The demands for legislative changes to make the police accountable are being raised as around 1,400 people were killed — most of them shot dead by cops — during the mass uprising.

But the ministry insists that the current laws, which are from the colonial era, are good enough, and there is no need for amendments.

"If the [existing] law and regulations are abided by, the police force will be accountable," reads the home ministry response to the reform commission's proposal to "overhaul" the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1898, the Police Regulations of Bengal, 1943, the Police Act of 1861, and several other laws and regulations.

The ministry conceded that some amendments may be made in light of emerging crimes like cybercrime and for conducting investigations in the digital sphere.

"The image of the police has been tainted because



Palestinians gather for a communal iftar on the first day of the Muslim holy month of Ramadan, amid rubbles of destroyed buildings in Rafah in the southern Gaza Strip on Saturday.

PHOTO: AFP

We must document atrocities of past regime

Says Yunus



BSS, Dhaka

Chief Adviser Professor Muhammad Yunus yesterday said documenting all atrocities committed during the regime of ousted prime minister Sheikh Hasina is necessary to ensure justice.

"There is a need for proper documentation of all atrocities committed against the people of this country. Without this documentation, it will be difficult to uncover the truth and ensure justice," the chief adviser said.

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certain policemen did not adhere to laws amid extra-legal political pressure," reads the response.

Currently, the home ministry's Public Security Division controls and supervises the police force. It is also responsible for overall management, policymaking, complaint resolution, and ensuring the security of the force.

According to estimates of the recently published fact-finding report by the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, the police, along with other forces and armed Awami League members, shot dead approximately 1,400 people, while thousands more suffered severe, often life-altering injuries during the July uprising.

The health ministry has recorded over 12,272 injuries.

After the Sheikh Hasina regime fell on August 5 last year, the police force completely lost its moral authority to enforce the law because the image of police acting like a tool of violent oppression was fresh in the public mind.

Even the home adviser mentioned several times that the police completely lost their morale.

A UN fact-finding report also recommended replacing the police oversight unit with a commission that would be independent of the home ministry and the police chain of command.

Members of the proposed police commission would be civil society representatives. The commission will have specialised staff, capacity, and legal authority to act as a public complaints body, says the UN report.

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Prices of iftar staples hold steady, mostly

SHAHEEN MOLLAH and MD ABBAS

This Ramadan, Dhaka residents are finding some comfort in the mostly stable prices of food items and ingredients considered essential for the preparation of iftar meals.

Compared to previous years, the situation is better this time around due to an abundance of winter vegetables, essential food items and ingredients.

The Daily Star visited several key kitchen markets, including Kazipara, Mirpur-11, Ibrahimpur, Kochukhet, and Karwan Bazar yesterday, and found that buyers are generally able to get what they need according to their purchasing power, save for cooking oil and lemons, which are now out of reach for many.

Consumers are particularly frustrated with the supply and pricing of soybean oil, one of the most essential commodities.

Traders say the supply of edible oil is insufficient compared to the current demand.

The price of loose soybean oil has surged by Tk 30-40, now selling at Tk 185-200 per kg, up from Tk 155 last

PRICE UP
Cooking oil, lemons, imported fruits

PRICE DOWN
Dates, sugar, eggplants, onions, potatoes, chillies

Ramadan.

A five-litre bottle of soybean oil is priced at Tk 852, compared to Tk 780 last year.

Chickpeas have also seen a price hike, now selling at Tk 105-120 per kg, up from Tk 100-115.

The price of four lemons ranges between Tk 40-120, whereas last year it was Tk 20-80.

The prices of most imported fruits have increased by Tk 20-40 per kg, while local fruits, including bananas, are up by Tk 10-20 per dozen.

Apples, oranges, and sweet oranges are now being sold at Tk 300-380 per kg, compared to Tk 270-350 last year.

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BUSINESS

Remittances surge 25% to \$2.52b in Feb

Bangladesh received \$2.52 billion in remittances in February, a 25 percent year-on-year increase, as migrant workers sent more than expected to their families for Ramadan-related expenses and Eid shopping.

The steady inflow strengthens foreign exchange reserves and helps stabilise the exchange rate. Remittance inflows may rise in March as well, as expatriates typically send more money during Ramadan, peaking before Eid.

In order to boost remittances further, an economist suggested focusing on sending skilled workers abroad and ensuring they are placed in suitable jobs.

STORY ON B1

UKRAINE SUMMIT IN LONDON Europe to assemble 'coalition for peace'

AFP, London

European leaders closed ranks yesterday in support of Kyiv at a London summit, where they pledged to spend more on security and assemble a coalition to defend any truce in Ukraine.

Bringing together 18 allies, the talks were devoted to the key questions of how to provide security guarantees for Ukraine and bolster Europe's future defences while keeping the United States under President Donald Trump onside.

Just days after a thunderous row between Trump and Ukraine's Volodymyr Zelensky raised fresh questions over the US leader's commitment to Ukraine and Nato, British Prime Minister Keir Starmer warned that Europe found itself "at a crossroads in history".

"This is not a moment for more talk — it's time to act. It's time to step up and lead and unite around a new plan for a just and enduring peace," the premier added.

With no guarantee of US involvement, "Europe must do the heavy lifting" in securing peace in Ukraine, Starmer said, indicating that several countries were ready to help defend any truce.

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Robbery on moving bus in Savar

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Savar

Passengers on a bus were robbed of their mobile phones and cash at knife-point in Dhaka's Savar yesterday afternoon.

The incident took place on a Dhaka-bound Rajdhani Paribahan in the Banktown area on the Dhaka-Aricha highway around 2:00pm, Jewel Rana, officer-in-charge of Savar Model Police Station, told The Daily Star.

Passenger Nazmul Hasan told this correspondent over the phone that he boarded the bus from the Chakraborty area of Ashulia.

He said that there were 20 to 25 passengers on the bus. As the vehicle reached the Banktown area of Savar around 2:00pm, four to five people got on the bus.

"Before we could realise anything, those five people, wielding knives and sharp weapons, started snatching

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North Bengal potato farmers have harvested over half of their crops but are facing financial hardship. Despite a significant increase in cultivation area this year, wholesale potato prices are barely covering production costs. Currently, a maund of potatoes sells for Tk 600-620, while production costs, according to a local agricultural office, are around Tk 600 per maund. The photo was taken recently in Bogura's Shibganj upazila.

PHOTO: MOSTAFA SHABUJ

'I am worried, but not without hope'

Amartya Sen tells PTI about Bangladesh

OUR CORRESPONDENT, New Delhi

Voicing concern over the situation in Bangladesh, Nobel laureate Amartya Sen said his friend Muhammad Yunus, chief adviser of the interim government, is taking significant steps but has a long road ahead to resolve the impasse.

In an interview with PTI at his ancestral house in Santiniketan recently, he cautioned against banning the Awami League, saying such a move would repeat the same mistakes that other parties had accused the Awami League government of making.

Asked about his assessment of Yunus as Bangladesh's chief adviser, Sen said "Yunus is an old friend. I know he is highly capable and, in many ways, a remarkable human being. He has made strong statements about Bangladesh's secularism and democratic commitment."

"If you suddenly become the head of a country, as Yunus effectively has, you must consider various factions. There are Islamic parties, and now Hindu factions as well. I have great confidence in Yunus' abilities," he said.

Sen said Bangladesh, which has largely kept communal forces like Jamaat in check, should continue its admirable commitment to secularism.

According to Amartya Sen, "Bangladesh should make the best use of its tradition of working together rather than attempting to sideline any particular group. A broader perspective is needed. I hope that the Bengali commitment to freedom and pluralism will persist. And I

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