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Bangladeshis
burdened with
high internet
taxes

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PCB hits reset
while BCB
hesitates

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Trump and
Zelensky: Is
the damage
irreparable?

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Special
Powers Act:
Bangladesh's
forgotten villain

P6

ENFORCED DISAPPEARANCE

Order came from AL govt high-ups

Commission says, warns against
“community shielding” for
individual responsibilities

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The order to carry out enforced disappearances during the ousted Awami League government tenure came from the very top, and the perpetrators will be brought to justice, even in their absents if necessary, the Commission of Enquiry on Enforced Disappearances said yesterday.

“We found that the highest level of the government was involved in committing this crime,” commission Chairperson Justice Moyeenul Islam Chowdhury told reporters at the commission office in Dhaka.

Relying to a query, he said Sheikh Hasina’s adviser Tarique Ahmed Siddique was involved in ordering enforced disappearance and they have evidence to that end.

The commission has interviewed 45 members of law enforcement and intelligence agencies, and identified a good number of law enforcers and intelligence officers involved in carrying out enforced disappearances, he said, without disclosing any names.

“Some people are apprehensive because we are finding involvement of some individuals in enforced disappearances, and the entire force is becoming panic-stricken. We want to tell them that the individuals belonging to law enforcement units or intelligence agencies who were

“Certain agencies have gotten panic-stricken because of our investigation. We want to tell them not to be afraid. If someone from a law enforcement agency or an intelligence agency was involved with enforced disappearance, it was entirely their own personal liability. No agency should own them, or their crimes.”

Justice Moyeenul Islam Chowdhury,
Commission Chief



GG

Constituent
assembly, nat'l
polls can be
held together

Says NCP chief Nahid Islam

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Nahid Islam, convenor of the National Citizen Party (NCP), at the party's first public programme since its launch, yesterday proposed holding constituent assembly elections and the parliamentary polls simultaneously.

“Constituent assembly elections will help pave the way for a new constitution and a genuine democratic process. The constituent assembly polls and the national parliamentary election can be held together. This will enable the formation of a new framework and the creation of a new Bangladesh.”

He made these remarks after visiting the graves of the July uprising martyrs in the capital's Rayerbazar. He was accompanied by other NCP leaders.

Nahid also demanded swift justice for the repression during the uprising.

“Through fair justice, we can at least alleviate some of the sufferings of those [the families of those] who sacrificed their lives and those who were injured.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 5

SEE PAGE 2 COL 2

2 KILLED IN CTG Deceased were Jamaat members Party says its 'planned murder'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The two people who were killed in a mob beating "on suspicion of being robbers" in Chattogram's Satkania upazila's on Monday night were identified as active members of Bangladesh Jamaat-e-Islami, said police.

Jamaat leaders claimed that the two members of their organisation were murdered in a planned manner by those who want to establish dominance in the area.

The deceased Md Nezam Uddin, 45, of Kanchana union, and Md Salek, 35, of the same union, were identified as supporters of Chattogram Metropolitan Jamaat's Ameer Shahjahan Chowdhury, said police sources.

"Salek stood accused in two murder cases, and Nezam had also been accused in several cases. After the incident, police and army personnel visited the spot and tried to find out what exactly happened there," Chattogram Superintendent of Police Saiful Islam Shantu told this newspaper.

"The incident took place during the Taraweeh prayer. After they [victims] went to the upazila's Chankhola area, an announcement was made through a mosque's loudspeaker that robbers were spotted in the area, prompting the public to gather," said the SP.

SEE PAGE 8 COL 1

**60pc of adults
will be obese by
2050 worldwide
Say researchers**

AFP, Paris

Nearly 60 percent of all adults and a third of all children in the world will be overweight or obese by 2050 unless governments take action, a large new study said yesterday.

The research published in the Lancet medical journal used data from 204 countries to paint a grim picture of what it described as one of the great health challenges of the century.

"The unprecedented global epidemic of overweight and obesity is a profound tragedy and a monumental societal failure," lead author Emmanuela Gakidou, from the US-based Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation (IHME), said in a statement.

The number of overweight or obese people worldwide rose from 929 million in 1990 to 2.6 billion in 2021, the study found.

Without a serious change, the researchers estimate that 3.8 billion adults will be overweight or obese in 15 years -- or around 60 percent of the global adult population in 2050.

The world's health systems will come under crippling pressure, the researchers warned, with around a quarter of the world's obese expected to be aged over 65 by that time.

**Calls grow in
Germany to
bring back
military service**

AFP, Berlin

Germany's conservatives who are set to lead the next government argued yesterday that the country should quickly reintroduce compulsory military service.

Friedrich Merz, head of the CDU/CSU bloc that won last month's elections, has argued that in the era of US President Donald Trump, Europe will have to better handle its own security.

The defence policy spokesman of his centre-right alliance, Florian Hahn, told Bild daily that Germany's "suspension of conscription no longer fits the current threat situation".

"The first conscripts will have to walk through the barracks gates in 2025," Hahn told the daily. "We cannot stand by and watch as the world around us becomes more unsafe."

Fears about the future strength of NATO have surged in Europe after Trump has increasingly sided with long-isolated Russia against Ukraine, upending the Western consensus of recent years.

Merz has vowed to break with many policies of former CDU chancellor Angela Merkel, including on migration, but also on her 2011 decision to suspend compulsory military service.

**No room for
mob justice**

FROM PAGE 1

She, however, said the government does not support any form of violence against women.

The press briefing was attended by Chief Adviser's Press Secretary Shafiqul Alam, Deputy Press Secretaries Apurba Jahangir and Abul Kalam Azad Majumder, and Assistant Press Secretary Suchismita Tithi.



As office hours end and the time for iftar approaches, the capital's metro stations get packed with commuters rushing to get home. The photo was taken at the Motijheel metro rail station yesterday afternoon.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

NEWS

COX'S BAZAR CLASH Father of victims files murder case

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Cox's Bazar

A murder case has been filed seven days after the death of Shihab Kabir Nahid during an attack and clash near an under-construction Air Force base beside the airport in Cox's Bazar.

His father, Md Nasir Uddin, filed the case with Cox's Bazar Sadar Model Police Station on Monday night.

The incident occurred on February 24 near Cox's Bazar town.

The air force on February 27 filed a case against two locals of Samitypara and 300 unidentified individuals. According to the case statement, the air force sustained damages worth Tk 69.4 lakh.

Shihab's father in the case filed on Monday said he and his wife had gone to the Community Eye Hospital in town for treatment on the morning of February 24. Around noon, a young man named Mohiuddin informed him that his only son, Nahid, 30, had been "shot dead" allegedly by an air force member and that his body was at Cox's Bazar Sadar Hospital.

Upon hearing this, he rushed to the hospital with his wife. The hospital authorities told him that the body would be handed over after an autopsy. The body was handed over at 6:00pm.

SEE PAGE 8 COL 1

CR Abrar 'next education adviser'

FROM PAGE 1

Foreign Service Academy in the capital yesterday.

Abrar is a former professor of the University of Dhaka's international relations department and the president of Odhikar, the human rights organisation founded by Adilur Rahman Khan, the adviser for the ministries of industries and housing and public works.

Abrar is also the executive director of the Refugee and Migratory Movements Research Unit founded by his wife Tasneem Siddiqui, a member of the committee formed by the interim government to prepare a white paper report on the Bangladesh economy.

He will take over from Wahiduddin Mahmud as the education adviser.

"Wahiduddin Mahmud has long expressed that managing two ministries simultaneously has been challenging for him. Given his advanced age and the heavy responsibilities at the planning ministry, CR Abrar is being added to the advisory council," Shafiqul said.

Constituent assembly, nat'l polls can be held together

FROM PAGE 1

This justice must serve as a precedent to ensure that no fascist regime emerges in the future."

Sarjis Alam, chief organiser (Northern region) of the NCP, stated that as long as Hasina is not on the gallows, no one should "even mistakenly talk about elections".

"Where killer Hasina has disposed of the bodies is still unknown. Mothers are desperately looking for their children's remains. Until justice is served, how can we think about anything else in this country?"

The party's Chief Organiser (Southern region) Hasnat Abdullah, said the current government came to power through the blood of students and the public.

"They must remember that if justice is not ensured, the entire process [of the interim government's formation] will be questioned. Justice must be ensured as quickly as possible. If necessary, the number of special tribunals should be increased to expedite the trials."

Those present at Rayerbazar also included NCP's Member Secretary Akhtar Hossain, Chief Coordinator Nasiruddin Patwary, Senior Joint Chief Coordinator Abdul Hannan

Ukraine can hold out on frontline

FROM PAGE 1

continue to work with the US through all available channels in a calm manner," he told a press conference. "We only have one plan - to win and to survive. Either we win, or the Plan B will be written by someone else."

Zelensky himself stayed silent over the aid freeze.

Russia said the suspension of US-Ukraine aid was the "best contribution" to peace, Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said, adding that it was a "solution which could really push the Kyiv regime to a peace process".

Europeans are racing to boost their own military spending and European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen yesterday unveiled proposals to boost spending on defence in the EU, which she said could mobilise up to 800 billion euros (\$840 billion). The EU is holding an emergency summit tomorrow.

Meanwhile, Russia said yesterday that any normalisation of relations with the United States would require the lifting of sanctions against Moscow.

"It is probably too early to say anything. We have not heard any official statements, but in any case, our attitude towards sanctions is well known, we consider them illegal," Peskov said.

"And, of course, if we talk about normalising bilateral relations, they need to be freed from this negative burden of so-called sanctions," he added.



Smoke billows from an apartment targeted in an Israeli raid in the eastern neighbourhood of Jenin amid a weeks-long offensive in the occupied West Bank yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

চুক্তি এ রিপার্স রিমিটেশন পাঠান
প্রিয়জনের পয়েন্টে...

যেকোনো শাখা থেকে রেমিটেন্স অহণ করলেই
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সাথে অ্যারও আরু নিচের আত্মস্থীয় পুরস্কার
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একটি পুরালী ব্যাংক অ্যাপস

Π

Dhaka hopes
Indian visa
services will
resume soon
Says foreign adviser

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka wants a good working relationship with New Delhi and hopes the Indian high commission will soon resume issuing visas to Bangladeshis, said Foreign Adviser Touhid Hossain yesterday.

"We have always said we want a good working relationship with India — we have a clear position on it," he told reporters at the foreign ministry.

Both countries want to maintain a good relationship, and Chief Adviser Muhammad Yunus made it clear in his interview with BBC Bangla, he added.

Asked if there is any update on when the Indian High Commission would

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3

SECONDARY SCHOOL
5pc quota for
July martyrs' families revoked
One seat per class to be reserved

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Ministry of Education has revoked its decision to allocate a five percent quota in government secondary schools for family members of those injured or killed during the July Uprising and has instead instructed that one extra seat per class be reserved for such students.

The ministry's Secondary and Higher Education Division issued a new directive on Monday, signed by Rahima Akter, deputy secretary (Secondary-I).

This directive will be applicable only for the 2025 academic year.

The directive states that in government secondary schools, one additional seat

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1



PHOTO: COLLECTED

ST MARTIN'S ISLAND

Tourism curb sparks ecological revival



an acre of rocky coastline in the island's southern region, including Diyar Matha.

Md Jamir Uddin, deputy director of the Department of Environment's (DoE) Cox's Bazar office, said with tourist activities and battery-powered vehicles restricted, at least seven to eight kilometres of beach along the island's southeast and west have seen an accumulation of seashells.

These shells help prevent beach erosion and protect the island's dunes. Previously, locals collected and sold these shells to traders who used them to make showpieces and jewellery.

He said drones were used to locate waste

deposits, leading to the collection of over 930 kilogrammes of waste in a cleanup operation that began on February 12.

Around 90 percent of the waste consisted of chips packets, polythene bags, and biscuit wrappers.

He said the number of Olive Ridley turtles coming to the island to lay eggs is rising, as artificial lights and loudspeakers — major deterrents for turtles — have been restricted.

Authorities are also protecting the turtles and their eggs from stray dogs that previously attacked them.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1

Rural areas to get 2,000 more doctors
Says Rizwana after advisory council meeting

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government will recruit 2,000 additional doctors to strengthen healthcare services in rural areas, said Environment Adviser Syeda Rizwana Hasan yesterday.

This will be in addition to the ongoing recruitment of 3,493 doctors through the Public Service Commission (PSC), she told the media at the Foreign Service Academy following a meeting of the advisers' council.

The adviser emphasised that rural communities are not receiving adequate healthcare and that the government is taking steps to bridge this gap by appointing the 2,000 doctors.

She also mentioned that Energy Adviser Muhammad Fouzul Kabir Khan recently visited Saudi Arabia and met with Saudi Aramco, the world's largest LNG supplier.

"We currently import LNG from Qatar and Oman. Aramco has agreed to supply LNG to us at lower prices," she said.

The advisory council also decided to rename two institutions — the Bangabandhu Science and Technology Fellowship Trust and the Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman Novo Theatre.

"The name of Bangabandhu will be omitted from the two institutions," said Rizwana.

Additionally, the council reviewed its progress, reporting that out of 135 decisions made, 92 (about 68 percent) have already been implemented.

"This is good progress," said Rizwana, adding that the council also agreed to set global standards for regulating saturated fat content in food products.



Heavy traffic congestion in Tejgaon yesterday, with long tailbacks on both sides of the road. Despite adjusted office hours for Ramadan, the capital's roads remain crowded during the pre-iftar rush.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

MONEY LAUNDERING
SC verdict on Tarique's appeal tomorrow

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Supreme Court will deliver its verdict tomorrow on an appeal challenging the High Court judgement that sentenced BNP's acting chairman Tarique Rahman and his close aide Gias Uddin Al Mamun to seven years' imprisonment in a money laundering case.

The Appellate Division of the SC yesterday fixed tomorrow for delivering the verdict on the appeal filed by Gias Uddin Al Mamun challenging the HC judgement.

A four-member bench of the Appellate Division headed by Chief Justice Syed Refaat Ahmed set the date after concluding hearing on the matter.

In 2013, the lower court acquitted Tarique and but jailed Gias for seven years and fined him Tk 40 crore.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1

Govt officer suspended for assaulting driver

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

The Ministry of Social Welfare has suspended Md Jahid Hasan, the upazila social services officer of Pabna, Rajshahi, following allegations of assaulting an auto rickshaw driver, said an official order issued on Monday.

The suspension follows a viral video showing Jahid severely beating the driver -- first with his shoe and then with a stick. Several national and local newspapers reported the incident on February 28, 2025.

Although the assault took place on February 2, it gained attention after the video surfaced online on February 28.

In its order, the ministry said Jahid's actions were inappropriate, violated professional discipline, and severely damaged the reputation of both the Department of Social Services and the Ministry of Social Welfare.



Two women fry puffed rice using hot sand and saltwater in a clay pot over an earthen stove. With high demand during Ramadan, they work from 3:00am to 8:00am, preparing several kilogrammes for sale in the market. The photo was taken at Bhorotkathi village in Jhalakathi yesterday.

PHOTO: TITU DAS

পাওয়ার গ্রিড বাংলাদেশ পিএলজি
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e-Tender বিজ্ঞপ্তি

পাওয়ার গ্রিডের জিএমডি, ময়মনসিংহ দস্তরের আওতাধীন নিয়ন্ত্রিত দরপত্র e-GP পোর্টালে প্রকাশিত হয়েছে।

ID	Reference	Title of Works
1072720	27.21.6152.643.07. 337.25.76; Date: 05.02.2025	Supply of Conductor, Hardware Fittings and Erection, Reconductoring, Testing & Commissioning of existing 132KV Kishoreganj-Mymensingh Circuit-2.

আগ্রহী টিকাদারী প্রতিষ্ঠানকে www.eprocure.gov.bd সাইটের মাধ্যমে দরপত্রে অংশগ্রহণের জন্য অনুরোধ করা যাচ্ছে।

মাসদল হক
নির্বাচী প্রকোশলনী, জিএমডি, ময়মনসিংহ

BCC launches all-out mosquito drive

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barishal

Amid a surge in mosquito population, Barishal City Corporation launched an all-out mosquito control drive yesterday afternoon.

The campaign, slated to continue till March 12, has been initially launched in wards 10 and 29 before expanding to all other wards under BCC.

The initiative kicked off with cleanliness operations and public awareness campaigns in the two wards.

As part of this initiative, unclean households will be identified and sent official notices. If the residents fail to clean their premises within the drive's duration, they may face fines, according to BCC officials.

As part of this initiative, unclean households will be identified and sent official notices. If the residents fail to clean their premises within the duration, they may face fines.

BANGLADESH BANK
Bankers' Selection Committee Secretariat
Head Office, Dhaka.
Website: www.bb.org.bd

Invitation for Tender Through Web

Date: 03/03/2025

Tenders are hereby invited through Electronic Media (e-Tenders) from bona fide, government-approved higher educational/training institutes for "Selection of an institution/firm for conducting recruitment examination for the post of Officer (General) (10th Grade) for State Owned Commercial and Specialized Banks and Financial Institutions" under package no. BSCS/2022/02. Detailed information and the terms and conditions pertaining to this tender are provided below:

01.	Procuring Entity	: Bankers' Selection Committee Secretariat (BSCS), Bangladesh Bank, Head office, Dhaka.
02.	Source of Fund	: Collection of fees from the applicants and funding from Bangladesh Bank and concerned Banks & Financial Institutions
03.	Invitation for Tender No.	: 21/2025
04.	Method of Procurement	: Open Tendering Method (National).
05.	Qualification of Tenderer	: This invitation for tender is open to all government-approved higher educational /training institutes of Bangladesh who have satisfied the following terms and conditions : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) A minimum of 10 years of general experience as a third-party service provider in the public sector, either as a sole service provider or in a joint venture. ii) The experience of successfully conducting a recruitment examination (i.e., an MCQ test and at least a 2-hour written examination) and the preparation of results for at least 1,00,000 candidates in a single arrangement under a single or multiple contracts/work orders (with a value of at least BDT 1 crore) for government, quasi-government, autonomous institutions, or banks and financial institutions during the last seven (7) years. The Tenderer shall have to furnish certificates from competent authority in line with the experience requirements. iii) Approval (in case of a Private University/firm) from UGC/relevant government authority regarding formation of the university/firm. iv) Having a valid trade license (applicable for a private university/firm), TIN certificate, VAT registration certificate. v) Average annual turnover (in case of a private institution/firm) of at least taka 4 (Four) crore during the last 3 years. vi) No failure in carrying out any assignment during the last 10 years.
06.	Web Address Receiving Tender Document	: www.bangladeshbank.org.bd www.bb.org.bd (eTender)
07.	Name & Address of the Offices Receiving Tender security & Other Documentary Evidence	: Bankers' Selection Committee Secretariat (BSCS), (16th floor, 2 nd Annex Building), Bangladesh Bank, Head Office, Motijheel, Dhaka.
08.	Last Date and Time for Online Submission of Tender Document	: 23/03/2025 up to 2:00 PM
09.	Last Date and Time for Submission of Original Tender Security & Tender Submission Letter as per Format PSN-1	: 23/03/2025 up to 2:00 PM
10.	Date, Time and Place for Tender Opening	: All Tenders will be opened at Bankers' Selection Committee Secretariat, (16th floor, 2 nd Annex Building), Bangladesh Bank, Head Office, Dhaka on 23/03/2025 at 2:30 PM. (Intending Tenderer or their authorized representatives are allowed to attend.)
11.	Time for Completion of the Assignment	: One year from the date of contract signing.
12.	Tender Security	: Tk. 4,00,000.00 (Taka Four Lakh) only in the form of PO/BD/BG.
13.	Special Instructions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. The Tenderer shall submit tender and scanned copy of documentary evidence through Bangladesh Bank web site (e-Tendering) & shall have valid e-mail address to participate in e-tendering. Original Bank Guarantee/Pay Order will be submitted in person to Director, Bankers' Selection Committee Secretariat, Bangladesh Bank, Head office, Dhaka. ii. If the tender is not submitted online or incomplete, defective or without tender security, it will be considered as non-responsive. iii. Tenderer shall provide documentary evidence etc. (attested or original whichever is necessary) when requested, failing which the tender may be considered as non-responsive. iv. The Tenderer shall submit "PSN-1", "PSN-2" as per format given in tender document and attached during submission of tender online (in pdf format). v. Furnishing of any false, misleading documents may result in rejection of tender and may lead to action under Rules 127 of PPR 2008. vi. BSCS reserves all rights to accept or reject any or all the Tender without assigning any reason whatsoever. No claim will be entertained in this regard.

সত্ত্ব: ডিসপ্লি: ৪৮/২০২৫-৬১৯
তারিখ: ০৮/০৩/২৫

ব্যাংকিং ও আর্থিক সেবা পেতে ইয়ারানির শিকার হলে কিংবা
কোনো অভিযোগ থাকলে ১৬২৩৬ নথরে ফোন করুন।

Signed/
(Mizanur Rahman Akon)
Director (BSCS), Bangladesh Bank
&
Member Secretary, BSC
Phone: 88-02-9530226

GD-566

Loose soybean oil fixed at Tk 160 a litre in Ctg

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

The district administration yesterday fixed retail price of loose soybean oil at Tk 160 per litre across Chattogram district.

The decision came at a meeting organised by Chattogram District Administration at Chattogram Circuit House and made effective from the same day. It will remain effective till April 10.

Chattogram City Corporation Mayor Shahadat Hossain was present as chief guest in the meeting, chaired by Farida Khanam, deputy commissioner of Chattogram.

Senior officials from businesses

including TK and City Group, importers of edible oil, trader leaders from Khatunganj wholesale market, and representatives of consumer organisations were also present.

"From today [Tuesday], loose soybean oil will be sold retail at Tk 160 per litre. Action will be taken if complaints are received against anyone selling at a higher price," Shahadat said.

On Monday, the CCC mayor and Chattogram DC visited Khatunganj, the country's largest wholesale market of daily essentials, amid the ongoing supply crisis of bottled soybean oil.

বাংলাদেশ বিদ্যুৎ উন্নয়ন বোর্ড
Office of the Executive Engineer
PC Pole Manufacturing Plant
BPDB, Saidpur, Nilphamari
E-mail: xen.pcpole.saidpur@gmail.com

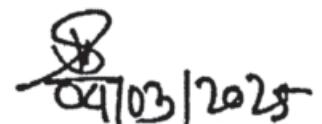
Memo No. 27.11.7385.550.01.018.25.94 Date: 04-03-2025

Invitation for e-Tender (OTM)

Tender ID	Name of work, Ref. No. & date	Tender publication date & time	Tender/ proposal document last selling date & time	Tender/ proposal closing & opening date & time
1079187	Carrying of SPC Pole and related materials 27.11.7385.550.01.018.2 5.93 Date: 04-03-2025	04-03-2025 12:45	19-03-2025 16:00	20-03-2025 11:00

This is one online tender where only e-Tenders will be accepted in e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copy will be accepted. To submit e-Tender please register on e-GP System (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>). Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal and from e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).

বিদ্যুৎ/জন-৮৫৮(২)/০৮/০৩/২৫


Engr. Md. Shofikul Islam
ID No. 1-01923
Executive Engineer
PC Pole Manufacturing Plant
BPDB, Saidpur, Nilphamari

GD-568

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Chief Adviser's Office
Bangladesh Export Processing Zones Authority
Cumilla Export Processing Zone
Old Airport Area, Cumilla-3500.
www.bepza.gov.bd

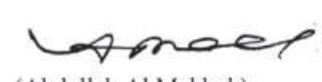
Ref. No. 03.06.1933.333.33.013.24/176 Date: 25 February 2025

Auction Notice

Sealed auctions are hereby invited from the interested National/Foreign Buyers/companies in order to sell Inventoried & Valuated Structure, Machinery, Equipment & other Assets by auction "as and where basis" of terminated textile industry named-M/s. Royal Denim Ltd., Plot # 108-110, 111 (part), 122 (part), 123 (part) & 124-126, Cumilla EPZ or to operate the enterprise. To participate in the auction the terms & conditions are stated below:

Terms & Conditions:

- 1) Interested Persons/Organizations/Existing enterprises of EPZ(s) (Local/Joint Venture/Foreign) or any other interested persons/organizations from outside EPZ can take part in this auction who are interested to purchase the Structure, Machinery, Equipment & other Assets "as and where basis" of the company by observing the existing rules and regulations in this regard;
- 2) Successful bidder will have to pay VAT, TAX and other payable fees as per custom rules for the duty free imported Assets of existing Industry to be taken out to the Domestic Tariff Area (DTA);
- 3) Auction documents attached with a single pay order/bank draft/FDD or any other means approved by Bangladesh Government from any schedule bank of an amount of 15% as earnest money (non-refundable for successful bidder & refundable for unsuccessful bidder) must be submitted in favour of BEPZA. Auction documents without earnest money will be treated as rejected;
- 4) Inventoried Structure, Machineries, Equipment & other Assets under the inventory list may be seen on 20-25 March 2025 from 10.00 am to 3.00 pm. Information regarding the visit and the list of Assets may be collected by contacting with the Executive Director, Cumilla EPZ directly;
- 5) If the auction is accepted by the Authority, the successful bidder will have to pay the remaining 85% amount of the quoted price along with applicable TAX & VAT within 15 days to BEPZA through Pay Order/Bank Draft/FDD or any other means approved by Bangladesh Government. Accordingly, the delivery of Structure, Machineries, Equipment & other Assets will have to be taken as per Customs & BEPZA rules;
- 6) Auction Schedule may be bought by paying Tk. 5,000.00 (non-refundable) within 06 April 2025 during office hours from the Accounts Department of Cumilla-EPZ, Dhaka-EPZ, Chattogram-EPZ, Adamjee EPZ, Karnaphuli EPZ, Mongla EPZ, Ishwardi EPZ, Uttara EPZ & Accounts Department, BEPZA Executive Office, Dhaka;
- 7) Auction schedule may be dropped into the auction box kept at the office of Executive Director, Cumilla EPZ on 07 April 2025 from 10:00 am to 12:00 pm and Submitted Auction documents will be opened in the same date at 12:30 pm at the office of Executive Director, Cumilla EPZ in presence of the bidders (if any). Updated copy of VAT, TIN and Trade License shall have to be attached with the Auction schedule; but this condition may be relaxed by the Authority in case of fully new 100% foreign owned company interested to invest in the EPZ;
- 8) Persons/Organizations/Investors who are interested to operate the closed industry will get priority in auction;
- 9) Successful bidder will have to take permission (If applicable) to operate the industrial unit in the EPZ by following the project sanctioning procedure of BEPZA as per rules;
- 10) The Authority reserves the right to accept any auction or reject any or all of the submitted auctions without showing any reason. The Authority also reserves the right to cancel the Auction and accordingly take next action if the desired rates are not obtained.


Abdullah Al Mahbub
Executive Director
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GD-560

Fallout of USAID funding cuts

Govt and NGOs should collaborate to keep key projects alive

Like many countries, Bangladesh was caught off guard by the speed and extent of USAID funding cuts under the Trump administration. Although there is no official data on how many people have lost, or may lose, their jobs due to the freezing of funds, estimates from the development sector suggest that between 30,000 and 40,000 people may be affected. This is deeply concerning, particularly because it will put significant strain on the economy.

According to diplomatic sources, USAID provides Bangladesh with \$300-400 million annually for health, nutrition, agriculture, livelihoods, labour rights, human trafficking prevention, and democratic development. These funds have been instrumental in Bangladesh's progress in areas such as maternal health, climate resilience, and rural development. However, following Donald Trump's inauguration as US president on January 20, his administration swiftly suspended most USAID funding and activities, except for emergency food aid, including assistance for Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh. This move has not only left thousands of development workers unemployed but also cast severe doubt over the future of various development projects.

Many of these now unfunded projects serve the most vulnerable segments of our society. Whether providing crucial immunisations, essential medicines, affordable birth control, or income-generating opportunities for the poor, their loss will have a far-reaching impact. Some projects also focus on promoting workers' rights or supporting labour related cases. With funding now frozen, many of these labour rights initiatives could be sidelined, leaving workers even more vulnerable to exploitation. In a country like Bangladesh, where a significant portion of the workforce is employed in the informal sector with weak labour protections, this could be devastating.

Many development projects currently facing an existential crisis are similarly essential not only for their beneficiaries but also for society at large. As such, the government must not allow them to collapse. It should instead conduct a thorough evaluation to identify the most critical initiatives and explore ways to sustain them. This could include direct government funding for the high-priority projects, partnerships with international organisations, or securing alternative donor support. NGOs, too, must adapt by assessing their efficiency, optimising operational costs, and exploring sustainable funding sources. Without compromising beneficiary support, they should implement cost-saving measures and seek collaborations with the private sector, philanthropic institutions, and public-private partnerships to reduce dependency on foreign aid.

The USAID funding cuts have posed a serious challenge, but they also underscored the need for a more self-reliant development model. A coordinated approach by the government, NGOs, and the private sector is therefore essential to ensure that crucial programmes continue to serve those who need them most.

Expedite textbook delivery

NCTB's poor planning is disrupting academic activities

It is deeply disappointing that three months into the new academic year, many school and madrasa students under the national curricula are still without their full set of textbooks, which is severely hampering their studies. According to a *Prothom Alo* report, the National Curriculum and Textbook Board (NCTB) was supposed to deliver a total of 39.5 crore books to four crore students at the start of the year, but as of the first week of March, over 6.38 crore books remain undelivered. Of them, 6.22 crore are meant for secondary-level students, including those in Ebtedayee madrasas.

As many of us would already know, several factors have impeded the delivery of textbooks this year, including book revisions, the reversion to an older curriculum, the decision to assign printing exclusively to local printers, and delays in tendering, approvals, contracts, etc. However, industry sources told *Prothom Alo* that NCTB's poor planning was a key factor in this setback. In fact, insiders had predicted last year that textbook distribution would not be complete before March, despite NCTB's claims that it would be done by mid-January. Printers had warned of a paper shortage, as much of it is apparently imported from China. Yet, three months later, the same issue persists, with NCTB now blaming printers for failing to secure alternative suppliers and complete the job on time. Why the textbook board did not address this problem earlier—before awarding printing contracts—is a mystery to us.

By now, NCTB's inefficiencies are nothing new. We witnessed a number of hiccups throughout the textbook revision and printing process, with the government body omitting as well as printing wrong information in revised books. Unfortunately, it is students who bear the brunt of these errors and failures, as delays in receiving books directly affect their learning and exam preparation. Under the circumstances, penalising printers, who failed to meet deadlines, is not enough; NCTB officials must also be held accountable. They must explain why a contingency plan was not in place to prevent such delays.

There is also scepticism over NCTB's latest deadline of March 10 for completing textbook distribution, as schools will remain closed throughout Ramadan. We hope this does not become yet another example of NCTB's poor planning. The authorities must ensure that such disruptions do not recur.

THIS DAY IN HISTORY



Joseph Stalin dies

On this day in 1953, Soviet Premier Joseph Stalin died at age 74 and was succeeded by Georgy Malenkov.

SPECIAL POWERS ACT, 1974

Bangladesh's forgotten villain



MIND THE GAP

Barrister Noshin Nawal is an activist, feminist, and a columnist for *The Daily Star*. She can be reached at nawahnoshin1@gmail.com.

NOSHIN NAWAL

Bangladesh has a curious love affair with villains—particularly those neatly wrapped up in legal jargon. Mention the Digital Security Act (DSA) or the Information and Communication Technology Act (ICT) at your next coffee catch-up, and you'll witness rants more passionate than your melodramatic cousin's Facebook poetry. But casually bring up the Special Powers Act (SPA), 1974, and watch the room go eerily quiet, as though you've referenced an awkward family scandal nobody wishes to recall. It's our quietly menacing dinosaur, a relic still lurking unnoticed in our legal attic—outdated, oppressive, and embarrassingly overdue for retirement.

The Special Powers Act isn't merely another oppressive law—it's the patriarch of Bangladesh's infamous "black laws," a term lovingly reserved for legislation designed primarily to silence anyone who dares to disagree with those in power. Born in the chaotic year of 1974—presumably when human rights were as optional as side dishes at a wedding—it hands the government a chilling ability to detain individuals without bothering with formal charges or pesky courtroom procedures. Initially, the detention is for six months, but here's the diabolical detail: these six-month periods can be renewed indefinitely. Think of it as Bangladesh's own twisted version of Hotel California—you can attempt to check out anytime, but good luck actually leaving.

What's especially alarming is how comfortably the SPA tramples over constitutional protections that are supposed to be sacred. According to Article 33(l) of the Bangladesh Constitution, any arrested individual must be promptly informed of their alleged crime and must have access to legal counsel. Additionally, Article 32 explicitly guarantees protection against arbitrary deprivation of life and liberty. Yet under the SPA, detainees frequently find themselves in a Kafkaesque nightmare—imprisoned indefinitely without knowing their supposed wrongdoing, without lawyers, and without recourse. It casually shreds the principle of habeas corpus, a cornerstone of any legitimate democracy, as if tossing away an unwanted food delivery flyer.

This form of preventive detention cheerfully ignores fundamental due process, casually discarding the rights to a fair trial and presumption of innocence, concepts our constitution claims to uphold. Terms like "prejudicial to national security" or "disturbing

public order" are deliberately vague, conveniently allowing authorities to target virtually anyone—from outspoken journalists and opposition figures to students whose only crime is to exercise their democratic rights.

Ironically, while activists justifiably raise hell over digital censorship via the DSA, the SPA goes quietly unnoticed, merrily detaining people without causing hashtags, tweets, or even the mildest online outrage. Amnesty International and Human Rights Forum Bangladesh have previously pointed to thousands of SPA detentions, citing devastated families,

relatives without answers, recourse, or support. Entire communities are held hostage by fear. Yet, because this abuse happens discreetly rather than dramatically, it fails to attract widespread empathy. Apparently, silent suffering doesn't make great headlines.

At present, Bangladesh finds itself led by an interim government promising significant institutional reform. Nobel Laureate Muhammad Yunus, now overseeing the transition, speaks eloquently about restoring democratic norms and constitutional rights. These reforms have inspired considerable hope. Yet, curiously absent from the discourse is any meaningful effort to address, amend, or—heaven forbid—repeal the SPA. It's as if everyone is busily rearranging furniture in a sinking house while ignoring the colossal, dinosaur-shaped hole in the ceiling.

Over decades, civil society leaders, legal experts, and human rights advocates have tirelessly argued that the SPA's unchecked powers are fundamentally incompatible with democratic ideals. Young Bangladeshis, whose hashtags and social media-driven activism have changed national conversations, are growing increasingly impatient with a law older than their parents, and

embarrassingly overdue for retirement. However, the interim government now has a historic opportunity—indeed, a moral obligation—to confront this embarrassing and dangerous law. A dedicated, independent commission must urgently review the SPA, offering meaningful, rights-respecting alternatives. Many democracies worldwide manage national security concerns without permanently sacrificing constitutional protections. Judicial oversight, transparency, and accountability are achievable goals; Bangladesh certainly doesn't lack the capability, merely the will.

Repealing or radically reforming the SPA wouldn't merely be symbolic—it would signify a profound and lasting shift in the state-citizen relationship.



VISUAL: ANWAR SOHEL

twice as outdated. This dissatisfaction is real, even if it isn't trending on Instagram. The lack of information and conversation around this topic is equally concerning.

Despite its severity, the SPA has mostly escaped international scrutiny, mainly because it's quietly old-school compared to flashier digital laws. Even as Amnesty International reported worrying spikes in SPA detentions during the previous election unrest, global and local outrage barely surfaced. It seems detention doesn't count unless it comes with trending hashtags and retweets.

Behind the legal jargon, families bear the genuine cost of this act. Loved ones vanish into detention, leaving behind confused and traumatised

It would finally honour constitutional promises made under Articles 32 and 33(l), bringing Bangladesh closer to genuine democracy.

So, next time you sit with friends, passionately dissecting the latest digital outrage over overpriced cappuccinos, perhaps spare a thought (and a hashtag) for this quietly terrifying villain. The Special Powers Act has lurked in our shadows since 1974—far too long, and far too damaging, to continue going unnoticed.

It's high time Bangladesh finally confronted this sinister dinosaur. Let's consign it where it belongs: safely in history's junkyard, alongside outdated rotary phones, embarrassingly wide bell-bottom pants, and every other idea best left firmly in the past.

Is smoking the problem, or that women are doing it?



Naziba Basher is a journalist at *The Daily Star*.

NAZIBA BASHER

A leisurely chat over a cup of tea and a quick smoke hardly has an ominous ring or suggest any associated danger—other than the consumption of tobacco and sugar, of course. Yet, that is exactly what turned out to be a nightmare for two people at a tea stall in Dhaka's Lalmatia area on Saturday. The only reason was that they were women.

An elderly man took offence and remarked that women should not be allowed to smoke there, at which the two women were duly offended. An altercation ensued with slurs quickly turning into slaps. In an appalling turn of events, the persecutor, a man well into his 60s, managed to incite a mob, calling the women "whores" for smoking in public. The mob pounced on the women. They were abused, harassed and assaulted. They were injured and parts of their clothes were ripped off. All because they smoked in public. Taken away into police custody, the two were then told not to file a complaint.

When asked about the matter later, Home Affairs Adviser Lt Gen (retd) Jahangir Alam Chowdhury duly noted that smoking in public is an offence—whether the laws against public smoking applied in this case could be a matter of debate—and that people should refrain from this habit. He also remarked that there had been a spat between the women and the old man, and that one of the women had apparently splashed tea on the man, thus triggering the whole incident.

However, the home adviser did not, for once, note the criminal nature of what the men had done to those women.

The Penal Code, 1860 in Bangladesh criminalises sexual assault against women, criminal force with intent to discolour, and attempt of wrongful confinement of women (sections 354, 355 and 375), all of which apply to the mob and the elderly villain in question—all of them men, by the way, and perhaps many smokers among them too.

It is not about the consumption of tobacco (chewing zarda, for instance) but the act of smoking by women that is generally associated with Westernised rebelliousness, that almost automatically lends itself to "bad character." Women who smoke are frequently labelled as "wayward," implying they lack traditional values. Not for men, though. For them it might be seen as an added layer of appeal—a show of masculinity, even.

This double standard is deeply rooted in subcontinental gender norms, cultural expectations, and moral policing, which dictate that women should embody ideals of modesty, virtue, and domesticity.

In a justified show of outrage, people protested, many women among them. On Monday, protesters under the banner of "Bangladesh Against Rape and Oppression" staged a demonstration protesting what happened in Lalmatia, burning an effigy of the home adviser and demanding his resignation. They argued that while smoking in public may be subject to legal restrictions, it does not justify physical assault. They also criticised the adviser for failing to acknowledge the criminal actions perpetrated by the attackers against the two women in Lalmatia.

This is not at all about encouraging women—or men—to smoke. Smoking is harmful for both men and women. It increases the risk of lung cancer, other forms of cancer, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), chronic bronchitis, and emphysema, cardiovascular diseases, hypertension, strokes, hormonal imbalances, and fertility issues for BOTH male and female smokers. No, it is about the male chauvinistic mindset that sets unreasonable standards for one gender and not the other. The same mindset spills into other spheres of public life—participation in sports, attire or even the nature of employment—with equal toxicity.

What happened in Lalmatia and our home adviser's response that followed had nothing to do with smoking. They only proved themselves as two more specimens confirming the stereotype which is easily threatened. It is quite simply discrimination. The same turn of events would have been quite beyond the question if it were two men.

It was never about smoking. It is just that women were doing it, and perhaps seen to be invading what is deemed to be men's territory. Feminist movements, urban youth cultures, and changing attitudes are slowly pushing back against these outdated norms, but incidents like the one in Lalmatia show that there is still a long way to go. But we will continue to raise our voice against injustice and gender-based violence.

With or without a cigarette between the fingers.

THIS DAY IN HISTORY



Joseph Stalin dies

On this day in 1953, Soviet Premier Joseph Stalin died at age 74 and was succeeded by Georgy Malenkov.

Trump and Zelensky: Is the damage irreparable?



Ramisa Rob
is in charge of Geopolitical Insights at The Daily Star.

RAMISA ROB

US President Donald Trump and the Republicans gave many indications that they were not fans of the Biden-era foreign policy towards Russia's invasion of Ukraine, which was sticking with Ukraine for "as long as it takes." Before his second inauguration, what Trump would do with US military support for Ukraine was a tense topic under his "America First" transactional foreign policy. Then it really exploded, much beyond the worst nightmare of European leaders. Vice-President JD Vance and Trump attacked Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelensky, with Trump going on to accuse Zelensky of playing with "World War III." During the internationally televised meltdown, the message was clear, if it had not been before: in the current US foreign policy, the US is only interested in supporting Ukraine if it serves the current president and his administration's broader political goals.

Underpinning what was largely an unstrategic—not to mention immoral—and ill-tempered treatment of the Ukrainian leader, is Trump's larger vision that the post-World War II era geopolitics is one that has led to what he calls "America's decline." For Trump, it's always, "What's in it for me?" And that policy is framed as "America First." But Trump's notions about what is to his advantage remains questionable. He believes that his country has the power to secure any deal under him, similar to Zelensky's foe, Russian President Vladimir Putin. Trump has broken ranks with European leaders on Putin. Before Zelensky's visit, he called the Ukrainian leader a dictator, and said Putin should be allowed to return to G7, from which he was expelled in 2014 after annexing Crimea.

On Monday, the US president paused all military aid to Ukraine, as reported by Bloomberg. Prior to the news, Trump had again taken to social media to chide Zelensky's assessment of the war with Russia. In a social media post, pointing to recent comments in which Zelensky said the end of his country's war with Russia remains far off, Trump said the US "will not put up with it for much longer," adding that Zelensky's assessment was "the worst statement that could have been made." To reporters on Monday afternoon, Trump continued to suggest that Zelensky "doesn't want to make a deal," and that one could "be made very fast." Trump went on to say he believed that "Russia wants to make a deal," and that "certainly, the people of Ukraine want to make a deal. They've suffered more than anybody else."

The warnings from the meltdown—and

the clear fact that Trump openly dislikes Zelensky—extended to Europe. Zelensky left early; the deal to offer Ukraine's rarest minerals to the US remained unsigned on the table. European leaders have stepped up, and the UK has taken on an urgency to seize the moment. The UK signed a \$2 billion deal with Ukraine and paved a way for the country to tap into Russian frozen assets, which have been under Europe's jurisdiction. The deal will allow Ukraine to use export finance to buy more than 5,000 air defence missiles, which will be made in Belfast.

On Monday, while Trump continued to sideline Ukraine, British Prime Minister Keir Starmer also declared a four-point plan for Ukraine, which included a "coalition of the willing" that would come together to draw up a peace plan to end the war. He said he would present it to the US president for his support. Unlike NATO and other alliances, "a coalition of willing" is designed to be palatable to the US president in the sense of nation-states that are willing to join in by not sending in their troops. The UK and France have mentioned that they are willing to commit troops in the event of a peace deal.

Starmer, European leaders, and Zelensky reiterated that the success of a peace deal would need strong US backing. Starmer told the UK members of parliament that Trump's commitment to achieving peace in Ukraine is "sincere." As the British prime minister spoke of the "heavy lifting" that Europe would have to do but reiterated the need for US support in the House of Commons, the US president posted on social media, saying, "Europe... stated flatly that they cannot do the job without the US—probably not a great statement to have been made in terms of a show of strength against Russia. What are they thinking?"

Trump's strangely antagonistic statements towards Europe on the issue of Ukraine, along with the bullying of Zelensky, has generated rifle speculations of US military aid cuts in the media. According to analysts, large spending cuts would definitely result in greater loss of life and could easily result in Ukraine losing the war.

The war is currently stalemated, but Russia has the initiative. Ukraine's defences on the eastern front are weak, though not breaking; it retains an enclave in Russia's Kursk region. Russia has made small but continuous gains in Ukraine's east since the Ukrainian counteroffensive halted in November 2023, but at a high cost. In 2024, the Russians suffered more than 420,000 casualties, and

the combat losses since 2022 are set to cross one million by mid-year, and Putin has not yet called for a second mobilisation. The US provides Ukraine with the full spectrum of equipment that a military needs.

To understand the importance of the US, militarily for Ukraine: the packages run the gamut from heavy weapons to munitions—artillery shells and air defence missiles—to medical equipment and cold weather

12, Donald Trump said Ukraine would not recover all its territories or join NATO, and said he would meet with Russian strongman Vladimir Putin. On February 13, Trump broke ranks with G7 leaders, who expelled Russia after it annexed Crimea in 2014, and said Putin should be allowed to return. For Trump, his path to "peace" between Russia and Ukraine is an image of himself standing between the countries. He has not agreed to provide any

reconsider the US as a steady ally, the prospects for Ukraine remain as bleak as ever. Trump continues his divisive language, but as we have seen before, his actions are often divorced from his words. US relations with Russia have always enjoyed a rare bipartisan consensus, even during recent times, despite talk of aid cuts. But the current atmosphere seems to have upended the earlier equation—for now. After the fiery meeting that drew



US President Donald Trump, along with Vice-President JD Vance, meets with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky at the White House in Washington, DC, US on February 28, 2025.

PHOTO: REUTERS

gear supplies. According to the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), recent packages appear to provide the monthly production of equipment that is in short supply in the US, such as artillery shells, air defence systems, and anti-tank weapons. Around a dozen HIMARS to boost Ukrainian firepower and a dozen National Advanced Surface-to-Air Missile Systems (NASAMS) for air defence were contracted in 2022 and will soon appear on the battlefield in Ukraine.

The focus on military equipment should not discount the "soft" support—training and intelligence data, for example—that the US provides. Although such support cannot be counted in the same way that equipment can, it has been critical in building Ukraine's military capabilities, and Europe cannot replace the same intelligence as to when Russia would attack or not.

Trump's approach to the so-called "peace deal," which he keeps referring to, has so far included dialogue with Putin. On February

security guarantees that Starmer has spoken of, and solely focused on the deal to open up Ukrainian minerals to US companies, arguing that the presence of US workers in Ukraine itself would discourage Russia from attacking or encroaching on the Ukrainian territory.

But if Trump's ultimate goal is normalisation with Moscow, and he is willing to make that deal, where is the line where he would settle with Putin? Vladimir Putin is not a reliable ally, with the robust track record of turning back on agreements, and if Trump wants to rewrite the history of the US and Russia, what are the concessions he would be willing to settle on with Russia? If those concessions come at the cost of Ukraine's sovereignty, neither Ukraine nor Europe would be onboard. On Monday, Kremlin spokesperson Dmitry Peskov told reporters, "We see that the collective West has begun to partially lose its unity."

While Zelensky has said the US-Ukraine relationship is salvageable, and Europe refuses to—on the diplomatic front—

backlash, Trump's cabinet, such as Secretary of State Marco Rubio and others, continue to back him and have vaguely said that the efforts to end the war need a "reset." It is unclear whether the entire administration remains aligned with Trump on whatever position he has on normalising relations with Russia, but his critics have accused him of essentially selling out Ukraine.

In the coming days, the best case scenario would be the continuation of US and European aid to stabilise front lines, defend Russian attacks, and find a footing for a negotiated settlement, and perhaps Russia would be more willing to make a deal as its cost of war piles up, as casualties are looking to surpass a million. What will happen is frankly too soon to tell, but the way the meeting-turned-shouting match between Zelensky and Trump blew up on live television—juxtaposed with the new tone of US foreign policy—the writing is on the wall: expect the unexpected.

Why Palestinians are now worried about the ceasefire



Yousef SY Ramadan
is the ambassador of Palestine to Bangladesh.

YOUSEF SY RAMADAN

In nearly eight decades of negotiating history between Israel and the Palestinians, the rule is enshrined that the weapon of the Palestinians' in the negotiations is their right and the paper that establishes it, and that Israel's weapon is the power of fire. In other words, we always find ourselves with the narrative that Israel is doing completely contrary to what was agreed, and that very dynamic also refers to the US, which is always accused of double standards; first, ensuring the interest of Israel in full, and second, ignoring rights for the Palestinians, which they claim to stand for, in engineering

Take for example, the Oslo Accords, signed in the White House and the aftermath that saw its promise utterly left unfulfilled for the rights of the Palestinians. Palestine is at an immensely fragile position, where the ceasefire deal—a deal largely made by the US—could bring us back to square one. As widely known, the deal came in three stages: the first has advantages for both parties, and the second has more advantages for the Palestinians, in that it includes a more permanent withdrawal of Israeli troops and authorities' presence in Gaza, which they destroyed.

We have seen this game before: postponing the negotiations which save Trump's ally Netanyahu the precious time he needs to rearrange his cards in the Israeli political arena to remain in power. As long as the war continues, even in parallel with the temporary truce and exchange, Netanyahu will remain the ruler in Israel until the last day of his term, with renewed chances of reaching another term.

agreements throughout the years.

The judgement in this equation is always power in all its military, economic and alliance components.

In all the agreements and understandings reached, Israel was exercising its commitment to them on the measure of the gains it has achieved for Israel, and the harm inflicted on the Palestinians by dispensing with them.

Israel's fascist Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's office came minutes after the first phase ended, and as talks have begun on starting the second phase that's aimed at ending the war and seeing all remaining living hostages in Gaza returned home, he issued a statement describing a US proposal—a ceasefire extension through Passover, or April 20. On the first day,



Israel blocked food and fuel from entering Gaza after the ceasefire's first phase expired on the night of March 1.

PHOTO: REUTERS

half the hostages, alive and dead, would be released. The rest would be released if agreement is reached on a permanent ceasefire. The extension would provide Israel with its desired advantages to continue illegal occupation, and the fate of the second and third phases are becoming determined, according to the unequal equation based on Israeli military force, which, even if not exercised, remains threatening enough.

Since the beginning of the first phase, Israel has been thinking, planning and working on how to defer the second phase and continue to deprive the Palestinians of its advantages, benefiting from the fact that the exchange will reduce the pressure from the Netanyahu government to bring home the Israeli hostages, and neutralise the hate against them, while also benefiting from the time factor that gives it valuable opportunities to officially and actually

abolish the second phase.

The Palestinians and Arabs can now admit that what is happening now is a lack of even the minimum balance that came from Washington—the American position under the Biden administration was characterised by a synthetic duality. Now, it is to unconditionally give Israel everything it needs and beyond more than the means of war, and giving the Palestinians in return—very limited drops of financial support to beat all the lingering traumas from the atrocities they have witnessed, and lived through. The Trump administration has unequivocally moved the already-lopsided equation between the US and Israel in another direction, as the US is no longer a mediator but rather a direct party by giving Israel an open mandate to do by the Palestinians whatever it wants.

Recent events in other parts of the world also indicate it could get much more frightening and worse for the Middle East. The kind of US government which staunchly supported Ukraine against Russian invasion, selectively following international law, is also vanishing from Washington. Ukrainian President Zelensky's humiliation in the White House should be understood as greater and deeper than a verbal quarrel between two presidents. It established the beginning of a dangerous era in which the creditor is a master and the debtor is a slave. Countries, including the Arab states, who could also be candidates for similar insults—as would be Europe—have the actual potential to save themselves and their prestige before the axe falls on the head. It is incumbent upon nations that still have power against Donald Trump to act before things take a turn for the worse.

We are already witnessing a pattern of behaviour in what is happening about Gaza, where the stages of the agreed deal are slyly being turned into one stage—which is only to be extended until the recovery of all Israeli hostages, living and dead, and then we will see everything that had nothing to do with what is written on the paper. We have seen this game before: postponing the negotiations which save Trump's ally Netanyahu the precious time he needs to rearrange his cards in the Israeli political arena to remain in power. As long as the war continues, even in parallel with the temporary truce and exchange, Netanyahu will remain the ruler in Israel until the last day of his term, with renewed chances of reaching another term.

The papers of agreements and understandings from the beginning of the Palestinian cause to the present day, have been burning in all rounds of its right struggle with the Israeli fire, to enshrine an equation that says: "What can the ink, paper, signatures, mediators and witnesses do with the fire other than burning and turning into ashes?"

Disarming 'a red line' amid Gaza truce impasse

Says Hamas leader as Israel demands 'full demilitarisation'

AGENCIES

Hamas leader Sami Abu Zuhri told AFP yesterday that disarming is a red line for his movement and other Palestinian groups in negotiations to extend the fragile Gaza ceasefire.

"Any talk about the resistance's weapons is nonsense. The resistance's weapons are a red line for Hamas and all resistance factions," Abu Zuhri said shortly after Israeli Foreign Minister Gideon Saar demanded the "full demilitarisation" of Gaza to proceed to the second stage of the January truce.

"We don't have an agreement on phase two. We demand total demilitarisation of Gaza, Hamas and Islamic Jihad out, and give us our hostages. If they agree to that we can implement tomorrow," Saar told a news conference in Jerusalem. He also charged that humanitarian aid had become the "number one source of revenue" for Hamas, as he defended his government's decision to block all deliveries to Gaza.

Arab leaders yesterday gathered in Cairo to discuss an alternative to a widely condemned plan from US President

- » Arab summit draft communique adopts Egyptian plan for Gaza
- » Hamas urges Arab summit to 'thwart' Gaza displacement plan

Donald Trump to assume control of war-battered Gaza and displace its Palestinian population.

A summit draft communique adopted an Egyptian plan for Gaza's future and called on the international community and financial institutions to provide support for the plan quickly, reports Reuters.

Hamas urged Arab leaders to "thwart" the relocation of Palestinians from Gaza.

"We look forward to an effective Arab role that ends the humanitarian tragedy created by the occupation in the Gaza Strip... and thwarts the (Israeli) occupation's plans to displace (Palestinians)," a statement by the group said.

After the first phase of the truce ended over the weekend without agreement on how to continue, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's office announced a halt to "all entry of goods and supplies" into the territory.

Israel's "closure of the Gaza Strip crossings for the third consecutive day, and its prevention of the entry of aid and goods, represents a Zionist insistence on violating the ceasefire agreement, and a clear war crime," Hamas said in its statement.



Serbian opposition lawmakers throw smoke grenades and tear gas inside parliament in Belgrade, Serbia, yesterday, as seen in this screengrab taken from a video. They were protesting against the government and supporting demonstrating students. During the chaos, one legislator suffered a stroke.

PHOTO: AFP

US MILITARY AID PAUSE Ukrainians see Trump helping Putin

AFP, Kyiv

Ukrainians were furious and in shock yesterday following a decision by US President Donald Trump to suspend military aid to Kyiv, saying the move played into the Kremlin's hands.

Denys Kazansky, a Ukrainian media commentator said that while Washington had paused military aid to Kyiv "North Korea and Iran did not stop military aid to Russia".

Both Moscow-allied countries have provided critical military support to the Russian military since the Kremlin launched its invasion in February 2022.

"We live in a reality where the United States has become an ally of North Korea, Russia and Iran and it is helping them carry out aggression against a European country," Kazansky added on social media.

Igor Romanenko, a military analyst who previously served in the Ukrainian army, said European countries would probably continue to support Kyiv but that aid would not make up for the loss of US military supplies.

"That is why we must rely on our own strength and reserves. This does not mean that we should despair," he said. He was optimistic Washington would not halt aid entirely but said it was unclear what kind of aid Ukraine might be able to rely on.

Sergiy Takhmazov, a member of the Ukrainian military, questioned how long Ukrainian would be able to hold out without US support for air defence systems and intelligence sharing. "All those who demand peace from us ignore that the price of our peace will be higher than the price of our war," said Pavlo Kazarin, a journalist.

WHO says it won't 'give up' after US aid funding cuts

AFP, Geneva

The World Health Organization (WHO) yesterday acknowledged that the US freeze on foreign aid funding has hit vital global health programmes but vowed to find a way to keep delivering to those in need.

The United Nations health agency said it was still too early to determine the full impact of the freeze on foreign aid spending by the United States -- traditionally the world's largest aid donor.

But WHO spokeswoman Margaret Harris admitted that some programmes had clearly been affected.

One authority to serve them all

FROM PAGE 10

the National Identity Registration Act 2010. Bangladesh launched NID cards with photographs in 2007-2008, as part of updating the voter list.

The Directorate of Registration under the Law and Justice Division deals with the marriage and divorce data while the Directorate General of Health Services collects health data, including causes of death.

A new Birth and Death Registration Act was passed in 2004. The law allowed local government bodies and Bangladesh embassies abroad to register births and deaths. The Office of the Registrar General of Birth and Death under the Local Government Division was established in September 2013 to establish a permanent central database of birth and death records.

The authorities so far have issued

birth certificates to at least 16.80 crore people. Birth registration is free if it is done within 45 days of a child's birth. For getting death certificates, children of deceased person should notify the authorities within 45 days of death.

Birth registration is needed for enrolment in educational institutions, registration for secondary school certificate examinations, applying for NID, passport, and driving licence.

Zahid Hossain, registrar general (Birth and Death Registration), told The Daily Star, "I believe that bringing NID and birth registration under one umbrella will expedite the delivery of citizen services."

An interim government adviser told The Daily Star yesterday that several advisers are in favour of keeping the NID activities under the EC.

Shipping Adviser Brig Gen (retd) Sakhawat Hussain, who is also a former election commissioner, told this newspaper that they would look into the matter when the draft ordinance is placed before them.

Earlier in May 2021, the government took an initiative to shift services relating to NID cards to the Security Services Division under the home ministry from the EC.

Ignoring objections of EC officials, the National Identity Registration Bill was passed in parliament in September 2023. The bill aimed to transfer the national identity registration operation from the EC to the home ministry's Security Services Division.

The interim government in mid-January repealed the new law paving the way for returning the NID services to the EC.

Manikganj youth builds aircraft

FROM PAGE 10

He said the aircraft was built primarily for experimental training rather than commercial purposes. However, with government funding and sponsorship, commercial production could be possible. The aircraft can reach an altitude of over 50 feet.

Deputy Commissioner Manowar Hossain Molla said the government would support Julhas's research.

While acknowledging the technical complexities involved, he said initial financial assistance had been provided to encourage his efforts.

Two Iranians hurt

FROM PAGE 10

which was a rental, and assaulted the two foreigners."

The victims claimed that \$950 and three iPhones were stolen from their possession during the attack.

A video of the mob attack circulated on social media following the incident.

The injured Iranians were taken to Kurmitola General Hospital for treatment. They were later escorted back to their Banani hotel.

Bhatara Police Station Officer-in-Charge Md Mazharul Islam said that the incident originated from a dispute over the money exchange rate. "However, the whole story is yet to be clear. A case is being prepared."

He added that police are trying to find the alleged thieves.

India break Australia jinx

FROM PAGE 10

Ravindra Jadeja took two wickets each.

India will now face the winner of the today's second semifinal between South Africa and New Zealand in Sunday's final in a bid to become the first team to win the tournament three times.

The outcome also means that the final of the tournament will be played in Dubai, not Lahore.

The last ODI between the two sides was the final of the 2023 World Cup, which ended in a heartbreaking loss for India in front of a home crowd.

But this time, after not allowing Australia to post an imposing target on the board, India pulled off a comfortable chase where they looked

mostly in command with a few minor bumps along the way.

After India lost Shubman Gill (eight off 11) and skipper Rohit Sharma (28 off 29) in the Powerplay, Kohli took control of the chase, forming a 91 run partnership with Iyer for the third wicket, followed by a 44 run stand with Axar Patel (27 off 30) and a 47-run partnership with Rahul.

However, Australia was also guilty of reprieving Kohli when he was on 51, with Glenn Maxwell diving to his right but failing to hold onto a catch at short mid off of the bowling off Zampa.

Kohli made Australia pay for that dropped chance and although he could not finish the chase, getting caught off Zampa at long on in the

Putin hails Myanmar ties as junta chief visits Moscow

AFP, Moscow

President Vladimir Putin yesterday praised Russia's developing ties with Myanmar, during a visit by the Asian country's junta chief to its key ally.

Russia is a crucial arms supplier to the isolated state, which is struggling to quell violent opposition to the junta's military rule.

"The relations between our countries are steadily developing," Putin told junta chief Min Aung Hlaing in a televised meeting at the Kremlin. "We have great potential," he said, hailing growing trade ties.

Min Aung Hlaing, who seized power in a 2021 coup, saluted Putin as a "king" and backed Moscow's full-scale military offensive on Ukraine.

"I believe that victory must be yours under your strong and decisive leadership," he told Putin.

Both countries are under heavy Western sanctions -- Myanmar following the 2021 coup and Russia after its 2014 annexation of Crimea and its ongoing three-year-long offensive on Ukraine.

2 explosive-laden cars ram into Pak military compound Six civilians killed

AFP, Peshawar

Two suicide bombers belonging to a militant group drove two explosive-laden cars into an army compound in northwestern Pakistan yesterday evening, triggering massive explosions, police told AFP.

"Suicide bombers rammed two explosives-laden vehicles into the entrance gate of Bannu Cantonment, triggering massive explosions... after which multiple militants attempted to storm the compound," a senior district police official said on condition of anonymity.

"Security forces present at the scene engaged them in a gunfight. Initial reports confirm that four militants have been killed," he said, adding that six civilians were killed.

Bannu, a district in Pakistan's turbulent Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, lies adjacent to the country's formerly self-governed tribal areas and close to Afghanistan.

The attack was claimed by the Hafiz Gul Bahadur armed group, which actively supported the Afghan Taliban in its war against the US-led Nato coalition since 2001.

Deceased were Jamaat members

FROM PAGE 2

When asked about the possible motive behind the killings, the SP said, "We don't rule out any possibilities, and we are investigating the incident. We tried to find CCTV footage but failed to get it as there was none."

"Police found a blood-stained pistol at the spot, and upon inspecting the firearm, police suspect that the pistol might have been looted from a government office right after the July uprising," the SP said.

Police and local sources said Nezam returned to Kanchana union after the fall of the Awami League government on August 5 last year.

Around the same time, other Jamaat men started to return and

began taking control of different business establishments and other assets.

Nezam and some Jamaat men had a rivalry with other local influentials.

However, Chattogram South District Jamaat's spokesperson Ayub Ali said in a press statement, "It's a planned murder. The area where the two were gruesomely beaten to death has long been a crime-prone area. A group has been trying to take control of the hills, trees, and brick kilns in the area."

In the name of an arbitration meeting, the victims were called to that area and later beaten to death," said the press release.

No case had been filed till the filing of this report at 6:00pm yesterday.

Father of victims files murder case

FROM PAGE 2

The case statement further mentions that around 10:00am on February 24, air force personnel detained and allegedly tortured a local youth, triggering anger among residents.

When locals attempted to rescue him, a clash erupted. Nahid, who went near the house of a local named Naseem to see what was happening, was shot in the head. Air force personnel then took him away and wasted time in taking him to the hospital. He died due to excessive bleeding, read the case statement.

Air Force Sergeant Md Ziaul Haque in his case filed on February 27 named Rahat Iqbal alias Iqbal Bahar,

42, and Ejabat Ullah, 43, along with 300 unidentified individuals.

Cox's Bazar Sadar Model Police Station OC Md Elias Khan said that investigations into both cases are ongoing.

"The autopsy report will confirm how Nahid died," he said.

While Nahid's family and locals claim he was shot, the police inquest report does not mention gunshot wounds. The report, prepared at the hospital morgue by SI Muhammad Ali Uddin of Cox's Bazar Sadar Model Police Station, reads that Nahid had a six-to-seven-inch-deep hole in his skull, with his brain completely exposed.



A wildfire continues to rage in a mountainous area in Ofunato, Iwate Prefecture, northeastern Japan, early yesterday. Firefighters were battling Japan's worst wildfire in half a century, which has left one dead and forced the evacuation of nearly 4,000 local residents.

PHOTO: REUTERS

Reshuffle in police top order

FROM PAGE 10
from Sunamganj.

The notification also named their replacements.

Abul Fazal Mohammad Tariq Hossain Khan, DMP deputy commissioner, has been made SP of Nilphamari, DMP DC Rawnak Jahan SP of Jashore, Khulna range DIG Tofayel Ahmed SP of Sunamganj, and Rajshahi Metropolitan Police DC Saifuddin Shaheen SP of Cox's Bazar.

Besides, Rezaul Karim, deputy inspector general of the highway police, and Ashrafur Rahman, Mymensingh range DIG, have also been transferred to the PHQ.

DIG Ataul Kibria from the PHQ has been posted as the new Mymensingh range DIG.

DIG Shoaib Riaz Alam of the PHQ has been transferred to the Sardah Police Academy, while Industrial Police DIG Mohammad Ashrauzzaman has been made commandant of Rangpur Police Training Centre.

Meanwhile, CID DIG Harun-or-Rashid Hajari has been transferred to the Industrial Police and Sardah Police Academy DIG Rokhfar Sultana Khanom to the highway police.

Travel fatigue hot topic ahead of NZ-SA semifinal

SAMSUL AREFIN KHAN from Lahore

Travel fatigue was the hot topic in both New Zealand and South Africa camps right before their semifinal clash of the ongoing ICC Champions Trophy but both sides were adamant to keep this issue on the sideline and focus on the task at hand at Lahore's Gaddafi Stadium today.

Both the Kiwis and the Proteas reached Lahore from Dubai on Monday in separate flights, with New Zealand arriving in the morning and South Africa reaching in the evening.

The Black Caps left Dubai a couple of hours after their final Group A fixture against India on Sunday, which they lost by 44 runs.

Meanwhile, South Africa travelled back to Dubai after beating England in their last Group B match because if India had lost to New Zealand on Sunday, then the Proteas would have had to face the Indians in the first semifinal, which took place yesterday. But as India had won that game, the Proteas had to fly back to Pakistan to face New Zealand in the semifinal.

"I think scheduling is an issue just all around," New Zealand skipper Mitchell Santner, who looked exhausted due to travel fatigue, said during the official press

conference in Lahore yesterday.

"I think when you do have time to rest and recover, I think it's very important with the quick turnaround of games. One day cricket can be quite exhausting on the body, so I think for us today [Tuesday] it might be making sure the bowlers are ready for tomorrow [today]."

Although all New Zealand players attend

their scheduled practice session at the Gaddafi Stadium yesterday noon, their training was limited to some light warm-ups. Meanwhile, South Africa had their practice session at the same venue under floodlights.

"I think, logically, things could have been, I guess, more efficient... We definitely don't use that as an excuse in terms of our preparation or anything like that. Our mind is geared to what we need to do for tomorrow [today]."

South Africa skipper Temba Bavuma said in his press meet in the evening.

South Africa and New Zealand have won this competition before, with the former winning the inaugural edition in 1998 and the latter winning it in 2000.

However, both sides have a reputation of faltering in the final hurdle with the Kiwis finishing as runners-up in the 2015 and 2019 ODI World Cup and 2021 T20 World Cup and South Africa finishing second in 2024 T20 World Cup. Both teams, who last faced off in a knockout fixture in the 2015 ODI World Cup, will be looking to first qualify for the final on March 9 and this time go all the way.



Shoriful shines in Rupganj's opener

SPORTS REPORTER

National team pacer Shoriful Islam was on fire in the early morning for Legends of Rupganj, picking up a four for against Gazi Group to help his side to a 10-wicket win in their Dhaka Premier League fixture at BKSP Ground 3 yesterday.

Rupganj has built a strong unit this season with a string of national team stars and Shoriful landed early blows in the very first over. He picked up Gazi captain Anamul Haque Bijoy on the very first delivery of the innings, a lucky caught-behind decision with the ball appearing to nick the thigh before going to the wicket-keeper. A gem of a delivery saw Mohammad Salman back in the dugout in the fifth delivery.

Shoriful then sent back Aminul Islam Biplob and Parvez Hossain Jibon for ducks. When Shoriful's national teammate Tanzim Sakib castled Shamsur Rahman for a duck next over, Gazi had slumped to six down for four in the fourth over. The competitiveness ended there with some lower-order runs seeing Gazi eventually bowled out for 93. Tanzid Tamim hit an unbeaten 46 ball 65 as Rupganj coasted to the win in 13.5 overs.

Shinepukur won by 77 runs against Partex Sporting in another game at BKSP Ground 4 as Rayan Rafsan's 81 ball 87 saw Shinepukur put on 298 for five.

Partex were bowled out for 221 following a cumbersome batting effort as Al Fahad and Rafiuzzaman Rafi scalped three wickets each.

Nurul Hasan Sohan was the hero for Dhanmondi Club during a four-wicket win over Brothers Union in Mirpur. In chase of 262 for five, Sohan struck an unbeaten 53 ball 58 to help Dhanmondi over the ropes after contributions from Yasir Ali (41) and Fazle Mahmud (55).

Earlier, Brothers reached 262 for five, thanks to Mahfuzul Islam's 111 ball 84.

PCB hits reset while BCB hesitates

SAMSUL AREFIN KHAN from Lahore

As the Champions Trophy edges towards its climax, with New Zealand and South Africa gearing up for a high-stakes semifinal today, Pakistan head coach Aaqib Javed perhaps felt out of place as he attended yesterday's press conference at Lahore's Gaddafi Stadium.

There, Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) announced sweeping changes to their white-ball squads.

Pakistan's premature exit from the 50-over tournament -- their first ICC event on home soil in nearly three decades -- had sent shockwaves through the team's hierarchy. In response, PCB wielded the axe, stripping Babar Azam and Mohammad Rizwan of their places in the T20 squad and sidelining Shaheen Shah Afridi from the ODI setup.

More significantly, Salman Ali Agha was handed the reins of the T20 side, a clear signal that Pakistan were turning the page with next year's T20 World Cup in mind.

But while Javed might have preferred to be in the shoes of Mitchell Santner -- who fielded



I think they (Bangladesh) were the most experienced side after India. But they didn't perform the way they should have. This Champions Trophy is a very tough tournament. There is no second-tier team you can beat.

Pakistan head coach Aaqib Javed

pre-semifinal questions an hour earlier at the same venue -- Pakistan's fate had been sealed early. A bruising loss to New Zealand in the opener, followed by a hammer blow from India, left their final group match against Bangladesh nothing more than a dead rubber.

Pakistan were not the only ones left licking their wounds. Bangladesh, too, had flattered to deceive, failing to make a mark in

the competition despite arriving as aspiring champions. Yet, while Pakistan took drastic steps to shake things up, Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) appeared in no hurry to follow suit.

Although a board meeting was held in Mirpur on Monday, no immediate decisions were made regarding their misfiring senior players, Mahmudullah Riyad and Mushfiqur Rahim -- who, according to BCB's cricket

operations chairman Nazmul Abedeen Fahim, must "prove themselves" for the 2027 ODI World Cup.

Asked about Bangladesh's struggles, Javed replied to travelling Bangladeshi journalists, "I think they were the most experienced side after India. But they didn't perform the way they should have."

"Because this Champions Trophy is a very tough tournament. There is no second-tier team you can beat."

Salman, meanwhile, was also quizzed about Bangladesh's upcoming tour of Pakistan in May, where they will play three ODIs and as many T20Is.

"Here we are looking forward to them. They are a great side and will always challenge you," said the new Pakistan T20 captain.

With a fresh-look squad, Pakistan now turn their focus to a tour of New Zealand, featuring five T20Is and three ODIs from 16 March to 5 April. Bangladesh, on the other hand, remain at a crossroads. The question is not just whether changes are coming, but whether BCB has the appetite to make them.

TABITH DEMANDS WIN AGAINST INDIA



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Liverpool, PSG ready for blockbuster clash

AGENCIES

Arne Slot says Liverpool have nothing to fear at the Parc des Princes as he prepares his Premier League title favourites for a blockbuster last-16 first-leg Champions League clash against runaway Ligue 1 leaders Paris Saint-Germain on Wednesday.

Slot's side, who finished first in the league phase with seven wins from eight games, including a 2-0 success against holders Real Madrid, take the next step in their bid for a first Champions League crown since 2019 but history is not on their side as the six-time European champions lost on both their previous visits to PSG, in 1997 and 2018.



This will be just the third Champions League meeting between Liverpool and Paris Saint-Germain.

They previously played each other in the 2018-19 group stage, with the Reds winning 3-2 at home and losing 2-1 away, so there is an even head-to-head record as it stands.

Liverpool have not won any of their last five away games against French sides in Europe (D2 L3), with their last such victory coming at Marseille in September 2008 (2-1 in the Champions League).

PSG have won their last five matches in the Champions League and hope to secure six successive wins in the competition for the first time since 1994-95.

Mohamed Salah has 52 goal contributions (30 goals, 22 assists) in all competitions this term -- the most by any player in Europe's top five leagues.

Like Liverpool, PSG are marching relentlessly towards the French title, opening up a 13-point lead thanks to a 24-game unbeaten run in Ligue 1 this season.

Facing Liverpool is a challenge of a different magnitude and Enrique is well aware of the threat they pose, describing the meeting of European powerhouses as an occasion more fitting for a final.

"I know Liverpool very well, without a doubt they are the team in the best form in Europe both in terms of results and play," he said.

"It could have been a Champions League final. We're going to try to do it with our weapons."

Meanwhile, Barcelona will look for a win away from home when they visit Benfica. The contest will feature two of the most inform strikers in the competition this season -- Barca's Robert Lewandowski (nine goals in eight matches) and Benfica's Vangelis Pavlidis (seven goals, two assists in 10 appearances).

The two sides have already met in the competition this season, with nine goals being scored in an eventual 5-4 win for Barcelona.

An all-Bundesliga affair will take place at the Allianz Arena on Wednesday when Bayern Munich take on Bayer Leverkusen. Leverkusen are unbeaten in their six matches against Bayern Munich across all competitions (W3 D3) under Xabi Alonso. They've kept a clean sheet in three of their last four against them, including the 0-0 in the Bundesliga in February when Bayern managed just two shots and didn't have one on target.

OTHER FIXTURES

Feyenoord vs Inter
Bayern vs Leverkusen
Benfica vs Barcelona

Team mentioned first will play first leg at home

With 20 victories, the Reds, who are closing in on a record-equalling 20th English title, have won more league games than any team in Europe's top five leagues so far this season.

"Do we fear PSG? We don't fear anybody. But I'm impressed by their quality, they are on an upward curve a bit similar to ours at the moment," he said.

"I don't think the likes of Liverpool, Arsenal, Paris Saint-Germain, Barcelona, Real Madrid fear opponents.

"But we definitely respect them and there's a reason for that. They won so many games in a row and they have so many quality players."

ভর্তি বিজ্ঞপ্তি

আর্মি নার্সিং কলেজ কুমিল্লা
ব্যাচেলর অব সার্কেল ইন নার্সিং কোর্সে ভর্তি বিজ্ঞপ্তি

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বিএসসি ইন নার্সিং ০৪ (চার) বছর মেয়াদী কোর্সে ছাত্রী ভর্তি কর্তৃত জন্ম আবেদন আহ্বান করা যাচ্ছে।

বিজ্ঞপ্তি মোগ্রাহ্য।

(১) ২০২০, ২০২১ অথবা ২০২২ ইং সালে অনুষ্ঠিত বিজ্ঞান বিভাগ থেকে এসএসসি/সময়মান পরীক্ষায় এবং ২০২২, ২০২৩ অথবা ২০২৪ইং সালে অনুষ্ঠিত বিজ্ঞান বিভাগ থেকে এইচএসসি/সময়মান পরীক্ষায় উত্তীর্ণ রাইজেন্সি কোর্সে আবেদন করতে পারবেন।

(২) এসএসসি/সময়মান এবং এইচএসসি/সময়মানের পরীক্ষা সমূহে প্রাপ্ত জিপিএ এর যোগফল ন্যূনতম ৭.০০ থেকে হারে, তবে কোন পরীক্ষার জিপিএ ন্যূনতম ২.৫০ এর কম হবে না। প্রাপ্তীকে এইচএসসি/সময়মান পরীক্ষায় জীববিজ্ঞানে জিপিএ ন্যূনতম ২.৫০ হারে করতে হবে।

ভর্তি পরীক্ষা সংজ্ঞান তারিখ ও সময়সূচি নিম্নরূপ।

আবেদন কর্তৃত সংগ্রহ	০১ মার্চ ২০২৫ হতে ১৫ এপ্রিল ২০২৫ পর্যন্ত।
আবেদন কর্তৃত সংগ্রহ দেওয়ার প্রেরণ তারিখ	১৫ এপ্রিল ২০২৫ মুঠো ১৪০০ ঘটিকা পর্যন্ত।
প্রেসেলের সংগ্রহের তারিখ	২০ এপ্রিল ২০২৫ হতে ২৪ এপ্রিল ২০২৫ পর্যন্ত।
জিপিএ পরীক্ষা	০৩ মে ২০২৫ (শুনিবার, সকাল ০৯০০ ঘটিকা)।

বিজ্ঞপ্তি প্রযোজনে ভর্তি সংজ্ঞান যাবতীয় কলেজে অধ্যক্ষের দন্তে অফিস চলাকালীন সময়ে আনা যাবে।

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Two Iranians hurt, 'robbed' in mob attack in the city

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Two foreign nationals were injured and allegedly robbed of cash and mobile phones during a "mob attack" in the capital's Bashundhara Residential Area yesterday afternoon.

The duo later identified themselves as Iranian tourists and said they had arrived in Bangladesh two days prior with plans to stay for a month.

The incident occurred near Bashundhara's main gate area around 4:45pm, when they got into an argument over the exchange rate with local currency exchange brokers they had arranged on the phone.

Bhatara Police Station Assistant Sub-Inspector Chhonton Chandra Das said he arrived at the scene after responding to a 999 call from a pedestrian.

"I found a crowd surrounding the car with the two Iranians inside. I told the driver to pull to the side and asked the two passengers to come with me to the station so we could understand what was going on."

"However, the driver, also Iranian, attempted to drive away, hitting three rickshaws. This further enraged the crowd, who then vandalised the car,"

SEE PAGE 8 COL 3



Chase-master Virat Kohli raises his bat to celebrate his fifty as Australia skipper Steve Smith watches on during their ICC Champions Trophy semifinal in Dubai yesterday. Kohli became only the second player, after Sachin Tendulkar, to complete 8000 runs in run-chases during a 98-ball 84-run knock

PHOTO: REUTERS

India break Australia jinx, book CT final

AFP, Dubai

India broke the Australia jinx and punched their ticket to the final of the ICC Champions Trophy with a convincing four-wicket win over the Aussies in the first semifinal at the Dubai International Cricket yesterday.

Virat Kohli once again led the way in a crucial run chase for India with a responsible knock of 84 off 98 balls while Shreyas Iyer (45 off 62), KL Rahul (42 not out off 34) and Hardik Pandya (28 off 24) chipped in with crucial contributions as India reached 267-6 in 48.1 overs.

Leg spinner Adam Zampa looked the most threatening of the Aussie bowlers, finishing with 2-60, and Nathan Ellis (2-49) bowled some tight overs in the final phase but it was not enough to ensure victory for the Aussies.

Batting first, skipper Steve Smith made 73 off 96 deliveries and Alex Carey hit a 57-ball 61 as Australia made 264 all out in 49.3 overs.

India pace spearhead Mohammed Shami stood out with figures of 3-48 while spinners Varun Chakravarthy

SEE PAGE 8 COL 4

China, Canada retaliate to US tariffs

Markets fall in Asia, Europe; Mexico vows to hit back with duties of its own

AFP, Washington

Mounting trade wars between the United States and its largest economic partners deepened yesterday as huge US tariffs on Canada, Mexico and China kicked in, sparking swift retaliation from Beijing and Ottawa.

Markets fell in Asia and Europe in response to what analysts said were the steepest tariffs on imports since the 1940s.

Trump had announced -- and then paused -- blanket 25 percent tariffs on imports from major trading partners Canada and Mexico in February, accusing them of failing to stop illegal immigration and drug trafficking.

He pushed ahead with them yesterday, citing a lack of progress on both fronts.

The duties will hit over \$918 billion in US imports from both countries, and are set to hamper supply chains for key sectors like automobiles and construction materials.

Canada responded with its own retaliatory 25 percent tariffs, while Mexican President Claudia Sheinbaum said there was no justification for the US move and vowed to hit back with duties of its own.

Trump also inked an order Monday to increase a previously imposed 10 percent tariff on China to 20 percent -- piling atop existing levies on various Chinese goods.

Beijing condemned the "unilateral imposition of tariffs

The duties will hit over \$918 billion in US imports from both countries, and are set to hamper supply chains for key sectors like automobiles and construction materials.

Reshuffle in police top order
CID, ATU chiefs transferred

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

In a major reshuffle, 18 police officials, ranging from the rank of superintendent of police to additional inspector general, have been transferred.

The transfer includes the chiefs of the Criminal Investigation Department, the Anti-Terrorism Unit, and the principal of the Sardah Police Academy.

The home ministry yesterday issued a notification signed by its Deputy Secretary Mahbubur Rahman in this regard.

Additional IG Motiur Rahman Sheikh, the CID chief, Additional IG Khondkar Rafiq-ul-Islam, the ATU chief, and Additional IG Masudur Rahman Bhuiyan, the police academy principal, have been transferred to the Police Headquarters.

Besides, four SPs, who were withdrawn from Jashore, Sunamganj, Cox's Bazar, and Nilphamari on February 17, have also been moved to the PHQ.

They are Muhammad Rahmat Ullah from Cox's Bazar, Ziauddin Ahmed from Jashore, Morshed Alam from Nilphamari, and AFM Anwar Hossain Khan

SEE PAGE 8 COL 6

NID SERVICES, BIRTH REGISTRATIONS One authority to serve them all

Govt planning to establish Civil Registration Commission that will deal with marriage, divorce, adoption records too

MOHIUDDIN ALAMGIR and AHMED DEEPTO

The government is planning to streamline vital citizen services by bringing National Identity cards, birth and death registrations, and other essential services under a single authority.

The draft ordinance said that the name of the separate entity would be Civil Registration Commission. It will be a five-member commission and one of them will be its chairman. A commissioner should be female.

According to a draft ordinance prepared by the Cabinet Division, a dedicated body will be established to oversee NID cards, birth and death registrations, marriage, divorce, and adoption records, as well as determining causes of death.

The draft also proposes the implementation of a robust unique ID system, integrating it with various service delivery processes. Officials said the Cabinet Division reviewed the draft during a meeting on Monday.

This initiative aims to reduce public hassles and enhance service efficiency, said officials.

Chief Election Commissioner AMM Nasir Uddin yesterday said that NID services should remain under the Election Commission. "We are preparing for a national election. I don't think any hasty decision will be made in this situation."

"Our commission has an opinion ... There will be more meetings. We will present our views there and also submit them in writing," he said while talking to reporters at the EC office yesterday.

Cabinet Division officials said that

they prepared the draft aiming to streamline and synchronise the civil registration processes that are now being overseen by different bodies.

The draft ordinance said that the name of the separate entity would be Civil Registration Commission. It will be a five-member commission and one of them will be its chairman. A commissioner should be female.

**Chief Election
Commissioner AMM
Nasir Uddin yesterday
said that NID services
should remain
under the Election
Commission.**

Currently, NID-related services are being provided under the Election Commission, which has developed the NID database containing information of 12 crore citizens aged above 18.

NID services encompass issuing secure national identity cards to citizens, overseeing related activities, maintaining a national citizen registration database, and delivering identity verification services to qualified public and private organisations.

A fully-fledged NID wing was established following the passage of

SEE PAGE 8 COL 1

Manikganj youth builds aircraft, flies it

SCAN THE QR CODE
TO WATCH VIDEO

ZAHANGIR SHAH

With determination and hard work, even the most difficult tasks become possible. A young man from Manikganj has demonstrated this by building his own aeroplane and successfully flying it.

Julhas Molla, 28, of Shaitghar Teota village in Shibaloy upazila, flew his self-made aircraft this afternoon on the banks of the Jamuna river in the Jafarganj area.

The deputy commissioner, along with senior officials from the district and upazila administration, attended the event, while thousands of curious locals gathered to witness the flight.

Julhas's father, Jalil Molla, originally hailed from the Baghutia area of Daulatpur upazila.

However, due to river erosion, the family relocated to Shaitghar Teota.

Julhas, the fifth of six brothers and two sisters, completed his SSC from Jionpur BKS High School but could not pursue further education due to financial constraints.

An electrician by profession, he works on a contract basis in various institutions in Dhaka and spent his weekly holidays building the aircraft.

According to Julhas, he conducted three years of research and spent another year constructing the aircraft, with a total cost of around Tk 8 lakh.

The structure is made of aluminium and iron, and it is powered by a seven-horsepower water pump engine.

SEE PAGE 8 COL 3



A resident is seen at a site of an apartment building hit by a Russian drone strike, amid Russia's attack on Ukraine, in Odesa, Ukraine yesterday.

PHOTO: REUTERS

**PRAYER
TIMING
MARCH 5**

Faz	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib	Esha
AZAN 5-02 12-45	4-30	6-04	7-30	
JAMAAT 5-12	1-15	4-45	6-19	8-00

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

SEHRI, IFTAR TIMING

RAMADAN	MARCH	SEHRI	IFTAR
4	5	6:04	
5	6	5:00	6:04
6	7	4:59	6:05

**টাকা উত্তর সিটি কর্পোরেশন
সম্পত্তি বিভাগ**

গণবিজ্ঞপ্তি

এতদ্বারা সকলের অবগতির জন্য জানানো যাচ্ছে যে, টাকা উত্তর সিটি কর্পোরেশনের মালিকানাধীন সকল মাঠ/পার্ক জনসাধারণের জন্য উন্মুক্ত। প্রায়শই লক্ষ করা যাচ্ছে যে, মাঠ/পার্কসমূহ ডিএনসিসির অনুমতি ব্যতীত বিভিন্ন প্রতিষ্ঠান কর্তৃক খেলাধূলার পীতি ম্যাচসহ সাংস্কৃতিক অনুষ্ঠান আয়োজনে ব্যবহার করে আসছে। যাহা আইনত দণ্ডনীয় অপরাধ।

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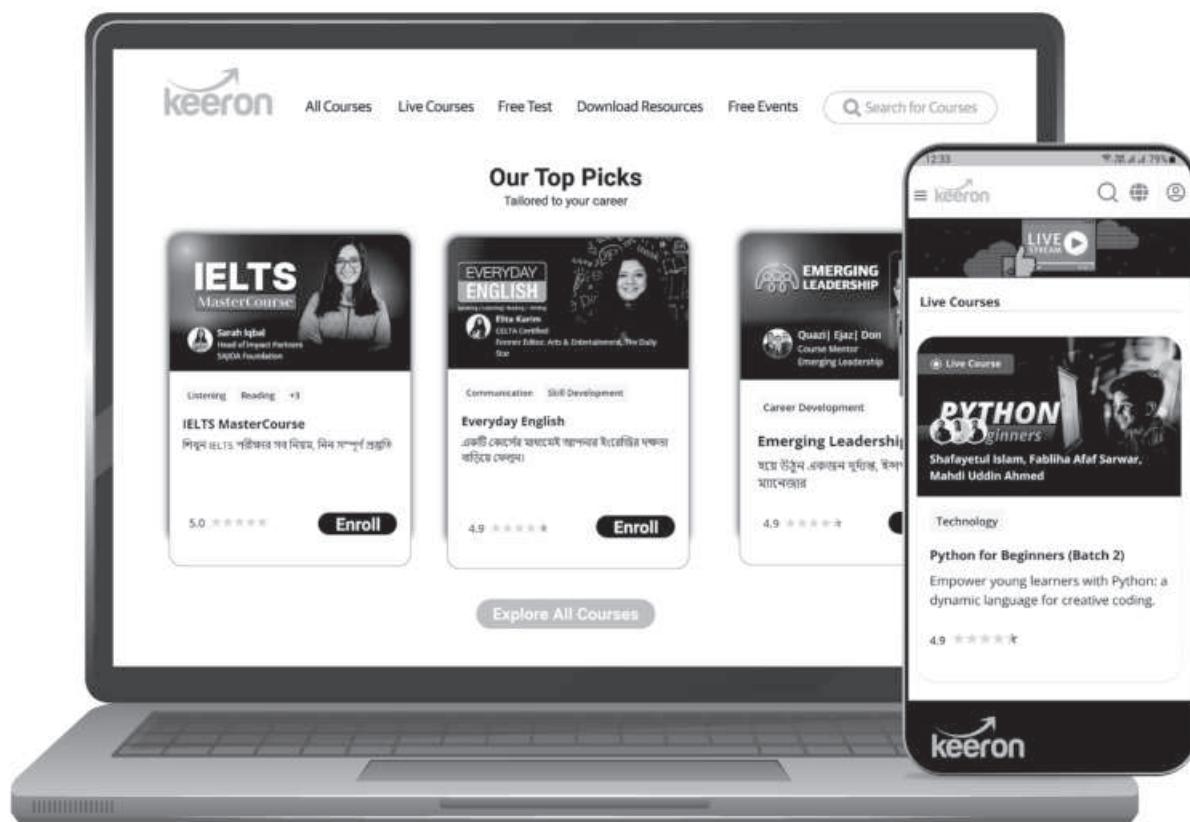
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