

YOUR
RIGHT
TO KNOW

SECOND EDITION

DHAKA WEDNESDAY MARCH 5, 2025

Plus 12-page tabloid supplement on Lifestyle Plus

REGD. NO. DA 781

VOL. XXXV No. 50

FALGUN 20, 1431 BS

www.thedailystar.net

RAMADAN 4, 1446 HIJRI

16 PAGES: TK 15.00



Bangladeshis burdened with high internet taxes
B1



PCB hits reset while BCB hesitates
P9



Trump and Zelensky: Is the damage irreparable?
P7



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

Rights activists and criminologists point out that political instability and weak governance have created a vacuum, which the wrongdoers are

SEE PAGE 2 COL. 2

taking advantage of.

MOHAMMAD JAMIL KHAN and SHAHEEN MOLLAH

Shahjahan Mintiz was standing in front of his house in Nazrul Nagar area of Char Fasson, Bholia, on Sunday morning when a group of men dragged him away, claiming that he was a thief.

There had been several incidents of theft in the village and the residents were angry. The men broke Mintiz's arms and legs before gouging out both his eyes.

Mintiz, 40, was accused in six cases. He was arrested in November last year and is now out on bail.

But police later said they have no information that Mintiz was involved in any incident of theft that day.

Ershadul Haque Bhuiyan, officer-in-charge of Dakshin Aicha Police Station, said no one had filed any complaint regarding the mob beating. "If we receive a complaint, we will take action," he told The Daily Star.

Mob violence has been occurring in the country for years. But the recent spate of mugging and robbery has apparently caused a surge in such incidences.

Rights activists and criminologists point out that political instability and weak governance have created a vacuum, which the wrongdoers are

taking advantage of.

Tawohidul Haque, associate professor at Dhaka University's Institute of Social Welfare and Research, said due to the deterioration of law and order, people are resorting to mob violence.

When people see law enforcement agencies failing to act and criminals taking advantage, they take matters into their own hands, he said.

According to Ain o Salish Kendra, mob beatings claimed at least 128 lives last year, with 96 occurring between August and December. The number of such deaths was 51 in 2023.

Environment Adviser Syeda Rizwana Hasan at an event yesterday said, "The government has clearly stated multiple times that there is no room for mob justice or moral policing in the country. The government has a strong stance against these."

On Sunday, a mob assaulted and seriously injured 19-year-old Shanto

SEE PAGE 2 COL. 2

No room for mob justice, moral policing

Environment adviser tells press briefing

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Environment Adviser Syeda Rizwana Hasan yesterday firmly stated there is no room for mob justice or moral policing in the country.

"The government has consistently taken a strong stance against such actions. However, as law and order have not yet been fully restored to normalcy, incidents of mob justice and moral policing have been observed in some areas," she said at a press briefing at the Foreign Service Academy.

Referring to a recent incident in Mohammadpur, Rizwana said, "We understand that both parties involved have signed a compromise agreement in the presence of police. Since a settlement has been reached, we must respect it as the final resolution."

SEE PAGE 2 COL. 1



Leaders of National Citizen Party pay tribute to the martyrs of 1971 at the National Martyrs' Memorial in Savar yesterday. The party said this was its first programme as a political party.

PHOTO: STAR

Ukraine can hold out on frontline

Says Kyiv after Trump pauses military aid

REUTERS, Kyiv

Ukraine said yesterday its forces could hold their own on the battlefield as they fight Russian troops after US President Donald Trump paused military aid to Kyiv in the most dramatic step yet in his pivot towards closer ties with Russia.

Trump has upended US policy on Ukraine and Russia, culminating in an explosive confrontation at the White House on Friday, when Trump upbraided President Volodymyr Zelensky for being insufficiently grateful for Washington's backing.

"President Trump has been clear that he is focused on peace. We need our partners to be committed to that goal as well. We are pausing and reviewing our aid to ensure that it is contributing to a solution," a US official said on Monday.

Ukraine's Prime Minister Denys Shmyhal said Kyiv still had the wherewithal to supply its troops. "Our military and the government have the capabilities, the tools, let's say, to maintain the situation on the front line," he said.

Shmyhal thanked the US and emphasised that Kyiv wanted mutually-beneficial cooperation. "We will

Russia says freeze on aid 'best contribution' to peace

EU chief unveils 800bn euro plan to 'rearm' Europe

Normalising ties with US will require lifting sanctions: Russia

SEE PAGE 2 COL. 5