

## Army chief conferred presidential medal by CAR

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Chief of Army Staff General Waker-Uz-Zaman has been honoured with the presidential medal by Central African Republic President Faustin-Archange Touadéra in recognition of Bangladesh Army's contributions, particularly in the medical sector, to the country's development.

The army chief received the honour during his visit to the Central African Republic, according to a press release from the Inter-

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## No one should take laws into their hands Says Nahid

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Law and order situation in the country has not improved to the expected level, said National Citizen Party (NCP) Convener Nahid Islam.

Nahid said this while attending "Iftar for the Masses" event of NCP in the capital's Eskaton Garden Road area.

"The police must be proactive. They should be allowed to do their job, and none of us should take the

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Chief Adviser Professor Muhammad Yunus at a meeting with former US Ambassador to Bangladesh William B Milam and former American diplomat Jon Danilowicz at the state guest house Jamuna in Dhaka yesterday.

PHOTO: CA PRESS WING

# Set up info commission as constitutional body

Speakers say it will ensure permanent continuity

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Establishing the Information Commission as an independent constitutional body is crucial to strengthening democracy through transparency, accountability, and good governance, said speakers at an event yesterday.

They emphasised that this would enable the commission to function autonomously and ensure transparency under the Right to Information (RTI) Act.

The speakers made the remarks at an event, titled "Effectiveness of the Information Commission and Amendments to the Right to Information Act," organised by the Right to Information Forum at the Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB) office in the capital.

In a statement, Hasibur Rahman, executive

**"Previously, the commission was run by political loyalists. We hope this will not continue under the interim government."**

**Ittekkharuzzaman**  
TIB Executive Director

director of Media Resource Development Initiative, said the Information Commission should have constitutional recognition for permanent continuity.

TIB Executive Director Ittekkharuzzaman questioned why the commission remains inactive under the interim government while other bodies, such as the Anti-Corruption Commission and the Election Commission, have resumed operations.

"Previously, the commission was run by political loyalists. We hope this will not continue under the interim government," he said.

He stressed that individuals appointed to the commission should not have a history of opposing information disclosure. "Our top priority is the

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## Interim govt to implement parts of July Charter

**Rest by political govt, Yunus tells US diplomats**

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The interim government will implement certain aspects of the July Charter, while the remaining reforms will be carried out by future political governments, Chief Adviser Professor Muhammad Yunus said yesterday.

During a meeting with former US Ambassador to Bangladesh William B Milam and former American diplomat Jon Danilowicz at the state guest house Jamuna in Dhaka, Yunus said political parties would sign the July Charter once discussions on the reforms recommended by the six commissions conclude.

"The July Charter will guide us," he said.

Milam and Danilowicz, who serve as the president and executive director of the US-based non-profit rights organisation "Right to Freedom", briefed Yunus on their work and plans to expand operations in Bangladesh to support the democratic transition.

Milam, who was the US envoy to Bangladesh in the early 1990s, praised the interim government's reform agenda. Danilowicz, a former deputy US ambassador to Dhaka, highlighted the need for positive narratives and serious measures to combat fake news and disinformation.

The hour-long meeting also covered Bangladesh-US relations, the Rohingya crisis, the impact of declining aid for Myanmar refugees, efforts to recover

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## UP CHAIR'S BANK ACCOUNTS Transactions worth Tk 14,000 crore!

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Anti-Corruption Commission has found 49 bank accounts linked to a former union parishad chairman, revealing approximately Tk 14,000 crore in questionable transactions, according to a top ACC official.

Lak Mia, former chairman of Brahhamandi Union Parishad in Narayanganj's Araihaazar upazila, has also amassed Tk 55.23 crore in assets during his time in office through the abuse of power, alleged the anti-graft body.

On these grounds, he has been sued for accumulating wealth beyond known income sources, ACC Director General Md Akhtar Hossain told journalists yesterday.

According to the case statement, Lak Mia's total assets -- including movable and immovable properties -- are valued at Tk 58.70 crore, while his

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## We must return to democracy through polls

**Fakhrul tells iftar gathering**

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The country must swiftly return to democracy through a free and fair election, said BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir yesterday.

He said the people of Bangladesh deserve a future free from fear, oppression, and political uncertainty.

Speaking at an iftar event hosted by BNP in honour of diplomats at a hotel in Dhaka, Fakhrul read out a statement, highlighting the party's commitment to democratic governance and economic cooperation.

"We want to work closely with our partners to ensure the collective progress of our region through democracy and liberal trade partnerships," he said.

BNP looks forward to fostering stronger people-

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A worker spreads out large quantities of vermicelli (shemai) to dry on racks. With Eid less than a month away, demand for vermicelli is surging, prompting factories across the country to ramp up production. The photo was taken on Rajakhali Road in the port city yesterday.

PHOTO: RAJIB RAIHAN

## Nine youths killed thru 'militant drama'

**Says ICT prosecutor on 2016 'Jahaj Building' incident**

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The International Crimes Tribunal's (ICT) prosecution yesterday said it has found primary evidence suggesting that nine youths were killed in Kallyanpur in 2016 after being falsely portrayed as militants.

ICT Prosecutor Gazi Monawar Hossain Tamim said the incident aligns with crimes against humanity, as police allegedly detained the youths from different parts of the country, confined them to a flat in the "Jahaj Building" in Mirpur, and systematically killed them while staging a

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## More trips, coaches and digital payment

**Newly-appointed MD of DMTCL shares his plans for metro rail**

TUHIN SHUBHRA ADHIKARY

The metro rail authority is considering several measures to improve services and simplify the ticketing system as passenger numbers rise rapidly.

Increasing the number of daily trips and adding two more coaches to each train, if technically feasible, are now under consideration.

Discussions are also underway with banks and card service providers to simplify ticketing. Additionally, efforts are being made to expand the workforce and modify draft service rules for metro rail employees.

Faruque Ahmed, the newly appointed managing director of Dhaka Mass Transit Company Ltd (DMTCL), shared these plans with The Daily Star on Wednesday.

Appointed last month, he is the first non-bureaucrat to lead the state-run company, which was established in June 2013.

A civil engineer with over 37 years of

**"We are working to simplify the ticketing system. Discussions are ongoing with banks and credit card providers to enable access to metro services via debit and credit cards."**

**Faruque Ahmed**



experience, Faruque, an expatriate in Australia, has spent 25 years working on transport infrastructure projects, mainly metro rail systems.

Currently, over four lakh people use the metro daily, and the number is growing.

"We are trying to reduce the headway [time between trips]," said Faruque Ahmed.

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