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## Arefin Siddique passes away

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Prof Abu Ahsan Mohammad Shamsul Arefin Siddique, widely known as AAMS Arefin Siddique, passed away at a city hospital yesterday. He was 72.

Prof Siddique, who served as the Dhaka University vice chancellor for two consecutive terms, breathed his last at

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At the end of the workday, bumper-to-bumper traffic is seen on city streets as people rush to get home in time for iftar. The photo was taken at Panthapath in the capital yesterday afternoon.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

## 'Let us do our job; please do not attack us' IGP urges people

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Inspector General of Police Baharul Alam yesterday urged the public not to attack law enforcement officers, emphasising the importance of allowing police to perform their duties.

"Let us do our job; please do not attack us. We are part of this society... citizens of this country. How can we ensure stability if we are unable to work? If we cannot perform our duties, how will we move towards a fair election?" he said.

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## Israel attack on Gaza IVF clinic a 'genocidal act'

Finds UN probe; Netanyahu slams claims as 'false'

AFP, Geneva

A United Nations investigation yesterday concluded that Israel carried out "genocidal acts" in Gaza through the destruction of its main IVF clinic, maternity facilities and other reproductive healthcare facilities.

The UN Commission of Inquiry said Israel had "intentionally attacked and destroyed" the Palestinian territory's main fertility centre, and had simultaneously imposed a siege and

blocked aid including medication for ensuring safe pregnancies, deliveries and neonatal care.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu reacted by calling the findings "false and absurd".

In a statement, the UN commission said it found that Israeli authorities "have destroyed in part the reproductive capacity of Palestinians in Gaza as a group through the systematic destruction of sexual and reproductive healthcare".

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Chief Adviser Muhammad Yunus is set to hold bilateral talks with Chinese President Xi Jinping in Beijing on March 28, said the foreign ministry yesterday.

## Yunus-Xi talks on March 28

Dhaka terms Delhi's comments unwarranted

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

This would be Yunus's first high-level bilateral meeting since taking office on August 8 last year.

Yunus is expected to depart for China, Bangladesh's largest trading partner, in the afternoon of March 26, Rafiqul Alam, the foreign ministry's

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## EC employees demonstrate nationwide

Insist on keeping NID services under EC

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Demanding the National Identity Card registration services remain under the Election Commission jurisdiction, its officials and employees yesterday demonstrated at the EC headquarters in the capital and election offices across the country.

They formed human chains and held sit-in programmes from 11:00am to 1:00pm, causing suspension of all types of services, including NID, during that time.

If no visible steps are taken in this regard by March 18, EC employees announced that they will observe a three-hour work abstention from 9:00am on March 19.

"We believe that NID services should remain under the EC," EC Senior Secretary Akhtar Ahmed said while responding to a reporter's query at the EC.

He further explained, "We have been developing this system since 2007. We have technical expertise and are providing the required services."

"Since this is an established system, it is logical to

If no visible steps are taken in this regard by March 18, EC employees announced that they will observe a three-hour work abstention from 9:00am on March 19.

expand the existing structure instead of creating a new one. This is what we have been reiterating."

Asked whether NID data is secure under the EC, he responded, "A total of 182 organisations access data from the EC, along with other agencies. They do so because the data is secure."

Regarding the continuation of NID services under the EC, its secretariat on March 9 in a letter said that this decision would curtail the constitutional authority of the EC.

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## UNTIL THEY LEARN TO FLY

A mother sunbird is feeding insects to her little chicks. She will nurture her babies until they learn to fly, at which point they will leave the nest. Belonging to the Nectariniidae family, these birds are adept at hovering near flowers, much like hummingbirds, to sip nectar using their long, curved beaks. Apart from nectar, sunbirds also feed on insects, contributing to pollination and pest control. They are commonly found in tropical regions across Africa, Asia, and Australia. In Bangladesh, several species of sunbirds are seen inhabiting forests, gardens, and areas dense with shrubs and trees. Sunbirds are renowned for their skilful nest-building, constructing intricate oval-shaped nests hanging from branches. Their agility, beauty, and role in the ecosystem make them fascinating creatures to observe! This photo was taken recently near Shaheed Sheikh Abu Naser Specialised Hospital in Khulna's Khalishpur.

PHOTO: HABIBUR RAHMAN



## Putin questions US-backed ceasefire plan

Says lots need to be discussed before deal

AGENCIES

Vladimir Putin has said he has many questions about the proposed US-brokered ceasefire with Ukraine and appeared to set out a series of sweeping conditions that would need to be met before Russia would agree to such a truce.

Speaking at a press conference at the Kremlin alongside the Belarusian president, Alexander Lukashenko, Putin said that he agreed in principle with US proposals to halt the fighting but said he wanted to address the "root causes of the conflict".

"The idea [US ceasefire] itself is correct, and we certainly support it," Putin said.

But he suggested that Ukraine should neither rearm nor mobilise and

that western military aid to Kyiv be halted during the 30-day ceasefire.

Donald Trump responded briefly before a meeting with the Nato secretary general, Mark Rutte, saying that Putin had "made a very promising statement, but it was not complete".

The US president said he was "ready to talk to Putin".

"We will see if Russia agrees, and if not, it will be a very disappointing moment," he said.

By avoiding an outright rejection of Trump's ceasefire proposal, Putin appears to be balancing between not openly rebuffing Trump's push for peace while also imposing his own stringent demands – potentially prolonging negotiations.

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