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60 lakh new voters added

Election Commission reports

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

More than 60 lakh citizens are set to be added to the voter list and over 20 lakh deceased voters are being removed from the roll.

According to a recent report by the Election Commission based on data collected by field-level officials to update the list, the total number of voters in the country stands at 12.37 crore.

The door-to-door voter list updating process, which began on January 20, will continue until April 11. The final updated list is expected by June 30.

During this period, eligible citizens who were left out can submit their information online and visit designated registration centres to enrol as voters.

According to the EC report, 60,87,739 individuals have been enrolled as new voters so far. Of these, 28,59,228 are male, 32,27,775 are female, and 1,055 are transgender.

Besides, 20,87,036 deceased voters will be removed from the list. Of them, 12,03,315 are male, 8,86,393 are female and 330 are transgender.

Since the introduction of the photo-based national ID card in 2007-2008, the EC has revised the voter list six times.

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The Bangladesh Ambulance Owners' Welfare Association park ambulances in front of the Jatiya Press Club yesterday to press home their five demands, including a national policy for ambulance services and an end to alleged police harassment of drivers on roads. The organisation also announced a nationwide strike from April 12.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

INVESTMENT SUMMIT 2025

Beginning of new investment narrative for Bangladesh

Says BIDA chairman Ashik Chowdhury

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh has set its sights on becoming a globally competitive, investor-friendly economy by 2035, said BIDA Chairman Ashik Chowdhury yesterday.

"We must imagine what Bangladesh will look like in 10 years -- the picture we want to see then must inform the actions we take today," said Ashik Chowdhury, executive chairman of Bangladesh Investment Development Authority (BIDA) and Bangladesh Economic Zones Authority, at a media briefing.

The briefing comes ahead of BIDA's Investment Summit 2025, the first large-scale conference after the interim government took charge in August last year.

The goal of the three-day summit, which kicks off today at Intercontinental Dhaka, is to shift the global perception of Bangladesh's investment climate from

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GRAFT CASE Shakib under investigation

ACC responds to Tulip's comments to UK media; sues Hasan Mahmud

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) has launched an inquiry into allegations of corruption against former national cricket team captain and ex-lawmaker Shakib Al Hasan.

ACC Chairman Mohammad Abdul Momen confirmed the development while speaking to reporters yesterday.

Shakib, the former world number one all-rounder and one of the most prominent figures in the country's cricketing history, was appointed the ACC's goodwill ambassador in 2018.

As part of his contract as the brand ambassador, he also made a documentary film without any remuneration. The documentary was made to mark the inauguration of the ACC's 106 complaint hotline at that time.

The ACC removed Shakib Al Hasan from his position as brand ambassador in 2022 after allegations of irregularities and corruption were raised against him.

Momen said, "The commission has launched a probe into allegations of corruption involving Shakib Al Hasan. If the investigation uncovers evidence of wrongdoing, a case may be filed against him."

The allegations stem from a formal application submitted on August 28 last year by Supreme Court lawyer Milhanur Rahman Naomi. The complaint accuses Shakib of involvement in stock market manipulation, illegal gambling ventures, gold smuggling, fraud against

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'Bombs were planted in Aynagarh'

ICT chief prosecutor claims attempt made to kill investigators

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Tajul Islam, chief prosecutor of the International Crimes Tribunal, has alleged an attempt to assassinate officials investigating secret detention centres built during the previous Awami League government.

Speaking to journalists after yesterday's proceedings, Tajul said the ICT investigation agency uncovered three of the most complex secret detention centres, known as Aynagarhs. Among them, the Taskforce For Interrogation (TFI) cell -- a semi-underground facility -- was found in a concealed state.

"These spaces had been sealed off by erecting walls, which had to be demolished during the investigation," he said.

He added that the entire area had been filled with garbage, which investigators had to clear in order to expose the crime scenes. He was present at the time, Tajul said.

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Wave of Israeli strikes kill at least 46 in Gaza

Israeli military changes initial account of Gaza aid worker killings

AGENCIES

A wave of Israeli strikes on Gaza yesterday targeted residential buildings and makeshift tents sheltering forcibly displaced families, killing at least 46 people.

Al Jazeera, quoting medical sources in the tiny Palestinian enclave, said at least 113 people were hospitalised with injuries.

Many victims are still trapped under the rubble and on the roads as rescuers are unable to reach them, they added.

Apart from overnight strikes, at least 13 people were killed in Israeli attacks since dawn.

In Khan Younis, overnight Israeli air strikes killed 19 people.

Mohamed Abou Ouda, a Khan Younis resident, told Al Jazeera that he woke up to his neighbour's house having collapsed onto his.

"We did not hear the sound of a missile. We only saw smoke and a huge explosion that shook the whole neighbourhood," Ouda said, adding that their home was now a pile of "twisted metal and burning memories".

Abu Khaleel al-Madhoon, another resident of Khan Younis, said he was "devastated" by the attack.

"They were kind, peaceful people, never involved in anything. The explosion shook the entire area like an earthquake. The family was

asleep, unaware, and in an instant, everything was gone. Children, women, all killed in cold blood. This is nothing short of pure brutality."

Since Israel broke the ceasefire deal on March 18, at least 1,309 people have been killed and 3,184 wounded in Gaza.

Meanwhile, Gaza's health ministry yesterday likened Israel's prevention of polio vaccines in the besieged and bombarded territory to "a time bomb that threatens to spread the epidemic".

In a statement, it said 602,000 children in Gaza were at risk of "permanent paralysis and chronic disabilities" unless they received the desperately needed vaccines. The ministry urged relevant health authorities to apply pressure on Israel to allow the entry of the polio vaccines.

Meanwhile, the Israeli military yesterday provided new details that changed its initial account of the killing of 15 emergency workers near the southern Gaza city of Rafah last month.

The 15 paramedics and emergency responders were shot dead on March 23 and buried in a shallow grave where their bodies were found a week later by officials from the United Nations and the Palestinian Red Crescent. Another man is still missing.

- At least 602,000 children in Gaza at risk of 'permanent paralysis'
- Witnesses say attack on Khan Younis 'nothing short of pure brutality'
- UN says situation in Gaza becoming 'desperate'

We hope India will reconsider Waqf bill: BNP

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP hopes that the recently passed controversial Waqf (Amendment) Act in India will be reconsidered in the interest of maintaining communal harmony in the region, said BNP Standing Committee member Salahuddin Ahmed.

"India is a large democratic country and its government will reconsider this law, upholding the guardianship role of the state in protecting the religious rights of citizens of all religions...we express this hope," the senior BNP leader said at a press conference at the party chairperson's Gulshan office yesterday.

"We believe that this step [to reconsider this law] will play a historic role in maintaining communal harmony in the region."

He said the All India Muslim Personal Law Board and other like-minded organisations have termed the new law contradictory to the core spirit of the Islamic "Waqf" system.

"They [the organisations] view this law as a direct interference in the religious rights of Muslim citizens."

The concept of "Waqf" is rooted in Islamic laws and traditions. It refers to an endowment made by a charitable or religious purposes, such as building mosques, schools, hospitals, or other public institutions.

The bill was passed in both Houses of Parliament.

Salahuddin said he analysed various

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Three killed in clash over land dispute

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Cox's Bazar

A khatib of a local mosque and two others were killed in a clash over a land dispute at West Para in Kutupalong under Ukhiya upazila of Cox's Bazar yesterday morning.

The deceased were identified as Abdullah Al Mamun, khatib of Kutupalong Bazar Jame Mosque; his cousin Abdul Mannan; and Mannan's sister Shahina Begum.

Ukhiya Police Station Officer in Charge Arif Hossain confirmed the incident to The Daily Star.

"We are still looking into the matter and will provide details later," the OC said.

Mohammad Ali, general secretary of the Kutupalong Bazar Committee, said the conflict between the khatib and his cousins stemmed from a boundary wall dispute.

"Mamun was on one side of the conflict, while Mannan and Shahina were on the other. All three were first cousins," he added.

Mohammad Ali, who was at the hospital during the time of reporting, said all three died from injuries from the clash.



After a nine-day Eid vacation, all public and private offices, banks, and courts reopened yesterday. The photo shows officials and employees entering the Secretariat building in the capital yesterday morning.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

New 3D-printed skin could end testing on animals

INDEPENDENT.CO.UK

Scientists have developed a 3D-printed imitation of human skin with living cells, an advance they say could enable cosmetic testing without the use of animals.

Researchers, including from the Vellore Institute of Technology in India, say the skin imitation mimics the natural three-layer tissue structure of human skin and is ready for testing cosmetic nanoparticles.

Their study, published in the journal STAR Protocols, comes amid restrictions imposed in the European Union on the animal testing of cosmetics and their ingredients.

Scientists worldwide are looking for alternatives to test the absorption and toxicity of cosmetics like sun creams and serums.

The latest research provides a protocol for fabricating scaffolds similar to human skin using 3D printing. "The process is simple, cost-effective, environmentally friendly, and allows customisation by adjusting treatment parameters," scientists write in the study.

The starting point for making these skin imitations is a hydrogel formulation, printed together with living cells, researchers say.

