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প্রিয়জনের প্রয়োজনে...

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Π

## Illegal fair occupies Dhupkhola playground

HELEMUL ALAM and RAKIB MADBER

A local club in Gandaria has been holding a Baishakhi fair at Dhaka's Dhupkhola playground since April 6 -- without obtaining mandatory permission from the Dhaka South City Corporation (DSCC).

The fair, expected to continue until April 17, has taken over the entire field, depriving residents of their only open space for walking, exercise, and sports. Locals say the unauthorised event has disrupted their daily routines and caused noise pollution in the area.

"This is our only open field," said Mohammad Anwar Hossain, a resident. "Now, it's completely taken over by the fair. Children have nowhere to play, and the loud music at night is unbearable."

Teenagers who regularly play football at the field also expressed frustration. "We haven't been able to practise all week. If this field is used for fairs too, where do we go?" said

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## UPRISING CASES 'Not sparing any big fish' Says home adviser

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Home Affairs Adviser Jahangir Alam Chowdhury yesterday dismissed allegations that law enforcers are only arresting grassroots level political activists over the attacks and killings related to the July uprising, sparing influential figures.

"I cannot fully agree with that," he told reporters after a meeting of the Core Committee on Law and Order at the Secretariat.

"We are not sparing any big fish. But they have to come into the net first. Whoever is caught, we are arresting. If someone enters the net and we let them go, then you can question us," he said.

Responding to complaints that police often refuse to file cases, Khuda Baksh Chowdhury,

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## DUCSU EC, voter list to be finalised by May

DU CORRESPONDENT

The process of forming the Election Commission and finalising the voter list for the Dhaka University Central Students' Union (Ducusu) election will be completed by May, according to the published roadmap of the election.

The appointment of the chief election commissioner and the formation of the commission will be completed in the first half of May, according to the roadmap sent by the university's Public Relations Office yesterday.

As per the provided schedule, the EC will prepare the voter list in the middle of the month. Then the election commissioners will announce the election schedule with the consent of the vice chancellor.

In this roadmap, the

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As another year passed and the Bangla New Year arrived, the country embraced the joyous occasion of Pahela Baishakh. People of all ages and backgrounds came together to celebrate the vibrant festivities. The photos were taken in Khulna, Chattogram, Tangail and Rajshahi on Monday.

PHOTO: HABIBUR RAHMAN, RAJIB RAIHAN, AZAHAU UDDIN, STAR



## Banning AL top reform priority Says Bobby Hajjaj during discussion with consensus commission

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Banning the Awami League is the first and most important reform initiative, said National Democratic Movement (NDM) Chairman Bobby Hajjaj yesterday.

He made the remarks during a discussion with the National Consensus Commission (NCC) at the LD Hall of the National Parliament.

While the NDM expressed support for state reforms under the interim government, it strongly opposed several proposed measures.

"We believe that one of the main duties of this government is to ensure a sustainable future by prosecuting the fascist organisation Awami League," Hajjaj said.

He said the party rejects the proposal to disqualify former prime ministers from running for president, calling it a move to serve "a specific agenda."

He also opposed the proposal to limit a prime minister's tenure to two terms.

"While we support forming a National Constitutional Council, only an elected parliament has the authority to make such a decision," he said.

However, NDM categorically rejected the formation process of the council as outlined in the Constitutional Reform Commission's report, particularly the clause allowing the president to act as chief adviser with unanimous consensus among the council's members.

"We also reject the suggestion to hold local elections before the national election," Hajjaj added.

The party opposed the proposal to nominate

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## PAHELA BAISHAKH Nation celebrates its roots, resolve thru dance and music

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

With the first light of Monday, Bangladesh stepped into the Bangla year 1432, as people from all walks of life embraced Pahela Baishakh with joy, tradition, and a renewed sense of community.

From Chhayanaut's stirring dawn melodies beneath Rama's ancient banyan tree to a mesmerising drone show over Manik Mia Avenue at dusk, the New Year was marked by vibrant festivities, cultural pride, and peaceful public gatherings across the country.

### MORNING MELODIES

In the capital, the day began with Chhayanaut's iconic programme at Ramna Batamul, held under the theme "Amar Mukti Aloy Aloy" (My Freedom Lies in Light), honouring co-founder Sanjida Khatun.

Over 150 artistes performed a seamless sequence of 24 choral pieces, solos, and poetry recitations. Among them were beloved classics like Nuton Pran Dao, Timir Duar Kholo, and Shono Shono Deshobashi.

### ANONDO SHOBHAJATRA

Later in the morning, the Faculty of Fine

Arts at Dhaka University led its annual rally, now renamed "Borsho Boron Anondo Shobhajatra," reverting to its 1989 title in place of the more familiar Mangal Shobhajatra.

While authorities defended the move as a



return to roots, critics -- especially students and alumni -- voiced concern over its political undertone.

This year's procession carried the theme "Symphony of the New Year, End of Fascism," showcasing motifs of peace, resistance, and solidarity with Palestine.

An effigy resembling a monstrous face

-- widely believed to represent ousted Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina -- was set ablaze before but rebuilt in time for the 9:00am march.

"This year featured the largest representation of ethnic communities from both hills and plains, alongside Bangalees," said DU Vice-Chancellor Md Niaz Ahmed Khan.

Cultural Affairs Adviser Mostofa Sarwar Farooki added, "We targeted fascism, not politics -- it's a universal evil."

### MUSIC, ART, AND WARNINGS

At Rabindra Sarobar in Dhanmondi, cultural platform Shurer Dhara presented a dawn concert featuring works by Tagore, Nazrul, and other Bangalee greats.

Indigenous performers from the Chittagong Hill Tracts and Mymensingh enriched the programme, while folk games and rural crafts created a festive, fair-like setting.

In Gulshan, Shahabuddin Park saw a community-led celebration by the Gulshan Society and social platform "Oligoli Borshoborobon Bondhugan."

Chief guest Prof Anu Muhammad warned of growing cultural intolerance.

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## NATIONAL ELECTION EC sets plans for paper procurement

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Election Commission has outlined a plan for completing the procurement of essential papers and printing work within a four-month window ahead of the upcoming national election.

It plans to acquire an estimated 1,69,629 reams of different types of paper for Tk 35.77 crore as part of preparations for the national election, as well as the local government elections.

Typically, the standard requirements for a national parliamentary election include the printing of 21 different forms, 17 distinct packets, 5 types of identification cards, the code of conduct, posters displaying party symbols, election management manuals, training manuals, guidelines, and a variety of other necessary materials, according to EC officials.

The EC held a preparatory meeting with officials from the Directorate of Printing and Publications yesterday morning at its headquarters in Dhaka to assess the volume of paper needed for printing various materials for the national election, the possible budget, and to verify existing stock and the timeframe needed to complete the

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Makeshift tea stalls and roadwork machinery have taken over this footpath, leaving little room for pedestrians. Illegal occupation of footpaths continues to disrupt daily movement in the capital. The photo was taken opposite Dhaka City College in Dhanmondi yesterday.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

## INT'L CRIMES TRIBUNAL 1971 war crimes accused gets bail after brief custody

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

An accused in a case filed over crimes committed during the 1971 Liberation War was held in the custody of the International Crimes Tribunal for two hours yesterday after his lawyer failed to submit necessary documents during a bail hearing.

The accused, Md Tofazzal Hossain, alias Tazu, a former NCC Bank chairman who had been on the run since 2019, surrendered before the tribunal seeking bail yesterday.

His lawyer, Md Jamil Hoque, could not present the required documents.

The tribunal then asked both the defence counsel and prosecutor Gazi Monawar Hossain Tamim to return with proper documents after two hours.

Around 3:00pm, the tribunal reconvened and granted interim bail after reviewing documents, which found no evidence against Tofazzal.

The defence informed the court that the initial investigation found no evidence against Tofazzal, yet formal charges were pressed.

A second investigation was later ordered due to lack of material, which also found no evidence, but the prosecution again pressed charges, allegedly withholding the findings, Jamil added.

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