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## HRW slams ban on AL activities

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Recent legislative initiatives by Bangladesh's interim government risk undermining fundamental freedoms, said Human Rights Watch yesterday.

Instead of pursuing its pledge to reform the criminal justice system and bring accountability for serious abuses, the government, led by Nobel laureate Muhammad Yunus, is attempting to "suppress the rights" of supporters of the deposed leader, Sheikh Hasina, and the Awami League party, it said in a report.

On May 12, the interim government ordered a "temporary" ban on the Awami League using newly introduced powers under a draconian amendment to the Anti-Terrorism Act, it added.

Meanwhile, draft legislation to address enforced disappearances, which were widespread under the previous government, does not meet international standards and scarcely addresses accountability for past crimes.

"Sheikh Hasina's government

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A farmer harvesting half-ripe paddy at Goalpara village in Rajshahi's Mohanpur upazila yesterday out of fear that water would completely ruin the crops after hours of incessant rain inundated fields in different upazilas of the district on Wednesday night.

PHOTO: AZAHAR UDDIN

## India pushed 109 more into Bangladesh

STAR REPORT

At least 109 people were pushed into Bangladesh from India through various border points in eight districts between Wednesday night and yesterday, according to Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB).

BGB officials detained them along the Bangladesh-India border in Panchagarh, Lalmonirhat, Thakurgaon, Dinajpur, Moulvibazar, Feni, Cumilla and Khagrachhari, said our local correspondents.

Over the past month, at least 500 people have been reportedly pushed into Bangladesh from India.

BGB officials, quoting the detainees, told this newspaper that India's Border Security Force (BSF) pushed the individuals in. However, BSF officials during flag meetings with BGB in at least two districts yesterday denied their involvement.

Meanwhile, Dhaka has sent multiple letters to New Delhi requesting a stop to actions that pose risks to security and undermine mutual understanding.

In Panchagarh, 21 individuals, including women and children, were detained near the Joydharbhangha Borobari border in Sadar upazila early yesterday. They are all from Khulna and Narail.

Lt Col Sheikh Md Bodruddoza, commanding officer of BGB 56, said the detainees had been living in various parts of Gujarat, India, for a long time.

They said they were handed over by Indian police to the BSF, who then pushed them into Bangladesh, he added.

BSF officials, however, denied their involvement during a flag meeting.

In Lalmonirhat, 20 individuals, including women and children, were detained near Dhabsutti and Jhalangi borders in Patgram upazila on Wednesday night.

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## Israel kills 52 more Palestinians

Two Israeli embassy staffers shot dead in Washington DC

AGENCIES

Gaza's civil defence agency said Israeli strikes had killed at least 52 people since dawn yesterday across the territory, as Israel allowed 100 aid trucks carrying flour, baby food and medical equipment into the enclave.

Boys and young men gathered after one vehicle arrived in the city of Khan Younis on Wednesday night, but kept back as men, some holding guns, watched over the unloading of sacks.

"Some bakeries will begin receiving flour to produce bread, and we expect the distribution of bread to begin later today[yesterday]," Amjad al-Shawa, director of the Palestinian Non-Governmental Organizations Network in Gaza, told Reuters.

"During the ceasefire, 600 trucks used to enter every day, which means that the current quantity is a drop in the ocean, nothing," he said. The International Committee of the Red Cross said it had got one truck of medical supplies through to replenish its field hospital in Rafah, but more was needed.

The Palestinian health minister said 29 children and elderly people had died from starvation-related deaths in Gaza in recent days and that many thousands more were at risk.

The Israeli army issued an evacuation warning yesterday for 14 neighbourhoods in the northern Gaza Strip, including parts of Beit Lahia and Jabalia.

The army told residents in an Arabic-language statement that it was "operating with intense force in your areas, as terrorist organisations continue their activities

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