



Bulbul replaces Faruque as BCB president

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Former national skipper Aminul Islam Bulbul was elected as the new president of Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) yesterday, ending weeks of speculation about him replacing former president Faruque Ahmed.

Following the National Sports Council's (NSC) decision to revoke Faruque's BCB directorship on Thursday night -- which came after the majority of the board directors expressed no confidence in him, and the review of the BPL fact-finding committee's report -- it was quite evident that Bulbul would take the job.

Bulbul, who played 13 Tests and 39 ODIs between 1988 and 2002, was recently offered a role in the BCB by Youth and Sports Adviser Asif Mahmud and after a series of incidents at BCB in recent times, he became the 17th BCB president and only the second cricketer



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ANTI-TOBACCO LAW AMENDMENT Revenue gets priority over public health

TUHIN SHUBHRA ADHIKARY

The move to strengthen the anti-tobacco law has stalled for the authorities' greater emphasis on revenue generation from tobacco sales than on public health, according to anti-tobacco campaigners.

The amendment to the Smoking and Tobacco Products Usage (Control) Act has yet to see the light of day despite being placed before the cabinet twice in the past two years.

The development comes at a time when anti-tobacco campaigners have expressed concern over the slow decline in tobacco use, suggesting that Bangladesh is unlikely to meet the UN set target for 2030.

AMENDMENT PROPOSALS

- Stop sale of loose or unpackaged tobacco products
- Ban retail sale of tobacco products without registration
- Ban tobacco advertising in digital, social media platforms
- Don't allow CSR events by tobacco companies

Citing surveys, they pointed out two alarming trends: the age of smoking initiation has become lower and the use of e-cigarettes has significantly increased during this period.

Against the backdrop, the country as well as the world is observing World No Tobacco Day today with the theme "Unmasking the appeal: Exposing industry tactics on tobacco and nicotine products".

This year's WNTD campaign aims to reveal the strategies employed by the tobacco and nicotine industries to make their harmful products enticing, particularly to young people, according to the World Health Organization.

By exposing these tactics, the WHO seeks to drive awareness, advocate for stronger policies, including a ban on flavours that make tobacco and

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Dozens of parties want polls by Dec Say Gono Forum, leftist parties; term Yunus's polls claim 'misleading'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Gono Forum, the Left Democratic Alliance, and the 12 Party Alliance have strongly reiterated their demand for holding the national election by December.

In separate statements yesterday, the parties rejected recent remarks made by Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus in Japan that "no one except one party wants elections in December".

They criticised the chief adviser's claim, terming it "false, misleading, and damaging to the political atmosphere".

Gono Forum described the remarks as "incorrect" and expressed concern that such statements from the chief adviser and others in the interim government were creating confusion and division among political parties.

The party said it has long called for necessary reforms and preparations to hold a free, fair, and credible election by December. It accused the government of failing to adopt a clear plan

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UN warns all of Gaza at risk of famine

Hamas says new US-backed truce proposal does not meet demands

AGENCIES

Gaza is "the hungriest place on Earth", the United Nations said yesterday, warning that the Palestinian territory's entire population was now at risk of famine.

Negotiations to end nearly 20 months of offensive have so far failed to achieve a breakthrough, with Israel resuming operations in Gaza in March, ending a six-week truce.

"Gaza is the hungriest place on Earth," said Jens Laerke, a spokesman for the UN humanitarian agency OCHA.

"It's the only defined area -- a country or defined territory within a country -- where you have the entire population at risk of famine. 100 percent of the population at risk of famine," he said, rejecting claims to the contrary by Israeli authorities.

Meanwhile, the White House said Thursday Israel had "signed off" on a new Gaza ceasefire proposal submitted to Hamas, but the Palestinian group said the deal failed to satisfy its demands.

The White House said President Donald Trump and US envoy Steve Witkoff had "submitted a ceasefire

proposal to Hamas that Israel backed".

A source close to the Hamas said the new version "is considered a retreat" from the previous one, which "included an American commitment regarding permanent ceasefire negotiations".

According to two sources close to the negotiations, the new proposal involves a 60-day truce, potentially extendable to 70 days, and the release of 10 living hostages and nine bodies in exchange for Palestinian prisoners during the first week.

In central Gaza, Israeli forces had shot and wounded at least 20 people seeking aid at the newest distribution point set up by the controversial Gaza Humanitarian Foundation, reports Al Jazeera online.

Medical sources also said that at least 28 people had been killed by Israeli attacks yesterday. The casualties are mainly coming from attacks on the north, where the Israeli military issued a state of forced evacuation orders earlier yesterday.

Israel announced Thursday the creation of 22 new settlements in the occupied West Bank, drawing sharp condemnation from Britain, Jordan

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US suggests student visa suspension to be brief

AFP, Washington

The US State Department indicated Thursday that a global suspension on visa processing for international students would be brief, as it ramps up scrutiny of applicants' social media activity.

State Department spokeswoman Tammy Bruce encouraged prospective students to seek visa appointments and said: "I would not be recommending that if this was going to be weeks or months."

"I can tell you that it's something that would happen perhaps sooner than later," she told reporters.

Secretary of State Marco Rubio on Tuesday ordered embassies and consulates to pause scheduling appointments for student visas pending new guidelines on checking applicants' social media postings.

It is one of a series of battles waged over education by President Donald Trump's administration, which has rescinded thousands of visas, sought to ban Harvard University from accepting any international students.

71 more pushed in through four border districts

STAR REPORT

At least 71 more people were detained by BGB yesterday after they were pushed into Bangladesh allegedly by India's Border Security Force (BSF) through various border points in Moulvibazar, Habiganj, Khagrachhari, and Lalmonirhat.

Fifty-one of them were identified as Bangladeshi nationals, according to BGB and local administration officials.

They could not confirm the identities of the remaining 20 till the filing of this report last night.

In Moulvibazar, 19 Bangladeshi were detained near Champa Para border and Baghchhara border area in Kamalganj upazila in the morning.

Lt Col ASM Zakaria, commander of BGB-46 Battalion, said, "The detainees are residents of northern regions. The BSF reportedly brought them to near the borders and pushed them back into our territory."

The individuals were apprehended around 7:30am, while attempting to enter Bangladesh. Of them, 14 were detained near Champa Para border and five near Baghchhara border, he said.

Besides, BGB detained 10 others, including women and children, near the border in Juri upazila in the morning.

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Palestinians evacuate following an Israeli strike on a house in Gaza City yesterday.

PHOTO: REUTERS



3,000-year-old Mayan city found in Guatemala

AFP, Guatemala City

Archaeologists have unearthed the remains of a Mayan city nearly 3,000 years old in northern Guatemala, with pyramids and monuments that point to its significance as an important ceremonial site, the Central American country's culture ministry said Thursday.

The Mayan civilization arose around 2000 BC, reaching its height between 400 and 900 AD in what is present day southern Mexico and Guatemala, as well as parts of Belize, El Salvador and Honduras.

The city named "Los Abuelos," Spanish for "The Grandparents," once stood some 21 kilometres (13 miles) from the important archaeological site of Uaxactun, in Guatemala's northern Peten department, the ministry said in a statement.



A group of youngsters enjoy a game of football in the now-muddy cropland after all the paddy was recently harvested. The photo was taken yesterday in Godagari upazila in Rajshahi.

PHOTO: AZAHAR UDDIN

মরণ



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