



## Govt revises definition of freedom fighter

Constituent assembly members will no longer be considered FFs

BAHARAM KHAN and MD ABBAS

The government last night promulgated an ordinance redefining the term "freedom fighter" (Bir Muktijoddha) and introducing three new categories.

The new categories are Muktijuddher Shohojogi (associate of the Liberation War); Muktijoddha Poribar (family of a freedom fighter); and Muktijuddher Shohojogi Poribar (family of a Liberation War associate).

The National Freedom Fighters Council (Amendment) Ordinance-2025 amended the previous National Freedom Fighters Council Act-2022.

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**The definition of "associate of the Liberation War" specifically includes all Members of the National Assembly and Members of the Provincial Assembly who were affiliated with the wartime provisional government of Bangladesh and later considered members of the constituent assembly.**

government of Bangladesh (Mujibnagar Government) and later considered members of the constituent assembly.

Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, Syed Nazrul Islam, Tajuddin Ahmad, and more than 400 others were members of the constituent assembly and used to be recognised as freedom fighters.

The ordinance, however, included the Mujibnagar government in the definition of "Bir Muktijoddha".

### BIR MUKTIJODDDHA (FREEDOM FIGHTER)

According to the ordinance, the new definition of a Bir Muktijoddha reads:

"Bir Muktijoddha is someone who, between March 26 and December 16, 1971, either prepared for war and received training within villages across the country, or crossed the border into India to enrol in various training camps with the aim of participating in the Liberation War. These individuals actively took part in the war against the occupying and invading Pakistani armed forces and their

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As the Jamuna's water level rises with the onset of monsoon, severe erosion has devoured a large stretch of riverbank in Char Poulee of Tangail Sadar, triggering panic among the locals. River erosion has been an ongoing threat in the area for several years.

PHOTO: MIRZA SHAKIL

Govt workers, pensioners to get special allowance

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government has announced a special allowance for public sector employees and pensioners, effective from July 1, in a move aimed at cushioning their incomes.

According to a finance ministry circular issued yesterday, employees in Grades 1 to 9 will receive an additional 10 percent of their basic salary each year,

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## Budget 'realistic, pragmatic'

Salehuddin defends fiscal plan, hints at revisiting black money provision

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Finance Adviser Salehuddin Ahmed yesterday described the budget for the new fiscal year as "realistic, implementable, and pragmatic", saying it aims to stabilise the economy.

"We didn't want to just make lofty promises or use flowery rhetoric," Salehuddin said at a post-budget media briefing in Dhaka. "Most of the commitments we made are grounded in what's practically possible."

The Tk 790,000 crore budget for fiscal 2025-26 is the first in years to be smaller than the previous

one in original size. "Normally, budgets keep expanding every year, but this time we've trimmed it," he said. "The aim is to deliver something we can actually implement, not just announce."

Salehuddin said the interim administration inherited a fragile economy teetering on the edge. "Some said the country was in the ICU. Others said we were at the edge of a cliff, especially in financial governance," he said. "We had to restore order, bring back normalcy, and revive economic activity. That's been our first priority."

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**CONSENSUS TALKS**  
Parties largely agree to let MPs vote at will in JS  
Lawmakers must follow party lines on finance bills, no-confidence motions

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Political parties have, by and large, agreed on keeping a constitutional provision that allows lawmakers to vote against their parties unless the vote is on finance bills, no-confidence motions and constitutional amendments.

The parties also agreed to have 400 seats in parliament.

Leaders of 30 parties met the National Consensus Commission yesterday at the Foreign Service Academy.

The parties agreed that heads of key parliamentary standing committees, such as the Estimate Committee, Undertaking Committee and Privilege Committee, should be appointed from the opposition.

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## Budget goals not backed by measures: CPD

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The positive objectives laid out in the proposed national budget for fiscal 2025-26 are not backed by measures, said the Centre for Policy Dialogue.

"The budget focused on several things like reducing inequality, overall development and human capital, which is good. Unfortunately, these are not supported by steps," said CPD Executive Director Fahmida Khatun at a media briefing on the think-tank's analysis of the national budget for the upcoming fiscal year.

While there are several positive initiatives such as tax relief for several

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