

## Man killed for protesting daughter's harassment

### Swechchhasebak Dal leader arrested

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bogura

A man was beaten to death allegedly by a local Swechchhasebak Dal leader for protesting the harassment of his 14-year-old daughter in Bogura town yesterday.

The incident took place around 2:00pm in the Phulbari-Joraghat area of Bogura town, said Hasan Basir, officer-in-charge of Bogura Sadar Police Station.

Police detained the main suspect, Jitu Islam, 43, and two of his cohorts immediately after the incident, said the OC.

Swechchhasebak Dal said it expelled Jitu as the assistant general secretary of its Bogura District Unit after the incident.

Mostafa Manzur, additional superintendent of police in Bogura, told The Daily Star that they initially learned that Jitu had made a marriage proposal to a 14-year-old

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Farmers are boiling and drying freshly harvested boro paddy in the Dakshin Jallabad area of Nikli, Kishoreganj. The region is a major source of foodgrain thanks to its vast floodplains.

PHOTO: TAFSILUL AZIZ

## IMF's two tranches to be placed to board

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Bangladesh's strained foreign exchange reserves are set to get a substantial boost this month with about \$2 billion coming in as budget support from other bilateral and multilateral lenders.

Bangladesh is expecting to get \$900 million from the Asian Development Bank's two budget support programmes, the proposal for which would be placed in the ADB's board meeting on June 19, according to the finance ministry officials.

Of the amount, \$500 million is expected for climate-related budget support and another \$400 million

is expected to reform the banking systems.

In co-financing deals with the ADB, the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank will provide \$400 million and the Agence Française de Développement, the French Development Agency, will provide \$100 million.

The World Bank will provide \$200 million in budget support, which will be placed at their board meeting on June 20, the finance ministry officials said.

"The Government of Bangladesh and the World Bank are preparing a development policy credit scheduled for the World Bank Board

discussion later this month, which would support transparency and accountability in domestic revenue mobilisation, banking sector, data production and dissemination, public investment management and procurement, audit and accountability, and the delivery of social programs," said the WB in a statement yesterday.

Besides, Japan will release \$418 million as a Development Policy Loan to support economic reforms and climate resilience.

As of May 29, reserves stood at \$20.57 billion as of May 29, according to the latest published data by the Bangladesh Bank.

## 54 pushed in thru 4 border dists

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with BSF and told them to verify the identities of the four detainees who claimed to be Indians."

In Thakurgaon, 23 individuals were detained at the Chapsar border in Haripur upazila at around 2:00am.

The BGB is currently working to confirm their identities.

They were detained around 8:00am after they illegally crossed the border, said Nayek Subedar Jobayer Rahman, commander of the Sreerampur BOP under BGB 61 Battalion in Rangpur.

All three are Bangladeshi citizens and were handed over to local police, said Jobayer.

Mahmudun Nabi, officer in charge of Hatibandha Police Station, said they had illegally entered India eight years ago in search of work in Mumbai. "We'll now verify their identities."

Meanwhile, nine others remained stranded at the zero line till last night after BSF attempted to push them in through two border points in Patgram upazila, but BGB, with help from locals, foiled the attempts, said Jobayer.

In Moulvibazar, 12 people were detained near the Kumarsail border area in Barlekha upazila.

The individuals identified themselves as Rohingya and were being kept in a local school as their identities were being verified, said Lt Col Ariful Haque Chowdhury, commanding officer of BGB 52 Battalion in Beanibazar.

The returnees claimed they were pushed into Bangladesh by BSF.

[Our correspondents from Thakurgaon, Lalmonirhat and Moulvibazar contributed to the report.]

## In 'Rab uniforms'

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The DC said the four were being questioned. Police are also probing why such a large sum was stored at the distributor's residence and why it was being transported in this early morning. "It's suspicious that the bike carrying Tk 1.08 crore was specifically targeted," he said, adding that informants are often involved in such crimes.

He added that no arrests were made as of last night. Nayan was summoned for further questioning. His partner, Tarikuzzaman, is out of Dhaka on Eid holidays.

Rab 1 Commanding Officer Wing Commander Md Rokonuzzaman said they were also investigating how individuals wearing "Rab uniforms" managed to carry out the incident.

## Death toll 279

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up their recovery efforts on Saturday, extracting a badly burnt body from the tailpiece before cranes were used to remove the wreckage.

At least 38 people were killed on the ground.

Distraught relatives of passengers have been providing DNA samples in Ahmedabad, with some having to fly to India to help with the process.

The first body of a passenger to be handed over to relatives was placed in a white coffin yesterday before being transported in an ambulance with a police escort, footage from the state government showed.

Aviation Minister Ram Mohan Naidu Kinjarpur said on Friday that a flight data recorder, or black box, had been recovered, saying it would "significantly aid" investigations.

Forensic teams are still looking for the second black box as they probe why the plane lost height and crashed straight after takeoff.

The aviation minister said on Saturday that authorities "felt the need to do an extended surveillance of the Boeing 787 planes", with eight out of Air India's 34 Dreamliners inspected so far.

## Gunman kills

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Democratic state assemblywoman Melissa Hortman, a former assembly speaker, and her husband, Mark, were shot dead in their home in the Minneapolis suburb of Brooklyn Park, Walz and law enforcement officials told reporters.

Her official website says they have two children.

Walz said that the gunman went to the Hortmans' residence after shooting Senator John Hoffman and his wife multiple times in their home in the nearby town of Champlin.

They underwent surgery, Walz said, adding that he was "cautiously optimistic" that they would survive "this assassination attempt."

"This was an act of targeted political violence," he said. "Peaceful discourse is the foundation of our democracy. We don't settle our differences with violence or at gunpoint."

## Iran, Israel trade missiles

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aircraft -- our air force, our pilots -- in the skies over Tehran," Netanyahu said, shortly after Israel's military reported it had struck 40 targets in the Iranian capital overnight, including missiles and advanced air defence systems.

In reply, Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian warned that there would be a "more severe and powerful response" if Israel continued to strike his country.

Pezeshkian also criticised what he described as the United States' "dishonesty" for supporting Israel while Iran and Tehran were engaged in nuclear talks.

The United States, Israel's main ally, helped shoot down Iranian missiles, two US officials said.

Iranian fire still struck residential districts in Israel, however, and Defence Minister Israel Katz said Iran's leadership had crossed a red line.

"If Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei continues to fire missiles at the Israeli home front, Tehran will burn," he said in a statement.

Iran had vowed to avenge Friday's Israeli onslaught, which gutted Iran's nuclear and military leadership and damaged atomic plants and military bases, killing 78 people, including civilians, according to Iran's UN envoy.

Iran warned Israel's allies that their regional military bases would come under fire too if they help shoot down Iranian missiles, Iranian state television reported.

Iran's own ally, the Yemeni Houthi group, fired missiles at Israel on Friday night, but at least one appeared to go astray, injuring five Palestinians including three children in the Israeli-occupied West Bank, the Palestinian Red Crescent said.

However, 20 months of war in Gaza and a conflict in Lebanon last year have decimated Tehran's strongest allies, Hamas in Gaza and Hezbollah in Lebanon, reducing its ability to project power across the region along with its options for retaliation.

Gulf Arab states that have long mistrusted Iran but fear coming under attack in any wider conflict have urged calm as worries about disruption to the Gulf region's crucial oil exports boosted the price of crude by about 7% on Friday.

Amid continuing fighting, UN chief Antonio Guterres called for Israel and Iran to halt their escalating conflict.

"Enough escalation. Time to stop. Peace and diplomacy must prevail," Guterres said on X.

**NIGHT OF BLASTS AND FEAR IN ISRAEL AND IRAN**

Iran's overnight fusillade included hundreds of ballistic missiles and drones, an Israeli official said. Three people, including a man and a woman, were killed and dozens wounded, the ambulance service said.

In Rishon LeZion, south of Tel Aviv, emergency services rescued a baby girl trapped in a house hit by a missile, police said. Video showed teams searching through the rubble of one home.

Iranian talks with the United States to resolve the nuclear dispute have stalled this year.

Gan, near Ben Gurion airport, Linda Grinfeld described her apartment being damaged: "We were sitting in the shelter, and then we heard such a boom. It was awful."

The Israeli military said it had intercepted surface-to-surface Iranian missiles as well as drones, and that two rockets had been fired from Gaza.

With Iran's air defences heavily damaged, Israeli Air Force chief Tomer Bar said "the road to Iran has been paved".

Attacks on Iranian defences continued until the filing of this report at 10:00pm.

In preparation for possible further escalation, reservists were being deployed across Israel. Army Radio reported units had been positioned along the Lebanese and Jordanian borders.

In Iran, explosions were heard overnight across the capital, state media reported. Fars News agency said two projectiles had hit Mehraband airport, located inside the capital, which is both civilian and military.

State television reported that a 14-storey housing complex, Shahid Chamran, had been flattened by a missile. It said 60 people had been killed, though there was no immediate official confirmation.

Israel's military did not immediately comment on that report.

Authorities in Iran's northwest said that Israeli air strikes since Friday had killed at least 30 military personnel in East Azerbaijan province, according to news agency ISNA.

Iran's UN envoy Amir Saeid Iravani said 78 people had been killed in Israel's strikes on Friday and more than 320 wounded, most of them civilians.

**IRANIAN NUCLEAR SITES DAMAGED**

Israel sees Iran's nuclear programme as a threat to its existence, and said the bombardment was designed to avert the last steps to production of a nuclear weapon, even though US intelligence says it has seen no sign that this is imminent.

Israeli UN envoy Danny Danon called the strikes "an act of national preservation".

A military official yesterday said Israel had killed nine Iranian nuclear scientists, and that the damage to the nuclear facilities at Esfahan and Natanz would take "more than a few weeks" to repair.

Tehran insists the programme is entirely civilian in line with its obligations under the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and that it does not seek an atomic bomb.

However, it has repeatedly hidden parts of its programme from international inspectors, and the International Atomic Energy Agency has reported it in violation of the NPT.

Israel, which is not an NPT signatory and is widely understood to have developed a nuclear bomb, has said it cannot let its main regional foe gain atomic weapons.

Iranian talks with the United States to resolve the nuclear dispute have stalled this year.



PHOTO: CA PRESS WING

Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus returned to Dhaka yesterday morning after completing his four-day visit to the United Kingdom. The photo was taken at Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport after his flight landed around 9:45am.

## BNP upbeat, process irks Jamaat, NCP

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council meeting yesterday morning.

"The chief adviser's joint press conference with one party has created concerns among the public about whether the upcoming election will be free, fair, and acceptable," the party said in its statement.

It added that in a country where many political parties are actively engaged, it is not reasonable to take decisions on overall political matters by consulting only one party.

"We hope the interim government will remain neutral, ensure a level playing field for a free, fair, and credible election, and take necessary steps regarding justice and reforms," the statement read.

The NCP, in a statement on Friday, also said the government appeared to be prioritising a particular party's demands regarding the election.

While the talks regarding the election timing figured high at the meeting, the key demands of citizens in the post-uprising Bangladesh, namely justice and reform, were not given the same importance.

"The National Citizen Party finds it extremely frustrating," reads the statement.

"Our party is okay with any date between December and June. But prior to that, a consensus must be reached on fundamental reforms and how they would be implemented. Restructuring the existing Election Commission is another precondition for ensuring a level playing field for a fair election,"

Ariful Islam Adeeb, senior joint convener of the NCP, told The Daily Star.

"Even the chief adviser said that polls

could be held in February if progress is made on reforms and ongoing trials.

But the NCP is publicising it in such a way that as if the government has finalised the election timing. They [BNP] are confusing people," he added.

Bangladesh Khelafat Majlis, headed by Mamunul Haque, expressed deep concern in a statement yesterday.

As the head of a non-partisan interim government, Yunus has the responsibility to ensure equal treatment of all political parties, the Khelafat Majlis said.

"Issuing a joint statement with the leader of a particular political party raises questions about his neutrality and acceptability and sends a message of state-level discriminations against other political parties," the Islamist party said.

"We hope the leadership of the interim government will play a more cautious and balanced role in the coming days, so that national unity is established and an acceptable electoral environment is ensured," the statement added.

The Khelafat Majlis also said it welcomes any constructive dialogue and discussion aimed at easing the ongoing political tensions and paving the way for a credible, peaceful, and neutral election.

Meanwhile, Revolutionary Workers Party General Secretary Saiful Haque said the meeting could be viewed as a step toward reforms, justice and polls, potentially offering a dignified exit for the interim government.

"This could help resolve the political stalemate. It might also reduce concerns about the government leaning towards any particular direction," he added while talking at a programme in the

capital.

In reaction to the Jamaat's statement, BNP Standing Committee member Salahuddin Ahmed told The Daily Star, "It was not a matter of fondness for any party. Rather, the new election timeline announced by the chief adviser aligns with the Jamaat ameer's suggestion that the election could be held in February, before Ramadan in 2026."

A majority of the parties, not just the BNP, demanded that the election be held within December, he said.

"Now, considering Ramadan, public exams, and weather conditions, the time that has been set is suitable for holding the election. We welcome it."

Talking about NCP's reaction to the meeting, Salahuddin said that the NCP is viewing it from a partisan perspective. "They should rise above their party views, make decisions keeping in mind the broader national interest."

Prof Al Masud Hasanuzzaman of Jahangirnagar University's government and politics department said signs of compromise aimed at resolving the electoral stalemate have emerged following the meeting. He described this as a positive development overall.

Asked about a possible shift in the political landscape, he explained that in the coming days, politics will centre around the election. Political parties will make their calculations, issue strategic statements, and ultimately launch their election campaigns.

"If all parties were