

Fire at mall in Iraq leaves 69 people dead 11 others missing

AFP, Kut

A fire tore through a newly opened shopping mall in the eastern Iraqi city of Kut overnight, killing at least 69 people, authorities said yesterday, as grief-stricken families searched for missing relatives.

Officials said many people suffocated in bathrooms, while one person told AFP that his five relatives died in an elevator. At least 11 people remained missing.

The blaze – the latest in a country where safety regulations are frequently neglected – broke out late Wednesday, reportedly starting on the first floor before rapidly engulfing the five-storey Corniche Hypermarket Mall.

The cause was not immediately known, but one survivor told AFP an air conditioner had exploded.

Several people told AFP they lost families including mothers and children who had gone to shop and dine



A group of migrants walk into the water to board an inflatable dinghy in an attempt to cross the English Channel to Britain, as tougher migration controls are announced, at Petit-Fort-Philippe beach in Gravelines, near Calais, France, yesterday.

PHOTO: REUTERS

JEFFREY EPSTEIN ROW 69pc Americans believe Trump admin hiding info: poll

REUTERS, Washington

Most Americans think President Donald Trump's administration is hiding information about accused sex-trafficker Jeffrey Epstein and give it poor marks on the issue after pledging to make public documents in the case, a Reuters/Ipsos poll found.

The two-day poll, which closed Wednesday, showed 69 percent of respondents thought the federal government was hiding details about Epstein's clients, compared to 6 percent who disagreed and about one in four who said they weren't sure.

Epstein, a wealthy financier and convicted sex offender, was facing federal charges of sex-trafficking minors when he died by suicide in jail in 2019. He had pleaded not guilty, and the case was dismissed after his death.

The case has captivated swaths of Trump's political base who were expecting lurid details after some of Trump's top law enforcement officials said they would be releasing documents that would lead to major revelations about Epstein and his alleged clientele. The Trump administration last week reversed course on its pledge, enraging some of the president's followers. Close to two-thirds of Republicans think the administration is hiding details on Epstein's business, the poll found.



at the mall, days after it opened in Kut – around 160 kilometres (100 miles) southeast of Baghdad.

Footage shared on social media showed people including children standing on the roof, calling for help.

Ali Kadhim, 51, has been shuttling between the mall and the main hospital, where the victims were taken, looking for his cousin, who is missing with his wife and three children.

Back at the mall, he waited anxiously as rescuers searched for victims in the wreckage, with an ambulance on standby.

Israel creating discord Says Syria's interim president, vows to protect rights of Druze citizens as ceasefire holds

REUTERS, Damascus

Syria's interim President Ahmed al-Sharaa promised to protect the rights of Druze citizens yesterday as a ceasefire appeared to be holding in the country's south following US intervention to end fighting between government forces and Druze fighters.

Overnight, the Islamist-led government's troops withdrew from the predominantly Druze city of Sweida, where scores of people have been killed in days of conflict pitting local fighters against the Damascus authorities and Bedouin tribes.

The violence in Syria escalated sharply on Wednesday as Israel launched airstrikes in Damascus while pressing attacks on government forces in the south,

Govt troops withdrew from Sweida after US intervention

Israeli strikes 'violate' Syria's sovereignty; Russia

Over 516 killed since the weekend in violent clashes in Sweida

demanding they withdraw and saying Israel aimed to protect Syria's Druze minority.

More than 516 people have been killed since the weekend in violent clashes in Syria's southern Sweida province, a war monitor said yesterday, updating an earlier toll.

Describing Syria's new rulers as barely disguised jihadists, Israel has bombed repeatedly this year, saying it will not allow Syrian government forces to deploy forces into areas

near its frontier. Facing calls from Israel's own Druze minority to shield Syria's Druze, Israel has also seized ground in the south.

In a speech to the Syrian nation yesterday, Sharaa said Israel had "consistently targeted our stability and created discord among us since the fall of the former regime", accusing it of seeking to "dismantle the unity of our people".

Reuters footage showed Syrian forces moving out of Sweida overnight. The situation in Sweida was calm on yesterday morning.

US Secretary of State Marco Rubio said late on Wednesday the US had engaged all the parties involved. "We have agreed on specific steps that will bring this troubling and horrifying situation to an end tonight," he said on social media.

BNP sees plot to thwart

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"Fascism has not ended yet," he said, hoping that the election will be held in February 2026 as agreed in the meeting between Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus and BNP's Acting Chairman Tarique Rahman.

On Wednesday, BNP standing committee, the highest policymaking body of the party, held a meeting at its chairperson's Gulshan office, where the recent violent incidents, including in Gopalganj, were discussed. Tarique presided over the meeting virtually from London.

Calling the NCP Gopalganj rally "carelessly planned", standing committee members said such an incident is being

government are further worsening the situation. The advisers in charge are only making statements in the media but are failing to take effective action," it added.

Meanwhile, at a protest rally yesterday in front of the party's central office in Nayapaltan, BNP Standing Committee Member Salahuddin Ahmed said a new political party, which has yet to receive registration, is announcing one political programme after another in an unplanned manner.

Salahuddin accused NCP of creating a situation to portray the government as incapable of maintaining law and order, raising doubts about its ability to hold elections.

Yunus has still not officially given any



BNP's youth wing Jubo Dal holds a rally outside the Nayapaltan office of the BNP yesterday, protesting deteriorating law and order across the country.

PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

AGENCIES

The Roman Catholic parish in the Gaza Strip was damaged by a military strike yesterday, killing two people and injuring several others, the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem said in a statement.

Earlier, doctors at the Al-Ahli Hospital in Gaza City said two women had been killed in the strike which was blamed on Israel.

The Latin Patriarchate, which oversees the Holy Family Church in Gaza, said parish priest Father Gabriele Romanelli was one of those injured in the attack, but gave no details about his condition.

Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni blamed Israel for the attack. **Pope 'deeply saddened' by Gaza church attack, without mentioning Israel.**



"The attacks against the civilian population that Israel has been carrying out for months are unacceptable. No military action can justify such an attitude," she said in a statement.

Medical sources have told Al Jazeera correspondents

on the ground that at least 22 Palestinians were killed in Israeli attacks across Gaza since dawn yesterday. Thirteen of them were killed in Gaza City, they said.

Eight Palestinians were killed while trying to protect aid trucks on way to northern Gaza. "As many

of 20 trucks were on their way to designated areas in the northern part of the Strip and were targeted by a drone strike. Body parts were scattered and civil defence members had to collect them," said an Al Jazeera correspondent.

Two members of Israel's Battalion 202 paratrooper brigade have been "seriously injured" in fighting in the northern Gaza Strip, the Israeli military has said.

US President Donald Trump's Middle East envoy, Steve Witkoff, said on Wednesday that negotiations for a ceasefire in Gaza were going well.

In a separate development, Yemen's Houthis rebels claimed a missile launched at Israel's main civilian airport, after the Israeli military said it intercepted a missile fired from the Arabian Peninsula country.



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বাইবির দীক্ষা: সবার জন্য উন্মুক্ত কর্মমুখী, গণমুখী ও জীবনব্যাপী শিক্ষা

Ref. No. BOU/E&E/28(427)/2025/186

Dated: 17/07/2025

e-Tender Notice

e-Tenders is invited through e-GP Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) by University Engineer, Bangladesh Open University, Gazipur-1705 for the procurement of work, which will be available at e-GP website from 27.07.2025, on 10.00am.

SI No.	Tender ID, Ref. No. & Package No.	Name of work	Last selling date & time	Tender closing date & time date
1	Tender ID: 1131016 Ref. No. BOU/E&E/Fur/10/2025-2026, Package No. 10	Supply Furniture for BOU Campus, Gazipur-1705.	Date: 16/08/2025 Time: up to 14.00pm	Date: 07/08/2025 Time: at 14.00pm

This is an online tender, where only e-Tenders will be accepted in e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-Tender, please register on e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>).

The fees for downloading the e-Tender documents can be deposited online through any bank's branches as per tender notice.

Sd/-
Engr. Md. Shahriar Sahan
University Engineer
Bangladesh Open University
Phone: 02996691121

GID-1602

GENERAL ELECTION UK to lower voting age to 16


AFP, London

The British government said yesterday it plans to allow 16- and 17-year-olds to vote in general elections, a landmark change giving the UK one of the lowest voting ages worldwide.

It follows a pledge from the ruling Labour Party to make the shift ahead of winning power last year, and is among several planned changes to the democratic system.

The voting age change is likely to prove contentious, with critics previously arguing it is self-serving as newly-enfranchised teenagers are seen as more likely to support the centre-left Labour party.

"I think it's really important that 16- and 17-year-olds have the vote, because they are old enough to go out to work, they are old enough to pay taxes, so (they) pay in," PM Keir Starmer said. "And I think if you pay in, you should have the opportunity to say what you want your money spent on, which way the government should go," Starmer added.



বাংলাদেশ ব্যাংক
(সেন্ট্রাল ব্যাংক অব বাংলাদেশ)
প্রধান কার্যালয়
মতিঝিল, ঢাকা-১০০০
বাংলাদেশ

ব্যাংকার্স সিলেকশন কমিটি সচিবালয়

১ জার্বণ ১৪৩২
১৬ জুলাই ২০২৫

বিজ্ঞপ্তি নম্বর-৭৪/২০২৫

২০২১ সাল ভিত্তিক 'এসিস্ট্যান্ট ডাটাবেইজ এডমিনিষ্ট্রেটর' (গ্রেড-০৯)
(Job ID-10200) এর ২টি শূন্য পদে ৩য় পর্যায় নিয়োগ প্রদান প্রসঙ্গে

ব্যাংকার্স সিলেকশন কমিটির তত্ত্বাবধানে সোনালী ব্যাংক পিএলসি-এ ২০২১ সাল ভিত্তিক 'এসিস্ট্যান্ট ডাটাবেইজ এডমিনিষ্ট্রেটর' (৯ম গ্রেড) (Job Id-10200) এর ০৩টি শূন্য পদে নিয়োগের লক্ষ্যে এ সচিবালয়ের বিগত ১২/০২/২০২৩ তারিখের নিয়োগ বিজ্ঞপ্তি নম্বর- ১৮/২০২৩ এর প্রেক্ষিতে অনুষ্ঠিত লিখিত ও মৌখিক পরীক্ষায় প্রাপ্ত নম্বরের ভিত্তিতে মোধাক্রমানুসারে প্রণীত প্যানেল হতে নিয়োগ সংক্রান্ত সরকারি বিধিবিধান অনুসরণপূর্বক ৩য় পর্যায়ে প্রাথমিকভাবে নির্বাচিত ০২ (দুই) জন প্রার্থীর রোল নম্বর বাংলাদেশ ব্যাংকের ওয়েবসাইট (<https://erecruitment.bb.org.bd>) এ আপলোড করা হয়েছে।

নিয়োগ সংক্রান্ত পরবর্তী সকল কার্যক্রম সোনালী ব্যাংক পিএলসি কর্তৃক সম্পাদিত হবে।

সূত্র নং ডিসিপিঃ ৪৮/২০২৫-১৮০০

স্বাক্ষরিত/-
মিজানুর রহমান আকন
পরিচালক (বিএসসিএস)
ও
সদস্য-সচিব, বিএসসি

বিস্তৃত প্রকাশিত ফলাফলের সংশোধনের প্রয়োজন দেখা দিলে বিএসসিএস তা সংশোধনের অধিকার সংরক্ষণ করে।

তারিখ: ১৮/০৭