

## POST-COUP MYANMAR Junta mandates prison sentences for polls critics

AFP, Yangon

Myanmar's junta said yesterday it has enacted a new law dictating prison sentences for critics or protesters of their planned election, which is being boycotted by opposition groups.

The junta seized power in a 2021 coup, sparking a many-sided civil war, and has touted elections at the end of this year as a path to peace.

Opposition groups -- including democratic lawmakers ousted by the military takeover -- and international monitors have called the polls a ploy to legitimise the junta's rule.

State newspaper The Global New Light of Myanmar said the "Law on the Protection of Multiparty Democratic Elections from Obstruction, Disruption and Destruction" was enacted on Tuesday.

Its 14 page text forbids "any speech, organising, inciting, protesting or distributing leaflets in order to destroy a part of the electoral process".

Individuals convicted face between three and seven years behind bars.

Support for  
Israel's Gaza  
war hits new  
low in US: poll

AGENCIES

A new poll from the research firm Gallup suggests that only 32 percent of Americans approve of Israel's military action in Gaza, a 10 point drop from September 2024, as anger over atrocities against Palestinians continues to rise.

The survey, released on Tuesday, also showed an enormous partisan divide over the issue. Seventy-one percent of respondents who identified as members of the Republican Party said they approve of Israel's conduct, compared with 8 percent of Democrats, reports Al Jazeera online.

Overall, 60 percent of respondents said they disapprove of Israel's action in Gaza. Shibley Telhami, a professor at the University of Maryland, said the latest survey shows a trend of growing discontent with Israel that goes beyond the war on Gaza.

REUTERS

A very powerful magnitude 8.8 earthquake off Russia's Far Eastern Kamchatka coast yesterday triggered tsunami warnings as far away as French Polynesia and Chile, and was followed by an eruption of the most active volcano on the peninsula.

The shallow quake damaged buildings and injured several people in the remote Russian region, while much of Japan's eastern seaboard -- devastated by a 9.0 magnitude earthquake and tsunami in 2011 -- was ordered to evacuate, as were parts of Hawaii.

By the evening, Japan, Hawaii and Russia had downgraded most of their tsunami warnings. But authorities in French Polynesia warned residents of several of the remote Marquesas Islands to move to higher ground and expect waves as high as 2.5 metres (8 feet).

Russian scientists said the

- ❶ Klyuchevskoy volcano on Russia's Kamchatka Peninsula began erupting
- ❷ Massive earthquake struck on 'megathrust fault': scientists
- ❸ Waves up to 1.7 metres high impacted Hawaii
- ❹ 3 tsunami waves recorded in Japan, largest of 1.3 metres

quake in Kamchatka was the most powerful to hit the region since 1952.

"It felt like the walls could collapse any moment. The shaking lasted continuously for at least three minutes," said Yaroslav, 25, in the city of Petropavlovsk-Kamchatsky.

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said there had been no casualties in Russia from the quake, crediting solid building construction and the smooth working of alert systems.

In Severo-Kurilsk in the northern Kuril Islands, south of Kamchatka, tsunami waves exceeded 3 metres, with the largest up to 5 metres, Russia's RIA news agency reported.

The Klyuchevskoy volcano on Russia's Kamchatka Peninsula began erupting later, a geological monitoring service said.

"A descent of burning hot lava is observed on the western slope. Powerful glow above the volcano, explosions," the Russian Academy of Sciences' United Geophysical

Service said in a statement posted on Telegram.

The US Geological Survey said the earthquake was shallow at a depth of 19.3 km (12 miles), and centred 119 km (74 miles) east-southeast of Petropavlovsk-Kamchatsky, a city of 165,000.

The quake occurred on what is known as a "megathrust fault" where the denser Pacific Plate is sliding underneath the lighter North American Plate, according to scientists.

Hawaii recorded waves of up to 1.7 metres while in Japan the largest recorded came to 1.3 metres, officials said. Flights out of Honolulu airport resumed in the evening, the transportation department said.

Waves of nearly half a metre were observed as far away as California, with smaller ones reaching Canada's province of British Columbia.

In French Polynesia, waves started to hit some islands in the early morning hours of yesterday.

## Last push to beat US tariff deadline

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Uddin. He was accompanied by National Security Adviser Khalilur Rahman, Commerce Secretary Mabhubur Rahman and Additional Commerce Secretary Nazneen Kawsar Chowdhury.

On the US side, Assistant Trade Representative Brendan Lynch is leading the delegation, accompanied by officials handling trade and tariff matters.

Bangladesh's economy is heavily reliant on exports to the United States, particularly garments, which made up the majority of the \$8.2 billion in goods shipped to the American market in 2024. Bangladeshi officials fear that any tariff above the current levels would severely damage competitiveness and disrupt employment in an already pressured global market.

Speaking from Washington, Commerce Secretary Rahman expressed cautious optimism. "We are confident our position is being seriously considered. We've made major offers to help balance trade, and the tone of the meetings has been constructive."

In recent weeks, Bangladesh has revised its negotiating strategy, presenting a package of concessions and market access promises that directly address US concerns over its \$6 billion trade surplus with Dhaka.

The government plans to import 3.5 million tonnes of American wheat over the next five years and purchase 25 Boeing aircraft under a multibillion-dollar deal. Additional plans have been offered to expand the import

of US liquefied natural gas, cotton, soybeans, and other agricultural products.

These proposals, Bangladeshi officials say, are aimed at demonstrating reciprocal trade goodwill and positioning the country as a cooperative economic partner in Washington's new trade architecture.

Privately, some Bangladeshi delegates suggest the country could increase US imports by as much as \$2 billion annually if policy support on port infrastructure and shipping logistics were improved at home. One major importer of US commodities, who requested anonymity, said this week from Washington that a favourable tariff outcome would unlock significant trade potential. "If the government provides proper port facilities, we could easily scale up imports of soy and LPG," he said.

The final outcome of the talks will be revealed soon. But there is no question that Bangladesh is now in a race against the clock.

### US-INDIA TALKS BREAK DOWN

Elsewhere, some countries are experiencing far rougher treatment. India, the world's fifth-largest economy, has already been hit with a 25 percent tariff by the Trump administration, along with a warning of additional penalties over the country's military and energy purchases from Russia.

Talks between Indian and US negotiators, which had stretched over months, broke down over New Delhi's refusal to open its domestic market to US agricultural products. Washington had pushed for

access to sensitive sectors including wheat, rice, corn, and genetically modified soybeans -- demands India resisted, citing the need to protect smallholder farmers.

The Indian tariff decision has alarmed exporters in Delhi, particularly those in labour-intensive industries such as garments, pharmaceuticals, jewellery, and chemicals. With India's exports to the US valued at \$87 billion in 2024, the economic fallout could be significant.

For Bangladesh, the difference between being in and out of a deal could define the trajectory of its economy over the coming years. The country's ready-made garments sector, which employs more than four million workers, is already operating on razor-thin margins. Any added tariff, even in the 15 percent range, would squeeze exporters and make it harder to compete with rivals like Vietnam and China, both of which have made strategic inroads in the US market.

Nahid expressed gratitude for people's overwhelming support for their countrywide march. Over the last five months, the NCP received an unrepresented response from the people and the party will win in the coming parliament and in the new Bangladesh", he said.

At its final rally of the march in Baipal intersection in Ashulia, Nahid said, "Sheikh Hasina's crimes will not be reduced even if she is hanged 10 times."

"The people of Bangladesh will never forgive Hasina. They will never forgive the Awami League... they will not even forgive a refined Awami League."

## Manifesto

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conspiracies were being hatched and obstacles placed. Reforms initiatives were being obstructed," he said at a rally in Narsingdi on the last day of NCP's month-long march.

The party started the march on July 1 after paying tribute to Abu Sayed in Rangpur, and it ended with rallies at Narsingdi and Ashulia of Dhaka last night.

At the Narsingdi rally, Nahid alleged that they were not allowed to frame a new constitution and to remove President Mohammed Shahabuddin elected by the fascist Awami League. He also criticised the interim government for not presenting the "July Declaration".

"Although Mahfuj Alam and Asif Mahmud are not members of our party, they are student representatives of the July uprising. They are working to realise the aspirations of July. But there is a plot underway to remove them," Nahid continued.

He said, "In Narsingdi, land grabbing and extortion continue, but we will drive out those responsible."

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PHOTO: REUTERS

Evacuated residents are seen on the roof of a fire station in Mukawa Town, Hokkaido, Japan yesterday, after Japan issued an evacuation alert following a major earthquake in Russia's Kamchatka Peninsula that triggered a tsunami warning.

## Huge quake off Russia sparks Pacific tsunamis

Warnings issued, later downgraded in Japan, Hawaii, Russia

## Salman Rahman barred from stock market for life

FROM PAGE 1

irregularities in the stock market, including the issuance of the IFIC Aamar Bond.

The decision to declare Salman, Shayan and Shibli persona non grata was based on the committee's findings.

Salman has also been fined Tk 100 crore, while Shayan faces a Tk 50 crore fine.

Beximco Ltd and SFR Real Estate Ltd had collectively contributed 25 acres of land to form a joint venture on a revenue-sharing basis with Sreepur Township Ltd.

The owners from Beximco were Salman and Shayan, respectively vice-chairman and adviser of the industrial behemoth.

Both sat on the board of IFIC Bank as well: Salman as the chairman and Shayan as the vice-chairman.

Shibli, a former Dhaka University professor, was working as BSEC chairman at the time of the issuance of the bond.

Salman and Shibli are currently behind bars on different charges related to the July uprising atrocities and financial irregularities.

A senior BSEC official, requesting anonymity, told The Daily Star that the action followed the inquiry committee's

recommendations. He added that the trio will be barred from participating in the stock market, even through intermediaries.

According to the BSEC, some rules and regulations were waived during the Sukuk's approval. The commission also granted multiple subscription extensions after the Sukuk failed to attract general investors. The issuer company abused its powers in securing the extensions, the BSEC said in the press release.

The inquiry committee further found abuse of regulatory authority in the approval of the Beximco Secured, Convertible, Asset-Based Green Sukuk worth Tk 300 crore.

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The inquiry committee has recommended further investigation by the BSEC and punitive measures against those involved in the Sukuk irregularities.

At the time, its authorised capital was Tk 500 crore and paid-up capital Tk 335 crore. Of the paid-up capital, Tk 248 crore was withdrawn in the name of land development and purchase -- a move the commission called "questionable".

Despite IFIC Bank not issuing the bond, it was widely promoted as "IFIC Aamar Bond" in advertisements.

"In this way, it attracted investors by means of fraud," the BSEC said in the press release.

The commission also fined Emerging Credit Rating Ltd Tk 10 lakh for its role in rating Sreepur Township Ltd.

Imran Ahmed, CEO of IFIC Investments Ltd and arranger of the bond, has been banned from the market for five years.

The BSEC has also issued warnings to IFIC Bank and its independent directors: ARM Nazmus Sakib, Md Golam Mostofa, Zafar Iqbal, Quamrun Naher Ahmed, and Shudhangshu Shekhar Biswas.

Prof Shaikh Shamsuddin Ahmed, the then BSEC commissioner, has also been declared unwanted.

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তারিখ: ২৯.০৭.২০২৫

দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি	
১. সংস্থার নাম	বাংলাদেশ শিল্পকলা একাডেমি, সেগুনবাগিচা, রমনা, ঢাকা।
২. সংগ্রহকারী প্রতিষ্ঠান	সচিব, বাংলাদেশ শিল্পকলা একাডেমি, সেগুনবাগিচা, রমনা, ঢাকা।
৩. জেলা	ঢাকা
৪. বাজেট ও অর্বের উৎস	রাজস্ব খাত
৫. দরপত্র নাম/ কাজের বিবরণ	একাডেমির কর্মকর্তা, শিক্ষী ও কর্মচারীদের অফিসে আনা-নেয়ার জন্য ০২টুইচ টাসি কেস্টার বাস ভাড়া সংক্রান্ত কাজ।
৬. দরপত্র দলিল প্রাপ্তি	অর্থ, হিসাব ও পরিকল্পনা উপরিভাগ, নিচতলা, প্রশিক্ষণ ভবন, বাংলাদেশ শিল্পকলা একাডেমি, সেগুনবাগিচা, রমনা, ঢাকা।
৭. ক্রয় প্রক্রিয়া	ট্রান্সপোর্ট দরপত্র (TM)
৮. দরপত্র দলিল বিক্রয় শুরুর দিন ও সময়	১৩-০৭-২০২৫, সকাল ৯:০০ টা
৯. দরপত্র দলিল বিক্রয়ের শেষ দিন ও সময়	১৩-০৮-২০২৫, সকাল ৪:৩০ টা পর্যন্ত
১০. দরপত্র দাখিলের শেষ তারিখ ও সময়	১৪-০৮-২০২৫, দুপুর: ২:০০টা
১১. দরপত্র খোলার তারিখ, সময় ও স্থান	১৪-০৮-২০২৫, দুপুর: ২:০০টা সচিবের দপ্ত