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## Dhaka asks Delhi to close alleged AL offices in India

**Delhi says it's unaware of any anti-Bangladesh activities there**

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka has urged New Delhi to immediately close any party office of the Awami League in India and ensure that no Bangladeshi engages in any anti-Bangladesh activity there.

It said any form of political activity or campaign by Bangladeshis against the interests of Bangladesh is a clear affront against the people of Bangladesh and the state.

This development also jeopardises the upholding of the good-neighbourly relations with India driven by mutual trust and mutual respect and carries serious implications for the political transformation underway in Bangladesh, said the foreign ministry in a statement yesterday.

"This may also trigger public sentiment in Bangladesh which may

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**A cross-dam of nets and bamboo under Khegoraghata Bridge in Kashimpur village, Bagerhat Sadar, has blocked the Huji River's natural flow. Once vital for boats, fishing, and irrigation, the river is now largely divided into similar private fish enclosures. Photo was taken recently.**

PHOTO: PARTHA CHAKRABORTTY

**ICT CASE**  
Doctors falsified records to treat injured protesters

**2 physicians tell tribunal that police threatened them**

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

As police threatened doctors not to treat protesters with gunshot wounds during last year's uprising, physicians falsified records to ensure their treatment, doctors of two Dhaka hospitals told the International Crimes Tribunal yesterday.

They said they showed on paper that the protesters were either suffering from diseases or were victims of accidents.

Mahfuzur Rahman, associate professor at the National Institute of Neurosciences & Hospital (NINS), told the court that on July 19, when the number of bullet-wounded protesters surged, a team of DB police pressured him not to admit the injured.

"Don't be overenthusiastic. You will be in danger. Don't release those already admitted. There are instructions from high-ups. Legal action will be taken against them," he quoted the police as saying.

Then doctors altered admission registers to conceal the true nature of the wounds sustained by students and civilians, recorded them as road accidents or illnesses, and secretly provided treatment to victims, he said.

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## RECRUITING SYNDICATE Assets worth Tk 500cr seized from kingpin: CID

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Criminal Investigation Department has seized about Tk 500 crore worth of assets belonging to Ruhul Amin Swapani, the alleged chief of a syndicate formed to send manpower to Malaysia.

In a press release issued yesterday, CID's Special Superintendent of Police (media) Jasim Uddin Khan said the agency's Financial Crime Division sought a court order to freeze the assets. Acting on the petition, the Dhaka Metropolitan Sessions Judge's Court ordered the seizure.

Through his recruiting agency, Ruhul embezzled Tk 8,000 crore, which was spent on buying houses and land, according to the release. It accused him of money laundering.

The CID statement mentioned that Ruhul's recruiting agency, Catharsis International, owns 231 kathas of land in Dhaka's Bashundhara Residential Area, Banani, and Uttara under seven separate deeds.

While the devalue of the land stands at Tk 15.55 crore, the market value of the land, including infrastructure built on them, has been estimated at Tk 500 crore.

The CID added that investigations are still underway against Ruhul and other members of the syndicate, and actions will be taken against them under the Money Laundering Act.

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**Palestinians rush for cover as an Israeli strike hits a building near refugee tents in Jabalia in the northern Gaza Strip yesterday.**

## Govt to discuss reducing metro costs with Japan

**Adviser Salehuddin to lead team to Tokyo for talks**

REJAUL KARIM BYRON

A high-level team of the interim government led by Finance Adviser Salehuddin Ahmed will hold meetings with the Japanese government on the possibilities of reducing the metro rail project costs.

The delegation will leave Bangladesh for Japan on Sunday and return on September 5.

Japan is financing several projects in Bangladesh, including three metro rail projects.

Of these, MRT Line 1 and MRT Line 5 are at the initial stage, while MRT Line 6 is about to be completed, with its major part from Utara to Motijheel already in operation.

When the MRT Line 1 and MRT Line 5 were approved in 2019, their estimated cost was Tk 95,000 crore. Now, according to bidders' proposals, the cost might be almost double the initial estimate.

"Even the initial costs approved for the two projects are

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### Star INTERVIEW

**Calls to extend reform timeline a bid to stretch interim govt tenure**

**Saiful Huq tells Star**

**Polls will be in February**  
**Says Adviser Asif Mahmud**

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Lalmonirhat

Youth and Sports Adviser Asif Mahmud Shojib Bhuyain

yesterday said the upcoming national election will be held in February and there is no possibility of delays.

The Election Commission has already completed the necessary preparations. If the meeting between the commission and political parties on the July charter proves successful, the electoral road map will become clearer. But there is no possibility of deferring the polls," he said after laying a wreath at the memorial of Shaheed Abu Sayed at Park Mor in Rangpur city.

He also highlighted government plans to boost development in northern and disadvantaged regions, focusing on reducing regional disparities and strengthening local government.

In the evening, the adviser attended the final of the July 36 Gold Cup Football Tournament.

MD ABBAS

Biplabi Workers Party General Secretary Saiful Huq warned that removing secularism while retaining Islam as the state religion is a fundamental deception of the people.

Addressing the debate over religion in the constitution, he said the people aspired to an inclusive state.

"A modern democratic state must be secular by definition. If state religion stays, we can't call it democratic -- it directly contradicts the goal of inclusivity," he told The Daily Star in a recent interview.

Challenging narratives that seek to delay the election until after reforms, Saiful dismissed the long-term versus short-term reform debate as a "misrepresentation".

"If the government acts with genuine political intent, the election can be held before February. The issue is not time but political will. If that exists, reforms can be completed within months."

He said those calling for extended reform timelines are actually trying to create uncertainty. "That is an indirect attempt to extend the interim government's tenure."

Saiful stressed that reform and elections must go together. "Without an elected parliament, no constitutional reform is legitimate. We need elections to begin that process."

On regional issues, Saiful spoke of Bangladesh's relationship with India, calling it complex but critical.

"Maintaining a respectful, balanced relationship based on mutual interests and international law is essential. With deep interdependence on issues such as security and trade, both countries must cooperate



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**India tables bill to remove ministers jailed for 30 days**

**Opposition calls move draconian**

OUR CORRESPONDENT, New Delhi

Indian Home Minister Amit Shah yesterday introduced the Constitution (130th Amendment) Bill, 2025, in the Lok Sabha, proposing automatic removal of a prime minister, chief minister, or any other minister if they remain in jail for 30 consecutive days on serious criminal charges.

The bill seeks to amend Article 75 of the Indian Constitution, which outlines the powers and responsibilities of the Council of Ministers.

According to the draft, "A Minister, who for any period of 30 consecutive days during holding the office as such, is arrested and detained in custody, on allegation of committing an offence... punishable with imprisonment for a term which may extend to five years or more, shall be removed from his office by the President on the advice of the

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