



If help doesn't reach them now, they [Gaza children] are certainly condemned to death

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UNRWA chief

YOUR RIGHT  
TO KNOW

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Political parties must support the election drive  
P6



Rescuing the universities from decline  
P7



'Aranyarekha': Earnest appeal to preserve the Sundarbans  
P8



The meaning and importance of ikigai for young adults  
P10

## DUCSU POLLS History rewritten with record number of women candidates

TANGILA TASNIM

For the first time in its history, the Ducusu polls will see the highest number of women vying for top positions, marking a significant shift in a space long dominated by men.

The last time the Dhaka University Central Students' Union had a female vice president was 59 years ago, and a female general secretary 62 years.

Despite Ducusu's pivotal role in defending students' rights, women's participation in its electoral process has remained very low – until now.

This year, five women are running for the VP post, another is contesting for GS, and four female candidates are in the race for assistant general secretary.

However, the panels of Chhatra Dal, Islami Chhatra Shibir, and Islami Chhatra Andolan did not nominate any woman for the top three posts.

According to former student leaders and historians of student politics, more women are contesting the three posts than in the polls

SEE PAGE 2 COL 2



"After so many years women are contesting for vital posts. This time we're ready to face anything that comes our way – we will not move from our places."

Adity Islam  
AGS candidate

## 462 candidates cleared for Ducusu, 1,108 for hall polls

DU CORRESPONDENT

With nominations submitted and scrutinised, Dhaka University authorities yesterday unveiled the draft list for Ducusu and hall union candidates.

According to it, 462 candidates are eligible to contest for 28 Ducusu posts. Of the 509 nominations, 47 were found faulty after scrutiny.

Meanwhile, 1,108 candidates were declared eligible to run for posts in 18 hall unions.

Cancelled nominations can be appealed by tomorrow (August 23), while candidates may withdraw from the race by August 25. The final list will be published on August 26.

Formal campaigning will begin later that day and continue till September 7 midnight. The election will be held on September 9, with vote count and results the same day.

POST-WISE CANDIDACY

Forty-eight candidates will run for vice-president, 19 for general secretary, and 28 for assistant general secretary.

Among the VP candidates, five are female. Only one woman will run for GS, while four are contesting for AGS.

For the 12 secretary posts: 19 candidates will run for literature and cultural affairs secretary, while 15 will contest for three posts – Liberation War and democratic movement affairs secretary, health and environment affairs secretary, and international affairs secretary.

Other secretary posts have between nine and 13 candidates each.

Meanwhile, 215 candidates are in the race for 13 executive member posts.

No female candidates submitted nominations for international affairs secretary, while nine are running for common room, reading room and cafeteria secretary.

Yesterday, former Students Against Discrimination spokesperson

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

## Defying outcry, Israel starts Gaza City offensive

World decry 'intolerable' move; at least 40 more killed

AGENCIES

Israel hammered Gaza City and its outskirts overnight, residents said yesterday, as the military announced it had taken initial steps in its push to capture Hamas's last major stronghold.

The newly approved plan authorises the call-up of roughly 60,000 reservists, deepening fears that the campaign will worsen the already catastrophic humanitarian crisis in the Gaza Strip.

"We are not waiting. We have begun the preliminary actions, and already now, IDF (army) troops are holding the outskirts of Gaza City," said the Israeli military.

Israel's plans to expand the fighting and seize Gaza City have sparked international outcry as well as domestic opposition. The Red Cross became the latest voice to condemn the plan yesterday, calling it "intolerable".

The renewed offensive has killed at least 40 people since the early hours, including eight killed while awaiting aid.

Ahead of the offensive, the Israeli military

said the call-up of the reservists would begin in early September, adding the second phase of the so-called operation "Gideon's Chariots" had begun.

Gaza City residents described relentless bombardments overnight.

"The house shakes with us all night long – the sound of explosions, artillery, warplanes, ambulances, and cries for help is killing us," one of them, Ahmad al-Shanti, told AFP.

"The sound is getting closer, but where would we go?"

Another resident, Amal Abdel-Aal, said she watched the heavy strikes on the area, a week after being displaced from her home in Gaza City's Al-Sabra neighbourhood.

"No one in Gaza has slept – not last night, not for a week. The artillery and air strikes in the east never stop. The sky flashes all night long," she added.

Media reports said that Gaza City now has more than a million people, nearly half of Gaza's population. They have gathered in the city, which has been almost destroyed, after being

SEE PAGE 2 COL 5

## 9 NBFIs staring at liquidation

MD MEHEDI HASAN

Nine non-bank financial institutions (NBFIs) out of a total of 35 are likely to be liquidated in the interest of depositors, making it the first such incident in the financial sector.

The nine NBFIs are: FAS Finance, Bangladesh Industrial Finance Company, Premier Leasing, Fareast Finance, GSP Finance, Prime Finance, Aviva Finance, People's Leasing and International Leasing.

The NBFIs accounted for as much as 52 percent of the sector's total defaulted loans of Tk 25,089 crore at the end of last year, according to data from the Bangladesh Bank.

"Those nine NBFIs will be liquidated – the government has given its opinion in principle," BB Governor Ahsan H Mansur told The Daily Star.

The liquidation process, which will take place under the Finance Company Act 2023, may begin next month.

As per the act, with the approval of the government, the BB can apply to the High Court for the liquidation of any finance company that fails to repay its accepted deposits, loans, borrowings or liabilities, notwithstanding anything

SEE PAGE 2 COL 5

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## Rising extremism threat to country's existence: Fakhrul

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir yesterday called for unity, cautioning that the country's existence is at stake if rising extremism goes unchecked.



"A form of extremism is on the rise in Bangladesh. We must not allow it to grow unchecked. If we do, the very existence of Bangladesh will be threatened," he said at an event at the Engineers Institution in Dhaka, jointly organised by BNP and the Bangladesh Hindu-Buddhist-Christian Welfare Fund to mark Janmashtami.

BNP acting chairman Tarique Rahman attended the programme virtually as chief guest.

Fakhrul alleged that efforts are underway to erase the memory of the Liberation War.

"1971 gave us an independent country, a sovereign identity. The martyrs of July-August 2024 gave us the chance to dream again of democracy. We must keep both in mind. But there is a deliberate attempt to make us forget 1971. Citizens of Bangladesh must unite against this," he said.

He said communalism has long been used as a political weapon in the country.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1



Displaced Palestinians inspect the rubble and debris beside a crater created by an Israeli strike at a camp for internally displaced people in Deir el-Balah in the central Gaza Strip yesterday.

## Govt amends tax reform ordinance; revenue officials to lead NBR

MD ASADUZ ZAMAN and BAHARAM KHAN

The advisory council yesterday amended the much-talked-about tax reform ordinance, paving the way for revenue officials to head the top and senior positions of the Revenue Policy Division.

Now, officials with experience working on the macroeconomy, trade policy and planning can serve as the secretary of Revenue Policy Division, one of the two divisions that will be formed after the dissolution of the National Board of Revenue (NBR) as per the new law.

In the original ordinance issued on May 12 as part of revenue system reforms, there was an ambiguity on whether the officials from tax and customs cadres would be given priority for the position of secretary.

It said an eligible government officer will be appointed as secretary of the revenue policy division, much to the dissatisfaction of the tax and customs officials.

With the aim of amending the law, the officials demonstrated for nearly two months, crippling the revenue administration and hitting business and export-import activities.

To address the grievance, the government formed a five-member committee in June.

PHOTO: AFP

SEE PAGE 2 COL 2