



India readies for punishing US tariffs

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Sweet harvest on saline shores

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Aid to Gaza still 'drop in the ocean': WFP

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Kiron discloses mega plan for women's football

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Rohingyas may go hungry after November: WFP

Calls made for immediate funds

MOHAMMAD JAMIL KHAN and MOKAMMEL SHUVO from Cox's Bazar

Food assistance for over 1.2 million Rohingyas in Bangladesh will end after November 30 unless urgent funds are secured, the World Food Programme has warned.

"We have enough money until November 30. On December 1, the situation will be zero -- no food for 1.2 million people. To maintain the minimum ration, we urgently require funds," WFP Bangladesh Country Director Domenico Scalpelli told The Daily Star yesterday.

"We need around \$173 million for the next 12 months," he said during a high-level delegation's visit to Cox's Bazar Rohingya refugee camps, warning that any further cut from the current \$12 per person per month would be devastating.

"If we drop it to \$6, malnutrition rates will rise, and children will die. Already the malnutrition rate is very high," Scalpelli cautioned, appealing to traditional donors as well as Gulf states, ASEAN, and OIC countries for immediate help.

Currently, each person's \$12 (around Tk 1,500) food basket includes 13kg of rice for Tk 650, one litre of vegetable oil for Tk 180, half a kilogram of salt for Tk 19, 200g of red chilies for Tk 23.40, five eggs for Tk 53, 400g of onion for Tk 26, 500g of lentils for Tk 47.60, 1kg of sugar for Tk 109, 510g of tilapia fish for Tk 113, 1kg of potato for Tk 14.70, 1kg of chicken for Tk 172, and 1kg of hog plum for Tk 39.

If the ration is cut to \$6 (around Tk 730), the probable food basket would include only 80g of rice for Tk 400, 1.33kg of red lentils for Tk 127, 1 litre of soybean oil for Tk 180, 300g of salt for Tk 10, and 100g of red chilies for Tk 12, according to WFP estimates.

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Food items, which a Rohingya gets every month for \$12, are on display at a refugee camp.

PHOTO: JAMIL KHAN

- WFP needs \$173m for the next 12 months to maintain minimum ration
- Each refugee now gets \$12 worth of food per month
- Rohingyas say \$12 is inadequate
- WFP says reducing ration to \$6 would trigger malnutrition, child deaths
- Bangladesh officials warn of chaos, famine at camps if food aid stops

Polls boycott can exclude parties from future politics

Says Salahuddin

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Any party has the right to skip a national election, but those who do so with excuses risk being sidelined from future politics, said BNP Standing Committee member Salahuddin Ahmed.



"Demanding PR (proportional representation) or a Constituent Assembly is a political tactic, and these statements are aimed at stirring up the field. The election mood is present in the country, and whoever speaks against it will be minus," he told reporters at his Gulshan home yesterday.

Salahuddin said the polls would be held in early February, a week before Ramadan as the government

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Families leave Gaza City after night of bombardment

34 more Palestinians killed

REUTERS, Cairo

More Palestinian families left Gaza City on Tuesday after a night of Israeli shelling on its outskirts, as Israelis launched a day of nationwide protests calling for hostages to be released and the war in Gaza to end.

Residents said Israeli aerial and tank shelling continued throughout the night and early on Tuesday in the eastern Gaza City suburbs of Sabra, Shejaiya, and Tuffah, as well as in Jabalia town to the north, destroying roads and houses.

"Earthquakes, we call it, they want to scare people to leave their homes," said Ismail, 40, a Gaza City resident.

The Israeli military has said its forces are operating in the area to locate weapons and destroy tunnels used by militants. Despite widespread protests at home and international condemnation, Israel is preparing to launch a new offensive in Gaza City, in what it describes

as Hamas' last bastion.

Israeli strikes at Nasser Hospital in the southern Gaza Strip on Monday killed at least 20 people, including journalists working for Reuters, the Associated Press, Al Jazeera and others.

At least 34 people were killed in Israeli strikes in the enclave overnight and on

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BUSINESS

Tax corruption hinders business growth: CPD

Corruption among tax officials has emerged as the single biggest barrier to business growth, according to a survey by Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD). More than 72 percent of firms, or three out of four, said bribery and harassment from taxmen were major obstacles to expansion. Another 82 percent said current tax rates were unfair.

STORY ON B1

Cyberbullying, smear campaigns cast shadow over Jucsu polls

Female, indigenous candidates targeted

SAKIB AHMED

Cyberbullying and smear campaigns targeting candidates, particularly women, have emerged as a disturbing trend ahead of the Jahangirnagar University Central Students' Union elections.

This has raised concerns about inclusivity and the safety of female participants as the university is preparing for the JUCSU polls scheduled for September 11, the first in 33 years.

At least 15 Facebook pages and groups have become hyperactive in recent weeks in the absence of clear university guidelines on online campaigning.

Pages such as JU Update, JU Family, JU Insiders, Jucsu News, JU Sarcasm, and JU Crush & Confession have been accused of running smear campaigns.

Candidates from Bangladesh Ganatantrik Chhatra Sangsad, Chhatra Dal, Bangladesh Chhatra Union, Sanskritik Jote, and Islami Chhatra Shibir alleged they were facing coordinated online harassment.

Several candidates claimed that accounts running the pages were linked

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On the first day of official campaigning for the Dhaka University Central Students' Union (Ducsu) elections, Chhatra Dal's vice-president candidate Abidul Islam Khan and the left-leaning Protirodh Porshod's general secretary nominee Meghmallar Basu greet each other with smiles and a handshake. The photo was taken in front of the university's Senate building yesterday.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

DUCSU POLLS Campaigning starts with rallies, tributes

Candidates allege violations of election code

DU CORRESPONDENT

Campaigning for the Dhaka University Central Students' Union kicked off yesterday with vibrant rallies, tributes, and outreach efforts by major panels and independents across Dhaka University.

However, several candidates accused one another of breaching the election code of conduct.

Chief returning officer Prof Mohammad Zashim Uddin yesterday said they would keep army personnel as a strike force on election day.

He said 471 students were set to run for 28 posts in Ducsu after a total of 28 withdrew their nominations. Nominations of 10 others were rejected.

Candidates and panels started their campaigns on campus yesterday morning, the first day for electioneering, according to the schedule.

Islami Chhatra Shibir-backed Oikkobodh Shikkharthi Jote began its campaign on the central library premises. Its VP nominee Abu Shadiq Kayem claimed that its campaign boards at the Fine Arts Faculty had been vandalised.

"We demand immediate punitive action against those involved," he said.

During a press briefing on Monday, Chhatra Dal-backed

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