

## BNP doubts EC's capacity but hopes for fair polls: Rizvi

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP has expressed doubt over the Election Commission's capacity to hold a free and fair national election, but said it still hopes the polls will be participatory and inclusive.

BNP Senior Joint Secretary General Ruhul Kabir Rizvi Ahmed made the remarks yesterday after a meeting with two election commissioners at the EC headquarters in Dhaka.

"We have doubts about the Election Commission's capability -- whether the election will truly be free and fair is in question. Because, although the Election Commission is an independent body, at different levels of the administration there are accomplices [of fascists] in place, who are engaged in various tactics and far-reaching conspiracies to obstruct or

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## Death anniv of Nurjahan Murshid

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Today is the 22nd death anniversary of Nurjahan Murshid, a women's rights activist, renowned politician and organisers of the 1971 Liberation War, said a press release.

Marking the day, wreaths will be placed at her grave around 11:00am at Mirpur Intellectuals' Graveyard in the capital today. Besides, food items will be distributed among the destitute.

In 1954, Nurjahan Murshid won as a member of the Provincial Council as a candidate of the Juktofront. She played an active role in the six-point movement in 1966 and the mass movement of 1968-69. She won the 1970 election as a candidate of Awami League.

In independent Bangladesh, she was appointed in 1972 as state minister for health and social welfare.

Nurjahan died in Dhaka on September 1, 2003. She played a significant role in different democratic movements. She was amongst a very small number of Muslim women who entered higher education and obtained her Master's degree in History from Calcutta University in the mid 1940s.



PHOTO: TITU DAS

Traders from Paschim Maluhar village in Banaripara upazila transport vegetables, including water lilies and bottle gourd saplings, by boat to sell at Lakutia Bazar. The photo was taken recently in Chandpasha area of Babuganj in Barishal.

## 'Every day, we've to step out taking our lives in our hands'

Prof Samina Lutfa tells rally

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Certain political interest groups are deliberately creating unrest in the country to serve their own agendas, alleged Professor Samina Lutfa of the Sociology Department at Dhaka University yesterday.

"The government has completely failed to control this unrest. We have never seen a more appalling law and order situation than this. Every day, we have to step out taking our lives in our hands," she said.

She made the remarks at a rally organised by the University Teachers' Network at the base of Aparajeyo Bangla on the campus. The event was

held to condemn ongoing harassment, attacks and dismissals of teachers, as well as the recent assault on Gono Odhikar Parishad President Nurul Haque Nur.

Speakers also called for ensuring the safety, dignity and justice of citizens.

She said since July, the demand has been to bring the perpetrators of the July killings to justice. However, no investigation or trial has been seen, and as a result, people have lost confidence in the justice system over the past year.

"This has been compounded by the competitive agendas of certain

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## Conspiracy to ban JP will be foiled

Says Shameem Haider Patwary

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Jatiya Party yesterday dismissed growing calls for a ban on the party, saying it has never engaged in terrorism and therefore faces no legal grounds for prohibition under the Anti-Terrorism Act.

Speaking to reporters at the party's central office in Kakrail, JP Secretary General Shameem Haider Patwary said, "The conspiracy to ban Jatiya Party will be foiled."

He said under the Representation of the People Order, JP has not committed any offence that could warrant the cancellation of its registration. There is no such allegation against JP, he stressed.

He termed the demand for a ban "unreasonable" and urged the government not to take what he called a "wrong decision based on a wrong demand".

Calling on party leaders and activists to remain alert, Patwary said they must continue their movement in a peaceful manner and be ready to respond if the party comes under attack.

## Journos demand legal protection, wage reforms

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Riaz also asked how journalists can be given legal protection in a country where ordinary citizens themselves face extrajudicial killings, disappearances, and persecution. "Your struggle is actually part of a broader struggle: the fight to secure legal protection for everyone. As a journalist, you should raise questions not only for journalists, but for everybody," he said.

Fahim Ahmed, a member of the Media Reform Commission and CEO of Jamuna Television,

said one recommendation was to make television channels profitable by requiring each cable operator to pay a fixed amount to every channel.

He said the commission had proposed a minimum salary structure equivalent to that of a first-class government employee, instead of a wage board, because the Ninth Wage Board is still tied up in litigation, making implementation impossible even if a new board is formed.

He also urged journalists to mobilise movements for

the implementation of the recommendations.

Chairman of the BJC Trustee Board Rezwanul Haque Raja said in a situation where media has sprung up like "mushrooms" and anyone with a mobile phone can now become a journalist, media reform is extremely urgent.

Around 80 percent of media houses do not pay journalists properly. "When reform is neglected, the media will continue to be accused in the future just as it has been in the past," he added.

BJC trustee Talat Mamun said media workers are so divided and the institution so fragmented that even a hawkers' association has far greater organisational capacity, as they are able to press their demands -- something

journalists cannot do.

In the keynote paper, BJC executive Milton Anwar said the Reform Commission submitted its report to the chief adviser on March 22, when the chairman, Kamal Ahmed, mentioned that some recommendations could be implemented immediately.

The immediately implementable proposals were submitted separately within two days, but in the past five months no progress has been made. Instead, he noted, implementation has moved in the opposite direction.

"Instead of establishing a National Media Commission, the government reconstituted the Press Council, which the commission's proposal had recommended for abolition."

BJC Member Secretary

Ilias Hossain conducted the discussion.

Among others, Dhaka Journalist Union president Md Shahidul Islam, Dhaka Reporters' Unity secretary Mainul Hasan Sohel, president of Bangladesh Nari Sangbadik Kendra Munima Sultana, journalist Hasnain Khurshed, Jagannath University assistant professor Minhaz Uddin, and BBC Media Action country director Md Al Mamun also spoke.

PRAYER TIMING		SEPTEMBER 1	
Fazr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib Esha
4:30	12:45	4:45	6:33 8:00
JAMAAT	5:05	1:15	5:00 6:36 8:30
SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION			

## Country's first robotic

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Long-term rehabilitation treatment, they said, is often difficult and expensive. Many of those injured in the July uprising had to be sent abroad due to the lack of advanced robotic therapy. So, establishing a fully functional, sustainable, and robotic rehabilitation system was crucial.

Prof MA Shakoor, chairman of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation at BMU, said the centre has a total of 15 types of robots.

He said if a patient begins rehabilitation immediately after a stroke, recovery takes less time whereas starting two years later offers a slim chance of returning to normal life.

"If a person begins this robotic therapy after their acute attack has stabilised, we believe they could recover within three months," said Shakoor, also the centre's focal person.

Mohammad Abu Naser, deputy director (hospital) of BMU, said once the trial period ends and formalities,

including equipment registration with the DGDA, are completed, the centre will open to the public.

He said it will be able to serve 50 people daily.



Prof Sayedur Rahman, special assistant to the chief adviser for the health ministry; Saidur Rahman, secretary of the Health Services Division; Yao Wen, Chinese ambassador; and BMU Vice-Chancellor Prof Shahinul Alam were present at the inaugural event.

## Mob violence claimed 23 lives

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journalists -- were reported as arrested under the Anti-Terrorism Act while in police custody.

The MSF report warned that unless the security and independence of the media are guaranteed, the country's democratic future will remain in jeopardy.

Although political violence decreased slightly in August 2025, internal conflicts within parties and attacks by criminal elements continued. Rising disputes within the BNP led to casualties and heightened public insecurity and fear.

MSF data showed that 49 incidents of political violence affected 549 people, resulting in two

deaths and 547 injuries. Additionally, 16 attacks by criminal elements targeted political leaders and activists, leaving seven dead and nine injured.

The report also documented 349 cases of violence against women and children, slightly fewer than the previous month. These included 47 rapes, 19 gang rapes, and four cases of rape followed by murder, with nine victims being disabled girls or women. A further 24 attempted rapes, 21 incidents of sexual harassment, and 94 cases of physical abuse were recorded. During the month, 41 individuals -- 16 adolescent girls and 25 women -- died by suicide.

At least 38 incidents of mob violence occurred in

August, down from 51 in July. These attacks resulted in 23 deaths and 43 serious injuries, with 22 injured handed over to the police.

The MSF report highlighted that concerns over law enforcement misconduct remain high, alongside continuing attacks on minorities.

Fatalities at the border persisted, with Bangladeshi citizens suffering deaths and abuse at the hands of Indian nationals, while pushback incidents were also reported.

The organisation has strongly urged the relevant authorities to guarantee political participation, peaceful assembly, freedom of expression, equality, and the safety of all citizens.

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Memo No: 27.29.0000.082.011.10.25.247 Date: 31.08.2025

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