



Emergency workers and people gather near a massive sinkhole that opened on Samsen Road near Vajira Hospital, in Bangkok, Thailand, yesterday.

PHOTO: REUTERS

HIV-prevention drug to be available for \$40 a year from 2027

AFP, Geneva

Generic versions of a groundbreaking injectable HIV-prevention drug should be available for \$40 a year in more than 100 countries from 2027, Unitaid and the Gates Foundation said Wednesday.

The two organisations have entered into separate agreements with Indian pharmaceutical companies to produce cheaper generic versions of lenacapavir -- a twice-yearly injection shown to reduce the risk of HIV transmission by more than 99.9 percent -- for low- and middle-income countries.

Marketed under the brand name Yeztugo by California based Gilead Sciences, lenacapavir currently costs around \$28,000 a year in the United States.

Far cheaper generic versions are therefore "really critical for the scale-up of prevention of HIV," Carmen Perez Casas, Unitaid's strategic lead for HIV, told AFP in an interview.

"Now, with this product, we can end HIV."

In October last year, Gilead announced that it had signed licensing deals with six generic drugmakers to produce and sell the world's first long-acting pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) in poorer countries.

Unitaid, an international health agency, said Wednesday that a partnership had been established with Dr. Reddy's Laboratories, the Clinton Health Access Initiative (CHAI) and Wits RHI to provide the drug at an annual cost of \$40 per person across 120 nations starting in 2027.

"The product is going to be at the beginning manufactured in India," Perez Casas said.

"But we also are working towards regional production in the future."

The Gates Foundation also announced Wednesday that it had entered into a similar partnership with Indian pharmaceutical company Hetero.

"Scientific advances like lenacapavir can help us end the HIV epidemic, if they are made accessible to people who can benefit from them the most," Trevor Mundel, head of global health at the Gates Foundation, said in a statement.

Since 2010, global efforts have helped slash the number of new HIV infections by 40 percent, but UNAIDS data still shows 1.3 million people contracted HIV in 2024.

Indian security forces kill five Maoist rebels

AFP, Raipur

Indian security forces have shot dead five Maoist rebels, including two senior commanders, in the first major onslaught since the guerrillas announced a unilateral halt in fighting last week, officials said Wednesday.

New Delhi has launched an all-out offensive to crush the decades-long conflict, vowing to wipe out the Maoist rebellion by March 2026.

The latest gun battles were reported from the states of Jharkhand and Chhattisgarh, part of the so-called "Red Corridor".

"Three members of the Jharkhand Jan Mukti Parishad (JJMP) were killed today in a gun battle with security forces," police inspector general Michaelraj S. told AFP.

JJMP is a splinter group of the Naxalite movement, named after the village in the foothills of the Himalayas where the Maoist-inspired guerrilla movement began nearly six decades ago.

Last week, the Maoists said they were suspending their armed struggle and offered talks with the government.

Authorities said they were verifying the authenticity of the claims.

On Monday, security forces killed two top Maoist leaders -- Katta Ramachandra Reddy and Kadri Satyanarayan Reddy -- in Abujhmad region of central India.

The duo were believed to have been active for the last three decades and were blamed for numerous deadly attacks on security forces.

"Our security forces are systematically dismantling the top leadership of the Naxals, breaking the backbone of red terror," home minister Amit Shah said in a social media post.

The Naxals have offered to engage in talks before, including in February when they called for a ceasefire -- an offer rejected by authorities.

Nearly 450 Maoist rebels have been killed since last year.

More than 12,000 rebels, soldiers and civilians have died in the conflict since a handful of villagers rose up against their feudal lords there in 1967.

The rebellion controlled nearly a third of the country with an estimated 15,000 to 20,000 fighters at its peak in the mid 2000s, but it has been dramatically weakened in recent years.

Law and order tops voter priorities

FROM PAGE 16

According to the survey findings presented yesterday at the Bangladesh National Archives Auditorium, 39.1 percent of the respondents consider the BNP the "most suitable party" to form the next government, Jamaat-e-Islami 28.1 percent, Awami League 17.7 percent and the National Citizen Party 4.9 percent.

In terms of perceived chances, 40 percent of the respondents said they believe the BNP is "most likely to form the next government", while 23.3 percent answered Jamaat and 12.1 percent Awami League.

The survey covered voters in 521 Primary Sampling Units. Of the respondents, 69.5 percent were in rural areas and 30.5 percent urban.

Md Rubaiyath Sarwar, managing director of Innovision and lead researcher, shared findings from the second report, which focuses on political choices and electoral outlook.

Discussing the results, Asif M. Shahin, professor at Dhaka University's development studies department, pointed out that many voters remain undecided.

"Most of the respondents believe BNP is likely to form the next government. In such a scenario, undecided voters may lean towards the BNP, thinking, 'Let's not waste my vote,'" he said.

Asked if they would vote, 57.8 percent respondents answered "yes", down from 62 percent in the first round. Willingness to reveal voting choice rose to 83.2 percent from 65.7 percent.

Among 5,673 respondents who disclosed their voting choices, 41.3 percent supported the BNP, 30.3 percent Jamaat, and 18.8 percent Awami League. NCP and Islami Andolan Bangladesh received 4.1 and 3.1 percent support among the respondents.

Among Gen Z voters, the BNP was supported by 34.3 percent of the respondents, Jamaat 32.8 percent, Awami League 18.8 percent, and NCP 6.8 percent. BNP's main backing comes from older generations, whereas Jamaat finds stronger support among the youth.

The study was conducted in collaboration with Voice for Reform and the Bangladesh Research Analysis & Information Network (BRAIN).

Shafiqur Rahman, executive director of BRAIN, also spoke at the event, moderated by Fahim Mashroor, joint convener of Voice for Reform.

nearly one-third of the population are young voters, whose preferences had remained largely invisible. "After the Dusse election, we're finally seeing the contours of youth voting preferences," she said.

Citing the survey, she said a majority of voters are not swayed by party symbols. They are choosing candidates based on capability and qualities, not manifestos. They want tangible changes and actions, not promises, she said.

Jamaat received the highest satisfaction rating at 30.3 percent in local politics, followed by BNP at 21.5 percent. Awami League faced the highest dissatisfaction, with 33.4 percent expressing discontent.

Asked about Awami League's participation in the next election, 45.8 percent said all parties should be allowed to contest, while 45.6 percent said the party should not be allowed in elections before trial.

If the Awami League does not participate, BNP's support would rise to 45.6 percent, Jamaat's to 33.5 percent, and NCP's to 4.7 percent, according to the survey. Additionally, 8.3 percent respondents said they would abstain.

On foreign policy, 72.2 percent said Bangladesh should maintain good relations with India, while 69 percent said the same about Pakistan.

In another part of the survey, young voters rated Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman the highest among past leaders. Among Gen Z, 20.8 percent gave him a perfect score, followed by Ziaur Rahman (15.5 percent), Khaleda Zia (10.6 percent), Sheikh Hasina (8.6 percent), and HM Ershad (4.4 percent).

Bangabandhu and Ziaur Rahman stood out as the most popular leaders across generations. Nearly half of all respondents rated each above 70 percent, with strongest support among voters aged 60 and above.

Meanwhile, Hasina received the highest proportion of zero score ratings, with 21.6 percent giving her a rating of zero. Ershad followed with 13.7 percent, while Bangabandhu received 8.8 percent. Khaleda Zia and Ziaur Rahman had the lowest zero ratings, at 5.6 and 4.4 percent.

The study was conducted in collaboration with Voice for Reform and the Bangladesh Research Analysis & Information Network (BRAIN).

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Discussing the facts, Zyma Islam, senior reporter at The Daily Star, said

London mayor hits back at Trump's 'Islamophobic' remarks

AFP, London

London mayor Sadiq Khan called Donald Trump "Islamophobic" and "racist" yesterday after the US president appeared to suggest the British politician wanted to introduce sharia law in the UK's capital city.

Khan, of the centre-left Labour party, and the Republican Trump have traded insults for years, with the latest row stemming from comments the president made at the United Nations this week.

"Now they want to go to sharia law. But you are in a different country, you can't do that," he added, referring to the Islamic law code based on the teachings of the Koran.

Labour Prime Minister Keir Starmer has made a considerable effort to try to stay in Trump's

misogynistic and he is Islamophobic," the Mayor of London told Sky News.

During his speech to the UN General Assembly in New York on Tuesday, Trump said: "I look at London, where you have a terrible mayor, terrible, terrible mayor, and it's been changed, it's been so changed.

"Now they want to go to sharia law. But you are in a different country, you can't do that," he added, referring to the Islamic law code based on the teachings of the Koran.

Labour Prime Minister Keir Starmer has made a considerable effort to try to stay in Trump's

good books, including with an unprecedented second state visit to the UK last week.

Khan said London was top of many indicators such as foreign investment, adding he was "really proud that we are the greatest city in the world".

Earlier on Wednesday, government minister Pat McFadden said Trump was "misreading" London.

Khan, who is Muslim, has been London's mayor since 2016. That year he criticised Trump over the then-presidential hopeful's proposed travel ban for people from some Muslim-majority countries.

GOVERNMENT OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF BANGLADESH

Ministry of Liberation War Affairs
Transport pool Building
Secretariat Link Road, Dhaka-1000
(Admin-2 Section)
www.molwa.gov.bd

Invitation for Tender

01	Ministry/Division	Ministry of Liberation War Affairs.			
02	Agency	Ministry of Liberation War Affairs.			
03	Procuring Entity Name	Ministry of Liberation War Affairs.			
04	Procuring Entity Code	Not Applicable			
05	Procuring Entity District	Dhaka.			
06	Invitation for	Tender.			
07	Invitation Ref No & Date	48.00.0000.000.001.07.0041.25.395			
08	Date	24.09.2025			
Key Information:					
09	Procurement Method	Open Tendering Method			
Funding Information:					
10	Budget and Source of Funds	Revenue Budget/GOB			
Particular Information:					
11	Tender Packages/Lots	LAN Network Infrastructure Installation and Modernization			
12	Tender Publication Date	25.09.2025			
13	Tender Last Selling Date	08.10.2025, Time 3:30 PM			
14	Tender Submission Date and Time	09.10.2025, Time 12:00 PM			
15	Tender Opening Date and Time	09.10.2025, 12:30 PM			
16	Name & Address of the office	Address			
	Selling & Receiving of Tender Document	Deputy Secretary (Admin-2) Ministry of Liberation War Affairs, 5 th Floor, Room No-604, Transport Pool Building, Secretariat Link Road, Dhaka-1000.			
	Opening of Tender Document				
17	Place/Date/Time of Pre-Tender Meeting (Optional)	-			
Information for Tenderer (IFT):					
18	Brief Eligibility and Qualification of Tenderer	<p>(1) Valid Trade License Certificate (FY 2025-26). (2) Income Tax Return Certificate (FY 2024-25). (3) VAT Registration Certificate. (4) Bank solvency certificate must be submitted with tender period. (5) Bidder shall mention the Brand, Country of Origin/Made in and warranty of the items. (6) The Tenderer shall have a minimum of 5 years of overall experience in similar works must be submitted. (7) The Tenderer shall have an experience of similar works as at least Tk. 40,00,000/- (Forty Lac) within the three years (FY 2022-23, 2023-24 & 2024-25) of government, Semi-Government and Autonomous organizations in the systems (work completion certificate must be submitted). (8) Required Tender Security (Bank Draft/Pay Order/ Bank Guarantee) must be submitted. (9) Specific Completion Certificate with No/Work order as specified in the TDS must be submitted. (10) The minimum amount of liquid assets i.e. working capital or credit line(s) of the Tenderer shall be Tk. 40,00,000/- (Forty Lac) must be submitted Authorization form. (11) Undertaking of not being Black-Listed/Debarred in any Government/Autonomous Body. (12) Total item based lowest bidder will be selected. (13) The procuring entity reserves the right to reject all Applications. (14) Manufacturer/Dealer Authorization letter must be submitted with the bid.</p>			
19	Brief Description of Goods	LAN Network Infrastructure Installation and Modernization			
20	Brief Description of Related Services	As described in STD.			
21	Price of Tender Document (Tk)	BDT-1,000/- (Not returnable)			
22	Package no	Identification of Package	Location	Tender Security Amount (Tk)	Completion Time in Weeks/ Months
22	01	LAN Network Infrastructure Installation and Modernization	Ministry of Liberation War Affairs, 5 th Floor, Room No-604, Transport pool Building, Secretariat Link Road, Dhaka-1000.	3% - 5% In favour of Deputy Secretary (Admin-2), Ministry of Liberation War Affairs	02 weeks from signing of contract.
Procuring Entity Details:					
23	Name of Official Inviting Tender	Shobnam Mushatry Rikta			
24	Designation of Official Inviting Tender	Deputy Secretary (Admin-2)			
25	Address of Official Inviting Tender	Ministry of Liberation War Affairs, 5 th Floor, Room No-611, Transport pool Building, Secretariat Link Road, Dhaka-1000.			
26	Contact details of Official Inviting Tender	02223388201 (Off) Fax: 41050901 mail: dsadmin2@molwa.gov.bd			
27	The Procuring Entity reserves the right to reject all tenders or annul the Tender proceedings.				

Shobnam Mushatry Rikta
Deputy Secretary (Admin-2)
Tel: 02223388201