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Yunus calls for national unity ahead of polls

Urges NRBs to play active role in country's future

STAR REPORT

Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus has said the spirit of national unity forged through the July uprising must not be lost as the nation strives for an inclusive and democratic Bangladesh.

"The July uprising has given us the strength to realise our dreams," he said while addressing a large gathering of non-resident Bangladeshis (NRBs) in New York on Saturday evening (US time) on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly, reports UNB.

The call was made as Bangladesh moves towards a national election in February, but political parties are yet to agree on the July charter and the ways to implement them.

BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir also made a similar call for unity in the national interest, saying: "We have only one appeal - let's come together on one issue - for Bangladesh. Let's put Bangladesh first."

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Bangladesh



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India batter Tilak Varma is being congratulated by teammates after his match-winning 53-ball 69 not out against Pakistan in the final of the Asia Cup in Dubai yesterday. The win helped India to a record-extending ninth title in the continental tournament.

PHOTO: REUTERS

India on cloud nine

Beat Pakistan by 5 wickets in Asia Cup final

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

India overcame Pakistan by five wickets in a thrilling final that went to the last over to lift a record-extending ninth Asia Cup title at the Dubai International Cricket Stadium on Sunday.

Tilak Varma was the star of the show, guiding India to 150-5 in 19.4 overs with an unbeaten 69 off 53 balls, with Sanju Samson (34 off 21) and Shivam Dube (33 off 22) playing second fiddle.

Pakistan's medium pacer Fahim Ashraf took 3-29, including two wickets in the Powerplay, but it was not enough to stop India from becoming undefeated champions.

Earlier, Pakistan were bowled out for 146 in 19.1 overs after a dramatic batting collapse which saw them lose nine wickets for 33 runs.

Openers Sahibzada Farhan (57 off 38 balls) and Fakhar Zaman (46 off 35) had set up a great base for their side with an 84-run stand off 58 deliveries, but India's deadly spin-trio led by Kuldeep Yadav (4-30) kept Pakistan to a modest total.

Sent in to bat, Pakistan did not lose a wicket in the Powerplay for the first time in the tournament, making 45 runs in the first six overs.

After Varun Chakravarthy (2-30) dismissed Sahibzada to break the opening stand, Fakhar and Saim Ayub sustained that momentum, adding 29 runs off 19 balls for the second wicket. But once Kuldeep dismissed Saim (14 off 11) in the 13th over, the floodgates opened.

Three wickets fell in the following three overs, and in the 17th, Kuldeep struck thrice, removing captain Salman Agha (eight off seven), Sheen Afridi (0) and Faheem Ashraf (0) as Pakistan went from 113-2 to 134-8.

Chasing 147, India had their worst Powerplay in the tournament, making 36-3, which included the wicket of the dangerous Abhishek Sharma (five off six balls).

Tilak then took control of the chase, first steadying the ship with a 57-run stand with Sanju and then a calculated 60-run stand off 40 balls with Dube.

Pakistan had a chance to run Tilak out on 37 but wicketkeeper Mohammad Harris took ages to dislodge the bats and the batter, with a desperate dive, made it home.

When 10 was needed off the last over from Haris Rauf, Tilak hit the fourth six of his innings off the second ball and Rinku Singh got India over the line with a four.



Beaten, shot and burned

Documentary at ICT shows police brutality during July uprising

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Four men lay wounded on the street near Jatrabari Police Station. Instead of rushing to their aid, policemen swarmed them. One policeman started beating one of the wounded, another kicked his head with full force, while another policeman joined in, striking with sticks.

This was a scene that unfolded in a 13-minute documentary of police atrocities on protesters at the capital's Jatrabari on the afternoon of August 5, 2024, the day Sheikh Hasina's regime collapsed.

Along with the documentary, the prosecution yesterday screened 16 other video clips of police firing on students and people during the July uprising at the International Crimes Tribunal-1 as evidence in the case against former prime minister Sheikh Hasina and her two close aides - former home minister Asaduzzaman Khan Kamal and ex-IGP Chowdhury Abdullah Al-Mamun.

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Country in urgent need of law to protect journalism

Media reform commission, speakers say at CGS event

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh urgently needs an independent media commission and laws to protect journalism and journalists in order to strengthen press freedom, speakers said at an event yesterday.

They voiced concerns over the shifting media landscape and leadership following the August 5 changeover of government.

Titled "Self Regulation and Grievances in Media: Political and Policy Perspectives", the programme was organised by the Centre for Governance Studies (CGS) at the CIRDAP Auditorium in the capital.

CGS President Zillur Rahman moderated the event.

Information Adviser Mahfuj Alam said the government faces a leadership



"We won't weaponise laws against the media. But we cannot allow anyone to simply call themselves a journalist without accountability. Freedom of expression without responsibility is dangerous."

Mahfuj Alam, information adviser

crisis, including uncertainty over his own tenure. "While other advisers may stay until the February election, I don't know how long I'll remain in my position."

He added that rumours about advisers stepping down have slowed work at government offices.

"The political landscape changed

significantly after June's events in London, which is why if parties want, I can pass a law within a month. But without goodwill, many are waiting for the next government to take over."

Mahfuj expressed frustration that few focus on national interest or the creation

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A relative bids farewell to a man killed in an Israeli bombing, in front of the al-Awda hospital in the Nuseirat refugee camp in the central Gaza Strip yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

Israeli strikes kill 77 more in Gaza

Trump hopeful of a deal as he meets Netanyahu

AGENCIES

Israeli tanks moved deeper into Gaza City's residential districts yesterday, as local health authorities said they have been unable to respond to dozens of desperate calls, expressing concern about the fate of residents in the targeted areas.

Gaza health ministry said at least 77 people have been killed by Israeli fire in the past 24 hours.

Witnesses and medics said Israeli tanks had deepened their incursions in the Sabra, Tel Al-

Hawa, Sheikh Radwan and Al-Naser neighbourhoods, closing in on the heart and the western areas of Gaza City, where hundreds of thousands of people are sheltering.

The Israeli military launched its long-threatened ground offensive on Gaza City on September 16 after weeks of intensifying strikes on the urban centre, forcing hundreds of Palestinians to flee although many still remain.

Meanwhile, US President Donald Trump yesterday expressed optimism about reaching a deal to end the war in Gaza, saying there is

"a real chance for greatness in the Middle East," ahead of tomorrow's talks with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

Trump did not provide specific details of a prospective ceasefire-for-hostages agreement in Gaza, but Vice President JD Vance told "Fox News Sunday" that top US officials are immersed in "very complicated" negotiations with Israeli and Arab leaders.

"We have a real chance for Greatness in the Middle East. All are on board for something special,

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Russian missile, drone barrage kills 4 in Kyiv

AFP, Kyiv

Russia pounded Ukraine for hours with hundreds of drones and missiles overnight, killing at least four people, including a 12-year-old girl, Kyiv said yesterday.

Neighbouring Poland scrambled jets to secure its airspace in the wake of the 12-hour barrage, after Nato accused Moscow of being behind a series of violations of the defence alliance's airspace.

Diplomatic efforts to stop the war have faltered, and Russia has vowed to press on with the offensive that it launched in February 2022.

"Moscow wants to continue fighting and killing and deserves only the harshest pressure from the world," Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky said following the strikes, which lasted for 12 hours.

"The Kremlin benefits from continuing this war and terror as long as there are profits from energy sales," he added, urging stronger measures against Russia.

Following the massive aerial barrage, Zelensky held a round of calls with allies, including Nato chief Mark Rutte, Finnish President Alexander Stubb and Norwegian Prime Minister Jonas Gahr Store.

Russia said it had only hit military targets during the attack.

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