



## NCP presses EC for 'shapla' symbol again

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The National Citizen Party has once again urged the Election Commission to allocate the shapla (water lily) as its election symbol, along with submitting seven sample designs of the symbol to the Commission.

In a letter signed by its convener Nahid Islam to the Election Commission secretariate yesterday, the party stated that the shapla symbol has developed a deep emotional and symbolic connection with the people, making it impossible for the NCP to accept any alternative symbol from the EC's list.

The NCP accused the Election Commission of deliberately delaying the party's registration process and of engaging in "undesirable, unlawful, discriminatory and arbitrary behaviour" by not allocating the shapla symbol.

The party also said the EC is intentionally depriving NCP of participation in the electoral process, thereby calling into question the commission's sincerity in ensuring a level playing field.

SEE PAGE 10 COL 4



Palestinians gather to receive food from a charity kitchen in Nuseirat, central Gaza Strip, yesterday. Israel has de-escalated its offensive in Gaza since US President Donald Trump called on it to halt its bombing campaign. At least 104 people have been killed in Gaza by Israeli forces since Friday.

PHOTO: REUTERS

## Reforms failed to address inequality

Says Rehman Sobhan

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

South Asian countries, including Bangladesh, have failed to tackle widening inequality despite decades of policy reforms and economic growth, said Rehman Sobhan, chairman of the Centre for Policy Dialogue.

"Despite all the reforms that have taken place, nowhere are we seeing any serious effort to correct the widening inequalities created over the last 17 years."

He said at a seminar on the book "Apostles of Development: Six Economists and the World They Made" held in the capital, organised by the Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies.

"Even in a country where a professor [Muhammad Yunus] is at the helm, we are not addressing the problem of inequality in our reforms in any meaningful way."

The prevailing policy frameworks across South Asia, including Bangladesh, continue to focus on short-term welfare or growth incentives without confronting the structural causes of injustice.

These injustices include concentrated asset ownership, elite influence over policymaking and limited access to opportunities for marginalised groups.

"We have grown, we have reduced poverty, but we have also become a much more unequal society in every South

SEE PAGE 10 COL 1



## Trio win Nobel for revealing quantum physics in action

REUTERS, Stockholm

US-based scientists John Clarke, Michel Devoret and John Martinis won the 2025 Nobel Prize in Physics for "experiments that revealed quantum physics in action", paving the way for the development of the next generation of digital technologies.

"My feelings are that I'm completely stunned. Of course it had never occurred to me in any way that this might be the basis of a Nobel Prize," Clarke told the Nobel press conference by telephone on Tuesday.



"I'm speaking on my cell phone and I suspect that you are too, and one of the underlying reasons that the cell phone works is because of all this work."

Quantum mechanical behaviours are well studied at the level of the incredibly small - atoms and sub-atomic particles - but are often seen as bizarre and unintuitive compared with classical physics and its far larger scale.

The Nobel winners carried out experiments in the mid-1980s with an electronic circuit built of superconductors and demonstrated that quantum mechanics could also influence everyday objects under certain conditions.

"It is wonderful to be able to celebrate the way that century-old quantum mechanics continually offers new surprises. It is also enormously useful, as quantum mechanics is the foundation of all digital technology," Olle Eriksson, chair of the Nobel Committee for Physics, said.

Quantum technology is already ubiquitous, with transistors in computer microchips an everyday example.

SEE PAGE 10 COL 1

## Three powers threatening Bangladesh

Says Salahuddin

UNB, Dhaka

BNP Standing Committee member Salahuddin



Ahmed yesterday said that Bangladesh is facing growing external pressure, with a global superpower and two regional powers reportedly trying to extend their influence.

"Right now, three powers are competing to establish hegemony here - two regional powers and one global superpower. Each has its own interests, but all three will harm Bangladesh's interests in the same way," he said.

The BNP leader made the remarks while speaking at a discussion organised by Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal at Dhaka University's TSC auditorium, marking the sixth death anniversary of Buet student Abrar Fahad.

Salahuddin described Abrar as a "strong voice against domination", saying he became a martyr because he spoke out against Indian hegemony.

"If he [Abrar] had criticised Sheikh Hasina, he might have gone to jail. But because he spoke

SEE PAGE 6 COL 4

## 'Real chance' of peace in Gaza, beyond: Trump

Vows to make parties adhere to a deal, if agreed; Hamas sets conditions in Egypt talks

AGENCIES

US President Donald Trump yesterday voiced optimism that there was a "real chance" to end the carnage in Gaza, as Israel marked the second anniversary of the October 7 attack.

Indirect negotiations between Israeli and Hamas negotiators are being held in the Egyptian resort town of Sharm El Sheikh, based on a 20-point plan proposed by Trump last month.

"There's a real chance that we could do something," Trump told reporters in the Oval Office, adding that US negotiators were also involved in the talks.

"I think there's a possibility that we could have peace in the Middle East. It's something even beyond the Gaza situation. We want a release of the hostages immediately."

Trump said the United States would do "everything possible to make sure everyone adheres to the deal" if Hamas and Israel do agree on a ceasefire.

On the second day of talks, Hamas yesterday said it wants to reach a deal to end the war in Gaza based on Trump's plan, but still has a set of demands, a statement signalling that indirect talks with Israel in Egypt could be difficult and lengthy.

The talks appear the most promising yet for ending a war that has killed tens of thousands of Palestinians and devastated Gaza since the October 7, 2023 attack on Israel by Palestinian groups.

"The (Hamas) movement's delegation participating in the current negotiations in Egypt is working to overcome all obstacles to reaching an agreement that meets the aspirations of our people in Gaza," Senior Hamas official Fawzi

Barhoum said in a televised statement.

He said a deal must ensure an end to the war and a full Israeli withdrawal from the Gaza Strip - conditions that Israel has never accepted. Israel, for its part, wants Hamas to disarm, something the group rejects.

Hamas wants a permanent, comprehensive ceasefire, a complete pullout of Israeli forces and the immediate start of a comprehensive reconstruction process under the supervision of a Palestinian "national technocratic body", he said.

➤ Hamas wants full Israeli withdrawal, seeks int'l guarantee

➤ Qatari PM, Turkey FM to join peace talks

➤ Israeli strikes kill 6 across Gaza

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu did not immediately comment on the status of the talks.

Trump's 20-point plan proposes an immediate end to fighting and the release of 48 hostages, only 20 of whom are thought to be alive, in exchange for hundreds of detained Gazans. The plan stipulates that once both sides agree to the proposal, "full aid will be immediately sent into the Gaza Strip".

It also states that Hamas will have to be

NOT JUST NUMBERS PAGE -7

SEE PAGE 6 COL 1

## Businessman shot dead in broad daylight

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Unidentified assailants shot a businessman dead after ambushing his SUV in broad daylight in Hathazari upazila of Chattogram yesterday.

The victim is Abdul Hakim, 55, a herbal medicine businessman, of Panchkhain village in Bagoan union under Raozan, police said.

The incident occurred in the Madunaghat area in the afternoon, where the attackers came on motorbikes, blocked Hakim's SUV, and fired indiscriminately, in the presence of bystanders.

Police and locals said Hakim had recently got involved in local BNP politics in Raozan upazila.

Confirming the incident, Additional Superintendent of Police (Hathazari Circle) Kazi Tarek Aziz told The Daily Star, "He was taken to Evercare Hospital after being rescued from his vehicle in critical condition. The reason behind the incident is yet to be known."

A video circulating on social media showed three bullet holes on the SUV's windshield. Hakim, seated next to the driver, was seen bleeding heavily as passersby pulled him from the vehicle. The car's side window had several bullet holes.

Another video showed three people wearing helmets riding up to the vehicle on motorcycles and shooting at the vehicle using pistols.

Hakim's body was sent to Chattogram Medical College morgue for autopsy.





# ৪৯

## বছর পেরিয়ে

### একসাথে, সমৃদ্ধির পথে

এই আত্মার পথচলায় গ্রাহকই শক্তি, সাফল্যই সাহস। তাই তো, আগামীর পথে যাত্রা দুর্নিবার।

আইএফআইসি ব্যাংকের ৪৯তম বর্ষপূর্তিতে সকল গ্রাহক, নৃশ্রমোষক, নিয়ন্ত্রণকারী সংস্থা ও শুভানুধ্যায়ীদের জানাই ধন্যবাদ ও কৃতজ্ঞতা।

**আইএফআইসি ব্যাংক** লিমিটেড

