

5 of a family die in bus-microbus collision

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Cox's Bazar

Five members of a family were killed and two others injured in a head-on collision between a bus and a microbus in Chakaria upazila of Cox's Bazar yesterday.

The deceased are Farzana Majumdar Liza, 25, wife of Aminul Haque of Batisa area in Chaudhagram upazila of Cumilla; Aminul's mother, Rumena Begum, 60; his sister, Sadia Haque, 24; his mother-in-law, Rizwana Islam, 50; and his sister-in-law, Farhana Majumdar, 24.

Aminul, his father, Enamul Haque, and his six-year-old son, Sadman, were injured in the crash.

Officer-in-Charge Mehedi Hasan of Malumghat Highway Police Station said the accident occurred around 9:00am in the Malumghat area on the Cox's Bazar-Chattoogram highway when Aminul's family was on their way to Cox's Bazar for a holiday.

A Chattogram-bound bus collided with their microbus, leaving two people dead on the spot and five others injured, he said.

The injured were taken to a nearby hospital, where doctors declared three of them dead, the OC added.

6 jhut depots gutted in Gazipur

STAR REPORT

A fire gutted six warehouses filled with jhut (garment scraps) in the Ambag area of Gazipur city yesterday morning.

The fire broke out around 6:30am at a warehouse located at Barbuchi Mor under ward No. 11 of Konabari Police Station, locals and fire officials said. It soon spread to five adjoining warehouses, triggering panic among residents.

Locals initially tried to bring the blaze under control but failed and later called firefighters.

On information, four firefighting units – two from Konabari Modern Fire Station and two from Chowrasta Fire Station – rushed to the scene and brought the fire under control after about two hours of effort, reports UNB.

Inspector Saiful Islam of Konabari Modern Fire Service said it was not yet clear what caused the fire or the extent of the damage.



PHOTO: REUTERS

Palestinian boys walk past the rubble of destroyed buildings in Gaza City, amid a ceasefire between Israel and Hamas.

US may seek UN Gaza force for two years

Document shows; Nasser hospital receives 15 Palestinian bodies under ceasefire exchange deal

REUTERS, United Nations

The United States has drafted a United Nations resolution that approves a two-year mandate for a Gaza transitional governance body and an international stabilization force in the Palestinian enclave, according to the text seen by Reuters on Tuesday.

The draft – which is still being developed and could change – was shared with some countries this week, but has not yet been formally circulated to the 15-member Security Council for negotiations, diplomats said. It was not immediately clear when Washington planned to do that.

A State Department spokesperson said discussions with UN Security Council members and other partners on how to implement President Donald Trump's Gaza plan were ongoing and declined to comment on "allegedly leaked documents."

The two-page text would authorise a so-called Board of Peace transitional governance administration to establish a temporary International Stabilization Force (ISF) in Gaza that could "use all necessary measures" – code for force – to carry out its mandate.

The ISF would be authorised to

protect civilians and humanitarian aid operations, work to secure border areas with Israel, Egypt and a "newly trained and vetted Palestinian police force, which the ISF will be responsible for training and supporting.

» Draft shared with some countries, not yet circulated to Security Council

» ISF to demilitarize non-state armed groups in Gaza

» Hamas has not yet agreed to disarm or demilitarize Gaza

The ISF would stabilize security in Gaza, "including through the demilitarization of non-state armed groups and the permanent decommissioning of weapons, as necessary."

Meanwhile, Gaza's Nasser Hospital in the southern city of Khan Yunis yesterday said it had received the bodies of 15 Palestinian prisoners under the US-brokered ceasefire exchange deal.

"The tenth batch of the bodies of Palestinian martyrs has arrived at Nasser Medical Complex in the Gaza Strip, numbering 15 martyrs," the hospital said in a statement, noting that 285 bodies were received under the agreement in total.

The next phase of the plan, which the draft UN resolution would endorse, is to establish the Board of Peace and the ISF.

The Trump plan also ends Hamas governance of Gaza and says the enclave would be demilitarized. Hamas has not said whether it will agree to disarm and demilitarize Gaza – something the group has rejected before.

The ISF would deploy under a unified command agreed by the Board of Peace and in close consultation with Egypt and Israel after detailed status of mission and forces agreements have been reached, according to the resolution.

While the Trump administration has ruled out sending US soldiers into the Gaza Strip, it has been speaking to Indonesia, the United Arab Emirates, Egypt, Qatar, Turkey and Azerbaijan to contribute to the multinational force.

It remains unclear whether Arab and other states will be ready to commit troops to the international force and Israel has repeatedly objected to the deployment of Turkish troops.

'Why force Awami League to join polls?'

Jamaat ameer says imposing election on those who dislike it amounts to oppression

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

Jamaat-e-Islami Ameer Shafiqur Rahman yesterday said forcing the Awami League to take part in the upcoming national election would amount to "oppression".

He made the remark while talking to journalists at Sylhet Osmani International Airport in the morning.

Shafiqur said, "There is no scope for the Awami League to participate in the next election. They don't even like elections. If something they dislike is imposed on them, that would be oppression. So, there is no question of involving them in the election."

He also said no election could be legitimate without a referendum. "We demand a referendum first so that the people can express their opinion."

"We are not forming any alliance but entering the electoral field with the people. Alongside Islamic parties, patriotic, committed, and honest citizens are joining us. Together, we want to rebuild the nation," he said.



NCP candidate list by Nov 15: Nahid

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Narayanganj

National Citizen Party Convener Nahid Islam yesterday said the party is preparing to field candidates in the highest number of constituencies in the upcoming 13th national election and will not join any alliance for now.

The party's candidate list will be announced by November 15, he added.

Speaking to journalists after visiting the family of late "July fighter" Gazi Salauddin in Godnail, Narayanganj, Nahid said the NCP aims to contest in all 300 constituencies.

However, as a mark of respect for those who played leading roles in the anti-fascism and pro-democracy movement, the party will refrain from fielding candidates in a few seats.

"The constituency of former prime minister and BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia will remain uncontested by the NCP," Nahid said.

On the question of alliances, Nahid said any political understanding must be based on shared principles.

"If such a possibility emerges – for example, alignment with the reform demands outlined in the July charter – we may consider joining hands. But for now, we are moving forward independently," he said.

Following his visit to Salauddin's home, Nahid expressed dissatisfaction over the treatment provided to the injured activists.



'A new era for New York'

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conservative media commentators and Trump himself.

Mamdani wasted no time calling out Trump, formally kicking off the battle that will likely define relations between the 34-year-old mayor and the president whose celebrity is tied to the city.

"Donald Trump, since I know you're watching, I have four words for you: turn the volume up!" Mamdani said during a Tuesday night speech to a raucous crowd of supporters shortly after being declared the victor.

His win, as well as the Democratic Party's victories in the governor's races in Virginia and New Jersey, suggest a shift in the political mood across the United States as it looks to next year's midterm elections, when control of Congress will be up for grabs.

"If anyone can show a nation betrayed by Donald Trump how to defeat him, it is the city that gave rise to him," Mamdani told supporters. "And if there is any way to terrify a despot, it is by dismantling the very conditions that allowed him to accumulate power. This is not only how we stop Trump, it's how we stop the next one."

Trump has repeatedly turned the massive powers of the presidency on political rivals, and already before the

election had threatened to possibly withhold billions of dollars in federal funding from New York City if Mamdani was elected.

"If you have a communist running New York, all you're doing is wasting the money you're sending there," Trump told CBS' 60 Minutes on Sunday, previewing how Republicans will use Mamdani's embrace of a socialist agenda as a line of attack against the Democratic Party.

Mamdani acknowledged his win poses a challenge in implementing what he calls "the most ambitious agenda to tackle the cost-of-living crisis this city has seen" since the 1940s – including a proposed rental freeze, universal childcare and other government actions targeting the private sector.

But, in the meantime, Mamdani pledged to fight.

"So hear me, President Trump, when I say this: To get to any of us, you will have to go through all of us," Mamdani added.

Yesterday, he said he would take on Trump and light antisemitism.

In another significant win for Democrats, voters in California also approved a proposition to redraw electoral districts in a bid to neutralise gerrymandering efforts ordered by

Trump in other states.

Trump refused to take any blame for Tuesday's results and tried to make an eleventh-hour intervention in the race, calling Mamdani a "Jew hater."

In a post on his Truth Social network, he also cited anonymous "pollsters" suggesting the Republican defeats were down to the government shutdown and the fact that his own name wasn't on the ballot.

Mamdani, a state lawmaker for New York's Queens borough, appealed to voters by pledging to tackle the soaring cost of living, offering free city bus travel, childcare and city-run grocery stores.

He focused on living costs facing ordinary New Yorkers, building support through his informal personal style, social media savvy and a massive canvassing ground game.

Mamdani was virtually unknown before his upset victory to secure the Democratic nomination over former governor Andrew Cuomo, whom he trounced again on Tuesday.

When the race was called in his favour, excitement was palpable across the city.

It was a "local victory" that offered a means of "resisting and pushing back" against the political establishment in

Washington, Ben Parisi, 40, told AFP, adding that the night stood in stark contrast to Republican Trump's victory a year ago.

Republican candidate Curtis Sliwa, founder of the Guardian Angels citizen crime patrol group, came in third after weeks of Cuomo insisting he bow out to increase his chances.

Turnout was high in this year's vote with 2.06 million ballots, or 98 percent of votes cast, counted by 12:31am yesterday – more than the total number of voters in the 2021 race.

Mamdani's improbable rise highlights the Democratic Party's debate over a centrist or a leftist future, with some leading national figures offering only tepid endorsements of Mamdani ahead of voting.

Syracuse University political science professor Grant Reeher said ahead of the result mayor Mamdani would face an uphill battle.

"Everybody's got their knives out, and it's a very difficult city to govern," he told AFP.

In New Jersey, Democratic Party candidate Mikie Sherrill beat out a Trump-backed businessman and in Virginia, Democratic candidate Abigail Spanberger took back the governor's mansion from the Republicans.

will remain protected. This merger process is for the people, the country and the long-term stability of the financial sector. Its successful implementation will bring significant positive stability for the next government and help rebuild confidence in the economy."

While it usually takes about two years to merge two banks, merging five banks will take even longer, he said.

"It will not be completed in a day, a month, or even six months – it will progress step by step. We hope that the future government will continue this initiative."

The shareholders of the five banks will not receive any shares in the new bank as the value of assets tied to their existing shareholding is already negative.

The BB found in its calculations that while the face value of each share is Tk 10, the net asset value for each is Tk 350 to Tk 420 in the negative, Mansur said.

"So, the central bank is not taking them into consideration, as they hold zero liability."

Draft law forbids

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parliamentary and judicial oversight. It also introduces multiple oversight bodies tasked with governing how "lawful interception" will be executed.

It defines lawful interception as government-authorised surveillance of communications for specific legitimate purposes such as evidence gathering, criminal investigations, protection of life, and national security.

The new law will penalise unauthorised interception with prison terms of up to 10 years and fines of up to Tk 10 crore. In the case of institutions, fines of up to Tk 100 crore may be imposed.

The draft states that a Central Lawful Interception Platform (CLIP) will be established under the home ministry, which will be tasked with carrying out all lawful interception.

"Any previously existing interception agency or telecommunications monitoring centre or platform shall be deemed abolished, and all its infrastructure, data, technical capabilities, systems, and assets shall be considered transferred to the Central Lawful Interception Platform."

"Accordingly, any central or regional technical platform or agency that continues to operate interception activities outside of CLIP shall be considered unlawful under this act," it adds.

Under the law, the CLIP cannot initiate interception independently. It can only act on behalf of authorised agencies, based on court directives or orders issued by an Independent Oversight Council to be formed under the law.

The draft further specifies that any interception-related request must be submitted exclusively by authorised agencies through the CLIP.

This independent oversight council will be a five-member body, with the president, the prime minister, and the Speaker of parliament nominating one representative each. The remaining two members will be retired judges of the High Court Division and the District and Sessions Court.

The council will be tasked with receiving and reviewing applications for interception and surveillance, and will meet twice a week. Each member will have a four-year term and can be either reappointed or replaced.

Furthermore, the council will have the authority to investigate complaints related to lawful interception.

However, law enforcement agencies filing such requests can appeal against the council's decisions.

Intercepted audio and video cannot be retained for over a month unless extended by court approval.

The draft also states that no evidence may be collected through interception beyond what is necessary for the purpose for which it was authorised.

The agencies allowed to seek interception include the Bangladesh Police – covering the Special Branch, counterterrorism units, and the Criminal Investigation Department – and the National Security Intelligence, which will be authorised solely for matters relating to national security.

Disciplined forces or intelligence wings within such forces can only intercept communications involving their own personnel or threats linked to foreign actors.

To intercept communications of Bangladeshi civilians, they must obtain a court order, and can only request such authorisation when investigating criminal offences involving those forces.

The CLIP will include representatives from all agencies authorised to conduct interception, who will operate the platform according to the rights of their parent organisations.

While the draft states that all interception requests must be registered and processed through the single, centralised CLIP system, it adds that such interception must adhere to the principles of necessity, proportionality, legality, and accountability.

The data types subject to interception include calls, messages, internet traffic, and social media metadata.

The draft also strictly prohibits interception for political, personal, or competitive purposes.

Meanwhile, an additional oversight, comprising the secretaries of the home, posts, telecommunications and information technology, and defence ministries, as well as the Principal Staff Officer of the Armed Forces Division and the Chairperson of the Telecommunications Regulatory Commission, will oversee CLIP's operations and determine the access rights afforded to each agency.

The law also mandates that "National Interception Reports" must be prepared, published, and presented to parliament annually.

A relevant parliamentary standing committee, comprising members from both the government and opposition, will meet monthly to review interception operations, procedures, and institutional capabilities under the lawful interception framework.

Biggest banking shakeup in motion

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In the biggest banking shakeup, the central bank also sent letters to the chairmen of the five banks stating that the lenders have been brought under the resolution process in accordance with Section 15 of the Bank Resolution Ordinance, 2025.

The central bank has declared the five banks non-functional, Mansur said at a press conference after the meeting with the bank chairmen and MDs.

Each bank will have one administrator along with an assisting team to carry out responsibilities.

The temporary administrations have been assigned four key responsibilities: to ensure that the banks remain operational and that large payments, remittances, and LC settlements continue smoothly; and to integrate and centrally manage the IT infrastructure, Mansur said.

The administrative teams will also assess staffing levels and the overall human resource situation and make necessary reorganisations, as well as

rationally merge multiple branches of the banks located in the same area.

"The main objective of this initiative is to overcome weak financial management and establish a viable banking institution," Mansur said.

Sammilito Islami Bank, a new Shariah-based state-run bank that will be formed through the merger of the five troubled banks, is set to launch soon.

Although the new bank will initially be state-owned, it will be operated under professional management and a board, like a private bank.

The bank's paid-up capital will be Tk 35,000 crore, the highest among all banks in the country, said Mansur, adding that it will be the strongest financial institution in Bangladesh.

The authorised capital of the bank will be Tk 40,000 crore (each share of Tk 10, totalling 4,000 crore shares).

Finance ministry officials said that they have already prepared the application and relevant documents for

the bank's licence, which were sent to the law ministry for vetting last week.

Once the vetting is completed, they will be forwarded to the BB, the officials said.

At the press conference, Mansur said that small depositors are likely to get back their money by the end of this month.

Since the new bank will be state-owned, there is no reason for depositors to worry, he said.

"From the very first day of the merger, profits will be provided based on market-based profit rates. Necessary safeguards have been put in place to prevent massive withdrawals."

Depositors with Tk 2 lakh or less will be able to withdraw their full amount soon.

For deposits above that limit, a phased withdrawal system will be introduced that will be announced later through a gazette notification.

"Through this merger process, the funds of more than 75 lakh depositors