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Yunus calls for quality, inclusivity in BNCC

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus has called for improving the quality and inclusivity of the Bangladesh National Cadet Corps (BNCC) as part of a long-term vision to engage youth in leadership, discipline, and national development.

"We all support BNCC, but we need to ensure quality and have good, credible instructors. We must pay attention to this and adopt a futuristic approach," he said after a presentation by BNCC

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Long tailbacks formed near the Matsha Bhaban in the capital yesterday afternoon. A joint rally by eight like-minded parties, including Jamaat-e-Islami, at Purana Paltan brought traffic in Dhaka to a standstill. The situation became normal in the evening.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

Traffic slows in some spots amid eight-party rally

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Traffic in Dhaka came to a standstill in some key places yesterday afternoon after a joint rally by eight like-minded parties, including Jamaat-e-Islami and Islami Andolan Bangladesh, commenced at Purana Paltan.

Activists began gathering at the venue from 1:00pm, blocking key intersections in the vicinity and causing a complete shutdown of traffic between the Kadam Foara and Dainik Bangla intersections.

Police set up barricades at both ends, while Jamaat activists were seen helping direct traffic alongside traffic police. The road closure led to gridlocks on adjacent routes, while metro rail stations in the area witnessed unusually large crowds.

Traffic Sergeant Minjis Alam Jibon, on duty at Kadam Foara, said police had placed barricades before 1:00pm.

"This stretch from Kadam Foara to Dainik Bangla is one of Dhaka's busiest roads. It already has heavy traffic, and today's closure has worsened congestion, stretching up to Matsha Bhaban and even Shahbagh," he said.

Many commuters faced long delays.

Sifat Habib, a passenger travelling from Farmgate to Kadam Foara, said, "I didn't expect so much traffic. It took more than an hour to reach here from Shahbagh – it usually takes 15 to 20 minutes."

He said he was heading to Baitul Mukarram Market but would now have to walk the rest of the way due to the closure.

Vehicles heading towards Dainik Bangla from Kadam Foara were diverted through Abdul Gani Road and Gulistan, resulting in heavy congestion on those alternative routes as well. The situation became normal in the evening after the rally ended, said traffic officials.

'Will maintain our funding for Rohingyas' Says Médecins Sans Frontières

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

With humanitarian funding declining for Rohingya communities in Cox's Bazar, Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) yesterday said it would maintain its current level of funding in Bangladesh.

"We intend to maintain our level of funding," said Orla Murphy, MSF's country representative, at a Café de Press event held at a hotel in Dhaka.

The Bangladesh chapter of the international medical humanitarian organisation organised the event to share updates on its activities in the country.

A humanitarian crisis is unfolding in the Rohingya camps due to funding shortages and continued arrivals from Myanmar's conflict-hit Rakhine state,

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EC bans posters, drones in campaigns

Issues code of conduct for national elections with guidelines for social media

AHMED DEEPTO

The Election Commission has introduced a comprehensive code of conduct that bans the use of posters and sets clear guidelines for the use of social media during election campaigns.

The commission issued the code late Monday night ahead of the 13th national election, expected in the first half of February.

It outlines detailed dos and don'ts for candidates and political parties.

The new rules introduce stricter measures, including the possibility of disqualifying candidates for serious breaches of conduct.

The new code also bars members of the Advisory Council from participating in election campaign.

It further requires individuals serving or nominated as chairpersons or members of the governing bodies of educational

AT A GLANCE

- No political activities or campaigns in schools
- No decorative lighting; only digital billboards may use illumination
- Advisory Council members barred from taking part in campaigns
- No use of AI for deceptive or manipulative content
- No spreading of hate speech, misinfo, or fake materials online

institutions to resign from those positions once their candidacy is finalised. It also prohibits campaigning at educational institutions.

Additional penalties have also been specified, and all parties and candidates must sign a written

pledge to comply with the code, according to the EC.

The draft makes it mandatory for political parties and candidates to formally commit to following the code.

Election Commissioner

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Armed forces' magistracy extended till February 28

UNB, Dhaka

The government has once again extended the magistracy power of commissioned officers in the army, navy, and air force until February 28 next year, effective from today, according to a notification from the Ministry of Public Administration.

According to the notification, commissioned officers holding the rank of captain and above in the Bangladesh Armed Forces have been granted special executive magistrate powers across the country.

The government initially granted the magistracy power to commissioned army officers on September 17 last year for 60 days to improve law and order. It was subsequently extended on January 12, March 13, May 13, and July 13 this year.

'Jamaat will cease to exist after next polls' Says Fakhrul

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Thakurgaon

BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir yesterday said Jamaat-e-Islami would "cease to exist" after next year's national election, urging people to remain cautious of their "hypocrisy".



"Jamaat says PR [proportional representation system] must be introduced or elections won't happen. Why are you so afraid of votes? Because you know you won't exist after the election," he said at a views-exchange meeting organised by BNP in Thakurgaon Sadar.

Mentioning that he does not understand PR, Fakhrul said people won't accept it. "We have always voted for candidates by their symbols – sheaf of paddy, boat, or scale. Now, they say we must vote for parties, and that the parties will decide who becomes an MP."

Fakhrul also dismissed NCP, saying, "They claim to be a party, but I don't see them anywhere. They won't get votes. Yet, they echo Jamaat, demanding PR and certificates before elections."

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Not facing pressure from any quarter

Says ICT prosecution over Hasina verdict

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The ICT prosecution yesterday said it was not facing pressure from any quarter despite escalating violence ahead of the impending verdict in the crimes against humanity case against ousted prime minister Sheikh Hasina.

ICT prosecutor Gazi Monawar Hossain Tamim told reporters that the tribunal was functioning as usual and that proceedings were taking place on schedule.

The tribunal will on November 13 fix the date for delivering the verdict in the case. Tamim said the Awami League and other political organisations were expected to announce programmes centring the verdict.

"We think the police and other law enforcement agencies are working for state security," he added.

The tribunal area has

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Denmark pledges \$3.7m for human rights, media

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Denmark has announced its support of DKK 25 million (\$3.7 million) for advancing human rights, independent media, and access to rehabilitation for survivors of violence and torture in Bangladesh.

The fund will be provided to a consortium consisting of three Danish organisations – DIGNITY, IMS, and the Danish Institute for Human Rights – that will partner with Bangladeshi organisations to promote the causes, said the Danish embassy in a statement on Sunday.

Christian Brix Møller, Danish ambassador to Bangladesh, said Denmark strongly believes that the upcoming programme will contribute to revitalising the pursuit of justice and democratic reform for the people of Bangladesh.

"A strong civil society is crucial in advancing human rights and securing accountability and rehabilitation for survivors of torture and violence," said Rasmus Grue Christensen, CEO of DIGNITY.

Executive Director at the International Media Support (IMS) Jesper Højberg said working closely with local organisations, civil society, and government, they aim to strengthen the foundations of Bangladesh's media sector.

"Reforming the National Human Rights Commission is key, and to be effective, our engagement will also build bridges and work with civil society and youth to articulate human rights demands and shape the country's future," said Mette Thygesen, International Director at the Danish Institute for Human Rights.



Children beam with joy as they gather water lilies from a nearby wetland, the blooms draped playfully around their necks like garlands. With winter approaching, lilies paint the wetlands in shades of green and pink, offering both beauty and a seasonal delicacy for local families. The photo was taken recently in Rajshahi's Kharkhari City Bypass area.

PHOTO: AZAHAR UDDIN