



## New alliance set to launch

### Says NCP's Patwary; talks with parties on

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

National Citizen Party Chief Coordinator Nasiruddin Patwary yesterday said that a new political alliance will be unveiled within the next few days.

“Our discussions with like-minded parties are moving forward. People will see a new alliance very soon,” he told an emergency press conference at the Shaheed Abu Sayeed Convention Centre in the capital's Shahbagh. He, however, did not mention which parties they were in discussions with.

He said his party is working to form an alliance with several parties that would stand for people's power, democracy, reforms, women's rights, and resistance against fascism, extortion, and corruption.

Patwary also accused the Election Commission of acting in a “one sided manner” and favouring a particular political party. “We aren't getting a level playing field.”

He further said the new state would not be shaped based on BNP or Jamaat. “We aim to build a state free

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A farmer clears grass and weeds from a mustard field in Mahishalbari village of Rajshahi's Godagari upazila yesterday. Mustard flowers have begun blooming across the district, painting the villages in gorgeous shades of green and yellow. PHOTO: AZAHAR UDDIN

## Khaleda being treated for chest infections

### Seeks prayers for quick recovery

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia is undergoing treatment under close supervision for chest infections.

She was admitted to Evercare Hospital in the capital on Sunday night after developing the infections, which have affected her heart and lungs, according to her medical board.

While updating reporters about Khaleda's health yesterday, her personal physician Prof AZM Zahid Hossain, also a BNP Standing Committee member, said the former prime minister has urged people to pray for her speedy recovery.

Khaleda, 80, has long been suffering from multiple health complications, including liver cirrhosis.

Prof FM Siddiqui, a member of the medical board, said several of her health problems flared up simultaneously on Sunday.

“She has a chest infection, which has affected her heart and lungs at the same time, causing respiratory distress. We have carried out urgent tests. Based on the reports received

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## 57% of coastal homes struggle to adapt to climate change: WB

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

More than half of households in Bangladesh's coastal belt report struggling to cope with rapid climate change, citing a lack of adequate disaster-protection infrastructure, according to a new World Bank survey.

When asked, 57 percent of households identified inadequate embankments, cyclone-resistant structures, and protective infrastructure as the biggest long-term barrier to building climate resilience.

In response to another question, 56 percent of households said financial constraints remain a major obstacle to implementing more effective adaptation measures.

“The impacts are not just environmental but deeply human, as poor and agricultural households are disproportionately affected,” the Washington-based lender notes in its report.

The survey, conducted across 250 coastal villages in 2024, is part of the World Bank's new report, “From Risk to Resilience: Helping People and Firms Adapt in South Asia,” unveiled yesterday at the InterContinental Dhaka.

South Asia, with its dense population, high temperature, and exposed geography, is one of the world's most climate-vulnerable regions, and Bangladesh is among the most at risk.

“By 2030, nearly 90 percent of the region's population will be at risk of extreme heat and nearly a quarter at risk of severe flooding. With an increase in water and soil salinity in the coastal regions, the climate crisis is severely impacting millions of lives in Bangladesh,”

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WORLD BANK REPORT



highlights the WB report.

According to the survey, more than three-quarters of households show strong awareness of climate risks, expecting a significant weather shock in the coming decade.

Already, 80 percent of households have taken action -- but most rely only on low-cost, basic solutions due to lack of access to advanced

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## ATTACK ON BAULS

### Govt inaction risks fuelling extremism

### Say activists, rights groups

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Outrage grew over the arrest of Baul Abul Sarkar and the attacks on other artistes in Manikganj, as citizens and rights organisations warned yesterday that the government's inaction could institutionalise religious extremism.

They also demanded Sarkar's release and said such attacks set dangerous precedents and violate freedom of expression.

On November 20, Abul Sarkar, president of Bangladesh Baul Samity, was arrested in Madaripur on charges of hurting religious sentiments. The case was filed by an imam of a mosque in Ghior, alleging that the baul made objectionable remarks during a performance there.

On Sunday morning, while Sarkar's followers were preparing to form a human chain demanding his unconditional release, a group of people under the banner of “Towhidi Janata” attacked them, injuring at least three, in the stadium area of Manikganj town.

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## Israeli drones continue to strike Gaza

### 4 Palestinians killed; IDF operates beyond yellow line despite truce

AGENCIES

Israeli drone strikes in Gaza's Khan Younis killed at least four Palestinians yesterday morning, hospital sources said.

Among the victims was a Palestinian killed by Israeli drone fire in the town of Bani Suheila, east of the southern city of Khan Younis, in an area beyond the so-called “yellow line”.

Extensive Israeli Defence Forces (IDF) operations beyond the so-called “yellow line” have resulted in the systematic destruction of Gaza's eastern neighbourhoods, according to local reports.

A systematic Israeli effort to demolish Gaza's neighbourhoods and establish buffer zones, rendering these areas uninhabitable and complicating the prospect of displaced families returning.

Sources in Gaza told Al Jazeera that Hamas forces, accompanied by the Red Cross and an Egyptian committee, have continued searching for the remains of an Israeli captive in Nuseirat refugee camp.

Meanwhile, the Israeli army has started a large-scale

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## Govt, not pharma, to set prices of life-saving drugs: HC

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court, in the full text of a verdict, has observed that the government, not the manufacturing companies, will fix the prices of all life-saving medicines under the Drug and Cosmetics Act, 2023.

The court also directed the authorities to frame a clear guideline for preparing the list and fixing the prices.

“Fixing the price of the medicine is not a privilege of the manufacturers in as much as the medicines are not fancy items or like other commodities the use of which may not be essential or the purchase of which can be deferred or avoided or otherwise managed or minimised, according to the means and need of the consumers,” said the HC bench of Justice Md Rezaul Hasan and Justice Biswajit Debnath in the 27-page verdict, which was released yesterday.

On August 25 this year, the HC delivered the judgment following a petition filed as a public interest litigation by Human Rights and Peace for Bangladesh (HRPB) in 2018.

Petitioner's lawyer Manzill Murshid said under the Drug Control Ordinance 1982, the government issued a gazette notification on September 18, 1993 fixing the prices of 739 medicines. However, the health ministry on February 26, 1994 issued a circular fixing the prices of only 117 medicines and stated that manufacturing companies would fix the prices of other medicines.

The HRPB challenged the legality of the circular in the petition, and the HC declared it illegal.

Murshid said medicines used for diseases such as diabetes, and heart and kidney problems are considered life-saving under the relevant law and, following the HC judgment, their prices will be determined by the government, not by the manufacturing companies.



## UN laments ‘meagre results’ at COP30 talks

AFP, Geneva

The UN rights chief yesterday lamented the “meagre results” at the COP30 climate summit, warning that the “fatal inaction” of leaders might one day be considered a crime against humanity.

“I often wonder how future generations will judge our leaders' actions -- and their fatal inaction -- on the climate crisis,” Volker Turk told a forum on business and human rights in Geneva, asking: “Could the inadequate response of today be considered ecocide or even a crime against humanity?”

He also warned that generative AI could become “a modern-day Frankenstein's monster”, with human rights the first casualty, as powerful tech giants unleash the technology on the world.

Turk said generative AI had “tremendous promise” but told the world body's business and human rights forum that its “exploitation for purely political or economic benefit can manipulate, distort, and distract”.

“When powerful tech giants introduce new technologies, such as generative artificial intelligence, human rights can be the first casualty,” he said.

“The threats to several human rights, including privacy, political participation, free expression and work are clear and present,” he added.

The UN High Commissioner for Human Rights warned that the threats of today “could materialise into harms that undermine the promise of emerging technologies and could unleash unpredictable consequences”.



Fire burns at a house that was destroyed in a Russian drone strike in Kharkiv on Sunday. A Russian drone strike on the major Ukrainian city of Kharkiv killed four people and wounded 17.

PHOTO: AFP

## SPs for all dists finalised ahead of nat'l election

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government has finalised the list of superintendents of police (SPs) for all 64 districts ahead of the 13th national election.

The selection was completed through a manual lottery system at the chief adviser's residence, Jamuna, last night.

Representatives from the Chief Adviser's Office and the home ministry were present during the selection, along with high officials of the police headquarters (PHQ).

The SPs will be posted to their respective districts in phases.

Sources at the Chief Adviser's Office and the PHQ confirmed the development to The Daily Star.

They, however, refused to disclose the names before the ministry published a circular.

A deputy inspector general (DIG) of the PHQ told The Daily Star that officers who had previously served as district SPs were excluded in the first stage. Besides, those who played commanding roles during the last three elections were kept outside the process, said the DIG, requesting anonymity.

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