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Bangladesh is now moving forward on the path to democracy. We are hopeful that the election will be held in early or mid-February 2026 without any hassle. Most political parties have declared their candidates. The election atmosphere has already started across the country.

MIRZA FAKHRUL ISLAM ALAMGIR
BNP Secretary General



People wait in front of an OMS truck to buy rice and other essentials at subsidised rates on Ring Road near Shyamoli in Dhaka. Many had been waiting for more than three hours for the vehicle to arrive. Amid rising living costs, such services remain a lifeline for low-income families. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

Will disclose names if anyone pressurises us
Says ACC chief

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Anti-Corruption Commission Chairman Mohammad Abdul Momen yesterday warned that the names of anyone attempting to influence or obstruct corruption investigations will be made public.

Responding to a question about whether the ACC faces undue pressure, Momen said, "If anyone tries to apply undue pressure on the ACC in the future, we will reveal their names."

He made the remarks at a views exchange meeting at the ACC headquarters in Dhaka's Segunbagicha, marking the commission's founding anniversary.

He stressed that the commission must protect its independence and prevent external interference. "We have many limitations, and we are trying to overcome them," he added.

Regarding action against politicians, the ACC chief

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Living on the edge

How neglect putting thousands of students living in DU dormitories at risk

MAHATHIR MOHAMMED

For years, experts have warned about the vulnerable condition of Dhaka University's residential halls, but those warnings have gone unaddressed.

Since 2008, multiple expert teams have inspected the old buildings and recommended comprehensive repairs. However, only emergency fixes were carried out, The Daily Star has found.

As a result, thousands of students have long lived in fear of a potential disaster, officials said.

Friday's earthquake intensified those concerns as fresh cracks appeared in buildings of at least 12 dormitories. Plasters also peeled off in many areas, according to hall union representatives.

The 5.7-magnitude quake left at least 10 students injured in four halls. In response, the university authorities announced a two week vacation to repair the dormitories.

University engineers confirmed that Sir Salimullah Muslim Hall is currently at the highest risk, followed by Haji Muhammad Mohsin Hall, Dr Muhammad Shahidullah Hall, Shahid Sergeant Zahurul Huq Hall, Surja Sen Hall, and Shamsunnahar Hall.



major overhauls for Mohsin Hall and Surja Sen Hall. However, only partial strengthening of the footings and beams was completed. Both halls have now developed fresh cracks.

Another DU engineer, Md Meraj Uddin, said a Buet team inspected Sir Salimullah Muslim Hall in 2021 and recommended evacuation for major repairs. "But no progress

has been made yet," he said.

Engineers blamed chronic underfunding for the lack of regular maintenance.

"The government allocates money for development, but not for maintenance. It has become a tradition," said Meraj.

He said if the halls and other

academic and administrative buildings were maintained regularly, the situation would have been better.

Acting Chief Engineer Kazi Md Akram said all old DU buildings require regular maintenance, but due to a low budget, only emergency work is done.

He said the expert teams' full

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NOISE POLLUTION

Now traffic police can fine offenders

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

To curb noise pollution, traffic police will now be authorised to fine offenders -- a power previously held only by magistrates.

Under the Noise Pollution (Control) Rules, 2025, issued Monday by the environment ministry, traffic police officers of at least sergeant rank can impose on the spot fines for illegal horns, loud sound systems, and other noise violations.

Officials say this added enforcement authority will strengthen monitoring on the ground, which had long been hindered by manpower limitations.

The new rules replace the Noise Pollution (Control) Rules, 2006, which officials described as outdated and lacking clarity on several regulatory issues.

The updated 2025 rules aim to address those gaps by reflecting current needs, practical realities, and technological changes.

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A woman carrying her child walks along the narrow edge of a footpath where drainage work is underway. With the area dug up and left unprotected, pedestrians are forced to navigate the risky spot at the edge of the road. The photo was taken in the Lakshmi Bazar area of the capital recently.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

POLLS MONITORING

Don't appoint politically-linked people
CEC tells local observers

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Chief Election Commissioner Md Nasir Uddin yesterday directed local election observer organisations not to appoint anyone with political links to monitor the upcoming national election.

The Election Commission sat with 81 organisations at its office as part of a dialogue ahead of the upcoming 13th parliamentary election.

The CEC reiterated that journalists and observers act as the commission's "CCTV cameras," ensuring accountability and transparency throughout the process.

CEC Nasir also instructed the organisations to provide proper training on election laws, rules, regulations, and other relevant issues to those who will monitor the polls on the ground.



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DHAKA WEDNESDAY NOVEMBER 26, 2025

AGRAHAYAN 11, 1432 BS

The Daily Star

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January 18, 2026

Registration is Going on
Last Date: 10th December, 2025



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