



"Anyone who lives in Venezuela and who wants to speak the truth is in danger".
Nobel Peace Prize winner
Maria Corina Machado

YOUR RIGHT TO KNOW

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Election on February 12

Referendum on same day; CEC urges all to play 'historic role' in advancing country's democratic journey

Dec 29, 2025
NOMINATION SUBMISSION DEADLINE
Final day for candidates to submit their nomination papers

Dec 30 to Jan 4
NOMINATION SCRUTINY
ROs to review nomination papers of the candidates

Jan 20, 2026
LAST DAY FOR CANDIDATURE WITHDRAWAL
Candidates have until this date to withdraw from the election

42,761 polling centres, 2,44,739 booths planned for 12.76cr voters
Polling hours: 7:30am to 4:30pm
More 'secret booths' to be added

Jan 21, 2026
PUBLICATION OF FINAL CANDIDATE LIST
The list of candidates and allocated symbols will be unveiled

Jan 22 to Feb 10
OFFICIAL CAMPAIGN PERIOD
Candidates are permitted to campaign during this timeframe

Feb 12, 2026
ELECTION DAY
Voting takes place for 300 seats and referendum on July charter

Referendum ballot colour: pink
National polls ballot colour: black & white
Ballots will be placed in one box

MOHIUDDIN ALAMGIR and AHMED DEEPTO

In a major step toward restoring democratic rule, the Election Commission yesterday announced the schedule for the 13th national election and the referendum on the July charter, both to be held on February 12.

Chief Election Commissioner AMM Nasir Uddin made the announcement in a televised address, ending weeks of speculation and setting political parties on course for final campaign preparations.

"I call upon all political parties, contesting candidates, and voters to participate sincerely and extend active cooperation in the electoral process," Nasir Uddin said in his 13-minute address.

Along with the national election to choose the next government, voters will cast their ballots in the referendum to decide the

- Yunus terms announcement milestone
- All major parties welcome schedule
- 3 EC officials made ROs for first time

fate of key constitutional reforms aimed at strengthening fragile democratic institutions and rebalancing state powers.

The CEC urged everyone to help make both exercises a success and "together play a historic role in advancing the country's democratic journey".

"Rise above fear, temptation, deception, and limitations, and exercise your right to vote

without hesitation. To ensure your safe and festive participation, all relevant institutions and forces will be working."

Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus congratulated the EC, calling the announcement an important milestone. "Following the historic mass uprising, the country is now advancing on a new path. This election and referendum will strengthen that trajectory, give priority to the will of the people, and further consolidate the foundation of a new Bangladesh."

Assuring full cooperation of the interim government, he expressed confidence that the EC would perform its duties independently and impartially.

"Bangladesh now stands at the threshold of a new future. Through your active participation and responsible conduct, I firmly believe we will succeed in building a modern, just, and prosperous state," he said.

MORE STORIES ON PAGES 3, 12

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Nation's heart breaks as fight for little Sajid ends in tragedy

2yr-old found dead after 32 hours in abandoned shaft

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi



As rescuers finally lifted two-year-old Sajid from the suffocating darkness of the narrow shaft, the entire nation held its breath.

For a fleeting moment, hope dared to rise — that perhaps the toddler who had been trapped underground for 32 agonising hours might somehow be saved.

In Rajshahi's Tanore upazila, villagers stood frozen, praying for the little boy to return to his mother's

arms. But that fragile hope shattered.

Less than an hour after being pulled from the muddy shaft, Sajid was declared dead, ending a vigil that had united the country and breaking the hearts of all who prayed for a

miracle.

After more than a day of relentless search, little Sajid was found dead, officials confirmed last night.

Fire Service and Civil Defence officials leading the rescue said the

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PHOTO: AZAHAR UDDIN

Hundreds of people watched in silence as Fire Service and Civil Defence personnel yesterday continued the rescue operation for two-year-old Sajid.

Trader shot dead in broad daylight in Old Dhaka

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A businessman was shot dead in broad daylight yesterday in Old Dhaka's Shyambazar area, allegedly over a longstanding rivalry, adding to a recent spate of similar killings.

Abdur Rahman, 55, a spice trader and the former president of the Shyambazar Kachabazar Traders' Association, was shot around noon in front of the Maula Buksh Sarder Eye Hospital in Shyambazar.

Critically injured, Rahman was rushed to the emergency department

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Richest 10% hold nearly two-thirds of wealth

Says World Inequality Report on Bangladesh

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The richest 10 percent of people hold 58 percent of total wealth in Bangladesh, according to the World Inequality Report 2026.

Wealth is even more concentrated among the top one percent, who alone control around 24 percent of all assets, said the report released by the Paris based World Inequality Lab yesterday.

By contrast, the bottom 50 percent of the population own just 4.7 percent of total wealth, while the middle 40 percent hold 36.9 percent.

The report said this distribution reflects a highly uneven concentration of wealth, though overall inequality has remained moderate with little change over the past decade.



The top 10 percent of earners receive about 41 percent of national income, while the bottom half capture only 19 percent.

The income gap between these groups narrowed slightly, from a level of 22 to 21, between 2014 and 2024, suggesting broadly stable inequality levels.

"Female labour participation remains low at 22.3 percent, indicating persistent gender disparities in economic activity," the report added.

Overall, inequality patterns in Bangladesh remain largely unchanged, with limited progress toward a more balanced distribution of income and wealth.

Globally, the report found that the richest 10 percent of the world's population own nearly three-quarters of all wealth, while the poorest half hold barely 2 percent.

Fifty-three years after independence, many wartime operations remain buried in footnotes and family archives. Part 7 of this 12-part series tells how freedom fighters and civilians in Kurigram carried out two of the Liberation War's most daring missions: raiding a bank and a treasury to secure crores in cash and gold for the Mujibnagar government.

Kurigram bank, treasury raided to fund war

AHMAD ISTIAK

During the 1971 Liberation War, a series of daring operations unfolded across the country, with civilians and trained freedom fighters jointly conducting raids to secure funds for the resistance.

In the early months of the war, freedom fighters broke into government treasuries and bank vaults in various districts and sub divisions, with most of the recovered money deposited into the Mujibnagar government treasury to finance the war.

Two of the most significant missions took place on April 16 and 18, when freedom fighters raided the National Bank and the Kurigram Treasury, both in the Kurigram subdivision. Together, they recovered over Tk 3 crore and 15kgs of gold jewellery.



TALES OF FREEDOM

These operations are documented in multiple books.

The National Bank operation is described in Tajul Mohammad's "Muktijuddher Itihashe Khoje Kurigram" and Akhtaruzzaman Mondol's "1971: Uttar Ronangone Bijoy".

On the other hand, the Treasury operation is documented in Hamidul Haque's "Boibhobe Ekattor" and Akbar Ali Khan's memoir "Purono Shei Diner Kotha".

Akhtaruzzaman Mondol, a former Awami League politician and Liberation War organiser from Bhurungamari, Kurigram took part in the April 16 bank raid.

According to Purono Shei Diner Kotha, the Pakistan government imposed strict restrictions on cash withdrawals at the start of the war.

Faced with a growing need for resources, Captain Nawazesh Uddin, deputy commander of the EPR's Rangpur Wing, advised National Assembly member Riaz Uddin Ahmed, Provincial Assembly member Shamsul Haque Chowdhury and Sub-divisional

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

"নিশ্চয় প্রত্যেক প্রাণিকে মৃত্যুর স্বাদ গ্রহণ করতে হবে"
- সুরা আল ইমরান

বাংলাদেশের ক্যান্সার ওষুধ শিল্পের কীর্তিমান পুরুষ এর মৃত্যুতে

আমরা গভীরভাবে
শোকাহত



মোহাম্মদ এবাদুল করিম বুলবুল

(২৭শে ডিসেম্বর ১৯৫৬ - ১৯ই ডিসেম্বর ২০২৫)

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