



NATIONAL POLLS Govt to go tough on disruptive activities

BAHARAM KHAN

Any group trying to create trouble and disrupt the election environment will face a strong response from the government.

This decision came at yesterday's advisory council meeting, where the situation post the announcement of the election schedule was assessed, The Daily Star has learnt from people with knowledge of the matter.

Chief Adviser Muhammad Yunus instructed all advisers to closely monitor the law-and-order situation after the announcement of the election schedule, they said.

The interim government will show a tougher approach after the announcement of the election schedule.

About the protesting staff at the Secretariat, they said the government has no scope to meet any demands after the schedule is announced -- whether they are Secretariat employees or metro rail workers.

Meanwhile, at a press briefing at the Foreign Service Academy after the advisory council meeting, Press Secretary Shafiqul Alam said: "We are now in election

SEE PAGE 8 COL 1



HOPE ON A PAVEMENT ... Sangita, Afia, Liza, and Maria, four HSC students of Siddheswari Girls' College, teach street children near their campus. Sangita said she would often spend time with the children, and about a month and a half ago, they told her they wanted to study and asked if she could help. Since then, the four friends have been giving the children a few hours of learning, laughter, and a sense of belonging, five days a week. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

Khaleda Zia on elective ventilator support: doctors

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia remains under close observation in the intensive care unit of Evercare Hospital in Dhaka and has been placed on elective ventilator support to rest her lungs and other organs, said her doctors yesterday.

The former prime minister has also developed several additional complications, including ineffective endocarditis, acute pancreatitis and severe bacterial and fungal infections, and is receiving necessary treatment, Prof Shahabuddin Talukder, who is leading her medical board, said in a press release.

She is also undergoing regular dialysis as her kidneys are not functioning properly.

The medical board, led by cardiologist Shahabuddin and comprising specialists from Bangladesh, the UK, the US, China, and Australia, is overseeing her treatment.

Khaleda, 80, was admitted to the hospital on November 23 on the advice of her medical board after being diagnosed with infections in her heart and lungs.



SEE PAGE 8 COL 3

Demand for 20% allowance 'unjustified' Say experts on Secretariat staffers' protest

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Experts have said the Secretariat staffers' demand for a 20 percent allowance is unjustified at a time when a new pay scale is being prepared. They warned that meeting this demand could trigger similar demands across other sectors and destabilise the situation.

On Wednesday, employees from various ministries and departments demonstrated at the Secretariat by confining Finance Adviser Salehuddin Ahmed for around six hours until police dispersed them. Witnesses said around 150-

SEE PAGE 8 COL 4

MOHAMMADPUR DOUBLE MURDER Burn mark, past thefts helped cops trace suspect

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Domestic worker Ayesha allegedly killed her employer, Laila Afroz, and Laila's 15-year-old daughter, Nafisa Nawal Binte Aziz, at their Mohammadpur home after a confrontation over the theft of Tk 2,000, police said yesterday.

Ayesha's full name and age could not be confirmed because she has no NID and had provided no personal



Ayesha

details to the employer. Police estimate her to be about 23 years old.

Police identified her through a distinctive burn mark on her neck and a history of theft at previous workplaces, DMP Additional Commissioner SN Nazrul Islam said yesterday, a day after Ayesha and her husband, Mohammad Rabbi Shikder, 26, were arrested from Jhalakathi.

SEE PAGE 8 COL 1

BNP, Jamaat, NCP hail end to polls uncertainty

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Welcoming the announcement of the schedule for the 13th national election, all major political parties yesterday said it has removed the uncertainty surrounding the polls.

However, the parties, including BNP, Jamaat-e-Islami, and the National Citizen Party (NCP), put the onus on the Election Commission to hold a free and fair polls.

Chief Election Commissioner AMM Nasir Uddin yesterday announced that the 13th national parliamentary election and the referendum would be

SEE PAGE 8 COL 4

Donald Trump launches \$1m 'gold card' visa programme

REUTERS, Washington

President Donald Trump's administration officially launched his "Trump Gold Card" visa programme on Wednesday to provide a pathway, with a steep price, for non-US citizens to get expedited permission to live in the United States.

The website Trumpcard.gov, complete with an

SEE PAGE 8 COL 6

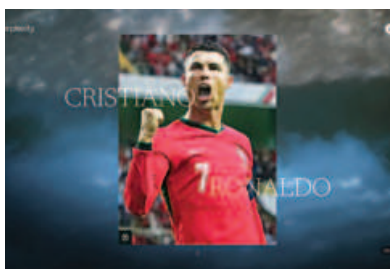


Tejgaon College students blocked the Farmgate intersection for over two hours till 1:00pm yesterday, demanding justice for fellow student Sakibul Hasan Rana, who died on Wednesday, four days after sustaining injuries in a dormitory attack. The blockade brought traffic in Farmgate and nearby areas to a standstill. PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

Ronaldo investing in Perplexity. Here's why.

ZARIF FAIAZ

Cristiano Ronaldo has become an investor and global ambassador for Perplexity, the San Francisco based AI search platform -- linking one of the world's most recognisable sporting brands with a fast-growing challenger in the search technology sector.



The partnership, announced in early December, comes as AI driven search tools compete for users in a market long dominated by Google and reshaped by models such as OpenAI's ChatGPT. Perplexity, known for its cited sources and direct answers, is positioning itself as a consumer-focused alternative.

SEE PAGE 8 COL 6

Architects of AI Time's 'Person of the Year'

REUTERS, New York

Time magazine named the architects of artificial intelligence its "Person of the Year" yesterday, citing their ability to deliver the age of thinking machines with transformative technology.

"Person of the Year is a powerful way to focus the world's attention on the people that shape our lives. And this year, no one had a greater impact than the individuals who imagined, designed, and built AI," Time Editor-in-Chief Sam Jacobs wrote in a letter to readers.

Jacobs described the architects as "wowing and worrying humanity" and "transforming the present and transcending the possible."

The 2025 "Person of the Year" issue features a cover story that explores how AI changed the world over the year in new and "sometimes frightening ways." It includes interviews with Nvidia Chief Executive Jensen Huang, whose chips are powering the AI boom, and AI investors such as SoftBank CEO Masayoshi Son.

It explores such troubling aspects of AI as the death of a 16-year-old Californian who committed suicide, after which his parents sued ChatGPT maker OpenAI, blaming the company for their son's death because of conversations he had with the chatbot.



📞 16627
pureit



Safer Than Boiled Water



Removes Harmful Virus & Bacteria



9 Liter Storage



4 Stage Advanced Purification



No Gas or Electricity Needed

* Pureit can remove over 95% of heavy metals like iron and lead when tested under NSF 53™ protocol.
 ** When 07 ppm iron and 015 ppm lead are used as the input mix for testing over the Germkill Kit's lifespan.

Analysed: Pureit/2025