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PHOTO: PID, STAR

President Mohammed Shahabuddin, Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus, leaders and activists of the BNP and National Citizen Party, and people from all walks of life pay tribute to the martyred intellectuals of 1971 by placing wreaths at the Martyred Intellectuals Memorial in the capital's Mirpur, marking the Martyred Intellectuals Day yesterday.



Bombs or gravel?

Defence challenges ICT Chief Prosecutor Tajul's earlier claim

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A defence lawyer yesterday challenged the chief prosecutor's earlier claim that bombs were planted inside a secret Rab-run detention centre to kill investigators.

During a charge hearing in an enforced disappearance case involving 17 accused, defence counsel Tabarak Hossain Bhuiyan told the International Crimes Tribunal-1 (ICT-1) that forensic findings showed no explosives were recovered from the site.

On April 6, Chief Prosecutor Tajul Islam told journalists that investigators had found three secret detention centres, known as Aynaghar, including the semi underground Taskforce Interrogation (TFI) cell, and alleged that timer-fitted bombs had been planted there to target the investigation team.

"The chief prosecutor's statement does not reflect reality. What was found resembled gravel, not bombs," Tabarak told the tribunal. Later, he told The Daily Star that a forensic report - allegedly prepared by the prosecution - confirmed no explosives were present, though he could not immediately produce the document.

Contacted, ICT prosecutor Shyikh Mahdi maintained that bombs were found and defused by Rab's bomb disposal unit. He shared two videos showing officials removing an object from a building and disposing of it, but the newspaper could not independently verify whether the object was an explosive.

Mahdi said the prosecution does not conduct forensic tests and suggested the report may have been prepared by Rab.

Tabarak, who represents seven army officers in the case, also told ICT-1 that the prosecution had wrongly framed charges against his clients.

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Tarique vows to ensure law and order, if voted to power

UNB, Dhaka

BNP Acting Chairman Tarique Rahman yesterday said his party will prioritise ensuring law and order and tackling corruption if voted to power.

"Those who will form the government after winning the election must first ensure one thing, and that is the rule of law. I think our foremost effort should be to ensure this with all our strength," he said while virtually addressing a discussion programme organised by BNP to exchange views with professionals and noted citizens.

The programme was

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Prioritise women, children's rights in polls manifestos

Civil society orgs urge parties

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A coalition of civil society organisations has urged political parties to place women's and children's rights at the centre of their election manifestos.

They warned that ignoring these issues could undermine Bangladesh's democratic transition, social stability and long-term economic growth.

The call was made during the presentation of a position paper, titled "Advancing Women's and Children's Rights: A Civil Society Push for Inclusive Election Manifestos", at a seminar in the capital yesterday.

Plan International Bangladesh and Manusher Jonno Foundation (MJF) jointly prepared the position paper.

The coalition - comprising Manusher Jonno Foundation, Breaking the Silence, JAAGO Foundation, Save the Children in Bangladesh, WaterAid Bangladesh, Plan International Bangladesh, and Oxfam in Bangladesh - said it was formed to ensure that the lived experiences, needs, and aspirations of women and children are reflected in political commitments.

It said Bangladesh's political transition under an interim government presents a key opportunity to incorporate inclusive and evidence-based commitments on education, health, protection, climate resilience, and social inclusion in party agendas.

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THAILAND-CAMBODIA Clashes displace 150 Bangladeshi migrant workers

Many detained by Cambodian immigration

PORIMOL PARMA

More than 150 Bangladeshi migrant workers have been displaced by the Thailand-Cambodia conflict, which has entered its second week.

The migrants said they had been working at a construction site close to the Thai-Cambodian border but fled the area on December 9 following bombings.

"We were absolutely terrified as part of the site we were working at was damaged by bombing," said Ronju Mia, 37, now sheltered at an immigration detention centre in Cambodia, speaking to The Daily Star over the phone yesterday.

The conflict, rooted in a long-standing dispute over colonial-era demarcations along the countries' 800-kilometre frontier, has already claimed at least 25 lives and forced more than half a million residents on both sides to flee their homes, according to an Al Jazeera report.

The migrant community has not been spared.

Ronju said he and other Bangladeshi workers had been working at the site for more than two months, having previously stayed in Phnom Penh.

"We had no idea our site could be the target of bombing," he said.

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Defeated fascist forces trying to derail polls

Says Fakhrul Islam

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir yesterday said defeated fascist forces are trying to derail the upcoming national election, while another force is attempting to create divisions among people by using religion.

He said the force that opposed Bangladesh's independence in 1971 has now changed its appearance and is claiming to build a "new country".

"This election will be a contest between two forces. One stands for Bangladesh, liberal democracy and the true establishment of democracy," Fakhrul said at a discussion organised by Jatiyatabadi Muktiyoddha Dal and Jatiyatabadi Muktiyoddha Projonmo at the Institution of Diploma Engineers, Bangladesh, in the capital.

Saying the country is facing deep polarisation, he asked whether people would choose independence, sovereignty and democracy, or

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সরকারি
সব শিক্ষা উপবৃত্তির টাকা
সহজেই নিন
বুকটে-এ

নিরাপদে নিশ্চিত্তে ঘরে বসে উপবৃত্তির টাকা
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আপনার বুকটে নাম্বারটি নিবন্ধন করুন।