

## Outcry for press freedom resounds at home, abroad

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He also said the attacks were part of a broader attempt to silence independent journalism and suppress critical voices.

Referring to previous attacks on cultural institutions such as Chhayanaut and Udichi, Dr Kamal said these incidents were not isolated.

"These are repeated assaults on our history, culture and democratic values," he said, calling for national unity to resist such forces.

Several senior Gono Forum leaders accompanied him during the visit.

Zonayed Saki, chief coordinator of Ganosamhati Andolan, said while criticism of the media is natural in a democracy, violence can never be justified.

"People can criticise the media or build alternative platforms, but burning offices and spreading fear through violence can never be acceptable," he said after visiting The Daily Star office yesterday.

Referring to the killing of Sharif Osman Hadi, a July frontrunner and spokesperson for Inqilab Moncho, Saki said the

murder was part of a wider plan to derail democratic transition.

He added that while people across the country were mourning and protesting the killing, some groups misused public anger to attack media houses.

"We have also seen attacks on cultural organisations. These are deliberate attempts to break the unity created during the July movement," Saki said.

The Supreme Court Reporters Forum (SRF) issued a statement denouncing the assaults and demanding a fair, neutral and speedy investigation.

"The media is the fourth pillar of the state and a key foundation of democracy. Violence, threats or attacks to silence the media are unacceptable," the statement said.

It also strongly condemned the harassment of Nurul Kabir, editor of The New Age and president of the Editors' Council, when he tried to help rescue journalists trapped during the fire at the newspaper offices.

On Thursday night, miscreants first attacked Prothom Alo and later The

Daily Star, vandalising the buildings and setting them on fire.

Several journalists were trapped inside The Daily Star building.

Army, police and BGB members later arrived at the scene, removed the attackers and brought the situation under control.

Fire service personnel doused the blaze and then army troops rescued the trapped journalists.

NATIONWIDE PROTESTS

Journalists across the country staged demonstrations, human chains and rallies demanding justice.

In Gazipur, reporters gathered at the Press Club to protest the attack on the two leading dailies as well as the harassment of Nurul Kabir.

"Instead of paying respect to the coffin of Sharif Osman Hadi, these attackers chose violence. The motive is clear – to create unrest and disrupt the democratic process," said Delwar Hossain, senior staff reporter of Dainik Dinkal.

ATN News staff reporter Mazharul Islam Masum warned that if justice was delayed, journalists would mobilise again.

In Satkhira, journalists declared that arson and vandalism would not silence the press.

They said Prothom Alo and The Daily Star played a courageous role during the July uprising and that attempts to intimidate the media were part of a wider conspiracy to destabilise the country.

The Electronic Media Journalists Association in Sylhet also condemned the attacks.

In a statement, the organisation said, "Despite expectations of a peaceful environment after the election schedule announcement, journalists continue to face violence, intimidation and killings."

INTERNATIONAL CONCERN

Journalists, media professionals, cultural activists, and members of the British Bangladeshi community gathered at the historic Altab Ali Park in East London yesterday to protest the recent attacks on The Daily Star and Prothom Alo, as well as the growing threats against journalists.

The demonstration, organised by Bangla-speaking journalists working in London, strongly condemned the

vandalism, arson, looting, and alleged attempts to kill journalists during coordinated attacks on the two media houses in Bangladesh. Protesters described the incidents as unprecedented and unacceptable, calling them a "black day" in the country's media history.

Speakers at the rally said The Daily Star and Prothom Alo have long stood for independent, objective, and responsible journalism – principles that have increasingly made them targets of intimidation and violence. They demanded an immediate and transparent investigation into the attacks and accountability for those responsible.

Meanwhile, the London Bangla Press Club issued a strong statement condemning the attacks.

Expressing deep concern, the Press Club said the arson, vandalism, and assaults constituted a direct attack on press freedom, freedom of expression, and the public's right to information, posing a serious threat to the country's democratic progress.

In a statement, it demanded swift

identification and punishment of those responsible and urged all sides to remain calm.

"Violence and arson do not honour the martyrs. Disagreements must be resolved through debate and logic, not through fire and fear," the statement said.

The Karachi Press Club (KPC) expressed profound concern and strongly condemned the escalating series of violent attacks, vandalism, and arson targeting the offices of major media outlets in Bangladesh.

A free, independent, and courageous press is the bedrock of any democratic society. Attempts to silence the media through physical violence, legal intimidation, or harassment are direct violations of fundamental human rights, the constitutional right to freedom of expression, and the principles of the rule of law.

In solidarity with our colleagues in Bangladesh, the Karachi Press Club calls upon the relevant authorities to ensure the safety of media persons and to conduct a transparent, impartial investigation into these attacks.

## OCCUPIED WEST BANK

# Israel's security cabinet okays 19 new settlements

AFP, Jerusalem

Israel's security cabinet approved the establishment of 19 new settlements in the occupied West Bank, a move the country's far-right finance minister said yesterday was aimed at preventing the establishment of a Palestinian state.

The decision brings the total number of settlements approved over the past three years to 69, according to a statement from the office of Finance Minister Bezalel Smotrich.

The latest approvals come days after the United Nations said the expansion of Israeli settlements in the West Bank – all of which are considered illegal under international law – had reached its highest level since at least 2017.

"The proposal by Finance Minister Bezalel Smotrich and Defence Minister Israel Katz to declare and formalise 19 new settlements in Judea and Samaria has been approved by the cabinet," the statement said, without specifying when the decision was taken.

Smotrich is a vocal proponent of settlement expansion and a settler himself. "On the ground, we are blocking the establishment of a Palestinian terror state," he said in the statement.

## Jamaat seeks gunman, police protection for its ameer

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its leaders became targets of "Awami terrorists", and that after the "July uprising" those elements chose "killings and attacks", which it said recent incidents prove.

The letter was signed by AFM Abdus Sattar, office secretary of Jamaat.

Referring to the upcoming election, Jamaat said it fears an increase in activities by what it described as "Awami terrorists" to foil the national election.

The party said Shafiqur's political activities have increased as party chief

and that he is travelling across the country to hold wayside gatherings and rallies.

The letter said appointing a gunman for his round-the-clock security and deploying armed police personnel for the security of his residence was "urgent", and requested the home adviser to take steps accordingly.

A copy of the letter was also sent for information and necessary action to the inspector general of police at Police Headquarters, the DMP commissioner, and the additional IGP (Special

Branch).

Confirming the development, Chief of Special Branch and additional inspector general of police Golam Rasul said, "We have received the letter; now we will analyse the security threats and then take steps accordingly."

On December 13, a core committee meeting on law and order decided that a gunman can be assigned to high-profile candidates and that security at residences assessed to be at high risk can be improved.

On December 15, in a major development, the

government issued policy guidelines on granting firearm licences and appointing retainers, persons to carry firearms, to individuals who are politically important and candidates contesting the national election.

Based on scrutiny and threat analysis, these individuals will be provided security or be granted a firearms licence, along with election candidates.

The development comes amid growing concern over candidates' security in the wake of the shooting of Sharif Osman Hadi, one of the frontliners of last year's

July uprising and an MP aspirant for Dhaka-8, a day after the election schedule was announced.

After fighting for his life for six days, Hadi died on December 18 while undergoing treatment at a hospital in Singapore.

A home ministry source said intelligence agencies have also identified around 200 high-profile individuals, including 157 student coordinators across the country who played an important role during the July uprising, and that the government is planning to provide security for them based on security assessments.

a major stakeholder in ensuring a sound election environment is definitely being disrupted."

"However,

initial assessments provided to us by all relevant agencies indicate that no mainstream political party has been found involved in these activities," he added.

Sanaullah said some

vested quarters exploited

the situation while the

nation was mourning

Hadi's death and carried

out these incidents

"by overpowering" law

enforcement agencies.

"These are our concerns

as they are definitely

linked to the election

environment," he said.

He said any incident

after the announcement

of election schedule

can impact the electoral

process.

Saying journalists are

"Those who want to disrupt and undermine the election are primarily targeting urban areas. If you observe carefully, they are carrying out very organised, targeted activities so that the impact is maximised and fear spreads among the public. We have identified all of this."

At noon, the service chiefs discussed election preparations and the overall security situation in a meeting with Chief Election Commissioner AMM Nasir Uddin at the latter's office.

Sanaullah said the chiefs assured the EC that all preparations are in place for a fair and smooth election, with forces, magistrates, and district cells coordinated to maintain law and order and prevent criminal activities.

## Liberation Ward dep commander AK Khandker laid to eternal rest

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Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus, Chief of Army Staff General Waker Uz Zaman, Chief of Naval Staff Admiral M. Nazmul Hassan, and Chief of Air Staff Air Chief Marshal Hasan Mahmood Khan, and Liberation War Affairs Adviser Faruk E Azam, Bir Protik, also paid homage to the Liberation War organiser.

A fly-past featuring BAF helicopters was also displayed.

Khandker breathed his last around 10:35am on Saturday aged 95.

Born on January 1, 1930, Khandker was a distinguished figure in national history. He played a pivotal role in the Liberation War as deputy chief of staff.

On December 16, 1971, Khandker was present

during the Pakistani forces' surrender at the Race Course Maidan as the representative of Bangladesh.

He also served as a diplomat, and became the planning minister after being elected to parliament from Pabna-2 constituency in 2009.

MIAMI TALKS

US, Qatar, Egypt, Turkey urge restraint in Gaza

AFP, Miami

The United States was joined Saturday by Qatar, Egypt and Turkey in urging parties in the Gaza ceasefire to uphold their obligations and exercise restraint, the chief US envoy said after talks in Miami.

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh  
Road Transport and Highways Division  
**Dhaka Mass Transit Company Limited**  
Metrorail Bhaban, Uttara Depot, Sonargaon Janapath  
Sector-16, Diabari Uttara, Dhaka-1230  
www.dmtcl.gov.bd

Date: 21.12.2025

## e-Tender Notice: OTM

e-Tender is invited in the National e-GP Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) for the procurement of Goods as stated as below:

This is an online Tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and No offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-Tender, registration in the National e-GP Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) is required. Further information and guideline are available in the National e-GP system portal and from e-GP Help desk ([helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd](mailto:helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd)).

Sl. No.	Package No.	Description of Goods	Tender ID No.	Previous Tender Closing Date and time	Amended Tender Closing Date & Time	Amended Last Tender Date and Time
01	DMTCL/GR-03/2025-26	Supply of MRT Pass for Dhaka Metro Rail under DMTCL. This MRT Pass will be used for entry and exit purposes at the metro station by the passengers.	1171017	22-December-2025; 15:00	30-December-2025; 15:00	29-December-2025; 16:00

(A.K.M. Sarwar Hossain  
Deputy General Manager (Store & Procurement)  
Dhaka Mass Transit Company Limited

## STATUTORY NOTICE

IN THE SUPREME COURT OF BANGLADESH  
HIGH COURT DIVISION  
(STATUTORY ORIGINAL JURISDICTION)

COMPANY MATTER NO. 2221 OF 2025

IN THE MATTER OF: An application under section 159 read with sections 171 and 396 of the Companies Act, 1994.

AND

IN THE MATTER OF: Standard Bank PLC. .... Petitioner

The Registrar, Joint Stock Companies and Firms and Another .... Respondent

Notice is hereby given that an application under Section 159 read with sections 171 and 396 of the Companies Act, 1994 was filed before the Hon'ble High Court Division on behalf of the above named Petitioner for condonation of delay of filing Mortgage Deed No. 6434 and IGPDA No. 6435 both dated 20.10.2024 of the B. T. Limited, within 21 days along with filing the Form XVIII with the Registrar of Joint Stock Companies and Firms. Upon hearing of the application on 11.12.2025, the Hon'ble Mr. Justice Ahmed Sohel has been pleased to admit the said application and directed to file an affidavit-in-compliance on or before 14th January, 2025. Any one desirous of opposing the said application, you may appear before the Hon'ble High Court either in person or through Advocate. Copy of the said application may be obtained from the undersigned on payment of nominal fees.

Madam Golam Kibria FCS, Advocate, Supreme Court of Bangladesh  
GK CHAMBERS, Mehera Plaza, Suite # 8-B, (Lift # 8)  
33, Topkhana Road, Dhaka-1000. Mobile: 01707-429282

## Legal Notice

IN THE SUPREME COURT OF BANGLADESH  
HIGH COURT DIVISION  
(STATUTORY ORIGINAL JURISDICTION)

COMPANY MATTER NO.1491 OF 2025

N.A. Husain A.T. .... Petitioner