



Unite against moves to stir instability, derail the vote

Urge journalists, political leaders, professionals; govt inaction during attacks on Star, Prothom Alo 'terrifying'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Leaders from the journalist community, political parties, different professional bodies, and civil society groups yesterday joined voices to demand

The recent violence targeting The Daily Star and Prothom Alo represents more than just a strike against the media; it is part of a systemic attack on the nation's democratic values, education, and cultural identity,

The recent violence targeting The Daily Star and Prothom Alo represents more than just a strike against the media; it is part of a systemic attack on the nation's democratic values, education, and cultural identity.

united resistance against attempts to incite instability in the country and undermine the upcoming national polls.

speakers said yesterday. They questioned the government's failure to restrain those inciting chaos

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The Editors' Council and the Newspaper Owners' Association of Bangladesh (Noab) organised a human chain demonstration in front of Pan Pacific Sonargaon Dhaka yesterday morning, protesting recent coordinated attacks on The Daily Star, Prothom Alo, Chhayanaut, and Udichi. The protest was part of a broader call to defend democratic values and press freedom in the wake of escalating mob violence. PHOTO: STAR

Bangladesh missions halt services in Delhi, Agartala

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh missions in New Delhi and Agartala have suspended all consular and visa services amid security concerns.

Meanwhile, a visa application centre, operated by a third party appointed by the Bangladesh Deputy High Commission in Kolkata, was forced to close the office by demonstrators.

Different groups in Kolkata also protested in front of the Bangladesh Deputy High Commission against what they described as attacks on minorities in Bangladesh, especially the killing of garment worker Dipu Chandra Das in Mymensingh last week.

"Due to unavoidable circumstances, all consular & visa services from the Bangladesh High Commission in New Delhi are temporarily suspended until further notice," according to a notice on the Bangladesh mission's board yesterday.

"Any inconvenience caused is sincerely regretted," it said.

In New Delhi, the suspension of visa and consular services come amid heightened security outside the high commission following a planned protest by Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP) and Bajrang Dal activists yesterday over the killing of a Hindu youth in Bangladesh, reported Indian newspaper The Telegraph.

Security was tightened in the diplomatic enclave, with police and paramilitary personnel deployed at regular intervals.

On December 18, Dipu, 25, was beaten to death by a mob over allegations of "hurting religious sentiments".

Local media of Agartala, Lokmat Time, reported activists of Sanatani Hindu Sena and the youth wing of Tipra Motha Party, an ally of BJP in Tripura, last week held separate demonstrations in front of

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Star files case against 350-400 over attack at its office

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Daily Star yesterday filed a case accusing 350-400 people of vandalism, arson, and looting at its Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue office early Friday.

According to the case filed by Mizanur Rahman, head of operations at The Daily Star, on December 19, the attackers, carrying local weapons, sticks, and flammable materials, gathered outside The Daily Star building around 12:25am, chanting provocative slogans against the newspaper.

Prior to this, certain online activists had posted inciting messages on social media and encouraged the mob to carry out the attack.

At approximately 12:35am, the group forcibly broke steel gates and glass doors to enter the premises. Inside, they physically assaulted staff, vandalised office property, looted valuables, and set fire to furniture and documents.

More than 200 computers, laptops, cameras, printers, and other electronic equipment, valued at about Tk 5 crore, were damaged or destroyed.

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A year of economic repair

The interim government has pulled the economy back from the brink, but investment remains in the doldrums

REJAUL KARIM BYRON

When Finance Adviser Salehuddin Ahmed answered his phone last week, he sounded like a man who had finally been allowed to exhale. The tenor of his voice marked a sharp contrast with the start of 2025. Back then, he was visibly strained, besieged by competing demands and an economy teetering on the edge. He was navigating a minefield of populist pressures, with professional bodies clamouring for pay hikes just as the treasury's coffers came under mounting stress.

As 2025 draws to a close, a balance-sheet assessment suggests that the change in mood is justified. Bangladesh has survived a year of economic triage.

The interim government, tasked with steering the country through a volatile political transition, has managed to stabilise the economy. But as economists say, the ledger remains heavy with liabilities. Stability has come at the cost of growth, investment, and the welfare of the poor.

Negotiations with IMF, multilateral lenders unlocked \$3b in budget support in June

Consumer prices were above the 10% mark for 9 consecutive months since Oct 2024

GDP growth fell to 3.97% last fiscal year, shows provisional BBS data

Govt's interest payments rose by 17.31% last fiscal year

To understand the sense of relief in the finance ministry, one must recall how the year began. The balance of payments was deeply in deficit, foreign exchange reserves were

eroding, inflation was entrenched in double digits, and the banking sector was burdened with bad loans. Any administration would have struggled under such conditions, let alone an interim one.

The government's foremost priority was to keep the International Monetary Fund on board. Without the IMF's seal of approval, vital budget support from the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank would have remained out of reach. This required a reset in priorities: rebuilding reserves and plugging revenue shortfalls.

Negotiations in Dhaka and Washington grew tense, at times threatening to collapse. The IMF pushed for market-based exchange rates and strict revenue targets. The demands triggered backlash at home. Officials at the National Board of Revenue went on strike, while business leaders protested value-added tax hikes on essential goods.

It was a familiar standoff between political feasibility and economic necessity. In the end, the deal held.

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Complete Hadi murder trial by 30 days

Demands Inqilab Moncho, calls for 2 advisers' resignation

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Inqilab Moncho yesterday demanded the immediate resignation of the Home Adviser Jahangir Alam Chowdhury, Law Adviser Asif Nazrul and CA's Special Assistant on Home Affairs Khoda Baksh Chowdhury, holding them accountable for the murder of the platform's spokesperson Sharif Osman Hadi.

The organisation warned that it would launch a movement to topple the interim government if justice is not ensured, and said the officials must disclose the reasons for their failure to provide security before stepping down.

In a press release issued yesterday afternoon, Inqilab Moncho Member Secretary Abdullah Al Jaber outlined a three-point demand on the investigation and trial of the murder.

The platform called for the judicial process to be completed within a maximum of 30 working days through a Speedy Trial Tribunal.

It also urged the government to involve

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Hadi murder case to be tried at speedy tribunal

Says law adviser; home adviser calls case top priority

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Law Adviser Asif Nazrul yesterday said the murder case of Sharif Osman Hadi, spokesperson of Inqilab Moncho and a frontline activist of the July uprising, will be tried under the Speedy Trial Tribunal to ensure swift justice.

Meanwhile, Home Adviser Lt Gen (ret'd) Jahangir Alam Chowdhury said progress had been made in the investigation and that law enforcers were making all-out efforts to arrest the prime accused, Faisal Karim Masud.

In a Facebook post, Asif said the case would be tried under the Speedy Trial Tribunal Act, 2002. Under Section 10 of the law, the trial must be completed within a maximum of 90 days after submission of the police report, he added.

Hadi was shot a day after the Election Commission announced on December 12 that the next national election would be held on February 12. He was airlifted to Singapore for advanced treatment, where he died on the night of December 18.

His death sparked widespread outrage and calls for prompt and exemplary punishment of those responsible.

After a meeting on the law and order situation at the Secretariat, the home adviser said the government is giving the case the highest priority and warned that no one involved would be spared.

Jahangir said joint forces comprising police, Rapid Action Battalion and Border Guard Bangladesh arrested 10 people, including the prime suspect's wife, his parents and brother-in-law, and the owner of the motorcycle used in the murder. Law enforcers also recovered the

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17 held, 31 IDed over attacks on media houses

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Police have so far arrested 17 people and identified 31 suspects in connection with recent attacks involving vandalism, arson, and looting at the offices of national dailies The Daily Star and Prothom Alo.

The arrests were made after analysing video footage of the incidents, and further arrests would follow, Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP) Additional Commissioner SN Nazrul Islam told reporters at the DMP Media Centre yesterday.

In what journalists described as an assault on press freedom, mobs launched coordinated attacks on the offices of The Daily Star and Prothom Alo on Thursday night and vandalised the offices, looted valuables, set the buildings ablaze, and trapped journalists and staff of the English daily inside for hours.

Home Adviser Lt Gen (ret'd) Jahangir Alam Chowdhury yesterday said the editors of both newspapers have been given gunmen for their protection.

"The security at their residences has also been strengthened," he said while briefing reporters at

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রিহ্যাব ফেয়ার ২০২৫

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