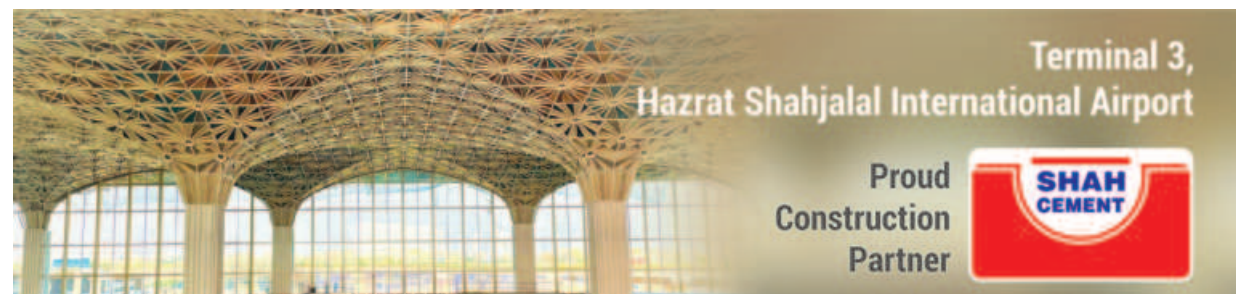




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## Tarique may register as voter today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Election Commission yesterday said there is no legal bar to BNP Acting Chairman Tarique Rahman's registration as a voter, clearing the way for his enlistment as early as today.

The EC said all preparations for his registration are complete, though it has not yet decided whether Tarique Rahman will appear at the commission's headquarters or whether an EC team will visit his residence to complete the process.

The commission said the matter involves no legal complications and will be handled in accordance with existing electoral laws and procedures.

Speaking to reporters, Election Commissioner Abdur Rahmnel Masud said, "There is no legal obstacle for Tarique Rahman to become a voter. Under Section 15 of the Voter List Act, 2009, the commission can register anyone as a voter at any time under special circumstances. Therefore, if it wishes, the EC can register anyone as a voter at any time."

Another commissioner, Anwarul  
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A group of men gather around a makeshift campfire for warmth amid the biting cold weather. The photo was taken on Indira Road in the capital last night.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

## Severe cold disrupts lives in the north

Farmers, daily wage earners worst affected

STAR REPORT

Severe cold continued to disrupt the livelihoods of people across the country yesterday, particularly in the northern districts, with low-income groups and agrarian communities bearing the brunt.

In Dhaka, the lowest temperature was recorded at 13.5 degrees Celsius, while Jashore recorded 9 degrees Celsius, the lowest temperature of the season so far.

Daily life has become particularly harsh in the Rangpur region as the cold spell continues to grip northern Bangladesh. People are staying indoors unless absolutely necessary, with thick fog blanketing the surroundings day and night amid biting cold.

According to the Rangpur Meteorological Office, as of 9:00am yesterday, the lowest temperatures recorded across the region were 10 degrees Celsius in Nilphamari, 11.5 degrees Celsius in Rangpur, 12 degrees Celsius in Lalmonirhat, 11.4 degrees Celsius in Kurigram, 12.1 degrees Celsius in Gaibandha, 11.4 degrees Celsius in Saidpur, 11 degrees Celsius in Panchagarh and 12 degrees Celsius in Dinajpur.

"This situation may persist for several more days," said Mostafizur Rahman, a meteorologist at the Rangpur

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## Ancient mosaic board game found at Mayan city

INDEPENDENT.CO.UK

Archaeologists have uncovered the remains of a unique mosaic-style board game in the Mayan city of Naachtun, Guatemala, offering fresh insights into gaming practices in the ancient world.

Patolli is one of the oldest ludo-like strategy board games played in the Americas by the Aztecs



and the earlier Mesoamerican cultures, typically involving an element of gambling.

It comprises a cross-shaped track of 52 spaces, drawn on cloth or even the ground, while patol beans marked with a dot on one side are thrown to function like dice. But exactly how the game was played in ancient Mayan societies remained unclear.

Recent excavations at Naachtun in northern Peten, once a Maya regional capital, offer clues about how people played the game, and its parallels to other sports in the region.

Researchers unearthed a board carved on the ground, made of small red mosaic tiles partly collected from broken ceramic vessels, parts of which they dated to the fourth century AD.

## 'Any party against graft may join our alliance'

Says Jamaat chief

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Any political party may forge an electoral alliance with Jamaat-e-Islami if it agrees to three conditions, Jamaat Ameer Shaliquur Rahman said yesterday.

He said such parties have to refrain from corruption and from patronising corrupt individuals, ensure equal justice at all levels of society without interfering with the judicial process. They also have to commit to implementing all reform recommendations.

His comments came amid speculation that the National Citizen Party is increasingly tilting toward a seat-sharing arrangement with Jamaat-e-Islami. Jamaat is already part of an eight-party Islamist bloc that includes Islami Andolan Bangladesh.

While addressing a conference of Islami Chhatra Shibir in the capital, Jamaat's student wing, he said Jamaat aims to build an education system that leaves no one unemployed.

Urging Shibir to act as

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## US launches strikes against IS in Nigeria

Trump claims the group targeting Christians in the northwest region



REUTERS, Palm Beach

The United States carried out strikes against Islamic State (IS) militants in northwest Nigeria at the request of Nigeria's government, President Donald Trump and the US military said on Thursday, claiming the group had been targeting Christians in the region.

"Tonight, at my direction as Commander in Chief, the United States launched a powerful and deadly strike against ISIS Terrorist Scum in Northwest Nigeria, who have been targeting and viciously killing, primarily, innocent Christians, at levels not seen for many years, and even Centuries!" Trump said in a post on Truth Social.

The US military's Africa Command said the strike was carried out in Sokoto state in coordination with Nigerian authorities and killed multiple ISIS militants.

Nigerian Foreign Minister Yusuf Maitama Tuggar told the British Broadcasting Corp the strike was a "joint operation" targeting "terrorists", and it "has nothing to do with a particular religion".

Without naming ISIS specifically, Tuggar said the operation had been planned "for quite some time" and had used intelligence information provided by the Nigerian side. He did not rule out further strikes, adding that this depended on

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## CRITICAL FUEL SHORTAGE Gaza hospital halts most services

AFP, Khan Yunis

A major Gaza hospital has suspended several services because of a critical fuel shortage in the devastated Palestinian territory, which continues to face a severe humanitarian crisis, it said.

Devastated by more than two years of war, the Al-Awda Hospital in the central Gaza district of Nuseirat cares for around 60 in-patients and receives nearly 1,000 people seeking medical treatment each day.

"Most services have been temporarily stopped due to a shortage of the fuel needed for the generators," said Ahmed Mehanna, a senior official involved in managing the hospital.

"Only essential departments remain operational: the emergency unit, maternity ward and paediatrics."

To keep these services running, the hospital has been forced to rent a small generator, he added. Under normal conditions, Al-Awda Hospital consumes between 1,000 and 1,200 litres of diesel per day. At present, however, it has only 800 litres available.

"We stress that this shutdown is temporary and linked to the availability of fuel," Mehanna said, warning that a prolonged fuel shortage "would pose a direct threat to the

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- Only essential units running at Al-Awda Hospital
- Truce allowed 600 aid trucks daily; only 100-300 now enter
- MSF now manages one-third of 2,300 hospital beds

## BPL 12 begins in style

SAMSUL AREFIN KHAN

The 12th edition of the Bangladesh Premier League T20 (BPL) got underway in spectacular fashion yesterday as Rajshahi Warriors edged Sylhet Titans in a high-scoring thriller at the Sylhet International Cricket Stadium, pushing aside the off-field chaos that marked the tournament's build-up.

Despite widespread concerns over organisational issues ahead of the opening day, the tournament began smoothly, offering several positives for organisers and fans alike.

The competition was officially launched in the presence of Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) president Aminul Islam Bulbul, with a brief opening ceremony featuring a minute's silence in memory of late youth activist and July uprising leader Sharif Osman Hadi. Smoke flares and balloon releases added colour to the occasion.

The 18,000-capacity stadium was packed to the rafters, and the crowd was treated to a run-fest, highlighted by the tournament's first century from Rajshahi skipper Najmul Hossain Shanto. Shanto smashed an unbeaten 101 off 60 balls, striking 10 fours and five sixes, and shared an unbroken 130-run partnership off just 71 balls with Mushfiqur Rahim, who remained not out on 51 off 31 deliveries. Rajshahi chased down the target to finish on 192 for two in 19.4 overs.

Earlier, Sylhet Titans posted a competitive 190 for five after being sent in to bat, riding on Parvez Hossain Emon's unbeaten 65 off 33 balls. Rony Talukdar and Afif Hossain

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Rajshahi Warriors captain Najmul Hossain Shanto celebrates after scoring the second T20 century of his career in the opening match of the 12th edition of the Bangladesh Premier League in Sylhet yesterday. Shanto's unbeaten 60-ball 101 helped Rajshahi chase down Sylhet Titans' 191-run target with eight wickets and two balls to spare. In the second match of the day, Chattogram Royals beat Noakhali Express by 65 runs at the same venue.

PHOTO: BCB

## IMDB GRAFT TRIAL Malaysia ex-PM Najib jailed for 15 more years



REUTERS, Kuala Lumpur

Malaysia's influential former premier Najib Razak was jailed yesterday for a further 15 years and fined \$2.8 billion for power abuse and money laundering in the biggest trial of the multibillion-dollar IMDB scandal, a ruling that could have big political ramifications.

Najib urged Malaysians to be calm, and said he would continue his "struggle" and demand his rights through legitimate channels.

Malaysia and US investigators say at least \$4.5 billion was stolen from Malaysia Development Berhad, a

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