



Strengthen cyber security ahead of polls

Yunus directs National Cyber Security Agency

BSS, Dhaka

Chief Adviser Professor Muhammad Yunus yesterday directed the National Cyber Security Agency to ensure all forms of cyber security ahead of the upcoming parliamentary elections.

“Centred on the upcoming elections, we have to enhance our information technology capabilities and strictly combat all types of cybercrime,” he said.

Yunus, also chairman of

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Momentarily lifted off the ground by the weight of this heavily-loaded handcart, a puller hangs from its front while trying to haul sacks of essential commodities near the TSC area of the Dhaka University campus. Another man helps him from behind, struggling to balance the cart and keep it moving. The photo was taken yesterday afternoon.

PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

JNU STUDENT POLLS

Allegations of code violations surface ahead of election

RAKIB MADBER

Allegations of widespread violations of the election code of conduct have emerged ahead of the first-ever Jagannath University Central Students' Union (JnUCSU) elections, triggering counter-accusations among rival panels despite a festive mood on campus.

The election is scheduled to take place tomorrow.

Students and several candidates have alleged that the panels backed by Chhatra Shibir, Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD), and Chhatra Shakti were all breaching election rules during their campaigns.

Students alleged that nightly gatherings featuring feasts were being held near the Pogose School area and the second gate beside the Shaheed Sajid Building, where votes were being solicited and money was being offered for campaign participation, particularly by the JCD-backed panel.

Allegations of additional violations have also surfaced, including food distribution in female residential halls by the Shibir-backed panel, while the Chhatra Shakti-backed panel brought national football team captain Jamal Bhuyan to campus for campaigning, violating polls conduct.

Arafat Nafis, a student of Public Administration department, said all three panels were violating polls code. Shibir distributed food in female halls under the guise of projection meetings, while JCD provided scholarships in halls and funded district welfare programmes, he alleged.

Mehrun Khanom, a student of Mass Communication and Journalism, cited Section II(e) of the JnUCSU election code, which prohibits serving food, drinks or gifts to voters.

She said both JCD and Shibir violated the rule.

Referring to Jamal Bhuyan's presence, she said the code also bans the involvement of outsiders in campaigns.

Independent general secretary candidate Md

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Children's safety under growing threat

1,170 child-related news reports involve rape, murder in 2025, says study

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Children's safety in Bangladesh is increasingly under threat due to rising incidents of rape, murder and abuse, according to a study based on reports published in national and local newspapers.

The findings were revealed in a report titled “State of Child Rights 2025”, which shows that 1,170 reports – 62.66 percent of 1,867 negative news reports – were related to children involved in rape and murder.

The report was unveiled at a programme organised by Sachetan Sangstha, with support from Manusher Jonno Foundation (MJF) and Street Children Activists Network (SCAN) Bangladesh, at the CIRDP auditorium in Dhaka yesterday.

Presenting the study, SCAN Bangladesh General Secretary Moniruzzaman Mukul said newspapers published 1,485 major reports related to children between January and November this year.

Of these, the largest share -- 31.19 percent -- concerned accidents and tragedies, including road crashes, drowning, falls from buildings and deaths during play, he said.

According to the analysis, reports on child abuse and violence accounted for 15.63 percent, while child trafficking and sexual exploitation made up 8.75 percent.

Reports related to child health and protection stood at 9.70 percent, while those focusing on risks in the education sector accounted for 6.94 percent, it added.

The report further noted that among the 1,867 negative news items, 15.16

percent involved child deaths caused by accidents.

Regionally, the Dhaka division recorded the highest number of crimes and accidents involving children. In the division, a total of 2,376 children were identified as victims, the report said.

Moniruzzaman said all political parties contesting the upcoming national parliamentary election should include clear commitments to child rights in their election manifestos.

He also stressed the need for swift trials and stringent punishment in

AT A GLANCE

Accidents, tragedies made up largest share of child-related news

Dhaka division recorded highest number of child victims

Rights groups urge political parties to commit to child protection

Calls grow for swift trials, stricter punishment in child abuse cases

cases of child rape and murder, as well as improved healthcare, psychosocial support and safe environments for children, particularly in marginalised areas.

Speaking as chief guest, Shishu Academy Director General Arju Ara Begum said the report was based on newspaper coverage and therefore did not reflect the complete national situation, but described the findings as “frightening”.

She said the government was undertaking various initiatives for

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Plans afoot to destabilise the country

Says Fakhrul

BSS, Thakurgaon

BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir

yesterday said a vested quarter is hatching conspiracies to destabilise the country.

Fakhrul made the remarks while speaking as the chief guest at a view-exchange meeting with Islamic scholars (ulemas) at the Human Welfare Council Training Centre ground in Thakurgaon.

Noting that the country is passing through a critical period marked by rumours, confusion and various movements, Fakhrul said, “We must remain cautious at this time so that we do not once again slide into darkness.”

He stressed that the upcoming 13th Jatiya Sangsad election is extremely important and warned that attempts are being made to derail it. “We must ensure that no one can thwart this election,” he said.

Calling for unity, he said internal divisions must be avoided, as conspirators would take advantage of any rift, causing harm to both the country and its people.

Describing Islam as

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Teachers condemn mob violence, media attacks

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The University Teachers' Network has strongly condemned a wave of violence, arson, and mob attacks across the country, accusing student representatives of acting beyond their authority and threatening freedom of expression.

In a statement issued yesterday, the network said the situation deteriorated following the shooting of young politician Sharif Osman Bin Hadi on December 12 and his death on December 18.

The killing was followed by attacks on leading newspapers, The Daily Star and Prothom Alo, as well as cultural institutions Chhayanaout and Udichi Shilpi Gosthi.

“Using the anger and frustration after Hadi's killing, opportunistic groups have carried out one criminal act after another,” said the statement.

The interim government has failed to arrest the killers, while journalists, cultural activists, and ordinary citizens have come under attack, it added.

The teachers also condemned several killings across the country, including the mob killing of Dipu Chandra Das in Bhaluka over alleged blasphemy and the burning to death of two children of BNP leader Belal Hossain in Lakshmipur.

They further criticised the conduct of Rucu leaders, particularly its General Secretary Salahuddin Ammar, accusing him of creating mob pressure, harassing teachers, and forcing deans to resign.

“The elected student representatives acted as if they themselves were the administration.

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ABU SAYED KILLING

Primary evidence found against 30 accused: IO

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Testifying before the International Crimes Tribunal-2 for the second consecutive day yesterday, the investigation officer (IO) in the case filed over the killing of Begum Rokeya University student Abu Sayed during last year's July uprising said the involvement of 30 accused in the crimes against humanity case has been proven at the primary level.

IO Ruhul Amin also told the tribunal that he found evidence indicating the doctor, who prepared Sayed's post-mortem report, had been pressured to change the report six times.



He further said that seized evidence, statements from the victim's family members and injured witnesses, along with other collected materials, indicate that crimes against humanity were committed in a systematic and widespread manner against unarmed students and civilians during the anti-discrimination student movement in July-August 2024.

A total of 30 individuals, including senior university and police officials, have been accused of murder and crimes against humanity. The accused include former Begum Rokeya University vice-chancellor Md Hasibur Rashid and former Rangpur Metropolitan Police commissioner Md Moniruzzaman. They face charges of murder, attempted murder, abetment and complicity in crimes against humanity.

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The Daily Star will stand tall again

Says Adviser Sakhawat

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Labour and Employment Adviser Brigadier General (rtd) M Sakhawat Hussain yesterday expressed solidarity with The Daily Star, saying the newspaper would rise again with courage despite a devastating setback.

On the night of December 18, mobs carried out coordinated attacks on the national daily's head office in Dhaka, vandalising offices, looting valuables, setting parts of the building on fire and trapping journalists and staff inside for hours.

“I am very sad,” the adviser said while visiting The Daily Star office yesterday.

He said a free and resilient media is essential for democracy in Bangladesh.

The adviser said the role of the media is neither to stand for nor against any individual or government, adding that no media outlet anywhere in the world remains permanently on one side.

He noted that the media landscape in Bangladesh did not develop overnight and that, in a country like Bangladesh, The Daily Star had grown steadily over time.

“In that context, this is undoubtedly a major setback, but I am confident that a newspaper like The Daily Star will stand tall again,” he said.

“Even after such devastation, this newspaper continued its work instead of closing. That is courage,” he said.

“I hope we will all remain tolerant and supportive. After the mass uprising, Bangladesh went through an unimaginable shock, with much bloodshed for a society free from discrimination. I hope we can uphold that spirit.”



Two workers remove signboards that have been fastened to roadside trees with iron nails during a drive by the Forest Department on Fuller Road near the Buet campus in Dhaka. This practice not only creates visual clutter but also damages trees, as nails pierce the bark and hinder natural growth -- a close-up of those nails is shown in the inset. The photos were taken yesterday.

PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

