



Recognise Hadi as cultural icon

Inqilab Moncho demands, gives govt 24 days to finish trial

DU CORRESPONDENT

Inqilab Moncho called for an online campaign today to seek recognition of Sharif Osman Bin Hadi as the country's cultural icon, briefly pausing its consecutive four-day Shahbagh blockade amid the cold wave.



Platform Member Secretary Abdullah Al Jaber, announcing the online programme titled "Saluting Our Cultural Hero", urged protesters and the media to share content related to Hadi on their social media and digital platforms.

He added that the blockade at Shahbagh would resume tomorrow and continue until the killers of Hadi, who was the platform's spokesperson, are brought to justice.

Since Friday, the platform has been demonstrating at Shahbagh and on Sunday pressed the government with its four-point demand. These include a 24-day ultimatum to complete trial proceedings against Hadi's killers, suspending work

SEE PAGE 10 COL 1



BNP acting chairman Tarique Rahman waves to the crowd of supporters, not in frame, who gathered to welcome him to the party's central office in the capital's Nayapaltan yesterday after more than one and a half decades.

PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

Actively contribute to nation rebuilding

Tarique urges supporters on his return to party headquarters after 17 years

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP Acting Chairman Tarique Rahman yesterday returned to the party's central office in Naya Paltan after 17 years and called on party leaders and activists to contribute to rebuilding the country by carrying out their responsibilities with sincerity and commitment.

Speaking briefly from the second floor balcony of the party headquarters before a large gathering of supporters, Tarique stressed the need for collective effort, saying even small actions could help restore the country.

"Let everyone contribute from whatever position they hold and let us try to rebuild our country. Let us make every possible effort within our capacity."

He also urged people to take responsibility in everyday life, saying that if anyone sees litter or a piece of paper lying on the street, they should pick it up if necessary. Such small steps could help people come together to rebuild the country gradually.

SEE PAGE 10 COL 7

Afghan Taliban official visits country

STAR REPORT

An Afghan Taliban official has visited Bangladesh and met Islamist leaders seeking to increase their political influence ahead of elections due in February, Islamist leaders in Dhaka said yesterday.

Abu Sayem Khaled, president of the Bangladesh-Afghanistan Chamber of Commerce, told AFP that the visit by Noor Ahmad Noor, director general at Kabul's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, also aimed to expand trade ties.

Mamunul Haque, leader of the Islamist Khelafat-e-Majlish party, told AFP that Noor also visited his madrassa during a week-long stay in Bangladesh.

"It was a courtesy call, as we run one of the largest madrassas in the country," Haque said. "He visited some other madrassas as well."

The government has not commented on the visit. A foreign ministry official, speaking on condition of anonymity, said Noor's trip was "personal".

According to officials of ministry of foreign affairs, Noor visited the country

SEE PAGE 10 COL 4

A turbulent year for public admin

Leadership vacuum, wave of promotions fuelled instability

BAHARAM KHAN

The public administration remained under strain for most of the year, grappling with a leadership vacuum and relentless pressure from officials for coveted transfers and promotions.

Following the Awami League government's ouster in August last year, the Secretariat fell into disarray, with professional groups lobbying and raising various demands.

While the turmoil gradually subsided, the interim government spent much of the year under mounting pressure, eventually approving a wave of promotions and transfers to appease officials.

Expertssaidtheabsenceofafullyempowered adviser for the public administration ministry deepened the crisis. With no clear authority at the top, bureaucratic knots tightened and decision-making slowed, leaving the government grappling with consequences it may not yet fully comprehend.

The disorder in the first few months of the interim government was not unusual. But no

- ▶ 1,700 officers promoted to ranks of deputy secy, jt secy, and adl secy between August 2024 and October 2025
- ▶ 842 retired cadre officials given retrospective promotions
- ▶ Confusion, doubts arose over postings of DCs in last quarter of 2025
- ▶ Public admin ministry remained without a secretary for 21 days

one expected the public administration to remain so disorganised throughout the year, said former secretary and writer Abdul Awal Mazumder.

"The ministry's activities did not reflect that it was working under a reform-focused

SEE PAGE 10 COL 4



Jara beats the clock to join race as independent

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

In a little over 30 hours, Tasnim Jara, former senior joint member secretary of the NCP, finished collecting the 4,693 signatures needed to submit the election nomination form as an independent candidate.

According to her campaigners, she hit her goal around 4:00pm yesterday and was able to submit her form just before the deadline.

Jara resigned from the National Citizen Party on Saturday and took on the

SEE PAGE 10 COL 1

Jamaat to prioritise youth, education in its manifesto

Pledges action against extortion, corruption; promises 'women's freedom'

RASHIDUL HASAN

Jamaat-e-Islami is close to finalising its election manifesto, placing the youth at the centre of its vision and pledging sweeping reforms in education, governance and business for a society free from corruption and extortion.

The manifesto is expected to be formally unveiled at a press conference in mid-January, said Ahsanul Mahboob Zubair, assistant secretary general and head of the party's publicity wing.

Speaking to The Daily Star yesterday, Zubair said the document will be released in three versions. The first will be a concise three-to-four-page bullet-point edition for general readers.

There will be a detailed 200-250-page version for journalists and civil society members; and an extensive 1,500-page document outlining implementation plans.

Ahead of finalisation, the party collected public opinions through a website and mobile app under a nationwide initiative titled "Janatar Ishtehar" (People's Manifesto) from December 18 to 24.

SEE PAGE 10 COL 1



Exhausted by the freezing cold, a scrap collector stops beneath a flyover, sets down her bags, and curls up under a blanket. The photo was taken in the capital's Moghbazar area last night. *Inset:* Rickshaw drivers, most of whom rely on their daily earnings, are out on the street with no choice but to work through the winter chill. The photo was taken around noon yesterday near Dhaka University's Curzon Hall. Dense fog shrouded Dhaka for much of yesterday, keeping the sun out of sight well into midday. The biting cold continues to weigh heaviest on the homeless and people from low-income backgrounds in the city.

PHOTOS: ANISUR RAHMAN, FIROZ AHMED



Cold brings misery for little ones

Hospitals struggle amid surge of child patients

TUHIN SHUBHRA ADHIKARY and SHAHEEN MOLLAH

Radhika Das, a five-month-old girl from Brahmanbaria's Bancharampur upazila, caught a cold on Friday.

Her parents took her to the local upazila health complex the following day, where doctors referred her to the Bangladesh Shishu Hospital and Institute in Dhaka as her condition deteriorated.

"We took her to the hospital after she developed breathing problems," her father Krishna Chandra Das told The Daily Star at the hospital's emergency department around 8:00pm on Sunday.

At that time, seven to eight other patients, mostly from outside Dhaka, were also seen there. Some were asked to take their patients to other hospitals as no beds were available, while parents were waiting in the hope of getting a bed.

Inside the hospital, it was overcrowded, with some patients lying on the floor.

Six-month-old Md Akbar from South Keraniganj was admitted to the hospital on Saturday with severe cold-related complications. He was put on oxygen as he also had other health issues.

"My child has heart-related problems. His condition became

complicated after he caught a cold about a week ago. We brought him here from a private hospital as his condition worsened," child father's Siraj Miah told this newspaper.

Like Radhika and Akbar, many children have been hospitalised with various cold-related diseases as a cold wave has been sweeping parts of the country since Friday.

Data from the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS) shows a sharp rise in the number of patients with acute respiratory infection (ARI) and diarrhoea across the country over the past three days.

As per the data, 632 patients were

SEE PAGE 10 COL 7

আতশবাজী পোড়ানো প্রাণহানির কারণ হতে পারে
নববর্ষ উপলক্ষে আতশবাজী পোড়ানো থেকে বিরত থাকুন
শব্দদূষণ (নিয়ন্ত্রণ) বিধিমালা, ২০২৫ মেনে চলুন

দেশজুড়ে জলবায়ু পরিবর্তন ও পরিবেশ দূষণ বিষয়ক সচেতনতামূলক প্রচারাভিযান প্রকল্প

পরিবেশ, বন ও জলবায়ু পরিবর্তন মন্ত্রণালয়