



### Unimaginable in a civilised state: Yunus

CID hands over report on bodies buried during uprising

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus yesterday said the brutal acts committed by the ousted Awami League government – killing the country’s citizens and burying them in mass graves – are “rare in world history” and unimaginable in any civilised state.

He made the remarks while receiving a report on DNA sample collection from 114 unidentified

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### Tarique’s four-day tour of the North begins Jan 11

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP acting chairman Tarique Rahman will begin his first tour outside Dhaka since returning to the country with a four-day visit to the northern region, starting on January 11.

According to the party’s schedule, Tarique will depart Dhaka on January 11 and return on January 14, visiting nine districts during the tour.

On January 11, he will travel to Tangail, Sirajganj, and Bogura, where he will stay overnight. On January 12, he will visit Rangpur, Dinajpur, and Thakurgaon, spending the night in Thakurgaon.

On January 13, Tarique will travel from Thakurgaon to Panchagarh, Nilphamari, and Lalmonirhat, before returning to Rangpur for the night. He will return to Dhaka on January 14 via Rangpur and Gabtali in Bogura.

During the tour, Tarique will visit the graves of

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Mobile phone traders form a human chain near Bashundhara City Shopping Mall in Dhaka yesterday, demanding postponement of the National Equipment Identity Register (NEIR) system’s implementation, release of detained colleagues, withdrawal of cases filed by BTRC, tax reductions, permission to import used phones, and simplification of the handset import process.

PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

## ‘Put an end to border killings’

Victim families demand justice at Odhikar rally

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a rally yesterday demanded an end to the killing and torture of Bangladeshi citizens by India’s Border Security Force (BSF) and protested what they described as aggressive actions along the Bangladesh-India border.

Rights organisation Odhikar held the rally in front of the Jatiya Press Club, with family members of several victims in attendance. Participants called for justice for the victims.

The programme marked 15 years since the killing of Felani Khatun, whose death in 2011 sparked widespread outrage at home and abroad.

Felani, a Bangladeshi teenager, was shot dead by BSF personnel on January 7, 2011, while crossing the barbed-wire fence with her father at the Anantapur border in Phulbari upazila of Kurigram.

Her body remained hanging from the fence for hours, becoming a global symbol of border-related human rights abuses.

Speakers said killings, torture and push-ins along the border violate international human rights law.

They also alleged that India is involved in the enforced disappearances of Bangladeshi citizens.

They urged the government to ensure justice, compensate victims’ families and raise the issue at international forums.

Mahadeb Kumar Singh, father

of Jayanta Kumar Singh, a teenage boy killed by BSF gunfire in September 2024, recounted the incident. He said his son had gone to visit relatives in India.

“I later found my son shot inside the barbed-wire fence. When I tried to go forward, BSF members fired at me as well. I was shot in the leg and my son in the neck,” he said, adding that his son was between 13 and 14 years old and had committed no crime.



The programme marked 15 years since the killing of Felani Khatun, whose death in 2011 sparked widespread outrage at home and abroad.

“I have still not received justice. Do the lives of poor people living along the border have no value?” he asked, demanding exemplary punishment for those responsible.

Odhikar Director ASM Nasiruddin Elan said the killing of Felani had shaken the nation, yet border killings and torture have continued.

He alleged that Bangladeshi citizens are being detained, tortured and fired upon, and that

women face sexual violence.

Despite international laws and bilateral agreements governing border management, India is not complying with them, he said.

Another Odhikar Director, Taskin Fahmina, citing the organisation’s data, said at least 625 Bangladeshi citizens were killed by BSF gunfire or torture between 2009 and 2025, including 25 children and adolescents. During the same period, 808 people were injured.

She also alleged that nearly 2,500 Bangla-speaking people, including Indian nationals and Rohingyas, were pushed into Bangladesh without diplomatic procedures.

Rahmatullah of Dhamrai alleged that he was picked up by Rab on August 29, 2023, held blindfolded and handcuffed for nine months, and later sent to India, where he spent seven and a half months in prison before returning home.

He demanded justice for those responsible for his enforced disappearance.

Meanwhile, police blocked the National Citizens Party’s “Anti-Hegemony March” toward the Indian High Commission, where activists demanded justice for Felani.

Leaders and activists of the NCP’s Dhaka North unit gathered in Shahjadpur of Badda and marched toward the Indian High Commission in Baridhara. Police

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### FEB 12 POLLS Law enforcers to be deployed in two phases

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Ahead of the 13th national parliamentary election and the referendum scheduled for February 12, the government yesterday decided to deploy law enforcement agencies across the country in two phases.

According to a circular issued by the Ministry of Home Affairs, overall coordination – from the security of polling centres to the operation of mobile and striking forces – will remain under the authority of the returning officers.

The circular said police, Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB), Ansar and VDP, and the Coast Guard will be deployed to maintain law and order. In addition, members of the armed forces will be deployed under the “in aid to civil power” provision to assist the local civil administration.

The circular also said in the first phase, personnel already deployed will continue their duties. In the second phase, law enforcement personnel will be on duty for seven days – from four days before the polls to two days after – between February 8 and February 14.

The armed forces, BGB, Coast Guard, RAB, police, APBN, and Ansar

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## Ensure voter clarity on referendum

### Speakers urge EC at Shujan roundtable

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a roundtable yesterday urged the Election Commission (EC) to lead a large-scale public awareness campaign on the upcoming referendum to prevent political controversy and ensure the process is not perceived as partisan.

They said the referendum is a crucial step to prevent the return of fascism, but warned that the public remains largely unaware of the technical details and significance of the 48 proposed constitutional reforms.

The discussion, titled “Referendum 2026: What and Why?”, was organised by Shushashoner Jonno Nagorik (Shujan) at the CIRDAP auditorium in the capital.

At the event, Labour and Employment Adviser Brig Gen (ret’d) M Sakawat Hussain said relying solely on the government for publicity could be counterproductive.

“The EC’s responsibility is not only to conduct the referendum but also to explain it to the people. If only the government does this, the process will face criticism and be labelled partisan,” he said.

Drawing on his experience as a former election

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## HADI MURDER Freeze bank accounts of accused: court

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday ordered the confiscation of Tk 65.5 lakh from 53 bank accounts belonging to Faisal Karim Masud, his wife Shaheda Parvin Samia, and two individuals and institutions linked to him, over suspicious transactions.

Judge Md Sabbir Faiz of the Metropolitan Senior Special Judge’s Court also directed the authorities to freeze the accounts following an application filed by CID, said court bench assistant Riaz Hossain.

According to the CID, a money-laundering allegation against Faisal – prime accused in the killing of Inqilab Moncho spokesperson Sharif Osman Hadi – and those linked to him is currently under investigation.

The application said analysis of the accounts revealed a large number of suspicious transactions involving Faisal and associated individuals and institutions.

## 2 sent to jail over rape in Magura

A CORRESPONDENT, Jhenaidah

Two youths were sent to jail yesterday on charges of raping a woman in Magura’s Mohammadpur upazila.

The accused are Nafis Ahmed Shadhin, 22, and Sizan Mahmud Sani, 20, of the upazila.

Police said the 30-year-old victim, wife of an expatriate, works at a jute mill in Faridpur’s Boalmari upazila.

She travels daily from Mohammadpur to Boalmari on the mill’s transport, said Md Ashrafuzzaman, officer-in-charge of Mohammadpur Police Station.

On Monday night, she got down from the mill’s transport around 11:00pm at Mezba’s brick field intersection and was walking home when four people intercepted her, took her to a secluded place, and raped her, said the OC.

She filed a case accusing the four the next day. Police arrested two of them the same night, said Abul Khayer, inspector (investigation) and investigation officer of the case. The duo was

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## Mercury dips further across country Rajshahi records lowest temperature at 6.7°C

STAR REPORT

The ongoing cold wave has continued to grip the country, with temperatures plunging further yesterday, severely disrupting agricultural activities, daily life, and livelihoods.

According to the Bangladesh Meteorological Department, the cold spell is affecting Dhaka, Rajshahi, Rangpur, Khulna, and Barishal divisions and may persist in the coming days.

The current situation may continue for another week until mid-January, said Omar Faruk, a meteorologist.

In response, the Bangladesh Agro-Meteorological Information Service issued urgent advisories to minimise damage to crops and farm assets during excessive cold and fog.

Farmers have been urged to provide light but regular irrigation to fruit trees, cover young plants with straw or polythene to block cold winds, take extra care of boro rice seedbeds during the cold spell, cover nurseries and seedbeds with transparent polythene from 3:00pm to 10:00am, protect livestock and poultry sheds with burlap or black cloth while keeping high-voltage bulbs lit to maintain warmth, and monitor pulses, mustard, and potato fields closely and treat them with recommended medicines as necessary to prevent disease outbreaks.

Meanwhile, suffering intensified as the temperature dropped further in the northern region yesterday.

The Met office recorded the country’s lowest temperature of the season in Rajshahi for the second consecutive day at 6.7 degrees Celsius in the Badalgachhi area.

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PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

Dense fog engulfs traffic on Babubazar Bridge in Dhaka yesterday as a cold wave grips the country, reducing visibility and disrupting daily life.

## ‘July fighters abandoned by NCP during crisis’

### Alleges SAD president Rifat Rashid

DU CORRESPONDENT

Students Against Discrimination (SAD) president Rifat Rashid yesterday alleged that the leaders of National Citizen Party (NCP), who had emerged through the July uprising, did not stand beside the July fighters in times of crisis.

Questioning NCP’s role in the recent arrests of SAD’s Habiganj unit member secretary Mahdi Hasan and “July fighter” Tahrima Jannat Surovi, Rifat said the party issued statements only after their release.

“Those NCP leaders who rose through the July uprising – every single one of them – remained silent when they [Mahdi and Surovi] were in danger,” he added.

Addressing a press

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