



“There is a stain on our relations such as had never occurred in our history.”

Venezuela's interim leader Delcy Rodríguez on ties with US

YOUR RIGHT TO KNOW

SECOND EDITION

THE DAILY

Star

ON FRIDAY

DHAKA FRIDAY JANUARY 9, 2026



REGD. No. DA 781

VOL. XXXV No. 348

POUSH 25, 1432 BS

www.thedailystar.net

RAJAB 19, 1447 HJRI

16 PAGES: Tk 15.00

# Law and order lapses stoke public fears

1,300 looted firearms yet to be recovered; 710 escaped inmates still at large

MOHAMMAD JAMIL KHAN and SHAHEEN MOLLAH

Despite the launch of Operation Devil Hunt, continued killings and law enforcement's failure to arrest escaped criminals and recover looted weapons are raising serious concerns ahead of the national election.

The first phase of the operation, designed to curb crimes, began on February 8, 2025, while the second phase, which is still ongoing, began on December 13.

However, at least a dozen murders were reported in the first week of this year alone, around four of them in the capital.

Moreover, eight political killings have taken place since the declaration of the election schedule on December 11, including that of Inqilab Moncho spokesperson and July uprising frontliner Sharif Osman Bin Hadi.

According to Police Headquarters data, over a thousand firearms looted during the July 2024 uprising, including 28 stolen from Narsingdi jail, are still unaccounted for.

Furthermore, the whereabouts of around 710 inmates who escaped from various prisons during the uprising remain unknown.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

## MAJOR KILLINGS IN 2026

- Lawyer Naeem Kibria beaten to death in Dhaka (Jan 1)
- Surgical assistant Shipon, 24, hacked to death in Dhaka (Jan 1)
- Pharmacy owner Khokon Chandra dies of injuries from Shariatpur attack (Jan 3)
- Scrap dealer Shahabuddin hacked to death in Dhaka (Jan 6)
- Student Mohammad Shahed Islam killed in Chattogram (Jan 6)
- Trader Rana Pratap Bairagi shot in the head in Jashore (Jan 6)
- Jubo Dal leader Mohammad Jane Alam Sikder shot dead in Chattogram (Jan 6)
- Trader Moni Chakrabarty hacked to death in Narsingdi (Jan 6)
- Ex-Swechchhasebak Dal leader Azizur Rahman Musabbir shot dead in Dhaka (Jan 8)



Suraiya Begum, wife of slain Swechchhasebak Dal leader Azizur Rahman Musabbir, sits outside the DMCH morgue yesterday, her face drained of expression as she waits for her husband's body. Musabbir was shot dead by unknown assailants in the capital on Wednesday.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

## DEVIL HUNT PHASE-1 (FEB 8-MAR 2)

12,220 people arrested

188 locally made weapons recovered

50 firearms seized

## DEVIL HUNT PHASE-2 (DEC 13-ONGOING)

15,009 arrested (till Jan 6)

218 firearms seized

1,333 looted firearms still missing

243,000 rounds of ammunition unrecovered

## 8 political killings since polls schedule: ASK

MUNTAKIM SAAD and MOHAMMAD JAMIL KHAN

With a little over a month left before the 13th general election, political leaders and activists are increasingly falling victim to targeted killings.

The violence began soon after the election schedule was announced on December 11 and has continued even in crowded areas, often involving firearms.

These escalating political killings are fuelling widespread fear and panic, raising serious concerns about law and

order.

Following the brazen attack on Sharif Osman Bin Hadi, spokesperson for Inqilab Moncho and an independent MP aspirant from Dhaka 8, the government on December 13 decided to provide personal security to individuals who played key roles in the July uprising, as well as high-profile political figures.

The government has also offered firearm licences to candidates in the upcoming parliamentary election to ensure their security. Despite these measures, political killings continue.

SEE PAGE 5 COL 1

## MUSABBIR MURDER Cops focusing on turf war in Karwan Bazar

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Former Swechchhasebak Dal leader Azizur Rahman Musabbir had been receiving threats for some time before he was shot dead in the capital's Tejgaon area on Wednesday night, police said.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1



Farmers inspect beehives in a mustard field at Kashimpur in Rajshahi's Godagari upazila yesterday. The farm's owner Ataur Rahman said many bees get knocked out, while others fail to return to their hives at all because of pesticides sprayed on the flowering crop.

PHOTO: AZAHAR UDDIN

## BCB alerts ICC to security concerns

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Bangladesh Cricket Board sent a letter to the International Cricket Council yesterday, detailing its security concerns over sending the national team to India for the ICC T20 World Cup.

The ICC had earlier asked the BCB to communicate its concerns in detail in response to the board's original letter on Sunday, in which it requested the cricket's global governing body to relocate Bangladesh's World Cup matches from India.

The board is now waiting for ICC's response, which could determine whether or not Bangladesh participate in the event, set to begin on February 7 in India and Sri Lanka.

Earlier on Wednesday, BCB President Aminul Islam Bulbul had reaffirmed the board's stance to not travel to India following a meeting with the Youth and Sports Adviser Asif Nazrul.

The adviser had also said the government will not compromise on "national honour or the security of our cricketers" and demanded that Bangladesh's matches be relocated to Sri Lanka.

SEE PAGE 5 COL 4

## Govt to fix prices of all 295 essential drugs

Adds 135 new medicines to list, frames pricing guideline

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government has updated the National Essential Drug List, raising the number of medicines to 295, and announced that prices will be fixed for all of them to ensure greater affordability for the public.

Alongside, a guideline for setting prices of all drugs — both essential and non-essential — has been approved to give authorities effective control over pricing.

The advisory council headed by Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus endorsed the updated list and the guideline at its weekly meeting yesterday.

Briefing reporters after the meeting at the Foreign Service Academy, Prof Sayedur Rahman, special assistant to the CA for the health ministry, described the move as "groundbreaking for Bangladesh's health sector," saying it would have far-reaching implications in reducing healthcare costs.

He added that a government gazette will be issued soon, with implementation to begin during the tenure of the interim government.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 5



Pharmaceuticals companies must use 25% production capacity on essential drugs



Price of non-essential medicine may not vary by more than 15%

# Rewards Plus

## WRITE TO WIN!

Win air tickets, study abroad kit and other amazing prizes!

Register for IELTS with the British Council in **January and February 2026** and submit a short write-up. Your words could win you the ultimate study abroad kit, including air tickets, amazing rewards from Pathao, Gorur Ghash, GrabGo and a one-year subscription to the British Council Digital Library!

Your Journey abroad starts here

In partnership with