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## Cricketers rally behind Tamim after BCB director's remarks

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) finance committee chairman M. Najmul Islam has come under heavy criticism after labelling former captain Tamim Iqbal an "Indian agent" in a social media post.

The remark followed Tamim's appearance at an event a day earlier, where he suggested that the BCB should consider all aspects before deciding not to send the national team to India for



SEE PAGE 9 COL 7

## US VISA BOND Dhaka seeks relief on tariff, business travel

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka has requested Washington to ease business travel for Bangladeshis following the United States' decision to add the country to its visa bond list.

Bangladesh also sought a reduction of the 20 percent US reciprocal tariff on its goods, particularly apparel made with US inputs, and requested access to financing from the US International Development Finance Corporation (IDFC) for the private sector, according to the Chief Adviser's Press Wing.

SEE PAGE 9 COL 5



For over a week now, households across the country have been facing difficulties in cooking due to an ongoing shortage of LPG cylinders. With supplies disrupted, many are turning to electric stoves as a practical alternative. This photo was taken yesterday at a kitchen appliance store in the capital's Mohammadpur.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

## Trump halts 2nd wave of attacks on Venezuela

Cites co-operation from Caracas; many political prisoners freed

AGENCIES

US President Donald Trump said he had canceled a second wave of attacks on Venezuela following cooperation from the South American nation.

The president said yesterday that Venezuela was releasing a large number of political prisoners as a sign of "seeking peace", following last week's dramatic US military operation that resulted in the capture of President Nicolas Maduro, reports Reuters.

Venezuela not 'subjugated' by US, says interim president

Former opposition candidate Marquez is among those released

US oil pledged \$100bn for Venezuela: Trump

Trump also said that the world's biggest oil companies pledged to invest \$100 billion to revive Venezuela's oil sector as he prepared for a meeting with top industry executives later yesterday.

Venezuela's interim president Delcy Rodriguez insisted Thursday her country was not "subjugated," despite Trump's claim to be in charge there after removing her predecessor Nicolas Maduro.

"We are not subordinate or subjugated," Rodriguez said during a

SEE PAGE 9 COL 6



People march in Caracas, Venezuela, on Thursday demanding the release of deposed president Nicolás Maduro and his wife Cilia Flores, who were taken to New York on January 3 to face trial on drug and weapons charges.

PHOTO: AFP

## MUSABBIR MURDER Shooters yet to be identified despite CCTV footage

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Police are yet to identify the shooters of former Swedchhasebok Dal leader Azizur Rahman Musabbir, despite having CCTV footage of them.

Musabbir was shot shortly after 8:00pm on Wednesday in an alley near Hotel Superstar on Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue.

CCTV footage analysis revealed two shooters, along with suspicious movements of several others.

"Two individuals are seen in the footage as alleged shooters. Besides, police have also obtained footage showing suspicious movements of several others. Efforts are underway to identify them," Ibne Mizan, deputy commissioner of Tejgaon division, told The Daily Star yesterday.



"Our first priority is to identify the two individuals whose images show them

SEE PAGE 9 COL 7

## LOSSES IN STUDENT POLLS Is BNP failing to connect with the youth?

SAJJAD HOSSAIN

Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal's defeats in five major student union elections point to deeper challenges for the BNP, analysts say, warning that the party cannot afford to ignore the setbacks ahead of the national polls.

The losses suffered by its student wing at public universities have raised questions about the BNP's ability to connect with young voters, a crucial bloc in the upcoming general election.

According to Election Commission data, about 44 percent of the country's 12.77 crore voters are aged between 18 and 37. Among them, nearly 4 million are undergraduate and postgraduate students.

With just over a month to go before the national election, Chhatra Dal suffered its latest defeat on Wednesday, losing the Jagannath University Central Students' Union (JNUCSU) polls to a panel led by Islami Chhatra Shibir, the student wing of Jamaat-e-Islami, BNP's main electoral rival.

Earlier, it lost student union elections at Dhaka University, Rajshahi University, Chittagong University and Jahangirnagar University between September and October last year. The combined electorate at these institutions exceeded 100,000.

Political analysts say student organisations play an active role in election campaigning and can influence broader voter perceptions, potentially affecting the BNP's electoral prospects. They warn that repeated defeats, coupled with the party's failure to retain influence

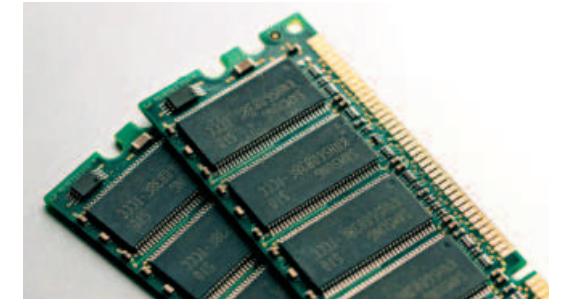
SEE PAGE 9 COL 1

## Avg smartphone prices could rise by 6.9% in 2026

MD ZAHIDUR RABBI

The global technology industry is bracing for a sustained rise in random-access memory (RAM) prices through 2026, a shift expected to ripple across consumer electronics markets, particularly desktops and smartphones. After a period of relative stability following the volatility of the pandemic years, memory prices are climbing again as demand from artificial intelligence (AI) infrastructure and data centres begins to outstrip supply.

Major chipmakers including Samsung Electronics, Micron and SK hynix have redirected large portions of their production capacity towards high-bandwidth memory (HBM), a specialised form of RAM used in AI accelerators and data centres. This strategic pivot has tightened supplies



of conventional dynamic RAM (DRAM), which remains essential for personal computers and mobile devices, pushing prices to levels not seen in recent years.

In Bangladesh, the impact of the global memory squeeze is already visible. Retailers and distributors in Dhaka report sharp increases in the cost of RAM modules and memory-dependent hardware over recent months. Prices for standard laptop and desktop RAM have risen by more than 200%, according to local sellers. A 16GB DDR5 6000MHz RAM module that sold for around Tk 7,800 in October 2025 was priced at approximately Tk 28,500 by December, this reporter found.

SEE PAGE 9 COL 1

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