



‘Over 500’ killed in Iran anti-regime unrest

War fear grows as Tehran vows to strike US interests if attacked; Trump weighs ‘a series of military options’



Protesters gather during anti-government unrest in Mashhad, in Iran’s Razavi Khorasan province. The screen grab has been taken from a social media video released on Saturday.

PHOTO: REUTERS

AGENCIES

Unrest in Iran has killed more than 500 people, a rights group said yesterday, as Tehran threatened to target US military bases if President Donald Trump carries out threats to intervene on behalf of protesters. With the Islamic Republic’s clerical establishment facing the biggest demonstrations since 2022, Trump has repeatedly threatened to intervene if force is used on protesters. According to its latest figures, from activists inside and outside Iran, US-based rights group HRANA said it had verified the deaths of 490 protesters and 48 security personnel, with more than 10,600

people arrested in two weeks of unrest. Iran has not given an official toll, and Reuters was unable to independently verify the tolls. Trump was to be briefed by his officials on Tuesday on options over Iran, including military strikes, using secret cyber weapons, widening sanctions and providing online help to anti-government sources, the Wall Street Journal said yesterday. CNN, quoting two officials, yesterday said Trump is weighing a series of potential military options in Iran. Trump was briefed in recent days on different plans for intervention, the officials told CNN. Some of the

discussions have also included options that do not involve direct US military force, one of the officials said. The president has not yet made a final decision on intervention, the officials said, but he is seriously considering action as the death toll in Iran continues to rise. The casualty figures were reported as Iranian authorities step up efforts to quell the country’s largest protests in years, which have seen thousands of people take to the streets in anger over the soaring cost of living and inflation. The protests, which began on December 28, have spread to more than 100 cities and towns across

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CA assures EU of free, fair election Says law enforcers ready to tackle disruption attempts

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus yesterday assured the European Union polls observers that the upcoming national election and referendum would be held in a free, fair, peaceful, and festive environment. At a meeting with the head of the EU polls observers delegation Ivars Ijabs, Latvian political scientist and politician; EU Ambassador to Bangladesh Michael Miller; and others at the State Guest House Jamuna, he said people linked to the fallen autocratic regime may try to disrupt the election and that law enforcement agencies are fully prepared to handle any situation. Yunus added that one of the biggest challenges is the spread of misinformation and disinformation on social media. “False information is often being used to incite violence.” Thanking the EU for sending an observation mission, he told the meeting that all political parties will get a level playing field, stressing that a fair election is crucial for Bangladesh’s democratic transition. He added that law enforcers will be equipped

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Gas crisis fuels sufferings, extra costs

ASIFUR RAHMAN

Dhaka residents are struggling to cook daily meals amid a worsening gas crisis affecting both pipeline supplies and bottled liquefied petroleum gas (LPG). Thousands of households in areas including Dhanmondi, Mohammadpur, Shyamoli, New Market, Hazaribagh, Gabtoli, Khilgaon and adjacent localities have experienced little to no piped gas for days, forcing many to rely on electric stoves, high-cost LPG cylinders or outside food. Most pipeline users report receiving gas for only a couple of hours a day, often late at night or early in the morning. For the rest of the time, kitchens remain cold. Take the case of Mir Hojaila Al Mamduh,

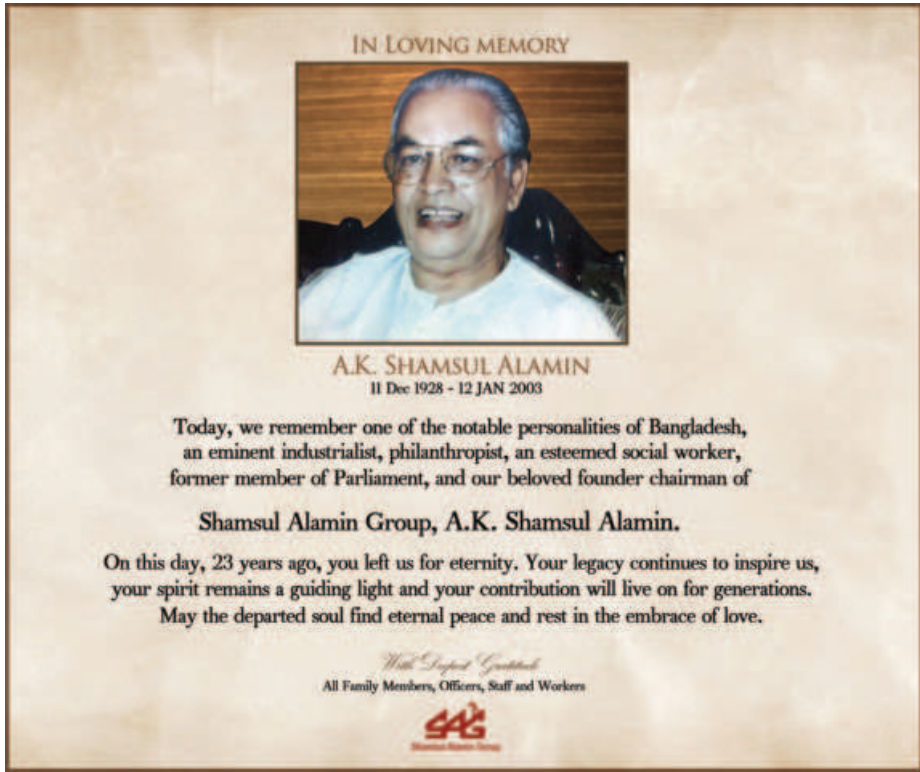


The past few days have been mentally distressing. My salary is limited and most of it goes toward rent and daily expenses. The additional cost of buying an electric stove would be a heavy burden.

Fahim Reza Shovon, a resident of West Dhanmondi

a resident of Mohammadpur, who said his household had no gas supply at all since Tuesday. Although a technician worked on the pipeline on Saturday night, he said only

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