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# ‘There should be no more mourning’

## Tarique says people must write the history of victory instead

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP plans to establish a separate department under the Liberation War affairs ministry to support the families of July martyrs and the injured if it comes to power, said party Chairman Tarique Rahman.

He said independence and sovereignty were achieved in 1971 and protected again in 2024 through the mass uprising against fascism.

“July warriors are also considered as freedom fighters,” said Tarique during a views-exchange event at the Krishibid Institution Bangladesh with the families of those killed in the uprising and those seriously injured.

Listening to the accounts of martyrs’ families and injured persons, Tarique appeared visibly emotional, at times breaking down and embracing family members of the victims to offer comfort.

He also came down from the stage, approached the families, listened to the injured, and offered them consolation.

Family members broke down in tears while sharing



A person maimed in the July uprising breaks down in tears while speaking at the Krishibid Institution in the capital yesterday, when BNP Chairman Tarique Rahman met the families of those killed and injured during the 2024 mass movement.

# Govt clarifies CA’s support for ‘Yes’ vote

UNB, Dhaka

The interim government has explained why Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus’ support for the “Yes” vote in the referendum is consistent with democratic norms in Bangladesh.

“Professor Muhammad Yunus’ support for a ‘Yes’ vote is consistent with the reformist mandate of the interim government, Bangladesh’s urgent need for institutional renewal, established international democratic practice, and transparency and accountability to the electorate,” said the Chief Adviser’s Press Wing yesterday.

Ultimately, the decision rests with the people of Bangladesh, the interim government said.

“That is the democratic guarantee. Leadership does not negate that choice. It helps clarify it,” said the press wing in an explanation.

# ‘EC not fit for holding credible polls’

## Says NCP; names candidates for 27 seats

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The National Citizen Party spokesperson Asif Mahmud Shojib Bhuyain yesterday said his party has lost all confidence in the Election Commission’s ability to hold a credible and neutral election.

He said the EC no longer has the capacity to conduct fair polls.

“The Election Commission has legalised candidacies in violation of several existing laws, including those in the constitution and the Representation of the People Order [RPO]. This commission will not be able to organise a fair election,” he told a press briefing at the party’s central office in Banglamotor last night.

He said the EC had been holding hearings on the legality of candidacies until yesterday, and described the commission members’ meeting with BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir during verdict delivery as a “warning”.

“We believe the verdict is fabricated and predetermined.”

Asif, who also serves as chairman of the NCP’s Election Management Committee, said, “It is time to reconsider whether the National Citizen Party will participate in the upcoming polls.

“Our political council will decide on the matter after review. At the same time, discussions will be held with other

# Unlock women’s power, unlock the economy

Say speakers at a policy dialogue

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Unlocking women’s underutilised human capital is essential for Bangladesh’s economic progress, said speakers at an event yesterday.

“We must remove barriers, change mindsets and ensure women take their rightful place in the workforce,” said Rupali Chowdhury, managing director of Berger Paints Bangladesh, at a policy dialogue styled “Women Shaping the Nation: Policy, Possibility & the Future of Bangladesh” organised by Dhaka Forum Initiative.

Many qualified women do not reach CEO positions partly due to mindset barriers and partly because leadership pipelines remain underdeveloped.

Women often leave work to shoulder family responsibilities and, upon returning, face the challenge of starting anew.

She underscored the importance of maternity leave, daycare facilities and community-based solutions where companies cannot provide them, and psychological and mental support.

“Women must negotiate, lead and participate fully in both corporate and community settings,” she said,





Women must negotiate, lead and participate fully in both corporate and community settings.

RUPALI CHOWDHURY, MD of Berger Paints Bangladesh

while emphasising the need for policies to ensure women occupy leadership roles, citing her company’s requirement that 30 percent of independent directors on the board be women.

Zaima Rahman, daughter of BNP

# 2 bodies found in abandoned Savar building

## Five bodies recovered from there in six months

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Savar

Police yesterday recovered charred bodies of two unidentified individuals from an abandoned community centre in Savar upazila of Dhaka district.

With this, a total of five bodies have been recovered from this exact spot over the last six months.

Around 2:00pm yesterday, the two bodies were discovered on the second floor of the abandoned Savar Municipal Community Centre after a call to the 999 hotline, said Arman Ali, officer-in-charge of Savar Model Police Station.

Police believe the two were murdered, possibly in the early hours of yesterday.

One Samrat Hossain, 35, was detained in this connection, said Saidul Islam, OC of Dhaka North Detective Branch (DB) Police.

“Initially, it appears that he may be involved with the killings. We are interrogating him, and further details will be shared later.”

However, locals claim the detained man is mentally ill and has long been seen in the area.

Meanwhile, OC Arman Ali claimed the detainee was not mentally ill and could just be faking it.

Later in the day, the Criminal Investigation Department visited the site.

# Iran protest toll climbs to 5,000

## Says official, blames ‘terrorists, armed rioters’; judiciary hints at executions

AGENCIES

At least 5,000 people have been killed in protests in Iran, including about 500 security personnel, an Iranian official in the region said yesterday, citing verified figures and accusing “terrorists and armed rioters” of killing “innocent Iranians”.

 500 security personnel among the dead: official

 Heaviest clashes, most deaths in Kurdish northwest

 Iran considers ‘gradually’ restoring internet

The official also told Reuters some of the heaviest clashes and highest number of deaths were in the Iranian Kurdish areas in northwest Iran, a region where Kurdish separatists have been active and where flare-ups have been among the most violent in past periods of unrest.

“The final toll is not expected to increase sharply,” the official added.

On Saturday, Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei said: “We will not drag the country into war, but we will not let domestic or international criminals go unpunished,” state media reported. Yesterday, the judiciary indicated that executions may go ahead.

# Tajul urges caution in using the word ‘mob’

## Politicians calls his statement ‘a threat’

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

ICT Chief Prosecutor Tajul Islam yesterday commented on the use of the word “mob” as a way to question the uprising and warned everyone to be cautious, a stance that political leaders at a discussion termed a “threat”.

He was addressing a policy dialogue titled “Independence of the Judiciary and Rule of Law”, organised by the Centre for Governance Studies (CGS) at the capital’s Cirdap auditorium.

“You cannot equate the fall of the Bastille with a street mugger’s mob. If any quarter attempts to question this revolution of toppling the Gono Bhaban – or those who carried it out – by repeatedly using the word ‘mob’, I would



Leaders and activists of Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal hold a sit-in outside the Election Commission headquarters in Agargaon yesterday, protesting the EC’s “biased and controversial” role ahead of the upcoming national election slated for February 12. Story on page 4.

# 3 days on, cops yet to rescue abducted man

His critically injured bodyguard at CMH

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Three days on, police have yet to rescue a man abducted in Uttara.

His bodyguard was critically injured during the abduction.

The incident occurred on Road-12 in Sector-14 of Uttara around 7:00pm on Friday.

The abducted man remains unidentified, as no family members have come forward or filed a complaint. Law enforcement agencies have yet to trace his family members as well.

The bodyguard, Mahbub Alam, 57, a retired army personnel, is currently undergoing treatment at the Combined Military Hospital (CMH).

Doctors say he has suffered a critical head injury.

Mahbub’s son Abdullah Azam filed a case with Uttara West Police Station on Saturday.

Uttara West Police Station Officer-in-Charge Kazi Rafiq told The Daily Star that police visited the scene and collected CCTV footage. “We are trying to rescue the abducted man.”

According to the case statement, Mahbub Alam lived on Road 13/C in Sector-6 under the Uttara East Police Station. He was employed through a security services company and had a 12-gauge shotgun licensed to his name.