



BNP senior leaders lay a wreath on the grave of party founder and late president Ziaur Rahman at Zia Uddin Park in the capital yesterday, marking his 90th birth anniversary
PHOTO: BNP MEDIA CELL



Politics must prioritise the people, not blame game
Says Tarique

UNB, Dhaka
BNP Chairman Tarique Rahman yesterday said politics must move beyond decades of blame and confrontation and instead focus on improving the lives of people and standing by them in times of need.
“Those of us who are in politics, who do we do it for? We do it for the people of this country. In short, in simple words, standing
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Dhaka candidates already on the move

Official campaigning yet to begin, but many conducting voter outreach through various means

SHARIF M SHAFIQUE and SADI MUHAMMAD ALOK
Although the official window for election campaigning begins on January 22, aspirants for the upcoming 13th national election are already active on the ground, engaging in various forms of “mass contact” to woo voters.
According to the election schedule, polling will take place on February 12. Formal campaigning – including the use of posters and digital projections – is prohibited until electoral symbols are allocated on January 21.
However, candidates across Dhaka constituencies have already started moving to increase their exposure, using social gatherings, religious venues, and digital platforms.
Candidates are frequently visiting local markets, attending social events, and offering prayers at local mosques to meet and greet residents.

Small courtyard meetings (uthan boithak) and charity activities have also become common outreach methods.
In Dhaka-10, BNP candidate Sheikh Rabiul Alam was seen interacting with residents of Hazaribagh on January 10, discussing issues such as the ongoing gas crisis. He also attended a
Candidates are frequently visiting local markets, attending social events, and offering prayers at local mosques. Courtyard meetings and charity activities have also become common outreach methods.
commemorative programme for late BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia at a school in Dhanmondi on January 14.
In Dhaka-11, BNP’s MA Quayum has been involved in charitable activities, distributing blankets among underprivileged people in Moddho Badda.
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Star ITIHAS ADDA
Dreams of intellectual emancipation still unrealised: speakers

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
The emancipation of the intellect – a vision imagined by a group of Dhaka-based thinkers a century ago – remains largely unfulfilled in present-day Bangladesh due to social elitism, intolerance, and a lack of moral integrity among the intellectual class.
Speakers made these remarks yesterday at the eighth episode of The Daily Star Itihas Adda, a history discussion series held at The Daily Star Centre.
The event marked the centenary of the Muslim Sahitya Samaj (Muslim Literary Society), founded in Dhaka on January 19, 1926.
Addressing the theme of the event, senior researcher Wakil Ahmed said the country has reached a point where people use their intellect to justify burning down the offices of The Daily Star and Prothom Alo.
“That intellect dictates: if opinions do not match, burn it down. This is indeed a ‘great emancipation’, which in reality means we have achieved nothing,” he said.
He said the nation has failed to uphold the values nurtured by the intellectuals of 1926. “We have walked our own path. While the Sahitya Samaj was a social and cultural movement, the movements that followed in Bangladesh were largely political,” he added.
“We rise like mercury when heated, reaching the peak in just 36 days. But then suddenly, the mercury drops to the bottom,” Wakil Ahmed said.
He noted that while the nation can mount large political uprisings, it struggles to sustain cultural values. “We fight for freedom, we achieve it, but we cannot hold on to it,” he said.
Referring to the present situation, Wakil Ahmed described it as more “disturbing” than the period the movement originally confronted. “Demonic forces are flexing their muscles everywhere, while human forces are defeated,” he said.
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Speakers at the eighth edition of The Daily Star Itihas Adda, a history discussion series held at The Daily Star Centre.
PHOTO: STAR



A four-member delegation of the National Citizen Party, led by NCP Convener Nahid Islam, met Chief Adviser Professor Muhammad Yunus at the state guest house Jamuna yesterday.
PHOTO: PID

Don’t pay visa bond before interview
US embassy urges applicants

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT
The US embassy yesterday urged visa applicants not to pay any bond in advance, warning that early payments neither guarantee visa approval nor ensure safety from fraud.
“Paying early does not guarantee you a visa, and third-party sites can be scams,” the embassy said in a statement posted on its verified Facebook page.
It added that any payment made before a visa interview is non-refundable, while the bond will be returned only if the visa holder complies with its terms.
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Empower urban govt to tackle Dhaka’s woes
Speakers tell dialogue

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
Lack of coordination among service-providing agencies and the limited authority of city mayors are among the key reasons behind the deteriorating condition of Dhaka and other cities across the country, urban experts and politicians said yesterday.
They stressed that forming a strong and empowered urban government is essential to effectively address city-level problems.
The speakers urged political parties to clearly outline plans for establishing an urban government and tackling urban challenges in their election manifestos.
They made the remarks at an urban dialogue titled “Manifesto to Save Dhaka,” jointly organised by the Urban Development Journalists’ Forum Bangladesh and Gulshan Society at a city hotel.
Speaking as the chief guest, Dhaka North City Corporation Administrator Mohammad Azaz said the authority of city corporations is largely limited to waste management and installing streetlights.
RECOMMENDATIONS

- Create one city coordination body
- Expand city corporation powers
- Earmark share of traffic fines for city corporations
- Make agencies publish targets, quarterly progress

“Without a dedicated police force, eviction drives cannot be made sustainable,” he said.
He said traffic law violation fines
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TK 32CR GRAFT CASE
Court frames charges against S Alam, PK Halder

COURT CORRESPONDENT
A special court yesterday framed charges against S Alam Group Chairman Mohammad Saiful Alam, former managing director of Reliance Finance Limited, PK Halder and 11 others in a Tk 32-crore graft case.
Judge Md Abdus Salam of the Special Judge’s Court 9 of Dhaka passed the order, said a court staffer. The court also set February 8 to start recording the deposition of the witnesses, he added.
The other accused are S Alam Group Vice Chairman Abdus Samad, directors Mohammad Abdullah Hasan and Shahana Ferdous, former executive VP and head of risk management at Reliance Finance Rashedul Haque, former corporate finance manager Nahida Runai, former SVP and credit committee member Kazi Ahmed Jamal, former deputy manager of corporate finance Jumaratul Banna, former managing director of Marine Vegetable Oils Ltd Zahir Ahmed, directors Tipu Sultan and Md Ishaq, and AM Trading proprietor Md Abdullah Al Mamun.

Two beaten to death on theft suspicion

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Manikganj
Two men were allegedly beaten to death by locals on suspicion of cow theft in Imannagar village under Singair upazila of Manikganj early yesterday.
The deceased were identified as Majnu Mia, 35, and Deen Islam, 23.
According to police and locals, the two were spotted at one Shakil Hossain’s house around 2:00am. Residents caught them and beat them severely on suspicion of cow theft.
Police rescued the injured men around 2:30am and took them to the Upazila Health Complex for primary treatment, said Md Mazharul Islam, officer-in-charge of Singair Police Station.
Doctors later referred them to the National Orthopaedic Hospital and Rehabilitation Institute in Dhaka. They were subsequently admitted to Suhrawardy Medical College Hospital, where both died around 6:00am while undergoing treatment, he added.
“There are multiple theft cases against them with Singair Police Station. Legal action will be taken over their deaths,” the OC added.