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NICAR MEETING

Recover looted weapons before polls: Yunus

STAFF CORRESPONDENT



Chief Adviser Professor Muhammad Yunus yesterday directed authorities to recover weapons looted from the police before the upcoming national elections, stressing that the arms must be retrieved as quickly as possible by any means.

He gave the instruction while presiding over a meeting of the National Implementation Committee for Administrative Reorganisation (NICAR) at the state guest house Jamuna.

After the meeting, Press Secretary Shafiqul Alam briefed journalists at the Foreign Service Academy.

Quoting the chief adviser, Shafiqul said, "The looted weapons must be recovered as soon as possible before the election, no matter what it takes."

At its first NICAR meeting, the interim

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PHOTO: STAR

Speakers at a roundtable titled "Just Energy Transition: Implementation on the Political Landscape of Bangladesh", jointly organised by The Daily Star and Coastal Livelihood and Environment Action Network at The Daily Star Centre yesterday.


Submit probe report on
Hadi murder
by Jan 25
Court asks CID

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday asked the Criminal Investigation Department to submit a probe report by January 25 in a case filed over the killing of Inqilab Moncho spokesperson Sharif Osman Hadi.

Dhaka Additional Chief Metropolitan Magistrate Jashita Islam passed the order after the CID failed to submit the report, said a sub-inspector working at the court.

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Commit to energy sector reforms in manifestos

Speakers urge political parties

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a discussion yesterday said political parties in Bangladesh must include clear commitments to ensure good governance in the power and energy sector in their election manifestos.

They identified two key priorities: ensuring transparency and accountability in all energy sector dealings and guaranteeing citizen participation in decision-making processes.

The recommendations were made at a roundtable titled "Just Energy Transition: Implementation on the Political Landscape of Bangladesh", jointly organised by The Daily Star and Coastal Livelihood and Environment Action Network (CLEAN) at The Daily Star Centre.

In his opening remarks, Hasan Mehedi, member secretary of BWGED, said the upcoming elections present an opportunity for political parties to ensure climate justice and good

governance in the energy sector, including for women, labour and indigenous communities.

Manowar Mostafa, networking adviser at CLEAN, highlighted corruption and mismanagement in the energy sector over the last 16 years and called on political

2 KEY PRIORITIES

Ensuring transparency,
accountability in energy
sector dealings

Guaranteeing citizen
participation in
decision-making processes

parties to outline clear plans for energy security in their election manifestos.

Abdullah Al Noman, executive director of Lawyers for Energy, Environment, and Development, said political parties must commit to ensuring community

and stakeholder participation in energy policymaking, including effective parliamentary oversight.

Abul Kalam Azad, project coordinator at ActionAid Bangladesh, said, "We must create a comprehensive energy policy based on our country's realities and communities, not old traditional models."

Munir Uddin Shamim, director at Ethical Trading Initiative Bangladesh, called for transparency and fairness in public procurement, adding that a just energy transition could create jobs and reduce poverty.

He urged political parties to reflect these opportunities in their election pledges.

Zahir Uddin Swapon, a member of the BNP Advisory Committee, said corruption persists despite the presence of technical expertise.

He warned that energy security has become more critical than food security and that political action is essential to resolve the crisis.

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Housing,
basic services
for Korail
residents
Pledges Tarique

UNB, Dhaka

BNP Chairman Tarique Rahman yesterday said his party wants to build multi-storey buildings and hand over registered flats to long-time residents of Korail slum if it returns to power.

Speaking at a doa and milad mahfil at the Mohakhali T&T Colony field, Tarique said, "We want to construct tall buildings here. We want to register the names of the

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Ensure access
for voters with
disabilities
Speakers urge EC

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at an event yesterday urged the Election Commission to take immediate steps to ensure accessibility for persons with disabilities in the upcoming national election.

They stressed the need for clear and uniform rules on providing assistance to voters with disabilities, and ensuring consistent enforcement of these rules across polling stations.

The speakers said election- and referendum-related information, along with voter education materials, must be made accessible and inclusive so that voters with disabilities can participate on an equal footing.

The recommendations were made at the launch of a policy analysis report titled "Policy Gap Analysis of Electoral Inclusion for Persons with Disabilities," organised by B Scan at Jatiya Press Club.

B-Scan spokesperson and director Iftekhar Mahmud said Bangladesh ratified the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities more than a decade ago, but the commitments have yet to be fully reflected in the

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MERGER OF HEALTH DIVISIONS
Focus now on
mid-, field-level
integration

TUHIN SHUBHRA ADHIKARY

Following the merger of the health ministry's two divisions yesterday, health authorities will now reorganise services at directorate and field levels to improve coordination and service delivery, officials said.

Under the plan, the entire health system will be divided into three parts -- clinical and hospital services, education and research, and primary and public healthcare -- with reorganisation beginning at the directorate level.

"We have already completed our homework in consultation with stakeholders. Implementation will now begin in phases. It will not be completed within two or three months, but we will initiate as much as possible," said Prof Sayedur Rahman, special assistant to the chief adviser for the health ministry.

Earlier in the day, the National Implementation Committee on Administrative Reorganisation, with Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus in the chair, approved the merger of the two divisions.

On October 29 last year, the pre-Nicar meeting recommended merging the two divisions.

The pre-Nicar, headed by the cabinet secretary, scrutinises proposals for forming new ministries, city corporations, municipalities, divisions, districts and upazilas, as well as approving manpower.

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Manholes remain open at the entrance to the emergency department of Dhaka Medical College Hospital as a drainage cleaning operation by the Public Works Department continues for the third consecutive day. With no safety barriers in place, patients, attendants and pedestrians are at risk of falling in. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

500 shelters
gutted in fire
at Rohingya
camp

STAFF CORRESPONDENT,
Cox's Bazar

Around 500 shelters at a Rohingya camp in Ukhia of Cox's Bazar were gutted in a fire yesterday.

The blaze broke out around 3:00am in D-4 block of Camp 16 in Palongkhali union and later spread to nearby shelters and sheds, triggering panic among camp residents, said Dollar Tripura, an official of Ukhia Fire Service Station.

"Around 500 shelters were gutted in the fire. Many were forced to move to safer places at night, creating chaos within the camp," he said.

On information, two firefighting units rushed to the scene around 3:20am, and brought the fire under control around 7:30am, he also said.

The extent of damage could not be determined immediately, while four to five people suffered minor injuries in the incident, the official added.

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IPF Bangladesh

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