



Sarba Mitra offers to resign after latest controversy

DU CORRESPONDENT

Amid criticism over repeated incidents of moral policing on the Dhaka University campus, Ducus leader Sarba Mitra Chakma yesterday announced his resignation.

In a Facebook post, Sarba apologised for his actions but defended them, saying, "I did not do it for any personal gain, but for the betterment of the campus."

SEE PAGE 11 COL 1



Braving a cold winter morning, two farmers in the Barind region are busy transplanting Boro seedlings. The photo was taken yesterday at Rajabari area of Godagari upazila in Rajshahi.

PHOTO: AZAHAR UDDIN

Defence industrial zone to be set up in Mirsarai

Govt allocates 850 acres previously set aside for Indian economic zone

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government decided to earmark around 850 acres of land in Chattogram's Mirsarai for the development of a Defence Industrial Zone aiming to strengthen domestic military production capacity and tap into the growing global defence manufacturing market.

The decision was taken yesterday at a governing board meeting of the Bangladesh Economic Zones Authority (BEZA) chaired by Chief Adviser Mohammad Yunus.

The 850-acre land, currently vacant, had previously been designated for the Indian Economic Zone until the project was cancelled in June last year, said BEZA Executive Chairman Ashik Chowdhury at a press briefing afterwards.

The initiative is not intended to replicate the existing Bangladesh Ordnance Factories model by building multiple state-run facilities.

Rather, the focus will be on technology transfer, joint ventures and supplier arrangements with foreign

SEE PAGE 8 COL 5

TRIBUTE TO MARK TULLY

A witness to Bangladesh's Liberation War

MOHIUDDIN ALAMGIR

Mark Tully was among the last of a generation -- not just in terms of the sweeping change they witnessed, from radio to television to the internet and the flood of social media, but also in terms of the respect and trust that reporters once commanded.

Beginning with radio, Tully was the BBC's voice from India for more than two decades, during which he covered South Asia. But for Bangladesh, he will forever be the voice that told the story of the Liberation War.

The BBC's coverage of the Bangladesh Liberation War in 1971 is widely appreciated. At



SEE PAGE 8 COL 1

Observers return in droves to monitor this election

MOHIUDDIN ALAMGIR and AHMED DEEPTO

The February 12 election is set to be held under the watch of the largest contingent of local and international observers since the 2008 polls.

The extended presence of observers, from grassroots civic groups to seasoned international missions, reflects a surge in both domestic vigilance and global curiosity about the country's democratic transition.

They said this election is widely hoped to be the first competitive contest since 2008, when Bangladesh last witnessed largely accepted and participated polls.

International and local observers noted that their mandate extends beyond simply watching events on

ELECTION OBSERVERS		
ELECTION	LOCAL OBSERVERS	INT'L OBSERVERS
Feb 12, 2026	55,454	500
Jan 7, 2024	20,773	158
Dec 30, 2018	25,290	125
Jan 5, 2014	8,878	04
Dec 29, 2008	1,59,113	593
Oct 1, 2001	2,18,000	225

election day. While short-term monitors focus on polling and counting, long-term international observers usually track the broader process -- examining preparations, the legal framework, and its enforcement, the conduct of campaigns, and the mechanisms for resolving electoral disputes, said EC

officials.

Election Commissioner Brig Gen (retd) Abul Fazal Md Sanaullah said 55,454 observers from 81 registered local organisations will be on duty. In addition, there will be around 500 foreign observers monitoring the polls.

A total of 1,59,113 local and 593 international observers

monitored the 2008 polls.

Polls expert Badiul Alam Majumdar, also chief of the now-defunct Electoral Reform Commission, told The Daily Star that the number of local and international observers has increased significantly as a competitive election is set to be held on February 12.

"Many international observers showed apathy in monitoring the three previous polls, as they were not contested. In many cases, they faced various obstacles, including being denied visa," he said.

Although parliamentary polls are scheduled every five years, this election comes just two years after the last one, following the fall of the Awami League regime, which had remained in power since 2008.

SEE PAGE 8 COL 4

BCL leader gets bail 3 days after deaths of wife, child

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Three days after the death of his wife and infant son, Chhatra League leader Jewel Hasan Saddam, who is currently at Jashore Central Jail, was granted bail yesterday.

The High Court granted him six months' ad-interim bail in a case filed under the Anti-Terrorism Act with Bagerhat Police Station on March 6 last year, Saddam's lawyer Sayed Ahmed Raza told The Daily Star.

The HC also issued a rule asking the state to explain why Saddam should not be granted permanent bail in the case.

The bench of Justice JBM Hassan and Justice Aziz Ahmed Bhuiyan came up with the order and rule following a petition filed by Saddam's lawyer seeking his bail in the case.

Raza said the court granted bail to his client on humanitarian grounds following the recent deaths of his wife and son.

He added that with this order, Saddam has now secured bail in all pending cases against him.

Saddam, president of now-banned student organisation Chhatra League's Bagerhat Sadar Upazila unit, was arrested in Gopalganj following the fall of the Awami League regime on August 5, 2024, and had been charged in several cases.

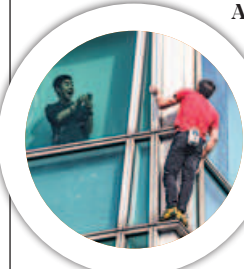
Earlier on Saturday night, Saddam was allowed to see his wife and son for the last time under police supervision at the gate of Jashore Central Jail. Family members said they had applied for his release on parole but then had to arrange for the bodies to be taken to the jail gate instead.

Witnesses at the jail gate had described scenes of profound grief during the final farewell. The incident later drew criticism across social media, with many arguing that Saddam should have been granted parole to attend the funeral.

SEE PAGE 8 COL 1

Daredevil free-climbs Taiwan's tallest building

AFP, Taipei



An American climber took on Taiwan's tallest building on Sunday, becoming the first person to scale Taipei 101 without a rope, harness or safety net.

Hundreds of spectators gathered at the base of the 101-storey tower to watch Alex Honnold, 40, embark on his daredevil feat, which was also broadcast live on Netflix.

After an hour and a half, he successfully made it up 1,667 feet before triumphantly rappelling down to reunite with his wife, Sanni McCandless Honnold.

Speaking at a press briefing afterwards, Honnold said "time is finite", and people should "use it in the best way".

"If you work really hard... you can do hard things," Honnold added. Honnold has conquered some of the world's most intimidating rock faces and rose to global fame in 2017 after he climbed Yosemite's "El Capitan", lauded among his peers as the pinnacle of technical difficulty on the massive granite monolith.



People take part in a demonstration in Minneapolis, Minnesota, US on Sunday, a day after Alex Pretti was fatally shot by federal immigration agents during an attempted detention. Billionaire Bill Ackman donated \$10,000 to a fundraiser for Pretti's family, the Wall Street Journal reported, citing his spokesman.

PHOTO: REUTERS

‘Speak up’ and take action

Obama, Clinton urge Americans after Minneapolis shootings; Trump says administration ‘reviewing everything’

AGENCIES

Two Democratic former presidents on Sunday condemned the scenes in Minnesota after Alex Pretti was killed this weekend, framing the tragedy as a pivotal moment that calls Americans to "speak up" and take action.

Former president Barack Obama and first lady Michelle Obama called Pretti's death a "heartbreaking tragedy" in a statement. "It should also be a wake-up call to every

American, regardless of party, that many of our core values as a nation are increasingly under assault," the Obamas wrote.

The Obamas criticised the "unprecedented tactics" the Department of Homeland Security has employed. White House spokesperson Abigail Jackson said Obama was exploiting the moment to "sow more division."

Former president Bill Clinton called the scenes in Minneapolis

"horrible" in a statement on social media. "Over the course of a lifetime, we face only a few moments where the decisions we make and the actions we take will shape our history for years to come. This is one of them," he wrote.

Clinton said "the people in charge" are lying to the public and telling them "not to believe what we've seen with our own eyes," reports NBC News online.

SEE PAGE 8 COL 6

গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার
হাসপাতাল ও ক্লিনিক শাখা
স্বাস্থ্য অধিদপ্তর
টিবি গেইট, মহাখালী, ঢাকা-১২১২

বিজ্ঞপ্তি

৪৯তম বিসিএস (বিশেষ) পরীক্ষা-২০২৫ এর মাধ্যমে বাংলাদেশ সিভিল সার্ভিস (বিসিএস) (সাধারণ শিক্ষা) ক্যাডারের বিভিন্ন পদে নিয়োগের জন্য সাময়িকভাবে মনোনীত ৬৬৫ (ছয়শত পঁয়ষাট) জন প্রার্থীদের স্বাস্থ্য পরীক্ষার সময়সূচী dghs.gov.bd উল্লেখিত ওয়েবসাইটে পাওয়া যাবে।

২৫.১.২০২৬
পরিচালক
(হাসপাতাল ও ক্লিনিক সমূহ)
স্বাস্থ্য অধিদপ্তর, মহাখালী, ঢাকা

GO-198

গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার
হাসপাতাল ও ক্লিনিক শাখা
স্বাস্থ্য অধিদপ্তর
টিবি গেইট, মহাখালী, ঢাকা-১২১২

বিজ্ঞপ্তি

৪৫তম বিসিএস পরীক্ষা ২০২২ এর মাধ্যমে বাংলাদেশ সিভিল সার্ভিস এর বিভিন্ন ক্যাডার পদে নিয়োগের জন্য সাময়িকভাবে মনোনীত ১৮০৬ (এক হাজার আটশত ছয়) জন প্রার্থীদের স্বাস্থ্য পরীক্ষার সময়সূচী dghs.gov.bd উল্লেখিত ওয়েবসাইটে পাওয়া যাবে।

২৫.১.২০২৬
পরিচালক
(হাসপাতাল ও ক্লিনিক সমূহ)
স্বাস্থ্য অধিদপ্তর, মহাখালী, ঢাকা

GO-197