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**ইসলামী ব্যাংকিং সেবা প্রদানে "ইসলামী ব্যাংকিং কর্ণার" পূবালী ব্যাংকর সকল শাখা এবং উপশাখায়**

## Bangladesh, US agree to boost military cooperation

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh and the United States have agreed to deepen army-to-army cooperation, with both sides emphasising training exchanges, joint drills, and the capacity to use advanced technology and military equipment.

The understanding came as the two countries concluded the 9th Bangladesh-US Land Forces Talks (LFT) 2026 in Dhaka, following a two-day meeting held on January 26-27 at the Army Sports Control Board conference room in Dhaka Cantonment, said a press release issued by the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) yesterday.

Lt Col Mohammad Badrul Haque of the Military Training Directorate led a 22-member Bangladesh Army delegation, while the four-member US delegation was led by Maj Michael Jacob Oster of the US Army Pacific Command's (USARPAC)

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A yellow oriole and two bulbuls gather to drink date palm sap on a sunny afternoon, following the onslaught of winter chills. The photo was taken in Atrai upazila of Naogaon yesterday.

PHOTO: AZAHAR UDDIN

## 3-yr-old dies after falling into Ctg deep tube-well pit

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

The body of a three-year-old boy was recovered last night, four hours after he fell inside a deep tube-well pit in Raozan upazila of Chattogram.

Firefighters recovered the body of Misbah Uddin at around 8:30pm, Raozan Police Station Officer-in-Charge Sazedul Islam told The Daily Star.

Misbah was the son of Saiful Islam, a day labourer by profession.

The incident took place in Joynagar village of ward 7 under Kadalpur union of Raozan upazila in the evening, police said.

According to family members, Misbah went missing after falling into the pit near his house around 4:30pm while he was playing near his house.

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## Govt approves purchase of 163 vehicles for Rab

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government has given in-principle approval to procure 163 vehicles for the Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) through direct procurement, bypassing the open tender process, to boost the force's operational capacity.

The decision was taken at a meeting of the Advisory Council Committee on Economic Affairs at the Secretariat on Tuesday, chaired by Finance Adviser Salehuddin Ahmed.

Briefing reporters after the meeting, Energy Adviser Muhammad Fouzul Kabir Khan said the purchase would include three jeeps, 100 patrol pickups, and 60 minibuses.

Asked about the cost, he said the committee had only approved the procurement method in

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More and more misinformation and disinformation are flooding social media ahead of the election. To create voter awareness, we are running selective fact-check reports published by fact-checking organisations.



## Fact-checkers debunk two viral claims

One falsely links Shahabuddin speech to Hasina return, another misidentifies man beside Patwary



STAR REPORT

A video circulating on Facebook has claimed that Sheikh Hasina, the ousted prime minister convicted of crimes against humanity, will return to Bangladesh before February. The video, shared by a page named Ajker Khobor on January 20, included a clip of President Mohammed Shahabuddin's remarks, presented in a way that suggested the development was recent.

However, fact-checking organisation Dismislab has verified the claim and found it to be false.

**WHAT THE CLAIM SAID**

The 15-minute video shows President Shahabuddin delivering a speech. In his address, he extends greetings to the people of Pabna and his contemporaries in politics. He also pays tribute to the four national leaders, Awami League activists, and freedom fighters.

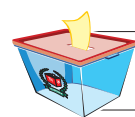
On the screen, the logo of Ajker Khobor appears on the right side, while the word "Live" and the date "20 January 2026" are displayed in the left corner. The caption of the Facebook video reads, "Ousted prime minister Sheikh Hasina will return to the country before February."

**WHAT THE FACT-CHECK FOUND**

Upon verification through keyframe-based reverse image search, Dismislab traced the circulating clip back to a video report published on May 16, 2023, by the YouTube channel of news outlet Maasranga. A part of the video matches exactly with the visuals seen in the misleading Facebook video.

The video reports show that Shahabuddin assumed office as president of Bangladesh on April 24, 2023. On May 16, the same year,

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## FEBRUARY 12 ELECTION | DHAKA-8

# A race shaped by a murder and war of words

SHARIF M SHAFIQUE and SADI MUHAMMAD ALOK

As the national election approaches, the nation's attention has converged on Dhaka-8, a constituency at the heart of the capital's administrative and commercial life.

Here, political tension is high as a veteran heavyweight faces a challenger from a new generation.

Dhaka-8 — comprising Shahbagh, Motijheel, Ramna, Kakrail, Shajahanpur, and parts of Moghbazar — is the nerve centre of Bangladesh's governance, home to the Secretariat and Dhaka University.

The political climate, however, took a sombre turn after the tragic killing of Sharif Osman Hadi, spokesperson of Inqilab Moncho and a former Dhaka University student.

Hadi, a potential independent candidate for this seat, was shot by miscreants on December 12 at Box Culvert Road in Purana Paltan while campaigning.

The constituency reflects a diverse social

mix. Government officials, businesspeople, and professionals dominate the Secretariat and Motijheel areas, while upper-middle and middle-class residents live in Ramna, Shantinagar, and Paltan.

Additionally, a massive cohort of young voters stems from Dhaka University, Dhaka Medical College, and the Buet area.

As campaigns intensify, voters point to persistent problems such as extortion, mugging, narrow roads, illegal occupation of footpaths, and waterlogging.

"A large portion of voters here are students. Since they are educated, candidates should make realistic and practical promises," a Dhaka University student told The Daily Star.

Sakeer Hasan, a Motijheel resident, was sceptical. "Extortion and illegal occupation are the core problems. I doubt these will really be solved after the election," he said.

Meanwhile, auto-rickshaw driver Md Nizamuddin placed his hopes on new leadership. "Old political

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Mirza Abbas

Nasiruddin Patwary

Meghna Alam



Daffodil International University (DIU) celebrates its 13th convocation at Daffodil Smart City yesterday. The ceremony was presided over by UGC Chairman Prof SMA Fayeze. Dr Hossain Zillur Rahman, a renowned economist, delivered the convocation speech. DIU Chairman Dr Md Sabur Khan and Vice-Chancellor Prof MR Kabir also spoke on the occasion.

PHOTO: COURTESY

## Take urgent action to curb unnecessary C-sections

Speakers tell event

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a seminar on maternal healthcare yesterday called for urgent action to reduce unnecessary caesarean sections in Bangladesh, particularly in private hospitals.

They also urged greater community engagement and public awareness, saying reducing unnecessary C-sections requires the involvement of both healthcare providers and families.

The seminar, titled "National Dissemination Meeting on Reducing Unnecessary Caesarean Sections in Bangladesh," was held at the CIRDAP auditorium and organised by Ashulia Women and Children Hospital (AWCH).

Md Saidur Rahman, secretary to the Health Services Division of the Ministry of Health and

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