

INTERNATIONAL



Demonstrators take part in a vigil and protest in New York City on Tuesday over the fatal shooting of a man identified as Alex Pretti by federal immigration agents in Minneapolis, Minnesota, US. Inset, federal agents detain a man during an immigration enforcement action in Saint Paul, Minnesota. PHOTO: REUTERS, AFP

Guarantee

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international law. The coming weeks will be a decisive test of whether it will honour those responsibilities," she said.

The authorities must uphold the rights of individuals and groups to speak freely – including during an election. Chief Advisor Yunus's government must show genuine leadership by ensuring that all Bangladeshis can participate fully and safely in deciding their country's future.

"They must ensure that the right to life is protected. No one should fear for their life for peacefully speaking their minds and sharing their views," she said in the letter.

Despite Bangladesh being a signatory to many of the core international human rights instruments, the interim administration has failed to give effect to these obligations. This includes the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, which enshrines the rights to freedom of expression, peaceful assembly and freedom of association that must be upheld, including during an election period.

"Unlawful restrictions on these fundamental freedoms undermine public debate and participation in the electoral process, and weaken public trust in institutions." The letter said since assuming power in 2024, the interim authorities have misused the draconian Anti-Terrorism Act (ATA) against journalists and other perceived critics. The letter cites the examples of Monjurul Alam Panna, who was arrested under the ATA in August 2025 for allegedly "attempting to overthrow the interim government," and Anis Alamgir, who was detained under the ATA in December 2025, for allegedly "spreading propaganda for the Awami League."

Both journalists' arbitrary arrests violate their rights to freedom of expression and association, it added. The letter also cites the interim authorities' inadequate response to the violence that followed the killing of Sharif Osman Hadi on 18 December 2025, when the offices of media outlets The Daily Star and Prothom Alo were set alight, and the editor of the New Age newspaper, Nurul Kabir, was harassed. On the same day, Dipu Chandra Das, a Hindu man, was lynched following allegations of blasphemy, it added.

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Tarique to hold 3 rallies in the north today

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divisional activists at the city stadium in 2004.

After campaigning in Rajshahi today, he will address another rally at ATM ground in the Kazir Mor area of Naogaon around 5:30pm. He is scheduled to attend another gathering around 7:30pm at the Alfresco playground in Bogura, where he will stay at Hotel Naz Garden overnight.

On Friday, the BNP chief will visit the grave of Abu Sayed in Pirganj around 3:45pm. He will then address a campaign rally at the Rangpur Eidgah ground around 4:30pm, after which he will return to Bogura.

Tarique is contesting from Bogura-6 and Dhaka-17. BNP candidates won all polls in Bogura 6, Tarique's ancestral home, up to 2008. Between 1996 and 2008, Khaleda Zia was elected from the seat four times.

On the last day of the three-day tour on Saturday, Tarique will join a rally for electioneering around 2:00pm at the BSCIC Industrial Park in Sirajganj, followed by another rally at 4:00pm in the Darun Charjona bypass area on the Dhaka-Tangail highway. He is expected to return to his Gulshan residence at night.

Party leaders said organisational preparations for the tour have been completed. Grassroots leaders and activists have been mobilised across the districts to ensure large turnouts and smooth programmes, reflecting growing local-level enthusiasm ahead of the polls.

They said the tour is aimed at taking BNP's election message directly to grassroots voters in the key northern districts.

The leaders added that the party will highlight its policy proposals, such as the Family Card, Farmer Card, and plans for education, healthcare, and other sectors, during the rallies to contrast its agenda with that of its rivals.

According to BNP sources, local units have been working for weeks to prepare venues, coordinate logistics, and mobilise supporters from surrounding upazilas and unions.

Meetings with ward- and union-level leaders have been held regularly to assign responsibilities, manage crowd control, and ensure discipline during the rallies.

Grassroots leaders said the party chairman's visit has energised activists, who had been largely inactive for years due to political pressure.

In several districts, BNP leaders said supporters from neighbouring constituencies are also expected to join the rallies, turning the programmes into regional rather than constituency-based events.

Minneapolis mayor 'playing with fire'

Trump blasts Jacob Frey's vow not to enforce federal immigration laws

AGENCIES

US President Donald Trump yesterday slammed comments by Minneapolis Mayor Jacob Frey who said the northern city "does not and will not" enforce federal immigration laws.

In a post on his Truth Social platform, Trump said he was surprised by Frey's statement since the two had "a very good conversation" following the fatal shooting of two Minneapolis residents by federal agents amid massive immigration raids there.

"Could somebody in his inner sanctum please explain that this statement is a very serious violation of the Law, and that he is PLAYING WITH FIRE!" Trump wrote.

On Tuesday, Trump suggested he would "de-escalate a little bit" in the city, as a senior White House aide said US immigration agents may have breached "protocol" in Minneapolis before shooting dead a nurse during protests.

The comments came the same day a man sprayed Minnesota Congresswoman Ilhan Omar with a syringe of unknown liquid at a Minneapolis town hall meeting, where she called for curbing the Trump administration's immigration crackdown.

White House Deputy Chief of Staff Stephen Miller told AFP the administration is evaluating



A man is tackled after spraying an unknown substance at US Representative Ilhan Omar during a town hall in Minneapolis on Tuesday. PHOTO: AFP

whether the Customs and Border Protection (CBP) agents who gunned down 37-year-old Alex Pretti on Saturday failed to follow "clear guidance" to "create a physical barrier between the arrest teams and the disruptors."

Two federal officers fired their weapons during the shooting of Pretti in Minneapolis, according to a Department of Homeland Security report to Congress published Tuesday by US media.

Trump told Fox News on Tuesday that Gregory Bovino, a hardline Border Patrol commander who

is now expected to leave the city, was "a pretty out-there kind of a guy" whose presence may not have helped the situation. He sent top US border security official Tom Homan to meet with officials there.

The turmoil could result in a fresh US government shutdown, with Democrats calling for broad reforms to federal immigration operations at DHS and threatening to block approval of its funding, as part of the spending bills that go up for votes in the Senate later this week.

Europe told to boost defence amid Trump rift

AFP, Brussels

Europe must step up efforts on defence and play a bigger role in Nato as US President Donald Trump has "shaken the transatlantic relationship to its foundation", EU top diplomat Kaja Kallas said yesterday.

Trump rocked European allies this month by threatening to seize Greenland from Nato and EU member Denmark – before eventually backing off.

The crisis – the latest to buffet ties since his return to power a year ago – has reinforced calls for the continent to cut its decades-long reliance on Nato's dominant military superpower for protection.

"Let me be clear: we want strong transatlantic ties. The US will remain Europe's partner and ally. But Europe needs to adapt to the new realities. Europe is no longer Washington's primary centre of gravity," Kallas told a defence conference in Brussels.

"This shift has been ongoing for a while. It is structural, not temporary... Europe must step up – no great power in history has outsourced its survival and survived." Kallas remained clear-eyed that Nato remains the bedrock of European security.

July uprising

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"We had made compromises to run the country according to Islamic principles. But when those we compromised with announced they would continue to govern under the existing laws, we were forced to withdraw from that compromise. However, the united policy we adopted in favour of Islam remains intact," he said.

Expressing regret, the ameer questioned why Abu Sayed and Mugdho had to lose their lives in the uprising,

Be neutral

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issued necessary operational directives, and exchanged views with the civil administration, ISPR said.

As part of the tour, General Waker held a meeting at the Patuakhali deputy commissioner's conference room with senior military officials, divisional and district administrators, and representatives of various law enforcement agencies.

A similar coordination meeting was later held at the Khulna divisional

and why so many young people were sacrificed, if the country was to continue under the old laws.

"Therefore, those who love the country and want to make the blood of July meaningful should vote for the Hand Fan symbol in the upcoming election," he said, urging voters to support Islami Andolon Bangladesh's Kurigram-2 candidate, Principal Nur Bakhtur.

Among others, presidium member Professor Mahbubur Rahman also spoke at the rally.

commissioner's office.

Discussions at the meetings focused on inter-agency coordination and overall security management to ensure that the upcoming national election is held in a peaceful, fair, and credible manner, the release said.

Senior army commanders, divisional commissioners, senior officials of the civil administration and law enforcement agencies, and members of the media were present during the visit.

Govt issues draft ordinances for broadcast, media commissions

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ministry secretary, two persons with at least 15 years' experience in broadcasting activities, and an additional secretary as its member secretary.

The draft says the chairman and members would be ineligible if they hold profit-making posts, are involved in media-related businesses, hold dual passports, or have been convicted in criminal offences.

According to the draft, the commission would oversee the formulation and compliance of broadcasting policies.

It would recommend issuance of licences upon applications and coordinate with the Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission on technical issues.

The commission would be empowered to inspect broadcasting offices and collect documents or digital evidence. In case of violations, it could impose fines, order corrective broadcasts, cancel licences and take other necessary measures. However, the draft ordinance also proposes a provision for appeals against

these decisions with the information ministry. In such cases, the ministry's decision will be considered final.

Owners of existing broadcasting media, defaulters declared by Bangladesh Bank or a court, dual citizens, those who have not completed five years after serving a two-year prison sentence, and those who have not completed three years since a licence was revoked will not be eligible to apply for a new broadcasting licence.

The draft proposes that those involved in broadcasting activities in violation of the law may face imprisonment of up to three years, or a fine ranging from at least Tk 10 lakh to a maximum of Tk 50 lakh, or both.

If any broadcaster airs confidential military or civilian information that may threaten state security or disrupt public order, each person involved may be punished with imprisonment of up to two years, or a fine ranging from Tk 1 lakh to Tk 10 lakh, or both.

The draft proposes that any involved in broadcasting

advertisements for unauthorised financial institutions, betting or gambling, tobacco or tobacco products, alcohol or narcotics, or any advertisement that is deceptive to the general public may be punished with imprisonment of up to two years, or a fine ranging from Tk 5 lakh to Tk 30 lakh, or both.

If parliament, the offices of the president and the prime minister, court proceedings, cantonment areas, or key point installations (KPIs) or institutions are shown in advertisements, those responsible may be punished with imprisonment of up to six months or a fine of up to Tk 2 lakh.

The draft proposes that offences be tried by a Broadcast Tribunal, with complaints filed only by commission-authorised persons, and that all offences be bailable.

Contacted, Rezwanaul Huq, chairman of the Board of Trustees of the Broadcast Journalists Centre (BJC), told The Daily Star that the broadcast sector involves multiple

stakeholders, including the ICT ministry, BTRC, cable operators, internet service providers, and issues such as the salary structure of broadcast journalists, but the draft ordinance does not address all these concerns.

"We don't want an incomplete broadcast ordinance passed in a hurry during the government's final days. We want a comprehensive law that includes all parties after the next government takes office," he added.

Media Commission The draft National Media Commission Ordinance, revised yesterday, proposes a commission of a chairman and eight members, including at least one woman and one member from a small ethnic or indigenous community. One member would serve as member secretary. The chairman and members would be appointed for up to four years.

Disqualifications include non-citizenship or dual citizenship; convictions for financial corruption or moral turpitude unless two years have passed since the

sentence ended; bankruptcy or unsoundness of mind; other profit-making posts (for members); and conflicts of interest, including recent paid work in media or advertising.

A five-member selection committee would recommend candidates for appointment by the president. It would be led by an Appellate Division judge nominated by the chief justice and include the cabinet secretary, a public university professor of mass communication and journalism or law, and two top journalists with at least 20 years' experience.

The two journalists must not be active members of any political party, hold ownership stakes in any media organisation, or have served as a media chief executive immediately before joining the committee.

The draft says the commission would uphold freedom of expression and press freedom by protecting media and journalism, setting standards for self-regulation and ensuring compliance.

It would frame codes of conduct and best practices

and force." Despite filing complaints with the Election Commission and law enforcement agencies, they have received no remedy.

"We have repeatedly warned that if this situation continues, the election will become one-sided, and the people's true verdict will not be reflected."

If such incidents are not stopped now, there would no longer be a suitable environment for the election.

Promising to address local problems, Nahid told voters: "We want real change in Bangladesh. There will be reforms. We will be able to establish a state free from corruption and discrimination."