

## INTERNATIONAL

## World must act to ease Gaza's 'dire' conditions

Says Red Cross chief; Israel kills three Palestinians, announces limited Rafah reopening

AFP, Geneva

The world must scale up efforts to alleviate the human suffering in Gaza, building on the momentum from the ceasefire's first phase, the head of the Red Cross said yesterday.

The US brokered ceasefire, which sought to halt the fighting between Israel and Hamas sparked by the group's October 2023 attack, has been in place for more than three months despite both sides accusing the other of repeated violations.

Earlier in January, Washington announced the truce had progressed to its second phase, intended to bring a definitive end to the war.



"States must harness the momentum generated by the first phase of the agreement between Israel and Hamas to urgently improve the dire humanitarian conditions in Gaza," Mirjana Spoljaric, president of the International Committee of the Red Cross, said in a statement.

Meanwhile, the Israeli military said yesterday it launched overnight strikes at "eight terrorists" in the southern Gaza city of Rafah, killing three of them.

It said that further strikes were launched and added that "soldiers continue to conduct searches in the area in order to locate and eliminate all the terrorists".

Israel also announced that the crucial Rafah crossing between the Gaza Strip and Egypt would be reopened tomorrow, but only for the "limited movement of people".



Firefighters work at the site of a private enterprise struck by an overnight Russian missile in Kharkiv, Ukraine, yesterday.

PHOTO: REUTERS

UK has much to offer China  
Says PM Starmer, defying Trump's warning on Beijing ties

AFP, Shanghai

Visiting Prime Minister Keir Starmer said yesterday that Britain has a "huge amount to offer" China, after his bid to forge closer ties prompted warnings from US President Donald Trump.

The first visit to China by a British prime minister in eight years, Starmer's trip follows in the footsteps of other Western leaders looking to counter an increasingly volatile United States.

Leaders from France, Canada and Finland have flocked to Beijing

in recent weeks, recoiling from Trump's bid to seize Greenland and tariff threats against Nato allies.

Trump warned on Thursday it was "very dangerous" for Britain to be dealing with China. Asked about the comments yesterday, Beijing's foreign ministry said that "China is willing to strengthen cooperation with all countries in the spirit of mutual benefit and win-win results".

Starmer met top Chinese leaders, including President Xi Jinping and Premier Li Qiang on Thursday, with both sides highlighting the need for

closer ties.

Yesterday, Starmer told business representatives from Britain and China that both sides had "warmly engaged" and "made some real progress".

"The UK has got a huge amount to offer," he said in a short speech at the UK China Business Forum at the Bank of China.

The meetings the previous day provided "just the level of engagement that we hoped for", Starmer said.

He signed a series of agreements on Thursday.

## Trump threatens tariffs on nations selling oil to Cuba

AFP, Washington

US President Donald Trump signed an executive order Thursday threatening to impose additional tariffs on countries that sell oil to Cuba, further increasing pressure on the communist-led island.

The order did not specify the value of the tariffs or which countries would be targeted, leaving those determinations up to his secretary of commerce.

Cuba, which has largely been under a US embargo since 1962, until recently received most of its oil from Venezuela.

But the United States has moved to block the flow after removing Havana's key ally Nicolas Maduro from power and effectively seizing control of Venezuelan oil exports.

Following the Venezuela operation, Trump vowed to completely cut off oil and money going to Cuba.

"I strongly suggest they make a deal, BEFORE IT IS TOO LATE," he threatened in a social media post.

## Moscow sees heaviest snowfall in 200 years

AFP, Moscow

Russia's capital Moscow has this month seen the largest snowfall in more than 200 years, Moscow State University meteorologists said on Thursday.

AFP images from the city of around 13 million people showed residents struggling to make their way through heavy piles of snow on the streets in its central district. Commuter trains in the Moscow area were delayed, and cars were stuck in long traffic jams on Thursday evening. "January was a cold and unusually snowy month in Moscow," the university said on social media.

## Dhaka-Beijing

FROM PAGE 12

During the meeting, State Guest House Jamuna, according to the Chief Adviser's Press Wing.

The delegation included senior Chinese academics, investors, and industry leaders from the biomedical, infrastructure, digital, and legal sectors.

Xin-yuan Fu, a leading Chinese biomedical scientist and director of the West China School of Medicine at Sichuan University, praised Professor Yunus's vision and said he looked forward to working with Bangladeshi academics to help improve people's lives.

Andrew Zilong Wong, senior adviser to the board of directors of Walvax Biotechnology, and Yuqing Yao, managing director of Walvax Biotech (Singapore), also expressed interest in working with Bangladesh. Walvax has exported vaccines to at least 22 countries.

The delegation informed the chief adviser that they had engaged with Bangladeshi university students on artificial intelligence and digitalisation and expressed admiration for the talent and potential of the country's youth.

Yunus recalled his long-standing relationship with China, which began through the microcredit movement.

"I had the opportunity to visit remote villages in China and see how people's lives were being transformed. Later, the Chinese government launched its own programmes inspired by these principles," he said.

Highlighting the government's priorities, the chief adviser said healthcare remains the top concern.

"Our highest priority is healthcare -- how to integrate digital technology so that doctors and patients can connect effectively, medical histories can be preserved digitally, and appointments can be accessed easily," he said.

He also emphasised the need for social business models in the pharmaceutical sector.

"Medicines cost pennies to produce, yet are sold for dollars. We want to encourage the establishment of social business pharmaceutical companies that focus on helping people, not just profits," he said.

## NASA eyes

FROM PAGE 12

In Florida, NASA has begun the final phase of preparations. Its 98 metre-tall Space Launch System (SLS) rocket, carrying the Orion spacecraft, has been moved from the Vehicle Assembly Building to Launch Pad 39B at the Kennedy Space Center. With the rocket now in position, teams will conduct a series of final checks, tests and a full dress rehearsal to simulate launch conditions.

NASA officials say the earliest possible launch date is February 6, 2026, with additional windows available later that month and into March and April.

The Artemis II crew includes NASA astronauts Reid Wiseman, who will serve as commander, Victor Glover as pilot, and Christina Koch, alongside Jeremy Hansen of the Canadian Space Agency. The astronauts have entered pre-launch quarantine in Houston as preparations continue.

Artemis II follows the uncrewed Artemis I mission, which launched in November 2022 and successfully orbited the Moon before returning to Earth after 25 days in space. If successful, Artemis II would be the first crewed mission to travel around the Moon since Apollo 17 in December 1972.

## Niko ordered to pay \$42m against claim of \$1b

FROM PAGE 12

added that other legal considerations were also involved, making it difficult to comment definitively before reviewing the full ruling.

They also said that during the previous government's tenure, premature disclosure of information related to the verdict had created complications, including allegations of breaching ICSID's confidentiality. As a result, authorities are proceeding cautiously this time.

Petrobangla and Bapex officials said Niko caused losses amounting to several thousand crore taka, while substantial sums were spent on litigation over the years. Compared to these losses and legal costs, the compensation amount is not considered financially satisfactory.

"The compensation amount is disappointing compared to the claim. Once the full verdict is received, it will be reviewed carefully. The total cost of litigation is also being

assessed," said a senior government official involved in the proceedings, requesting anonymity.

Gas from the Tengratila field was supplied to Chhatak Cement Factory and Paper Mill after the discovery of gas there in 1959. The well was shut down due to water intrusion after extracting about 26.46 billion cubic feet of gas.

The field remained inactive for years before being handed over to Niko for exploration in 2003. During drilling operations, two major explosions occurred on January 7 and June 24, 2005.

The fires destroyed gas reserves in parts of the field and caused extensive damage to nearby infrastructure and assets. Petrobangla initially demanded Tk 7.46 billion in compensation from Niko, which the company refused to pay.

In response, Petrobangla filed a case in a local lower court in 2007 and

suspended payment of gas bills for Niko's Feni gas field. The High Court later ordered the seizure of all Niko assets in Bangladesh and annulled its contracts, a decision subsequently upheld by the Supreme Court.

In 2010, Niko filed two complaints at ICSID alleging non-payment of gas bills and compensation. In a 2014 ruling, ICSID directed Petrobangla to pay dues for gas from the Feni gas field. Subsequently, in 2016, Bangladesh initiated arbitration at ICSID, seeking \$118 million in compensation for Bapex and \$896 million for the government.


On February 28, 2020, ICSID delivered a preliminary ruling in favour of Bangladesh, which the Energy Division announced at a press conference the following month.

According to Petrobangla sources, drilling operations at Tengratila were conducted

under Niko's supervision and management. The explosions occurred due to failure to follow international petroleum industry standards and inadequate safety measures, making Niko directly responsible -- an issue considered by the tribunal in determining the penalty.

The gas field is divided into Chhatak East and Chhatak West (Tengratila). While one gas-bearing layer in Chhatak West was destroyed in the fire, other layers and the Chhatak East reserves remain intact. The field's potential reserves are estimated at 2 to 5 trillion cubic feet.

As the government works to increase domestic gas production, a development project proposal (DPP) has already been prepared for drilling new wells at the Chhatak gas field. Once the final ICSID verdict is received, Petrobangla officials said, the next steps will be taken after consulting legal experts.



## ভর্তি বিজ্ঞপ্তি

**আর্মি নার্সিং কলেজ কুমিল্লা**

**ব্যাচেলর অব সায়েন্স ইন নার্সিং কোর্সে ভর্তি বিজ্ঞপ্তি**

২০২৫-২০২৬ শিক্ষাবর্ষে আর্মি নার্সিং কলেজ কুমিল্লায় ১ম বর্ষে (১২তম ব্যাচ) ০৪ (চার) বছর মেয়াদী ব্যাচেলর অব সায়েন্স ইন নার্সিং (বি এসসি ইন নার্সিং) কোর্সে ছাত্রী ভর্তির জন্য আবেদন আহ্বান করা যাচ্ছে।

**শিক্ষাগত যোগ্যতা:**

(১) ২০২১, ২০২২ অথবা ২০২৩ ইং সালে অনুষ্ঠিত বিজ্ঞান বিভাগ থেকে এসএসসি/সমমান পরীক্ষায় এবং ২০২৩, ২০২৪ অথবা ২০২৫ ইং সালে অনুষ্ঠিত বিজ্ঞান বিভাগ থেকে এইচএসসি/সমমান পরীক্ষায় উত্তীর্ণ হই কেবলমাত্র আবেদন করতে পারবেন।

(২) এসএসসি/সমমান এবং এইচএসসি/সমমানের পরীক্ষা সমূহে প্রাপ্ত জিপিএ এর যোগফল ন্যূনতম ৬.৫০ থাকতে হবে, তবে কোন পরীক্ষায় জিপিএ ৩.০০ এর কম হবে না। প্রার্থীকে এইচএসসি/সমমান পরীক্ষায় জীববিজ্ঞানে জিপিএ ন্যূনতম ২.৫০ থাকতে হবে।

**ভর্তি পরীক্ষা সংক্রান্ত তারিখ ও সময়সূচি নিম্নরূপ:**

আবেদন ফরম সংগ্রহ	০১ ফেব্রুয়ারি ২০২৬ হতে ০৫ মার্চ ২০২৬ পর্যন্ত।
আবেদন ফরম জমা দেওয়ার শেষ তারিখ	০৫ মার্চ ২০২৬ দুপুর ১৪০০ ঘটিকা পর্যন্ত।
প্রবেশপত্র সপ্রাপ্তের তারিখ	০৮ মার্চ ২০২৬ হতে ১২ মার্চ ২০২৬ পর্যন্ত।
সিবিভ পরীক্ষা	১৪ মার্চ ২০২৬ (শনিবার, সকাল ১১০০ ঘটিকা)।

বিঃদ্রঃ বিশেষ প্রয়োজনে ভর্তি সংক্রান্ত যাবতীয় তথ্যাকী কলেজ অধ্যক্ষের দপ্তর হতে অফিস চলাকালীন সময়ে জানা যাবে।  
সময়ঃ সকাল ০৯০০ টা হতে ১৪০০ টা পর্যন্ত (অক্টোবর ও শনিবার এবং সরকারী ছুটির দিন ব্যতীত)।

আর্মি নার্সিং কলেজ কুমিল্লা  
কুমিল্লা সেনানিবাস (সি এম এইচ এর ২নং সেক্টর সংলগ্ন)  
যোগাযোগঃ সকাল ০৯০০ টা হতে ১৪০০ টা পর্যন্ত  
মোবাইল নম্বরঃ ০১৭৬৯৩৩০৩১০/০১৭৬৯৩৩০৩২৮/০১৭৩০২০১১৫  
ওয়েব সাইটঃ anarimnarsing.com/

সেঃ কর্নেল  
প্রিন্সিপাল  
আর্মি নার্সিং কলেজ কুমিল্লা

GD-223

## 48% see Tarique as next PM: poll

FROM PAGE 12

The sample size was 5,147 respondents, selected through random sampling from the combined panels of previous survey rounds.

Of those surveyed, 93.3 percent said they plan to vote in February. Among respondents who previously said they would vote, 96.1 percent maintained that intention, while 78.5 percent of those who had earlier said they would not vote now plan to participate.

The data indicate that BNP is consolidating its support, gaining disproportionately from previously undecided voters and Awami League supporters.

Of BNP's projected vote share, 26.6 percentage points come from voters who were earlier undecided or unwilling to disclose their preference.

Among the people who usually vote for AL, 32.9 percent now say they are likely to vote for BNP, while 13.2 percent favour Jamaat. However, 41.3 percent of AL supporters remain undecided.


The survey attributes a significant portion of BNP's

recent gains after Tarique's return home and the death of former prime minister Khaleda Zia -- events that appear to have mobilised undecided voters.

At the constituency level, 52.9 percent of respondents said a BNP candidate would win in their area if the polls were held tomorrow, while 23.8 percent said they could not say.

Public confidence in the administration of elections has improved. About 72.3 percent of respondents said they believe the government can organise a fair election. Confidence in impartial policing and local administration stood at 74.4 percent, while 82 percent said they feel safe about casting their votes.

A panel discussion was also held at the event, where Dhaka University's Development Studies Prof Asif M Shahan; Voice for Reform Joint Convener Fahim Mashroor; BRAIN's Executive Director Shafiqul Rahman, political analyst and BRAIN member Jyoti Rahman; and Innovision Consulting's Portfolio Director Tasmiah Rahman spoke, among others.



## বাংলাদেশ বিদ্যুৎ উন্নয়ন বোর্ড

**Bangladesh Power Development Board**

Directorate of Purchase  
Biddut Bhavan (12th Floor)  
1 Abdul Goni Road, Dhaka-1000

### e-Tender Notice

The Following e-Tender is invited in the National e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) for the procurement of:

SL No	Tender ID No.	Package No	Reference No.	Description of Goods/Works	Last Selling Date and time	Closing Date and time	Opening Date and time
1	1221747	EB-GRL-11 Fy-25-26	27.11.0000. 304.26.125 .26 Date: 29/01/2026	Supply of 12 M steel pole-350 daN-200 nos. & Supply of 12 M steel pole-450 daN-400 nos.	18-Feb-2026 17:00	19-Feb-2026 14:00	19-Feb-2026 14:00

This is online tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP portal and no offline/ hard copies will be accepted.

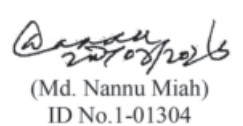
To submit e-Tender, registration in the National e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd/>) is required.

The fees for downloading the e-Tender Documents from the National e-GP System Portal have to be deposited online through any registered bank branches.

Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal and from e-GP help desk ([helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd](mailto:helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd)).

For more details please contract to the PE's Support Desk (01768595879).

বিদ্যুৎ/জন-৬৭১(২)/২৯/০১/২৬



(Md. Nannu Miah)  
ID No. I-01304  
Director  
Directorate of Purchase  
BPDB, Dhaka.

GD-225