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Women's rights activists slam Jamaat over misogyny

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Women's and human rights groups at a protest yesterday condemned what they described as misogynistic politics and hate speech by Jamaat-e-Islami leaders, accusing the party of openly degrading working women and promoting discrimination under the cover of religion.

In a keynote statement read out by Manisha Majumder, a member of Naripokkho, she referred to recent remarks by Jamaat-e-Islami Ameer Shafiqur Rahman, who described working women as equivalent to "prostitutes".

She also cited an earlier statement in which he called working women "kamla" at a public gathering and told young men not to bring "labourers" home but to bring "queens".

With the parliamentary election only days away, the organisations criticised what they described as the government's and the Election Commission's silence on misogynistic statements and conduct during election campaigning.

The group called for immediate action against any candidate or party engaging

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Dredging is underway in the Harihar River near Khulna's Sholgotia Bridge to ease chronic waterlogging, caused by silt accumulation and illegal encroachment that had obstructed the river's natural flow. The initiative was taken due to heightened flooding risks in nearby villages, including Bhabadah, during the monsoon and affected agriculture and fisheries.

PHOTO: HABIBUR RAHMAN

Rebels haunt BNP in four dozen seats

SAJJAD HOSSAIN

BNP-nominated candidates are facing strong competition from rebel party candidates in around four dozen constituencies, according to the party's internal findings.

Party insiders said rebel candidates have become increasingly active, with grassroots leaders openly engaging with them. These candidates enjoy strong local support and benefit from their geographical roots in the constituencies they are contesting.

Over the past ten days, BNP internal teams have gathered updates from grassroots units across all 300 seats, closely tracking the growing influence of rebel candidates.

For instance, in Munshiganj-3, BNP nominee Quamruzzaman Ratan is facing a tough contest against expelled rebel candidate Md Mohiuddin.

After the party expelled around a dozen leaders for engaging with rebels in these constituencies, over 100 grassroots leaders resigned from their posts to back Mohiuddin.

In Bagerhat-1 and Bagerhat-2, former lawmaker and BNP rebel candidate MAH Selim is contesting against party-nominated candidates, posing strong challenges.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

Conservative PM claims election win in Thailand

Nearest rival concedes defeat

AFP, Bangkok

Thailand's conservative prime minister claimed victory in the country's general election yesterday, after television stations projected his party would be by far the largest in parliament after riding a wave of nationalism.

"We are likely to take first place in the election," Anutin Charnvirakul told reporters at his party headquarters in Bangkok.

"The victory today belongs to all Thais, no matter whether you voted for us or not."

His Bhumjaithai party was forecast to win nearly 200 seats by Channel 3 on the basis of results from the parties. The progressive People's Party trailed far behind, just above 100 seats, ahead of jailed former prime minister Thaksin Shinawatra's Pheu Thai party in third.

It would be a stunning turnaround for Anutin, whose party came third at the last election and who was only installed as prime minister by parliament in September, after two predecessors from Pheu Thai were ousted by the courts.

Conceding defeat, People's Party leader Natthaphong Ruengpanyawut told reporters in Bangkok that "we stand by our principle of respecting the party that finishes first and its right to form the government".

Foremost on many voters' minds was a longstanding border dispute with Cambodia that erupted into deadly fighting twice last year.

"We need a strong leader who can protect our



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Army picking up Bangladesh Times staffers 'unacceptable'

Says TIB; BJIM seeks explanation from authorities

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Transparency International Bangladesh has expressed concern after 21 employees were picked up from a media outlet's office on Saturday night, describing the incident as a move to create an atmosphere of fear for the press.

Around 9:30pm on Saturday, army personnel entered the office of online news portal Bangladesh Times in Dhaka's Nikunja and picked up the staffers and took them to the army camp.

At around 11:30pm, a live video streamed on the Bangladesh Times Facebook page showed that the 21 employees were released and returned to their office.

Speaking at an event at TIB's office at the MIDAS Centre in Dhanmondi yesterday, TIB Executive Director Dr Ittekkharuzzaman said the incident at the Bangladesh

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'Polls code violations rampant, yet EC largely silent'

TIB study also says a third of the runners exceeded spending limits

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A study by Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB) found widespread violations of the electoral code of conduct and a lack of strong action by the authorities to ensure a level playing field for the February 12 elections.

It said though campaign began with a comparatively positive attitude, eventually the political parties and candidates maintained the old political culture of conflicts and violence within the parties and alliance partners.

"There are risks of instability because of election-related violence and the anti-voting campaign by the fallen authoritarian forces," TIB Executive Director Ittekkharuzzaman said while revealing the study findings at the TIB office in the capital yesterday.

He, along with TIB researcher Mahfuzul Haque, presented the findings of the study titled "Pre-election and Referendum situation: TIB's Observation".

VIOLATIONS
The TIB study said political parties and candidates began campaigns well before announcement of the election schedule and violated provisions of the Wall Writing and Posters (Control) Act, 2012, by displaying promotional materials on walls, pillars, vehicles, and other structures.

At least 33.8 percent of candidates exceeded the election expenditure limit, spending an average of Tk 1.19 crore between December 4, 2025, and February 1, 2026, said TIB researcher Mahfuzul.

Despite directives from the Election Commission instructing candidates to remove campaign materials, 81.3 percent

"Candidates spent high amounts on social media and used it to create instability, confuse the voters, and influence them through AI-generated photos and video clips."

failed to comply, he added.

Under the EC framework, a candidate in each constituency is allowed to spend either Tk 25 lakh or Tk 10 per voter, depending on the number of voters, he said.

Candidates spent high amounts on social media and used it to create instability, confuse the voters, and influence them through AI-

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Dhaka seeks UN help for probe into Hadi killing

Move follows demands for a UN-supervised investigation

UNB, Dhaka

The interim government has formally asked the United Nations to support a fair, transparent, and swift investigation into the assassination of Sharif Osman Bin Hadi, a frontliner of the July uprising.

On instructions from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Bangladesh mission in Geneva sent a "Note Verbale" to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) there on Friday, formally requesting assistance in the investigation, as per a communication from the mission yesterday.

The mission will inform the ministry as soon as it receives a response from the OHCHR, added the letter sent to the foreign ministry by Bangladesh Ambassador in Geneva, Nahida Sobhan.

OHCHR is the principal UN entity dedicated to promoting and protecting all human rights. It works to strengthen international rights, supports treaty bodies, and conducts field operations to monitor and report on human rights.

On Friday, Chief Adviser's Press Secretary Shaiful Alam said the interim government remains steadfast in its commitment to ensuring justice in this case and will extend all possible cooperation to such an investigation.

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Archaeologists revive ancient Egyptian perfumes

INDEPENDENT.CO.UK

Scientists have developed new methods to recreate perfumes used during the ancient Egyptian mummification process, an advance that could lead to multisensory museum experiences in the future.

Developments in archaeology have led to advanced methods for studying ancient DNA, proteins and other molecules, revealing insights into past diets, diseases and ritual practices.

In recent times, researchers have developed improved tools to study a category of molecules called volatile organic compounds (VOCs), which have the potential to reveal secrets of ancient fragrances.

Recreating ancient VOCs can provide unprecedented insight into perfumery, medicine, ritual, and daily life of the past, scientists from the Max Planck Institute in Germany said.

"Biomolecular data provide essential clues but the perfumer must translate chemical information into a complete and coherent olfactory experience that evokes the complexity of the original material rather than just its individual components," archaeochemist Barbara Huber from the University of Tübingen said.



Nepal batter Lokesh Bam (R) is on his haunches as England all-rounder Sam Curran celebrates a thrilling four-run victory in a Group C encounter of the T20 World Cup at the Wankhede Stadium in Mumbai yesterday. Bam took Nepal close to the victory target of 185 with an unbeaten 39 off 20 deliveries but a terrific final over bowled by Curran -- conceding only five runs -- saw the ICC associate nation fall agonisingly short.

PHOTO: REUTERS

51 kidnapped, 3 killed in Nigeria attacks

AFP, Kano

At least 51 people have been kidnapped and three killed in attacks over the past three days in four different villages in Nigeria's northern Kaduna State, security forces said Saturday.

The attacks were in the southern part of the state, which is majority Christian and where more than 180 people were seized in January during raids on churches.

On Saturday, armed men abducted 11 people, including a priest, in the Kajuru Local Government Area, security sources told AFP.

A nearby attack on Saturday left three people dead and 38 kidnapped, including a local imam and four members of his congregation.

The day before, two people were kidnapped on the road to Maro, also in Kajuru. Assailants destroyed houses in Maro on Thursday, but the number of victims has not been released.