

Looking forward

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South Korean President in a message to Prime Minister Tarique.
President Lee said he looks forward to working with the prime minister of Bangladesh to further strengthen the ties between the two countries.
He extended his heartfelt congratulations to Tarique on his journey as the prime

minister of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, following his election with the strong support of the people of Bangladesh. "Please accept, Excellency, my best wishes for your success and for the continued prosperity of the People's Republic of Bangladesh," according to the message shared by the South Korean Embassy in Dhaka yesterday.

Khalilur leaves

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on the occupied West Bank. Khalilur and Humayun are also likely to have bilateral meetings on the sidelines of the OIC meeting with Saudi counterparts, officials said.
Earlier, Saudi Ambassador to Bangladesh Dr Abdullah Zaler H bin Abiyah was the first to call on PM Tarique Rahman as well as Foreign Minister Khalilur Rahman on Sunday.

reaffirmed Bangladesh's support, commitment and readiness to strengthen and revitalise the SAARC process through proactive initiatives.

He recalled late president Ziaur Rahman's idea and proposal for regional cooperation in South Asia in the early 1980s to promote people's welfare, improve quality of life, and strengthen collective self-reliance in the region.

Meanwhile, UAE Ambassador to Bangladesh Abdulla Ali Al-Humoudi yesterday made a courtesy call on the foreign minister, when they discussed signing the Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) and strengthening cooperation between the two countries in trade, energy, infrastructure, and PPP projects.

CHINESE ENVOY MEETS FAKHRUL, MILON, HAJJAJ
Chinese Ambassador Yao Wen yesterday separately called on LGRD Minister Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir, Education Minister ANM Ehsanul Hoque Milon and State Minister for Education Bobby Hajjaj at the Secretariat.

The Chinese envoy discussed cooperation in the areas of local governance and infrastructure development with Fakhrul to achieve fresh outcomes in the Comprehensive Strategic Cooperative Partnership, said a statement from the Chinese embassy.

Khalilur emphasised Bangladesh's commitment, under the "Bangladesh First" policy, to elevating bilateral relations to a comprehensive strategic and economic partnership, while appreciating the UAE for hosting around 1.2 million Bangladeshi expatriates.

During the meeting with Milon and Hajjaj, the Chinese envoy reaffirmed China's strong support for Bangladesh's educational advancement and expressed China's willingness to share reform experiences with Bangladesh.

He also requested the UAE to reopen labour visas and facilitate greater mobility, including business and transit visas.

Milon and Hajjaj called upon China for strengthened educational exchanges, enhanced institutional cooperation, and contribution to further development.

The UAE envoy also paid a courtesy call on State Minister for Foreign Affairs Shama Obaed Islam.

Bangladesh at a crossroads

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he added, on whether the trade envoy to Bangladesh, said stronger UK-Bangladesh trade ties would depend on governance, regulatory reform and stability, especially as the country prepares to graduate from Least Developed Country status.

he added, on whether the government is willing to curb some of its own powers.

Dr Sohela Nazneen, research fellow at the Institute of Development Studies, said holding a peaceful election was only the first step.

She said investor confidence requires sound financial regulation, reduced bureaucracy and improved law and order.

She stressed that the new parliament, expected to act as a constituent assembly for constitutional changes, must ensure inclusivity and restraint.

Chairing the session, Apsana Begum, MP for Poplar and Limehouse, said the session aimed to examine what the election outcome means for the future of Bangladesh and the key challenges ahead, noting strong interest in the country's trajectory within the UK Parliament.

Only seven women were directly elected, she noted, adding that women were largely absent from high-level reform negotiations.

Abida Islam, High Commissioner of Bangladesh to the UK, said it was the first peaceful and genuinely competitive election in 32 years, with a turnout of 59.44 percent among more than 127 million registered voters.

"This parliament is going to play a crucial role, and you're not even there in terms of having a seat at the table," she said.

She noted the introduction of postal voting for expatriates, with 750,000 overseas Bangladeshis registered, including many in the UK. Nearly 69 percent of voters also approved the July Charter reform package in a referendum.

She also described the online campaign environment for female candidates as "toxic" and marked by harassment and coordinated character assassinations.

Calling it a "fresh start" and a "second republic", Adiba said the government had begun work on structural reforms, including proposals for term limits for the prime minister and measures to rebalance executive authority.

Abida responded that Bangladesh's civil society remains vibrant and that people are freely expressing their concerns.

Dr Chietigi Bajpae, senior research fellow for South Asia at Chatham House, described the election as largely peaceful and predictable, but questioned whether it marked a real break from the country's polarised political past.

During the question-and-answer session, audience members raised issues of foreign relations and accountability.

He said the credibility of the transition would depend on implementing the July Charter reforms, including restoring a caretaker government system for overseeing elections and creating an upper house.

Dr Bajpae said it would not be sustainable for Bangladesh and India to endure a prolonged period of strained ties, given their shared border and economic interdependence.

Abida said early signals from New Delhi were positive and that Dhaka would pursue a foreign policy based on sovereignty and mutual respect.

On justice and institutional reform, Abida said the new government had taken initial legal steps and that clearer direction would emerge in the coming months.

The discussion reflected cautious optimism. While the election delivered a strong mandate, speakers said the real test will be whether it leads to lasting institutional change, balanced governance and broader political inclusion.



A pall of dust hangs over the under-construction Sylhet-Dhaka highway in front of South Surma Police Station, as traffic crawls through clouds of construction residue. The photo was taken recently.

PHOTO: SHEIKH NASIR

DU students protest assault on fellow

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Meanwhile, four police personnel were withdrawn from duties yesterday amid protests by DU students demanding the removal of Masud Alam, deputy commissioner of the Ramna division, in connection with the incident.

At the demonstration, Nayem questioned how drug syndicates could continue their activities at Suhrawardy Udyan even though the Shahbagh Police Station is nearby.

"Because I'm a Dhaka University student, people have gathered here today [Tuesday] after I was attacked. But if it were an ordinary citizen, there would not have been so much media coverage or such a large gathering," Nayem said.

He added that DU students would continue their tradition of struggle

to uphold the democratic rights of citizens in the country.

During the demonstration, the students demanded an end to what they termed "unwarranted policing" on campus and across the city, immediate legal action against those involved in the assault, and the formation of an investigation committee in line with the law to probe the incident.

The students left the police station premises in the afternoon, following a meeting between Additional Deputy Commissioner Asaduzzaman and the protesters' representatives.

After the meeting, Nayem told reporters that they demanded a formal statement from the police authorities be issued within 24 hours.

"We demanded the

removal of Masud Alam. We will observe the authorities' step regarding this demand."

A video clip that went viral shows that while Nayem was speaking to DC Masud, who was leading the drive, a policeman grabbed him from behind and began beating him up with a stick until he fell to the ground.

Contacted, Masud said, "He was arguing from the beginning and refused to allow a search." The police officer added that they attempted to search him because they found him in a "specific location".

Asked about his detention, Masud said that although no narcotics were found on him, police recovered items used for processing narcotics.

At a press briefing at Madhur Canteen, a group of Anthropology Department students, under the banner

of "Anthropology Against Repression," demanded an official public apology from the Shahbagh Police Station.

Their demands include formation of a probe committee within 24 hours and the suspension of DC Masud from duty during the probe.

They threatened tougher programmes if the authorities fail to take steps within the stipulated time.

Meanwhile, Bangladesh Chhatra Federation, Dhaka University unit, held a human chain in front of the Raju Memorial Sculpture and expressed solidarity with the protesting students.

In another development, Dhaka University Central Students' Union (Ducusu) issued a statement, denouncing the police attack on the DU student and the journalists.

"Attacking unarmed

people without any specific reason is clearly a human rights violation," reads the statement.

Protesting the incident, Gonotantik Chhatra Jote, a coalition of seven left-leaning student organisations, held a protest rally on the campus.

Regarding the withdrawal, DC Masud told The Daily Star that the four officers involved in the incident were withdrawn, and procedures for taking departmental action against them were underway.

"We are trying to identify two to three more personnel who used excessive force," he said.

He, however, did not disclose the names or ranks of the withdrawn officers.

The police action came after multiple video clips of the incident went viral on social media, triggering widespread criticism.

PM's call

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As the PM's motorcade was about to leave the premises, Shamim attempted to approach him but was stopped by security personnel. He explained the urgency of the situation and was then allowed to speak.

"The prime minister was surrounded by many people. But hearing the urgency in my voice, he asked me to tell him everything," Shamim said, adding that Tarique then immediately instructed Deputy Commissioner of Ramna Division of Dhaka Metropolitan Police, Masud Alam, and ordered that the boy be rescued as soon as possible.

"Within an hour, police rescued my son from an abandoned building."

Masud told this newspaper that Tarique had called and directed him to take immediate action.

Following the call, police launched a drive and, within about an hour, rescued the boy from the seventh floor of an abandoned building adjacent to Popular Diagnostic Centre in Shantinagar. However, when the criminals sensed police presence, they fled the area," Masud said.

The child was later handed over to his family, he said, adding that no one has been arrested yet in this connection.

New US tariffs

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"Net-net we still think the effective tariff rate will fall this year and that the world post SCOTUS will see lower tariffs than the pre SCOTUS world," its analysts said, using the acronym for the Supreme Court of the US.

Despite the fact that a 10 percent tariff is less punitive than had been expected, traders cited uncertainty about the trade outlook as one reason why European shares opened lower yesterday.

The new tariffs took effect at midnight, while collection of the tariffs annulled by the Supreme Court was halted. They had ranged from 10 percent to as much as 50 percent.

Govt likely to appoint 61 zilla parishad admins

FROM PAGE 12
government functionality and continuity was discussed in detail, particularly in light of the vacuum created in the parishads, which are currently operating without elected representatives following the fall of Awami League government in August 2024.

Officials said the absence of leadership has slowed down routine development activities, financial approvals, and coordination with field administration in multiple districts.

They stressed that no final decision has yet been made and that internal consultations are ongoing to assess the legal and administrative aspects.

The ministry is now reviewing the relevant laws and preparing a list of potential candidates for consideration. After completing the legal review and finalising the proposed list, a formal announcement is likely to be made, subject to the government's approval, said the officials.

According to ministry insiders, the review process includes examining provisions of the Local Government (Zilla Parishad) Act and related rules to ensure that any appointment is legally sound and administratively defensible.

Seeking anonymity, an LGRD ministry officer said, "No final directive has been issued yet. We have made

all necessary preparations regarding the relevant laws and regulations; if the government desires, a notification will be issued in the shortest possible time."

The official added that after completing groundwork at the administration level, the matter was then sent to a policy-level decision.

Ministry sources said LGRD Minister Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir recently met Prime Minister Tarique Rahman to discuss the option of appointing zilla parishad administrators, and the meeting was described as productive.

After the July uprising, most local government representatives went

into hiding, disrupting institutional operations and prompting the government to introduce alternative administrative arrangements.

Officials said the absence of elected chairmen and members in many districts created operational gaps, particularly in project supervision, budget utilisation, and coordination with central ministries.

On August 18, 2024, the interim government appointed administrators to 61 zilla parishads.

In eight zilla parishads, additional divisional commissioners (general) were given the charge as administrators, and in 53 zilla parishads, the respective

deputy commissioners were assigned the responsibility.

The three Chittagong Hill Tracts districts – Rangamati, Khagrachhari, and Bandarban – are governed by a special law. The Zilla Parishad Act does not apply to the districts.

Local government elections were held on a non-partisan basis before 2015, when the AL government amended the law to allow polls to be held under party symbols.

The BNP initially participated in several local government polls, but widespread allegations of rigging and vote grabbing emerged. Subsequently, the party gradually began boycotting the elections.

BNP sources said normally those who did not get party nominations in the national election may be given first priority for such appointments.

They said many of the leaders are active in grassroots activities despite being denied nominations in the polls, and the party leadership views them as capable of handling administrative responsibilities.

They added that giving them priority will also help maintain internal balance and morale within the party, particularly among leaders who have worked for years but could not secure any tickets for running polls.

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

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Memo No: DGDA/Tender/2025-26/ 329

Invitation For Tender (OTM) e-Tender Notice No: 01 (2025-26)

Date: 24/02/26

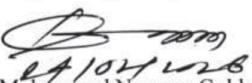
E-Tender is invited to the National e-GP System Portal (<https://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) for the Procurement of the following goods:

SL No	Tender ID and package no.	Description of package	Tender/Proposal Publication Date and Time	Last selling Date and Time	Closing/Opening Date and Time
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02	dgda/accounts-03/Rev/procure/2022-23/GR-06	Goods Supply for Furniture (Spl. Mobile Rack for physical archive)	24-02-2026 10:00	08-03-2026 12:00	08-03-2026 15:00

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