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Iran vows to avenge Khamenei killing

Launches fresh strikes across Gulf; Trump warns of unprecedented force as wider war fears grow; Russia, China condemn killing

Iran again targets US bases in Iraq, Gulf

3 US troops killed; 9 die in Israel

Blasts heard in Tehran, elsewhere

Iran Guards chief, top security officials among 40 killed

Work begins to elect new Iran leader

Iran announces 40 days of mourning



AGENCIES

Iran launched strikes across the Gulf yesterday after vowing to avenge slain supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, defying a threat from President Donald Trump to strike with unprecedented force.

Israel also launched a new wave of strikes on Tehran, saying it aimed to dominate the skies.

US and Israeli strikes -- and Iranian retaliation -- sent shockwaves through sectors from shipping to air travel to oil, amid warnings of rising energy costs and disruption to business in the Gulf, a strategic waterway and global trade hub.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

KHAMENEI: A REVOLUTIONARY ATOP ISLAMIC REPUBLIC WHO MIGHT REPLACE IRAN LEADER -- PAGE 5

The killing was carried out in a cynical violation of all norms of human morality and international law.

Vladimir Putin, Russian president

They better not do that... if they do, we will hit them with a force that has never been seen before!

Donald Trump, US president



A fireball lights the sky following a missile strike on Tel Aviv yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

CIA intel guided strikes that killed Khamenei

NYT reports

AFP, Washington

CIA intelligence indicating Ayatollah Ali Khamenei would attend a meeting of top Iranian officials helped guide strikes in a US and Israeli attack that killed Iran's supreme leader, the New York Times reported yesterday.

Khamenei was killed in the strikes on the capital Tehran, Iranian state media confirmed yesterday, after the US and Israel vowed to seek regime change in the Islamic republic.

The American intelligence agency had been tracking Khamenei

SEE PAGE 8 COL 6

Missile kills Bangladeshi in the UAE

Panic grows as 4 hurt in drone attack in Kuwait

MD ABBAS

Bangladeshi migrant workers in Qatar, the United Arab Emirates, Kuwait, Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, and Jordan are living in fear and uncertainty following US and Israeli strikes on Iran and Tehran's subsequent retaliation in the Gulf region. Families back home have grown increasingly anxious amid reports of missile interceptions and resulting casualties.

The United Arab Emirates said yesterday that a Bangladeshi migrant was among three who died during Iranian missile strikes.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 4

PM prioritises migrant safety, energy security

SAJJAD HOSSAIN

Prime Minister Tarique Rahman has instructed officials of ministries and departments concerned to remain alert and closely monitor developments in the Middle East.

He said that protecting migrant workers, ensuring energy security, and maintaining economic stability will be the government's immediate priorities as the situation unfolds.

The PM also directed the foreign ministry to stay in regular contact with Bangladesh missions in the Gulf countries to ensure the safety and security of Bangladeshis living there.

The decisions came when Tarique held a meeting with Foreign Minister Khalilur Rahman and PM's Foreign Affairs Adviser Humaiun Kobir, along with senior officials, to assess the situation and review diplomatic and economic preparedness.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 4

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(From left, clockwise) People gather to mourn the death of Iran's supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, who was killed in joint US and Israeli strikes, at a square in Tehran (inset, pro-regime supporters mourn his death); Israeli emergency service officers remove a body bag from the scene of a missile attack near Bet Shemesh, west of Jerusalem; motorists drive past a plume of smoke rising from a reported Iranian strike in the industrial district of Doha. Photos were taken yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP, REUTERS

Iran vows to avenge Khamenei killing

FROM PAGE 1

Iran's President Masoud Pezeshkian declared Khamenei's killing a "declaration of war against Muslims" and warned: "Iran considers it its legitimate duty and right to avenge the perpetrators and masterminds of this historic crime."

Israel described Khamenei's death as a "first step", and military spokesman Lieutenant Colonel Nadav Shoshani boasted that the joint operation "eliminated 40 senior commanders, including Khamenei, in one minute in two different locations over a thousand miles from Israel in broad daylight".

Yesterday, in an interview with Fox, Trump said that 48 Iranian leaders have been killed in the ongoing US-Israeli bombardments of the country.

Meanwhile, Pezeshkian said a leadership council composed of himself, the judiciary head and a member of the powerful Guardians Council had temporarily assumed the duties of Supreme Leader following Khamenei's death.

Earlier, the parliament's Speaker Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf said that Iran had prepared for "all scenarios", including the way forward after the death of Khamenei. He said the US and Israel have "crossed our red lines" and "will suffer the consequences".

The US military said it had sunk an Iranian ship, while Iran's Revolutionary Guards said they had launched an attack on the US aircraft carrier Abraham Lincoln with four ballistic missiles, state media reported.

In a sign of widening turmoil, Israel's ambulance service said nine people were killed by a missile strike in the town of Beit Shemesh, the United Arab Emirates said Iranian attacks killed three people, and Kuwait reported one dead in Iranian raids.

The Pentagon yesterday said three members of the US military have been killed and five others wounded in the operation against Iran, announcing the first American deaths in the conflict.

"Three US service members have been killed in action, and five are seriously wounded as part of Operation Epic Fury," the Pentagon said, adding several others sustained minor shrapnel injuries and concussions.

The Red Crescent in Iran on Saturday said the joint strikes had left 201 people dead and injured hundreds more. No death toll was released yesterday.

The Israeli military said that over the past day, Israeli planes had conducted strikes to open the "path to Tehran", and the majority of aerial defence systems in western and central Iran had been dismantled.

It added: "Ali Khamenei was targeted in a precise, large-scale operation carried out by the Israeli Air Force, guided by accurate IDF intelligence, while he was in his central leadership compound in the heart of Tehran, where he was together with additional senior officials".

Israeli military spokesperson Lieutenant Colonel Nadav Shoshani said many targets remained, including sites of military-industrial production. "We have the capabilities and the targets to keep going on for as long as necessary," he said.

Asked if Israel was considering

deploying ground forces, Shoshani said that was not under consideration even though Trump and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu have urged Iranians to seize a rare opportunity to topple their leaders.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu yesterday also vowed to intensify air strikes on Tehran in the coming days, declaring that the military had mobilised its "full strength" in the campaign against Iran.

Hours after the US and Israel said an air strike killed Khamenei, Iran's state media confirmed the 86-year-old leader had died.

Inside Iran, some grieved for Khamenei while others celebrated

Union foreign policy chief Kaja Kallas said the death of Khamenei was "a defining moment in Iran's history".

France, on the other hand, expressed satisfaction at the death of "a bloodthirsty dictator who oppressed his people, degraded women, young people and minorities".

After Iran retaliated with airstrikes around the Gulf, Anwar Gargash, adviser to the president of US ally and oil power the United Arab Emirates, urged Tehran to "go back to your senses", saying the war is not with Iran's Gulf Arab neighbours. The UAE has so far borne the brunt of Iran's retaliation.

Earlier, Trump warned that the US



Members of the Iranian community hold placards, wave flags and chant slogans during a rally in Sydney as the news of Khamenei's death spread yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

his death, exposing a deep fault line in a country stunned by the sudden demise of the man who ruled for decades.

Thousands of Iranians were killed in a crackdown authorised by Khamenei against anti-government protests in January, the deadliest wave of unrest since the Islamic Revolution of 1979.

Footage from Tehran showed mourners packed into a square, dressed in black and many of them weeping.

But videos posted on social media also showed joy and defiance elsewhere, with people cheering as a statue was toppled in the city of Dehloran in Ilam province, dancing in the streets of Karaj city, near Tehran in Alborz province, and celebrating in the streets of Izeh in Khuzestan province. Reuters has verified the locations of these videos.

Khamenei, who built Iran into a powerful anti-US force and spread its sway across the Middle East during his 36-year iron-fisted rule, was working in his office at the time of Saturday's attack, state media said. The raid also killed his daughter, grandchild, daughter-in-law and son-in-law.

Experts said that while his death and those of other Iranian leaders would deal Iran a major blow, it would not necessarily spell the end of Iran's entrenched clerical rule or the sway of the elite Revolutionary Guards over the population.

International reactions to the conflict have been mixed.

Russian President Vladimir Putin denounced Khamenei's death as a cynical murder, and China's Foreign Minister Wang Yi described it as "blatant killing", while European

would hit Iran "with a force that has never been seen before" if it strikes back after the attacks on it.

In a sign of disruption to energy supplies, at least 150 tankers, including crude oil and liquefied natural gas vessels, dropped anchor in open Gulf waters beyond the Strait of Hormuz and dozens more were stationary on the other side of the chokepoint, shipping data showed yesterday, after the US and Israeli strikes.

In other regional repercussions, Pakistani police yesterday clashed with protesters who breached the outer wall of the US consulate in Karachi, leaving nine people dead, following news of Khamenei's death.

Protests were also held in Iraq and some Muslim-majority countries.

Global air travel remained heavily disrupted as continued air strikes kept major Middle Eastern airports, including Dubai, the world's busiest international hub, closed in one of the biggest aviation interruptions in recent years.

Several blasts were heard for a second day in Dubai and over Qatar's capital of Doha, witnesses said. Dark smoke rose over Dubai's Jebel Ali port, one of the busiest in the Middle East.

Iran, which had said it would target US bases if attacked, hit a range of other targets, keeping the Gulf on edge.

Trump said the air strikes aimed to end a decades-long threat from Iran and ensure it could not develop a nuclear weapon. He also sought to justify a risky gambit that seemed to contradict his professed opposition to American involvement in complex overseas conflicts.

PM prioritises migrant safety, energy security

FROM PAGE 1

Meeting sources said Tarique wants to keep a balanced relationship with Iran and the US.

Bangladeshi Muslims have sympathy for Iran and the BNP-led government has to keep a healthy relationship with America, said sources.

"The prime minister instructed the authorities to ensure the safety and security of expatriates and also to extend visa validity periods, as many of them are unable to return to their host countries due to flight cancellations and regional instability," said an official, seeking anonymity.

Tarique has taken updates on the condition of Bangladeshi expatriates in Iran and other Middle Eastern countries amid the ongoing war in the region.

The officials said the country had faced similar crises before and although there might be some fluctuations in energy-related matters, overall preparations are adequate and there is no need for undue concern.

They added that if the war continues, global oil prices are likely to rise, which would directly affect Bangladesh's economy as the country imports most of its fuel from the Middle Eastern countries.

If the conflict spreads and disrupts oil supply routes such as the Strait of Hormuz, it could lead to higher fuel prices, reduced remittance flow, and slower economic growth.

For now -, the government says it is monitoring developments closely and preparing precautionary measures to safeguard the economy and citizens abroad.

Also, higher oil prices would increase the government's import

bill, put pressure on foreign exchange reserves, raise electricity generation and transport costs, and ultimately push up inflation, the officials said.

Bangladesh has around 75 lakh migrant workers in Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Kuwait, and Oman. Remittances sent by them are one of the country's main sources of foreign currency.

Expatriates currently working in Middle Eastern countries, as well as those planning to travel there for employment, may face problems.

Officials said prolonged instability could slow down construction projects and other economic activities in the Gulf nations, potentially resulting in reduced job opportunities, delayed recruitment, or even job losses.

During yesterday's meeting, the PM instructed the expatriates' welfare and overseas employment ministry to prepare support measures in case any Bangladeshi workers face difficulties due to instability in the region.

The government has also asked the energy ministry to closely monitor global oil and gas prices.

Sources said Bangladesh imports most of its fuel from the Middle East. If the conflict disrupts oil supply routes or increases global prices, the country's import costs could rise sharply.

Officials said the government is also reviewing fuel stock levels to ensure that sufficient reserves are maintained to prevent supply disruptions at home.

"At the moment, there is little chance of an increase in oil prices," said a ministry official.

The civil aviation authority has also been asked to monitor flight routes to and from the Middle Eastern countries.

The Gulf region serves as a major transit hub for Bangladeshi passengers and cargo, and any airspace restrictions could affect travel and trade.

At the meeting, Tarique emphasised that Bangladesh will maintain a balanced diplomatic stance and support peaceful resolution of disputes through dialogue.

According to officials, the PM has instructed the foreign ministry to closely follow international discussions and remain engaged with global partners to protect Bangladesh's interests.

He also asked the ministry to stay alert to prevent any internal instability or misinformation that could arise due to international tensions.

Government officials said coordination meetings may be held regularly to review the situation and update response plans as needed.

The premier also asked relevant agencies to prepare clear public communication so that citizens remain informed and do not panic.

"We are not directly involved in the conflict, but we must protect our economic and national interests," said an official familiar with the discussions.

At the same time, officials stressed that Bangladesh's foreign policy remains guided by principles of non-alignment, peace, and regional stability.

After the meeting, PM's Additional Press Secretary Atikur Rahman Ruman told reporters that the prime minister is closely monitoring the situation at Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport, particularly regarding passengers stranded due to flight disruptions.

Missile kills Bangladeshi in the UAE

FROM PAGE 1

The UAE defence ministry stated that the other two victims included one each from Pakistan and Nepal.

Contacted, Arman Ullah Chowdhury, counsellor at the Bangladesh embassy in the UAE, said, "We have received the defence ministry statement. We are following up on it on our end."

In Kuwait, at least four Bangladeshi workers were injured during a drone attack near Kuwait International Airport, according to the Ministry of Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment in Dhaka.

Aminul Islam from Brahmanbaria, Rakibul Islam from Pabna, Masudur Rahman from Noakhali, and Dulal Miah from Cumilla were all hurt by debris scattered during the attack.

Ministry Senior Secretary Niyamat Ullah Bhuiyan said the government is coordinating with the Bangladesh mission in Kuwait to ensure medical treatment and support.

"We are extremely worried. We don't know the full situation there. We are praying for his recovery," said Aminul's family in Brahmanbaria.

Relatives of Rakibul in Pabna, Masudur in Noakhali, and Dulal in Cumilla echoed similar fears.

"He told me not to worry, but how can a mother not worry when she hears explosions in the background?" said Rakibul's mother in Pabna.

In Qatar, Bangladeshi migrants

reported loud explosions and repeated alerts.

"We are hearing loud explosions and emergency alerts. We received shelter location instructions from the government. They are saying another wave of attack could come within an hour," one expatriate told The Daily Star over the phone.

In Abu Dhabi's Musaffah industrial area, several Bangladeshi workers reported explosions during drone interceptions shortly after noon local time.

Authorities advised residents to stay indoors, avoid windows, and remain in safe areas. Debris from intercepted drones was reported near the Etihad Towers complex, while fighter jets were spotted overhead.

Workers in Saudi Arabia, the top destination for Bangladeshi migrants, reported relative calm.

"Everything is quite normal here, and workers are carrying out their duties without disruption," said expatriate Mamonur Rashid in a video message.

Till last night, flights from Bangladesh to several Middle Eastern destinations have been suspended since Saturday afternoon.

The Bangladesh government has urged migrant workers in Qatar, the UAE, Bahrain, Jordan, Kuwait, and Iraq to stay in safe locations, avoid military installations, and remain indoors unless necessary.

Embassies have issued hotlines and safety guidelines, advising workers to carry cash, IDs, health cards, mobile chargers, dry food, and medicines.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs convened an emergency meeting attended by Foreign Minister Khalilur Rahman, State Minister Shama Obaid Islam, Prime Minister's adviser Humayun Kabir, and Foreign Secretary Asad Alam Siam.

Officials also coordinated with the Bangladesh mission in Tehran to ensure the safety of diplomats, staff, and students in Iran.

Shariful Hasan, associate director of BRAC's Migration Programme and Youth Platform, said embassies should actively communicate with workers, provide regular updates, and engage trusted community leaders to maintain contact.

"Regular alerts and support from embassies reassure workers that the government is with them," he said.

Ariful Haque Chowdhury, Minister of Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment, said embassies have been instructed to identify and bring Bangladeshi citizens to safe locations, assist the injured, and ensure their stay until travel is safe.

He added that authorities are coordinating with hotels and airlines to support stranded workers. "We are tracking every citizen and maintaining contact to provide timely support."

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JAHANGIRNAGAR UNIVERSITY

Students protest
admin inaction
in rape case

JU CORRESPONDENT

Female students of Jahangirnagar University brought out a protest procession on the campus yesterday, alleging that the administration had failed to ensure their safety and security.

The procession, joined by female students from different residential halls, began around 3:00pm. Starting from the hall area, the protesters marched through key points on the campus and proceeded to the vice-chancellor's residence, where they held a brief rally.

At the rally, the protesters condemned what they termed the administration's negligence in handling the rape allegations against SM Tarikul Islam, a former student of the 44th batch.

On Saturday, the JU administration suspended Tarikul's academic certificates following allegations that he took a female student to a house near the campus, confined her and raped her.

The victim, who was reportedly in a relationship with the accused, filed a case

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4



Female students of Jahangirnagar University bring out a protest procession on the campus yesterday, alleging that the administration had failed to ensure their safety.

PHOTO: STAR

Islamist parties
condemn US-Israel
attacks on Iran

Urge UN, global leaders to intervene

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Top Islamist parties in Bangladesh, including Jamaat-e-Islami and Islami Andolan Bangladesh, have strongly condemned the US-Israeli attacks across Iran, terming the strikes "illegal" and a "violation of international law".

The recent attacks reportedly left Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei and several senior officials dead, alongside causing widespread casualties and destruction.

In statements, speeches and protest rallies, the parties urged the UN and global leaders to take immediate and effective steps to halt what they described as aggression.

Jamaat Ameer and Leader of the Opposition Shafiqur Rahman, in a Facebook post from his verified page yesterday, said he was "deeply saddened" by the news of Khamenei's "martyrdom".

He said the current instability in the Middle East has already put regional stability at grave risk. "If the situation escalates further into military confrontation, it could have catastrophic consequences not just for one country but for the entire region," he said, calling on all parties concerned, including the US, Israel and Iran, to immediately cease military actions, exercise maximum restraint and move towards a diplomatic resolution.

SEE PAGE 9 COL 5

Justice for July
killings, 'arrest of
fascist president'

Demands Nahid Islam

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

NCP Convener and Opposition Chief Whip Nahid Islam yesterday said justice for the July killings must be ensured before anything else.

Speaking at a Jubo Shakti iftar programme at the KIB auditorium in Farmgate, he called for the arrest of the "fascist president", saying, "We will not allow any mark of fascism to remain in Bangladesh."

Nahid said efforts were under way to organise youths across the country and stressed the need to expand the process. "We need to widen this process of organising youth power, not only in parliament but also on the streets. We must remain steadfast in our demand for judicial reform," he said.

He said 1,400 people were killed and more than 30,000 injured in the July uprising. "We will ensure justice for the July killings, including Shaheed Osman Hadi."

SEE PAGE 9 COL 1

Ensure probe into recent
rape, murder cases

Demands Rape Law Reform Coalition

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Rape Law Reform Coalition (RLRC) yesterday demanded thorough investigations into recent incidents of rape and murder across the country, calling for the perpetrators to be brought to justice and for the protection of survivors and witnesses.

The coalition, an alliance of 17 organisations formed in 2018 under the "Rape Law Reform Now" campaign, expressed deep concern over the abduction, rape and killing of a 15-year-old girl in Narsingdi, along with other reported cases of sexual and gender-based violence.

In a press statement, the RLRC urged the authorities to take immediate and visible steps to prevent such violence and to ensure accountability of government service providers, including one-stop crisis centres and victim support centres.

The demand comes amid a series of incidents reported in late February.

On February 25, a teenage girl was abducted in front of her father in the Madhabdi area of Narsingdi. Her body was recovered the following day from a mustard field in

Mahishasura union.

The victim's family alleged that six youths killed her after they sought justice for a previous rape incident.

On February 24, a student of Jahangirnagar University was allegedly taken to a house in the Islamnagar area by a former student. She was reportedly tied up, beaten and doused with boiling water before being raped.

Although she was rescued by Ashulia police after calling 999, the coalition alleged a lapse in medical care.

Despite her worsening condition, she was reportedly sent back from a Dhaka-based one-stop crisis centre after waiting two hours without being admitted.

On February 28, the bodies of a 65-year-old woman and her 15-year-old granddaughter were recovered from a house and a nearby field in Ishwardi, Pabna.

Police initially said the grandmother was killed while trying to prevent the abduction of her granddaughter, who was later raped and strangled.

The RLRC said the recurring violence

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RLRC urged the authorities to take immediate and visible steps to prevent such violence and to ensure accountability of government service providers, including one-stop crisis centres and victim support centres.

DNCC forms
cell to step
up mosquito-
control

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka North City Corporation (DNCC) Administrator Md Safiqul Islam Khan yesterday said a monitoring cell has been formed to oversee mosquito control measures, with drives being conducted as planned.

Speaking while visiting Korail slum in the capital, Safiqul said residents would begin to see the benefits of the initiatives within a short time.

"We are continuously working from our place of responsibility and accountability so that the people can live with some relief," he said.

State Minister for Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperatives Mir Shahe Alam, who was present during the visit, said information collection activities were under way in Korail for the distribution of Family Cards.

'India to resume
full visa services
gradually'Home minister says after
meeting Pranay Verma

PHOTO: PID

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Home Minister Salahuddin Ahmed yesterday said India has assured Bangladesh that it will gradually resume full visa operations, which have remained limited due to security concerns over the past one and a half years.

He also said India had informed that its consulates and visa offices had faced attacks over the past one and a half years, preventing them from functioning at full capacity.

The minister said this while briefing reporters after Indian High Commissioner to Bangladesh Pranay Verma paid him a courtesy call at the ministry yesterday noon.

SEE PAGE 9 COL 2

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আপনার বিশ্বস্ত সহযোগী

‘A relative raped, killed Pabna girl’

Accused also killed her grandmother as she tried to save the teen, say police

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Pabna

A relative was behind the rape and murder of the teen girl in Pabna on Friday, said police yesterday after arresting the prime accused.

The key accused, Md Shariful Islam Sharif, 35, also killed the girl's grandmother as she tried to save her.

M Anwar Zahid, superintendent of police in Pabna, disclosed the information at a press briefing yesterday.

He said Sharif gave his confessional statement to police after his arrest on Saturday.

Sufia Begum Sufi, 70, and her granddaughter Jamila Khatun, 15, were murdered on Friday night at Bhabanipur Uttarpura village under Pabna's Ishwardi upazila.

Sharif, a distant uncle of Jamila, had been stalking her for a long time. On Friday night, Sharif forcibly tried to bring Jamila out of the home. When Sufia tried to stop him, Sharif hit the elderly woman with a wooden stick, leaving her in a senseless state.

Then, Sharif went to Jamila's room and tried to assault her sexually. However, as the girl resisted him, Sharif hit her with a hammer. He dragged her body to a nearby mustard field. He then raped and murdered the girl, the SP said.

On Saturday morning, police recovered the bodies.

SEE PAGE 9 COL 1



Students look at a wall of portraits at Bangla Academy in the capital yesterday. The display, set up at the Amar Ekushey Book Fair, features photographs and names of those killed during the July uprising.

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

‘I had no role in Khaleda’s eviction’ Says Iqbal Karim during cross-examination at ICT

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Former army chief Iqbal Karim Bhuiyan yesterday rejected the defence claim that he had taken necessary steps to evict Khaleda Zia from her Dhaka Cantonment residence while serving as Quarter Master General, saying he was abroad at the time.

He made the remarks during cross-examination by defence counsel Aminul Ghani Titto, representing Maj Gen (relieved) Ziaul Ahsan, before International Crimes Tribunal-1 in a crimes against humanity case.

Ziaul is accused of orchestrating the enforced disappearance and murder of 104 people between 2010 and 2013.

Iqbal said he could not specify the number of enforced disappearances during his tenure and admitted he had not personally tried to rescue any victims, as he did not consider it his responsibility.

SEE PAGE 9 COL 1

Jamaat activist killed in clash with BNP men in Chuadanga

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Chuadanga

A Jamaat-e-Islami activist was killed, reportedly in a clash with BNP leaders and activists, at Hasadah Bazar in Jibannagar upazila of Chuadanga on Saturday evening.

The deceased was identified as Hafizur Rahman, younger brother of Mofizur Rahman, ameer of Banka union unit of Jamaat, said Jibannagar Police Station Officer-in-Charge Solaiman Sheikh.

“The confrontation unfolded in phases outside the gate of a Kamil madrasa from 7:30pm to 9:00pm... At least six people from both sides sustained injuries during

SEE PAGE 9 COL 4

NOTICE

IN THE SUPREME COURT OF BANGLADESH
HIGH COURT DIVISION
(STATUTORY ORIGINAL JURISDICTION)
COMPANY MATTER NO. 168 OF 2026

Knit Plus Limited, represented by its Managing Director
... **Transferee-Petitioner No.1**
Biotech Printing Plus Limited, represented by its Managing Director
... **Transferor-Petitioner No.2**
PURPLE SHINE LTD. represented by its Managing Director
... **Transferor-Petitioner No.3**

Versus ... **Transferor-Petitioner No.3**

The Registrar Joint Stock Companies and Firms of TCB Bhaban (6th Floor), 1 Karwan Bazar, Dhaka-1215 and others

----- Respondents.

Notice is hereby given that an application under section 228 read with section 229 of the Companies Act, 1994 has moved in the Hon'ble High Court Division of the Supreme Court of Bangladesh by the petitioners for amalgamation of the above names Companies. The Hon'ble Madam Justice Kazi Zinat Hoque admitted the said application on 22.02.2026. If any person is interested to oppose the said matter may appear before the Hon'ble Court either personally or through his advocate. A copy of the said application may be obtained from under mentioned chamber of the learned advocate. **Md. Lutfur Rahman**, Advocate, Bangladesh Supreme Court, Room No. 806 (A/E), Supreme Court Bar Association Building, Shahbag, Dhaka. Cell No-01716600657

পাওয়ার গ্রিড বাংলাদেশ পিএলসি
POWER GRID BANGLADESH PLC
(An Enterprise of Bangladesh Power Development Board)

Grid Bhaban, Avenue-3, Jahurul Islam City, Aftabnagar, Badda, Dhaka-1212 Web: www.powergrid.gov.bd
স্মারক নং- ২৭.২১.১৯৩৩.৬৯১.৪৪.০৫২.২৬.১০০ তারিখঃ ২৬/০২/২০২৬

e-Tender বিজ্ঞপ্তি

পাওয়ার গ্রিডের জিএমডি, কুমিল্লা দপ্তরে আওতাধীন নিম্নলিখিত দরপত্র e-GP পোর্টালে প্রকাশিত হয়েছে।

ID	Title of Works	Last date & time of document selling	Last date & time of security submission
1231864	Repair work on the roof, ceiling, walls, kitchen, toilet, floor and other works including construction and installation of steel stairs to the roof of the Ansar Barracks of Chandpur 132/33 KV Grid Substation under Power Grid, GMD, Cumilla.	08 March 2026 at 15:00	09 March 2026 at 11:30
1232184	Cleaning work of tiles, toilets, stairs, lobby, border posts and roads etc by daily wage basis sweepers of the control room of Kachua 230/132/33 KV GIS Grid Substation under Power Grid, GMD, Cumilla	11 March 2026 at 15:00	12 March 2026 at 11:30
1236357	Repair/Maintenance, Cleaning Soil & other materials of drain and surrounding area as well as renovation of switch yard surveillance path work of 230/132/33 KV Comilla (N) Grid Substation under GMD, Cumilla.	15 March 2026 at 15:00	16 March 2026 at 11:30
1236782	Installation of a new IP camera set for the 230/132/33 KV Comilla (N) Grid Substation under GMD Cumilla.	11 March 2026 at 15:00	12 March 2026 at 11:30

আগ্রহী ঠিকাদারী প্রতিষ্ঠানকে www.eprocure.gov.bd সাইটের মাধ্যমে দরপত্রে অংশগ্রহণের জন্য অনুরোধ করা যাচ্ছে।

মোঃ জসিম উদ্দিন
নির্বাহী প্রকৌশলী, জিএমডি, কুমিল্লা

Students protest

FROM PAGE 3
with Ashulia Police Station on Wednesday.

“An incident as grave as the inhumane torture and rape of a student cannot be met with administrative indifference. Such a lackadaisical attitude is directly responsible for the growing insecurity faced by female students on the campus,” said Nazeeha Binte Shamsuddin, a student of the 52nd batch of the Economics department.

She added, “We demand

Ensure probe

FROM PAGE 3
violates Articles 27, 28, 31 and 32 of the Constitution of Bangladesh, which guarantee equality before the law and the right to life and personal liberty.

The coalition said the incidents also contravene the Nari O Shishu Nirjatan Daman (Amendment) Ordinance, 2025, and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW).

It expressed hope that the newly elected government would take strict steps to uphold the Constitution and existing laws, prevent violence against women and children, and ensure justice for the victims.

the immediate arrest of Tarikul and a fair trial to set an example. The administration must urgently address the bureaucratic and structural shortcomings that enable such incidents. The Anti-Sexual Harassment Cell must be made fully functional, and comprehensive reforms to prevent violence against women on the campus must be ensured without delay.”

Sanzeeda Noor, a student of the Public Administration department, echoed her.

“It took them five days just to suspend his academic certificate, and that too temporarily. Instead, the administration should have immediately provided all necessary information to the police and acted as a pressure group to ensure his arrest,” she added.

400 families hit as saline water enters canal

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Patuakhali

Majnu Hawlader has to carry buckets of water from a pond to a nearby field to feed his cattle several times a day, since the water of the nearby Jaban Khan canal has become unusable due to high salinity.

Majnu, a resident of West Madhukhali village under Patuakhali's Kalapara upazila, is not alone. At least 400 farming families in West Madhukhali and two other neighbouring villages have been suffering immensely due to the sudden intrusion of saline water into the canal.

The five-kilometre-long canal, a lifeline for the villagers for drinking, irrigation, and rearing livestock, turned brackish after a four-vent sluice gate was allegedly opened at night a week ago.

The impact has been severe.

Residents complained that more than 100 ducks died after drinking the saline water, and cattle are refusing to drink from the canal. Farmers now have to carry pond water in buckets to feed cattle.

Kawsar Gazi, a member of Mithaganj union parishad, said, “The canal is already silted up. A vested quarter opened the sluice gate to catch fish, allowing saline water to enter. Farmers are now in serious trouble.”

Mezbah Uddin Khan Dulal, chairman of the union parishad, said a temporary embankment should have been set up in front of the sluice gate to prevent saline intrusion.

Kawsar Hamid, upazila nirbahi officer in Kalapara, said he would instruct the UP chairman to investigate the matter and take necessary steps.



Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Ministry of Planning
Statistics and Informatics Division
“Strengthening Capacity of National Statistical System for Coordination in SDGs Data Reporting (SCNSS4SDGs)”
E-27/A Agargaon, Dhaka-1207
No.52.00.0000.028.14.017.25(part-1)-197 Date: 01/03/26

e-Tender Notice

This is to notify all concerned that the following tender has been published through e-GP system:

Tender ID, Package No. & Date of Publishing	Description of related Service Procurement
Tender ID: 1233182 Package No: SCNSS4SDGS_Serv-1 Publishing Date and Time: 02 March 2026 12:00 PM	Consultancy service on “Measuring Progress towards Sustainable Development: An overview of Education data through an SDG Lens” (Details of Deadline and specification of the above-mentioned consultancy service is available on e-GP portal)
Tender ID: 1234817 Package No: SCNSS4SDGS_Serv-2 Publishing Date and Time: 02 March 2026 12:00 PM	Consultancy service on “Assessing Industry and Labor in Bangladesh: A Comprehensive Review of Relevant Data”. (Details of Deadline and specification of the above-mentioned consultancy service is available on e-GP portal)

The interested persons/firms may visit the website www.eprocure.gov.bd to get the details of the tender. This is an online tender, where only e-Tender/applicant will be accepted in the National e-GP portal and no offline/ hard copy will be accepted. To submit e-Tender, registration in the National e-GP Portal (http://www.eprocure.gov.bd) is required.

Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal and from e-GP Help Desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).

Hemonto Henry Kubi
Project Director
SCNSS4SDGs Project
E-mail: sdgcell@sid.gov.bd

GD-443

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Office of the Principal
Jhalokathi Govt. Technical School and college
Jhalokathi

Memo NO. 57.13.4240.000.18.002.26.4375 Date: 28/02/2026

e-Tender Notice

e-Tender is invited in the National e-GP System portal(http://www.eprocure.gov.bd) for the procurement of goods:

SL no.	Tender ID	Tender package no.& description	Publication date	Last selling date and time	Closing date and time
1	1233497	57.03.0000.000.023.20.0001.25.149/JTSCGR-01 Procurement of cleaning products	02/03/2026 17:00	15/03/2026 17:00	16/03/2026 16:30
2	1233003	57.03.0000.000.023.20.0001.25.149/JTSCGR-02 Computer Accessories	02/03/2026 17:00	15/03/2026 17:00	16/03/2026 16:30
3	1234218	57.03.0000.000.023.20.0001.25.149/JTSCGR-03 Procurement of Stationary materials	02/03/2026 17:00	15/03/2026 17:00	16/03/2026 16:30
4	1234220	57.03.0000.000.023.20.0001.25.149/JTSCGR-04 Procurement of chemical items	02/03/2026 17:00	15/03/2026 17:00	16/03/2026 16:30
5	1234285	57.03.0000.000.023.20.0001.25.149/JTSCGR-05 Procurement of Sporting Goods	02/03/2026 17:00	15/03/2026 17:00	16/03/2026 16:30
6	1234288	57.03.0000.000.023.20.0001.25.149/JTSCGR-06 Procurement of Raw Materials	02/03/2026 17:00	15/03/2026 17:00	16/03/2026 16:30
7	1234350	57.03.0000.000.023.20.0001.25.149/JTSCGR-07 Procurement of Engineering Equipments	02/03/2026 17:00	15/03/2026 17:00	16/03/2026 16:30
8	1234351	57.03.0000.000.023.20.0001.25.149/JTSCGR-08 Procurement of Office Equipment	02/03/2026 17:00	15/03/2026 17:00	16/03/2026 16:30
9	1234352	57.03.0000.000.023.20.0001.25.149/JTSCGR-09 Procurement of Learning materials	02/03/2026 17:00	15/03/2026 17:00	16/03/2026 16:30
10	1234353	57.03.0000.000.023.20.0001.25.149/JTSCGR-10 Procurement of Furniture items	02/03/2026 17:00	15/03/2026 17:00	16/03/2026 16:30

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.

Jinnat Rehana Ferdousi
Principal
Jhalokathi Govt. Technical School and college
Jhalokathi

GD- 437

গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার
তথ্য ও সম্প্রচার মন্ত্রণালয়
চলচ্চিত্র-২ শাখা
বাংলাদেশ সচিবালয়, ঢাকা
www.moi.gov.bd

নং- ১৫.০০.০০০০.০৪১.০২.০০৩.২০.৮৮ তারিখঃ ১৬ ফাল্গুন ১৪৩২
০১ মার্চ ২০২৬

সরকারি অনুদানে পূর্ণদৈর্ঘ্য ও স্বল্পদৈর্ঘ্য চলচ্চিত্র নির্মাণের জন্য প্রস্তাব জমাদানের সময় বৃদ্ধি

চলচ্চিত্র শিল্পে মেধা ও সৃজনশীলতাকে উৎসাহিত করা এবং বাংলাদেশের সকল জনগোষ্ঠির আবহমান সংস্কৃতির প্রতিনিধিত্ব করার লক্ষ্যে মানবিক মূল্যবোধ সম্পন্ন, জীবনমুখী, শিল্পমান সমৃদ্ধ ও বহুস্রর বিবৃত করে এমন পূর্ণদৈর্ঘ্য ও স্বল্পদৈর্ঘ্য চলচ্চিত্র নির্মাণের জন্য ২০২৫-২৬ অর্থবছরে সরকারি অনুদান প্রদানের উদ্দেশ্যে কাহিনী ও চিত্রনাট্য বাছাইয়ের জন্য প্রযোজক/পরিচালক/চলচ্চিত্র নির্মাতা/চলচ্চিত্র ব্যক্তিত্ব/সংশ্লিষ্ট বিষয়ে পেশাদার প্রতিষ্ঠান/লেখক/চিত্রনাট্যকারদের নিকট থেকে পূর্ণাঙ্গ প্যাকেজ প্রস্তাব জমাদানের নিমিত্ত কতিপয় শর্তে গত ০৯ জানুয়ারি ২০২৬ তারিখে বিজ্ঞপ্তি প্রকাশ করা হয়। পূর্ণাঙ্গ প্যাকেজ প্রস্তাব জমাদানের সময়সীমা ২৯ জানুয়ারি ২০২৬ তারিখ পর্যন্ত সময় নির্ধারিত ছিল যা পরবর্তিতে ০১ মার্চ ২০২৬ পর্যন্ত বৃদ্ধি করা হয়।

০২। বিজ্ঞপ্তিতে উল্লিখিত শর্তাবলী অপরিবর্তিত রেখে পূর্ণাঙ্গ প্যাকেজ প্রস্তাব জমাদানের সময়সীমা ৩১ মার্চ ২০২৬ তারিখ পর্যন্ত পুনরায় বৃদ্ধি করা হলো। পূর্ণদৈর্ঘ্য ও স্বল্পদৈর্ঘ্য চলচ্চিত্র নির্মাণের জন্য অনুদান প্রাপ্তির লক্ষ্যে গল্প, চিত্রনাট্য এবং চলচ্চিত্র নির্মাণের সার্বিক পরিকল্পনাসহ পূর্ণাঙ্গ প্যাকেজ প্রস্তাব আগামী ৩১ মার্চ ২০২৬ তারিখ বিকাল ৫:০০ ঘটিকার মধ্যে তথ্য ও সম্প্রচার মন্ত্রণালয়ের চলচ্চিত্র-২ শাখায় (রুম নং- ৮০৮) পৌছাতে হবে।

মোহাঃ শারমিন আখতার
উপসচিব

GD-448

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Prime Minister's Office
Bangladesh Economic Zones Authority (BEZA)
National Special Economic Zone (NSEZ) Development Project
Biniyog Bhaban (Level-9), Plot#E6/B, Agargaon, Dhaka-1207
www.beza.gov.bd

e-Tender Notice-03/ (2025-26)

Memo No.: 03.07.0000.056.099.293.25-3499 Date-01 March 2026

The tender notice for the procurement of 'Road Network (Sub Zone-6 & 7, 11, 18) at NSEZ, Mirsora, Chattogram', Package No. WD 23-NSEZ-BEZA, e-GP Tender ID No. 1214074 is published in e-GP website. This is an online Tender, where only e-Tenders will be accepted in e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-Tender, registration on e-GP system (www.eprocure.gov.bd) is mandatory. For more details contact e-GP Help desk.

Mohammad Saifur Rahman
Project Director (Joint Secretary)
Phone: +8802 44826009
Email: pd.pride.beza@nsez.gov.bd

GD-440

Who might replace Khamenei?

CNN ONLINE

Iran's clerical regime now faces the prospect of trying to find a successor to Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei following his killing in joint US-Israeli strikes. CNN takes a look at some of the contenders for the position, according to experts and analysts.



The second son of Khamenei, Mojtaba is known to wield significant influence behind the scenes and has strong links with the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC), the most powerful military body in the country, as well as its Basij volunteer paramilitary force.



A lesser-known figure, Arafi is an established cleric with a track record in government institutions who was also a confidant of Khamenei.

He currently serves as deputy chairman of the Assembly of Experts and has been a member of the powerful Guardian Council, which vets election candidates and laws passed by parliament. He is also head of Iran's seminary system.

He is said to be tech-savvy and fluent in Arabic and English.

MD MEHDI MIRBAGHERI Mirbagheri is a hardline cleric and a member of the Assembly of Experts who represents the most conservative wing of the clerical establishment. According to IranWire, an activist outlet, he is strongly opposed to the West and believes a conflict between believers and infidels is inevitable.



Khomeini is the grandson of the founder of the Islamic Republic, Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, giving him religious and revolutionary legitimacy. He serves as the custodian of the Khomeini mausoleum but hasn't held public office and appears to have little influence with the country's security apparatus or ruling elite.

Khamenei: a revolutionary atop Islamic republic

AFP, Paris

Iran's Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei, whose death was confirmed by state media yesterday, was a pillar of the country's theocratic system since the Islamic revolution and saw off multiple crises over the decades, remaining defiant to the very end.

Aged 86, Khamenei dominated Iran since taking on the post for life in 1989 following the death of revolutionary founder Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini.

He remained in power after overcoming 1999 student demonstrations, 2009 mass protests sparked by disputed presidential elections and 2019 demonstrations that were brutally suppressed.

He also survived the 2022 2023 "Woman, Life, Freedom" movement sparked by the death in custody of Iranian Kurdish woman Mahsa Amini, who had been arrested for allegedly violating the strict dress code for women.

Khamenei was forced to go into hiding during the 12-day war against Israel in June, which exposed deep Israeli intelligence penetration of the Islamic republic that led to the killing of key security officials in air strikes.

But he survived that war and, after nationwide protests again shook Iran earlier this year, he emerged defiant as ever.

Khamenei lived under the tightest security, and his relatively infrequent public appearances were never announced in advance or broadcast live.

As supreme leader, he never set foot outside the country, a precedent set by his predecessor Khomeini following his triumphant return to Tehran from France in 1979.

Khamenei's last known foreign trip was an official visit to North Korea in 1989 as president, where he met Kim Il Sung.

There had long been speculation about his



health given his age, but there was nothing in his most recent appearance to fuel any new rumours.

Khamenei's right arm was partially paralysed following an assassination attempt in 1981 that authorities have always blamed on the People's Mujahedin of Iran (MEK) group, one-time allies of the revolution now outlawed in the country.

Repeatedly arrested under the shah for his anti-imperial activism, Khamenei shortly after the Islamic revolution became Friday prayer leader of Tehran and also served on the front line during the Iran-Iraq war.

He was elected president in 1981 following the assassination of Mohammad Ali Rajai, another attack blamed on the MEK.

During the 1980s, Khomeini's most likely successor was seen as the senior cleric

Ayatollah Hossein Ali Montazeri, but the revolutionary leader changed his mind shortly before his death after Montazeri objected to the mass executions of MEK members and other dissidents.

When Khomeini died and the Islamic republic's top clerical body – the Assembly of Experts – met, it was Khamenei they chose as leader.

Khamenei famously initially rejected the nomination. But the clerics stood in unison to seal his nomination and his grip on power never slackened.

Khamenei worked with six elected presidents. He was believed to have six children, although only one, Mojtaba, gained public prominence. He was placed under US sanctions in 2019 and is one of the most powerful backstage figures in Iran.

Global travel chaos deepens

Thousands of flights cancelled amid second day of fighting

REUTERS, Dubai

Global air travel remained heavily disrupted yesterday as continued air strikes kept major Middle Eastern airports, including Dubai, the world's busiest international hub, closed in one of the sharpest aviation shocks in recent years.

Key transit airports, including Dubai and Abu Dhabi in the UAE and Doha in Qatar, were shut or severely restricted as much of the region's airspace remained closed after US and Israeli strikes killed Iranian Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei on Saturday.

Israel said it launched another wave of strikes on Iran yesterday while loud blasts were heard for a second day near Dubai and over Doha after Iran launched retaliatory air attacks on the neighbouring Gulf states.



Dubai International Airport sustained damage during Iran's attacks while airports in Abu Dhabi and Kuwait were also hit. Thousands of flights have been affected across the Middle East, according to FlightAware.

Airspace over Iran, Iraq, Kuwait, Israel, Bahrain, the UAE and Qatar remained virtually empty, maps by Flightradar24 showed early yesterday.

The flight-tracking service said that a new "Notice to Airmen" (NOTAM) had extended closure of Iranian airspace until at least 0830 GMT on March 3.

The airport closures have rippled far beyond the Middle East.

Mixed reaction over Khamenei's killing

AFP, Paris

The world greeted with jubilation, anger or trepidation the news yesterday that Iran's supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei had been killed in the US-Israeli strikes on the Islamic republic one day earlier.

Iranians took to the streets, cheering with joy, setting off fireworks and playing celebratory music after reports of Khamenei's death, according to witnesses and video footage verified by AFP.

However, the thousands who did gather in the centre of Iran's capital were instead mourning Khamenei's death, according to AFP journalists.

The mourners, dressed mostly in black and some crying, chanted "death to America" and "death to Israel" in Enghelab (Revolution) Square, with many waving Iran's flags and holding photos of Khamenei.

In Istanbul, protesters carried portraits of Khamenei as they marched against the war, with some burning posters of US President Donald Trump and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

In Seoul, South Korea, protesters held "Hands off Iran" signs in front of the US embassy.

Similar protests took place in Hyderabad in India and in Athens, Greece.

However, the Iranian diaspora in Europe and the United States cheered Khamenei's death.

China yesterday said the killing was "a serious violation of Iran's sovereignty and security, a trampling on the aims and principles of the UN Charter and the



basic norms of international relations".

Russian President Vladimir Putin, a key ally of Tehran, slammed Khamenei's killing as a "a cynical violation of all norms of human morality and international law".

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu also called for Iranians to "overthrow the regime" after Khamenei's killing.

Pope Leo XIV called for an end to the "spiral of violence before it becomes an irreparable chasm," speaking to a crowd in St Peter's Square.

EU foreign policy chief Kaja Kallas said that the killing was a "defining moment".

"What comes next is uncertain. But there is now an open path to a different Iran, one that its people may have greater freedom to shape," Kallas wrote on X.

UK Defence Secretary John Healey said on Sunday that "few people will mourn" Khamenei, echoing Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese.

French government spokeswoman Maud Bregeon likewise said that France "could only be satisfied with his demise", calling him a "bloodthirsty dictator".



Smoke rises after an explosion following Israeli and US strikes on Iran in Tehran yesterday. The US aircraft carrier USS Abraham Lincoln was targeted with four ballistic missiles, Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corp said in a statement reported by state media.

PHOTO: REUTERS

গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার

ঔষধ প্রশাসন অধিদপ্তর

ঔষধ ভবন, মহাখালী, ঢাকা-১১১২

www.dgda.gov.bd

স্মারক নং-ডিজিডিএ/বিজ্ঞপ্তি/২৯-০২/০৯/৩৩৮১

তারিখঃ ০১/০৩/২০২৬

গণবিজ্ঞপ্তি

এতদ্বারা সংশ্লিষ্ট সকল প্রতিষ্ঠান ও সর্বসাধারণের অবগতির জন্য জানানো যাচ্ছে যে, স্বাস্থ্য সেবা বিভাগ, স্বাস্থ্য ও পরিবার কল্যাণ মন্ত্রণালয়ের স্মারক-৪৫.০০.০০০০.১৮২.৮২.০০১.২১ (অংশ-১), ৫৭, তারিখঃ ১৫/০২/২০২৬ বিশেষজ্ঞ পরামর্শক কমিটির সুপারিশের আলোকে ট্যাব্ল, ভ্যাক্সিন, ক্রিমিন এবং কোম্পানিগুলোর যুক্তিসঙ্গত মূল্যায়ন বিবেচনায় এনে নিম্নবর্ণিত প্রতিষ্ঠানসমূহের আমদানিকৃত ক্রোমোলারী স্টেন্টসমূহের সর্বোচ্চ খুচরা মূল্য (MRP) অনুমোদন/পুনর্নির্ধারণ করা হয়েছে, যা আগামী ০১/০৩/২০২৬ইং তারিখ হতে কার্যকর হবে।

SI No.	Name of Importer & Local Distributor	Name of the Product	Name of the Manufacturer	পূর্বের মূল্য (টাকা)	পুনর্নির্ধারিত মূল্য (টাকা)
1	Advanced Meditech	Alex Plus	Balton S.P Zoo, Poland	60,000.00	57,000.00
		Alex		60,000.00	57,000.00
		Abaris		60,000.00	57,000.00
2	Asia Pacific Medicals Ltd	Coroflex ISAR Neo	B. Braun Melsungen AG, Germany	55,000.00	52,000.00
		Coroflex ISAR		53,500.00	50,000.00
3	Alliance Medical	Amazonia Sir	Minvasys S.A.S France	53,000.00	50,000.00
4	Biva International	MAGMA	Qualimed Innovative Medizinprodukte, GmbH, Germany	37,000.00	30,000.00
		Suna Stent Delivery System		14,00.00	14,000.00
5	Biovascular International,	CRE 8	CID SpA, Italy	56,000.00	50,000.00
		Avantgarde		15,000.00	15,000.00
6	Business Link	Direct-Stent-Siro-Sirolimus Eluting Coronary Stent	InSitu Technologies Inc, USA	66,000.00	62,000.00
		Direct-Stent Cobalt Chromium Coronary Stent		30,000.00	30,000.00
7	Cardiac Solution Ltd,	Orsiro	Biotronik AG Switzerland	63,000.00	60,000.00
		Orsiro Mission		68,000.00	65,000.00
		Pro-Kinetic Energy		20,000.00	20,000.00
8	Cardioline	ITRIX Rapamycin	AMG International GmbH, Germany	36,000.00	36,000.00
		ARTHOS PICO		15,000.00	15,000.00
9	Cardinal Health Care	Genoss DES	Genoss Co, Ltd, South Korea	56,000.00	50,000.00
		genXSync Sirolimus Eluting		50,000.00	48,000.00
10	Cardiode	Limus Track	L2MTech GmbH, Germany	55,000.00	50,000.00
11	Delta Ltd.	Affinity-MS Mini Cobalt Chromium	Umbr Medical Products Inc. USA	60,000.00	55,000.00
12	EPIC Technologies	Yukon Choice PC	Translumina GmbH, Germany	53,000.00	50,000.00
13	Genevic Health Limited	Iht DEStiny BD	Ibrihospitex, Spain	55,000.00	52,000.00
14	Heart Quake Ltd	Euca limus	Eucatech AG, Germany	56,000.00	53,000.00
		CC Flex		15,000.00	15,000.00
15	The Heart Beat	Ivascular angiolite	Life Vascular Devices Biotech S.L (LVDB), Spain	62,000.00	58,000.00
		Inspiron		55,000.00	50,000.00
16	Life Line International	Combo Plus-bio-Engineered	Orbus Neich Medical BV, The Netherlands	56,000.00	53,000.00
17	Meril Bangladesh Pvt Ltd	Metafor	Meril Life Sciences Pvt. Ltd, India	40,000.00	38,000.00
		Evermine 50		50,000.00	47,000.00
		BioMime Morph		50,000.00	48,000.00
		BioMime		45,000.00	42,000.00
18	Medibud International	Synsiro Pro	Biotronik AG, Switzerland	60,000.00	56,000.00
19	Mtech Medical Solution,	GuReater CoCr	ipu Medical Technology (Beijing) Co. Ltd., China	55,000.00	50,000.00
20	M. R. Trading International,	Angiolite	Life Vascular Devices biotech Sl,Spain	53,000.00	50,000.00
21	National Health Care	Firehawk	Shanghai MicroPort Medical (Group) Co, Ltd, China	45,000.00	42,000.00
		Firehawk Liberty		58,000.00	54,000.00
22	Ocean Life Limited	Supraflex Cruz	Sahajan and Medical technologies Ireland Ltd, Ireland	55,000.00	52,000.00
		BioMatrix NeoFlex		60,000.00	57,000.00
23	Omega Health Care	BioMatrix Alpha	Biosensors Interventional technologies PTE Ltd, Singapore for Biosensors Europe SA, Switzerland	66,000.00	62,000.00
		Bio Freedom		68,000.00	65,000.00
24	PCI Support,	Yukon Chrome PC	Translumina GmbH Germany	60,000.00	56,000.00
25	M/s. The Spondon Limited	DESyne X2 Novolimus	Elixir Medical Corporation, USA	60,000.00	56,000.00
26	UniMed Limited	ULTIMASTER Tensei	Ashitaka Factory of Terumo Corporation, Japan	66,000.00	65,000.00
27	UniTrade Life Science Ltd.	Albuminus DES+	Concept Medical BV, The Netherland	63,000.00	60,000.00
28	M/s. Refresh Medical Device	Xlimus	Cardionovum GmbH Germany	58,000.00	55,000.00

১। হার্টের রিং (Stent) এর সর্বোচ্চ খুচরা মূল্য অনুসরণ করে ক্রয়-বিক্রয় করতে হবে। ব্যবহৃত হার্টের রিং এর প্যাকেটিং রোগীকে সরবরাহ করতে হবে।

২। Stent এর সর্বোচ্চ খুচরা মূল্য চিকিৎসা প্যাকেজে অন্তর্ভুক্ত করা যাবে না। Stent এর নাম, মূল্য ও উৎপাদনকারীর নাম উল্লেখপূর্বক ক্যাশমেমো প্রদান করতে হবে।

৩। হাসপাতাল কর্তৃক স্টেন্ট সরবরাহকারী হতে সার্ভিস চার্জ হিসেবে কোনভাবেই ৫% এর অতিরিক্ত অর্থ আদায় করা যাবে না। উক্ত সার্ভিস চার্জ রোগীর নিকট হতে আদায় করা যাবে না।

স্বাক্ষরিত/-

মহাপরিচালক

ঔষধ প্রশাসন অধিদপ্তর

ফোনঃ ০২২২২২-৮০৮০৩

Email: dgda.gov@gmail.com

GD-441

Another display of ‘might is right’

US-Israel military aggressions against Iran deeply concerning

We unequivocally condemn the US-Israel military aggression against Iran that has killed the country's supreme leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, and more than 200 others since February 28. We must, however, also state that Iran's retaliatory attacks against its own neighbours, targeting US assets there, benefit no one, neither the Iranians nor other Middle Easterners, let alone the rest of the world. Such actions have only served to escalate the situation.

The attack on Iran has been conducted breaking all international diplomatic norms, rules, and laws. After the latest round of talks between the US and Iran over the latter's "nuclear programme" concluded on February 26, the negotiator, Omani Foreign Minister Sayyid Badr bin Hamad Al Busaidi, expressed hope about its renewal. But the US initiated the attack in collusion with Israel even before the next phase of talks could resume. It is now clear that it was never about denuclearisation but about toppling the regime. What's worse is that among the first targets that were hit was a girls' school in southern Iran, not a nuclear facility.

At least that's what Israel's Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu appeared to relay in his Saturday morning speech. He said they believed the negotiations were "fruitless and deceitful" and Iran was only buying itself time "to rebuild their nuclear and missile capabilities" through the talks. Meanwhile, US President Donald Trump, in his Truth Social posts, said Khamenei's killing was "the single greatest chance for the Iranian people to take back their Country." A report published in *The Guardian* also claims that the military offensive was aimed more at toppling the Iranian regime rather than neutralising a nuclear threat.

Perhaps this should not come as a surprise, given what the US did in Venezuela just two months ago: abducting a sitting president and Trump expressing interest in running the country and fixing its oil infrastructure. Indeed, the current war once again indicates that the declarations countries made after World War II to respect the sovereignty of all states, whether big or small, no longer stand. Big powers—be it Russia invading Ukraine or the US bombing Iran without provocation—can do whatever they wish, breaching all international rules and norms. Small, militarily weak sovereign states are at the mercy of big powers.

What happens to Iran remains to be seen, but its continuous retaliatory offensive against its neighbours with US military bases will only invite more hostility and increase instability across the region. The impact of the war is already visible: thousands of flights have been disrupted, including over 50 flights just in Bangladesh. At least four Bangladeshis have been reportedly injured in drone attacks in Kuwait. The lives of many other Bangladeshi expatriates remain at risk as the Middle East is our main labour market. We urge the government to employ all its diplomatic efforts to ensure their safety. If this war continues for a considerable time, the world economy, particularly the energy supply, will suffer. The government must take pre-emptive actions to minimise the impact on Bangladesh.

We also call on world leaders and international bodies to defuse the situation and bring the warring parties back to the negotiation table. A world that is already experiencing subdued economic growth and facing pressures of trade wars and environmental crises cannot afford yet another war.

Rising student suicide rate alarming

Govt must give greater attention to students' mental health

We are alarmed by the findings of the latest survey by Anchal Foundation on the prevalence of suicide among students across the country. According to the report, at least 403 students from schools, colleges, universities, and madrasas died by suicide in 2025, up from 310 in 2024. Even more troubling is that nearly half of them—190 students—were school children. In addition, 92 college students, 77 university students, and 44 madrasa students also died by suicide during this period. The survey also found that suicide rates were higher among female students, 249 being girls. The situation is deeply disturbing and exposes our collective neglect towards students' mental health.

At the school level, 139 girls died by suicide compared with 51 boys, suggesting that adolescent girls may be particularly vulnerable to family pressures, social scrutiny and emotional distress. At the university level, male students slightly outnumbered females, reflecting stressors such as career uncertainty and anxieties about future. Depression, emotional stress, family disputes, mental instability, and sexual abuse remain major causes of suicide, while children face increasing harassment in digital spaces. For school students, competitive environments and exam-related stress are significant drivers. Urban alienation and fragmented family life may further heighten emotional vulnerability, particularly in the Dhaka division, which recorded the highest number of cases.

Apart from students, suicide rates among people of all ages remain alarmingly high. A recent report found that around 13,491 people died by suicide between January and November 2025—an average of 41 deaths per day. This underscores the urgent need for proper intervention in suicide prevention nationwide. Unfortunately, counselling services are scarce in most educational institutions, especially at the school level. Teachers are rarely trained to recognise early signs of depression or anxiety, while parents often miss subtle behavioural changes. The stigma surrounding mental health further discourages open conversation, leaving students to internalise distress until it becomes overwhelming.

To address the rising crisis of students' suicides, all educational institutions must provide comprehensive mental health support and screening. Teachers should be trained to recognise early signs of stress, depression, and anxiety, while primary school teachers should receive psychosocial training to support children's emotional development. Regular awareness programmes should be organised to strengthen communication between students and parents, and sustained media campaigns are needed to reduce stigma and encourage students to seek help. The state, educational institutions, and communities must work together to create safe, supportive spaces where students feel heard and valued.

Can Family Card reset our social protection system?



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SELIM RAIHAN

The social protection system in Bangladesh has always carried two truths together. On paper, it is large, diverse, and politically important. On the ground, it is often messy, fragmented, and sometimes unfair. The tension is back under the spotlight with the government's new Family Card initiative, scheduled to begin as a four-month pilot from March 10, covering 6,500 families in 14 upazilas, each receiving Tk 2,500 per month through mobile wallets or bank accounts.

Supporters see it as a bold step, even historic. Critics fear it may simply become one bigger programme layered on top of an already crowded landscape. The real question is not whether the Family Card is good or bad in principle; it is whether the country can use this moment to address the deeper design and governance failures that have long held back social protection.

Two features make this initiative politically and economically significant. First, the scale being discussed is unprecedented. If the government eventually brings two crore families under monthly support, it would cost roughly Tk 5,000 crore per month, or around Tk 60,000 crore a year. It is a macro-level commitment that will shape fiscal choices for years.

Second, the architecture proposed goes beyond cash transfer. The draft guideline reportedly envisions a Dynamic Social Registry, integration of existing TCB cards, and a longer-term ambition of turning the Family Card into a universal social identity instrument by 2030, while pushing the social protection budget towards three percent of GDP by 2028. If that direction is real and implemented properly, it could address a core problem Bangladesh has struggled with for decades: a system that has grown in pieces rather than as a coherent whole.

Bangladesh currently runs more than 100 social safety net programmes across 25 ministries, with a budget allocation reported at roughly two percent of GDP. Too often, it produces duplication, inconsistent eligibility rules, administrative waste, and room for discretion at the local level. As a result, some households receive multiple benefits while similarly

poor households receive none. While the draft guideline notes that 22.25 percent of the actual poor remain excluded, many studies indicate that the exclusion error could be more than twice this figure. When exclusion errors are that high, the moral argument for reform becomes as compelling as the technical one.

What the Family Card gets right

Three aspects deserve credit because they align with what serious reform requires.

First, using the household as the delivery unit. Many vulnerabilities are shared within the family: food insecurity, health shocks, rent pressure, and job loss. A family-based



VISUAL: ANWAR SOHEL

instrument can reduce the common problem of "one person, one benefit" designs, which miss the broader dependency structure.

Second, making women the primary recipients. The plan is to issue cards in the name of the mother or female head of household. This matters. There is strong global evidence that transfers routed to women more often translate into spending on food, health, and children's needs, and it can strengthen bargaining power inside the household.

Third, attempting a data-driven selection mechanism. The proposed use of Proxy Means Test (PMT) scoring, door-to-door data collection, verification by social services staff, and QR-coded cards signals an intention to limit patronage. But design intentions do not automatically become delivery

outcomes. That is where the real test begins.

Three biggest risks, and how to reduce them

First are targeting risks. PMT is not magic. It can be useful, but it can also misclassify households, especially in urban areas where incomes are irregular and assets are shared informally. Bangladesh's urban poor are often "working poor" who do not look poor on paper, yet remain one illness away from disaster. The pilot locations include major urban slums in Dhaka and other areas, which is good because it forces the system to confront real urban complexity early. What should be non-negotiable is a strong grievance and appeals mechanism, plus routine recertification. If the poor cannot contest exclusion, the registry will turn into another instrument of unfairness.

Second are fragmentation risks. A new programme can worsen the mess. If the Family Card simply adds a large cash transfer without consolidating older schemes, more duplication may emerge. The promise of integrating

the balance between redirected funds, new revenue, and savings gained from streamlining the system. Without that, the programme risks being scaled back in a messy way, which would hurt the very families it aims to protect.

The country's National Social Security Strategy (NSSS) is built around a lifecycle approach: support should respond to different risks at different stages of life, from early childhood nutrition to old age security. A single card is a strong tool for aid, but the government must ensure that popular cash handouts do not drain the funding and attention needed for high-impact services like nutrition and disability support.

Therefore, the best use of the Family Card is as infrastructure, not as the entire building. Build the registry, strengthen payment rails, improve verification, and then layer programmes in a coherent way: nutrition and maternal health where needed, education stipends where school dropout is high, climate-responsive support where disasters hit, and portable benefits for migrant workers.

If Bangladesh wants the Family Card to become a genuine reform lever, five practical commitments could define success: 1) a single dynamic social registry that all ministries must use, with interoperable data systems and clear rules on data privacy and access; 2) consolidation milestones, announced early—which programmes will be merged, which will be phased out, and what safeguards will protect current beneficiaries during transition; 3) independent monitoring and public dashboards, including inclusion and exclusion error estimates, payment regularity, and grievance resolution performance; 4) urban portability, so families who move for work do not lose benefits because their address changed; and 5) a credible financing plan, tied to domestic resource mobilisation and expenditure reprioritisation, so the promise does not become an unfunded mandate.

Social protection is not charity. It is an economic policy. If done well, it increases resilience, raises human capital, and reduces inequality in a way that growth alone cannot. Done poorly, it becomes a leaky bucket and a political battleground. The Family Card initiative, in that sense, can become Bangladesh's most serious attempt in years to move from fragmentation to an integrated system, anchored in a modern registry and cleaner delivery. Or it can become another large programme that inherits the old weaknesses: discretion, duplication, and distrust.

BNP's health agenda faces major execution challenges



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SHAIKH MASUDUL ALAM

The Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) has formulated its 2026 National Election Manifesto with the compelling philosophy of "Bangladesh Before All." Among its most notable pledges are health emergency funding, the introduction of family cards, farmer cards, and e-health cards, the recruitment of 100,000 community health workers, expansion of preventive and maternal-child healthcare, ensuring quality medical services at district and metropolitan levels, and allocating five percent of GDP to the health sector.

These commitments signal an ambitious vision for transforming Bangladesh's healthcare system. However, the reality on the ground presents formidable challenges.

For years, Bangladesh's health sector has struggled with neglect, political interference, and weak accountability. Out-of-pocket expenditure still accounts for 73 percent of total health spending, placing enormous financial burden on families. Meanwhile, non-communicable diseases (NCDs) have emerged as the leading cause of death, responsible for roughly 67 percent of all fatalities and 63 percent of disability-adjusted life years. Hypertension,

cardiovascular diseases, cancer, diabetes, and respiratory illnesses are rapidly reshaping the country's health profile.

Human resources remain another critical bottleneck. According to the Bangladesh Health Workforce Strategy 2024, 77,877 sanctioned posts—about 32 percent—remain vacant. Shortages are particularly severe among nurses and midwifery associates (62 percent), doctors (40 percent), allied health professionals (40 percent), and management staff (37 percent). While the BNP manifesto's pledge to recruit 100,000 additional health workers appears promising, numbers alone cannot guarantee improved services.

Bangladesh already has a substantial frontline workforce. Family Welfare Assistants, Health Assistants, and Community Clinic Health Care Providers play vital roles in delivering primary healthcare. Yet, concerns persist regarding absenteeism, weak supervision, and poor accountability. In many communities, frontline workers are rarely seen, family planning supplies are unavailable, and community clinics operate irregularly (sometimes run by substitute staff rather than designated providers). As

a result, patients frequently return home without care, and public trust in the system is eroded.

So, will recruiting more staff solve systemic problems, or simply expand inefficiencies? Without clear planning, strong management training, and effective accountability mechanisms, workforce expansion risks becoming a costly but ineffective move.

Currently, many services fall under local government rather than the Ministry of Health, contributing to the rapid and largely unregulated growth of private clinics. Weak regulatory oversight has allowed malpractice to flourish, including the spread of informal broker networks that steer vulnerable patients towards specific facilities for profit.

BNP's pledge to establish free, quality primary healthcare, inspired by the UK's National Health Service (NHS) General Practitioner model, is equally ambitious. The GP model emphasises continuity, accountability, and people-centred care. However, recreating the same success in Bangladesh will require more than structural replication. The proposed reliance on public-private partnerships raises legitimate

concerns about maintaining equity, continuity, and accountability—the core strengths of the GP model.

Urban primary healthcare presents additional complexities. Currently, many services fall under local government rather than the Ministry of Health, contributing to the rapid and largely unregulated growth of private clinics. Weak regulatory oversight has allowed malpractice to flourish, including the spread of informal broker networks that steer vulnerable patients towards specific facilities for profit. This not only compromises service quality but also undermines public confidence.

Financing remains perhaps the greatest challenge. The national health budget for FY 2025-26 stands at Tk 41,908 crore, a modest share of total public spending. In contrast, allocating five percent of GDP to health would require approximately Tk 250,000 crore, which is an enormous fiscal leap. While such a commitment is commendable, fulfilling it will demand sustained political will, economic capacity, and careful prioritisation.

The BNP manifesto presents a bold and inspiring philosophy. But philosophy alone cannot heal patients. Real transformation will depend on strengthening accountability, improving governance, enforcing regulation, and ensuring that existing resources function effectively. If the vision of "Bangladesh Before All" is to succeed, harmony must be created between philosophy, policy, and practice. Only then can the promise of healthcare for all become a lived reality rather than an electoral aspiration.

Khamenei’s death and the uncertain future of the Islamic Republic



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ASIF BIN ALI

When US and Israeli jets went over Tehran on February 28, it was not another round of shadow warfare. It was a daytime assault on the core of the Iranian state, designed around the working day on Pasteur Street so that the leadership would be at their desks when the missiles hit. Within hours, reports from Tehran, Washington, and Jerusalem converged on one blunt fact: Iran’s supreme leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, was dead, killed in the first wave of strikes on his office compound. Iranian state media later confirmed what Benjamin Netanyahu and Donald Trump had already said in their statements and social media posts.

For those familiar with the Middle East, this moment did not come out of the blue. Since 1979, the Islamic Republic has built its foreign and security policy around two linked goals: survival of the revolutionary regime at home and expansion of its influence abroad. On the other side, Israel has spent decades trying to prevent an ideologically anti-Israel regime from ever reaching nuclear capacity, while preserving its own military superiority over any regional rival. Washington’s approach has shifted across administrations, but the basic priorities have remained stable: maintain a regional order friendly to US interests, protect Israel and key Arab partners, secure sea lanes and energy routes, and prevent nuclear proliferation. From Obama’s 2015 nuclear deal to Trump’s 2018 withdrawal and “maximum pressure” campaign, to Biden’s stalled attempt to revive diplomacy amid the Gaza and Red Sea crises, US policy has shifted in tactics but consistently sought to contain Iran and protect its Gulf assets while avoiding a full-scale regional war.

The new joint offensive changes the scale and ambition. According to detailed

accounts from Washington-based analysts and journalists, the operation—dubbed “Epic Fury” by the US and “Roaring Lion” by Israel—was months in the making. It was not just about punishing Iran for its regional activities or slowing its nuclear and missile programmes, but has been openly described by Trump as a “regime change” operation. US and Israeli leaders have addressed the Iranian public directly, urging them to “take back” their country once the bombing eases.

Washington and Tel Aviv have three overlapping goals in this war. First, they want to remove what they see as an intolerable security threat by crippling Iran’s near-nuclear capacity and restoring deterrence. Second, they aim to break the backbone of Iran’s regional network by degrading the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC), its missile and drone industries, and the wider “axis of resistance” that stretches from Lebanon to Yemen. Third, both leaderships are using the confrontation to shore up their domestic standing, projecting strength to answer internal critics and the trauma of recent wars. In that sense, the campaign targets Iran’s capabilities abroad, its regime resilience at home, and the political vulnerabilities of US and Israeli leaders at the same time, raising the question of whether these goals are strategically coherent or if they simply deepen a long conflict with no clear exit.

Tehran, in turn, is fighting for its life. The Islamic Republic has always presented itself as the anti-imperialist alternative in the region: a state that stands up to Israel, resists US domination, and champions “the oppressed.” It is an ideological project sitting on top of a very real power structure: the Supreme Leader’s office, the IRGC and its

economic empire, the security services, and a network of loyalist clerics and bureaucrats. Khamenei’s killing does not automatically erase that structure. Instead, it forces it into emergency mode.

Within hours of the Tehran strikes, Iran launched waves of missiles and drones at Israel as well as US bases in Bahrain, Qatar, Kuwait, and the UAE. Gulf cities like Doha saw their skies lit up as air defences intercepted

deterrence. Iran’s missile and drone arsenal is the main tool that allows it to threaten Israeli cities, Gulf infrastructure, and shipping lanes without having a modern air force. If that capability is destroyed or heavily degraded, the regime loses both leverage and prestige.

It may be recalled that Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, the founding leader, died in 1989 and handed power to Khamenei through a controlled succession. This time, the Supreme

suddenly relax repression or open up genuine political competition. More arrests and more securitisation of everyday life should be expected, all justified in the name of national defence. The second is that the nuclear file may move in a darker direction. Before these strikes, there were still debates within Iran’s elite about the costs and benefits of openly pursuing a bomb. Now, after seeing the limits of deterrence without nuclear weapons, the argument for crossing the nuclear threshold as an “insurance policy” will gain strength in some circles. A campaign launched to prevent a nuclear-armed Iran may end up making that outcome more likely.

Shift one’s gaze from Tehran, Washington, and Tel Aviv to the Gulf capitals, the mood is less triumphant and much grimmer. Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Qatar, and Oman spent months urging the US not to go down this path because they knew they will be on the front row when Iran retaliates. This is why we see the same dual message from Riyadh, Abu Dhabi, and Doha: criticism of Iranian strikes and expressions of solidarity with the victims, combined with urgent calls for a ceasefire and diplomacy, and clear signals that they do not want their territory to be used for an open-ended campaign of regime change. There have been contradictory reports of prior lobbying for an attack on Iran. But the bigger question is, where does it leave the region now?

One scenario is a short, brutal war that ends with a shaky ceasefire, leaving a militarised Iran still in place, more tied to Moscow and Beijing, and less willing to talk to Washington. A second is a drawn-out regional war in which Iran’s allies in Iraq, Lebanon, and Yemen are fully activated, turning the conflict into a long, uncontrollable bleed across the Middle East. The third is internal fracture in Iran, with protests and elite splits leading to a messy transition, fragmented power centres, and dangerous uncertainty over who controls nuclear and missile assets.

Across all three, the core risk is miscalculation: Washington and Tel Aviv believe they can “solve” the Iran problem. Tehran believes it can still absorb the blows and spread the pain across the region. History suggests that none of them is as in control as they think.



A woman holds an image of Iran’s Former Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei when protesting against US-Israel strikes on February 28 in Tehran.

PHOTO: REUTERS

Appointing a new governor for Bangladesh Bank has never been so chaotic



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BIRUPAKSHA PAUL

If morning shows the day, appointing a new governor to the central bank of the country by abruptly ousting his predecessor testifies neither prudence nor fairness for the newly elected BNP government. It does not dovetail with the philosophic call of BNP’s iconic leader, Khaleda Zia, who spoke about building a “knowledge-based society” on the very day when the previous prime minister, Sheikh Hasina, was ousted from power. Nor does it pass the litmus test for BNP’s election manifesto where the party vowed to build a “meritocratic Bangladesh.”

There has been no sign of upholding those commitments, particularly during what went

the central bank premises was not only disrespectful to a monetary scholar and an erudite banker, but also ominous to the future of leadership in the money and financial industry. The government failed to handle the situation in a tactical, respectful manner at a time when its welcoming flowers were still fresh.

If the forced ouster had happened during the Yunus government—the interim period that was largely characterised by mobocracy and vandalism—people would likely have accepted it as one of so many similar occurrences. But the resurfacing of mobocracy under a ruling party that earned an absolute majority in parliament via a landslide victory

exchange reserves, increasing remittances and exports, completing the merger of the dysfunctional Islami Shariah-based banks, and finally ensuring financial stability in the market. He was not necessarily successful in achieving all his goals effectively, but his policy directions purely complied with the textbook solutions of central banking, whose conspicuous absences during the Awami regime rule triggered high inflation and dwindling reserves.

Mansur failed to bring inflation down to five percent not for his inaction but for the utter fiscal incapacity of the finance ministry. Monetary tightening by raising the policy rate and thus restricting private credit growth exerted downward pressure on inflation for sure, but excessive government borrowings from the banking system contributed to excessive liquidity, which in turn revitalised price hikes. Eventually, inflation didn’t cascade down as expected—a failure attributable mainly to three inefficient ministries: finance, commerce, and home. The home ministry was undoubtedly the worst during the interim. Institutional factors such as syndication by big cartels and extortion by political *mastans* added fuel to the flame of inflation. And the governor did not get adequate cooperation from his colleagues sitting at the Secretariat. That largely says why inflation dominated the market while reserves were on the rise, diluting the fear of any abrupt shortage of foreign currencies.

What the market expected was that the former governor would continue with the new government until the regime found another “Mansur,” with formidable qualifications in the line of macroeconomics, central banking, financial markets, and public policy. These expectations became more valid when the BNP championed meritocracy in its manifesto and speeches. The selection of ministers made a respectable balance between political loyalty and expertise. But the choice of the new governor became highly disproportionate with BNP’s recent nominations for other leadership positions.

Being a businessman is not a fault for the new governor. Rather, his business experiences can add value to his policymaking. But being recorded as a loan defaulter in the past and

now being appointed as a regulator to fight the indomitable culture of default create doubts about whether the governor will really be a good fit for this position.

The selection process of the central bank governor in all developed countries is highly rigorous and challenging. While stakeholders pay little attention to the selection of different ministers, who are picked from the winning party, the governor’s selection goes through huge debates and intellectual scrutiny. The US president, for example, proposes the name of the Federal Reserve chair and Congress jumps into a wide-scale investigation and evaluation of the candidate.

While most governors hold doctorate degrees in economics, finance, banking, or public policy, having PhDs is not enough to be eligible for the position. Other attributes such as publications, policy advocacy, profound knowledge, professional

background, strong personality, and recognition in the relevant fields are deeply desired when a central bank governor’s credentials are examined before making the final decision on the leadership post. It will be hard for the government to convince the stakeholders, economists, and policy experts that the party leaders carried out a serious homework before making the decision about the post of the governor of the Bangladesh Bank that holds the helm of the economy.

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

Office of the Executive Engineer

Education Engineering Department

Pirojpur

www.eed.pirojpur.gov.bd

Tender No. XEN/EED/PIROJ/175

Date: 01.03.2026

e-Tender Notice No. e-GP/13/EED/PIR/2025-26, Date: 01.03.2026

e-Tender is invited in the e-GP Web Portal (www.eprocure.gov.bd) for the procurement of following works. Details are given below:

Sl No.	PackageNo. & Tender ID No.	Description of works	Last selling date & time	Last submission (date & time)	Tender closing & opening (date & time)
01	44. ID No. 1219828	Site Development at Pirojpur Technical School & College (TSC), Sadar, Pirojpur.	15-Mar-2026 15:30	16-Mar-2026 12:30	16-Mar-2026 13:00
02	44. ID No. 1235001	Construction of Internal Road at Pirojpur Technical School & College (TSC), Sadar, Pirojpur.	15-Mar-2026 15:30	16-Mar-2026 12:30	16-Mar-2026 13:00
03	WD-228. ID No. 1234981	Construction of Retaining Wall, Boundary Wall and Main Gate of Pirojpur Polytechnic Institute under Sadar Upazila, Pirojpur.	15-Mar-2026 15:30	16-Mar-2026 12:30	16-Mar-2026 13:00
04	e-GP/W-26/EED/PIR/7016/ SHED/ 2024-2025 ID No. 1234923	Construction of pile works & single storey academic building with 6-storied foundation IN/C. sanitary, water supply & electrification works (FY: 2024-2025) at Collectorate School & College, Sadar, Pirojpur. (RMS No. 1047729).	15-Mar-2026 15:30	16-Mar-2026 12:30	16-Mar-2026 13:00

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GD-445

17 killed at pro-Iran protests in Pakistan

FROM PAGE 12
saw tear gas even before the planned start of a rally at 3:00 pm.

In the northern city of Skardu, protesters stormed and set fire to a United Nations office, causing black smoke to rise from the building, an AFP reporter saw.

At least three nearby vehicles were completely burned.

Thousands of people also took to the streets in the eastern city of Lahore.

Since the launch of the US-Israeli operations, Prime Minister Sharif has announced several calls with other regional leaders -- whose countries have been targeted by Iranian retaliatory attacks -- and urged restraint.

His statements have notably called the attacks on Iran an Israeli operation -- excluding mention of the major US involvement.

The killing also prompted governments across Muslim-majority South and Southeast Asia to reiterate calls for restraint as protests flared in several cities, with some religious and political movements hailing the cleric as a "martyr".

Dhaka calls

FROM PAGE 12
residing in the affected countries.

The Middle East is Bangladesh's major labour market, including Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Bahrain, Qatar, Kuwait and Oman.

Meanwhile, Prime Minister's Foreign Affairs Adviser Humaiun Kobir yesterday said the government's top priority is the safety of Bangladeshi expatriates living in the Middle East and assisting passengers waiting at airports.

"We are coordinating properly so that none of our citizens face distress, whether those waiting in the country or those abroad who may be worried due to the current situation in the Middle East," he told reporters after a meeting with Prime Minister Tarique Rahman at the Secretariat.

Kobir said he personally visited the airport along with the aviation minister to oversee the situation as per the directives of the prime minister.

The adviser added that the government is assisting outbound workers whose visas may expire due to travel disruptions and is in contact with the diplomatic community of destination countries to address such issues.

The Middle East is also Bangladesh's main source of petroleum, and experts say a prolonged war could affect oil supplies and push up prices.

Humaiun Kobir, however, said there was no reason for Bangladesh to be worried about fuel supplies despite growing instability in the Middle East following the attacks by the US and Israel on Iran.

"At this moment, with the stock we have, there should not be any major problem. We had faced similar crises before. There may be some fluctuation in energy-related matters, but overall, we are well prepared," Kobir said.

He added that Bangladesh wants de-escalation of the conflict through diplomacy and urged a peaceful resolution of the crisis.

Afghan, Pak forces

FROM PAGE 12
Tariq Fazal has refuted social media reports that Pakistan halted its operations against Afghan Taliban, reports Dawn online.

"The reality is the opposite. In view of the current regional situation, sharing Pakistan Air Force and drone footage with the media has been temporarily stopped. The purpose of this decision is to safeguard national security and operational strategy, not to halt the operations," he wrote in a post on X.

Drones were also heard by an AFP journalist in the border province of Khost, while in Jalalabad city -- between Kabul and the border -- an AFP photographer saw a jet.

Diplomatic efforts have intensified, with Saudi Arabia, Russia, China, the European Union and United Nations urging restraint and calling for talks. The US said it supports Pakistan's right to defend itself.

The violence follows air strikes inside Afghanistan this week that Pakistan said targeted militant infrastructure. Afghanistan described the strikes as a violation of sovereignty and announced retaliatory operations along their shared border.

Iran, which shares borders with both Afghanistan and Pakistan, had offered to help facilitate dialogue before itself coming under attack on Saturday from Israel and the US bent on diminishing Iran's military capability.

Pakistan has said Afghanistan harbours Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) militants, which it said are waging an insurgency inside Pakistan.



Shiite Muslims gather during an anti-US and -Israel protest in Skardu in Pakistan's Gilgit-Baltistan region yesterday. Pro-Iranian protesters angered by the death of Iran's supreme leader Ali Khamenei tried to storm the US consulate in Pakistan's Karachi on the day, leaving eight dead. PHOTO: AFP

Migrant workers in limbo as flights to ME uncertain

FROM PAGE 12
welfare minister, was overseeing arrangements to ensure passengers do not suffer due to the disruptions.

The state minister further said rescheduled flights had been finalised and that arrangements were made to operate the previously suspended flights by tomorrow and transport affected passengers. "However, if the situation in the Middle East escalates or is prolonged, further steps will be taken through consultations."

He said the rescheduling was being done so that passengers, including those travelling from remote areas, would have sufficient time to reach the airport. He urged passengers to contact their travel agencies or airlines before heading to the airport.

Millat also said Prime Minister Tarique Rahman was personally monitoring the situation and issuing instructions. "Passenger care is being prioritised, including arrangements for liftar."

Meanwhile, Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment Minister Ariful Haque Choudhury yesterday said food and accommodation had been arranged for 850 passengers of cancelled flights.

Airport officials said that so far at least 40 flights departed Dhaka for various destinations, including Middle East, until 10:00pm yesterday, while 40 flights arrived from different destinations.

AIRLINES UPDATE SCHEDULES

Biman Bangladesh Airlines said that yesterday (March 1), all of its Middle East-bound flights would depart on schedule except those to Doha, Dubai, and Abu Dhabi. The airline also requested passengers to arrive at the airport at least four hours before their scheduled departure time.

Biman spokesperson and General Manager (public relations) Bosra Islam said a Saudi Arabia-bound flight (BG339), which was suspended at 1:15am on Saturday night, will leave from Dhaka for Riyadh at 1:00pm today.

At 4:35pm yesterday, Biman flight BG135 departed from Chattogram for Jeddah carrying 419 passengers.

Meanwhile, Salam Air flight OV 403 departed from Oman's Muscat for Chattogram at 5:50pm, local time (3:50pm BD time). It landed in the port city later around 10:47pm.

On Saturday, 20 international flights were cancelled from Shah Amanat International Airport, according to airport officials.

US Bangla Airlines spokesperson Kamrul Islam said the airline operated its scheduled flights to Jeddah, Riyadh, and Muscat yesterday but temporarily suspended flights to Dubai, Abu Dhabi, and Sharjah in the UAE and to Qatar's Doha, considering the situation in the Middle East.

He added that US Bangla would contact passengers as soon as flights to the UAE and Qatar become

operational.

For flight-related information, he requested passengers dial 13605 or 0177777800 806.

FLIGHTS CANCELLED

HSIA authorities said that on Saturday, amid security concerns, Iran, Iraq, Kuwait, the UAE, Bahrain, Qatar, and Jordan closed their airspace, triggering the cancellation of the flights from Dhaka and Chattogram.

Emirates cancelled one flight to the UAE, Gulf Air cancelled one to Bahrain, flydubai cancelled one to the UAE, Air Arabia cancelled three to the UAE, US-Bangla cancelled six, and Biman cancelled 11 flights to different destinations.

Later, 40 flights were cancelled on different Middle East routes. Jazeera Airways cancelled two flights to Kuwait, Emirates cancelled five to the UAE, Gulf Air cancelled two to Bahrain, flydubai cancelled four to the UAE, Qatar Airways cancelled two to Qatar, Salam Air cancelled two to Oman, Air Arabia cancelled eight to the UAE, Kuwait Airways cancelled two to Kuwait, US-Bangla cancelled four, and Biman cancelled nine.

With no update on the reopening of airspace, at least 11 flights were also cancelled yesterday afternoon, according to airport officials. Qatar Airways cancelled four flights, Emirates cancelled five, and Gulf Air cancelled two flights.

PASSENGERS LEFT WAITING

Md Kawsar, 26, from Feni's Parshuram, said he was travelling back to Saudi Arabia but does not know what fate is waiting for him.

He said his family was in two minds after watching reports about the situation, but he felt he had no option. He came to Bangladesh on a month-long leave and now had to return. "I asked my company what I should do. They said the situation was manageable, and that I should return if possible."

On the other hand, Mohon Bhuiya, 50, who came to the airport from Cumilla's Chouddagram with relatives, said he was travelling to Dubai, but his flight scheduled at 8:05am on Saturday was cancelled. "I came to the airport around 3:00am but was informed of the cancellation around 6:00am. I was then told to leave."

Golam Noor, a resident of Brahmanbaria's Nasirnagar, returned from Jeddah on three months' leave. He went to HSIA at 3:00pm for a flight scheduled for 8:45pm on Saturday and learned that flights were not operating and was asked to leave.

Noor said he tried again yesterday, as he must reach Jeddah since his visa will expire in two days. "I spoke to airlines authorities and my workplace, who told me to arrive within the stipulated time because they are not sure if they can extend my visa."

CIA intel guided

FROM PAGE 1
for months, the Times reported, citing people familiar with the operation, and learned that a meeting of top Iranian officials was set for Saturday morning at a leadership compound in the heart of Tehran.

Washington and Tel Aviv originally planned to launch strikes on Iran at night, but officials adjusted the plan based on the CIA intelligence, according to the Times.

The US gave the information to Israel, which planned to carry out the attack on Iranian leadership, the newspaper reported.

The operation began about 6:00am in Israel (0400 GMT), and long-range missiles struck the compound about 9:40 am, the Times said.

Senior Iranian national security officials were in one building at the compound, and Khamenei was in a nearby building.

In addition to Khamenei, two top Iranian military leaders were killed in the bombing: the chief of the Revolutionary Guards, General Mohammad Pakpour, and another top security adviser, Ali Shamkhani, Iran's judiciary confirmed.

US President Donald Trump said in a post on his Truth Social platform that Iran's top leader was killed after intelligence pinpointed his movements.

"He was unable to avoid our Intelligence and Highly Sophisticated Tracking Systems and, working closely with Israel, there was not a thing he, or the other leaders that have been killed along with him, could do," Trump said.

The two US sources and the US official, speaking on condition of anonymity, said that confirmation of Khamenei's meeting with top advisers put the Israeli-US air and naval operation into motion.

The location of the meeting was not immediately clear. But Khamenei's high-security compound in Tehran was struck at the beginning of the operation, and satellite imagery reviewed by Reuters confirmed that it had been destroyed.

The impact of Khamenei's death remained to be seen.

But in a pre-attack assessment, the US Central Intelligence Agency concluded that he could be replaced by IRGC hardliners, according to two sources briefed on the intelligence.

ICT identifies

FROM PAGE 12
verbal testimonies of three police constables -- Ajoy Gosh, Abdur Rahman, and Asif Khan -- instead of the documentary evidence on record?" the tribunal asked, citing contradictions between witness testimonies and official arms registers.

It noted that constable Ajoy, who claimed he refused to fire despite orders, returned only 18 out of 40 bullets, casting serious doubt on his assertion of non-participation. The court further questioned why he allegedly complied with the orders to surrender his weapon and ammunition if he had indeed defied instructions to shoot.

The tribunal also criticised investigators for failing to implicate or examine SI Md Ashraful Islam, who admitted before a magistrate that he had actively participated in the Chankharpul operation and provided a detailed account of events. Despite his self-incriminating statement, Ashraful was neither made an accused nor produced as a prosecution witness.

The verdict revealed that at least 25 officers were issued Chinese rifles, shotguns, and submachine guns (SMGs), along with a large supply of ammunition, yet most of these weapons were never accounted for.

The tribunal described the investigation as "seriously flawed" and questioned the absence of video evidence showing the actions of other armed personnel, beyond the three accused constables.

ICT-1 further expressed concerns over the mysterious absence of the Ramna Zone deputy commissioner from the case records, despite Chankharpul falling under his jurisdiction.

"It is not understood why all those forces deployed with lethal weapons and ammunition have not been implicated in the case. It is improper to decide without trial who used or did not use arms during the occurrence," the tribunal observed.

The court also observed that former DMP commissioner Habibur Rahman, joint commissioner Sudeep Kumar Chakrabarty, ADC Shah Alam Mohammad Akhtarul Islam, and assistant commissioner Mohammad Imrul fled the country following the fall of the Sheikh Hasina government, stating that their absconding "lends support to the presumption of their guilt".

However, it criticised law enforcement agencies for allowing ADC Akhtarul to remain at large for a considerable period after the regime change, effectively enabling his escape.

On January 26, the tribunal sentenced three former senior police officials, including Habibur, to death for killing six people in the Chankharpul area. Five other former policemen were handed various jail terms in the same case.

I had no role in Khaleda’s eviction

FROM PAGE 4

He said military intelligence had informed him that disappearances were taking place but did not provide specific details.

He denied attempting to influence Ziaul during the investigation into the Narayanganj seven-murder case and rejected claims that a hostile relationship developed after Ziaul allegedly refused to comply.

Referring to his earlier testimony, Iqbal said he could not investigate allegations that India’s Research and Analysis Wing (RAW) operated an office inside DGFI headquarters, as the agency was beyond his operational authority.

He also denied amassing wealth through benefits from the Hasina government. He dismissed allegations that he had tried to portray Ziaul as a “serial killer” without documentary evidence.

Answering further questions, he said army operations in the CHT

during his tenure as GOC resulted in multiple deaths, including members of the Shanti Bahini, and that some suspects died while in temporary custody.

He also denied owning Winnievision Power Plant Limited, saying he never received approval to operate any power plant under the Hasina government and that he is only the chairman of Uni Vision Power Limited.

At one point, tribunal chair Justice Md Golam Mortuza Mozumder cautioned Iqbal against unnecessary elaboration, saying, “Talking too much may harm the case.”

Meanwhile, two women broke down before ICT-2 yesterday while recounting how their husbands were shot dead during the July uprising in Kushtia.

Laboni Akhter Ity, wife of Ashraful Islam, and Fahima Khatun, wife of gold trader Suruj Ali Babu, testified as prosecution witnesses in a case against

Mahbubul Alam Hanif and three other local Awami League leaders – district president Sadar Uddin Khan, general secretary Azgar Ali, and city general secretary Ataur Rahman Khan Ata – over the killing of six people, including their husbands.

Laboni said Ashraful joined the protests on August 4 after witnessing police brutality against a boy.

On August 5, Ashraful called her from outside Kushtia Model Police Station amid heavy gunfire, saying he could not return home. That was their last conversation. He later died of gunshot injuries.

Fahima said her husband was shot while protesting near Burmese Goli on August 5 and later died at Kushtia General Hospital.

Both women alleged the killings were carried out on the orders of senior Awami League leaders and police officials and demanded justice.

Jamaat activist

FROM PAGE 4

the incident,” he added.

“One of the people critically injured in the clashes later died while being taken to Dhaka. Following a post-mortem at Chuadanga 250-bed General Hospital, the body was handed over to the family,” Chuadanga Superintendent of Police Mohammad Monirul Islam told The Daily Star.

Jibannagar Upazila Nirbahi Officer Md Ashraful Alam Rasel said tension remained high in the area.

“Police, army, and other law enforcement personnel visited the scene at night. An application has been submitted to the deputy commissioner requesting additional forces,” he added.

According to police and locals, the clash erupted from an earlier attack on Mehdi Hasan, convener of Hasadah union Swechhchasebak Dal, at Sutia village on February 13. Police rescued Hasan and admitted him to the upazila health complex.

On Saturday evening, Molizur and Hafizur were travelling with a few activists to the party office at Hasadah Bazar on motorcycles when they were obstructed in front of the Kamil madrasa by Mehdi, who allegedly assaulted them. In the ensuing retaliation, at least six people were injured, they added.

Jibannagar upazila BNP President Anwar Hossain Khan held Jamaat responsible for the incident, claiming that the party had been repeatedly attacking BNP leaders and activists since the election.

He alleged that Jamaat men had brutally assaulted the Swechhchasebak Dal leader before handing him over to police in an injured condition, which led to the clash.

Upazila Jamaat Ameer Maulana Sazedur Rahman countered that Jamaat leaders and activists were innocent and had been attacked with locally made weapons.

Chuadanga-2 lawmaker and Ameer of district Jamaat, Md Ruhul Amin, told The Daily Star that it was not a clash but an attack.

He said a young man from Sutia village had gone to Hasadah Bazar on Saturday to buy iftar items. There, BNP activists assaulted him. Later, our men went to the spot and asked the person who had beaten him to come forward for a mutual settlement. They were standing beside the market at the time. Then 20 to 25 men arrived on motorcycles and launched a sudden attack. He said one activist was killed and three others were in critical condition. They have been admitted to Chuadanga Sadar Hospital. “A total of five of our men were injured in the attack. We demand a fair investigation and justice over the incident.”

Islamist parties condemn US-Israel attacks

FROM PAGE 3

“Ensuring international law, state sovereignty, and the protection of civilians is now the most urgent priority,” he said.

Jamaat also staged a demonstration at the north gate of the Baitul Mukarram National Mosque yesterday afternoon, followed by a procession through Bijoynagar and Kakrail till the Shantinagar intersection.

Addressing the event, ATM Azharul Islam, the party’s naye-b-e-ameer, alleged that those who “cannot tolerate the rise of

Islam” are using Israel in an attempt to destroy Iran.

He also criticised the role of the UN, saying that if it sides with powerful states, questions may arise about its necessity in maintaining world peace.

In a separate statement, IAB Ameer Mufti Syed Muhammad Rezaul Karim said his party strongly condemns the killing of Iran’s top religious leader in a missile strike at his residence, terming it a barbaric act.

Rezaul Karim said such “US-Israeli brutality” could

turn the entire Middle East into a flashpoint and its repercussions would be felt worldwide.

Bangladesh Khelafat Majlis Ameer Mamunul Haque and Secretary General Jalaluddin Ahmad, in a joint statement, described the attacks on Iran and the killing of Khamenei as a “blatant disregard for established international law and norms”, adding that the conflict is jeopardising regional stability and security while fuelling global concern and anger.

Addressing a rally

at Baitul Mukarram’s north gate, Khelafat Majlis Secretary General Ahmad Abdul Quader also condemned the US strikes on Iran and alleged that the Trump administration had violated US law.

He said assassinating the top leader of a sovereign country cannot be justified under any international norm.

Quader further claimed that over 100 children were killed in a strike on a school in Iran, describing it as a grave crime against humanity.

A relative

FROM PAGE 4

Yesterday afternoon, police took the accused to the crime scene and recovered a hammer, wooden stick, and some other evidence.

“Samples have also been collected for DNA testing to corroborate the confessional statement,” said the SP.

Jamila’s sister Nitu told The Daily Star that Sharif had been stalking her sister for a while, but she rejected his offer.

Dr Sharmin Sobnom, a forensic physician at Pabna Medical College and Hospital, said, “Samples have been collected for chemical analysis to confirm whether the girl was raped. We will get the reports within two or three days.”

The bodies were handed over to the family yesterday following autopsies.

Justice for July

FROM PAGE 3

On ordinances issued during the interim government, Nahid said it is now the responsibility of the current parliament to approve them. He said the ruling and opposition parties could reach a consensus on the matter during the session.

“The parliament should be declared a council representing the July uprising movement, take oath, and bring the fascist president under arrest,” he said.

He also urged party leaders and activists to actively uphold the demands raised during the uprising.

At the programme, NCP spokesperson Asif Mahmud Shojib Bhuyain said, “We want the BNP to take the oath for the Constitutional Reform Council at its first session on March 12. At the same session, the president must be impeached.”

India to resume full

FROM PAGE 3

“Discussions during the meeting covered visa services, border management, security cooperation, and broader bilateral engagement. There was no specific discussion on reopening tourist visas separately,” Salahuddin said.

He also said the Indian envoy met him as part of routine courtesy following the new government’s formation.

The minister said Bangladesh sought India’s cooperation based on mutual interests, dignity, respect, and benefit.

Referring to border security and border killings, a key focus of the discussion, Salahuddin said, “We want our Border Guard Bangladesh and India’s Border Security Force to hold continuous meetings to avoid such incidents.”

Salahuddin said Bangladesh wants to move its relations with India forward, not backwards, adding that the foundation of Bangladesh-India bilateral relations should rest on people-to-people contact, not ties between political parties of the two countries.

“We want to renew our relations by learning from past experiences. We do not want to see our interdependence as weakness, but as strength. The basis of our relationship will be shared interests,” he said, adding that the two countries share a common history and culture.

The home minister requested the Indian high commissioner to reopen the visa centres and increase the rate of visa issuance.

In response, Pranay Verma said India was issuing adequate medical visas. However, over the

past one and a half years, various visa centres have faced mob attacks and protests, as well as broader security concerns, which led to closures and a reduced rate of visa issuance.

With a political government now established in Bangladesh and the law and order situation improving, the Indian visa centres would be reopened gradually once security was ensured, and visa issuance would increase step by step, he added.

Salahuddin assured the envoy that there would be no mob attacks on Indian visa centres or other Indian establishments, and adequate security has been ensured at the Indian High Commission office and visa centres.

The high commissioner also noted that Indian visa applications are currently submitted online and requested necessary measures against attempts to hack the website.

The home minister instructed the Cyber Crime Unit of the Dhaka Metropolitan Police and the Counter Terrorism and Transnational Crime Unit for steps to address the matter.

Pranay also said India’s training programmes were of a high standard and stressed greater participation from Bangladesh in skill development training under the ITEC programme.

The minister assured him that more members of Bangladesh’s law enforcement agencies would be sent to India for such capacity-building training.

The envoy expressed hope that the two countries would work together to restore and strengthen their historical ties.

জীবনের জন্য বিজ্ঞান

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Barisal, beyond, and the making of BENGALI LITERARY MODERNITY

In conversation with Clinton B Seely, emeritus professor of South Asian Languages and Civilisations at the University of Chicago. A leading scholar of Bengali literature, he has authored a seminal biography of Jibanananda Das, translated Michael Madhusudan Dutt's Meghanad badh kabya, and written influential essays on modern Bengali literary history. Recently, the University Press Limited (UPL) republished his book Barisal and Beyond. This conversation is centred on the book.

The Daily Star (TDS): The title Barisal and Beyond suggests both rootedness and transcendence. How do you interpret Jibanananda Das's regional imagination? Does Barisal function more as a remembered homeland or as a metaphorical space of longing and exile?

Clinton Booth Seely (CBS): Barisal is where I started out in Bengal. Barisal is where Jibanananda started out. Both of us went elsewhere. Both of us went beyond. *Rupasi Bangla* is how Jibanananda, in part, remembered Barisal; *Barisal and Beyond* is how I, in part, remember Barisal.

Though I was not “called back to Bengal”, Jibanananda was, and it was definitely not a metaphorical space of exile for him. If he ever felt exiled, it was when he accepted a teaching job in Delhi at the very end of 1929, leaving that post in early 1930, and then again later, after 1946, when he took up residency in Kolkata, never to return to live permanently in Barisal. He felt exiled *from* Barisal, not *in* Barisal, I think we can safely say that.

I consider one of his most haunting lyrics to be the one in which he is “called back to Bengal”. It is a poetic apostrophe, first published in *Kavita* in 1937. Just to be certain, there is no confusion about what constitutes a poetic apostrophe, let me assure my readers that it has nothing to do with the punctuation mark, as in the apostrophe “s”. A poetic apostrophe is a figure of speech in which a speaker directly addresses someone or something that is not present or capable of responding. Shakta devotee and poet Ramprasad Sen made good use of the apostrophe when addressing his chosen deity, the mother goddess. The poem “Come Back” (*phire eso*), though not devotional in a religious sense, is just such a lyric, poetically employing the apostrophe. The addressee, I argue in the prologue to *Barisal and Beyond*, is Jibanananda himself, summoning himself back to Barisal.

Come back to the sea's shore,
Come back to paths through fallow fields,
To where the train stops
At a world of mango, *nim*, and *jhau* trees,
Come back. Once you wove an egg of blue.
Still today stars lie silent in the dewdrops.
When will you turn into a waterfall of birds
And be aware of me?

An even more emotional lyric of his, in which he identifies with Barisal, is the poem where he has a personified tree address humans:

Said the ashvattha slowly: “Which way are you headed—
Where do you wish to go?
We've all been neighbours so long, so very, very close.
Your sun-stained straw huts, they're standing yet.
And here you go forsaking home and lands,
Heading where, what path—I have no idea.
You've wrapped up your belongings, even the broken bowls, that leaky pot.
Now where are you set on going?

Not fifty years have passed, why, it seems just yesterday
Your grandfathers, fathers, uncles
—yes, I remember them well.
Here on the edge of these very fields they bought land, built their straw huts
And in this land, on these paths with all this grass and paddy, and trees of *nim* and *jamrul*,
They paid off their debt of sorrow with life's hopes, hunger, and exhaustion.
Standing here I watched it all—it seems like just the other day.

You won't stay any longer? Which way are you headed?
I suppose there's greater peace somewhere else—more hope?
A deeper sense of life, I guess?
And that's why you'll go there to build your huts of hope.
But, no matter where you go, life itself does not change.
No matter where you build your hope-filled huts, a tale of hunger, dreams—
A tale of pain and separation shall show itself in graying hair.
So said that ashvattha tree, trembling in the darkness overhead.”

It was the ashvattha tree who—and the human pronoun makes sense here—was referenced in the poem about a suicide eight years earlier, questioning whether it/he did not protest that grievous act. Why would anyone deprive himself of Bengal, of Barisal!

TDS: What personal or intellectual motivations led you to focus so deeply on



Clinton Booth Seely

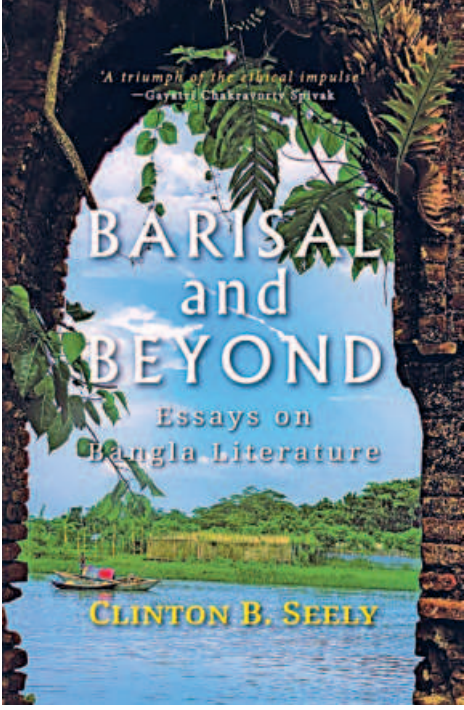
Jibanananda Das? Did your identity as a non-Bengali scholar affect how you were received in Bengali literary circles?

CBS: It was Jyotirmoy Datta, who, after his tenure at the Iowa Writers' Workshop, relocated to the University of Chicago and became one of my professors, along with Edward C. Dimock Jr. It was Jyoti who encouraged me to consider undertaking a biographical and literary study of this unique and challenging Bengali poet, fairly recently deceased at the time. My non-Bengali identity actually made access to his literary world easier. Jibanananda was everybody's favourite poet (after Rabindranath Tagore, of course), and all were more than willing to share with me, a non-Bengali, their reflections on Jibanananda and his poetry.

TDS: Has your understanding of Jibanananda Das's work evolved over the decades since you first encountered it? If so, what critical or emotional shifts have shaped the way you now read and interpret Banalata Sen?

CBS: I have a complete chapter in *Barisal and Beyond* on my rereading of “Banalata Sen.” I always thought it odd, even awkward, that the speaker in that poem went from the South Asian subcontinent to the Malay archipelago and went nowhere else outside the South Asian subcontinent in the entire poem. Late in my career, I came to realise that “*malay sagar*” is really a misreading—by all of us, Jibanananda possibly included—of the *sagar*, or body of water, off the Malabar Coast.

TDS: How do you view Bharatcandra Ray's Annada Mangal in terms of poetic transition? Despite being situated at a literary crossroads, how did he so



Cover of the book *Barisal and Beyond* (UPL edition, 2025).

masterfully employ older medieval literary motifs in his poetry?

CBS: The *Annada Mangal* is, in my opinion, the apex of the *mangal kavya* literary tradition, both in terms of being a perfect *mangal kavya* structurally, and in terms of being the most highly ornate literary composition of that genre. I argue these points more extensively in the second half of the first chapter of *Barisal and Beyond*. For our purposes here, let me take up the second of my claims first. Most narrative texts of the pre-modern period rely upon two metres, *payar* and *tripadi*. *Payar* has been deemed the more prosaic of the two, used extensively to advance the action of the narrative. *Tripadi* is often reserved for ornamental elaborations, though both metres can be used for both purposes. Bharatcandra employs a far, far greater variety of metres than just these two.

My second claim, that the *Annada Mangal* is structurally a perfect *mangal kavya*, is diametrically opposed to what Professor Sukumar Sen has written. For Professor Sen, Bharatcandra's text is actually three separate texts: one a *mangal kavya per se*, one a romantic or erotic tale, and one a historical narrative.

I view complete *mangal kavyas* as having three distinct segments. The first takes place in *dhya loka*, or the home of the divines and heavenly folk. The second takes place in the mortal world, the realm of humans. The third starts out in Bengal, where a Bengali, usually

a merchant, sets out to do business elsewhere in the world. This third segment I call the Dhanapati paradigm, Dhanapati being the name of a Bengali merchant who, in one *mangal kavya*, goes to Ceylon to engage in trade. The king there misidentifies the merchant as a thief, imprisons him, and plans to execute him. The goddess, whose *mangal kavya* it is, has to intervene to humble the king and free the wrongly imprisoned Bengali merchant.

Bharatcandra's *Annada Mangal* has precisely these three narrative sections. The first section takes place in heaven. Unfortunately, two of the heavenly characters are caught making love when they should have been worshipping the goddess. Those two beings are condemned to spend some time out of heaven and down among humans in the mortal world. Their names, we come to know, are Vidya and Sundar—he from South India and she a resident of Bengal. Their courtship constitutes the second segment of Bharatcandra's tripartite *mangal*. Vidya's father condemns Sundar to death for violating his daughter, until the goddess steps in and convinces the father that a legitimate marriage had taken place, a so-called *rakshasa* marriage, thereby exonerating Sundar, and at the same time convincing everyone of the supremacy of



DESIGN: DOWEL BISWAS

that particular goddess.

The third segment consists of the conquest of Bengal, specifically the Jessore region, by an army of the Mughal emperor Jahangir. That Mughal army is assisted by a Bengali gentleman from the household of a Hindu *zamindar* from Krishnanagar. In appreciation for the needed assistance, the Mughal general promises the Bengali gentleman a reward to be bestowed by Jahangir.

In a perfect “Dhanapati paradigm”, the Mughal general and the Bengali gentleman proceed from Bengal to the Mughal capital in northern India. Once there, Jahangir disbelieves his general and decides, wrongly, that the Bengali gentleman is a liar. He imprisons the Bengali and threatens execution. The goddess Annada intercedes, punishing Jahangir and effecting the Bengali gentleman's release, after which he is rewarded by Jahangir and sent on his merry way back to Bengal—the culmination of the perfectly structured tripartite *mangal kavya*.

TDS: You have written extensively on Tagore's engagement with mangal kavya. What is the significance of his reading of this genre? Did it shape any critical approaches that later influenced modern Bengali literary criticism?

CBS: I can't say that Tagore's understanding of *mangal kavya* literature, which he obviously knew well, influenced modern Bangla literary criticism. I would say, however, that his understanding of the structure of the *mangal kavya*—a ubiquitous narrative genre among Hindu Bengalis in premodern Bengal—and the power of that *mangal kavya* to argue for the supremacy of one goddess or god over all others, made it possible for Tagore to argue against restrictive, conservative societal rules and caste regulations—his *niyam*—and to argue in favour of progressive, liberal, modernising spontaneity—his *icche*—in the symbolic and delightful drama *Taser Desh*, or *Land of the Cards*.

TDS: What, in your view, is truly 'modern' about Ravana as portrayed in Michael Madhusudan Dutt's work? How would you evaluate Michael's retelling of the Ramayana—does it reflect a European spirit shaped by Occidental ideas, or is it influenced more by South Indian Dravidian interpretations that challenge Orientalist readings?

CBS: The most oft-quoted line by Michael is not from any of his literary writings. It comes from one of his letters, where he wrote: “I despise Ram and his rabble, but the idea of Ravan elevates and kindles my imagination; he was a grand fellow.”

Your question as to whether his retelling of the *Ramayana* is more reflective of European classics or more influenced by the Dravidian

recasting of the tale: I go to great lengths in *Barisal and Beyond* to show that the characters in Michael's epic do not deviate from those same characters in either the Sanskritic *Ramayana* by Valmiki or the standard Bangla *Ramayana* by Krittivasa. That, over the years, so many critical readers have seen deviations between Michael's main characters and those same characters in the older *Ramayanas* can be attributed to what I have called in *Barisal and Beyond* “subversive similes”. Michael makes the reader think that he has fundamentally altered the characters of Rama and Ravana through the use of those “subversive similes”.

Let me step back from Michael's quoted sentence from his letter above. It might be concluded that he is focusing on Ravana; he is not. His epic is not titled *Ravanavadha*. It is *Meghanad badh*, the slaying of Meghanada. It is Ravana's first and foremost son, Meghanada, who is the focus of this epic. It is really Meghanada who “elevates and kindles” Michael's imagination. It is Meghanada whom Michael valorises, even idolises. It is Meghanada, I submit, to whom Michael compares himself and finds himself wanting. Let me quote from my own published writings, from the introduction to my translation of *Meghanadavadha*, to show you what I mean:

Datta tells us in one of his letters how it

to predetermined features of a particular genre. I must admit that at times I have wondered whether Jibanananda was reluctant to publish his *Rupasi Bangla* sonnets due to the possibility that they would be judged more on whether they conformed to one or another European sonnet structure than on whether the emotional content was compelling. The sonnet, as we know, has been a very productive genre in Bangla ever since Michael. Jibanananda need not have been diffident about how emotionally compelling his sonnets were, given their reception during the 1971 war of independence.

TDS: When you encountered Tagore's work through Satyajit Ray's films, did it change the way you understood the original texts? How did that experience shape your thinking about how literature and cinema speak to, resist, or transform one another?

CBS: Satyajit Ray's direction, as well as Madhabi Mukherjee's and Soumitra Chatterjee's acting interpretations of Charu/Kadambari and Amal/Rabindranath, make Tagore's novella come ever more alive for me. It has been my experience that with cinema and literature, whichever I see or read first becomes my preferred standard. If I see the film first, the novel proves somehow inadequate. If I read the book first, the film

usually fails to meet my standards. In the case of *Nasta Nir* and *Charulata*, neither takes second place to the other. Both impress me equally and overwhelmingly.

As I note in the preface to the UPL edition of *Barisal and Beyond*, my reading of this tale of a marriage under strain conforms to Satyajit Ray's dramatisation of Tagore's work. Furthermore, I note in that preface that Satyajit's understanding of the narrative—and mine as well—is not acceptable to all contemporary Bengali readers and viewers. There are those who vigorously reject the notion that the character Amal is in any way autobiographical, or that Charu is, for all intents and purposes, the actual Kadambari Devi. Those who hold that opinion are, of course, strongly implying that Satyajit Babu and I have tarnished the good name of Rabindranath and Kadambari. I reiterate here what I write in the preface:

[N]either Satyajit Babu nor I were besmirching the name of either Tagore or Kadambari Devi. Nor was Tagore, with his moving and obviously heartfelt depiction of his wonderfully talented *bouthan*, his sister-in-law, being disrespectful of her.

TDS: You describe Raja Pratapaditya as a “problematic” hero. What led you to that assessment? Was he an exception among the Bara Bhuiyans, or do similar ambiguities appear in the portrayal of other figures? How did later currents of Hindu nationalism, and the pull between regional Bengali identity and pan-Indian heroic imagery, shape the way his legacy came to be remembered?

CBS: My chapter on the “problematic” Bengali hero, Raja Pratapaditya, should explain to readers why I consider him problematic. Tagore questioned Pratapaditya's status as a hero during the Swadeshi period and specifically challenged his niece Sarala Devi Chaudhurani's lionisation of him. Based on the literary evidence I have seen, including the Ram Ram Basu biography, I stand with Tagore's opinion, as opposed to his niece's, of this pre-modern Bengali warlord from Jessore.

TDS: How do you situate Rizia Rahman within the landscape of post-independence Bengali fiction?

CBS: Rizia Rahman can easily be placed within a literary lineage of Bengali women writers beginning with Begum Rokeya. However, I consider Rizia Rahman from the perspective of Bengali writers in general, not only women writers. Her attempt to make sense of individual identity within a particularly heterogeneous population, such as that found in modern-day Bangladesh, strikes me as thoughtful and provocative.

The interview was taken by Priyam Paul.

SHAKIB'S RETURN in balance amid legal hurdles

SAMSUL AREFIN KHAN AND SUKANTA HALDER

Recent political developments have significantly strengthened the possibility of all-rounder Shakib Al Hasan returning to the national team, but several legal obstacles still stand in the way.

For more than a year and a half, Shakib's comeback appeared improbable due to his association with the ousted Awami League government, under which he served as a Member of Parliament from Magura-1. His political role placed him at the centre of a rapidly shifting national landscape.

When the Awami League government fell on August 5, 2024, following a student-led mass uprising, uncertainty loomed over Shakib's return home and taking the field for the Tigers.

Despite the political turmoil, Shakib, one of the country's most prominent sporting figures, continued to represent Bangladesh in international cricket immediately after the regime change, playing matches in Pakistan and India.

He had hoped to conclude his illustrious Test career with a farewell appearance against South Africa in Mirpur in October 2024. That plan, however, collapsed when the Prof Muhammad Yunus-led interim government denied him clearance to return home, citing potential security risks. The decision left his international future suspended and sparked widespread debate among fans and analysts alike.

The matter remained largely dormant until January 24 this year, when the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) announced that Shakib would be considered for selection in both home and away series, subject to his availability. The announcement came shortly after the International Cricket Council (ICC) replaced Bangladesh with Scotland in the ongoing ICC Men's T20 World Cup after the interim government refused to have its team travel to India over security concerns.

POLITICAL SHIFT

Initially, the BCB's statement was viewed by some as an attempt to shift focus away from the World Cup setback. However, following the February 12 national elections, in which the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) returned to power with a landslide victory, the stance over the Shakib issue gradually softened.

Home Minister Salahuddin Ahmed recently instructed law enforcement agencies to re-examine cases initiated after the uprising, emphasising that innocent individuals should not face harassment. This directive was widely seen as a signal that politically sensitive cases could undergo renewed scrutiny.

Meanwhile, subsequent remarks from State Minister for Youth and Sports

Aminul Haque suggested that the cricketer's return was not impossible, provided legal issues were resolved through proper channels.

Shakib's comeback, however, hinges on three cases filed against him: cheque dishonour, money embezzlement and murder. Each case remains under legal review, creating uncertainty around his immediate future.

State Minister Aminul echoed a similar tone regarding Shakib's situation. He stated that the matter remained one of state concern because of the cases against the cricketer but reiterated that the government would adopt a soft approach. He also remarked that Shakib and fellow cricketer Mashrafe Bin Mortaza should resolve their legal matters through lawyers. If they prove their innocence and settle the cases, he said, their return to competitive cricket would be welcomed.

MURDER CASE

One of the most serious allegations involves a murder case filed at Adabor Police Station in late August 2024. The case concerns the death of a garment worker during the student-led uprising. Shakib was listed as the 28th accused in the First Information Report (FIR), alongside former prime minister Sheikh Hasina and several other Awami League leaders.

At the time of the incident, Shakib was in Canada participating in the Global T20 Canada tournament. The investigation has since been transferred to the Detective Branch (DB). According to the investigation officer, Md. Tipu Sultan, approximately 148 individuals have been named in the case. No charge sheet or final report has yet been submitted. Authorities have verified Shakib's immigration records to confirm his whereabouts, and the verification process remains ongoing.

Tipu is reportedly the fourth investigation officer assigned to the case, reflecting its complexity.

CHEQUE DISHONOUR CASE

In January last year, a Dhaka court issued an arrest warrant against Shakib and three others in connection with a cheque dishonour case involving IFIC Bank. According to the case documents, Shakib Al Hasan Agro Farm Ltd took business loans from the Banani branch of the bank. The company later issued two cheques totalling Tk 41.5 lakh, which were dishonoured due to insufficient funds.

Md. Rafiqul Islam, deputy managing director and spokesperson of IFIC Bank, stated that discussions regarding loan rescheduling are ongoing. Shakib's representative has deposited Tk 22 lakh as a down payment, and the matter awaits board approval. The total outstanding amount stands at nearly Tk 5 crore. However, until a settlement is formally reached, the arrest warrant remains active.

ACC MONEY LAUNDERING CASE

On June 17, 2025, the Anti-Corruption

Commission (ACC) filed a case against Shakib and 14 others, alleging embezzlement of Tk 256 crore through stock market manipulation and money laundering. The ACC summoned the accused for questioning in November but has not yet submitted its investigation report.

Court sources indicate that the next hearing is scheduled for early March. No charge sheet or arrest warrant has been issued against Shakib in this case, though a travel restriction remains in place.

WHAT LAWYERS SAY

Barrister Jyotirmoy Barua explained that a case under section 138 of the Negotiable Instruments Act is bailable and that individuals typically secure bail in such cases. He noted that loan rescheduling and criminal proceedings are separate matters, and obtaining bail could remove legal barriers to Shakib's participation in cricket.

Regarding the murder case, he suggested investigators may not find evidence of involvement if Shakib's absence from the country is confirmed. However, legal formalities must still be addressed.

Supreme Court lawyer Ishrat Hasan emphasised the principle of equality before the law, stating that Shakib, despite his popularity, must comply fully with due process like any other citizen.

BCB'S POSITION AND WHAT LIES AHEAD

The BCB has forwarded details of Shakib's cases to the Ministry of Youth and Sports upon request. Board director Asif Akbar stated that the board has completed its responsibility and expressed satisfaction with assurances that post-August 5 cases would be reconsidered. He added that negotiations with the bank are nearly finalised.

With Pakistan scheduled to arrive on March 9 for a three-match ODI series, anticipation is mounting over whether Shakib could return during that tour.

Yet insiders caution that unless the legal matters are resolved promptly, his comeback may face further delays.

Shakib, however, said he was unwilling to make any comments regarding his availability for the upcoming series and his stance on other legal issues, leaving fans waiting for clarity on the future of one of Bangladesh's most celebrated cricketers.



Damage control central to Bangladesh strategy

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh women's football team are placing strong emphasis on tactical discipline in a bid to minimise mistakes and avoid heavy defeats in the group stage of the AFC Women's Asian Cup, which got underway on Sunday with hosts Australia defeating the Philippines 1-0.

Bangladesh are set to make their debut in the continental showpiece when they face defending champions China at Western Sydney Stadium on Tuesday.

Following a one-and-a-half-hour training session at Jubilee Stadium, Bangladesh goalkeeping

coach Masud Ahmed Uzzal said the team have been closely analysing the strengths of China, North Korea and Uzbekistan, while also working to address their own weaknesses since qualifying for Asia's premier women's competition.

"In today's training session, we focused on positional roles and responsibilities in every zone of the pitch. If we maintain our tactical discipline and proper technique, we will minimise errors and avoid major setbacks," said Uzzal in a video message sent by the Bangladesh Football Federation, adding that the Bangladesh defence playing deep is a strategy to stop strong opponents

like China, a nine-time Women's Asian Cup champions.

The women in red and green are also preparing to counter long-range shots and deal with attacks from multiple angles.

"We have analysed our opponents' shooting patterns and finishing angles. We have worked extensively on this, and I am confident that our goalkeepers will not struggle with distance strikes," Uzzal said. "Regarding set pieces, we are currently refining our attacking routines. We will focus more comprehensively on defensive set pieces clarifying individual marking and positioning."

RECORD ROAR IN PERTH



The AFC Women's Asian Cup 2026 got underway yesterday at Perth Stadium in front of a tournament-record 44,379 spectators, as star striker Sam Kerr's 14th-minute header gave hosts Australia a 1-0 Group A win over the Philippines, handing the 2010 champions an unconvincing but victorious start to their campaign.

PHOTO: AFP



HEALY'S ODI FAREWELL

India line up to give Australia skipper Alyssa Healy a guard of honour in her 126th and final ODI in the third match in Hobart yesterday -- and the 35-year-old delivered a farewell for the ages. Healy blazed 158 off 98 balls, hammering 27 fours and two sixes (120 runs in boundaries). Her eighth WODI century, joint second-most by an Australian woman, came off just 79 balls. It was also the highest women's ODI score in Australia and the highest anywhere against India, as she joined South Africa's Johanni Logtenberg as the only women to score a century in their final ODI. Beth Mooney added 106 off 84, reaching her sixth ODI ton off 82 balls, as the pair shared a 145-run stand to power Australia to 409-7. The hosts then bowled India out for 224 in 45.1 overs to seal a clean sweep.

PHOTO: BCCI

YOUNGEST OF THE CENTURY

Teenage star Lamine Yamal netted his first career hat-trick to propel Barcelona to a 4-1 win over Villarreal on Saturday, reaching a personal milestone while also taking the Catalan giants four points clear at the top of LaLiga, albeit having played a match more than second-placed Real Madrid. Yamal, at 18 years and 230 days, struck twice in the first half and once after the break to become the youngest player to score a hat-trick in the Spanish top flight in the 21st century. Only two players have ever registered a hat-trick at a younger age: Jose Iraragorri, aged 17 years and 337 days in 1930, and Pablo Pomo, aged 18 years and 200 days in 1934.



PHOTO: REUTERS

Arsenal sink Chelsea to stay on title track

AFP, London

Arsenal won their set-piece battle with 10-man Chelsea as Jurrien Timber sealed the Premier League leaders' crucial 2-1 victory over their London rivals on Sunday.

Mikel Arteta's side struck twice from corners and also conceded from the same route in a match that underlined the increasing importance of set-pieces in the Premier League.

William Saliba's first goal since December 2024 put Arsenal ahead in the first half at the Emirates Stadium.

Piero Hincapié's own goal drew Chelsea level from one of Reece James' deadly corners just before the break.

But Timber won a priceless three points for Arsenal with his second-half header before Chelsea winger Pedro Neto was sent off for a second booking.

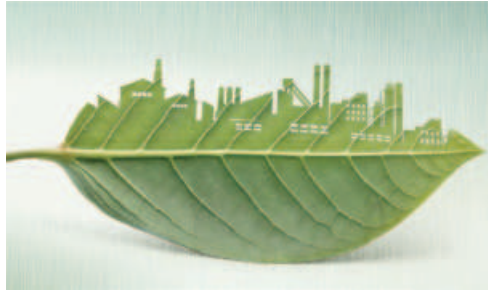
The Gunners' second successive league win reestablished their five-point lead over second-placed



Manchester City, who have a game in hand and had closed the gap with a 1-0 victory at Leeds on Saturday.

The Gunners have just one top-flight match left against sides currently in the top six -- a potentially decisive trip to Manchester City on April 18.

Chelsea, meanwhile, dropped to sixth place after losing to Arsenal for the third time in Liam Rosenior's brief reign.



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US-ISRAEL, IRAN WAR Dhaka calls for maximum restraint

Prioritises expat safety

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh has warned that continued hostilities in the Middle East endanger regional peace and civilians, urging all parties to exercise maximum restraint and return to diplomacy, the foreign ministry said yesterday.

It comes as the US and Israel attacked Iran, which responded by striking US bases across the Middle East.

Bangladesh also condemned the violation of sovereignty of some countries in the region, including Bahrain, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates.

"Bangladesh hopes that calm will prevail at the earliest and peace, security and stability will be restored soonest across the region," the foreign ministry said.

The government said it remained deeply concerned about the safety and security of Bangladeshi nationals

SEE PAGE 8 COL 1



A passenger checks revised flight schedules at Dhaka airport yesterday, as flights from the capital to several Middle Eastern destinations have been suspended since Saturday afternoon after airports shut down following US and Israeli strikes on Iran and Tehran's subsequent retaliation in the Gulf.

PHOTO: MEHEDI HASAN

Migrant workers in limbo as flights to ME uncertain

Govt assures reschedules

MOHAMMAD JAMIL KHAN and SHAHEEN MOLLAH

With airlines resuming limited operations after two days of disruption, anxious passengers returned to Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport yesterday for updates on when they will be able to depart.

Flights to Dubai, Abu Dhabi, Sharjah, and Doha remained suspended, with airport officials reporting around 90 cancellations from Dhaka and Chattogram since Saturday.

They said the disruptions, triggered by a deteriorating security situation in the Middle East, have left thousands of outbound passengers in limbo.

Many feared that missing their scheduled arrival would create complications with employers, while others worried about returning to work in a war zone.

State Minister for Civil Aviation and Tourism M Rashiduzzaman Millat said suspended Middle East-bound flights would be rescheduled, with measures in place to ensure passengers receive adequate notice.

Speaking to reporters at HSI, he said some planned rotations of Biman Bangladesh Airlines had been kept on hold. "We have resumed some operations today [yesterday]. Flight schedules are being adjusted in consultation with the relevant authorities."

He added that an inter-ministerial coordination team, involving the foreign minister and the expatriates' team,

SEE PAGE 8 COL 2

Stern action in the works against extortionists

Says home minister

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government will take action against extortionists and "top criminals" and bring those behind such rackets to justice, said Home Minister Salahuddin Ahmed yesterday.

Suspects have been identified and intelligence agencies are working on the matter, he told reporters.

and that several intelligence agencies were working on the case.

Asked about allegations of extortion in different places in the BNP's name, Salahuddin said those involved should be identified and brought under the law.

The law and order situation has improved since then, he said, adding that the establishment of a political government creates stability,

"Did the home minister say anything on this? I do not know why the secretary general gave such an explanation. I have not made any statement on this issue."

Salahuddin on investigation into police killings during July uprising



ICT identifies 'anomalies' in Chankharpul killings probe

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The International Crimes Tribunal-1 has identified "gross anomalies" and serious investigative lapses in the probe and prosecution of the Chankharpul killings during the July uprising.

In its full verdict, signed on February 1, a copy of which was obtained by The Daily Star yesterday, the three-member tribunal observed that at least 40 to 50 police personnel were deployed in the capital's Chankharpul on August 5, 2024, many of them equipped with firearms and large quantities of ammunition.

However, official records show that only four or five officers returned their weapons and bullets, leaving no account of the remaining firearms.

The tribunal questioned why the case mainly targeted three constables – Md Sujon, Imaaj Hossain Emon, and Nasirul Islam – when evidence suggested that widespread gunfire and lethal force were used by many others.

"Should we believe the

SEE PAGE 8 COL 6

17 killed at pro-Iran protests in Pakistan

AFP, Karachi

At least 17 people were killed yesterday across Pakistan as protesters outraged over the death of Iran's supreme leader took to the streets, with some attempting to storm US diplomatic buildings.

In the Pakistani megacity of Karachi, an AFP journalist witnessed hundreds of pro-Iranian protesters trying to enter the US consulate, prompting clashes with police.

At least 10 people had died and over 70 were injured as of yesterday evening, the office of the Karachi police surgeon said.

Earlier, a hospital toll seen by AFP listed nine people as having died from gunshot wounds.

In the northern city of Gilgit, at least seven people were killed and many more injured in clashes with police, rescue official Zaheer Shah told AFP by phone.

Thousands gathered in the streets of the capital Islamabad, many holding photos of the late Iranian leader Ali Khamenei, with AFP witnessing police deploy tear gas to disperse crowds near the US embassy.

Israel and the United States launched their mass aerial campaign on Iran early Saturday, quickly killing the long-ruling supreme leader and prompting outrage in neighbouring Pakistan.

Pakistan's Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, who has close ties with both the United States and Iran, said yesterday evening that the killing of Khamenei was a "violation" of international law.

"It is an age-old convention that the

Heads of State/Government should not be targeted," Sharif wrote on X.

The "people of Pakistan join the people of Iran in their hour of grief and sorrow and extend the most sincere condolences on the martyrdom" of Khamenei, he added.

At Karachi protest, people chanted slogans against the United States, Israel and their allies.

"We don't need anything in Pakistan that is linked with the US," a protester, Sabir Hussain, told AFP.

Earlier a crowd of young people climbed over the main gate and gained



access to the driveway of the consular building, smashing some windows.

Police fired tear gas at the protesters, who dispersed, the AFP journalist saw.

The embassies of the United States and Britain both urged citizens in Pakistan to be cautious in the country.

Around 4,000 people took to the streets in the capital Islamabad, where AFP journalists heard overhead gunfire, believed to be to disperse the crowd, and

SEE PAGE 8 COL 1

Afghan, Pak forces battle along border

Two Afghans killed in drone strikes

AGENCIES

Afghan and Pakistani troops battled along their border, Afghan residents and officials told AFP yesterday, with the fighting coming alongside multiple strikes including the former US air base at Bagram.

Months of cross-border clashes have flared since Thursday when Afghanistan launched an offensive along the frontier, with Pakistani forces hitting back on the border and from the skies.

Residents in multiple areas bordering Pakistan told AFP of overnight fighting, while two civilians were killed in drone strikes, according to the Nangarhar province information department and police.

North of the capital Kabul, air strikes "hit Bagram air base" according to a resident who AFP is not naming for security reasons. A second resident said "it was very strong, which shook the area. There was smoke and fire coming out north of the airport", describing the dawn raid as "very terrifying".

The provincial spokesman, Fazl ul Rahim Maskin Yar, said Pakistani jets "attempted to bomb" the base, but there were no casualties or damage.

In Kabul, AFP journalists heard an explosion followed by successive gunfire. Taliban government spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid said "anti-aircraft fire is being directed at Pakistani aircraft".

Pakistan's federal minister of Parliamentary Affairs Dr

SEE PAGE 8 COL 1



Sanju Samson celebrates after steering India to a five-wicket win over West Indies in a T20 World Cup Super Eight clash in Kolkata yesterday, sealing a semifinal berth against England on Thursday. Samson smashed an unbeaten 97 off 50 balls as India chased down 196 with four balls to spare.

PHOTO: AFP

February remittance crosses \$3b on Eid boost

B1

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PRAYER TIMING

MARCH 2

Fajr Zohr Asr Maghrib Esha

AZAN 5:07 12:45 4:30 6:03 7:30

JAMAAT 5:17 1:15 4:45 6:13 8:00

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

SEHRI, IFTAR TIMING

RAMADAN MAR SEHRI IFTAR

12 2 6:03

13 3 5:03 6:04

14 4 5:02 6:04