

War escalates

Iran launches missile salvos into Israel, strikes Saudi, Qatar energy sites, UK base in Cyprus; Israel bombards Lebanon; death toll in Iran rises to 555

AGENCIES

The war launched by the United States and Israel against Iran spread across the Middle East and beyond yesterday, with Lebanon's Hezbollah entering the fray and a British air base in Cyprus targeted.

The Israeli military said it began new strikes on Tehran, as AFP reporters in the Iranian capital heard explosions ring out on the third day of the US-Israeli joint assault, and Israeli strikes rocked Lebanon's capital Beirut.

Gulf monarchies threatened to retaliate as a Saudi oil refinery burned, Qatar halted LNG production, tankers were attacked off Oman, and energy prices soared.

Washington's senior military officer, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General Dan Caine, told reporters that US forces had achieved air superiority over Iran to "allow them to continue the work".

Meanwhile, black smoke rose from the US embassy complex in

"No stupid rules of engagement, no nation building quagmire, no democracy-building exercise. No politically correct wars. We fight to win and we don't waste time or lives."

Pete Hegseth, US defense secretary



Dubai, UAE

PHOTO: AFP

Kuwait as Iran pressed on with attacks it launched in retaliation for the US and Israeli campaign that killed its supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei.

Also in Kuwait, a US base and

a power station were targeted, while three US F-15e Strike Eagle jets were downed by friendly fire. The pilots and weapons officers survived.

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'Regime change unlikely in Iran'

REUTERS

Following the killing of Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei on Saturday, many senior US officials remain skeptical that the US and Israeli military operation against the Islamic Republic will lead to a regime change in the near term.

Before and after the start of the attack, US officials, including US President Donald Trump, had suggested that toppling the nation's repressive governing system was one of several US goals, in addition to crippling Iran's ballistic missile and nuclear programmes.

"I call upon all Iranian patriots who yearn for freedom to seize this moment ... and take back your country," Trump said on Sunday in a video posted on Truth Social.

But three US officials familiar with US intelligence said there is serious skepticism that Iran's battered opposition can topple the theocratic, authoritarian governing system that has been in place since 1979.

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Smoke billows following Israeli bombardment on Beirut's southern suburbs yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP



Iran says ready for 'long war', rules out talks with US

Trump sets 4 war goals, says 'big wave' of attack coming

US claims achieving 'air superiority' over Iran

Israeli strikes kill 51 in Lebanon

Qatar halts LPG production amid crisis

One in four Americans supports ops

Russia, China, Turkey condemn violation of int'l law

3 US warplanes shot by 'friendly fire' in Kuwait

Living in fear in the Middle East

Another Bangladeshi dies in missile attack in Bahrain

MD ABBAS

Bangladeshi expatriates across parts of the Middle East are living in fear and uncertainty after another Bangladeshi was killed and two others were injured in Bahrain yesterday.

A Bangladeshi was killed and five others were hurt in drone and missile attacks in the UAE and Kuwait on Sunday. SEE PAGE 8 COL 1

"We never thought something like this could happen here. Now every loud sound makes us nervous."

A Bangladeshi construction worker in UAE

Flights scrapped, visa clock ticking

131 cancellations so far

SHAHEEN MOLLAH and MOHAMMAD JAMIL KHAN

Mohammad Obaidullah thought he was finally heading back to work in Dammam after two failed attempts. The 38-year-old, from Cumilla's Muradnagar, had boarded a Biman Bangladesh Airlines flight on February 28.

The plane remained airborne for two hours before returning to Dhaka around 7:00pm.

Early yesterday, he received a message asking passengers to return to Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport at 6:00am, as flight operations had resumed.

Obaidullah said he reached the airport around 3:00am, completed boarding, got on the aircraft and even had breakfast.

"But around 7:00am, an announcement came that the flight had been cancelled again and passengers would be informed later about the next steps... Two days - and even after boarding, we still cannot go," he said, adding SEE PAGE 8 COL 1

Yunus gets VVIP status for a year

Interim govt issued gazette 2 days before Feb 12 polls

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Prior to the national election on February 12, the interim government declared the then chief adviser Dr Muhammad Yunus as a "Very Very Important Person" (VVIP) for a period of one year starting from the date of the transfer of responsibilities.

The gazette was issued on February 10, 2026 - two days before the 13th national election.

The Chief Adviser's Office issued the gazette, signed by the then CA office secretary Md Saifullah Panna. Panna is currently attached to the public administration ministry.

Panna confirmed signing the document to Prothom Alo yesterday.

As a result of this designation, Yunus will remain under SEE PAGE 8 COL 4



Fuel stocks adequate for short term

Crisis knocking if war prolongs

MOHAMMAD SUMAN and ASIFUR RAHMAN

While a prolonged conflict in the Middle East could disrupt fuel flows, Bangladesh's energy supply remains stable for now, with officials saying imports and distribution are continuing without interruption.

According to the officials, the country's fuel stock ranges between two weeks and one month, while the gas supply will remain stable for the next 20 days at least. LPG is being collected from alternative sources outside the Middle East.

If the conflict ends within the next couple of weeks, the country's energy supply would not be impacted much.

At present, the country has 201,610 tonnes of diesel in stock, enough to meet demand for about 14 days, according to data from the Bangladesh Petroleum Corporation (BPC).

Petrol and octane stocks stand at 21,705 tonnes and 34,133 tonnes respectively, enough for roughly 17 and 31 days.

Besides, BPC's fuel imports until June are coming from Malaysia, China, Singapore and Indonesia, which are not related to the Strait of Hormuz, the area impacted by war. The Daily Star has learnt from BPC

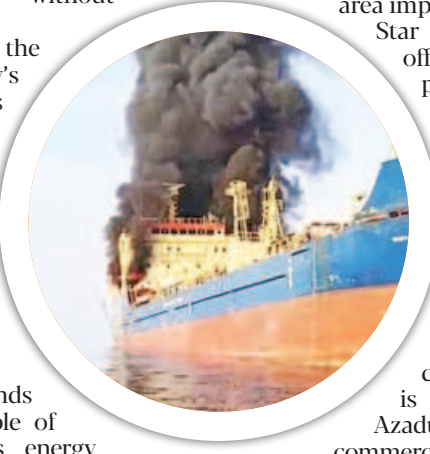
officials involved with the proceedings.

But there are uncertainties regarding crude oil import, which the country sources mainly from Saudi Arabia and the UAE.

The fuel supply situation is being closely monitored and contingency planning is underway, said AKM Azadur Rahman, BPC's commercial director.

"Although crude oil mainly comes through the Strait of Hormuz, refined petroleum products are sourced from different countries. Refined oil suppliers have assured us that shipments will

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BNP offers deputy speaker post to the opposition

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The BNP has offered the post of deputy speaker to the opposition ahead of the first sitting of the newly elected parliament, Home Minister Salahuddin Ahmed said yesterday.

"We respect the July National Charter and want to begin implementing the political understanding reached through consensus. We have agreed that two deputy speaker posts will be created. One of them will be nominated or elected from the opposition. We are offering that now," he said while briefing reporters after meeting with Prime Minister Tarique Rahman at the Secretariat.

Salahuddin said the offer was made as a gesture of goodwill in line with the July charter.

Asked about a reported petition seeking to bar the president from delivering the inaugural address on the first day of the session, he said he had no knowledge of such a petition.

"We have said that for freedom of speech and liberty, we have given our lives. People can speak," he added.

However, Salahuddin said the

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RUSSIA-UKRAINE WAR

Over 100 Bangladeshis sent to the front, 34 dead: report

MOHAMMAD JAMIL KHAN

More than 100 Bangladeshis have been recruited to Russia's war against Ukraine, and dozens have been killed on the front lines, according to rights groups that say many of the men were misled, exploited, or financially trapped before ending up in combat.

In an exclusive interview with The Daily Star, John Quinley, director of Bangkok-based Fortify Rights, and Oksana Pokalchuk, co-executive director of Ukraine-based Truth Hounds, disclosed the findings of a joint report to be launched today.

The report is based on interviews with 24 people in Bangladesh and Ukraine, including survivors, families of the deceased, and prisoners of war from Sri Lanka and Nepal.

According to the findings, at least 104 Bangladeshis were identified as having been recruited, with at least 34 dead based on Ukrainian information. Researchers, however, said the real toll could be higher and referred to "dozens" killed.

FAMILIES AWAIT

Several relatives told the researchers they have been lobbying Bangladesh's foreign ministry to bring back the bodies of their loved ones. Many have yet to receive them.



PHOTO: COURTESY OF FAMILY

Akram Hossain, of Hosenpur village in Brahmanbaria's Ashuganj, was killed in a drone attack in Ukraine on April 14, 2025, the Bangla New Year.

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