



"A targeted military action, even for a few weeks, will not allow us to resolve the nuclear issue in the long term."  
Macron on US-Israeli strikes on Iran

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## Key reform ordinances left to expire

JS special committee places report on 133 ordinances issued by interim govt

MOHIUDDIN ALAMGIR

The special parliamentary committee, reviewing ordinances issued by the interim government, yesterday recommended that 20 of them lapse or expire, including those aimed at ensuring judicial independence, curbing enforced disappearances, and strengthening the anti-corruption and human rights commissions.

In a report placed before parliament by its chief Zainul Abedin, the committee also proposed repealing four of the 20 ordinances.

The 13-member special JS panel, which includes three from the opposition bench, was formed after 133 ordinances passed by the interim government were tabled during the first sitting of the 13th parliament. It was directed to submit its findings by April 2.

According to the constitution, parliament must approve or reject ordinances within 30 days of its first sitting, which took place on March 12. If they are not ratified within this period, the ordinances



Eight-month-old Mizanur Rahman has been undergoing treatment for measles at the Infectious Diseases Hospital in the capital's Mohakhali since Tuesday. Children across the country are getting infected, and the official death toll has already crossed 50. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: MEHEDI HASAN

## Measles has spread to 56 of 64 dists

4 more die with suspected infections

TUHIN SHUBHRA ADHIKARY

At least 56 of the 64 districts have reported measles cases as of March 28, officials said citing reports from both the government and the World Health Organisation – indicating widespread national transmission of the infectious disease.

The number of affected districts could be higher as new cases may have been reported from eight additional districts since the WHO report was submitted to the health authorities on March 28, officials said.

Considering the ratio of population to suspected cases, Cox's Bazar recorded the highest burden of patients. Barguna, Chapainawabganj, Pabna and Natore, as well as Dhaka North City Corporation, Mymensingh City Corporation and Barisal City Corporation, have emerged as hotspots, they added.

A total of 2,373 suspected measles cases were tested until Wednesday, SEE PAGE 8 COL 5

### AT A GLANCE

- To be passed unchanged: 98
- To be passed with amendments: 15
- To be repealed outright: 4
- May be reintroduced as bills later: 16

automatically lapse.

The committee recommended that 98 ordinances remain unchanged and 15 others be amended.

Opposition members in the special committee issued notes of dissent on the decisions regarding 20 ordinances. The notes concern four proposed to remain in force, two recommended for amendment, 11 set to lapse but to be reintroduced later by ministries, and three slated for repeal.

After the report was placed, and following proposals from the law and home ministers, Speaker Hafiz Uddin Ahmad said the reviewed bills recommended for passage will begin to be placed in the House from Monday (April 6).

#### TO BE REPEALED

The four ordinances that will be straightaway repealed are the Jatiya Sangsad Secretariat (Interim Special Provisions) Ordinance, 2024; Supreme Court Judges Appointment Ordinance, 2025; Supreme Court Secretariat Ordinance, 2025; and Supreme Court Secretariat (Amendment) Ordinance, 2026.

The three ordinances related to the apex court were introduced to ensure judicial independence, create judicial posts, and support the development of the judiciary, with budgetary authority entrusted to the Supreme Court Secretariat under the chief justice's control. Under the Secretariat's full operation, authority over the transfer, promotion, and discipline of lower court judges would also be vested in the SC.

Although the constitution requires a law for appointing judges, such legislation has not yet been enacted.

In 2025, the interim government issued the Supreme Court Judges Appointment Ordinance, which aimed to establish a process whereby

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### AUSTERITY MEASURES

## Office hours now 9 to 4, shops to close by 6

- Banks to stay open until 3:00pm**
- 30% energy expenditure to be cut for govt offices**
- Foreign training for civil servants suspended**
- Govt vehicle, vessel purchases paused**
- Computer equipment buying suspended**

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government yesterday announced a series of austerity measures, including curtailing office hours and early closure of shopping malls and shops, as the fallout of the US-Israel war on Iran strains the energy sector.

It also decided to cut expenditure on fuel, power, and gas for government offices by 30 percent and suspend all government-financed foreign training for civil servants until further orders.

Purchase of government vehicles, vessels, and aircraft has also been put on hold.

The decisions were made at a three-hour-long cabinet meeting chaired by Prime Minister Tarique Rahman at the Cabinet Room of the Jatiya Sangsad

Bhaban, Cabinet Secretary Nasimul Gani told reporters after the meeting.

He said expenditure on hospitality at meetings and seminars would be reduced by 50 percent. Domestic training programmes would also be cut by 50 percent, he said, adding that non-essential travel expenses would also be cut by 30 percent.

All government and private offices will run from 9:00am to 4:00pm, while banks will conduct transactions from 9:00am to 3:00pm and close fully for the day by 4:00pm.

Shopping malls would have to close by 6:00pm from tomorrow, but outlets for essentials, eateries, and pharmacies would remain open, he said, adding that no decorative lighting would be allowed

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## Consumers in for worsening LPG woes

12kg cylinder price hiked by 29% to Tk 1,728; importers say the increase is not enough

ASIFUR RAHMAN and SUKANTA HALDER

The Bangladesh Energy Regulatory Commission (BERC) yesterday raised the price of liquefied petroleum gas cylinders by nearly 29 percent, as a sharp surge in global benchmark prices and import costs for suppliers amid the ongoing US-Israel war on Iran.

According to the new price, a 12kg LPG cylinder, the most widely used size in Bangladesh, will now cost Tk 1,728.

The retail price has increased by Tk 387 per cylinder, marking one of the largest single-month increases since BERC began setting LPG prices in April 2021 as the average benchmark prices of LPG raw materials in the global market rose by nearly 45 percent within a month – an unusually steep increase in recent history.

In addition, higher freight and shipment-related premiums further raised the cost of imports, contributing to the sharp spike in local retail prices.

Under the revised pricing, the commission has set LPG at Tk 144 per

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**People are already paying between Tk 1,900 and Tk 2,100 for a cylinder since late March**

## 'Big step for humanity'

Astronauts begin lunar mission after blast-off

AFP, United States

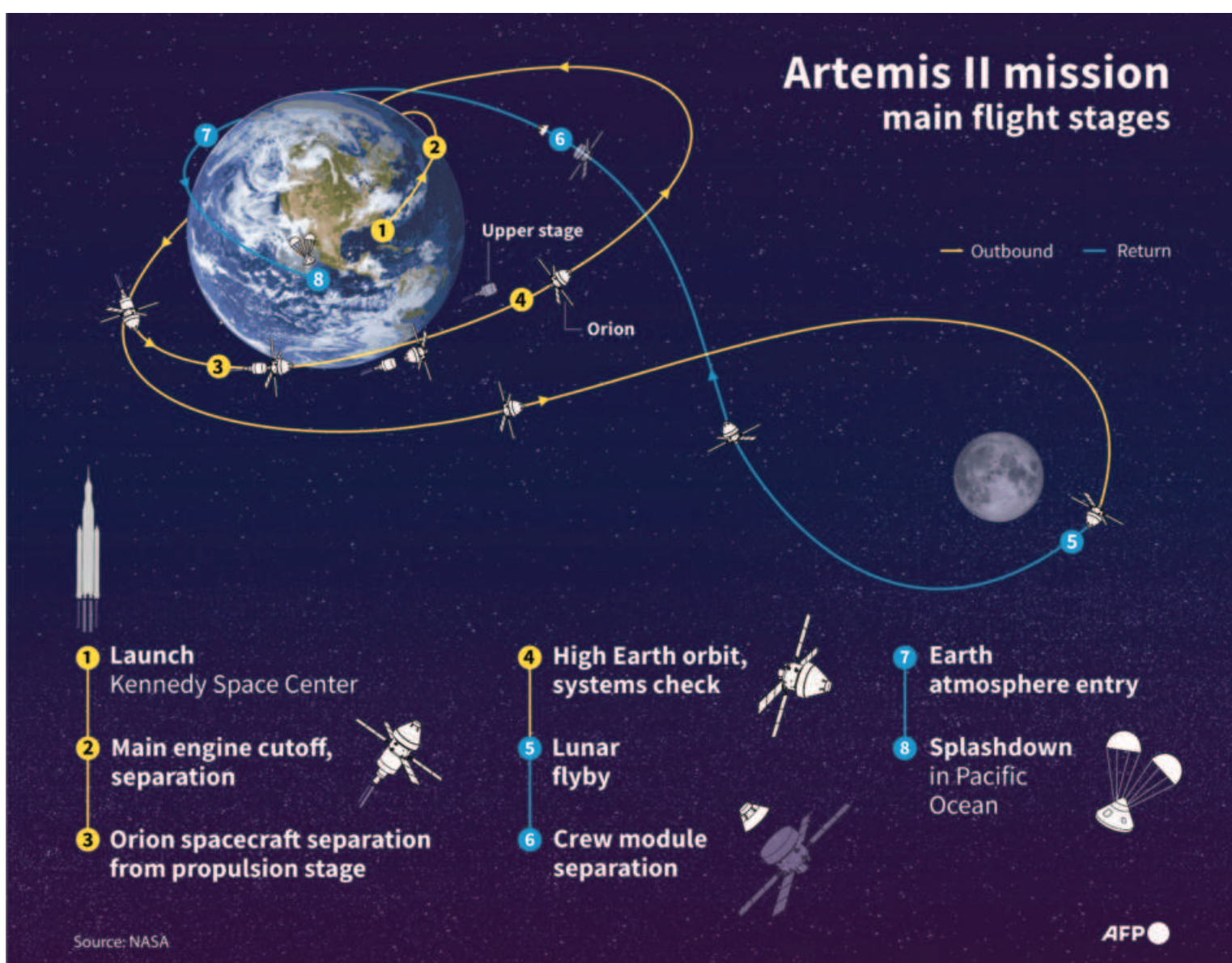
Four astronauts blasted off aboard a massive NASA rocket early yesterday on a long-anticipated journey around the Moon, the first crewed lunar flyby in more than 50 years.

With a thunderous roar that reverberated far beyond the launchpad, the enormous orange-and-white rocket carried three Americans and one Canadian away from Florida's Kennedy Space Center at approximately 6:35pm local time (2235 GMT).

Nasa teams and spectators alike were ecstatic as the spacecraft ascended into a radiant sky atop a cascade of flames. The team, who donned bright orange suits with blue trim as the mission began, includes Americans Reid Wiseman, Victor Glover and Christina Koch along with Canadian Jeremy Hansen.

"We have a beautiful moonrise. We're headed

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## Oil prices surge as hope fades for swift end to war

Tehran vows 'crushing' attacks after Trump's threat to 'bomb Iran back to the stone age'

AGENCIES

Hopes for a swift end to the Middle East war faded yesterday after US President Donald Trump vowed more aggressive strikes on Iran, sending oil prices sharply up again in a blow to consumers around the world.

Stocks slid and the dollar gained after Trump said military operations would be intensified without offering the timeline that investors had sought for ending hostilities against Iran.

"We're going to hit them extremely hard over the next two to three weeks. We're going to bring them back to the Stone Ages where they belong," Trump said in a Wednesday evening prime-time speech.

Trump said the US would achieve its military objectives soon but suggested the war could escalate if Iranian leaders did not give in to Washington's terms during negotiations, with strikes on Iran's energy and oil infrastructure possible.

He has said he may end the war with a deal and told countries that rely on fuel shipments through the Strait of Hormuz, which has been all but closed by Iranian attacks, to "just grab it".

European and other states have said they will only help secure the strait if there is a ceasefire.

Meanwhile, around 40 countries yesterday called for the immediate reopening of Hormuz.

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