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## Tougher demos if July charter not implemented

### 11-party rally warns govt

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Leaders of the Jamaat-led 11-party alliance yesterday demanded the full implementation of the July charter in line with the referendum verdict and warned that they would launch strong street protests if the referendum mandate is ignored. They said the July uprising did not take place to carry out "routine tasks" like constitutional amendments but to bring about structural reforms. Ignoring the people's verdict in favour of reforms would amount to reinstating a "fascist system", they alleged.

The warning came from a rally held at the north gate of Baitul Mukarram National Mosque in the capital, organised to protest what the alliance described as the government's stance against the referendum verdict and to demand its immediate implementation. A procession followed the rally, with a

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The 11-party alliance led by the Jamaat-e-Islami holds a rally and protest march at the north gate of Baitul Mukarram National Mosque in Dhaka yesterday, demanding the implementation of the referendum verdict.

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

## DIESEL FROM KAZAKHSTAN

### Govt to import another 1 lakh tonnes

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government is set to import another 1,00,000 tonnes of diesel from Kazakhstan on an emergency basis as it hunts high and low for fuel amid the ongoing US-Israel war on Iran.

The diesel will be bought at \$75.06 per barrel from Kazakh Gas Processing Plant through direct procurement, as per the decision of the Cabinet Committee on Government Purchase chaired by Finance and Planning Minister Amir Khosru Mahmud Chowdhury yesterday.

"The deal is considered cost-effective given the current energy supply situation," the Bangladesh Petroleum Corporation (BPC) informed the meeting.

The BPC and Kazakh Gas Processing Plant completed their negotiations on April 2. The shipment would be loaded from Batumi, Georgia for delivery to Chittagong Port.

This comes after the government last week approved the import of another 1 lakh tonnes of diesel from ExxonMobil Kazakhstan through direct procurement.

The move to import diesel from Kazakhstan comes after contracted suppliers Unipac Singapore and Petco Trading Labuan Company invoked force majeure on their April delivery.

The committee also approved the procurement of two

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## Odhikar protests move to repeal key ordinances

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Rights body Odhikar yesterday strongly protested moves to repeal several key ordinances issued by the interim government and urged the government to immediately pass them in parliament instead.

In a statement, the organisation said a parliamentary special committee recommended revoking four ordinances.

These are the Supreme Court Judges Appointment Ordinance 2025, the Supreme Court Secretariat Ordinance 2025, the Supreme Court Secretariat (Amendment) Ordinance 2026, and the National Parliament Secretariat (Interim Special Provisions) Ordinance.

The committee also suggested not placing 16 important ordinances as bills at this stage, Odhikar said.

These include the July National Charter Implementation Order 2025, the ordinance expanding the powers of the Anti-Corruption Commission, the Prevention of Enforced Disappearance Ordinance, and the National Human Rights Commission Ordinance.

If they are not placed as bills, the ordinances will be treated as repealed and lose effect after April 10, according to the statement.

Odhikar said 68 percent of people voted "yes" in the referendum. It also alleged that the special committee recommended the repeal, ignoring notes of dissents from opposition lawmakers.

It said that during Sheikh Hasina's long rule, state institutions were deliberately turned into subservient partisan bodies, resulting in judicial harassment, enforced disappearances, extrajudicial killings, mass arrests, torture, and other forms of repression against opposition leaders and activists, dissenters, and citizens.

The rights body added that although BNP and Jamaat leaders and activists, as well as dissenters, faced widespread repression during that period, the then National Human

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## BIDA U-turns on pvt sector advisory body

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

In a sudden reversal, the Bangladesh Investment Development Authority (BIDA) has withdrawn its claim that the government had established a formal Private Sector Advisory Council.

The clarification came just hours after BIDA issued a statement naming nine prominent business leaders as inaugural members of the body. The Daily Star had published a report on its business page, based on that initial press release issued yesterday evening.

In a revised message posted on its Facebook page, BIDA said the meeting with Prime Minister Tarique Rahman was merely convened to gather observations and recommendations from selected entrepreneurs and identify priorities for private sector-led growth.

"It was not a formal advisory council of the government or the honourable prime minister," BIDA said, adding that the council had no organisational or legal basis.

BIDA also said "similar engagements" would continue in the future,

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## TOP 20 LOAN DEFAULTERS

### 1% of Tk 92,627 crore recovered from six state banks

REJAUUL KARIM BYRON

The top 20 loan defaulters account for 63 percent of the defaulted loans in six state-owned banks, prompting the government to order specific roadmaps for recovery.

At the end of last year, the top 20 defaulters owed Tk 92,627 crore, according to the minutes of a finance ministry review meeting held last month.

The state banks could recover only Tk 562 crore from the defaulters. Rupali recovered Tk 361 crore, followed by Janata (Tk 56 crore), Agrani (Tk 31 crore), Sonali (Tk 9 crore), Bangladesh Development Bank (Tk 7 crore) and BASIC (Tk 5 crore).

Nazma Mobarek, secretary of the Financial Institutions Division, who chaired the review meeting, termed the recovery situation "highly disappointing". The Daily Star has learnt from people involved with the proceedings.

She directed the banks' chief executives to formulate a realistic recovery action plan.

A steel company cleared Tk 242 crore to exit Rupali Bank, or else the bank's recovery figure would have been much less, said one of its top officials on the condition of

anonymity to speak candidly on the issue.

The majority of the defaulted loans are from the Awami League times and most of the defaulters have fled the country with the ouster of the Sheikh Hasina-led government.

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"How can we recover such sums from them when they are not in the country?"

And those who are still in the country made down payments to avail themselves of the central bank's special loan rescheduling facility, he said.

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## AMINUL MURDER

### 14 years on, family waits for justice

#### Demands probe to identify masterminds behind the labour leader's killing

SHAHEEN MOLLAH and MUNTAKIM SAAD

Fourteen years after the brutal killing of Aminul Islam, a labour leader from Ashulia, his family continues its quest for justice, calling for a full and impartial probe to bring all those responsible to book.

Aminul, 40, was abducted on the evening of April 4, 2012, by self-proclaimed labour leader Mustafizur Rahman and an unidentified burqa-clad woman.

His body was found the next morning by the roadside in Ghatail, Tangail, bearing signs of torture. The autopsy confirmed it was a murder, sparking outrage both at home and abroad.

Aminul's elder brother Rafiqul Islam filed a murder case with Ghatail Police Station. The investigation passed through four officers before Fajlul Kabir, assistant superintendent of police at the Criminal Investigation Department, submitted a charge sheet in 2013, naming only Mustafizur.

Mustafizur reportedly worked as a source for intelligence agencies. In 2018, a Tangail court sentenced him to death, but he had already gone into hiding.

The family and activists of the Bangladesh Centre for Workers Solidarity (BCWS), where Aminul was an organiser, rejected the verdict.

They said the judgment failed to clarify Mustafizur's role, identify accomplices, or address alleged involvement of intelligence officials.

Speaking to The Daily Star yesterday, Aminul's brother

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## Artemis astronauts more than halfway to the Moon: Nasa

AFP, Houston

The Artemis 2 astronauts have passed the halfway point between Earth and the Moon yesterday as they sped toward a planned lunar flyby, with Nasa releasing initial images of Earth taken from inside the Orion spacecraft.



Astronaut Christina Koch said the crew had a collective "expression of joy" upon being told of the milestone, which was hit around two days, five hours and 24 minutes after the spacecraft blasted off from the Kennedy Space Center in Florida.

Nasa's online dashboard showed early Saturday that the Orion spacecraft carrying the astronauts was more than 229,000 kilometres (142,000 miles) from Earth.

The space agency earlier released images from Orion that included a full portrait of Earth, featuring its deep blue oceans and billowing clouds.

The astronauts are due to loop around the Moon early next week – a feat not accomplished in more than 50 years.



A mother comforts her baby, suffering from measles, as it sleeps with an oxygen mask on at the Infectious Diseases Hospital in Mohakhali yesterday. Patients are being accommodated on balconies or floors as the facility is overcrowded amid a measles outbreak.

PHOTO: MEHEDI HASAN

## Crime boss Boro Sazzad's deputy held in Chattogram

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Rapid Action Battalion yesterday arrested Saddam Hossain, alias "Galakata Bacha", the second-in-command of notorious criminal Sazzad Ali, alias Boro Sazzad.

Saddam, 37, of the Muktijoddha Colony in Arefin Nagar under Bayezid Bostami area in Chattogram, was apprehended in the South Salimpur area of Sitakunda upazila early yesterday.

ARM Mozaffar Hossain, assistant director (media) of Rab-7, confirmed that the raid took place around 2:45am following a tip-off regarding Saddam's whereabouts.

Saddam has long been a figure of fear in Chattogram, particularly in the Jungle Salimpur and surrounding areas,

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