



"Both sides are sincere about the ceasefire... We always need to take Israel's potential for acting as a spoiler into account."
Turkish FM Hakan Fidan on US-Iran ceasefire

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NHRC ORDINANCES

Govt's rationale for repeal flawed

Say 'immediate past' commissioners; law minister refutes the claim

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government presented wrong information in parliament to justify the repeal of NHRC-related ordinances, the "immediate past" commissioners of the National Human Rights Commission alleged yesterday.

In an open letter, they said the government's real motive behind the repeal was to curb the NHRC's independence, and warned that the move could put victims of enforced disappearances and participants in the July uprising at serious risk.

They also said that under the reinstated NHRC act of 2009, security forces would be responsible for investigating allegations of their own human rights violations.

Contacted by The Daily Star, Law Minister Md Asaduzzaman, however, said all the points made in the open letter were "based on misconceptions and are incorrect".

Meanwhile, the reinstatement of the 2009 act has created confusion over the commission's current status.

On April 9, parliament repealed three ordinances related to the NHRC, passed between 2024 and 2025, and reinstated the 2009 law enacted during the Awami League era.

"If a government agency is accused, an investigation subject to that same government's permission is meaningless."

'Immediate past' NHRC commissioners

"All the points made in the open letter are based on misconceptions and are incorrect."

Law Minister Asaduzzaman

The repealed ordinances are the National Human Rights Commission (Amendment) Ordinance, 2024; the National Human Rights Commission Ordinance, 2025; and the National Human Rights Commission (Amendment) Ordinance, 2025.

Justice Moyeenul Islam Chowdhury, Nur Khan, Ilira Dewan, Prof Md Shariful Islam, and Nabila Idris said their roles as commissioners ceased to exist following the repeal.

"Since the ordinances have been repealed, we are no longer serving," Nur Khan told this newspaper, replying to a query about why they described themselves as "immediate past" in the open letter.

Asked about their status now, he explained, "We did not resign, and the government did not ask us to resign.... The status is -- when the law under which we were appointed is repealed, we cease to exist."

"We have no relation to the 2009 law as our appointments were made in line with the 2025 ordinance."

Under the 2009 act, the selection committee for appointing the NHRC chairperson and commissioners was dominated by the ruling party. It was chaired by the then Speaker and included the home minister, the chairman of the law commission, the cabinet secretary, and one member each from the ruling and opposition parties.

The interim government, however, changed this process through an ordinance. Under it, the committee would be chaired by a judge of the Appellate Division nominated by the chief justice.

Other members included the cabinet secretary, one ruling party MP, one opposition MP, a university professor, a citizen representative, a journalist representative, and a representative of the minority ethnic groups.

The interim government reconstituted the commission following the promulgation of the ordinance in November last year.

OPEN LETTER; MINISTER'S RESPONSE

The open letter, issued by commissioners who described themselves as "immediate past", responded to what they called incorrect information

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IN THE SPIRIT OF BAISHAKH

With gentle strokes of a brush, a woman paints alpona art on a young girl's cheek on the eve of Pahela Baishakh. This traditional art form, which embodies the spirit of the celebration, will adorn spaces and faces across the country today as the nation revels in festivity. The photo was taken yesterday at Dhaka University's Faculty of Fine Arts.

PHOTO: MEHEDI HASAN

US blockade of Hormuz begins

Trump vows to sink Iranian boats as oil surges; Tehran slams 'US piracy', vows to attack Gulf ports

Nato allies refuse to join blockade

Pak PM says truce 'holding', efforts on to resolve issues

China slams move UN says blockade illegal

Trump says gas prices may remain high till November

AGENCIES

The US military began a blockade of ships leaving Iran's ports yesterday, President Donald Trump said, and Tehran threatened to retaliate against ports of its Gulf neighbours after weekend talks on ending the war broke down.

Oil prices climbed back over \$100 per barrel, with no sign of a swift reopening of the Strait of Hormuz to ease the biggest ever disruption in supplies and broader concerns over the durability of a two-week ceasefire agreement reached last week.

Trump said that Iran had been in touch and wanted to make a deal, but that he would not sanction any agreement that allows Tehran to have a nuclear weapon.

"Iran will not have a nuclear weapon," Trump

told reporters at the White House yesterday. "We can't let a country blackmail or extort the world."

Since the war started on February 28, Iran has effectively shut the Strait of Hormuz to all vessels except its own, saying passage would be permitted only under Iranian control and subject to a fee.

Trump said earlier that Washington would block Iranian vessels and any ships that paid such tolls and that any Iranian "fast-attack" ships that went near the blockade would be eliminated.

Brigadier General Reza Talei-Nik, a spokesperson for Iran's Ministry of Defence, warned that efforts by foreign military to police the strait would escalate the crisis and

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Invest in agro in the north

Tarique urges businesspeople

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Prime Minister Tarique Rahman yesterday asked a group of top businesspeople to increase investment in production of agricultural products and agro-processing industries in northern districts and other remote areas.

He also suggested that the businesspeople invest more in sugar, poultry, seed industries, and fruit production so that the overall agricultural sector can advance significantly, particularly in the northern region.

Tarique assured them of more support for developing the agricultural and agro-processing sectors at a meeting at his Secretariat office.

Talking to reporters after the meeting, Ahsan Khan Chowdhury, chairman and chief executive director of PRAN-RFL Group, said the prime minister wants an agricultural revolution.

He said that during the meeting, they demanded the premier ease doing business by removing different tax and non-tax barriers.

Ahsan added that the businesspeople want the establishment of a zoning system in the agricultural sector, such as zoning for the production of crops, paddy,

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Bhasan Char forest bears brunt as LPG runs dry

Left without LPG cylinders due to fund crunch, Rohingyas forced to chop down trees for firewood, making the island more vulnerable to storm surges, erosion



Rohingya residents living in refugee camps on Bhasan Char resort to denuding the forest to collect firewood for cooking amid a prolonged shortage of LPG supplies.

PHOTO: SAJJAD HOSSAIN

SAJJAD HOSSAIN, back from bhasan char

As dawn broke over Bhasan Char, Mohammad Nur, a Rohingya refugee, stepped out of his shelter with an axe and headed towards a patch of trees on the island, southwest of Sandwip and 37 miles off the coast of the Bay of Bengal.

After a 15-minute walk, he reached a thicket of coastal vegetation. He began cutting branches of a kewra tree, chopped them into pieces and carried them home to use them as firewood. He stored them in a small kitchen space in his shelter in Cluster 23.

"Over the last two months, I have cut at least

14 trees," Nur told this correspondent who visited the island last month.

When Nur, now in his late 20s, arrived on the island with his family from a congested Rohingya camp in Cox's Bazar five years ago, life felt relatively stable.

Apart from having a roof over their heads, they received Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) cylinders for cooking through aid distribution. However, the LPG supply began to dwindle in August last year, making it increasingly difficult to cook meals for his seven-member family. About three months ago, the supply ground to an abrupt halt. With no gas and no

alternatives available, Nur turned to the only source of fuel within reach: the island's trees.

"What else could we do? How will we survive if we cannot cook food?" asked Nur, who lives with his wife, three sons, a daughter, and his younger brother in the shelter.

Nur is not alone. Across the island under Noakhali's Hatiya upazila, members of around 8,000 Rohingya families enter the forest in small groups to collect firewood, carrying axes, sacks and ropes.

For more than 34,000 Rohingya refugees on the 40-square-kilometre island, collection of

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US blockade of Iran a major military effort, say experts **P5**



Corn imports shift away from India to Brazil, US **B4**

১৫ এপ্রিল হতে ১১ জুন পর্যন্ত মোট ৫৮ (আটাত্তাল) দিন বঙ্গোপসাগরে সকল প্রকার মৎস্য নৌযান কর্তৃক মৎস্য আহরণ নিষিদ্ধকরণ বিষয়ে বিজ্ঞপ্তি

সামুদ্রিক মৎস্য (Marine Fisheries) আইন, ২০২০ এর ধারা ৩ এর উপধারা ২ মোতাবেক বাংলাদেশের সামুদ্রিক মৎস্য জলসীমায় ১৫ এপ্রিল হতে ১১ জুন পর্যন্ত মোট ৫৮ (আটাত্তাল) দিন সকল প্রকার মৎস্য নৌযান দ্বারা যে কোন প্রজাতির সামুদ্রিক মৎস্য আহরণ নিষিদ্ধ করা হয়েছে। সকল মৎস্য নৌযান মালিক/প্রতিষ্ঠানকে এ নিষেধাজ্ঞা প্রতিপালনের জন্য অনুরোধ করা হলো।

এর ব্যত্যয় ঘটলে সামুদ্রিক মৎস্য আইন, ২০২০ এবং সামুদ্রিক মৎস্য বিধিমালা, ২০২৩ অনুযায়ী ব্যবস্থা গ্রহণ করা হবে।

প্রচারে : **মৎস্য অধিদপ্তর**
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