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BANK RESOLUTION ACT A window for fund recovery, not individuals' rehabilitation

Finance minister tells JS

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Bangladesh Bank did not issue any directive regarding the reopening or closure of S Alam Group's commercial operations, which remain suspended due to loan defaults, Finance Minister Amir Khosru Mahmud Chowdhury told parliament yesterday.



The comment came after opposition MP Hasnat Abdullah asked how the Chattogram-based business group could be considered for reinstatement without repayment of dues and whether any compromise had been reached.

In a starred question, Cumilla-4 lawmaker Hasnat asked about

SEE PAGE 8 COL 1



Activists of Dhaka University's Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal at a procession from VC Chatter to the Raju Bhaskarja last night, protesting an alleged attack by Islami Chhatra Shibir on general students and JCD activists at Chattogram City College earlier yesterday. Story on Page 3.

'Consensus commission was undemocratic'

Sara Hossain says people did not understand the third question in referendum

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Senior Supreme Court lawyer Sara Hossain yesterday said the National Consensus Commission "cannot, in any way, be considered a democratic process".

"This is a selective process. You sat with a few people and made decisions. Where was democracy there? What kind of election was this? who came? Who from outside was able to speak? No one."



Sara, also a rights activist, made the remarks yesterday at a roundtable discussion organised by Sushashoner Jonno Nagorik (Shujan), a civil society platform for good governance, titled "Judicial Independence and Reform: Constitutional Obligations, Court Directives, and Public Expectations" held at the Jatiya Press Club.

Shujan Secretary Badiul Alam Majumdar conducted the event while its acting president Justice MA Matin presented the keynote.

SEE PAGE 8 COL 1

Copy of Homer's Iliad found inside Egyptian mummy

INDEPENDENT.CO.UK

Archaeologists have found a papyrus copy of Homer's Iliad in the gut of an ancient Egyptian mummy, the first time ever that a Greek literary text has been found incorporated into the preservation process.



The discovery has big implications for our knowledge of funerary practices and religious life in ancient Egypt.

The papyrus fragment was discovered in the abdomen of a mummy buried in a Roman-era tomb in Oxyrhynchus around 1,600 years ago.

Oxyrhynchus, known in the Pharaonic times as Per-Medjed, was one of the most important cities of Greco-Roman Egypt. Its remains are in the present-day town of Al-Bahnasa, about 190km south of Cairo, next to the branch of the Nile known as Bahr Yussef.

Researchers from the Institute of Ancient Near East Studies at the University of Barcelona found the mummy during a recent excavation campaign carried out between November and December 2025.

Egyptian mummies from this period have previously been found to carry papyri written in Greek, but they have all carried text of magical or ritualistic content.

The discovery of the Iliad papyrus marks the first time that a Greek literary text has been found in the embalming context, researchers note.

The epic poem, divided into 24 books, is attributed to Homer and dates back to 800BC.

Russia says it has taken 1,700 sq km of Ukraine this year

REUTERS, Moscow

Russian forces have taken 1,700 square km (656 square miles) of territory in Ukraine this year and are advancing on its so-called fortress belt in Donbas, Moscow's top general said while inspecting his forces.

Russia has since its 2022 invasion been seeking to take the whole of the Donbas area in eastern Ukraine, where Kyiv's forces have been pushed back towards a line of cities in grinding fighting.

Kyiv has also reported some gains in the deadliest war in Europe since World War Two. Top Ukrainian commander Oleksandr Syrskyi said in mid-April that Kyiv's forces had regained control of nearly 50 square km of its territory in March.

"Since the beginning of this year, a total of 80 settlements and more than 1,700 square kilometres of territory have come under our control," Valery Gerasimov, Chief of the General Staff of the Russian Armed Forces, said in footage released by the defence ministry on Tuesday.

Reuters was unable to verify the battlefield accounts, and a spokesperson for Ukraine's General Staff said he would not comment on the claim. Pro-Ukrainian maps indicate Russia has taken around 600 square km this year.

Gerasimov said Russia's Southern Grouping of forces was attacking the Donetsk fortress belt comprising the cities of Sloviansk, Kramatorsk and Kostiantynivka, and that Russian forces were about 7 to 12 km (4.3 to 7.5 miles) from Sloviansk and Kramatorsk.

Citizens decry Mujibnagar vandalism

Call for urgent
restoration

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A citizens' delegation has expressed concern over vandalism at the Mujibnagar Memorial Complex, the site where Bangladesh's first government took oath during the Liberation War, and demanded immediate steps for its preservation and reconstruction.

The demand was made at a press conference held at the Jatiya Press Club yesterday following their visit to Mujibnagar on April 17.

Senior journalist and writer Abu Sayeed Khan presented the written statement. He said that during the visit, his team found that several sculptures in the complex had been vandalised.

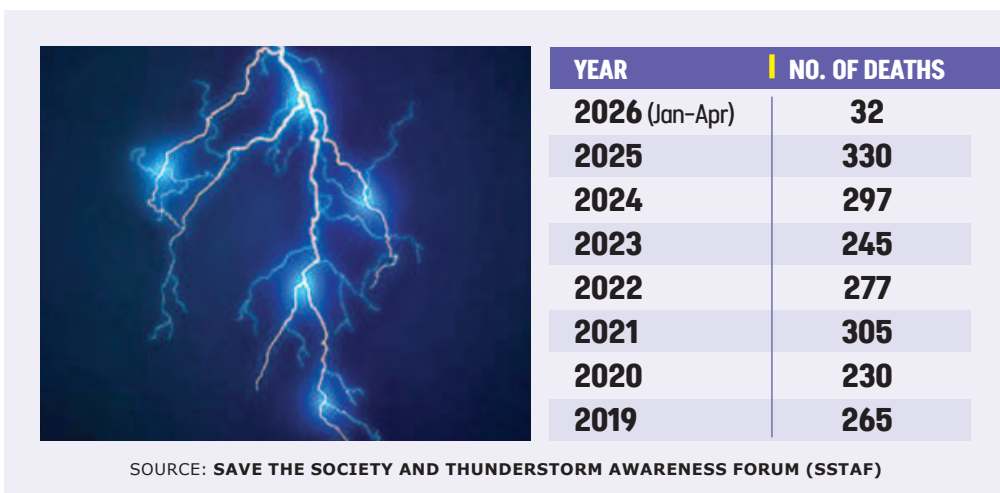
He alleged that following the August 5 mass uprising, miscreants carried out coordinated attacks. However, no effective action was taken by the interim government to restore the site.

He added that no notable government programme was observed this year to

SEE PAGE 8 COL 6

DEATHS BY LIGHTNING An unsettling reality

Study shows nearly 4,000 killed from 2010-2023



SOURCE: SAVE THE SOCIETY AND THUNDERSTORM AWARENESS FORUM (SSTAF)

DWOHA CHOWDHURY

As farmers across the country worked in the fields on Saturday to bring in the season's largest rice harvest, 10 of them were killed by lightning in seven districts.

That very day (April 18), lightning also killed two fishermen.

These deaths once again highlight how Bangladesh's rural workforce remains dangerously exposed, despite government pledges to mitigate the impact of one of the country's deadliest weather hazards.

For the family of Abdul Kalam, a farmer who died after being struck by lightning in Tahirpur upazila of Sunamganj on Saturday, the loss is immediate and devastating.

His father, Abu Bakar, said, "My son died

from lightning and left behind twin seven-year-old sons and a toddler daughter. Of my five sons, he was the only one who stayed with us and was the breadwinner of the family. Now, at the age of 70, I don't know how my family will survive."

He said local council representatives, administrative officials, and politicians visited his house and assured him of financial aid, while neighbours helped cover the burial costs.

The Save the Society and Thunderstorm Awareness Forum (SSTAF), a non-governmental organisation tracking lightning casualties, reported that 32 people have died from January 1 to April 18 this year.

Last year, 330 people were killed by lightning, the highest in the last seven years

SEE PAGE 8 COL 4

3 suspected robbers found dead in Teknaf

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Cox's Bazar

Police recovered the bodies of three suspected robbers from a hill in Teknaf, Cox's Bazar, who are believed to have been killed in a clash between two rival groups.

The bodies were found around 9:00am yesterday on a remote hill in the North Shilkhali area under the Baharchhara union, said Durjoy Biswas, the officer-in-charge of the Baharchhara Police Investigation Centre.

The deceased were identified as Aminul Islam Robi, 19; Mujibur Rahman, 38; and Nur Bashar, 20. They were residents of the same area.

Another suspect, Morshed, was critically injured in the incident and is currently undergoing treatment at a hospital under police custody, according to Durjoy.

Mujibur and Morshed were known offenders with multiple robbery cases against them, while the other two were relatively new to criminal activities linked to robbery and human trafficking. Police are verifying whether they had any prior cases.

The incident may be linked to abduction and human trafficking, said Saiful Islam, the officer-in-charge of Teknaf Model Police Station.

"We are taking the matter seriously and investigating," he said.

Robi's father, Ruhul Amin, identified his son at the scene after being informed.

"Morshed called my son last night while he was having dinner and asked him to come out. He had been missing since then. This morning, I found his body in the hills," Ruhul said.



Cars, bikes and heavy vehicles wait in line for fuel outside Talukdar Filling Station at Asad Gate around 9:30pm last night. Pump employees said the queues were slightly shorter yesterday.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

UN urges help for stranded Hormuz sailors

AFP, Singapore

The head of the UN maritime agency appealed on Tuesday for help for thousands of seafarers stranded due to the closure of the Strait of Hormuz, as the Middle East war paralyses the vital shipping route.

Around 20,000 seafarers and 2,000 ships have been stranded after shipping was disrupted in the strategic strait following US-Israeli strikes on Iran on February 28 that triggered the war, according to the International Maritime Organization (IMO).

Around one-fifth of the world's crude and liquefied natural gas normally passes through the strait.

IMO Secretary-General Arsenio Dominguez told a maritime conference in Singapore on Tuesday that stranded sailors were suffering from stress and fatigue.