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BNP 'deceiving the nation'

Jamaat ameer says ruling party opposing even its own reform proposals

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Jamaat-e-Islami Ameer Shafiqur Rahman yesterday accused the BNP of "clearly deceiving the nation" by opposing key state reforms.

"The BNP is opposing every necessary reform required to establish good governance and ensure true independence for the people," he said, adding that the ruling party is "going against even its own reform proposals and manifesto".

Shafiqur, who is also the leader of the opposition in parliament, made the comments while presiding over a rally at the capital's Suhrawardy Udyan, attended by the families of July uprising martyrs and injured activists.

Alleging a shift in BNP's political stance, Shafiqur said, "They [BNP] have begun to follow the path of so-called fugitive fascists. No matter how hard they try, they cannot become the Awami League; at best, they are a weaker version that once mocked the nation and the opposition."

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People throng Laldighi Maidan in Chattogram city to watch "Jabbar er Boli Khela" yesterday. A Baishakhi Mela was held on the occasion of this traditional wrestling competition.

PHOTO: RAJIB RAIHAN

Be 'servants and friends of the people'

PM tells officials

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Tarique Rahman yesterday urged public administration officials to move beyond a bureaucratic mindset and serve as "servants and friends of people", saying their integrity, efficiency and accountability are key to the government's success.



"You are the link between making policies and putting them into action. Your honesty, competence and accountability form one of the key foundations of the government's success."

Tarique's comment came at the inauguration of the new training dormitory building of the Bangladesh Institute of Administration and Management (BIAM) Foundation at its auditorium in Dhaka.

Civil servants play a key role in ensuring the effectiveness, continuity and stability of the state machinery, he said, adding that a strong and accountable administration is essential to building a modern Bangladesh.

The current government is committed to developing merit-based, confident, creative and responsible human

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Beware of political traps, provocations

Tarique warns JCD leaders

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP Chairman and Prime Minister Tarique Rahman yesterday instructed Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal to avoid conflict with opposition student groups and not to fall for provocations on campuses.

Amid rising concern within the BNP over campus tensions, Tarique asked JCD central leaders to convey and enforce the directive by visiting educational institutions across the country.

The instructions came at a meeting at the BNP chairperson's Gulshan office last night, where senior party leaders reviewed the political situation and recent campus incidents. BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhru Islam Alamgir and several Chhatra Dal leaders were present at the meeting.

The directive follows recent clashes between Chhatra Dal and Shibir across campuses.

Party insiders said Tarique instructed JCD leaders and activists to act with patience, discipline and caution, warning that any misstep could malign not only the organisation but also the BNP and the government. He also stressed maintaining a peaceful academic environment.

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Palestinians vote amid pall of war

13 more killed ahead of local elections

AFP, Ramallah

Palestinians in the West Bank and central Gaza voted yesterday in municipal elections, the first since the war in Gaza erupted, with low early turnout and a limited political field.

Nearly 1.5 million people are registered to vote in the Israeli-occupied West Bank, as well as 70,000 people in Gaza's Deir el-Balah area, according to the Ramallah-based Central Elections Commission. Deir el-Balah was chosen as it is one of the few areas where the population has not been massively displaced, he said.

Early AFP footage from Al-Bireh in the West Bank and Deir el-Balah showed voters trickling into the polling stations.

An AFP journalist reported near-empty stations across parts of the West Bank, even as foreign diplomats made their rounds to observe the process.

Most electoral lists are aligned with President Mahmud Abbas's secular-nationalist Fatah movement or are composed of independents.

Hamas, Fatah's bitter rival and the ruling power in Gaza, is

absent from the race.

In many municipalities, Fatah-backed lists face off against independents supported by smaller factions such as the Marxist-Leninist Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine.

stagnation and declining legitimacy. Western and regional donors have increasingly tied financial and diplomatic support for the PA to visible reform, particularly in local governance.

Polling in the West Bank



Municipal councils oversee water, sanitation, and local infrastructure but do not enact legislation.

Still, with presidential or legislative elections frozen since 2006, councils have become one of the last remaining democratic mechanisms under the Palestinian Authority.

The PA faces widespread criticism over corruption,

ends at 7:00pm. In Deir el-Balah, stations close at 5:00pm to facilitate counting in daylight because of the lack of electricity in the war-devastated strip, the elections commission told AFP.

Two years of war that started in October 2023 have left swathes of Gaza destroyed and more than 72,000 people dead,

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No need to panic over possible attacks

CTTC says after PHQ alert

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Urging people not to panic over a recent Police Headquarters alert regarding possible extremist attacks on key installations, the Counter Terrorism and Transnational Crime unit yesterday said its cyber intelligence team is actively working on the matter.

"We have received the information, and our CTTC cyber intelligence team is working on it. There is no reason to panic," CTTC Joint Commissioner Munshi Shahabuddin told reporters responding to a query at a press briefing at the DMP media centre.

He, however, declined to provide specific details about any particular group or organisation.

The remarks follow an "urgent and confidential" letter issued by the PHQ on April 23, which alerted law enforcers nationwide of potential attacks by supporters of a banned extremist outfit.

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Bangladesh to overtake India in per capita GDP

Says IMF in projection for 2026

STAR REPORT

When the International Monetary Fund (IMF) released its latest World Economic Outlook (WEO) database on April 14, one data point quickly made its way through financial markets and newsrooms.

Bangladesh is projected to record a higher gross domestic product per capita than India in 2026, measured in current US dollars. The forecast puts Bangladesh at \$2,911 per person against India at \$2,812. The difference is small in absolute terms, but its symbolism is significant.

India's economy, valued at \$3,916 billion in 2025, is roughly eight times the size of Bangladesh's \$458 billion. It is also one of the most closely watched growth stories in the world. Yet on this narrow measure, the smaller neighbour appears set to edge ahead.

The reaction in India was swift. Kaushik Basu, former chief economist of the World Bank, described the development as "shocking". Indian commentators debated whether the figure reflected a deeper structural divergence or merely a statistical quirk.

The answer, as is so often the case with economic data, is: both.

Measured in current dollars, Bangladesh led India in per capita income for seven years from 2018.

India moved ahead in 2025 after the Bangladeshi taka weakened sharply. This is not without precedent.

Bangladesh was also ahead of India in per capita GDP between 1989 and 2002.

India then pulled in front for around 15 years before slipping below Bangladesh in 2018.

The rupee's own depreciation against the dollar in the subsequent period then swung the comparison back.

According to the latest projections, Bangladesh is set to move ahead in 2026 by roughly \$100 per person.

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Manipur ethnic violence kills 3

AFP, New Delhi

Gun battles between rival ethnic groups in India's troubled northeastern Manipur state killed three men, police said, the latest unrest in the far-flung region.

Manipur has seen periodic clashes for nearly three years between the predominantly Hindu Meitei majority and the mainly Christian Kuki community in which more than 250 people have been killed.

"In a heavy exchange of fire... three individuals sustained fatal bullet injuries," Manipur police said in a statement late Friday.

The clashes took place at Mullam village in Ukhrul district, and police did not specify which community the men came from.

"Security measures have been enhanced in the area to prevent further escalation of violence," police said.

"Operations are still underway."

Longstanding enmity between the Meitei and Kuki communities revolves around competition for land and public jobs.

Rights activists have accused local leaders of exacerbating ethnic divisions for political gain.

Unrest erupted in 2023, when around 60,000 people were forced to flee their homes, according to government figures.

Trouble eased, but earlier this month, four people, including two children, were killed during an attack by a Kuki group, and a Meitei mob later stormed a paramilitary camp.

On Thursday, 249 Indians from the northeastern states of Manipur and Mizoram -- from the Bnei Menashe

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Hawkers' stalls in front of the emergency gate of Dhaka Medical College Hospital are making it difficult for ambulances and patients to enter the hospital. Parking of ambulances on the other side of the street worsens the situation. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

6 killed as Russia strikes Ukraine

Zelensky urges more sanctions

AFP, Kyiv

Russian strikes across Ukraine killed at least six people, officials said yesterday, most of them in an attack on a residential building in the eastern city of Dnipro.

The strikes extended nearly daily attacks Russia has launched since starting its invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, with many civilians being killed.

"The Russians' tactics remain unchanged: attack drones, cruise missiles and a significant amount of ballistic missiles," Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky said.

"Most of the targets are ordinary infrastructure in cities. Residential buildings, energy facilities and businesses have been damaged," he said.

Four people were killed,

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