



WORLD PRESS FREEDOM INDEX Bangladesh slides 3 spots to 152nd

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh has slipped down three places to 152nd on the World Press Freedom Index this year, losing some of last year's gains.

Reporters sans frontières (RSF), or Reporters Without Borders, published the index yesterday, putting Bangladesh's score at 33.05.

Last year, Bangladesh's score increased to 33.71 from 27.64 a year earlier. The jump helped Bangladesh climb an unprecedented 16 places in last year's index.



The index is based on a score ranging from zero to 100 that is assigned to each country or territory, with 100 being the best possible score, or the highest possible level of press freedom, and zero the worst.

This score is calculated on the basis of a tally of abuses against media and journalists in connection with their work and a qualitative analysis of the situation in each country.

Depending on their scores, countries are classified in a range between "good" and "very serious".

Bangladesh is classified as "very serious", a category for countries with a score between zero and 40.

To determine a nation's press freedom ranking, its

SEE PAGE 12 COL 4



Perched face-to-face on a sunlit branch in Rangamati's Kaptai upazila, two Asian glossy starlings are locked in what feels like an intimate conversation. Native across South and Southeast Asia, including Bangladesh, these highly adaptable birds thrive in forests, mangroves and even busy urban spaces. Their diet is delightfully varied -- soft fruits like figs, mango and papaya, alongside insects they pick deftly from foliage. Social and often noisy, they move in flocks, sometimes mimicking sounds from their surroundings. Classified as Least Concern by the IUCN, they remain widespread, though local pressures such as habitat change and conflict with fruit growers threaten their populations.

PHOTO: KAMOL DAS

21 killed in mob violence in April: MSF

Rights body reports 312 incidents of violence against women, children

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Rights body Manabdhikar Shongskriti Foundation (MSF) yesterday said incidents of mob violence rose in April, surpassing the figures recorded in the previous month.

At least 21 people were killed and 49 others were critically injured in mob beatings across the country in April, while 19 people were killed and 31 were injured in similar incidents in the previous month, MSF said in its monthly monitoring report.

In February, 18 people were killed and 33 others were injured, while at least 21 people were killed in mob beatings in January, up from 10 deaths recorded in December 2025, according to MSF.

On April 11, 52-year-old pir Abdur Rahman alias Shamim al-Jahangir was beaten and hacked to death by a mob at his darbar (shrine) in

SEE PAGE 12 COL 4

BNP moves to reign in its ranks

SAJJAD HOSSAIN

The ruling BNP is planning to restore its chain of command, discipline leaders and activists, and strengthen its organisational structure amid concerns that unruly behaviour by some party members could damage the government's public image.

As part of this effort, BNP Chairman Tarique Rahman is expected to meet with grassroots leaders in the second week of this month to provide them with direct instructions on party discipline and organisational activities.

This will be Tarique's first such meeting with grassroots leaders after becoming the prime minister.

BNP policymakers said the party leadership has become concerned over discourteous behaviour by some leaders and activists with the public, local-level infighting, weak coordination and allegations of links with criminal elements.



"We are planning to hold a meeting with leaders of all district units, where our leader Tarique Rahman will give them necessary directives on strengthening organisational activities and maintaining party discipline," said Syed Emran Saleh Prince, joint secretary general of BNP.

Presidents, general secretaries, conveners and member secretaries of 82 organisational districts are expected to attend the meeting, according to party sources.

Grassroots leaders may also be asked to share their views on the party, the government's performance, local problems, internal disputes and organisational weaknesses in their areas.

Two senior ministers, who are also BNP policymakers, told this newspaper that they would soon sit with Tarique to discuss the party's next course of action.

They said the party chief wants to hear from both central and grassroots leaders before taking major

SEE PAGE 12 COL 1

US suffered a 'shameful defeat'

Says Khamenei; Trump to be briefed on Iran military options

Trump warns Iran blockade could last for months

US seeks 'maritime freedom' coalition to restart Hormuz

Israel defence minister says it may have to 'act again' against Iran

AGENCIES

Iran's supreme leader yesterday declared that the United States had suffered a shameful defeat, defiantly rejecting a warning from President Donald Trump that an economically punishing US naval blockade could be enforced for months to come.

Oil prices hit a four-year high, then fell back slightly, before Mojtaba Khamenei issued a written message read out on state television declaring that Iran was now in the driver's seat in the crisis.

"Today, two months after the largest military deployment and aggression by the world's bullies in the region, and the United States' disgraceful defeat in its plans, a new chapter is unfolding for the Persian Gulf and the Strait of Hormuz," he said, hailing Iran's control over shipping in the strait.

He said US bases in the region "lack even the capacity to ensure their own security, let alone provide any hope of securing their allies."

He went on to predict a bright future for the Gulf without the United States, saying those who interfere in the region from afar "have no place there except at the bottom of its waters."

Khamenei was wounded in the initial US-Israeli strikes that killed his father Ali Khamenei, and has not been seen in public since being named his successor as supreme leader last month.

The United States imposed a blockade on Iran's ports two weeks ago, while the Islamic republic has maintained its stranglehold over the strategic Strait of Hormuz since the start of the Middle East war at the end of February.

Now Washington is seeking to set up an international coalition comprising allied states and shipping firms to coordinate safe passage through Hormuz, a State Department official told AFP -- while maintaining its blockade of ships

SEE PAGE 12 COL 1

Shamima appointed Dhaka SP

In a first for the district, DC and police super now both women

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Shamima Pervin has been appointed superintendent of police (SP) of Dhaka district, becoming the first woman to hold the post in Dhaka.

She earlier served as assistant inspector general of police (Education, Sports and Culture) at the Police Headquarters.

On April 22, Farida Khanom, a deputy secretary at the home ministry, was appointed deputy commissioner of Dhaka, also becoming the first woman to hold the post in Dhaka.

As of yesterday, Dhaka's DC and SP are now both women.

Shamima is also the spouse of Rakibul Islam, lawmaker from Khulna-3 and whip of the 13th parliament.

Yesterday, 12 senior

SEE PAGE 12 COL 4

Most reserved seat picks highly educated, rich

Says TIB in its analysis of affidavits

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Nearly two-thirds of the nominees for reserved women's seats are both highly educated and millionaires, said Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB) in a statement yesterday.

Around 65 percent of the candidates declared multimillionaire status, while more than 63 percent reported postgraduate or higher qualifications in their affidavits, it said.

TIB presented this picture through an analysis of the affidavit information of 49 nominated candidates for the reserved women's seats in the 13th National Parliament submitted to the Election Commission.

Candidates for reserved women's seats are significantly ahead of directly elected members of parliament in terms of educational qualifications, said the anti-graft watchdog.

In these seats, 63.3 percent of candidates hold postgraduate or higher degrees, whereas among elected MPs, this rate is 50.7 percent.

Overall, 52.63 percent of all members hold postgraduate or higher degrees, including directly elected and reserved women's seat members.

Among the reserved women's seat candidates, 27 percent are graduates and 4.1 percent have passed higher secondary education. The rate of self-educated candidates is 4.1 percent and secondary school graduates account for 2.1 percent.

According to the analysis, out of 49 candidates, 32 (65.31 percent) are multi-millionaires based on the total value of movable and immovable assets, while 25 are multimillionaires based on movable assets and 14 based on immovable assets.

A party-wise analysis shows that among BNP's 36

SEE PAGE 12 COL 4

ICT asks how Qamrul got foreign report

Stays its order to transfer to Evercare

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The International Crimes Tribunal-1 yesterday expressed surprise at how former food minister Qamrul Islam, now in jail, obtained a medical report from a Singapore hospital without its permission.

The tribunal sought an explanation from his lawyer, stayed its earlier order allowing his transfer from Bangladesh Medical University to Evercare Hospital Dhaka, and directed that his medical reports be submitted within 15 days.

Arrested on November 18, 2024, Qamrul faces charges of crimes against humanity linked to the July uprising.

Typically, inmates receive treatment at prison hospitals. After falling ill in custody,

SEE PAGE 12 COL 4



Biman Managing Director Kaizer Sohel Ahmed and Boeing Vice President Paul Righi sign a \$3.7 billion deal for 14 aircraft in the presence of senior government officials, diplomats and aviation executives at a city hotel yesterday.

PHOTO: COURTESY OF BIMAN

Tree that can filter 98% of microplastics from tap water

CNN ONLINE

The moringa tree, known as the "miracle tree", is one of the most nutrient-dense plants on the planet and is prized for its healing qualities. It also has another huge benefit, according to new research: it's excellent at removing microplastics from water.

A team of scientists from Brazil and the United Kingdom found extracts of seeds from these fast-growing trees are just as effective at removing microplastics from drinking water as commonly used chemicals, according to their findings published in April.

Moringa trees have been used to purify water for millennia, with evidence of their use by ancient Greeks, Romans and Egyptians, said Adriano Gonçalves dos Reis, a study author and a professor at the Institute of Science and Technology of São Paulo State University.

He and his colleagues have been studying the tree's seeds for a decade, specifically the role they can play as a "coagulant", a substance which causes tiny particles in water to stick together so they can be filtered out. Given growing concerns over microplastics in drinking water, they decided to look at the moringa's potential for removing them.

