



JURNOS IN JAIL Some may have been complicit in crimes against humanity: Zahed

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Filing murder cases against journalists over the atrocities during the July uprising was a wrong move, Zahed Ur Rahman, the prime minister's adviser on information and broadcasting, said yesterday.

He, however, said he personally believes that the crimes allegedly committed by some of the journalists currently behind bars are far graver than murder. While they are being held on specific murder charges, he argued that they could instead be held, to some extent, responsible for crimes against humanity.

Speaking to reporters during a weekly press briefing at the Secretariat's Press Information Department, he also highlighted



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Dhaka South City Corporation (DSCC) workers draw boxes with white paint on Gulistan streets to designate hawkker spots and ensure space for pedestrians. The photo was taken on Shaheed Abrar Fahad Avenue yesterday.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

Trade deal with US cannot be scrapped at will Says commerce minister

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh cannot unilaterally revoke its trade deal with the US, Commerce Minister Khandaker Abdul Mukhtar said yesterday.

He made the remarks as the agreement faced fresh scrutiny over language that reportedly places far more binding obligations on Dhaka than on Washington DC.

"A state-level agreement is not like a personal contract that can be cancelled at will," he told the media following a meeting with Brendan Lynch, assistant US trade representative for South and Central Asia, at the ministry in Dhaka.

"It is a reality, and we want to make the best use of it to expand the country's trade and investment," the minister said.

He said Bangladesh need not worry about the agreement, as international trade deals are structured to benefit all signatories.

"Any international agreement is reached through coordination between two parties. It is designed to create a win-win situation by taking into account the interests of both sides," Mukhtar said.

The minister urged stakeholders to focus on extracting mutual value from the arrangement. He also noted that the current government did not negotiate the Agreement

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'Drug dealers' hack Rab men in Narayanganj

Jubo Dal leader snatched away from police custody in Rupganj, seven cops hurt

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Narayanganj

At least three Rab members were injured in an attack in Narayanganj city yesterday, while assailants attacked police personnel and snatched away an arrestee, a Jubo Dal leader, in Rupganj.

According to a Rab statement, a four-member intelligence team of Rab-II was collecting information as part of an anti-narcotics drive when drug dealers attacked them with sharp weapons in the city's Boalia Khal area around 12:30pm.

Corporal Najibul and constables Mahi and Ibrahim were injured in the attack. Najibul was critically wounded and is currently undergoing treatment at Dhaka Medical College Hospital.

"All four members of the intelligence team were in plainclothes. Two of them were hacked with sharp weapons," Abdur Rashid, deputy director of Rab-II, told The Daily Star over the phone.

A Rab official, requesting anonymity, said the attack was carried out by associates of listed criminals Jahid and Masud, also known as "Buitta Masud", who are involved in drug trading in the area.

Rab sources said the same group had previously attacked a Rab team during an anti-crime drive in Gaibandha Bazar of Masdair on November 16 last year, when indiscriminate gunfire left a woman injured.

CCTV footage of yesterday's incident shows several people, wielding machetes and cleavers, attacking the Rab members.

Abdus Salam, president of Narayanganj District

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58 killings tied to Shapla Chattar crackdown

Says ICT chief prosecutor

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Investigators have identified 58 killings linked to the crackdown on Hefazate-Islam's Shapla Chattar rally in Dhaka and four districts on May 5-6, 2013, the International Crimes Tribunal's (ICT) chief prosecutor Md Aminul Islam said yesterday.

He confirmed the figure based on post-mortem reports, burial site identifications, and statements from victims' families. Of the victims, 32 were in Dhaka, 20 in Narayanganj, five in Chattogram, and one in Cumilla.

Aminul said the number of accused would be "no fewer than 30," with six already arrested, including a former inspector general of police, though identities were not disclosed at this stage of investigation.

He indicated responsibility may extend to the highest levels of government under the doctrine of superior

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RELATED STORY ON PAGE 4

Govt plans polls to local bodies within a year

Says Fakhrul; army chief thanks all for help in successfully holding national election

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government plans to hold elections for all tiers of local government bodies within a year, including city corporations, district councils, upazila parishads, municipalities, and union parishads.

Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir, minister of local government, rural development, and cooperatives, told reporters after attending the third day of the DC conference at Osmani Memorial Auditorium in Dhaka yesterday.

He emphasised that local government is the strongest foundation of democracy and a vital grassroots institution. He said that strengthening these institutions bolsters both democracy and the state.

The minister also asked deputy commissioners to work alongside the people, asserting that the citizens are the true owners of the country and that people at the grassroots determine the nation's direction.

After discussions on power and energy at the conference, Minister Iqbal Hasan Mahmud Tuku told journalists that the government's goal is to generate 5,000 megawatts of electricity from solar energy over the next five years.

Regarding power outages, he said there is currently no load-shedding in the country and suggested that any electricity shortages are likely due to transmission line faults rather than load-shedding.

Brig Gen (ret'd) AKM Shamsul Islam, PM's defence adviser, said certain groups were trying to undermine the military by deflecting attention from their own failures and shifting

blame in an attempt to create discord in civil-military relations.

The defence adviser further emphasised that a strong civil-military relationship built on mutual respect and trust is essential for the country, noting that the roots of this bond lie deep in the history of Bangladesh's independence.

He made the remarks while addressing a session on the Ministry of Defence and Armed Forces Division at the DC conference, said an ISPR press release.

Army Chief General Waker-Uz Zaman, in his

The four-day DC conference, which began on Sunday, held eight sessions covering 14 ministries and divisions on its third day.

speech, congratulated all concerned on holding a successful and impartial election. He noted that discharging duties in coordination with the civil administration has further strengthened public trust in the army.

Navy Chief Admiral M Nazmul Hassan highlighted the navy's activities in protecting maritime boundaries, while Chief of Air Force Air Chief Marshal Hasan Mahmood Khan presented future development plans, including the necessity of adding new aircraft for the air

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RAPE OF 11-YR-OLD 2 weeks on, accused still at large, goes live on FB

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Netrokona

Despite nearly two weeks having passed, police are yet to arrest madrasa teacher Amanullah Mahmud Sagor, the prime accused in a case over the rape and impregnation of an 11-year-old student in Netrokona's Madan upazila.

Meanwhile, Sagor, 30, founder of the madrasa, went live on Facebook yesterday from an undisclosed location to claim his innocence.

On April 23, the mother of the child filed a rape case against two including Sagor with Madan Police Station after discovering that her daughter was seven months pregnant.

The incident has since sparked outrage across the country.

According to the First Information Report, on October 2 last year, after classes ended in the afternoon, Sagor told the child to sweep the mosque adjacent to the madrasa. By that time, other teachers and students had already left for home. After the child finished sweeping, he told her

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UNBOWED

On the occasion of **WORLD PRESS FREEDOM DAY**, The Daily Star will continue its exhibition till **MAY 15 (11:00AM TO 8:00PM)** at its Dhaka office on Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue.

The exhibition documents the brutal attack on its Dhaka office on December 18, 2025. We invite you to walk through these scarred spaces and bear witness to what was endured.

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Three-month-old Arbin Sarkar being carried to the intensive care unit (ICU) at the DNCC Dedicated Covid-19 Hospital in the capital's Mohakhali yesterday as his condition suddenly worsened after suffering from measles for five days. His guardians had brought him from Narsingdi and admitted him to the hospital.

PHOTO: MEHEDI HASAN

Rohingya youth held over 'TTP link'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Police in Cox's Bazar have arrested a Rohingya youth for alleged links with Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), a Pakistan-based militant group.

Officials said this marks the first reported case of suspected TTP communication with a Rohingya refugee in Bangladesh.

A team from Teknaf Model Police Station apprehended Mahmudullah, 19, from Camp 24 on Monday and seized an Android mobile phone.

Case documents state that the device showed his connection to a WhatsApp group named "Haqeeqat News" (in Urdu), operated by TTP, through his social media ID "Ayatullah BD alias Amhed".

"He has been regularly maintaining the communication

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