



"I'm not going to walk away and plunge the country into chaos. The results are tough... and there's no sugarcoating it."

UK PM Keir Starmer on Labour losses in local polls



CIVIL ADMIN TOP POSTS

Frustration grows over contractual appointment

25 out of 85 secretaries are contractual appointees; bureaucrats call for cancelling contracts

BAHARAM KHAN

The BNP-led government appears to be continuing the controversial practice of placing retired officials in key administrative positions – a policy widely followed by the previous interim government – which, according to many bureaucrats, is stoking frustration within the civil service.

Moreover, the government has drawn criticism over the recent appointments of two controversial officials to key deputy commissioner-level posts.

Bureaucrats expected that the elected government would overhaul the administration by removing contractual officials from top positions, but they are now witnessing the opposite.

According to the public administration ministry's data, all eight senior secretaries, aged between 65 and 75, are contractual appointees, most of whom had been out of administrative roles for over a decade. They include the cabinet secretary, the principal secretary to the prime minister, and the secretaries for public administration and land.

Ministry sources said that during the interim government's tenure, at least 18 secretaries were appointed on a contractual basis for one to two years, while the BNP-led government appointed 19 secretaries on contract, cancelling more than a dozen such appointments.

"Signs of indecision and instability are visible in selecting top officials. Sudden decisions should not be made regarding senior



Rampant hill razing continues to plague the remote Jungle Salimpur area of Sitakunda upazila in Chattogram. Despite recent law enforcement drives, new settlements are being built by carving into the hilly terrain. Ahead of the monsoon, locals fear major accidents as heavy rains could trigger landslides. The photo was taken recently.

PHOTO: RAJIB RAIHAN

- 8 senior secretaries appointed on a contractual basis
- Most were away from admin roles for over a decade
- Two controversial officials given key posts
- 6 serving secretaries withdrawn, attached to ministry

posts. Unexpectedly, this is happening during the tenure of an elected government," public administration expert Firoz Mia told The Daily Star.

Ministry officials said that in the past, about 10 percent of the total number of secretaries were appointed on a contractual basis, but the number now stands at 25 out of a total of 85 secretaries.

One of them is Cabinet Secretary Nasimul Ghani, who was made an officer on special duty (OSD) in 2009 and retired in 2016.

About a decade after his retirement, Nasimul was appointed secretary of the President's Office and later home secretary during the interim government's tenure.

Just a day before the current government took office on February 17, he received a contractual appointment as cabinet secretary – an instance many experts and bureaucrats described as unprecedented in Bangladesh's administrative history.

Officials at the public administration ministry could not say anything about the tenure of his contractual appointment.

When asked, Nasimul said, "I don't know how long I'm going to hold this post... I will leave the day the government wants me to. If it directs me not to come to office from tomorrow, I won't."

A new precedent was also set through the appointment of ABM Abdus Satar, a former private secretary to the BNP chairperson, as the principal secretary to the PM.

According to sources at the Prime Minister's Office (PMO), this was the first time a party chief's private secretary was given the post of principal secretary.

When a secretary is appointed on a contractual basis, it impacts the promotion and placement cycles of three to four regular officers. Currently, more than a hundred officers are missing out on their due promotions and roles because of these contractual appointments. Consequently, this is causing frustration within the administration, said a joint secretary on the condition of anonymity.

CONTROVERSIAL APPOINTMENTS

The recent government decision to appoint two controversial officials to key deputy commissioner-level posts came as a shock to many

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Gulf clash clouds truce deal hopes

US, Iran exchange fire at Hormuz; Trump insists ceasefire holds; UAE repels Iranian air attack

REUTERS, Washington

US and Iranian forces clashed in the Gulf and the United Arab Emirates came under renewed attack, but President Donald Trump said a ceasefire was still holding despite the flare-up, which dented hopes for a swift diplomatic resolution to the crisis.

of Hormuz, under fire. There was no damage done to the three Destroyers, but great damage done to the Iranian attackers," Trump wrote on Truth Social.

He later told reporters the ceasefire remained in effect and played down the exchange. "They trilled with us today. We blew them away," Trump said in Washington.

Iran accuses US of targeting ships, attacking civilian areas

Some 1,500 ships trapped in Gulf due to Iran conflict: IMO

Iranian forces seize the oil tanker Ocean Koi in the Gulf of Oman

Israeli strike kills 4 people in south Lebanon

The escalation came as Washington awaited Tehran's response to a US proposal to end the war, which began on February 28 when the US and Israel launched airstrikes on Iran.

Trump said on Thursday three US Navy destroyers were attacked as they moved through the Strait of Hormuz, a vital conduit for global oil supplies that Iran has all but closed since the war began. Yesterday, Iran accused the US Navy of "aggressive acts" against two Iranian tankers.

"Three World Class American Destroyers just transited, very successfully, out of the Strait

Iran, however, accused the United States of breaching the ceasefire, which had largely held since it was announced on April 7 but has been under its biggest strain since Trump announced and then paused a new naval mission in the strait this week.

"Every time a diplomatic solution is on the table, the US opts for a reckless military adventure," Foreign Minister Abbas Araqchi said yesterday.

Iran's top joint military command said US

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Bangladeshi broadcasters risk FIFA WC blackout

SAMSUL AREFIN KHAN

The FIFA World Cup 2026 is set to begin in just 33 days, but there is a strong possibility that Bangladeshi viewers may face a World Cup blackout, as no broadcaster in the country has secured telecast rights for the global showpiece event as of yesterday.

Whopping asking price for broadcast, limited commercial inventory, and inconvenient match timings are the reasons behind Bangladeshi broadcasters not showing interest in telecasting the greatest football show on earth.

Four years ago, state-run Bangladesh Television (BTV) had secured terrestrial broadcasting rights while satellite channels, T Sports and GTV, secured satellite rights. These TV channels aired all 64 matches live, while Toffee held the digital streaming rights.

This year, however, no broadcaster has acquired the rights because of the massive price being demanded by Springbok Pte Ltd, the Singapore-based company that secured media rights for Bangladesh.

Information and Broadcasting Minister Zahir Uddin Swapan told The Daily Star that the government is not interested in purchasing the rights, given the current financial situation and allegations of corruption surrounding the previous deal.

"It seems that not even one-tenth of the money spent on the purchase last time was recovered," Swapan said yesterday.



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Star wins global accolade for youth readership drive



STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Daily Star has clinched the third place in the Best Initiative to Bolster Next Generation of Readership category at the 89th INMA Global Media Awards 2026, a global stage that honours the most innovative initiatives in the news industry across the world.

The recognition came for the paper's flagship youth engagement platform, the National Newspaper Olympiad (NNO).

INMA announced 60 winners on Thursday, awarding first, second, and third places in each category, with select exceptions where judges exercised discretion.

This year's competition drew a record 960 entries from 274 leading news media brands across 46 countries, including newspapers, magazines, digital outlets, and TV and radio stations.

From 200 finalists chosen in March by an international jury of 60 media executives from 26 countries, winners were revealed in Berlin.

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A child turns his face away as he walks past plumes of toxic smoke rising from plastic waste openly being burnt along the banks of the Buriganga river. Despite grave risks to public health and the environment, this harmful practice of plastic waste disposal remains a common sight in the area. The photo was taken yesterday afternoon.

PHOTO: MEHEDI HASAN

Suvendu named West Bengal CM

Oath ceremony today; TMC plans to challenge governor's move to dissolve assembly

STAR DESK

Suvendu Adhikari was formally named the Chief Minister of West Bengal yesterday, days after the BJP's resounding victory in the recently concluded assembly elections.

Dilip Ghosh, a senior BJP leader and former state president, proposed Adhikari's name at the legislature party meeting held in Kolkata earlier in the day.

Union Home Minister Amit Shah, who was appointed the central observer for the meeting, and Odisha Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi, the co-observer, were present.

"I announce the name of Suvendu Adhikari elected as Leader of West Bengal BJP Legislative Party," Shah announced at the legislature party meeting.

The oath-taking ceremony for the newly elected BJP MLAs is scheduled for today and will take place at the Brigade Parade Ground. Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Amit Shah, BJP national president Nitin Nabin, and chief ministers from other BJP-ruled states are expected to attend.

The BJP secured a historic victory in the recently concluded West Bengal assembly elections, ending the Mamata Banerjee-led Trinamool Congress's (TMC) 15-year rule.



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