Wild West Wing? Turmoil revives memories of Trump 1.0

AFP, *Washington*

After a relatively disciplined start to Donald Trump's second term, the White House is grappling with signs of turmoil that have revived memories of his first chaotic presidency.

From the extraordinary departure of his new press secretary after five days to questions about the future of his chief of staff, there have been a series of upheavals in recent weeks.

The ructions come at the worst possible time for Trump, with many Republicans fearing that the president's dismal polling will drag on their chances in next month's midterm elections.

The White House strongly denies there is infighting in what US media called the "Wild Wild West Wing" -- with the fiercest pushback reserved for reports that Trump was looking to replace Susie Wiles, his ultra-loyal chief of staff.

"No one is distracted by FAKE NEWS. This team is strong, united, and focused on President Donald J. Trump, delivering his America First agenda, and winning the midterms," White House Spokesperson Danielle Alvarez said in a statement to AFP.



Traffic police take seized illegally operated battery-run autorickshaws to a dumping ground. The photo was taken at the capital's Asad Gate yesterday. PHOTO: **PRABIR DAS**

Nato to send 'additional assets' to Black Sea after drone attacks

AFP, *Brussels*

Nato yesterday said it will deploy "additional assets" to the Black Sea after a string of drone strikes off Romania and Bulgaria in the latest spillover from Russia's war on Ukraine.

"Nato will be sending additional assets to the region, including support for surveillance, reconnaissance, and forensics," Nato spokeswoman Allison Hart posted online after a meeting of alliance ambassadors in Brussels.

"We will continue to stand united and ensure that we are ready and able to address any threat and to keep our one billion people safe," she added.

The announcement from Nato came after Bulgaria's Prime Minister Rumen Radev said that a US military plane had started to patrol the Black Sea following a plea for help after recent drone attacks.

"An American P-8 Poseidon... has begun patrolling the Black Sea to conduct reconnaissance missions and detect any activity that could pose a risk," said Radev.

He said some Nato countries were quick to answer his call for help after the attacks and that Sofia expects "further assistance".

The spate of strikes on ships in the waters off Nato and EU members Bulgaria and Romania have left more than a score of sailors missing and stirred condemnation in Europe.

'Helper drove as driver slept'

FROM PAGE 1

Md Alauddin, officer-in-charge of Bonpara Highway Police Station, said police were investigating the allegation that the helper was driving.

Md Abdus Salam, from Moktarpur in Madaripur, said he had fallen asleep after the bus stopped at a restaurant.

"I suddenly woke up to find my face covered in blood. Without thinking, I jumped out of the bus and lost consciousness. The next thing I knew, I was lying in a hospital bed," he said at Patwari General Hospital.

Alamgir Matbor, a Shariatpur resident who suffered minor injuries, said, "I was in the back. I witnessed how hard people were fighting to survive. I can still see the horror when I close my eyes."

Locals rushed to the scene before police and firefighters joined the rescue operation.

"We were asleep when we suddenly woke up to a loud crash, shouts and crying. When we opened our doors, we saw blood on the road and people shouting inside the vehicles," said Maseka Begum, a local.

Another eyewitness, Nurunnahar Begum, said locals initially struggled to pull victims from the mangled vehicles before police and firefighters rescued them.

The injured were taken to Baraigram Upazila Health Complex, Natore General Hospital and Patwari Hospital in Bonpara. Those critically injured were transferred to Rajshahi and Bogura.

Among the victims were Himesh Jomadar, 35, and his wife, Bobby, from Faridpur Sadar upazila. They were travelling to Chapainawabganj to visit family for Durga Puja.

Himesh died, while Bobby remained in critical condition at Natore General Hospital.

"Himesh took leave from work to visit his in-laws during puja, but the crash took him before he could reach," said his cousin Pushpa Rani.

Pubali Bank officer Rubina Akter and her husband, Shahidul Islam, a BRAC Bank employee, were travelling from Mirzaganj in Patuakhali to Rajshahi with their two children for the holidays.

Shahidul and their daughter, Tasfia Khatun, died at the scene. Rubina and their 10-year-old son, Labib, were receiving treatment at Natore General Hospital.

Abdus Samad, 70, an onion trader from Jajira in Shariatpur, was travelling with 11 other traders from his area to buy onion seeds at Baneshwar haat. Five of them died.

"My father was supposed to return in the afternoon after buying the seeds. Instead, he is returning home in an ambulance," said his son, Md Badsha Fakir, at Bonpara Highway Police Station.

Relatives alleged that much of the Tk 20 lakh to Tk 30 lakh the traders were carrying to buy seeds went missing after the crash.

"My father had over Tk 4 lakh in cash, which is unaccounted for," Badsha said.

Several other victims also reported losing cash and mobile phones.

Asked about the missing belongings, SP Shariful said, "We reached the spot as quickly as possible, and the focus was on rescuing the victims. Investigation will reveal what happened before we reached there."

The other deceased were identified as Md Sohel Rana, 40, and Md Anowar Haque, 30, of Rajshahi; Md Jewel Matbor, 40, Sohag, 30, Shah Lal, 46, and Md Shahin, 32, of Shariatpur; Md Abu Kalam, 56, of Jhenaidah; and Russell, 33, of Naogaon.

Survivors identified Sohel Rana as the bus helper they suspected was driving at the time of the crash.

The Natore district administration has formed a seven-member committee to investigate the crash.

Relief for errant bank owners?

FROM PAGE 1

Theatrics aside, that session marked something serious: oligarchic capture written into law. The rot, however, long predated the 2023 amendment. For years, conglomerates had treated commercial banks as personal balance sheets, seeding boards with spouses, children and extended relatives and draining assets along the way. Insider lending and bad loans hollowed out bank after bank, until some could no longer serve ordinary customers. Depositors showed up at the counter and were turned away.

The numbers show how deeply the system was compromised. Directors of eight private banks borrowed heavily from one another through reciprocal lending. By the end of 2023, loans involving the directors of the eight banks totalled Tk 25,000 crore, according to financial reports analysed by The Daily Star. Four of those banks also lent around Tk 20,000 crore to relatives of their chairmen or directors.

Tenure also matters because a board is supposed to be the bank's conscience, the place where management is questioned, and risky loans are challenged. Keep the same directors in place for too long, and that scrutiny fades: loans to friendly companies get waved through, and warning signs get filed away.

THE INTERIM FIX

When an interim government took over after the 2024 political upheaval, the central bank set out to break that cycle. The first job was firefighting. To stop the rot from spreading, the authorities merged five failing private lenders into a new entity, Sammilito Islami Bank, backed by a Tk 20,000 crore capital injection from the national budget. The bill for a crisis cooked up in private boardrooms landed, as usual, on taxpayers.

The second job was finding out how deep the hole went. Asset quality reviews dragged bad loans out of the shadows, and the numbers were sobering. According to a September 15 report by Moody's Ratings, non-performing loans across the system now stand at around 32.8 percent. In other words, roughly one taka in every three lent out by Bangladeshi banks is not being repaid as promised.

The third job was prevention, and here the interim reforms showed real ambition. Bangladesh Bank drafted an overhaul of the Bank Company Act modelled on international corporate governance standards and aimed squarely at the machinery of board collusion. At its heart was a plan to curb family control: the number of relatives allowed on a board would be reduced from three to two, and the consecutive tenure cap would drop from twelve years to six.

The interim administration then went after the make-up of boards themselves. Independent directors would fill half the seats on a slimmed-down board of 15, putting people with no stake in the owners' other businesses in a position to ask tough questions. That is the difference between independence as decoration and independence as a genuine safeguard.

To stop families from simply shuffling seats to relatives, the interim draft also broadened the legal definition of "family" to cover in-laws, brothers-in-law and mothers-in-law. That added teeth to the rules. Under a cross-default rule, a director would lose their seat if any company linked to them defaulted on a loan, and only full repayment, not rescheduling, would win it back.

THE RETREAT

Now the Bangladesh Association of Banks, the influential lobby of bank owners, has pushed for a reversal. Its arguments are familiar. Capping family directorships would upset established ownership structures. Shorter tenures would strip boards of hard-won experience. And handing half the board to independent directors would cost shareholders control, trading growth and profitability for box-ticking compliance. The Financial Institutions Division appears to have been largely persuaded, as minutes of a September 20 meeting on the reforms suggest.

The owners' concern about control is understandable, but a bank is not an ordinary company. It runs largely on other people's money, and its shareholders' stake is typically a small fraction of the deposits it holds. That is precisely why regulators everywhere set limits on owners.

The timing could hardly be worse. Moody's Ratings estimates that bringing banks back up to the required capital adequacy level will cost around 10 percent of GDP, spread over several years. Earlier this month, Bangladesh Bank Governor Mostaqur Rahman put a number on the pain: the banking sector will need Tk 60,000 crore a year from the national budget for the next five to eight years. For a government with very little fiscal room, that is a heavy load, and it comes with a hidden sting. The state is leaning more and more on domestic banks to finance itself, and every taka it borrows from them is a taka not lent to private businesses. Bad governance at the top of a few banks ends up squeezing credit for the entire economy.

There is one bright spot in the Moody's assessment. Liquidity has held up, with deposits across the system growing. Savers, it seems, have not given up on the banking system. The sector's troubles lie mainly in the solvency of some lenders rather than in overall liquidity, which is another way of saying the problem sits in the loan book, not in a shortage of cash. And loan books are shaped in the boardroom.

There is also a question of credibility. Investors and foreign lenders, including the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, all watch how Bangladesh handles moments like this one. A reform announced with fanfare and then hollowed out sends all of them the wrong message.

Cosmetic fixes will not do, and retreating from deep reform is a gamble Bangladesh can ill afford.

30 detained in Cambodia return home

FROM PAGE 3

detained them over irregular immigration status and other complications. Two were later released, while the remaining 30 were held at an immigration detention centre until Friday, following prolonged negotiations involving the Bangladesh Embassy in Thailand and appeals by the foundation.

Zahir Imam, the embassy's first secretary (labour), earlier told The Daily Star that the detainees were released following repeated requests from the mission. They bought their own air tickets, he said.

The foundation estimates that more than 2,000 Bangladeshis remain stranded in Cambodia, including around 1,800 facing uncertainty over an October 31 deadline concerning overstay penalties.

According to the Bureau of Manpower, Employment and Training, 15,963 Bangladeshis obtained employment clearances for Cambodia between January 1, 2025, and September 30, 2026.

After 14 years, BRT project

FROM PAGE 3

BRT, introducing route-franchised buses, converting the corridor into a toll expressway, or turning it into a conventional highway. The cabinet eventually opted for the last option.

A review team from BUET also recommended abandoning the BRT service, citing design flaws and limited capacity. It suggested using the existing infrastructure for general traffic instead of investing further in the project.

In October 2025, the interim government also decided against launching the BRT service on the Dhaka-Gazipur route, citing the additional time and funding required.

Sheik Moinuddin, special assistant to the former chief adviser on the Ministry of Road Transport and Bridges during the interim government, announced the decision during an exchange of views with members of Reporters for Rail and Road on October 11.

The latest decision has drawn criticism from planners and civic groups.

The Bangladesh Institute of Planners (BIP) yesterday called the decision a "black day" for sustainable and inclusive public transport and demanded its withdrawal.

BIP said the move contradicted recommendations in the Gazipur Transport Master Plan (GTMP) and the Revised Strategic Transport Plan (RSTP) for Dhaka, and favoured private car users and the construction sector.

It also said the decision failed to address the transport needs of residents of Gazipur and Uttara, who have faced disruption during the 14 years of construction.

In a separate statement, Gazipur Heritage and Development warned that dismantling the nearly completed infrastructure would waste public money and increase commuters' suffering. The group called for a review of the decision.

Meanwhile, at least six people have been killed in accidents at the construction site. In July 2022, a construction worker died after a crane fell at a BRT construction site in Gazipur. Five men were killed in Uttara when a crane dropped a heavy girder onto a car.

PRAYER TIMING

OCTOBER 21

	Fazr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib	Esha
AZAN	4-50	12-45	4-00	5-36	7-15
JAMAAT	5-25	1-15	4-15	5-39	7-45

SOURCE: **ISLAMIC FOUNDATION**

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Office of the Executive Engineer (RHD)
Road Division, Bogura.
Phone/Fax: 051-66304
✉ eebog@rhd.gov.bd

Memo No.35.01.1000.405.16.100.26-1926 Date: 19/10/2026

e-Tender Notice

This is an online Tender, where only e-Tenders will be accepted in e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-Tender, please register on e-GP system portal (http://www.eprocure.gov.bd).

e-Tenders are invited in e-GP System Portal (http://www.eprocure.gov.bd) by Executive Engineer (RHD), Road Division, Bogura for the procurement of:

Tender ID & Package No.	Package Description	Publishing Date, Closing Date
Tender ID No : 1357586, e-GP-59/EE/BRD/OTM/2026-2027	Construction Footpath cum Pipe Drain at 4th (P) Km (PTI Mor) of Bogra (Banani)-Matidali National Highways (N-514) under Road Division, Bogura during the year 2026-2027.	19-Oct-2026 10:00:00 , 29-Oct-2026 13:00:00
Tender ID No: 1357591, e-GP-64/EE/BRD/OTM/2026-2027	Re-Construction of Cross Drain at Ch. 11+750 Km of Sultangonj(Lichutola)-Madla-Bagbari(kodomtoli)-Gabtoli(Panchmile)(Z-5040) under Road Division Bogura during the year 2026-2027	19-Oct-2026 10:00:00 29-Oct-2026 13:00:00

e-Tender details can be downloaded are from as stated above on e-GP system portal (http://www.eprocure.gov.bd) for pursue.

e-Tenders will be accepted only up to as above date and time. Accepted tender will be opened online immediately after as stated above date and time.

(Md Rasedul Haque)
Identity No: 602322
Executive Engineer (C.C), RHD
Road Division, Bogura.

GD-2567

Govt turns to drones to monitor Turag pollution

FROM PAGE 3

Other key activities include ensuring the effectiveness of ETPs at 173 identified factories along the Turag river, establishing a real-time online system to monitor water quality at industrial facilities, and cleaning the riverbed through vessel patrols.

Water samples will be collected and analysed at least 36 times during the project period.

The project will also upgrade the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change's 333-4 helpline into an integrated grievance management system. It will assess carbon emission reductions and potential areas for carbon trading.

Industries adopting environmentally friendly practices will be encouraged and awarded a "Green Star Rating".

The project's goal is to reduce solid waste and wastewater pollution in rivers, canals and lakes across the Dhaka metropolitan area and improve stormwater management to make the city more liveable and sustainable.

The proposal notes that the Turag, an important tributary of the Bangshi river, has historically supplied water for agriculture, fisheries and domestic use. However, rapid urbanisation and unplanned industrialisation have severely polluted and encroached on the river, threatening aquatic life and the wider ecosystem.

An official involved in the project said it aims to strengthen the DoE's capacity to monitor and enforce environmental regulations in ecologically critical rivers, conduct regular enforcement operations to prevent pollution, establish real-time monitoring to prevent untreated wastewater discharge into the Turag, and improve long-term water quality monitoring through extensive sampling, analysis and reporting.

গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার
বিভাগীয় বন কর্মকর্তার কার্যালয়
সিলেট বন বিভাগ
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www.forest.sylhetdiv.gov.bd

বিজ্ঞপ্তি নং-০৩/রাজস্ব তারিখ-১৯/১০/২০২৬ খ্রিঃ

আগর বৃক্ষ বিক্রয়ের জন্য ক্রেতার তালিকাভুক্তি হওয়ার বিজ্ঞপ্তি

এতদ্বারা সর্বসাধারনের অবগতির জন্য জানানো যাইতেছে যে, অত্র সিলেট বন বিভাগের অধীন বিভিন্ন রেঞ্জের আওতায় সৃজিত আগর বৃক্ষ বিক্রয়ের জন্য প্রকৃত আগর ব্যবসায়ী, আগর ব্যবসায়ী প্রতিষ্ঠান ও আগর ফ্যাক্টরী মালিকগনের নিকট হইতে সীল টেন্ডার/প্রকাশ্য নীলামের মাধ্যমে বিক্রয়ের জন্য আগর ক্রেতার তালিকাভুক্ত করা হইতেছে। আগরক্রেতা হিসাবে তালিকাভুক্তি হইতে হইলে নির্ধারিত ফরমের মাধ্যমে তালিকাভুক্তি ফি বাবদ রাজস্ব ১,০০০/-(এক হাজার) টাকা, তালিকাভুক্তি ফি'র উপর ১৫% হারে ভ্যাট বাবদ ১৫০/-(একশত পঞ্চাশ) টাকাসহ মোট ১,১৫০/-(এক হাজার একশত পঞ্চাশ) টাকা বন বিভাগীয় রশিদ/চালান মূলে জমা প্রদান করতঃ রশিদ/চালান ও নিম্নোক্ত কাগজপত্রাদিসহ তালিকাভুক্তি হওয়ার জন্য নির্ধারিত ফরম অত্র দপ্তর হইতে সংগ্রহ পূর্বক আবেদনপত্র বিভাগীয় বন কর্মকর্তা, সিলেট বন বিভাগ, সিলেট এর বরাবরে জমা প্রদান করিতে হইবে। অত্র দপ্তর হইতে আগর ক্রেতার তালিকাভুক্তি গ্রহণ ব্যতীত কেহ আগর গাছ বিক্রয়ের দরপত্রে অংশগ্রহন করিতে পারিবেন না।

প্রয়োজনীয় কাগজপত্র/তথ্যাবলী ঃ

* জাতীয় পরিচয় পত্রের ফটোকপি ১ম শ্রেনীর গেজেটেড কর্মকর্তা কর্তৃক সত্যায়িত।
* সদ্যতোলা ছবি ০৩(তিন) কপি ১ম শ্রেনীর গেজেটেড কর্মকর্তা কর্তৃক সত্যায়িত।
* পৌরসভা/ইউ.পি চেয়ারম্যান/অনলাইনে প্রাপ্ত নাগরিকত্ব সনদপত্রের মূলকপি।
* পৌরসভা/ইউনিয়ন পরিষদের চেয়ারম্যান কর্তৃক হালনাগাদ ট্রেড লাইসেন্সের ফটোকপি ১ম শ্রেনীর গেজেটেড কর্মকর্তা কর্তৃক সত্যায়িত।
* উপযুক্ত কর্তৃপক্ষ কর্তৃক ইস্যুকৃত আগর ব্যবসায় সম্পৃক্ততার প্রত্যয়নপত্র।
* হালানাগাদ আয়কর (TIN) ও ভ্যাট নিবন্ধন সনদের সত্যায়িত আলোকছাপ।
* যেকোন তফসিলভুক্ত ব্যাংক কর্তৃক ইস্যুকৃত আর্থিক সচ্ছলতার স্বপক্ষে হালনাগাদ লেনদেনের Bank Statement.

স্বাক্ষরিতঃ
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