





# Jamaat bloc plans council to pursue July charter reforms

MAMUNUR RASHID

The Jamaat-e-Islami-led 11-party alliance has decided to pursue an alternative process outside parliament to implement the July National Charter and the referendum verdict, rejecting the government's parliamentary approach to constitutional amendments.

**The alliance plans to form a "Constitution Reform Implementation Council" to prepare a draft framework for constitutional reform, build public opinion and pursue implementation of the referendum verdict.**

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The proposed council may include lawmakers and other representatives of alliance partners. Discussions are also underway on involving other parties that signed the July charter.

The move comes after the alliance refused to join the parliamentary special committee on constitutional amendments, objecting to the government's proposed process.

Hamidur Rahman Azad, assistant secretary general of Jamaat-e-Islami and coordinator of the alliance's liaison

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**Substitute Mohammad Ibrahim (left) celebrates with Rakib Hossain after scoring the only goal in Bangladesh's 1-0 win over Bhutan in their SAFF Championship 2026 opener at the National Stadium in Dhaka yesterday. After a goalless first half, Ibrahim broke the deadlock from close range in the 69th minute, just four minutes after coming on.** PHOTO: STAR

# Army member killed in a gunfight with trafficking gang

## 57 hostages rescued, 5 detained in Teknaf

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A Bangladesh Army soldier was killed during a joint operation against a human trafficking gang in Cox's Bazar's Teknaf upazila yesterday.

The operation led to the rescue of 57 hostages and the detention of five suspected traffickers.

The deceased, Sepoy Md Titas Sheikh, 27, sustained a gunshot wound to his left shoulder after suspected traffickers opened fire on a joint force in the Rangikhali hills around 5:00pm, according to an Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) press release.

The release said intelligence reports indicated that a group of 15 to 16 armed traffickers had been holding around 120 Rohingya and Bangladeshi nationals hostage in the remote hill area.

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# 44,000 clearances later, govt tightens migration rules

## Ministry approval made mandatory for 12 countries amid trafficking concerns

MOHAMMAD JAMIL KHAN

The government has made prior ministry approval mandatory for issuing immigration clearance to workers bound for 12 countries, including Cambodia and Russia, after more than 44,000 Bangladeshis received clearance for these destinations over nearly 22 months.

The directive comes amid concerns over recruitment fraud, human trafficking, and Bangladeshis being deceived into forced labour abroad.

An analysis of the Bureau of Manpower, Employment, and Training (BMET) clearance portal shows that 44,122 Bangladeshis were granted clearance for the 12 countries between January 1, 2025, and October 30 this year.

Of them, 27,647 received clearance for Cambodia, Russia, Laos, and Belarus. The four countries are placed in Tier 3, the lowest category of the US State Department's 2026 Trafficking in Persons (TIP) Report.

In a letter to the BMET director general on Wednesday, the Ministry of Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment

**The expatriates' ministry instructed not to issue clearance without ministry permission for Serbia, Moldova, Belarus, Kosovo, Russia, Japan, Iraq, Laos, Vietnam, Cambodia, Ukraine, and Libya.**

instructed the bureau not to issue clearance without ministry recruitment permission or approval for Serbia, Moldova, Belarus, Kosovo, Russia, Japan, Iraq, Laos, Vietnam, Cambodia, Ukraine, and Libya.

The Bangladesh Association of International Recruiting Agencies (Baira) has already informed its members of the instruction in a circular signed by Secretary Md Nazrul Islam.

BMET data show Cambodia recorded the most clearances, at 15,235, followed by Iraq with 8,743, Russia with 5,776, Laos with

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FORMING ISRAELI GOVT

# Largest Arab party group backs Eisenkot

## Netanyahu loses religious party's support

AFP, *Jerusalem*

Israel's largest Arab party grouping, the Joint List, said yesterday it would recommend opposition bloc leader Gadi Eisenkot for the formation of a new government after last week's election.

"The Joint List announced today, Thursday, that it will inform the President of the State, Isaac Herzog, this evening of its decision to recommend that Gadi Eisenkot be tasked with forming the government," the list said in a statement.

Arab-majority lists won an unprecedented 19 parliamentary seats in the election out of 120, making them potential kingmakers in Israel's next government.

Meanwhile, an ultra-Orthodox Jewish party long aligned with Benjamin Netanyahu yesterday declined to recommend him to stay as Israel's prime minister.

Herzog was holding a second day of consultations with political parties after the October 27 election, in which neither Netanyahu -- a polarising right-winger who has led Israel through three years of war -- nor Eisenkot secured enough votes for a majority.

United Torah Judaism, which backed Netanyahu after the previous five elections, in its meeting with Herzog declined to recommend Netanyahu again as prime minister, although it also did not side with Eisenkot.

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# No AI guidelines for universities

MOHIUDDIN ALAMGIR *and* ARAFAT RAHAMAN

Despite the widespread use of generative artificial intelligence tools among Bangladeshi university students, educational institutions have made little progress in developing policies to regulate their use, raising concerns over academic integrity and the quality of learning.

While universities worldwide have introduced rules governing AI use, Bangladesh's University Grants Commission (UGC) has yet to issue guidelines, leaving universities to adopt differing approaches.

"AI has become a regular tool in my overall study workflow," said Tanjil Ahmed, an MBA student at Dhaka University. He recalled recently using AI tools to complete an assignment from start to finish.

Subscriptions to major AI tools such as ChatGPT and Claude are readily available in Bangladesh. Although these tools can support learning, their growing use has raised questions about students' independent thinking, creativity and the originality of their academic work.

"Some students are using AI to write for them. They are submitting that writing under their own names," said A Al Mamun, professor of Mass Communication and Journalism at Rajshahi University.

The National Education Policy 2010 identifies critical thinking, creativity, original research and problem-solving as key objectives of higher education.

Concerns over education quality, however, predate AI. The World Bank's Higher Education Quality Enhancement Project, launched in 2009, sought to improve teaching and research, while a 2014 WB overview identified inadequate funding for research, laboratory equipment, books and journals.

- UGC yet to issue AI guidelines
- Students increasingly rely on AI for assignments
- Teachers fear loss of critical thinking, creativity
- Universities adopt different approaches to AI use

Prof Md Khairul Islam of DU's Institute of Education and Research, who has researched ChatGPT use among university teachers and students, said excessive dependence on AI was affecting students' ability to think independently and critically.

Students increasingly use AI to find research literature, summarise readings and complete assignments.

Hlathoaicha Chak, a third-year student of

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**Residents welcome tourists with flowers and sweets as the first tourist vessel of the season arrives at St Martin's Island in Cox's Bazar. The MV Baro Awlia carried around 800 passengers to the country's only coral island. Two other vessels, MV Karnaphuli and MV Teknaf, will also operate on the route this season. Under the government's decision, the island will remain open to tourists until March 15. Daily visits will be capped at 3,500.** PHOTO: COLLECTED

## NEWS IN FOCUS

# No passport needed to bring Hasina back

## Says Humaiun Kobir

UNB, *Dhaka*

State Minister for Foreign Affairs Humaiun Kobir yesterday said Bangladesh wants former prime minister Sheikh Hasina to be handed over under the existing extradition treaty with India, dismissing suggestions that she would require a passport or other travel documents to return.

"We want Hasina to be handed over. She will be handed over. She is a terrorist. She is a fugitive. There is an active extradition treaty between Bangladesh and India," he told reporters.

The state minister made the remarks while responding to questions at Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport after seeing off a visiting Chinese delegation led by Liu Haixing, minister of the International Department of the

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EXTORTION BID

# 2 DGFI men sacked, jailed for a year

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Two members of the Directorate General of Forces Intelligence (DGFI), arrested over an alleged extortion attempt and assault on a businessman in Dhaka's Mohammadpur, have been dismissed from service and sentenced to one year in prison each, intelligence sources have said.

Sergeant Al Mamun and Lance Corporal Md Nuruzzaman faced a court martial, where the allegations against them were proved, sources familiar with the development told The Daily Star.

The two were among six people arrested by police on October 25 after motorcycle trader Mohammad Sharif was allegedly confined to a flat in Chandrima Model Town, Mohammadpur, and asked to pay Tk 10 lakh.

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