



Crude bomb blasts, bus arson raise security alarm

At least 15 explosions in Dhaka since Nov 1; police blame AL

TOUSIF KAIUM *and* **DIPAN NANDY**

A fresh wave of crude bomb explosions and bus arson attacks has raised security concerns, with at least 15 blasts in Dhaka since November 1 and buses torched in the capital and other districts.

Police blamed leaders and activists of the Awami League, whose activities are banned, alleging the attacks were intended to create unrest ahead of December, when ousted prime minister Sheikh Hasina has announced plans to return from India.

Additional Inspector General of Police (Crime and Operations) Mohammad Sayedur Rahman accused the party of trying to destabilise the government.

"Who else could be behind these acts of terrorism except the Awami League? These incidents are clearly intended to destabilise the government and create panic among the public. Exploding cocktails serves no other purpose than spreading fear.

"We achieved victory in December [1971], but their entire objective is to tarnish Victory Month. They are trying to dedicate this month to our neighbouring country. Their objectives and motives are bad."

On November 2, crude bombs exploded beneath Agargaon metro station and near Dhanmondi Government Boys' High School in Sobhanbagh. Another exploded outside the July Memorial Museum in Sher-e-Bangla Nagar on November 4.

The following day, a constable was injured when a crude bomb was thrown at a police patrol vehicle near Kurmitola

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PHOTO: **AZAHAR UDDIN**

A locally made vehicle laden with a tall stack of heavy timber travels along a road in Chapainawabganj's Shibganj upazila. Powered by a small diesel engine and operating without any particulars, like fitness certification and registration, such vehicles are a common sight on rural roads and highways. The photo was taken recently on Monakasha road.



US firms supply 85% of Bangladesh's LPG

ME disruption drives sourcing shift, raises import costs, exposes nearly one crore consumers to price, supply risks

ASIFUR RAHMAN

Bangladesh's dependence on US-based firms for liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) imports has surged amid the US-Israel war on Iran, leaving the South Asian country exposed to supply disruptions and price volatility.

The shift has forced importers to seek supplies from farther afield, and rely more heavily on spot-market purchases, and pay higher procurement premiums, freight and insurance costs.

With nearly one crore consumers relying on LPG, largely for household cooking, these costs are feeding into domestic prices.

The US firms accounted for 85 percent of Bangladesh's LPG imports in September this year, up from 27.4 percent a year earlier, according

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Trump names hardliner Miller chief of staff

AFP, *Washington DC*

US President Donald Trump has named Stephen Miller, architect of his hardline immigration policy, as his new chief of staff, signaling a bare-knuckle fightback after Republicans were hammered in the midterms.

Ultra-loyalist Miller, 41, will replace Susie Wiles, who becomes the first major White House casualty from the Democratic landslide earlier this week.

Democrats pledged they would fight "every step of the way" against Miller, who became synonymous with scenes of masked immigration agents committing violence after he backed federal agents who shot and killed two Americans.

"I wanted to make a change," Trump told reporters at the White House when asked why he named Miller to replace Wiles.

"Sometimes in life you have to make moves."



Trump's move was particularly startling, as he had repeatedly insisted before the midterms that there was "zero chance" of replacing Wiles.

A White House official told AFP that Wiles had resigned on Thursday night.

But naming the combative Miller was the clearest possible signal from Trump that the gloves are now off after his brief conciliatory gestures to Democrats in the wake of the Republican midterms collapse.

"He's a great fighter," Trump said later at the airport in West Palm Beach, Florida, where he was accompanied by Miller. "He's been with me right from the beginning...and he's very loyal."

Miller has been one of Trump's closest aides for decades, pushing nativist policies that gelled with Trump's "America First" agenda.

At Trump's Mar-a-Lago resort home on Friday night, Miller addressed a crowd of party faithful to lavish Trump with praise, pledging his undying loyalty.

"It is the honour of my life to be President Trump's chief of staff," Miller said in a video posted to the president's Truth Social account.

As Trump's deputy chief of staff for policy and homeland security advisor, he was the brains behind the mass deportation

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Govt's debt burden swelling

WB warns public debt-to-GDP ratio may cross 45% in FY28,

REJAUL KARIM BYRON

Bangladesh's public debt-to-GDP ratio could rise to 45.2 percent by FY28, narrowing the gap with the 55 percent threshold the International Monetary Fund (IMF) considers sustainable, the World Bank has warned.

The projected increase reflects growing expenditure on public sector salaries and pensions, subsidies, capital support for troubled banks, and debt servicing, against a backdrop of weak revenue growth, according to the global lender.

The ratio is estimated to have increased to 40.5 percent in FY26 from 38.9 percent in FY25. The World Bank projects it will reach 43 percent in FY27 before crossing 45 percent in FY28.

"Public debt continued to rise, posing risks to debt sustainability," the bank said in its latest development update, released last month.

Against this backdrop, the government and the Asian Development Bank (ADB) will jointly host a two-day international debt conference in Cox's Bazar on November 15-16, with delegates from 30 countries.

Finance ministry officials said the conference, the first of its kind in the country, would discuss sustainable borrowing strategies and cost-risk trade-offs, assess the evolving IMF-World Bank Debt Sustainability Framework, and explore ways to mobilise private capital for public investment.

The discussions are also expected to identify reforms to strengthen debt management, including the possible establishment of a dedicated Debt Management Office.

THE WORLD BANK

Govt to hold first-ever debt conference on Nov 15-16

RISING EXPENDITURE

According to finance ministry estimates, spending on government salaries, allowances and pensions, now Tk 1.31 lakh crore, could rise to Tk 2.37 lakh crore after full implementation of the new pay scale.

The pay scale, the first comprehensive revision since 2015, is being introduced in phases with retrospective effect from July 1, 2026. Basic salaries and allowances are set to rise by an average 120 percent and pensions by around 70 percent.

The new pay structure aims to address the erosion of real wages experienced by government employees amid prolonged inflation and rising living costs.

However, the World Bank said, "The additional wage bill, estimated at around 0.6 percent of GDP in FY27, is likely to add pressure on fiscal space, which remains constrained by low revenue collection and competing spending demands."

Subsidy and incentive allocations have risen from around Tk 24,000 crore in FY21 to Tk 1.16 lakh crore in the current fiscal year.

Interest payments could exceed Tk 1.5 lakh crore next fiscal year, up from Tk 1.31 lakh crore in FY25 as external borrowing has become less concessional over time.

Debt service obligations continue to rise, with interest payments remaining elevated at 2.6 percent of GDP in FY28, the World Bank warned.

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Advertisement



New Gini housing attacked again

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A group of 100 to 150 people allegedly attacked and vandalised the New Gini Properties housing project in the capital's ECB Chattar area yesterday afternoon, nearly six weeks after a similar attack on the compound.

The attackers broke the entrance gate, entered the premises and assaulted security personnel and other workers, said

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