



50th death anniversary of Bhashani today



STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The 50th death anniversary of Maulana Abdul Hamid Khan Bhashani, a legendary political leader in the subcontinent, will be observed today.

He passed away on November 17, 1976, and was buried in Tangail's Santosh.

Maulana Bhashani Science and Technology University in Tangail and various socio-political organisations have chalked out elaborate programmes to mark the day.

They will place wreaths at his grave in Santosh in the morning. Other programmes

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Bangladesh's Litton Das celebrates his eighth Test century by displaying a handwritten message dedicated to his daughter that read, "Happy Birthday my Princess, This 100 for you", during the second day of the first Test against South Africa at the Wanderers Stadium in Johannesburg yesterday. The wicketkeeper-batter scored 120 as Bangladesh posted 400 in the first innings. The hosts, in reply, ended the day at 287 for four.

PHOTO: AFP

Public debt hits Tk 23.38 lakh crore

Says finance minister at JS

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh's total public debt stood at an estimated Tk 23.38 lakh crore as of June 30, Finance Minister Amir Khosru Mahmud Chowdhury told parliament yesterday.

Of the total, approximately Tk 10,00,325 crore was external debt and Tk 13,37,250 crore was domestic debt, he said in response to a question from BNP MP Mostafizur Rahman Babul during the question-and-answer session at the Jatiya Sangsad.

Under the Appropriation Act, Tk 8,08,778 crore has been allocated in the current fiscal year for debt servicing, covering both principal and interest payments, the minister said.

Replying to a question from BNP MP Farida Yasmin, Amir Khosru said the government had repaid $2.95 billion in external loans between March and September 2026.

He said the government had been working since assuming office to keep external debt at a sustainable level. Before approving any new project financed through foreign borrowing, both the project proposal and the associated loan proposal were being thoroughly scrutinised to prevent unnecessary projects from being undertaken.

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RMG wage board meeting put off amid unrest

Board member's illness cited; fresh date yet to be set

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The third meeting of the wage board formed to recommend the minimum wage for garment workers, scheduled for yesterday at Sramo Bhabon in Dhaka, was postponed after a board member fell ill.

The owners' representative was due to submit a wage proposal, while the workers' representative had proposed Tk 32,000 at the previous meeting.

Wage board Chairman Syed Azad Subhani said a new date had yet to be fixed, but work was continuing, including factory visits to assess industry conditions.

Industry insiders suggested the postponement may have stemmed from fears that the owners' proposal could fuel labour unrest and prolong the crisis, or from the ongoing political situation.

Babul Akhter, workers' representative on the board, said six members, including the chairman, visited three factories of different sizes in Narayanganj on Sunday, with the visits continuing until 8:30pm. The chairman informed them of the postponement during the visits.

Babul suggested the owners' and independent representatives might not have been ready with their proposals. Political factors and labour unrest could also have contributed, he said, adding that he would seek a new meeting date.

Owners' representative ABM Shamsuddin said the chairman had cited unavoidable circumstances without elaborating. He urged an early announcement of a new date.

40 garment factories remained closed in Savar and Ashulia yesterday, while 22 in Gazipur district and metropolitan areas were shut indefinitely amid wage-related unrest.

In a joint statement, the Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA) and Bangladesh Knitwear Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BKMEA) termed the postponement unfortunate, saying it

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Help AL, face expulsion

BNP warns grassroots amid complaints

SAJJAD HOSSAIN



The ruling BNP has warned that grassroots leaders and activists who shelter Awami League members, try to secure the release of arrested members, or assist them in other ways could be expelled from the party if the allegations against them are found to be true.

The instruction comes as BNP sources say the leadership has got complaints from eight districts that some of its local leaders are helping AL members, whose political activities are now banned.

Senior BNP leaders said the party would examine such complaints and take action without considering the position or influence of those involved. They said the party would also help police pursue legal action against them.

The party has asked grassroots leaders to watch for possible violence or sabotage ahead of December and provide the police and local administration with relevant information.

BNP Joint Secretary General Syed Emran Saleh Prince said, "If anyone is involved in helping Awami League leaders or activists, they will certainly be held accountable. The party will take strict disciplinary action against them."

"Instead of increasing conflict, our leaders and activists have been instructed to help the administration by providing information," he told The Daily Star.

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Two oil tankers hit mines in Hormuz

Say Iran's Guards as USS Theodore Roosevelt joins US warships in Middle East

AGENCIES

Two oil tankers hit mines in the Strait of Hormuz that led to explosions, Iran's Revolutionary Guards said yesterday, as the USS Theodore Roosevelt arrived in the Middle East.

Six tankers caught fire in similar incidents in the strategic waterway on Sunday and yesterday, the Revolutionary Guards statement added.

The aircraft carrier Roosevelt joins two others operating in the US Central Command area of responsibility, a US official told Al Jazeera.

Meanwhile, Yemen's Houthis were advancing on the interim seat of the internationally recognised government, positioned just 60 kilometres from Aden, sources told AFP, as government forces rushed to defend the city.

Four military sources within government forces and two government sources said the Houthis had seized control of two districts in Lahj province and were moving towards Aden.

They said the Houthis were positioned at the Al-Kharaz camp in Al-Madariba, 60 kilometres (about 40 miles) from the city.

The Iran-backed group also targeted the King Khalid International Airport and a financial centre in the Saudi capital Riyadh with two ballistic missiles, Reuters reports.

Houthis advance on Aden as govt bolsters city defences

The Iran-backed group launches missiles towards Riyadh

Tehran bars UN inspections of damaged nuclear sites

A senior Iranian official said in a televised interview late Sunday that Iran will not let UN inspectors visit its damaged nuclear facilities until the Middle East war has ended and the United States meets its conditions.

In a post on X, Iran's foreign minister, Abbas Araghchi, has suggested the US could face defeat despite its confidence in the ongoing war.

"'Don't quote laws to men with swords' was uttered by a Roman general whose final campaign ended in crushing defeat, despite numerical superiority," Araghchi writes. "He was beheaded after fleeing the battlefield."





The vandalised and torched BNP office and shops belonging to party supporters at Chowrangi intersection in Gopalganj's Tungipara, following an attack allegedly carried out by Awami League activists on Sunday. *Inset*, police and BGB personnel deployed near the Gopalganj Deputy Commissioner's Office to maintain law and order after two days of protests, clashes, vandalism and arson.

PHOTO: HABIBUR RAHMAN

NEWS IN FOCUS

Murder suspect beaten to death in Mymensingh

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Mymensingh*

A man suspected of involvement in the murder of a Swechchhasebak Dal activist was beaten to death in Mymensingh city early yesterday, hours after the activist was stabbed to death in the same area on Sunday evening.

Md Abdullah Al Mamun, additional superintendent of police (administration), identified the victim as Mehdi Hasan, 31, of Barera Masjid Road in the city's ward 26.

Quoting locals, he said Mehdi was the younger brother of Jahangir Alam, president of the ward unit of Jubo League.

"Critically injured Mehdi was taken to Mymensingh Medical College Hospital (MMCH), where he died yesterday morning," he told The Daily Star.

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'I'm pregnant, yet he kicked my abdomen'

Headteacher accuses BNP leader; 2 show-caused

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Netrokona*

A local BNP leader and his associates have been accused of assaulting a pregnant teacher, including kicking her in the abdomen, over a dispute regarding the formation of a school managing committee in Netrokona's Atpara upazila yesterday.

The incident took place at Kacharpar Government Primary School in the upazila's Teligati union.

The victim, acting headteacher Nibedita Deb, alleged that the attackers included Anwar Hossain, president of Teligati union BNP, and Nuruzzaman Khan Putul, a former teacher at the school and a BNP-backed candidate for the post of managing committee president.

"Anwar Hossain kicked me in

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