

## WEST BENGAL ASSEMBLY POLL

## 'Game over' for TMC

Says Modi as he flags off campaign attacking Mamata; actor Mithun joins BJP

AGENCIES

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi flagged off his West Bengal Assembly poll campaign officially yesterday by lashing out against Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee and promising a "Sonar Bangla" (Golden Bengal) if the BJP is voted to power. He attacked the state government for allegedly letting down the people who had placed much expectation in it.

"Bengal trusted Didi for Pariborton (change). She broke the trust," he said at a massive Kolkata rally.

"I have come here to make you believe in 'Asol Poriborton' (real change), believe in Bengal's development, in changing Bengal's situation, in increasing investment and industries in Bengal, and in the reconstruction of Bengal," Modi said at the city's Brigade Parade Ground.

He later turned to the ruling party's latest favourite slogan, "Khela hobe", which means "let's play". The PM sought to use the slogan to indicate that the Trinamool's "game is over" now and asked people to vote for the BJP.

"Tolabaazi (extortion), syndicate, commission cut! You have done so many scams that a 'Corruption Olympics' game can be organised. You have played with the hard-earned money of the people and their lives," he said.

The PM, whose party has been accused by many for dividing India by religious lines, said the divisive politics of TMC is behind the rise of BJP.

Veteran Bengali actor Mithun Chakraborty yesterday joined BJP and shared the dais with Modi at the mega rally.

The BJP is pulling out all stops to defeat West Bengal's Mamata Banerjee-led Trinamool Congress which has been ruling the state for the last decade.

This was Modi's first visit to West Bengal since the state's Assembly poll dates were announced last week, although he has already been here at least three times in the past few months. At least 20 more rallies are planned for him in the state till the polls are over.

Elections to West Bengal's 294-seat Assembly are scheduled to be held in eight phases from March 27 to April 29 and the results will be declared on May 2.



Protesters raise their fists during a demonstration called by Feminist Strike Movement for Women's Rights Day, ahead of International Women Day. While world will celebrate celebrates female gains like the right to vote today on the International Women's Day, a World Economic Forum study found that at present rates of change gender parity still won't happen in our lifetimes.

PHOTO: AFP

## NEWS IN BRIEF

## Air strikes hit Yemen after Saudi foils drone attacks

A Saudi-led military coalition conducted air strikes on the Yemeni capital Sanaa yesterday, a Reuters witness and residents said, after it said it had destroyed drones launched by the Iran-aligned Houthis, including at least five fired towards Saudi Arabia. In the Houthi-held Yemeni capital Sanaa, a Reuters witness and two residents reported several air strikes. The Houthi-run Al Masirah TV station said coalition warplanes conducted seven air raids. There was no immediate confirmation from the coalition, which has in the past conducted air strikes on Houthi military sites in Sanaa in response to cross-border attacks.

## Iran's Rouhani urges Europe to avoid 'threats or pressure'

Iran's President Hassan Rouhani yesterday urged Europe to avoid "threats or pressure" in any negotiations with Tehran, as he received Ireland's foreign minister amid diplomatic efforts to revive a landmark nuclear deal. "The best way to solve problems with European partners at various bilateral, regional and international levels, is negotiations based on mutual respect and avoiding any threats or pressure," Rouhani told Irish Foreign Minister Simon Coveney at yesterday's meeting. The Iranian president criticised Europe's "inactivity on JCPOA commitments" and added that Iran is committed to "preserving the JCPOA and is the only party that has paid a price for it." "But this situation cannot continue as it is," Rouhani stressed.

## Call for investigation as 9 activists killed in Philippines

Human rights groups called on the Philippine government to investigate what they said was the use of "lethal force" during police raids yesterday that left at least nine activists dead. The raids in four provinces south of Manila resulted in the death of an environmental activist as well as a coordinator of left-wing group Bagong Alyansang Makabayan, among others, and resulted in the arrest of four others, activist groups said. Sunday's raids came two days after President Rodrigo Duterte ordered the police and military to "kill" communist rebels and "ignore human rights".

## Swiss look set to approve ban on facial coverings

A far-right proposal to ban facial coverings in Switzerland was headed toward a narrow victory in a binding referendum yesterday viewed as a test of attitudes toward Muslims. Projections for broadcaster SRF, based on partial results, showed the measure passing 52% to 48%, with a two-point margin for error. Final results were due later on the day. The proposal under the Swiss system of direct democracy does not mention Islam directly and also aims to stop violent street protesters from wearing masks. France, Denmark, Austria, the Netherlands and Bulgaria have full or partial bans on wearing face coverings in public.

SOURCE: AFP, REUTERS

## US brings chaos in the name of democracy

Accuses China's top diplomat, urges Washington to remove 'unreasonable curbs on cooperation'

AGENCIES

China yesterday urged the United States to remove "unreasonable" curbs on cooperation as soon as possible and work together on issues like climate change, while accusing Washington of bringing chaos in the name of spreading democracy.

Last week US President Joe Biden singled out a "growing rivalry with China" as a key challenge facing the United States, with his top diplomat describing the Asian country as "the biggest geopolitical test" of this century.

Speaking at his annual news conference, the Chinese government's top diplomat, State Councillor Wang Yi, struck a tough line even as he outlined where the world's two biggest economies could work together.

Questioned about recent US-China frictions over Taiwan, Xinjiang and the disputed South China Sea, Wang said Beijing "will never accept baseless accusations and smears".

The United States had used democracy and human rights as a basis for arbitrarily interfering with other countries' affairs, he said. "The US should realise this as soon as possible, otherwise the world will continue to experience instability."

Wang added that differences between China and the United States must be



Defends Hong Kong electoral system overhaul

Warns US over Taiwan, denounces Xinjiang accusations

managed carefully, the two sides must advocate healthy competition not zero-sum finger-pointing, and that areas like climate change and fighting the pandemic were where they could cooperate.

The United States and China are at odds over influence in the Indo-Pacific region, Beijing's economic practices, Hong Kong, Taiwan and human rights in China's Xinjiang region.

Wang warned that on Chinese-claimed Taiwan there was no room for

compromise.

During Trump's administration, the United States levied a series of sanctions against China and its officials over Xinjiang, Hong Kong and Beijing's economic policies, which have not been lifted under the new administration.

Asked about Uighurs' genocide in Xinjiang, he said: "The so-called 'genocide' in Xinjiang is ridiculously absurd. It is a rumour with ulterior motives and a complete lie."

He also defended Beijing's controversial proposal to introduce new veto powers on Hong Kong's legislative elections as "lawful, just and reasonable".

Legislation to allow China's communist rulers to vet all election candidates in Hong Kong was put forward Friday at the opening of the nation's rubber-stamp parliament.

## Rohingyas in Jammu fear deportation

Over 150 detained

REUTERS, Srinagar

Indian police have detained more than 150 Rohingya refugees found living illegally in the northern region of Jammu and Kashmir and a process has begun to deport them back to Myanmar, two officials said yesterday.

Dozens of Rohingyas are in a makeshift "holding centre" at Jammu's Hira Nagar jail after local authorities conducted biometric and other tests on hundreds of people to verify their identities.

"The drive is part of an exercise to trace foreigners living in Jammu without valid documents," said one of the two officials, who declined to be named as they are not authorized to speak to the media.

"We have started the process of deportation of these refugees," the official added.

India rejects a UN position that deporting the Rohingyas violates the principle of refoulement - sending refugees back to a place where they face danger.

Rohingyas staying in India have said conditions are not conducive for them to return to Myanmar.

## 'One day an icon, next day a threat'

US poet Amanda Gorman says followed by guard, called 'suspicious'

AFP, New York

African-American poet Amanda Gorman, who became a star after her reading at President Joe Biden's inauguration, has said a security guard claimed she looked "suspicious" and followed her as she walked home.

"This is the reality of black girls: One day you're called an icon, the next day, a threat," she tweeted Friday.

"He demanded if I lived there because 'you look suspicious.' I showed my keys & buzzed myself into my building. He left, no apology," she wrote.

In another tweet on Friday, Gorman wrote: "In a sense, he was right. I AM A THREAT: a threat to injustice, to inequality, to ignorance. Anyone who speaks the truth and walks with hope is an obvious and fatal danger to the powers that be."

Gorman, whose Twitter account says she lives in Los Angeles, did not immediately reply to an AFP request for more information.

Gorman, the 22-year-old Harvard University graduate, became an international sensation after reciting her original work "The Hill We Climb" at the inaugural, a poem inspired by the January 6 attack on the US Capitol.



## Fatinaaz Feroz: Trailblazing women, inspiring the future generation

Fatinaaz Feroz, Chairman of Board of Trustees of Stamford University Bangladesh, speaks to The Daily Star about her voyage from a young, passionate student with skills to becoming the leading figure in one of the leading private university in Bangladesh and gives her sage advice on how to take equality & women empowerment to the next level.

## Briefly tell us about your journey to where you are now?

It's a very long journey comprised of a vast amount of difficulties & struggles. From childhood, my father never differentiated between my brothers and me, and always tried to push me towards becoming the best version of myself. While I was studying in the university, I also applied for certain jobs to test my own skills & ability. Like, I applied for Biman Bangladesh Airlines as an executive. Though I left it because it was hampering my studies, it developed my confidence and my knowledge. We had to struggle hard, we had to work harder to prove we belong in the men's world as they perceived it to be at that time. After graduating, I worked in different companies. I worked in an Airline in Gulf Air, worked for the UNDP as an administrator as well. After I got married, another challenge began. I had to look after the family and continue my professional life as well. When I rethink those days, I really think I was a fighter, and the fight towards equality & empowerment is what made me the champion that I am today.

## What pushed you/inspired you to keep moving forward at a time where women empowerment was not that prevalent?

It was the voice within me that kept me pushing forward and breaking boundaries. I think the urge to be equal, to contribute towards society was more forceful in me because I always fought to keep striving forward. Sometimes within my relatives, friends, and other close people used to discourage me. Nevertheless, I proved the naysayers wrong and reached the top through hard work and determination.

## What is your process of delegation/leadership in your university, which boasts a huge number of staff and individuals?

This is a big university. We have around 300 faculty members, about 300-400 staff members, and around 7000+ students. Luckily, I have a very good & skilled team. I delegate my work to them and give them ample opportunities to develop leadership in themselves



in their own respective fields. I have supervisors & in-charge personalities to keep everything in check. As I'm in charge of policymaking, all I'm doing is leading them to success.

## What can the government do to ensure &amp; improve gender equality &amp; women empowerment even more?

I think our honorable Prime Minister, Sheikh Hasina, is doing a tremendous job in spreading the message of equality and Women Empowerment country-wide. Even at the Public grassroots level, they are encouraging women empowerment by allotting different positions for women, like women's membership in the local government. We now have women competing with men in a lot of sectors, breaking the boundaries and showcasing that they can go the distance as well, given the right amount of opportunity and inclusivity. We have to unleash the potential within these women and give them equal amounts of opportunity. And the Government should play a vital role in instigating this change nationwide.

Do you think we still have a gap in terms of equal opportunity & equal pay in our country? What can the employers do to improve this situation?

The private sector attitudes to play a bigger role in empowering women. The private sector should employ more women, have no discrimination towards women in their employment process. One of my Youngest Daughters is a Civil Engineer in Canada. When I tell her to come back home, she tells me there's no job for her here. When I looked into this matter, in the newspaper, a private Construction Company's vacancy announcement, it was written: "No women are encouraged to apply". So, there is still a lot of gap within the private companies and their stance regarding women empowerment and they need to improve and act upon it.


## What is Stamford University doing in terms of Women's Education &amp; Empowerment?

In this University, we have almost 340 Female faculty & staff members as well. We are giving them the opportunity, training and platform to prove themselves and climb the pedestal among their own departments. If you talk about the students, we provide special scholarships to women who prove themselves in their own respective departments. We also have a women's forum that enlightens women about their rights, empowers them, and helps them in contributing to society.


## What would be your advice towards women who want to reach the top of the mountain like you?

Their journey will be quite different from my journey. But in general what I can say is that, educate yourselves, develop your skills, and be focused on your goals. I would also request the families to encourage their daughters to strive for the best. If you want your decision to matter and be taken seriously, you have to educate yourself, become skilled and financially independent. You have to organize and empower your thoughts, work hard and be fearless.

The interview was taken by Foyzal Mahmud Niloy.



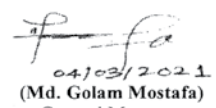
**Bangladesh Bank**  
Department of Currency Management  
Head Office  
Dhaka.



**Invitation for International Tender**

E-Tenders are invited through open tendering method from reputed Mints for minting & Supply of Gold Coins commemorating Golden Jubilee of Independence Day of Bangladesh by Bangladesh Bank. Necessary information is given below:

1. Procuring Entity	Department of Currency Management, Bangladesh Bank, Head Office, Motijheel, Dhaka - 1000, Bangladesh.
2. Invitation for	Minting & Supply of Gold coins commemorating Golden Jubilee of Independence Day of Bangladesh by Bangladesh Bank
3. Invitation Reference No. & Date	DCM(PM)/25(Golden Jubilee)/2021-872, Date: 04 March, 2021.
4. Procurement Method	Open Tendering Method (International)
5. Source of Funds	Bangladesh Bank's own fund.
6. Tender publication date	04 March, 2021.
7. Last date and time for submission of original tender, security and tender submission letter	15 April, 2021 at 2:00 pm, Bangladesh Standard Time (GMT+6)
8. Tender closing Date & Time	15 April, 2021 at 2:00 pm Bangladesh Standard Time (GMT+6)
9. Tender Opening Date & Time	15 April, 2021 at 2:45 pm Bangladesh Standard Time (GMT+6)
10. Name & Address of the Office Receiving/ Opening Tender Documentary evidence.	Department of Currency Management, (28th Floor of 2nd Annex building), Bangladesh Bank, Head Office, Motijheel, Dhaka-1000, Bangladesh.
11. Availability of tender document and web Address of the office receiving Tender Document	https://etender.bb.org.bd/
12. Eligibility of Tenderers	Tenderers from all countries except Israel fulfilling the following conditions are eligible: A) Must have minimum 10(ten) years experience in minting and supplying of similar goods/coins; B) The satisfactory completion of supply of similar goods of minimum 02 (two) million USD under maximum 02 (two) contracts in the last 03 (three) years. i.e. years counting backward from the date of publication of IFT in the news paper/website. Tenderer(s) shall submit at least 3 (three) user certificates from 3 (three) central banks in last 5(five) years. i.e. years counting backward from the date of publication of IFT in the news paper/website. C) Must have minimum yearly production capability of 100 million pieces of coins and minimum liquid asset or credit facility amounting to US\$ 1.00 million or equivalent.
13. Brief Description of the Goods.	1,000 units pieces of Gold Coin with following specifications: Described in Tender Document
14. Name, Designation and Address of Official inviting Tender	Md. Golam Mostafa, General Manager, Department of Currency Management, (28th Floor of 2nd Annex building), Bangladesh Bank, Head Office, Motijheel, Dhaka-1000, Bangladesh. Phone: +88-02-9530090, Fax: +88-02-9530091, E-mail: mdgolam.mostafa@bb.org.bd
15. Contact person and address	Md. Syed Golam Shahajarul Alam, Joint Director, Department of Currency Management, Bangladesh Bank, Head Office. (28th floor) Phone: +88-01711466780, E-mail: syed.alam@bb.org.bd
16. Pre-tender Meeting Date, Time & venue	1st April, 2021 at 11.00 a.m. [Bangladesh Standard Time (GMT+6)] in the Conference room of the Department of Currency Management (DCM), Bangladesh Bank, Head Office, (28th Floor of 2nd Annex Building), Motijheel, Dhaka-1000, Bangladesh. Tenderers must submit their queries (if any) to the contact person through email at least 5(five) days prior to the pre-tender meeting.
17. Tender Security	Irrevocable Bank Guarantee for Gold Coin 15,000 US Dollar drawn in favour of General Manager, Department of Currency Management, Bangladesh Bank, Head office from a scheduled bank in Bangladesh issued against counter guarantee from a reputed bank abroad shall be submitted with the bid/offer, or tenderer(s) may send the money as tender security through SWIFT to any of the Bank account of Bangladesh Bank mentioned in the ITT 29.3.
18. Time for Completion	05 (five) weeks from the date of contract signing.



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বাহ্যিক ও আর্থিক সেবা পেতে হয়রিন শিকার হলে কিংবা কোনো অন্তিমোহ থাকলে ১৬২৬ নম্বরে কোন কলন।

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