

# Pre-primary in-person classes from March 15

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

In-person classes at pre-primary schools will resume on March 15 after a two-year closure due to Covid-19 pandemic. Mohammad Mahbubur Rahman, public relations officer of the primary and mass education ministry, said the decision was taken at a meeting yesterday.

State Minister for Primary and Mass Education Md Zakir Hossain chaired the meeting.

For the first time, the students who had enrolled at pre-primary schools in 2021 and 2022, will get a chance of having in-person class experience.

Educational institutions were shut down on March 17, 2020. Those were reopened partially on September 12 last year.

Following a sharp rise in the Covid transmission rate, the government again shut all schools and colleges from January 21 for two weeks. The closure of primary schools was later extended till March 1.

In-person classes at all primary schools and kindergartens resumed on March 2. Classes are being held in two shifts. The first- and second-graders are attending classes in the first shift and the rest in the second. Besides, classes resumed partially at secondary schools, colleges and universities on February 22.

The government is planning to resume full-fledged classes at schools and colleges as more than 84 percent secondary students have already received two doses of vaccine and the daily positivity rate is on its way down.

Authorities say they are considering conducting classes at secondary schools in full swing from middle of this month, after two years of full and partial closures.



Garbage being burnt on open roads is quite a common scene in the capital. This occurs as collectors try to reduce the amount of waste they need to load on the truck, before it's sent to the dumping ground. As discarded wastes are typically unsorted, fumes from plastic and organic wastes exacerbate the city's air pollution. This photo was taken recently in Dhaka University area near TSC.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

## Address gender needs to become disaster resilient

### Speakers tell roundtable



Speakers at the roundtable at The Daily Star Centre yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

To build gender-sensitive, resilient strategies for disaster-risk reduction, gender needs of women and men need to be addressed using an inter-sectional lens, said speakers at a roundtable yesterday.

They said the ability to reduce risk for any kind of disaster in Bangladesh is improving day by day, but now, it is time to develop vulnerable areas inclusively.

The discussion titled "Intersectionality in Redressing Gender & DRR: #BreakingTheBias" was held at the capital's The Daily Star Centre, in observance of International Women's Day.

The programme was jointly organised by Gender Responsive Resilience and Intersectionality in Policy and Practice (GRRIPP) South Asia, Gender and Disaster Network, Institute of Disaster Management and Vulnerability Studies at Dhaka University, and The Daily Star.

Mahbuba Nasreen, regional lead of GRRIPP South Asia and pro-vice chancellor (academic) of Bangladesh Open University, said South Asian countries are highly susceptible to natural and human-induced disasters due to their location and land characteristics.

Dr Saleemul Huq, director of International Centre for Climate Change and Development, said the country needs better preparation to fight climate change, and it has to take strategies from locals.

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# Unite to EMPOWER

Speakers tell discussion marking Int'l Women's Day

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

While women's emergence as social and economic actors in the past 50 years is a big achievement in Bangladesh, further alignment of the women's rights movement with other national and global civil rights movements is important to ensure their empowerment, speakers said at a discussion yesterday.

They said breaking the glass ceiling, by tackling issues like harassment and toxic masculinity, needs to be done by creating a supportive environment, with participation of both men and women. Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD) organised the event on "Break the Bias for a Gender Equal World" at a city hotel on the occasion of International Women's Day.

In her speech, CPD Distinguished Fellow Prof Rounaq Jahan said when she used to write about women's issues during the late 1960s and early 1970s, collective action for women would be emphasised. But now, that notion, that sort of thinking has eroded, she said.

Saying that "every issue is also a women's issue", Prof Rounaq said, women may have a different perspective and priorities, but they are not always thinking about "just us women".

She added that it is essential for Bangladeshi women's rights movements to align with like-minded people and women's rights movements.

Brac chairperson Hossain Zillur Rahman said the emergence of women as social and economic actors is "one of the fundamental features" of the last 50 years in the country.

As a citizen, a woman has fundamental rights to access all sorts of services. However, these are not sufficiently emphasised in discussions, he said.

There is a huge gap in terms of ensuring institutional security for those who want to be courageous, and gender equality will only be achieved if there is equity in the society as a whole, Zillur continued.

Firdausi Qadri, emeritus scientist at icddr,b, said the multi-tasking role that women in Bangladesh

### KEY POINTS

- Women's rights movement need to align with national, global civil rights movements
- Both men, women need to participate to break glass ceiling
- Women's fundamental rights to access services not sufficiently emphasised in discussions
- Huge gap in ensuring institutional security
- Efforts from both government, private enterprises important for women to excel
- It is essential to celebrate work of and for women

have to play is not an easy thing to do.

"The thing is, you have to force yourself to go that extra mile every day," she said, stressing the need for efforts from both government and private enterprises for women to excel.

Swedish Ambassador in Bangladesh Alexandra Berg von Linde said celebrating International Women's Day is important, as it is essential to celebrate the work of and for women, as well as acknowledge that "we still have a long way to go".

Taslima Akter, president of Bangladesh Garments Sramik Sanghati, said at present, the number of female garment workers in Bangladesh has dropped to 40 lakh from 44 lakh.

She suggested creating sufficient childcare and breastfeeding corners in factories.

Moderated by CPD executive director Fahmida Khatun, the event was also addressed by Syed Nasim Manzur, director of Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce and Industry; Barrister Rashna Imam, managing partner of Akhtar Imam and Associates; Paula Schindeler, deputy head of mission, Embassy of the Netherlands in Bangladesh; and Rizvana Hredita, co-founder of Hydroquo Bangladesh Ltd.

## Will prepare roadmap after discussion

### Says EC Md Alamgir

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Election Commissioner Md Alamgir yesterday said authorities would prepare a roadmap of their activities after completing an upcoming dialogue.

The newly formed Election Commission is going to start a series of talks with a cross-section of citizens, including leaders of political parties, to know people's expectations from the commission.

The dialogue will start on March 13 by sitting with educationists. EC officials said that they are also planning to hold discussions with civil society members on March 22, and with journalists on March 30.

During talks with educationists, civil society members, election experts, media personalities and others, EC would seek their advice on how the polls, including the 12th national election, can be held in a free and fair manner.

"We have not prepared a roadmap of our work so far. We will finalise it after completing the discussions," said Alamgir while talking to reporters at his EC office.

"We will ask them what will be our role in conducting elections in free and fair manner... They have some role in the election process. We hope they would play that role," he said.

EC is holding the dialogue when BNP and several other political parties refrained from taking part in its formation process.

The parties did not join the dialogue with President Abdul Hamid on forming the search committee that recommended names to appoint the CEC and other election commissioners.

They also did not propose any names to the search committee for forming the next EC.

The last EC also held discussions with all stakeholders, including political parties, ahead of the 11th national election held in December 2018, after chalking out their work plans.



## AL leaders 'getting share' from market manipulators

### Alleges Fakhrul

UNB, Dhaka

BNP secretary general Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir yesterday alleged that the government will not be able to rein in the skyrocketing prices of daily essentials as the ruling party leaders are involved with the business syndicates that manipulate the market.

"The price of per kg rice is now Tk 70 while that of per litre soybean oil is Tk 200... We can't afford the food we used to normally buy," he said.

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It's been two weeks since DPDC authorities dug up a huge section of the busy Love Road for installing high voltage cables. As the work progresses in the authorities' own time, the greatest sufferers are commuters, since traffic congestion has significantly increased and pedestrian movement has become extremely dangerous. This photo was taken yesterday in Tejgaon Industrial Area.

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

## SEXUAL HARASSMENT OF DU STUDENT

### Initial probe finds proof against teacher

SIRAJUL ISLAM RUBEL

A female student of Dhaka University (DU) has brought an allegation of sexual harassment against a teacher. Primarily, a probe committee has found proof of the allegation, informed DU sources.

On December 13, the student submitted a complaint letter to Vice Chancellor Prof M Akhtaruzzaman demanding justice after proper investigation.

The VC has directed the faculty dean to investigate the allegation, who formed the probe committee in this regard.

Seeking anonymity, a member of the

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PRAYER  
TIMING  
MAR 10



	Fazr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib	Esha
Azan	5-05	12-45	4-30	6-12	7-30
Jamaat	5-40	1-15	4-45	6-15	8-00

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION