

# Doing everything to ensure ‘free, fair’ polls

JS body tells IRI president

UNB, Dhaka

The government is taking all measures to ensure a free, fair and participatory national election scheduled for early 2024, a delegation of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on the Ministry of Foreign Affairs told the International Republican Institute (IRI) president recently.

The delegation said this during a discussion with senior officials of the IRI led by its president Dr Daniel Twining on Thursday.

The delegation also had meetings with Ambassador Donald Lu, assistant secretary of state for South and Central Asian Affairs at the State Department, and Congressman Dwight Evans in the Capitol Hill.

Muhammad Faruk Khan, chair of the standing committee, is leading the delegation. Other members of the team are lawmakers Nurul Islam Nahid, Nahim Razzaq, and Kazi Nabil Ahmed.

Bangladesh Ambassador to the US M Shahidul Islam and senior officials of the

embassy were present at the meetings.

During a meeting with Donald Lu, the parliamentary team discussed the entire range of issues encompassing the Bangladesh-US partnership and expressed resolve to deepen bilateral engagements.

The two sides discussed Bangladesh's potential in the IT and ICT sectors.

The visiting delegation sought the assistance of the Biden administration for the early deportation of Bangabandhu's killer Rashed Chowdhury. They also raised the issue of recent US sanctions on Rab and its senior officials.

Cooperation in the area of labour rights, Bangladesh's access to US DFC financing for larger investments in infrastructure projects, steps taken by Bangladesh to promote democracy and human rights, and the ongoing defence and security cooperation also came up for discussion.

The parliamentary committee appreciated the US humanitarian and political support extended to Bangladesh on the Rohingya issue.



People from all walks of life and age meditate on the premises of Barishal's Bangabandhu Udyan yesterday, marking World Meditation Day. The event was organised by Quantum Foundation.

PHOTO: TITU DAS

## Good governance

FROM PAGE 3

Shyamal Dutta, editor of Bangla daily Bhorer Kagoj, said syndication stems from a lack of good governance. “Labour sending process should be ‘open, transparent and free’, which not possible with only 25-50 agencies as a greater number of agencies can reduce migration cost,” said Barrister Shameem Haider Patwary, chair of Bangladesh Parliamentarians’ Caucus on Migration and Development.

Referring to government data, labour migration expert Shariful Hasan said a Bangladeshi migrant worker needs nearly 18 months to recover his migration cost. Mentioning

that about 95 percent of labour migration from Bangladesh is operated by private recruiting agencies, MS Shekil Chowdhury, chairperson of Centre for NRB, said a strong watchdog process has to be ensured in the sector.

Joining the event virtually from Malaysia, Sukumaran Nair, secretary general of National Organisation of Private Service Agencies Malaysia, said they want equal participation of all valid Bangladeshi recruiting agencies in the process.

Among recruiting agency leaders, Ali Haider Chowdhury, Nur Ali, Abul Bashar, and Shameem Ahmed Chowdhury Noman spoke at the event.

## It took them seconds

FROM PAGE 3

to five seconds to steal a phone from someone's pocket, said DC Mashiur.

Investigators said Rony used to sell the stolen phones to Jakir for Tk 1,500 to 1,800.

Jakir then kept those phones switched off for some days. Later on, he would change their IMEI numbers and sell them in different locations of the capital, said the officer, quoting arrestees.

The theft gang even posted phone-sale advertisements on different online platforms and charged Tk 5,000 to 10,000 for a phone. If they ever failed to break a phone's lock or change IMEI, the gang would destroy the phone and sell parts in different markets.

Regarding Aziz, DC Mashiur said he has been involved in stealing phones and other valuables for the last three years in Dhaka. His target areas were

Dhaka Medical College, Kamalapur Railway Station, TSC, Nagar Bhaban, Gulistan, Dhanmondi lake and Jatrabari.

“The syndicate used to steal at least eight to 10 phones a week,” said Mashiur.

Detectives said Aziz was arrested just three months back for stealing a laptop from a shop in the capital's Baitul Mukarram market.

The shop authority then handed him over to police, and he was sent to Keraniganj central jail. He, however, managed to get free and got involved in the same crime.

After interrogating the arrestees, detectives got a list of around two dozen people who were involved in stealing valuables at Kamalapur Railway Station.

“We are trying to locate other associates of Aziz, and a drive is underway to arrest them,” said DC Mashiur.

## ENSURING FOOD SECURITY

# Need more support from developed countries

Says state minister for foreign affairs

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh has called for increased investments and targeted technology support from developed countries, while promoting global solidarity to keep critical food delivery infrastructure out of harm's way during conflicts.

State Minister for Foreign Affairs Shahriar Alam made the call at the UN Security Council Open Debate on “Conflict and Food Security” on Friday.

He underscored the importance of enhancing productivity and ensuring effective food storage and distribution systems.

## Judge impersonator

FROM PAGE 5

It was reported that a justice named Biplab Pramanik would enter Chandpur from Dhaka via Cumilla. He needed a security arrangement comprising two gunmen.

On information from Chandpur Police Control Room, Chandpur DIO-1 Monirul Islam contacted the fake judge on his mobile and followed through with the request.

He also informed Chandpur Superintendent of Police Milon Mahmud,

Additional Superintendent of Police (Administration and Finance) Sudipta Roy, and officers-in-charge of Matlab south and north police stations.

However, the Chandpur SP got suspicious about the matter, and told the additional SP to look into it. When Arif's car reached Barthila area, Matlab South Police Sub-inspector Ruhul Amin got suspicious, as there was no flag or bodyguard in the vehicle.

The police team started questioning and found that

Arif impersonated a justice and duped police. Law enforcers then took him into custody.

SP Milon Mahmud said three warrants were found against him in Matlab South Police Station.

“We suspect that he used this tactic to gain some advantage in his own area. We have filed another fraud case against him,” he said. Police said Arif used to run a business in his hometown. As it did not do well, he moved to the capital.

## No worker should pay

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example, the cost of migration to Kuwait for a Bangladeshi migrant is \$3,136, whereas, for an Indian national, it is \$1,248 – almost one-third of the amount. For a Sri Lankan national, the cost is \$319.

According to a 2020 survey by Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics, Bangladeshi workers need nearly 18 months on average to recover the migration amount. Not only does it negatively impact the economic conditions of migrant families but also leads to other forms of exploitation, including forced labour, irregular stay and labour trafficking.

ILO Country Director for Bangladesh Tuomo Poutiainen said, “Workers should not pay migration costs. If we can change this, a lot of problems related to the recruitment process can be eliminated.”

Recruitment processes should be drawn considering international labour standards, labour rights principles of non-discrimination, and effective enforcement of law and regulations.

Barrister Shameem Haider Patwary, chair of the parliamentarians' caucus on migration and development, called for establishing a separate ministry for skills development.

Amid the ongoing crises, including the aftermaths of the pandemic, the war in Ukraine and unrest in Sri Lanka, it is important to observe the government's stance on some crucial aspects regarding migrant workers' rights during negotiations with the recruiting countries.

Md Shahidul Alam, director general at the Bureau of Manpower Employment and Training, said it is important to take care of every aspect of migrants' life – training, travel, post-migration period, their families left behind, saving facilities and reintegration back home.

## The girl who wrote her own fate

FROM PAGE 5

“When I was selling newspapers, many people passed snide remarks at me for being a woman. But I never judged any type of work. Besides, their criticisms never paid for my food or shelter, so I never bothered to pay heed to them. I had to survive with dignity,” said Champa, now in her mid-thirties.

“At the beginning, I had no fixed customers and could barely sell five to seven newspapers a day. But I never took it to heart and continued doing my job with diligence,” she said.

“I started delivering newspapers on a bicycle. Within a few months, I got some customers. Now, I have a total of 275 fixed customers around the upazila.”

“Now I'm earning Tk

500-550 a day selling newspapers, travelling 20-25 kilometres.” Champa said, adding that those who had criticised her are now praising her.

Experiencing struggles in her own life, Champa always aimed to work for those who are neglected in society. With that goal, she chose to run in the union parishad elections.

On November, 2021, she was elected as a female member in the reserved seat of ward 3,4,5 of Parshodanga union.

“When I was struggling to survive, nobody came to help me, rather they criticised me. There are many people like me, and I always thank my voters for giving me the opportunity to serve them,” said Champa.

“As a hawker, I get to go door-to-door and meet

all these voters. I try to understand their struggles and do my best to do something for them,” she added.

Contacted, Md Azhar Ali, chairman of Parshodanga union, said, “Champa sets an example of how to give service to the people amidst hurdles in life.”

“After serving her role as a newspaper hawker, she joined the union parishad on time and performed her duty successfully. This is inspiring to say the least,” Azhar said.

“There are many people in our society who blame their fate for living lives like Champa's. But Champa never relied on her fate but worked to build her fortune,” said Md Anisur Rahman, a college teacher in the area.

## AM Choudhury passes away

CITY DESK

Eminent disaster forecasting expert and space scientist Dr AM



Choudhury passed away at his Dhanmondi residence on Thursday. He was 81, said a press release.

He was buried at Mirpur Intellectuals' Graveyard yesterday after his first namaz-e-janaza at Taqwa Mosque and the second one on the cemetery premises.

Choudhury was former chairman of the Bangladesh Space Research Centre.

He is famous for the development of Rose Petal Theory for the forecast of cyclone tracks. His research on long term forecasting of weather in predicting floods or droughts using the Atmospheric Teleconnection theory is also very promising.

He received the Independence Award, the highest civilian honour, from Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in 1998.

He also won the NASA Group Achievement Award for his role as executive director of the Bangladesh Computer Council.

## UN refugee agency chief in city

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

UN High Commissioner for Refugees Filippo



Grandi yesterday kicked off his five-day visit to Bangladesh to highlight the need for sustained international support for more than one million Rohingyas.

This is the first visit by the UN refugee agency chief to refugee camps in Bangladesh since the pandemic began, following an earlier trip in March 2019.

“The High Commissioner will meet with representatives of the government of Bangladesh to discuss the ongoing response for Rohingya refugees in Cox's Bazar and Bhasan Char,” according to a UNHCR statement.

He is scheduled to meet the prime minister, officials of the foreign ministry, disaster management ministry, UN officials and the Rohingyas.

During his visit to the camps and to Bhasan Char, he will meet Rohingya refugees to discuss their needs, challenges and hopes for the future.

Indrika Ratwatte, UNHCR's Regional Director for Asia and the Pacific, and Herve de Villeroche, Senior Advisor to the High Commissioner, are accompanying Grandi.

## Where is our

FROM PAGE 3

Rana Dasgupta said despite the 15th amendment of the constitution, the nation could not be free from the damages done during the regimes of Zia and Ershad.

“It is true that the country has made tremendous progress in the last 13 years but the mindset of the people has lagged far behind,” he added.

The event was presided over by Prof Neem Chandra Bhowmik, president of the Parishad. Prof Robayet Ferdous of Dhaka University and Rekha Chowdhury, vice-president of Bangladesh Mahila Parishad, participated in the discussion.

The keynote paper was presented by Barrister Tapas Kanti Ball. Nirmal Rozario, another president of the Parishad, presented the vote of thanks.

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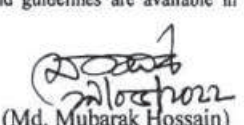
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**Tender Description**

Sl. No.	Tender ID No.	Name of Work	Tender Documents Last Selling Date & Time	Tender closing Date & Time
1	701523	Establishment of 560 Modle Mosque and Islamic culture Centre in Zilla & Upazilla of Bangladesh, Head: External Electrification, Sub-Head: 150 KVA Sub-station, 30 KVA Generator, Air Cooler, 3 HP Centrifugal Pump, 5.5 HP Submersible Pump, Fire Extinguisher, Sound & PA System, Compound & Security Light, Solar Panel, CCTV System, Lightening Arrestor for Islamic Foundation, Bangladesh. One at Sadar of Jamalpur District(Type-A)FY-2021-2022	05-Jun-2022 17:00:00	06-Jun-2022 12:45:00
2	701516	Establishment of 560 Modle Mosque and Islamic culture Centre in Zilla & Upazilla of Bangladesh, Head: External Electrification, Sub-Head: 150 KVA Sub-station, 30 KVA Generator, Air Cooler, 3 HP Centrifugal Pump, 5.5 HP Submersible Pump, Fire Extinguisher, Sound & PA System, Compound & Security Light, Solar Panel, CCTV System, Lightening Arrestor for Islamic Foundation, Bangladesh. One at Melandaha Upazilla of Jamalpur District(Type-B)FY-2021-2022	05-Jun-2022 17:00:00	06-Jun-2022 12:45:00
3	701483	Establishment of 560 Modle Mosque and Islamic culture Centre in Zilla & Upazilla of Bangladesh, Head: External Electrification, Sub-Head: 150 KVA Sub-station, 30 KVA Generator, Air Cooler, 3 HP Centrifugal Pump, 5.5 HP Submersible Pump, Fire Extinguisher, Sound & PA System, Compound & Security Light, Solar Panel, CCTV System, Lightening Arrestor for Islamic Foundation, Bangladesh. One at Sarishabari Upazilla of Jamalpur District(Type-B)FY-2021-2022	05-Jun-2022 17:00:00	06-Jun-2022 13:00:00
4	701488	Establishment of 560 Modle Mosque and Islamic culture Centre in Zilla & Upazilla of Bangladesh, Head: External Electrification, Sub-Head: 150 KVA Sub-station, 30 KVA Generator, Air Cooler, 3 HP Centrifugal Pump, 5.5 HP Submersible Pump, Fire Extinguisher, Sound & PA System, Compound & Security Light, Solar Panel, CCTV System, Lightening Arrestor for Islamic Foundation, Bangladesh. One at Islampur Upazilla of Jamalpur District(Type-B)FY-2021-2022	05-Jun-2022 17:00:00	06-Jun-2022 13:00:00
5	701490	Establishment of 560 Modle Mosque and Islamic culture Centre in Zilla & Upazilla of Bangladesh, Head: External Electrification, Sub-Head: 150 KVA Sub-station, 30 KVA Generator, Air Cooler, 3 HP Centrifugal Pump, 5.5 HP Submersible Pump, Fire Extinguisher, Sound & PA System, Compound & Security Light, Solar Panel, CCTV System, Lightening Arrestor for Islamic Foundation, Bangladesh. One at Sadar Upazilla of Jamalpur District(Type-B)FY-2021-2022	05-Jun-2022 17:00:00	06-Jun-2022 13:00:00
6	701502	Establishment of 560 Modle Mosque and Islamic culture Centre in Zilla & Upazilla of Bangladesh, Head: External Electrification, Sub-Head: 150 KVA Sub-station, 30 KVA Generator, Air Cooler, 3 HP Centrifugal Pump, 5.5 HP Submersible Pump, Fire Extinguisher, Sound & PA System, Compound & Security Light, Solar Panel, CCTV System, Lightening Arrestor for Islamic Foundation, Bangladesh. One at Madargonj Upazilla of Jamalpur District(Type-B)FY-2021-2022	05-Jun-2022 17:00:00	06-Jun-2022 12:30:00

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GD- 1027