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**Meril-Prothom Alo celebrating the best in showbusiness**



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## ILLEGAL HEALTH FACILITIES One of them even served embassies

DGHS starts shutting down unauthorised hospitals nationwide

MOUDUD AHMED SUJAN and ZYMA ISLAM

Located in the capital's upscale neighbourhood of Baridhara, Wahab Medical Practice has been making medical assessments of people travelling to western countries, says its website.

The embassies of the USA and Australia mention on their websites the name of this clinic as an approved healthcare facility where individuals can get their medical assessments required for visa applications.

The clinic's website says it has been in operation for nearly 30 years.

But it was neither found in the government's list of licensed hospitals, nor in the list of hospitals with pending applications for licences.

Officials said the facility had no authorisation from the health directorate and only yesterday it sought licence from the directorate.

Despite repeated attempts, The Daily Star could not reach the high ups of Wahab Medical Practice.

On Wednesday, the DGHS in a meeting decided to shut down all unauthorised healthcare facilities by yesterday afternoon.

As of yesterday evening, 44 facilities sought authorisation from the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS).

Officials said multiple unauthorised healthcare facilities were shut down in every district of the country yesterday.

The DGHS is planning to hold a press conference today about the countrywide crackdown on unauthorised private healthcare organisations.

"We wanted to give everybody a strict message. The 72-hour ultimatum has worked very well; they [owners of unauthorised facilities] are now fleeing," Prof Ahmedul Kabir, additional director general of the DGHS, told The Daily Star yesterday.

The DGHS said it was cracking down on healthcare facilities that had not even sought registration or renewal of expired licences.

The deadline for applying for renewal of licence was yesterday afternoon.

Health officials started conducting the countrywide drive since Thursday. In many districts, officials of the unauthorised facilities suspended their services and fled.

"We closed down three facilities, which had no authorisation, and issued an ultimatum to three others to renew their licences. But many others fled as soon as they saw us," said Awliad Hossain, Chuadanga Sadar health and family planning officer.

Yesterday, a health officials in Natore shut down eight unauthorised private healthcare organisations, reports our correspondent.

**"We closed down three facilities, which had no authorisation, and issued an ultimatum to three others to renew their licences. But many others fled as soon as they saw us."**

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Children of the victims of enforced disappearances hold photos of their loved ones at a rally in front of the National Museum in the capital yesterday. Mayer Daak, an organisation of family members of the victims, organised the event in which the families demanded answers from the government.

PHOTO: STAR

GOVT REPORT TO UN

## 'Our words neither heeded nor believed'

Say families of enforced disappearance victims

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Families of the victims of enforced disappearance decried the government's report to the Working Group on Enforced Disappearance or Involuntary Disappearances.

Families of 52 forcibly disappeared victims stood in front of the National Museum yesterday afternoon demanding answers.

For the first time in 26 years, the government had responded to the Human Rights Council's working group, a United Nations body, submitting to them information about forcibly disappeared people.

The list of outstanding cases of enforced disappearance recorded

with the organisation is at least 76 and the working group had rejected government explanations for 66 of them terming them "insufficient", according to its latest report.

For preparing the report for the UN, law enforcers visited the families of the enforced disappearance victims to collect information. Some of the families said this was the first time they had been contacted by law enforcers in years.

Standing in front of the museum yesterday, some families spoke about how they were gaslighted during the "investigation". Their words were neither heeded nor believed, they said.

Abdul Kuddus's family, for example,

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## A nightmare that won't stop at rape

ZYMA ISLAM

A victim of an alleged rape by a police officer has taken shelter in a government safehouse after the suspect, now on bail, allegedly threatened her with consequences for filing the case.

The suspect, Khairul Alam, is a sub-inspector of Sher-e-Bangla Nagar Police Station who allegedly raped the woman thrice in Gulshan last year.

The alleged incident happened just days after the woman went to the police station to seek protection from a man who would stalk her on her way to work.

The cop was arrested after an uphill battle by the victim and her mother to sue him, and is now out on bail after five months of imprisonment.

After coming out of jail, he allegedly visited the neighbourhood where the woman lives with her mother and asked locals about her whereabouts.

SI Khairul dismissed the allegation as a "baseless lie".

On May 9, inside the courtroom of the Women and Children Repression Prevention

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## Every Dhaka street will have CCTV coverage

Home minister says

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

All roads in the capital will be brought under CCTV camera coverage, which would benefit the city's traffic management and help control crime, Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan said yesterday.

He was speaking at the ninth general assembly of "Nirapad Sarak Chai", a platform working to ensure safe roads.

"We are taking initiatives to make Dhaka a safe city. We will bring the whole city under CCTV camera coverage. If we can do it, then we will do the same for Chattogram and Rajshahi cities. We are working towards achieving that goal. It will benefit many areas, particularly in traffic and crime control," the minister said at an event held in the capital's

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A large waterbody near Hajj camp in the capital's Ashkona is being rapidly filled up by the Civil Aviation Authority of Bangladesh for building living quarters for its employees. The move, which violates a conservation law, will surely worsen waterlogging in the adjacent neighbourhoods, experts say.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

## Trading a lake for houses

Caab filling up waterbody in Ashkona; waterlogging feared to worsen

HELEMUL ALAM and RASHIDUL HASAN

The Civil Aviation Authority of Bangladesh is filling up a large waterbody on the eastern side of the Hajj camp at the capital's Ashkona for a housing project for its officials and employees, violating a conservation law.

The aviation regulator has not even taken permission from Rajdhani Unnayan Karttripakkha (Rajuk) to fill up the around 30-acre pond, which has long been used as a water retention pond for Ashkona, Uttar Khan and Dakkhin Khan areas.

Experts fear the filling up of such a vast pond, earmarked clearly as a waterbody in Rajuk's Detailed Area Plan (DAP), will aggravate the perennial waterlogging problem in the area.

The Caab has been filling it up with earth for the last four months and has already filled up around half the area.

A recent visit by The Daily Star found that workers were busy filling up the pond with a crane. A heap of earth, piled up on the already-filled portions, is waiting to be dumped.

According to Playground, Open Spaces, Gardens, and Water Bodies Conservation Act 2000, no one can fill up water bodies or stop the normal water flow.

Md Ashraf Islam, project director of DAP, said, "Filling this waterbody will have an adverse impact on areas like Ashkona, Uttar Khan and Dakkhin Khan. The pond has been playing a vital role in retaining rainwater.

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**DON'T MISS TODAY'S SPECIAL ISSUE ON BANGLADESH AC MARKET**

**"In the context of Bangladesh, political forces and bureaucracy never want changes in police. The ruling party wants police to do what they say; the MPs want OCs to do their bidding,"**

— Former IGP  
AKM Shahidul Hoque

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