



"Reversing all measures that restrict women's rights to work is key to reaching the millions of people in Afghanistan that require humanitarian assistance."

UN chief Antonio Guterres



## WB to give \$2.75b over next 5 years

### Financing meant to accelerate green growth

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The World Bank is set to provide \$2.75 billion by way of six projects over the next five years to help Bangladesh achieve greener and more resilient development and greater inclusion.

Financial agreements for five of the projects took place during the celebrations of 50 years of partnership between the WB and Bangladesh at the lender's headquarters in Washington DC on May 1.

The projects are being funded by the International Development Association, the WB arm that offers concessional loans and grants to the world's poor nations.

Those loans are to be repaid in 30 years with a grace period of five years.

A yearly service charge of 0.75 percent and an interest rate of 1.25 percent needs to be paid on the withdrawn amount of

the loans. Besides, a maximum annual commitment fee of 0.50 percent is payable on the unwithdrawn financing balance.

For one of the projects involving \$500 million, a different financing structure is being used: 65 percent of the amount is being treated as a Short-term Maturity Loan. The \$324 million has to be repaid in 12 years with a grace period of six years. No service charge and interest will be applicable on the withdrawn amount of the loan.

Of the six projects, three were approved by the WB board last year but their loan agreements were not signed. The other three were approved ahead of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's visit to Washington DC for the celebrations.

The loan agreement for one of the projects will be signed later.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina presents a painting of the Padma Bridge to World Bank President David Malpass at his headquarters in Washington DC on Monday.

PHOTO: PTI

## PADMA BRIDGE External pressure led WB to cancel loan

Says PM

UNB, Washington DC

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has blamed external pressure for the cancellation of World Bank's \$1.2 billion credit to finance the Padma Bridge.

"I regret that the World Bank moved away from funding this most important project [Padma Multipurpose Bridge] owing to external pressure," she said on Monday while addressing an informal interaction with WB's Board of Executive Directors in Washington DC.

Hasina, however, wished to look into the future of the partnership between Bangladesh and the multilateral lender.

The PM is now in Washington DC on a week-long official visit to the US mainly to take part in the celebration of the 50 years of partnership between Bangladesh and the WB.

She also presented WB President David Malpass with a painting of the Padma Bridge, which was opened on June 25 last year, during the signing of a \$2.25-billion-dollar deal between Bangladesh and the WB to implement five projects.

"The construction of the 6.1km Padma Multipurpose Bridge with our own financial and technical resources is a sign of our economic maturity," she proudly said.

Tk 32,600 crore was spent for constructing the bridge.

## Help us graduate from LDC: Hasina to WB

AGENCIES, Washington DC

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has sought enhanced World Bank cooperation for Bangladesh's smooth transition towards a developing nation, subsequent graduation as upper-middle income country, and implementation of its Delta Plan 2100.

"Bangladesh is preparing for smooth and sustainable graduation from the UN LDC status in 2026. I request the World Bank to support our human capital and institutional capacity development programmes for a smooth transition. The critical IDA [International

Development Association] window needs to be preserved and continued," she said.

The PM was speaking at the plenary session of an event titled "Reflection on 50 years of World Bank-Bangladesh Partnership" at the WB headquarters in Washington DC on Monday, reports BSS.

"My presence here [at the WB HQ] signals that we maintain our trust in the World Bank. Our success in the next two decades would depend on our collective ability and efforts to overcome the emerging challenges in a just and sustainable manner," Hasina said.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

"My presence here [at the WB HQ] signals that we maintain our trust in the World Bank."

PM Sheikh Hasina.

"We are proud of our partnership and look forward to opening the next chapter."

WB President David Malpass

## Repeal DSA, amend all anti-free press laws

Discussion marking World Press Freedom Day told

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government must either repeal the Digital Security Act 2018 or amend it in such a manner that it does not hamper free media or freedom of expression.

While presiding over a discussion observing World Press Day, the editor and publisher of The Daily Star, Mahfuz Anam, placed the demand.

Anam said that when the DSA was at its drafting stage, journalists identified different anti-free media provisions and raised their objections first to the government and then to the parliamentary standing committee. Nothing was done. "Later we were assured by the law minister and the information minister that the law would not be used against journalists or to suppress freedom of expression."

PHOTO ON PAGE 3

SEE PAGE 6 COL 4



THE KILLING CONTINUES ... The Dhaleshwari wears a black, foamy look as the dumping of liquid waste from the Savar Tannery Industrial Estate continues unabated. While estate officials have claimed that the liquid seeping into the river is "treated", the environmental department has found the situation to be otherwise. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

### BUSINESS

#### Export, remittance plunge

Exports and remittances, two major sources of foreign currencies, plunged in April, a bad omen for the economy as it deals with multiple challenges, including a dollar crisis, soaring import costs and falling forex reserves.

Export earnings slumped 16.5 percent year-on-year to \$3.95 billion last month, while remittances nosedived 16.2 percent to \$1.68 billion, according to EPB and BB data.

STORY ON B1

## ANTI-GOVT MOVEMENT BNP weighing options for 'final phase'

### Most senior leaders favour road marches, some suggest rallies

MOHAMMAD AL-MASUM MOLLA

The BNP is planning to hold road marches or rallies as the final phase of the anti-government simultaneous movement.

Most of the senior leaders and the parties participating in the movement opined for starting the movement through road marches, while some suggested road marches after holding rallies in 19 major districts to gain momentum for the movement, said party sources.

They said the BNP wants to go to the final phase of the movement with fresh programmes. And to make it inclusive, the top leadership is taking opinions from leaders of party's different tiers and the parties taking part in the movement.

"We are discussing the final phase of the movement. We will announce the programmes shortly after finalising them," Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir, BNP secretary general, told The

SEE PAGE 2 COL 5

## Stalker stabs schoolgirl to death in Netrakona

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Mymensingh

An alleged stalker stabbed a schoolgirl to death in Barhatta upazila of Netrakona yesterday.

The victim was Mukti Rani Barman, 15, daughter of Nikhil Barman of Premnagar Chhalipura village in Barhatta.

She was a class-X student at a high school, said police.

Quoting family members, Khokon Kumar Saha, officer-in-charge of Barhatta Police station, said Kawser Mia, 19, used to stalk Mukti on the way to school.

She on multiple occasions fended off his advances and Kawser threatened her with dire consequences.

When the girl was returning home from school

SEE PAGE 6 COL 6

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ



We thank you all for your kind words, love and support for our mother and grandmother, **Rokia Afzal Rahman**. She meant the world to us.

Please keep her in your prayers.

With Love:

Erum, Kaiser, Imran, Sanjida, Faiza, Nehal, Imaan, Omar, Ayaana, Amaya and Marium



## DEFAMATION CASE Gujarat HC refuses to grant interim relief to Rahul

NDTV ONLINE

In another setback for Congress leader Rahul Gandhi, the Gujarat High Court yesterday refused to grant an interim stay on his conviction in a criminal defamation case over his "Modi surname" remark in which he was sentenced to two years in jail by a Surat court. The court will give an order on his petition post summer vacation.

The former Congress president had sought an interim stay of the conviction till the High Court pronounced the order on his petition.

Abhishek Manu Singhvi, the lawyer for Rahul, cited "extreme urgency" to request from the court for an interim or a final order after arguments from both sides in the matter concluded during the day. However, the court of Justice Hemant Prachchhak said no interim protection can be granted at this stage.

Justice Prachchhak said he will pass a final order only after going through the records and proceedings, and posted the matter for verdict after reopening of the High Court post-summer vacation, which will be from May 8 to June 3.

Rahul, who represented Wayanad parliament constituency in Kerala,

**Justice Prachchhak said he will pass a final order only after going through the records and proceedings, and posted the matter for verdict after reopening of the High Court post-summer vacation, which will be from May 8 to June 3.**

was sentenced to two years in jail after he was convicted on March 23 under sections 499 and 500 of the Indian Penal Code for criminal defamation in the case filed by BJP MLA Purnesh Modi.

The BJP MLA's case against Rahul was over his "how come all thieves have Modi as the common surname?" remark made during an election rally at Kolar in Karnataka on April 13, 2019.

The two-year jail term resulted in him being disqualified as a Member of Parliament. The law states that if a member is convicted of any offence for two or more years, his or her seat will be declared vacant. One can only stay in the parliament if the conviction is suspended.

The senior Congress leader vacated his official residence, which he had since 2005, last month after losing his MP status.



**"Let's meet for coffee" is the casual invite for friends now. It got me thinking — when did we become a nation of coffee drinkers? I am a Dhakaite and I love gorom cha; that hot cup of tea to kickstart my lazy mornings. I need "cha" during my mid-morning meetings, during my busy afternoons, and I need my tea at a friend's gathering over a hot political debate.**



## Bring back THE LOVE OF 'CHA'

RBR

From sipping orange pekoe in posh cafes to slurping hot tea from the saucer in front of the tong er dokan, cha in any form is Dhaka to me. Having said this, I found that the pronouncement was no longer holding true for most of my fellow Dhakaite, because tea was no longer their thing.

We are now a coffee-drinking metropolis where our mundane cha seemingly has no place. Coffee for Dhaka is such a new fad and it seems to have taken over our tea-drinking palate.

All cafes around the city, especially near Gulshan, Banani, Uttara, or Baridhara carry a fancy coffee menu featuring all sorts of lattes, espressos, mocha, americanos, and cappuccinos with malai cha, dudh cha, or masala cha having no place in these places.

While there are some exclusive tea bars in town, if you ask me, finding a decent cup of tea in these establishments is an unlikely matter

because you will be served a light tea bag in a beautiful tea cup with kettles and all, or the frothy malai cha will be accompanied by spring rolls — an odd item with tea. In fact, the menu in these tea bars is unnecessarily "posh"; you will find pasta, quiche, and potato wedges but not puris or piyajas.

Be it after a movie or office hours, or even on the weekends, if you want to



hang out with friends over a steaming cup of malai cha or just black tea, your cafe options in Dhaka are plenty. But they hardly carry any tea on their menu, except maybe an earl grey or a green tea, that too in a tea bag!

We are Bangalees at heart no matter how much we might pretend otherwise and we will always crave a daal puri with dudh cha and the only place to find them is on the streets. Upmarket cafes will not carry such snack menu items but if your heart craves it, you can always grab a cup by any roadside.

## Farmer trampled by elephant

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Mymensingh

A farmer was killed by elephants in Sherpur's Sreebordi upazila on Monday evening. The victim is Abdul Hamid, 50, of Hatibor Tilapara village, said police.

A herd of elephants entered into a paddy field on Monday evening. On information, a group of farmers rushed to the spot to shoo them away, said Biplob Kumar Biswas, officer-in-charge of Sreebordi Police Station.

At one point, the elephants attacked the farmers and trampled on Hamid. Locals rushed him to Sherpur General Hospital where doctors declared him dead, he added.

An unnatural death case was lodged with the police station in this connection.

## Six BNP leaders sent to jail

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Pabna

Six leaders of the BNP and its associate organisations were sent to jail in Sirajganj yesterday on charges of vandalism and arson attacks.

The accused are Saidur Rahman Bacchu, secretary of Sirajganj district unit BNP, Muraduzzaman Murad, secretary of Sirajganj district unit Jubo Dal, Golam Kibria Borat, president of Sirajganj Sadar unit Jubo Dal, Yeard Ahmed, secretary of Kalia Haripur union unit Chhatra Dal, and Sohel Rana and Mohammad Noman, leaders of the union Jubo Dal.

All of them were accused of vandalism and arson attacks during a clash at Kalia Haripur union, said Humayun Kabir, officer-in-charge of Sirajganj Sadar Police Station.

Pro BNP lawyer Nazmul Islam said the accused appeared before the Sirajganj district and session judge court.

## Body found in Tangail

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Tangail

Police recovered the body of a youth in Tangail's Madhupur upazila yesterday.

The dead is Shamsheer Miah, 23, of the upazila's Harindhara village, said police.

Locals found the body and informed police about it. On information, they law enforcers recovered the body and sent it to Tangail General Hospital morgue for autopsy, said Mohammad Mazharul Amin, officer-in-charge of Madhupur Police Station.

Marks of fatal injuries were found on the body, he said.

Police suspect that the youth was killed at night and his body was dumped in an isolated place in the dark, he added.

## Elderly man found dead

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

The throat-slit body of an elderly man was found in Dinajpur's Birampur upazila yesterday.

Dead Wahed Munshi, 80, of Bhabanipur village, was a quack by profession, said police.

The body was recovered in a grass field and sent to M Abdur Rahim Medical College Hospital for autopsy, said Ershad Ali, sub-inspector of Birampur Police Station.

Police suspect that he was killed over previous enmity or disputes, he added.

## WB to give \$2.75b over next 5 years

FROM PAGE 1

Of the sum, \$753.45 million will be given by way of the \$1.05 billion Accelerating Transport and Trade Connectivity in Eastern South Asia (ACCESS) Programme Phase I project.

The project, which was approved by the WB board on June 28 last year, will help improve regional trade in Bangladesh and Nepal by reducing trade and transport costs and transit time along the regional corridors.

It will upgrade the 43-kilometre two-lane Sylhet-Charkai-Sheola road to a climate-resilient four-lane road, connecting the Sheola land port with the Dhaka-Sylhet highway. This will cut down travel time by 30 percent.

The project will support digital systems, infrastructure, and more streamlined processes at Benapole, Bhomra and Burimari land ports, the three largest land ports in Bangladesh handling approximately 80 percent of land-based trade.

It will also support the modernisation of the Chattogram customs house which handles 90 percent of all import/export declarations in Bangladesh.

The implementing agencies are the National Board of Revenue, the Roads

and Highways Department and the Bangladesh Land Port Authority.

Another \$500 million will come through the Resilient Infrastructure for Adaptation and Vulnerability Reduction (RIVER) project, the first major investment project to support the Bangladesh Delta Plan 2100.

The project, which was approved by the WB board on July 15 last year, will help improve disaster preparedness against inland flooding in 14 flood-prone districts benefiting over 1.25 million people.

The Local Government Engineering Department of the Local Government Division is the implementing agency.

The WB will give \$250 million towards the \$483.7 million Bangladesh Environmental Sustainability and Transformation (BEST) project.

The project, which was approved by the WB board on December 1 last year, will help the country strengthen environmental management and promote private sector participation in green investment.

It will support the Department of Environment to strengthen

its technical and administrative capacity, help construct four vehicle inspection centres and an e-waste management facility.

The Bangladesh Road Transport Authority, the Bangladesh Bank and the Bangladesh High-Tech Park Authority are also part of the project.

Both the ACCESS and RIVER projects are expected to wrap up in June 2028 and BEST in December 2028.

The \$500 million First Green and Climate Resilient Development Credit will help the country's transition to green and climate-resilient development.

The project, which was approved on April 27, will (i) enhance public planning, financing and delivery of green and climate-resilient interventions; and (ii) promote key sector reforms for greener and more efficient production and services.

The Finance Division is the main implementing agency for the programme. The amount, which will come as budget support will be released by June 30, 2024 subject to compliance with certain prior conditions, said a press release from

the ERD.

The \$250 million Sustainable Microenterprise and Resilient Transformation (SMART) project will help transform the micro enterprise sector into a more dynamic, less-polluting, resource efficient and climate-resilient growth sector.

The project, which was also approved on April 27, is scheduled for completion by December 31, 2028 by Palli Karma-Sahayak Foundation.

At the same board meeting on April 27, the WB approved \$543 million for the Programme on Agricultural and Rural Transformation for Nutrition, Entrepreneurship, and Resilience (PARTNER) project.

The \$4.57 billion project will help promote diversification, food safety, entrepreneurship and climate resilience in the agri-food systems once it wraps up on December 31, 2028.

The loan agreement for the project is yet to be signed.

Sharifa Khan, secretary of the Economic Relations Division, and Abdoulaye Seck, the WB's country director, signed the loan agreements for all six projects save for PARTNER.

## BNP weighing options

FROM PAGE 1

Daily Star yesterday.

Sources said BNP acting chairman Tarique Rahman will hold a meeting with its organising secretaries tomorrow.

The party already held a series of meetings with the like-minded political parties and took their views.

A BNP standing committee member, seeking anonymity, said the committee held a meeting on Monday night where they discussed the party's next course of action.

Most of the standing committee members favoured the road marches, but could not reach a consensus on whether the programme will be Dhaka-centric or from Dhaka to divisional headquarters.

Party sources said due to the ongoing SSC examination, the announcement of the programmes may take some time as the party does not want to go for any major programme during the exams.

Prefering anonymity, a senior BNP leader said, "They can hold fresh programmes from the third week of this month as soon as the exams are over."

Some senior leaders said the party had held various types of programmes, including human chains, hunger strikes and rallies, but those failed to get momentum. They said the divisional rallies saw a huge number of people.

The BNP leader said the top party leadership is mentally prepared for waging the final phase of the movement and wants to create a "solid foundation"

for the movement before Eid-ul-Azha. "We don't want to prolong the movement unnecessarily which may lose the momentum."

Party sources said the joint declaration of simultaneous movement has been finalised after discussions with the like-minded political parties.

The declaration will include the demands of the other parties, keeping intact the 10-point demand of the BNP.

Source added that apart from this, there will be a joint outline that will mention what the parties will do if they assume power in future.

The BNP already announced a 27-point outline and the proposals of other parties are also being included.

Leaders of the liaison committee of the like-minded political parties said a joint announcement will be made soon.

"It will be finalised within a day or two," said a leader.

Sources said there were some differences of opinions about the joint declaration between the BNP and Gonotontro Moncho, an alliance of seven political parties. To solve it, the two sides held a meeting at the BNP chairperson's Gulshan office on Tuesday, the sources added.

After the meeting, BNP Standing Committee member Amir Khosru Mahmud Chowdhury told journalists that they discussed the joint declaration and it would be announced soon.

## Help us graduate from LDC: Hasina to WB

FROM PAGE 1

World Bank Group President David Malpass said that they will support Bangladesh as it navigates a challenging global environment on its way to reaching upper-middle-income status by 2031.

"I am confident that with the right set of policies and timely action, Bangladesh can achieve its growth aspirations," he said.

Bangladesh's remarkable journey was made possible by the indomitable energy and resilience of its people and a national will to build a prosperous nation, the WB president said.

"We are proud of our partnership and look forward to opening the next chapter together with you," he said, addressing PM Hasina.

Malpass also tweeted: "Many countries can learn from Bangladesh's innovative approaches to reducing poverty, empowering women, and adapting to climate change."

Hasina is now in Washington DC to celebrate 50 years of Bangladesh-World Bank partnership, reports UNB.

She also had a meeting with the WB executive board where she delivered an introductory speech.

After her speech, a number WB board members asked her about different issues relating to Bangladesh's development journey, said a World Bank official present in the meeting.

Also on Monday, a deal of \$2.25 billion was signed between Bangladesh and the WB to implement five projects. Addressing in the plenary session,

the Bangladesh premier put forward five specific suggestions before the WB for its consideration.

She said Bangladesh will continue to invest in infrastructure and logistics for realising its vision to become a high-income economy by 2041 and added that she expected the World Bank support.

The PM said Bangladesh has aligned UN SDGs with its national aspiration to become an upper middle-income country by 2031.

"There is an expectation that the World Bank and other development partners would deliver increased, concessional and innovative financing for SDG implementation," she added.

Hasina mentioned that the multiple ongoing global crises, caused by the

pandemic, armed conflicts and climate emergency, have put most developing economies under serious stress.

Despite the crises, some of the development partners have chosen to increase their lending costs and interest rates, which detract from their core mandate, she said.

"I call upon the World Bank and other development partners to find viable alternatives so that our economies can cope better with the emerging challenges."

She said Bangladesh hopes that the WB's enhanced engagement in climate action would help address the wide gaps in financing under the Paris Agreement.

"We would stress the importance of equal distribution of financing

between climate mitigation and adaptation," the PM said, adding that Bangladesh has emerged as a global role model in disaster management and preparedness.

Describing Bangladesh as a living laboratory of climate adaptation, Hasina invited the WB and other development partners to join the country in implementing the projects under Bangladesh Delta Plan 2100.

About the Rohingya issue, the PM said Bangladesh has been working with the UN and other international agencies to secure safe, dignified and voluntary repatriation of Rohingyas to Myanmar, but not a single person has returned till date.

"The situation is getting increasingly difficult for us, with growing security

implications for the wider region. I thank the World Bank for joining us in our humanitarian endeavor and for the \$590 million grant for the Rohingya and the communities impacted," she said.

Hasina said Bangladesh has offered shelter to the forcibly displaced Rohingya from Myanmar over the last four decades and their number has reached 1.2 million.

PM's ICT Affairs Adviser Sajeeb Ahmed Wazed, Foreign Minister AK Abdul Momen, Planning Minister MA Mannan, and PM's Private Industry and Investment Adviser Salman Fazlur Rahman, among others, were present.

Former WB chief economist Kausik Basu also spoke at the programme.

Hasina arrived in Washington DC on April 28.



<b>LARGEST ONLINE BRANCH NETWORK</b>	<b>LARGEST PRIVATE COMMERCIAL BANK</b>	<b>FIRST BANGLAEE BANK</b>
Sharia'h based Islamic Banking through 500 Branches & 151 Sub Branches	 <b>পূবালী ব্যাংক লিমিটেড</b> <b>PUBALI BANK LIMITED</b>	Take your remittance Smile with your gift
<b>ESTABLISHED IN 1959</b>	<b>64 YEARS IN BANKING</b>	<b>Excellence in Remittance Service</b>

## DSA was never misused: PM

STAR REPORT

Terming Bangladesh's Digital Security Act a simpler law than similar ones found in other countries, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina said the act was never misused.

Since the DSA is being discussed so much, the Bangladesh government is reviewing similar laws in other countries including the US, UK and European countries.

"The DSA will be reformed if we find any law with tougher punishments than ours," the prime minister said during an interview with Voice of America released Monday.

Laws like the DSA do not exist in Bangladesh alone, and all countries, including the USA and the UK, have such laws, she said, reports UNB.

It was not that only journalists were being targeted but action is also taken against anyone engaged in anti-social activities or provoking militant activities, she said.

"If a journalist tries to steal a document from a ministry, should that person be rewarded? What action would any civilised country take in such a situation?" she asked.

But the PM said individual has been turned into a hero after committing various offences and being released on bonds.

### US SANCTIONS ON RAB

The US sanctions on Rab embolden

**Since the DSA is being discussed so much, the government is reviewing similar laws in other countries including the US, UK and European countries.**

militants, the PM said when asked what reforms the government was enacting for the withdrawal of sanctions.

As per the suggestion of the US, Rab was formed during the rise of militant activities in the country and elsewhere in the world after the September 11 attacks.

"Rab played a significant role in curbing militancy and crimes. But it is not understandable to me why they imposed the sanctions on Rab when Awami League assumed the power and continued the democratic process," Hasina said.

Rather, Rab's role was questionable before the AL regime. Bangladesh government brings Rab men to book if they commit any crimes, which is absent in other countries, even in the US, she added.

On the reformation of Rab, she said the government is always careful in ensuring that no innocent people are punished.



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina visits a photo exhibition on the World Bank headquarters premises in Washington DC. The exhibition marks the 50-year partnership between Bangladesh and the WB. Hasina and WB President David Malpass jointly inaugurated the event on Monday.

PHOTO: PID

### SAAT MASJID ROAD

# More trees felled in name of development

HELEMUL ALAM

Dhaka South City Corporation is cutting trees in the name of infrastructure development and beautification works at Saat Masjid Road in Dhanmondi, amid the existing scarcity of greenery in the capital.

The felling of trees started in the middle of January. The process came to a halt before Eid, after cutting a good number of trees from Jigatala to near the Abahani playground. However, the tree felling resumed again after the Eid vacations, said locals.

Environmentalists have protested the move and termed the initiative



unplanned. They believe that the development work could have been done by protecting all the trees on the road medians.

The trees are being cut under a Tk 9.62 crore project, aiming to develop

different infrastructures, including the beautification of islands, footpaths and road medians, and the construction of public toilets, under Dhaka South City Corporation.

The project, which commenced on September 20, 2022, is scheduled to be completed by June 30, 2023.

During a visit to the Saat Masjid Road yesterday, this correspondent found the remains of many trees that were felled near the Abahani playground. Around 20 big trees were cut down by contractors appointed by DSCC and taken away, said locals.

Over a thousand more trees on the

SEE PAGE 4 COL 2

## Play a bigger role in resolving Rohingya issue

### President urges India

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

President Mohammed Shahabuddin yesterday urged India to take more effective measures to ensure a "safe and dignified" repatriation of Rohingyas to their homeland at Rakhine state in Myanmar.

President made the call while Indian High Commissioner in Dhaka Pranay Kumar Verma paid a courtesy call on him at Bangabhaban on Monday.

Verma became the first foreign envoy to meet the president since he took office on April 24.

Press secretary Joynal Abedin briefed reporters after the meeting.

Shahabuddin said Bangladesh attaches highest importance to its relations with India, which is so closely linked by geographical proximity, shared history and sacrifices.

He hoped that the two countries would amicably resolve the unsettled issues between them, including the water sharing of common rivers, for greater benefit of the two peoples.

In his remarks, the Indian high commissioner said, "The connectivity between the two countries has increased manifold over the last 15 years. People of both countries are enjoying this."

## 'Ensure press freedom and freethinking'

### TIB urges govt on eve of Press Freedom Day

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Transparency International Bangladesh has called upon the government to ensure fundamental rights, including the security of journalists and create an amiable ambience for freethinking, freedom of the press and the right to the free flow of information.

They also demanded the abolishment of the Digital Security Act which has been used arbitrarily to muzzle the media to protect the interest of the ruling party.

In a press release issued on the eve of World Press Freedom Day yesterday, TIB Executive Director Dr Iftekharuzzaman said it is the responsibility of the government to ensure that the media can play its

SEE PAGE 4 COL 5



From left, Dewan Hanif Mahmud, general secretary of The Editors' Council and editor of Bonik Barta; Mahfuz Anam, editor and publisher of The Daily Star; Hasanul Haq Inu, chairperson of the parliamentary standing committee on Information and Broadcast Ministry; Nurul Kabir, editor of New Age; Tasmima Hossain, editor of Daily Ittefaq, and Mozammel Hossain, editor of Daily Samakal, at a discussion titled "Freedom of Expression is the Driver of all Human Rights" yesterday. The event was organised by The Editors' Council (Shampadak Parishad) at the capital's Jatiya Press Club.

PHOTO: STAR

## Dhaka back to bedlam

MD ABBAS

Dhaka experienced severe traffic congestion during the morning and evening rush yesterday as offices in the capital reopened after a day's holiday, causing acute sufferings for commuters.

Since morning, heavy gridlocks were seen on various roads in Motijheel, Gulistan, Jatrabari, Wari, Sayedabad, Paltan, Malibagh, Karwan Bazar, Farmgate, Dhanmondi, and Shahbagh and Saat Masjid Road areas.

The Traffic Division of the Dhaka Metropolitan Police reported that the ongoing construction work for the extension of the metro rail in

Shapla Chattar area has resulted in one side of the road being closed for vehicular movement, resulting in traffic congestion in Motijheel area.

The start of SSC examination exacerbated it, added Mohammad Mainul Hasan, deputy police commissioner of DMP's Traffic Division in Motijheel.

He said traffic congestion reduced around noon.

Md Tipu Chowdhury, an employee of a private firm, experienced delays during his journey from Gandaria to Tikatuli due to heavy traffic.

"Normally, it takes around 25 to 30 minutes, but today's traffic jam caused a one hour and 20 minute

delay," he said.

Mohiuddin Tushar, a private job holder, said it took him one hour and 45 minutes to reach the secretariat from Jatrabari on his bike yesterday, whereas it usually takes him only 30 to 40 minutes.

Several other commuters shared similar experiences with The Daily Star.

Asked, Md Nazer Ahmed Khan, deputy police commissioner of DMP's Traffic Division in Wari, said, "Vehicle pressure were significantly high in Jatrabari and Wari areas compared to other days. The number of vehicles on this road increased particularly after the construction of the Padma Bridge."

## Errant cops beware

### Says DMP chief, awards 33 cops for role in recent fire

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

"If one or two policemen commit any offence, crime, or make a mistake, the Dhaka Metropolitan Police will not take responsibility," said DMP Commissioner Khandker Golam Faruq yesterday.

He made the remarks while addressing an award-giving ceremony in recognition of the police's humanitarian work in the fire incident at the Dhaka New Super Market as chief guest at Rajarbagh Police Lines.

A total of 33 policemen were awarded yesterday by the DMP chief.

He said nobody in uniform should do any work that will dishonour the force of 32,000 members.

"The government gave me a uniform and dignity. I will not let that dignity be lost in any way," said the commissioner.

The DMP boss also said the humanitarian work that the police have done in the New Market fire incident is nothing new.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1

### PRAYER TIMING

MAY 3

Fazr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib	Esha
AZAN 4-15	12-45	4-45	6-31	8-00
JAMAAT 4-50	1-15	5-00	6-35	8-30

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

# The Daily Star is HIRING

Take a front row seat to history. Report the news and edit stories of our time!

**YOU WOULD NEED TO HAVE**

- ✔ Commitment to seeking the truth
- ✔ Honesty and courage to work without fear or favour
- ✔ An interest in events, issues and, most of all, people of all kinds
- ✔ Critical thinking, attention to accuracy and fairness
- ✔ Relevant skills and experience of at least two years
- ✔ Ability to work as a team

NEWS

BUSINESS

COPY EDITOR COPY EDITOR  
REPORTER REPORTER



**APPRENTICESHIP**  
We welcome university students who have the heart for journalism to apply for a few apprenticeships on offer

If you're the right person, email your resume and a statement about the position you're interested in and why you would like to work for The Daily Star to [career@thedailystar.net](mailto:career@thedailystar.net) by May 12, 2023.



NICVD resumes surgeries

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The authorities of National Institute of Cardiovascular Disease and Hospital (NICVD) resumed cardiac surgeries yesterday, which was halted since April 19 for failure of the air-conditioning system at the intensive care units.

On the first day, surgeons conducted surgeries on three patients, said a press release signed by Prof Dr Mir Jamal Uddin, director of the hospital.

"The schedule cardiac surgeries were suspended during the Eid vacation (April 19-23) to disinfect the operating theatre and the ICU," read the press release.

The surgeries, however, could not be resumed from April 24 due to the technical failure of the air conditioning system, said the press release.

Errant cops

FROM PAGE 3  
"What DMP members have done cannot be recognised by merely awarding them. It is only a recognition of their good work that comes with a message," he added.

AKM Hafiz Akther, additional commissioner (admin) of DMP, and Khandker Mahid Uddin, additional commissioner (crime and ops) of DMP also addressed the ceremony.



The capital was back to its usual form yesterday, with traffic congestions a common feature across the city. This photo was taken in Bijoy Sarani area yesterday morning.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

More trees felled

FROM PAGE 3  
medians from in front of Abahani playground to Sankar are counting their last minutes.

"We used to get shade from the trees during the scorching summer heat. Now, we are being deprived of these facilities," said Md Dukhu Mian, a security guard of a private company near the road.

Mohammad Alamin, a tea stall owner, said there were banyan trees, Nim trees, plum (Borai) trees and many other kinds of trees on the median, which currently stands empty.

Terming the move immature, Adil Mohammad Khan, former general

secretary of Bangladesh Institute of Planners, said such activities will reduce the remaining greeneries in Dhaka.

"The development of the median could have been done by protecting all the trees. The condition of the medians was fit for the purpose," he said.

DSCC did not discuss it with professionals, neither did they care about public opinion before going ahead with this move. Public participation and professional engagement are two very necessary factors before deciding on such issues. Beautification can never translate to getting rid of trees, he added.

"The authority's attitude in this regard is as if trees were never needed in the first place and only nice buildings would be enough for us," said Abu Naser Khan, chairman of Save The Environment Movement.

DSCC chief engineer Saleh Ahmed said the city corporation plans to replace the felled trees with trees of higher quality in those places.

"The geometric dimension of the space requires that we double the size of the medians. In our plan, we have kept designated spaces to plant new trees on these medians," he added.

Quamrul Islam passes away

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Quamrul Islam Chowdhury, former general secretary of Jatiya Press Club, passed away last night at Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University Hospital. He was 63.

Quamrul, former news editor of Bangladesh Sangbad Sangstha, had been suffering from liver, kidney and lung ailments for a long time.

He left behind his wife, a son and a daughter. Quamrul, also former chairman of Forum of Environmental Journalists of Bangladesh, obtained his graduation and post-graduation degrees from Dhaka University.

Sharifuzzaman Pintu, acting editor of Dainik Bangla, said Quamrul played an important role as a negotiator on climate-related issues on behalf of the government and private organisations. He served as the lead climate negotiator for the UN least developed countries (LDCs) group since 1990, he said.

Among others, Jatiya Press Club President Farida Yasmin and General Secretary Shyamal Dutta, Prime Minister's Press Secretary Ihsanul Karim and Managing Director and Chief Editor of BSS Abul Kalam Azad expressed grief at his death.

Ensure press

FROM PAGE 3  
role as the fourth pillar of the state.

"Unfortunately, the number of media houses has increased phenomenally but the practice of free and bold journalism has reduced proportionately," observed Ittekkharuzzaman.

"The degradation of Bangladesh in the World Press Freedom Day 2022 Index proves how alarmingly press freedom has decreased in our country. According to this reliable research, journalists are made accused in one in every four DSA cases," he said.

TIB believes that the lack of exemplary punishment for the attack on journalists and the fear of DSA have created a fearful environment, entrapping media workers in self-censorship. TIB urged the government, media owners and stakeholders to ensure risk allowance for journalists, along with regular salary, health security and an amicable environment to work freely.

10 hurt

FROM PAGE 5  
MP Shimul said, "District Chhatra League president Farhad bin Aziz started the clash. But nothing serious happened. We have resolved the matter in the presence of the former cabinet secretary."

Farhad bin Aziz said, "When we sat down, the MP's people tried to create a chaotic situation. I told them to sit instead of creating chaos. Then they threw a chair at me." Natore Sadar Police Station OC Nasim Ahmed said they are looking into the incident.

Three

FROM PAGE 5  
succumbed to their injuries early yesterday at Sirajganj General Hospital, said police. The ambulance carrying the patient was going to Dhaka from Bogura.

In Jashore, a father and his 17-year-old son were among three people killed as two motorcycles collided head-on in Keshabpur upazila on Monday night.

The deceased are Jahangir Jawaddar, 40, of Khulna's Dumuria upazila, his son Mostain Jawaddar, and Golam Mostafa, 22.

Fewer road crashes

FROM PAGE 5  
prices and bus fare.

He, however, said like in previous years, road crashes involving bikes were the highest in number. At least 167 people were killed and 120 were injured in 165 bike-related accidents, which were 54.3 percent of total accidents and 51 percent of the total deaths.

"Accidents involving small vehicles often go unreported in the media. So the exact figure could be much higher," he said.

Meanwhile, Road Safety Foundation said at least 285 people were killed and 454 were injured in 240 road crashes in 14 days (April 16 to 29) during the Eid rush.

It said 376 people were killed in 283 road crashes in the same period last year, meaning the number of road crashes and related deaths came down by 15.19 percent and 24.20 percent respectively.

The organisation also said 133 people were killed in 127 bike-related

crashes during this time, which were 52.91 percent and 46.66 percent of the total deaths and accidents respectively.

Both organisations cited faulty vehicles, reckless driving, unskilled drivers, operation of a huge number of bikes on highways as the reasons behind the road crashes. They recommended steps to upskill drivers, halt the collection of ransom on the highways and proper implementation of Road Transport Act-2018.

Career Opportunity

TM Textiles & Garments limited is inviting application from suitable candidate for an Expatriate "Manager Sewing" for company's Garments Division, Located at Kashor, Habirban Union Bhuluka, Mymensingh, Bangladesh having the following conditions:

Table with 4 columns: Position & Post, Education, Experience & Age, Responsibility. Details include Manager Sewing (01), Graduate, 5-7 years in Garments production & Quality, and overall management responsibilities.

Salary & Other Benefits: Negotiable. Interested applicants are requested to send their CV by mail to hr@tmtgbd.com or by post to Admin & HR Department, TM Textiles & Garments Limited, House # 541/3 (4th Floor) Rd # 12 DOHS, Baridhara, Dhaka-1206, Bangladesh within 5 days from the date of advertisement.

RFP Ref. No.: LRPS-BAN-2023-9182425

Request for Proposal (RFP): To establish Long Term Arrangement (LTA) for identification and deployment of individual contractors as required by UNICEF programs and operations for 2 + 1 years.

UNICEF Bangladesh is inviting interested companies with a strong record and credibility of providing the above-required service. To receive the detailed scope of work and procedure to submit the bid response, please email to supplybangladesh@unicef.org

The deadline to submit the proposal is Wednesday, 31 May 2023; Time: 11:00 Hrs.

Please note UNICEF does not charge any fee at any stage of the solicitation process.

www.unicef.org/bangladesh



Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

Office of the Director  
Central Cattle Breeding & Dairy Farm  
Savar, Dhaka  
Phone No. 02-224426010, E-mail: directorsavardairy@gmail.com

e-Tender Notice

Ref. No. 33.01.0000.301.07.001 (9th)-22-743 Date: 02-05-2023  
This is an online tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-Tender, registration in the e-GP Portal (http://www.eprocure.gov.bd) is required.

Table with 5 columns: Tender ID and Reference No., Package No., Name of scheme, Last selling date and time, Closing & opening date and time. Includes details for Wheat Bran, Molasses and Rice Straw under Central Cattle Breeding & Dairy Farm, Savar, Dhaka.

The fees for downloading the e-Tender documents from the National e-GP Portal have to be deposited online through any registered bank's branches. Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP Portal and from e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).

Dr. Md. Monirul Islam  
Director  
Central Cattle Breeding & Dairy Farm  
Savar, Dhaka

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

Office of the Livestock Officer  
Govt. Goat Development Farm, Sylhet  
Department of Livestock Services (DLS)  
Ministry of Fisheries and Livestock  
Phone: 0821-760867  
www.dls.gov.bd

Dated: 02/05/2023

e-Tender Notice

This is an online tender where only e-tender will be accepted in the national e-GP portal and no hard copy will be accepted. Further information and guidelines are available in the national e-GP portal from e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).

Table with 5 columns: SL no, Tender ID and Ref. no., Name of Tender, Last Selling Date and Time, Closing Date and Time. Includes details for Wheat Bran, Gram, Soyabean Meal and Vitamin Minerals Feed Premix (DB) and Khashari Bran, Maize, Di-Calcium Phosphate and Salt (Iodine Mix) under Government Goat Development Farm, Tilagar, Sylhet.

Dr. Mohammad Shahidul Islam  
Livestock Officer (Add. Charge)  
Govt. Goat Development Farm, Sylhet  
Telephone: 0821-760867  
e-mail address: logfsylhet@gmail.com

Advertisement for Bangladesh Mujibvada Kalyan Trust, featuring a table with details about a memorial event for Syed Tanweer Murshed.

Memorial advertisement for Syed Tanweer Murshed (1938-1988), including a photo and text: 'Loving father, devoted husband. Always in our thoughts and prayers. May Allah grant him maghfirat and eternal peace. Ameen. Yasmeen, Maher and Madiha Murshed'.

Large advertisement for North South University (NSU) Career Opportunity. Includes university logo, 'Center of Excellence in Higher Education', and detailed job description for a Corporate Relation Officer for Career and Placement Center: 1 (one) position. Lists job overview, description, academic qualifications, experience, and pay scale.





The mangled remains of a bus and an ambulance after they collided head-on in Sirajganj on Monday evening. Four people -- including three of a family -- were killed in the accident. Inset, demanding safe road, people from all walks of life brought out a rally in Tangail's Dhanbari area yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

## Three of a family among 7 killed in road accidents

STAR REPORT

At least seven people were killed in road accidents in two districts on Monday.

Four people -- including three of a family carrying a patient -- were killed as an ambulance and a bus collided head-on in Sirajganj on Monday evening, reports our Pabna correspondent.

The accident happened about 7:00pm on Dhaka-Bogura highway in Kalikapur Jora Bridge area, said OC Bodrul Kabir of Hatikumrul Highway Police Station.

Police caught the bus but its driver managed to flee.

Lalu Miah, 35, the ambulance driver, died on the spot and Md Moshir Rahman, 40, Abdul Baten, 35, and Ranu Akter, 22, of the same family from Panchagarh

SEE PAGE 4 COL 5

## 10 hurt as two AL factions clash in Natore

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Natore

At least 10 people were injured in a clash between two factions of Awami League over establishing dominance in Natore yesterday.

The clash took place during a meeting at the office of the district AL.

Former cabinet secretary Kabir bin Anwar and local lawmaker Shafiqul Islam Shimul were present at the meeting. At one stage, a clash broke out between the supporters of the lawmaker and district AL general secretary Shariful Islam Ramzan.

At least 10 people were injured in the incident. Later, police rushed in and brought the situation under control.

Shariful Islam told The Daily Star, "The district Chhatra League president and other leaders were also present at the meeting. MP Shimul's supporters attacked them."

SEE PAGE 4 COL 5

## Fewer road crashes, deaths this year

Claim two road safety organisations based on media reports during Eid rush

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Two non-government organisations working on road safety issues yesterday said the number of road crashes and deaths during this year's Eid rush was lower than last year.

Better road situation, relatively long vacations, the authority's strong monitoring and relatively a lower number of home-goers were reasons behind the lower numbers of crashes and casualties, they said.

Although allowing bikes to operate on the highways and even on the Padma Bridge made many people's Eid journey smoother, the highest number of accidents were bike-related ones, they said.

Bangladesh Jatri Kalyan Samity and Road Safety Foundation yesterday revealed the information at a press conference at Bangladesh Shishu Kalyan Parishad auditorium, while the Foundation issued a press release. Both organisations complied with the data following media reports.

According to Jatri Kalyan Samity, at least 328 people were killed and 565 injured in 304 road accidents in 15 days (from April 15 to 29) during the Eid rush.

The number of road crashes and related deaths during this year's Eid was 18.2 percent and 21.1 percent lower respectively than in the same period last year, said the Samity.

At least 418 people died and 844 suffered injuries in 372 accidents in 15 days of the Eid journey last year.

While reading the data, Mozammel Hoque Chowdhury, secretary general of the organisation, said they estimated that the number of people leaving Dhaka was lowered by around 30 percent this year due to the heatwave, rise in essentials

SEE PAGE 4 COL 6

## 'We want safe roads, justice'

OUR CORRESPONDENT,

Tangail

People from all walks of life at Dhanbari in Tangail yesterday demanded road safety and trial of those responsible for the death of four people, including two schoolgirls, in a road accident three days ago.

On Sunday, the accident occurred on the Tangail-Jabalpur highway in Baghil area when a bus ran over a battery-run easy bike and an auto-rickshaw van.

This left the easy bike driver and one passenger of the rickshaw van dead on the spot.

Four students of Bhaighat High School were also injured in the road accident.

Yesterday, the protestors brought out separate processions.

They later formed a one-kilometre long human chain on the highway at Baghil for one hour, which resulted in a suspension of all vehicular movements.

## গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার

সমাজসেবা অধিদফতর

জেলা সমাজসেবা কার্যালয়, ঠাকুরগাঁও

www.dss.thakurgaon.gov.bd

### দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি

১	মন্ত্রণালয়/বিভাগ	:	সমাজকল্যাণ মন্ত্রণালয়
২	এজেন্সি	:	সমাজসেবা অধিদফতর, ঢাকা।
৩	সংগ্রাহক সত্ত্বার নাম	:	উপতত্ত্বাবধায়ক, সরকারি শিশু পরিবার (বালিকা), ঠাকুরগাঁও উপতত্ত্বাবধায়ক, শব্দলহাট ফজিলাতুননেছা সরকারি শিশু পরিবার (বালক), ঠাকুরগাঁও রিসোর্স শিক্ষক, সমন্বিত দৃষ্টি প্রতিবন্ধী শিক্ষা কার্যক্রম, ঠাকুরগাঁও
৪	সংগ্রাহক সত্ত্বার জেলা	:	ঠাকুরগাঁও।
৫	যে কাজের দরপত্র	:	২০২৩-২০২৪ অর্থ বছরে সমাজসেবা অধিদফতর পরিচালিত সরকারি শিশু পরিবার (বালিকা), ও শব্দলহাট ফজিলাতুননেছা সরকারি শিশু পরিবার (বালক), এবং সমন্বিত দৃষ্টি প্রতিবন্ধী শিক্ষা কার্যক্রম, ঠাকুরগাঁও এর নিবাসীদের ক, খ, ঘ ও ঙ গ্রুপ বিবিধ মালামাল সরবরাহ।
৬	দরপত্র নম্বর ও তারিখ	:	নম্বরঃ ৪১.০১.৯৪০০.০০০.১৮.০০৮.২৩.৩৮৬ তারিখঃ ০২/০৫/২০২৩খ্রিঃ
৭	দরপত্র প্রচারের তারিখ	:	০৩/০৫/২০২৩ খ্রিঃ
৮	সংগ্রহ পদ্ধতি	:	উন্মুক্ত দরপত্র পদ্ধতি (ওটিএম)
৯	বাজেট এবং তহবিল উৎস	:	রাজস্ব বাজেট, জিওবি
১০	দরপত্রের প্যাকেজ নং	:	ক-২টি, খ-২টি, ঘ-১টি ও ঙ-৩টি = মোট ৮ (আট)টি।
১১	দরপত্রের প্যাকেজ নাম	:	২০২৩-২০২৪ অর্থ বছরে সমাজসেবা অধিদফতর পরিচালিত সরকারি শিশু পরিবার (বালিকা), ঠাকুরগাঁও ও শব্দলহাট ফজিলাতুননেছা সরকারি শিশু পরিবার (বালক), ঠাকুরগাঁও এবং সমন্বিত দৃষ্টি প্রতিবন্ধী শিক্ষা কার্যক্রম, ঠাকুরগাঁও এর নিবাসীদের ক, খ, ঘ ও ঙ গ্রুপ বিবিধ মালামাল সরবরাহ।
১২	দরপত্র সিডিউল বিক্রির শেষ তারিখ	:	১৭/০৫/২০২৩খ্রিঃ বিকল ৫টা পর্যন্ত।
১৩	দরপত্র দাখিলের তারিখ ও সময়	:	১৮/০৫/২০২৩খ্রিঃ সকাল ১০:০০টা হতে দুপুর ১২:০০টা পর্যন্ত।
১৪	দরপত্র উন্মুক্তকরণের তারিখ ও সময়	:	১৮/০৫/২০২৩খ্রিঃ দুপুর ২:০০টা দরদাতা বা তার মনোনীত প্রতিনিধির উপস্থিতিতে খোলা হবে (যদি কেহ উপস্থিত থাকেন)।
১৫	কার্যালয়ের নাম ও ঠিকানাঃ (ক) মূল দরপত্র দলিল বিক্রয় (খ) দরপত্র দলিল গ্রহণ (গ) দরপত্র দলিল উন্মুক্তকরণ	:	সংশ্লিষ্ট প্রতিষ্ঠান ও জেলা সমাজসেবা কার্যালয়, ঠাকুরগাঁও। উপপরিচালক, জেলা সমাজসেবা কার্যালয়, ঠাকুরগাঁও এবং জেলা প্রশাসকের কার্যালয়, ঠাকুরগাঁও। জেলা প্রশাসকের কার্যালয়, ঠাকুরগাঁও।
১৬	দরদাতার যোগ্যতা	:	(১) বৈধ সরবরাহকারী প্রতিষ্ঠান। (২) সিডিউল ক্রয়ের ট্রেজারি চালানের মূলকপি, দরপত্র দলিল অনুসারে অভিজ্ঞতার সনদপত্র, ব্যাংক স্বাক্ষরতার সনদ (ব্যাংক স্টেটমেন্টসহ), হালনাগাদ (ট্রেড লাইসেন্স, আয়কর সনদ এবং ভ্যাট প্রদান সনদ) সহ প্রয়োজনীয় অন্যান্য দলিলসমূহ টেন্ডার ডকুমেন্টে উল্লেখিত) দাখিল করতে হবে।
১৭	দরপত্র সিডিউলের মূল্য	:	দরপত্র সিডিউলের মূল্য ট্রেজারি চালান এর মাধ্যমে কোড: ১-২৯৩১-০০০০-২৩৬৬ তে (অফেরতযোগ্য) জমা দিতে হবে।

গ্রুপ	সংক্ষিপ্ত বিবরণ	সিডিউল মূল্য	দরপত্র জামানতের পরিমাণ	মন্তব্য
ক	খাদ্য ও খাদ্যানুসঙ্গিক (পচনশীল ও অপচনশীল)	৭০০/- (সাতশত) টাকা	৭২০০০/- (বাহাওর হাজার) টাকা	শিশু পরিবারের জন্য
খ	শিক্ষা, স্বাস্থ্য, প্রশাসনিক ও অন্যান্য	৫০০/- (পাঁচশত) টাকা	২৫০০০/- (পঁচিশ হাজার) টাকা	শিশু পরিবারের জন্য
ঘ	খাদ্য ও খাদ্যানুসঙ্গিক (পচনশীল ও অপচনশীল) সমন্বিত দৃষ্টি প্রতিবন্ধী শিক্ষা কার্যক্রম এর জন্য	৩০০/- (তিনশত) টাকা	১২০০০/- (বারো হাজার) টাকা	সমন্বিত দৃষ্টি প্রতিবন্ধী শিক্ষা কার্যক্রম এর জন্য
ঙ	বিবিধ মালামাল (শিশু পরিবার)	৫০০/- (পাঁচশত) টাকা	৫০০০০/- (পঞ্চাশ হাজার) টাকা	শিশু পরিবারের জন্য
চ	বিবিধ মালামাল (সমন্বিত দৃষ্টি)	৫০০/- (পাঁচশত) টাকা	৭০০০/- (সাত হাজার) টাকা	সমন্বিত দৃষ্টি প্রতিবন্ধী শিক্ষা কার্যক্রম এর জন্য
১৮	দরপত্র আহবানকারী কর্মকর্তার নাম	মোঃ মাহবুবুর রহমান		
১৯	দরপত্র আহবানকারী কর্মকর্তার পদবী	জেলা প্রশাসক, ঠাকুরগাঁও		
২০	দরপত্র আহবানকারী কর্মকর্তার ঠিকানা	জেলা প্রশাসকের কার্যালয়, ঠাকুরগাঁও		
২১	দরপত্র আহবানকারী কর্মকর্তার সাথে যোগাযোগের নম্বর	০২৫৮৯৯৩১০১১		

শর্তাবলীঃ

- (ক) পিপিএ-২০০৬ এবং পিপিআর- (সংশোধিত) এ প্রদত্ত ক্রয় সংক্রান্ত পদ্ধতি যথাযথভাবে অনুসরণ করা হবে।  
(খ) 'ঙ' গ্রুপের ক্ষেত্রে বরাদ্দ প্রাপ্তি সাপেক্ষে কার্যাদেশ প্রদান করা হবে।  
(গ) কর্তৃপক্ষ কারণ দর্শানো ব্যতিরেকে যে কোন দরপত্র গ্রহণ অথবা সকল দরপত্র বাতিলের ক্ষমতা সংরক্ষণ করেন।  
(ঘ) দরপত্র দাখিলের শেষ তারিখ ও সময় পর্যন্ত দরপত্র দাখিল করা যাবে।  
(ঙ) বিশেষ নির্দেশনাঃ বিস্তারিত তথ্য দরপত্র ডকুমেন্টে বর্ণিত আছে।

জেলা প্রশাসক  
ঠাকুরগাঁও

জিডি-৭৬০

## Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

Office of the Executive Engineer  
Barisal PWD Division, Barishal  
www.pwd.barisal.gov.bd

Memo. ৩৫০১/২

Dated: 30/04/2023

e-Tender is invited in the National e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) for the Procurement of following works given below:

Sl. No.	Tender ID	Invitation Reference No.	Name of works	Tender closing date & time
1	818859	PWD/Bari/SBMC/Memo-04/30-01-23/SI-2/22-23	Repair & renovation different room of 1st, 2nd, 3rd & 4th floor of front block of Female Student Hostel Adjacent of Sher-E-Bangla Medical College at Barishal.	10-05-2023 12:15

This is an online tender, where only e-Tenders will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted.

To submit e-Tender, registration in the National e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) is required. Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal and from e-GP help desk (Email: [helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd](mailto:helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd)).

Md. Kamrul Hassan  
Executive Engineer  
PWD Division, Barishal  
Tel: 02478864915  
E-mail: ee\_bari@pwd.gov.bd

GD-763



## Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh Bangladesh Police Police Headquarters, Dhaka.

### e-GP Tender Notice

Memo No.44.01.0000.024.01.003.2022/540

Date: 02 May 2023

This is an online Tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-Tender, please register on e-GP Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>).

Sl. No.	Tender ID/ Tender Ref.	Name of Goods	Publish date & time	Closing & opening Date & Time
1	Tender ID-826315 44.01.0000.024.01.003.2022-02	Purchase of Double Cabin Pickup	03 May 2023 11:00	01 June 2023 12:30

e-Tender detail can be downloaded from 03 May 2023 to 1 June 2023 on e-GP Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) for pursue.

(Sarwar Murshed Shamim, BPM)  
BP 7401020793  
Addl. DIG (Transport)  
Bangladesh Police  
Police Headquarters, Dhaka  
Phone: +88029564779, Fax: +88029575663  
Email: addldigtrans@police.gov.bd

GD-766



# I became numb when I signed my first Vinyl record: Mehreen

RAKSHANDA RAHMAN MISHA

From *Anari* to *Rajkumar*, Mehreen isn't your quintessential artiste. Her deep, soothing voice, as well as her presentation, has always awed listeners. Recently, the singer launched her Vinyl album *Bondhuta* which is the first LP (Long Play) to be produced in Bangladesh after 40 years. Initially, the Vinyl will be available in two outlets- Noise and Analogue Beat. The limited edition LP has been priced BDT 4000.

**Tell us about your Vinyl album 'Bondhuta' and how did you come up with it?**

I wasn't the one who came up with the Vinyl idea, it was RTV's Managing Director Humayun Kabir Bablu who came up with this unique idea. Bablu bhai was thinking of producing records of old bands and I was really happy that I was the first to have her own Vinyl album. My album *Bondhuta* was probably released around 2017, but I never got to properly launch it. He called me in America two years ago, and told me that that he wants to make a Vinyl record out of it. Bablu bhai worked hard to ensure that high-end record covers were used to make it adhere to International standards. I was just numb when I was signing the LP, and I couldn't believe I was holding the actual record as it came from London on April 29, **How do you think Jazz and pop genres influenced your music?** *Anari* was more disco-pop. I went on



to do rock pop, melo-pop, and then world pop-jazz. Actually, it all depends on my voice quality and its texture. I am really thankful that I worked with unique musicians who know that they can experiment with my voice. I have a unique vocal but I am not that innovative -- so I chose people who know how to bring out my best. I am a non-commercial singer who doesn't do her work for the sake of money, it has to be interesting for me.

**You have been missing from the music industry for some time.**

I work in intervals. My debut album *Anari* was released in 2000, after that album I had my first baby and so I had to take some time off. And then after 2002, I began work, and from there onwards I released an album in 2004, and 2006. It takes me a long time to produce my album because of the phase of music. If you would look at the likes of Fuad and Manam Ahmed, they are genius, but they haven't produced thousands of songs. It just goes on to show that creativity takes time. **What was your biggest hurdle in the industry?** I am a music labourer -I have gone from cassettes to CD, from CD to MP3, and from MP3 to pendrive, and now to LP. While the LP is incredible for

me, YouTube is certainly my future. However, my biggest hurdle was to accept my voice, now my voice is pretty common. Nowadays, most of the artistes who are coming to the industry have a heavy voice like mine. It was really hard to get the right sound engineer for my voice

during my initial stint. **You have been seen in lots of musical programmes this Eid. Do you have any memorable incidents from those shows?**

I had a wonderful time shooting with my band in the live music programme for Maasranga. This was their sole in-house programme for Eid, and I had a great time shooting for it. I requested AR Rahman in his email asking whether he would be interested to convey his Eid greetings to Bangladesh and he replied within 10 minutes. This was really special for me.



PHOTOS: COLLECTED



## 'Hotath Daekha' album launched for Nazrul-Rabindra birth anniversary

With a combination of Kazi Nazrul Islam's and Rabindranath Tagore's songs, Srabani Sen's and Shusmita Anis's new album was launched yesterday. Titled *Hotath Daekha*, the album's music has been arranged by renowned singer and music director, Bappa Mazumder. The *Hotath Daekha* album is thematically organised in four different genres-love, seasonal, devotional and motivational songs. The whole project is initiated and conceptualised by artiste Shusmita Anis, bringing together artistes and professionals of the two Bengals. The album is available for streaming on Shusmita Anis's YouTube channel.



## Shakib Khan's 'Leader' still going houseful

The Shakib Khan and Bubby starrer, *Leader Amie Bangladesh* has been performing well in Madhumita Cinema Hall, even 10 days after its release. The 6 pm screenings of the film even went houseful on Monday. Apart from this cinema hall, the film has also gone houseful in multiple theatres including Bashundhara City Star Cineplex and Sony Star Cineplex, among others. After releasing in 100 theatres across the country on Eid, *Leader Amie Bangladesh* is reigning in its second week, as it keeps on adding more halls to its list. The film is on top of all the other Eid releases.

# COUNTRYWIDE

## A govt pry school that has no students

S DILIP ROY

It is hard to believe that a government primary school, built in the middle of croplands, in Kurigram Sadar upazila is running without students.

Surprisingly, although the institution has five teachers, including the headmaster, no students are virtually present at the school.

Teachers, however, claimed that this year 80 students are enrolled at the school, but none of them were seen attending classes.

Established in 2004, Uttar Majherchar Adarsha Government Primary School, located at Krishnapur village in Mogolbasa union, was nationalised in 2018.

While visiting the institution on two separate working days a couple of weeks ago this correspondent found all the classrooms empty.

Meanwhile, three assistant teachers Mahasina Begum Anju, Sabina Yasmin and Ashrafi Binte Akhtar were seen loitering at the schoolground.

Teachers said another assistant teacher Afa Sultana was on leave and headmaster Altaf Hossain left for the upazila education office for urgent purpose.

Assistant teacher Sabina Yasmin said

although a number of students from the nearby areas took admission at the school, none of them come to school regularly.

Another assistant teacher Ashrafi Binte Akhtar said they have a few students because there are several other schools and madrasas in the surrounding areas.

Teacher Mahasina Begum said as the school is situated in the middle of croplands, many parents are unwilling to send their children at the institution.

One of the local residents Abdus Sattar said though the teachers of the institution together receive a handsome amount from the government every month, they have never seen any students at the school premises.

The upazila education office is well aware of the matter, but no step has been taken in this regard yet, he said.

Contacted, Headmaster Altaf Hussain said due to river erosion the school was temporarily shifted to another place in 2011.

However, the institution has been facing shortage of students since it was brought back to its previous location in September last year, he added.

Kurigram Sadar Upazila Education Officer Lutfar Rahman said he was not aware of the matter.



Believe it or not, this government primary school, built in the middle of croplands in Kurigram Sadar upazila, is running without students. PHOTO: STAR

## Go tough

FROM PAGE 12

ACC lawyer Khurshid Alam Khan told the court that the directives will be implemented.

"All the stakeholders, including the government, civil society, media and judiciary, have to work together. The judiciary and government alone cannot do it. All the people must have patriotism and abide by the rule of law.

"Our prime minister has cited a zero tolerance policy against corruption, which must be followed," Justice Nazrul Islam Talukder said, adding that the media and journalists can play the role of graft watchdogs.

He said that anyone who joins a service must first abide by the system and rules, and be transparent and accountable about the positions.

Justice Nazrul further said Bangabandhu said he would take drastic action if he receives any allegation of corruption in any manner, and fair and honest people are needed to build a golden Bangladesh.

The HC ordered the education secretary and director general of the National Archives to submit the speeches, lectures and directives of Bangabandhu, including available audios and videos, regarding the prevention of corruption and money laundering, before the court by June 4.

The HC directed the ACC to keep Bangabandhu's speeches, lectures and directives in mind when dealing with graft and money laundering.

The court also asked the respondents to explain why they should not be directed to include Bangabandhu's speeches, lectures and directives in the syllabuses of government and private academic institutions, including schools, colleges, universities and training institutes, and what steps have been taken in this regard.

## Repeal DSA

FROM PAGE 1

"Five years on we are forced to draw the conclusion that whatever their purpose [to formulate the law] was, it has been used against free journalism.

"Thus today we have no alternative but to demand its repeal," he added.

The discussion titled "Freedom of Expression is the Driver of All Human Rights" was organised by The Editors' Council (Shampadak Parishad) at the capital's Jatiya Press Club.

Addressing the discussion as special guest, Hasanul Haq Inu, chairperson of the parliamentary standing committee on Information and Broadcast Ministry, said the DSA should be reviewed and necessary amendments made to make it more press-friendly.

He called upon the government to take prompt steps in this regard.

Inu said as long as the law is not amended, filing cases under it should be based on prior approval of the home minister.

He, however, also stated that there is a need for a law in the country to fight cybercrime.

New Age Editor Nurul Kabir said the DSA has largely been used against political opponents and those who want to express their opinion freely and write about the country's declining democracy and overall deteriorating situation on human rights.

Daily Samakal Editor Mozammel Hossain said the government points to the proliferation of newspapers as a sign of press freedom, but that this is a fallacy.

"If the number of media houses is the yardstick, then the locust would have been the strongest creature on earth," he said.

Daily Ittefaq Editor Tasmima Hossain said that there is a culture of fear and

even editors are a victim of it.

"There is a history of those in power taking steps that repress free media," she said. She recalled the role of legendary editor, Tofazzal Hossain Manik Mia and how he fought all sorts of oppressive steps against Ittefaq during Pakistani rule.

Senior journalist Monjurul Ahsan Bulbul said that they had told the government to remove the vagueness of certain clauses of the law several times.

"On one hand, most of the media is controlled by a select few, shrinking the space for a plurality of voices. On the other, a plethora of laws and regulations are working to restrict the media," said Bulbul.

Prothom Alo Managing Editor Anisul Hoque commented that there cannot be any terms and conditions for freedom of expression. "The American constitution states that no law can be made that hinders freedom of expression. The constitution of Bangladesh allows for certain exceptions, which parties interpret to suit their own needs," he said. This duplicity must end.

The Financial Express Editor Shamsul Haq Zahid pointed out that although the law minister had promised several times that the DSA will be amended, it has not been done yet.

He urged journalists to be united and to fight for this common cause.

Desh Rupantor Acting Editor Mustafa Mamun said, "The space for freedom of expression is so narrow that we cannot even say that we are being censored."

He said that as a result, the mainstream media in Bangladesh is losing "credibility and acceptance".

Mahfuz Anam concluded the session by placing a set

of five demands, which we publish in full.

1. Stop further enacting all anti-free media laws now in draft forms. Hold talks with all stakeholders, especially representatives of journalists and media institutions, before moving forward with these draft laws.

2. Amend all existing laws that affect the functioning of the media and remove all anti-free media provisions in them.

3. Repeal Digital Security Act (DSA) or amend it in such a manner that it focuses only on clearly defined cybercrimes and does not in any way hamper the operation of free media or freedom of expression. Suspend operation of DSA till it is either repealed or amended.

4. Withdraw all cases against journalists filed under DSA.

5. Enact laws that support and nurture the growth of free media and remove the current environment of fear and intimidation.

Dewan Hanif Mahmud, general secretary of the parishad and editor of Bonik Barta, moderated the discussion, and said the World Press Freedom Day reminds every government across the globe about their commitments towards free press.

Patel, however, said as it relates to elections, they want elections to be free and fair and to be reflective of the will of the Bangladeshi people.

"I will say broadly, though, is that the U.S. and Bangladesh last year celebrated 50 years of diplomatic relations, and we look forward to continuing to deepen those relationships," he said at a regular media briefing at the state department.

Patel said Dhaka and Washington have a number of areas where they have the possibility for immense cooperation and engagement - whether that be climate change, economy, addressing the humanitarian crisis, or other things.

## Polls internal

FROM PAGE 12

Bangladesh, another party refuses to participate in a national election and may later claim to be an unfair and unjust election.

Patel, however, said as it relates to elections, they want elections to be free and fair and to be reflective of the will of the Bangladeshi people.

"I will say broadly, though, is that the U.S. and Bangladesh last year celebrated 50 years of diplomatic relations, and we look forward to continuing to deepen those relationships," he said at a regular media briefing at the state department.

Patel said Dhaka and Washington have a number of areas where they have the possibility for immense cooperation and engagement - whether that be climate change, economy, addressing the humanitarian crisis, or other things.

Patel said Dhaka and Washington have a number of areas where they have the possibility for immense cooperation and engagement - whether that be climate change, economy, addressing the humanitarian crisis, or other things.

Patel said Dhaka and Washington have a number of areas where they have the possibility for immense cooperation and engagement - whether that be climate change, economy, addressing the humanitarian crisis, or other things.

Patel said Dhaka and Washington have a number of areas where they have the possibility for immense cooperation and engagement - whether that be climate change, economy, addressing the humanitarian crisis, or other things.

Patel said Dhaka and Washington have a number of areas where they have the possibility for immense cooperation and engagement - whether that be climate change, economy, addressing the humanitarian crisis, or other things.

Patel said Dhaka and Washington have a number of areas where they have the possibility for immense cooperation and engagement - whether that be climate change, economy, addressing the humanitarian crisis, or other things.

Patel said Dhaka and Washington have a number of areas where they have the possibility for immense cooperation and engagement - whether that be climate change, economy, addressing the humanitarian crisis, or other things.

Patel said Dhaka and Washington have a number of areas where they have the possibility for immense cooperation and engagement - whether that be climate change, economy, addressing the humanitarian crisis, or other things.

Patel said Dhaka and Washington have a number of areas where they have the possibility for immense cooperation and engagement - whether that be climate change, economy, addressing the humanitarian crisis, or other things.

Patel said Dhaka and Washington have a number of areas where they have the possibility for immense cooperation and engagement - whether that be climate change, economy, addressing the humanitarian crisis, or other things.

Patel said Dhaka and Washington have a number of areas where they have the possibility for immense cooperation and engagement - whether that be climate change, economy, addressing the humanitarian crisis, or other things.

Patel said Dhaka and Washington have a number of areas where they have the possibility for immense cooperation and engagement - whether that be climate change, economy, addressing the humanitarian crisis, or other things.

Patel said Dhaka and Washington have a number of areas where they have the possibility for immense cooperation and engagement - whether that be climate change, economy, addressing the humanitarian crisis, or other things.

## Stalker stabs

FROM PAGE 1

yesterday afternoon, Kawser and his cohorts waylaid her, the OC said.

At one stage, he started stabbing the girl, leaving her critically injured.

Hearing Mukti's screams, locals rescued and took her to Barhatta Upazila Health Complex that referred her to Mymensingh Medical College Hospital.

She died on the way to the hospital around 5:00pm, said the OC.

The suspect is on the run.



## EASTERN UKRAINE

**100K Russian troops dead, hurt: US**

AGENCIES

More than 20,000 Russian troops have died and another 80,000 were wounded in five months of fighting in eastern Ukraine, particularly in Bakhmut, a White House official said Monday.

"We estimate that Russia has suffered more than 100,000 casualties, including over 20,000 killed in action," National Security Council spokesman John Kirby told reporters.

"Russia's attempt at an offensive in the Donbass, largely through Bakhmut, has failed... Russia has been unable to seize any really strategically significant territory," Kirby said.

Kirby, citing newly declassified US intelligence, said that about half of those killed were soldiers recruited by the private military company Wagner, reports AFP.

The toll from fighting -- with the most intense battle being for Bakhmut, where Ukrainian troops have been driven from all but a sliver of the city -- accounts for losses since the start of December.



A Palestinian kicks a burning tire during clashes between Palestinians and Israeli soldiers following the death of Palestinian prisoner Khader Adnan during a hunger strike in an Israeli jail, in Hebron in the Israeli-occupied West Bank yesterday. The Israeli military also traded fire with Gaza militants in a flare-up of violence following the death of Adnan. PHOTO: REUTERS

**TENSIONS WITH CHINA  
US, Philippines  
reaffirm 'ironclad'  
alliance**

REUTERS, Washington

President Joe Biden told his counterpart Ferdinand Marcos Jr. on Monday that the US commitment to the defense of its ally was "ironclad," including in the South China Sea where Manila is under pressure from China.

Marcos, on the first White House visit by a Philippines leader in 10 years, stressed the importance of the US as his country's sole treaty ally in a region with "arguably the most complicated geopolitical situation in the world right now."

The two countries reaffirmed their decades-old security alliance in a trip that marks a dramatic turnaround in US-Philippine relations as both countries seek ways to push back against what they see as China's increasingly aggressive actions near Taiwan and in South China Sea.

US officials said the leaders would agree new guidelines for stronger military cooperation. "The United States remains ironclad in our commitment to the defense of the Philippines, including the South China Sea," Biden told Marcos.

A joint statement said this meant that any armed attack on Philippine armed forces, public vessels or aircraft in Pacific, including in the South China Sea, would invoke US mutual defense commitments.

**Over 430,000 fled homes  
amid Sudan fighting  
Says UN; warring parties agree to 7-day truce**

AGENCIES

The fighting in Sudan has caused more than 330,000 people to flee their homes within the country, with over 100,000 others escaping over the borders, the United Nations said yesterday.

UNHCR, the UN's refugee agency, is estimating that more than 800,000 people could potentially flee to neighbouring countries as the conflict continues in Sudan between the army and a paramilitary group.

The UN's International Organization for Migration (IOM) said an estimated 334,000 people had been internally displaced by the fighting, which broke out on April 15.

"Over 100,000 refugees are estimated to be among those who have now fled Sudan to neighbouring countries, including Sudanese

refugees, South Sudanese returning home prematurely, and others who were themselves refugees in Sudan," UNHCR spokeswoman Olga Sarrado told reporters in Geneva.

The IOM said in a situation report that "the total estimate of displaced individuals across Sudan has reached 334,053", reports AFP.

"About 72 percent, roughly 240,000 of these new internal displacements were reported in West and South Darfur alone," spokesman Paul Dillon told reporters.

Meanwhile, warring factions agreed in principle to a seven-day ceasefire from Thursday, reports Reuters.

A statement released by the foreign ministry of South Sudan said its President Salva Kiir stressed the importance of a longer truce and of naming envoys to peace talks, to which both sides had agreed.

**Int'l police  
arrest 288 in  
dark web bust**

AFP, The Hague

A global crackdown has halted a major "dark web" marketplace, with international police arresting 288 suspects and recovering more than 50 million euros (\$54.8 million) in cash and virtual currency, Europol said yesterday.

The joint operation called SpecTor by US, British, Brazilian and European law enforcement also netted almost a tonne of drugs and 117 firearms. "A number of these suspects were considered high-value targets," Europol said.

**'Godfather of AI'  
quits Google****Warns of danger ahead**

AFP, Washington



A computer scientist often dubbed "the godfather of artificial intelligence" has quit his job at Google to speak out about the dangers of the technology, US media reported Monday. Geoffrey Hinton, who created a foundation technology for AI systems, told The New York Times that advancements made in the field posed "profound risks to society and humanity". "Look at how it was five years ago and how it is now," he was quoted as saying in the piece, which was published on Monday. "Take the difference and propagate it forwards. That's scary." Hinton said that competition between tech giants was pushing companies to release new AI technologies at dangerous speeds, risking jobs and spreading misinformation. "It is hard to see how you can prevent the bad actors from using it for bad things," he told the Times. In 2022, Google and OpenAI -- the start-up behind the popular AI chatbot ChatGPT -- started building systems using much larger amounts of data than before. Hinton told Times he believed that these systems were eclipsing human intelligence in some ways because of amount of data they were analysing.

**RELIGIOUS FREEDOM  
US panel again  
takes aim at India**

AFP, Washington

A US government panel renewed calls Monday to blacklist India over religious freedom, saying that treatment of minorities has continued to worsen under Prime Minister Narendra Modi. The US Commission on International Religious Freedom offers recommendations but does not set policy and there is little expectation that the State Department will accept its stance on India, a growing US partner. The State Department each year lists countries where it sees particular concern on religious freedom, with the prospect of sanctions without improvement. The independent commission, whose members are appointed by the president and congressional party leaders, supported all of the State Department's latest designations which included China, Iran, Myanmar, Pakistan, Russia and Saudi Arabia.



"Russia's position is well known - the deal was extended for two months. The terms of the deal that concern Russia's agricultural sector are not being fulfilled."

Kremlin spokesman  
Dmitry Peskov on Black Sea grain deal

**IBA** Institute of  
Business  
Administration

**ADMISSION TEST  
Executive MBA; Fall 2023 (Batch-38)****Criteria for Eligibility****Academic Qualifications:**

- Minimum 4 years of university education after HSC or equivalence (including bachelor's degree) in any discipline with a minimum CGPA of 2.50 out of 4.00 or 2nd class.
- Minimum GPA of 3.00 out of 5.00 (or 2nd division) in both SSC and HSC exams separately or minimum GPA of 2.00 in both O level and A level exams separately. For details, please visit our website.

**Job Experience:**

- Minimum five years of full-time work experience in executive/Grade-9 or above (in case of public sector employments) level after bachelor's degree.
- Applicants working in organizations that require permission to pursue higher studies must produce the same if selected for viva.

The written test will be held on **Friday, 26 May 2023 at 10:00 am at IBA, University of Dhaka**. The total duration of the written test is one hour. The test has two parts: i) Analytical Ability and ii) English Language & Communication. An applicant must obtain a minimum qualifying score in each of the above two parts to pass the written test and appear before an interview board.

An applicant with a foreign nationality and degree(s) having a valid GMAT score of minimum 75 percentiles may be exempted from the written test. However, s/he is required to appear before the interview board.

For all foreign certificates/degrees (excluding O and A Levels), equivalence will be determined by the Equivalence Committee of IBA. Without such equivalence, an applicant is not eligible to sit for the admission test.

An applicant with degree from UGC unapproved program of any university is not eligible to apply for the admission test.

The application fee is Tk. 4000. The application must be submitted online by **Tuesday, 23 May 2023**. For detailed application procedure, please visit:

[www.iba-du.edu](http://www.iba-du.edu) or <http://iba-emba.registrationbd.com>

**Classes of Executive MBA Program will take place during weekends i.e. on Fridays and Saturdays.**

For further information, please contact:  
Executive MBA Program Office, Room # 405 (3rd Floor)  
Institute of Business Administration  
University of Dhaka, Dhaka 1000  
Phone # 0241061218, Mobile # 01758171660

**Director**  
Institute of Business Administration

GD-758

**CAREER OPPORTUNITY**

**NORTH SOUTH UNIVERSITY**  
Center of Excellence in Higher Education

North South University (NSU), the first private university in Bangladesh, seeks applications from candidates with required qualifications and experiences for the following positions:

**Please read the full job description carefully to see if you have the skills, knowledge and experience that NSU are looking for. Only eligible candidates will be contacted by NSU for written examination and interview:**

**Research Associate for South Asian Institute of Policy and Governance (SIPG): 1 (one) position**

**Job Description:**

- Conduct research, data collection, analysis and report writing
- Project management and proposal writing
- Creation of online content
- Prepare presentations and reports as directed time to time
- Literature Review, conducting interviews, transcriptions and data coding
- Has to be good in design/graphics, website and social media account maintenance

**Academic Qualification:**

- Master's degree preferably from abroad in a relevant discipline such as Public Administration/ Political Science/Development Studies/ Economics/Sociology/ Statistics/Applied Statistics/Computer Science.

**Experience:** 2 to 3 years in a relevant field.

**Age:** Not exceeding 32 years.

**Pay Scale:** Tk. 25,383 - 2,538- 63,456 (as per NSU policy).

**Other Terms and Conditions:**

- Experience in research will be given preference.
- Excellent communication skills in both English and Bangla.
- Candidates having knowledge in different statistical software (e.g. R, Stata, SPSS and NVivo) will be given preference.
- Publications in reputed journals will be considered as an additional qualification.
- Experienced candidates will be given preference, but other candidates are also encouraged to apply.
- Have good interpersonal skills, team spirit and be able to work under pressure.
- Must be self-motivated and able to work independently.
- Willingness to work in holidays and after office-hours if necessary.
- Third division/ class/ equivalent CGPA of the candidates in any educational level will not be accepted.

**NSU reserves the right not to appoint anyone if suitable candidates are not found.**

**Any prior communication or persuasion to the position will be considered as a disqualification. Interested candidates are requested to apply through [jobs.northsouth.edu](http://jobs.northsouth.edu) by June 02, 2023.**

Department of Administration  
NORTH SOUTH UNIVERSITY  
Plot# 15, Block# B, Bashundhara, Dhaka - 1229  
NSU Job Portal: [jobs.northsouth.edu](http://jobs.northsouth.edu)



The Daily Star

FOUNDER EDITOR: LATE S. M. ALI

Press freedom is in peril

With it, the people's right to know and our democracy

For a country whose destiny till now has largely been shaped for the better by dissenting voices – oftentimes coming from within the more courageous sections of the independent press – it is extremely disheartening to have to come to terms with the decrepit state of press freedom today. According to Reporters Without Borders, Bangladesh ranked 162nd in the World Press Freedom Index last year – the lowest among all South Asian countries except for Myanmar – out of 180 countries. And if that wasn't terrifying enough, the rapidly worsening trajectory of Bangladesh's positioning in the rankings over the past years – 121 in 2019, 152 in 2021, followed by 162 in 2022 – should have caused a massive national outcry, followed by serious retrospection to find out how exactly we've gotten here. But unfortunately, what we have seen over the last year is the complete opposite of that.

There has been a lot of hostility displayed over the past year, particularly by government officials and ruling party affiliates, against the press. But that, perhaps, should not come as a big surprise, as it is the duty of the press to challenge power and to hold it to account – which naturally causes the powerful to push back. What has been shocking, however, is how openly that has been done and the tactics and pretences that have been used to shut down critical voices. What is further worrying is the complete lack of accountability for those who have broken the law – such as attacking or even murdering journalists – to prevent media workers from doing their jobs of informing the public.

As journalists, human rights defenders and even the general public have repeatedly pointed out, the Digital Security Act (DSA) has created an environment that is the antithesis of one which allows press freedom and free expression to exist, let alone flourish. The main and most glaring problem with it is that it has been framed in such a way that "allows" for the law to be abused. And since its enactment, that is exactly what has happened, with data from the Centre for Governance Studies (CGS) showing there have been at least 355 cases filed against journalists using the law and, almost half of all cases being filed by people affiliated with a political party or government officials. In spite of all that, more laws seem to be in the offing to allegedly "regulate" the press – or rather, in our case, force it to remain passive and silent in the face of exploitation and lawbreaking by the powerful.

The prevailing situation clearly does not allow the press to function freely. Yet, the biggest danger of that is that it impedes upon the people's right to information and knowledge. When people are forcibly kept in the dark, democracy cannot exist. It is from this dangerous quagmire that we need to dig ourselves out of.

Robbing the poor of social safety net benefits

Government must check corruption, update database of beneficiaries

A recent survey conducted by the Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD) has found that non-eligible people are eating away around Tk 1,500 crore every year from the government's social safety net programme meant for the elderly and widows. Moreover, the programme has not covered an estimated 33 lakh old people and 25 lakh widows who are eligible for the support. Such a situation is not only unfortunate but also totally unacceptable at a time when inflation and the increasing cost of living are pushing poor people further into poverty, with the elderly people, widows and the marginalised communities being the worst-affected. The question is, why after so many years of the introduction of the social safety net programmes in the country has the government failed to create an accurate and updated database? Equally importantly, why are government officials in charge of disbursing these funds allowed to engage in rampant corruption?

Reportedly, this social safety net programme provides a monthly allowance of Tk 500 each to around 57 lakh elderly people and 25 lakh widows. However, among these beneficiaries, around 30 percent of the elderly and 33 percent of the widows are no longer eligible for the allowance. Meanwhile, around 12 percent people are getting multiple allowances from such schemes. We assume that this is not only true for this particular scheme; the rest of the safety net programmes may also be suffering from similar issues.

For instance, another CPD study in four northern districts of Bangladesh – Gaibandha, Kurigram, Nilphamari and Rangpur – during the first stage of the Covid-19 pandemic found that nearly two-thirds of households that received allowances under five leading social safety net programmes were not eligible to receive them.

Clearly, such irregularities and inefficiencies could take place because of a lack of proper database of the beneficiaries. The government has been telling us for a long time that they would use the National Household Database (NHD) to select the beneficiaries of all these schemes, once it is developed. We would like to ask: what has happened to this NHD, which is expected to serve as a poverty registry in the country? Why has it still not been developed although the deadline has expired?

It is common knowledge that local government officials include ineligible people in the list of beneficiaries in exchange for bribes. Moreover, even eligible candidates have to pay bribes to get the allowances. According to the CPD survey, elderly people had to pay between Tk 500 and Tk 6,000 in bribes to get their dues.

We urge the government to urgently address the inefficiencies and corruption plaguing social safety net programmes. Stern action must be taken against these corrupt officials who are supposed to serve the poor, not rob them of their entitlements. It is the government's responsibility to ensure that support reaches the most vulnerable sections of society in the worst cost of living crisis in over a decade.



VISUAL: TEENI AND TUNI

Titas doesn't have the budget to fix all gas leaks – so it ignores them

Dr Ijaz Hossain is former dean of the Faculty of Engineering and Technology (Buet). In an interview with Eresh Omar Jamal of The Daily Star, he talks about the hazardous state of Dhaka's gas distribution system and how that is putting people's lives at major risk.

On April 24, people from different parts of Dhaka started to panic fearing there had been a gas leak. How vulnerable is our gas distribution system to such leaks and how much danger is it putting people in?

The first thing we need to accept and understand is that these leaks are there. It is pointless to deny or hide it. So, if these leaks are there, why did people smell the odorant mixed with the gas on April 24, and not on other days? Titas itself has answered that question. Normally, we have a gas shortage problem, which leads to low gas pressure in different parts of Dhaka, and sometimes people also complain that they are not getting any gas. Since all industries closed down during Eid, gas consumption went down drastically, leading to higher-than-usual gas pressure.

Before natural gas enters any city, it has to pass through a facility called city gate station (CGS). On the upstream side of CGS, you have very high pressure from gas fields. Its function is to lower the pressure before supplying gas to the city – you can't give 1,000 PSI of gas to the city. Because gas pressure from gas fields is

due to the low pressure, we cannot detect it as, after dispersion in the surrounding air, the amount of gas that leaks out is not detectable by our nose.

Anecdotally, we know that Titas' lines have many leaks. This incident just outright proved it. But we had proof before, too. For example, we have all seen gas coming out of these lines at high pressure in flood-affected areas. And, several years back, there was a study done under the carbon credit programme "Clean Development Mechanism (CDM)" – because this is a greenhouse gas which is being emitted – of many risers (and pipes) at consumers' premises which found that a large proportion of those had leaks.

The number of leaks in Dhaka city is staggering – pointing to the fact that the pipelines are old or were constructed poorly. So, gas is leaking continuously. If this leaked gas collects in a pocket or an enclosed space – and its concentration goes above five percent – there could be an explosion. And I believe that the recent explosions we have seen around Dhaka city occurred from that. It's not always that gas can build up to that point in an enclosed place. And even if it did, it's possible that, fortunately, there was no source of ignition to cause an explosion. But we now have proof showing that these leaks are serious and dangerous.

Is there a way to have a system in place that could detect leaks before people are put in harm's way?

It is one thing when gas leaks into someone's kitchen because they might have meters, detectors, etc showing that it's leaking. But what about the pipeline? There are definitely ways to detect leaks there, and Titas knows when the pipeline is leaking. But they don't have the budget needed to fix them all – so they ignore it.

There are many technologies for detecting leaks. Imagine a line has two meters at two ends. If there are no leaks, there won't be any loss when gas is flowing – whatever passes through one meter must pass through the

other one. Pressurising a line by closing all outlets and observing pressure can detect leaks. These are simple standard methods of detecting a gas leak.

Where should the push for this investment come from? While this may be monetarily costly, what about the cost in terms of the lives we've paid with by ignoring this issue?

We have already experienced a few big explosions. For example, the one at the Narayanganj mosque and also at Moghbazar. But we could witness even bigger ones. As per some sources, many other recent explosions (although the government has not confirmed this) also happened from leaks. So, all leaks in gas pipelines need to be plugged urgently.

Also, these leaks are emitting methane, which is 24 times worse than carbon dioxide in terms of global warming. So, while the government is up in arms about climate change, it is ignoring this emission.

In our country, an adequate maintenance budget is rarely provided. Public sector utilities are more interested in new projects. When you create a budget, you need to set aside resources for the maintenance of old and new projects – as well as provide funds for the protection of workers and the general public. One needs to invest in protecting these pipelines so that they last for 30 years and also provide money to replace the pipes once their useful life (as specified by manufacturers) is over – even if the pipes still look okay and have no leaks, just to be safe.

Through the April 24 incident, we came very close to some major accidents – and luckily people promptly complained and Titas managed to take corrective actions on time. However, there was some negligence here as well. At the CGS, if they had detected the high pressure upstream (because of factories and industries being closed) resulting in high pressure downstream, this would not have happened – and it should never have happened. So,

It's not always that gas can build up to that point in an enclosed place. And even if it did, it's possible that, fortunately, there was no source of ignition to cause an explosion. But we now have proof showing that these leaks are serious and dangerous.

the authorities, including the energy minister, need to sit down and find urgent solutions.

So, what we see happening are all outside of the domain of good practices when it comes to safety.

Can the lack of sufficient investment for maintenance and everything you mentioned be described as part of a governance failure?

Yes, absolutely. It is also the attitude that is the problem. The authorities responsible for different projects are not putting enough emphasis on safety – both that of people and of the environment. We are literally seeing crashes, explosions, and fires every day, many of which result from disregarding safety guidelines. Why? Because infrastructures are not well-maintained and, in some cases, not properly constructed.

How do we change this mindset? In many countries, had such deaths from explosions occurred, we would see criminal cases being filed, perhaps being followed by prosecution. Could such accountability improve things?

Our judicial system needs to take proactive steps in this regard and hold people responsible. There needs to be adequate budgetary allocation for safety. This propensity of wanting to build new infrastructure, while ignoring the upkeep of the systems we already have in place, is a damaging one. Until things break down – taking lives with it – we rarely take any actions to replace the asset. So, what does that illustrate? That these lives are dispensable? This should never be acceptable.

So, yes. We have to hold people, organisations, and even the government accountable or criminally liable. But for that, all the courts have to operate with a mindset that people's lives must always take precedence over and above everything else.



Ijaz Hossain



WORLD PRESS FREEDOM DAY

# There was a time... Why Press Council is failing to protect press freedom



Tanim Ahmed is a dropout journalist who thinks freely, comments a lot and writes a little.

TANIM AHMED

There was a time when journalists sought to be biased, but only towards people. And it was in the interest of the masses that they prided themselves on questioning the regime. It was a time when members of the press corps would silently measure who was asking the most pertinent questions that others had missed. There would be a certain degree of respect and awe for those raising the toughest questions in their quest to ascertain whether the people were benefiting.

The mere act of questioning, in itself, did not warrant applause so much as the degree of accountability that one demanded. It was the degree of inspection the regime was being subjected to that won the admiration. It was a time when we assessed who was it that gave pause to the figure at the podium, whose question was it that caused the speaker to be beaded with sweat. And it would be s/he who deserved the backslaps and applause.

There was a time when news outlets could be fiercely political and steadfastly non-partisan in their adulation as well as admiration, boldly adversarial and yet dispassionately balanced in their commendation as well as criticism of the ruling regime or its opposition. Sure, there would be backlash when the critique was too incisive, and the commendations dull. But nothing that could not be smoothed over during a strained détente.

It would be naïve to believe that there was a time when there were no news outlets acting like mouthpieces. There always were. But they would be on the sidelines, never daring to claim the validity of the mainstream. For it was the mainstream that maintained neutrality and independence. It was a time when the press strived to inform, educate, and entertain the audience with objective journalism, instead of clickbait headlines and an eternal quest for what has come to be known as viral content. There was a time when, through their work, journalists sought to comfort the afflicted and afflict the comfortable.

There have been sycophants too. But they would never condemn fellow journalists with unabashed self-righteousness, despite their own chequered careers riddled with political somersaults from one camp to another, for pointing out the obvious. They would never dare slam an outlet and accuse them of misconduct merely to be in the good graces of the government, especially if the outlet in question was only writing about deprivation and misery of the people. They would do the bidding of the powers that be in awkward embarrassment and slither back into the obscurity where they belonged. They never flaunted the complete decay of their spine from years of genuflection, for they too knew those who championed the needs of the poor and acted as the mouthpiece of the people were actually being responsible.

There was a time when it was unpatriotic to write about the Indigo Revolt for it cast the regime in a bad light. There was a time when it was unpatriotic to cover the Salt March for it planted seeds of rebellion. There was a time when it was unpatriotic to cover the Language Movement for it emboldened people to rise up

**There were times when regimes exploited and employed the state apparatus to watch over those deemed to lack patriotism, particularly journalists and news outlets. But there was always a veneer of civility, there was always a façade of operating under the table. There was always the foregone subconscious that it was essentially wrong to monitor the press and impinge on its independence, for it contradicted the spirit of our democratic people's republic.**

in popular demand. There was a time when it was unpatriotic to champion the political process over the mediocrity of uniformed stewardship. Ironically, the last time this was the case, the stewards attempted to banish the custodians of democracy from the public sphere and held them forcibly on the national parliament grounds, which is the seat of our democracy. Ironically still, it was in columns like these that we saw repeated criticism and resistance to injustice, and continuous calls for restoration of democracy through elections. There have also been times when it was unpatriotic to champion the plight of millions left without the ability to afford two square meals.

But criticism of the political establishment never invoked the wrath and vitriol of the executive, legislative and the judiciary or vice versa, threatening to blur the already thinning grey line between the party and the state, especially when the heart of the matter was true.

There were times when regimes exploited and employed the state apparatus to watch over those deemed to lack patriotism, particularly journalists and news outlets. But there was always a veneer of civility, there was always a façade of operating under the table. There was always the foregone subconscious that it was essentially wrong to monitor the press and impinge on its independence, for it contradicted the spirit of our democratic people's republic. Those deployed to keep watch would operate at the fringes and sniff around apologetically. They never demanded a seat at the table.

Autocratic or dictatorial, fascist or totalitarian, these regimes have remained



VISUAL: REHNUMA PROSHOON

stubbornly oblivious to the electorate's persistence and its capacity to protest. These regimes have, thus, underestimated the creativity and imagination of the electorate with single-minded devotion. From *Bhootnath* to *Jiban Theke Neya*, wit and humour have never failed to overwhelm these regimes with absolute befuddlement. There was a time when two bumbling idiots named Goopi and Bagha showed the hollowness of a totalitarian regime built on the riches of its diamond mines.

There was a time when the regime was particularly averse to the criticism of collaborators. It was as if Razakars never existed on this soil. So, no one dared point their fingers at the guilty or even mention the murky past. That was also a time when a parrot decided to accuse its confronter of being a collaborator. And "*Tui Razakar*" caught the imagination of millions. No matter how strongly dissent is subdued or throttled, parrots have chirped. Bumbling idiots have cracked iron-fisted regimes.



Kamal Ahmed is an independent journalist. His Twitter handle is @ahmedkal

KAMAL AHMED

As countries observe World Press Freedom Day today with the theme "freedom of expression is a driver for all other human rights," Bangladesh is perhaps passing through the worst phase of it. Our standing in the World Press Freedom Index has been witnessing a year-on-year slide for quite some time, despite the fact that the number of media outlets – be it a newspaper, a TV channel or a multimedia portal – in the country has seen a spectacular growth. These numbers have certainly given the government a viable tool to counter the national and international outcry of curbing media freedom.

Media plurality, though essential in all democracies, has sadly become a tool for drowning out independent and critical voices. From India, the world has learnt

According to the statistics compiled by Bangladesh-based think tank the Centre for Governance Studies (CGS), journalists are the second-most sued professionals under the DSA since its enactment. At least 355 journalists have been implicated in these cases, and a significant number of them have been arrested and faced incarceration for some time. As the DSA allows anyone to file a lawsuit without being remotely linked to the alleged offence, it has become a preferred weapon to suppress independent and critical voices. Though the outcome has been widely described as self-censorship, Prof Ali Riaz of Illinois State University says it's not self-censorship, rather an environment of fear in which everyone feels there's no way other than complying with the authorities.

The original legislation, the Press Council Act, 1974, noted in its introduction, "Whereas it is expedient to establish a press council for the purpose of preserving the freedom of the Press and improving standard of newspapers and news agencies in Bangladesh." Unfortunately, the council, in its lifetime, never stood up for preserving press freedom against an attack from the government, which

**According to the statistics compiled by Bangladesh-based think tank the Centre for Governance Studies (CGS), journalists are the second-most sued professionals under the DSA since its enactment. At least 355 journalists have been implicated in these cases, and a significant number of them have been arrested and faced incarceration for some time.**

can be seen in India. Its focus remained largely concentrated in adjudicating cases brought in by the members of the public against any specific newspaper or news agency. In recent years, it started giving some training to journalists.

The Press Council of India, despite being a statutory body, set up under a national legislation and reformed quite a few times, still remains a truly independent and self-regulatory institution for the media industry. However, one plausible explanation for its independence is that its financing comes from the levy it gets from the industry. In Western democracies, including the United Kingdom, the press is largely self-regulated, and the government stays away from the regulatory body, which is set up by the industry.

Journalists are now least protected in Bangladesh, not only due to a host of repressive laws and punitive actions by the authorities including discreet bans on advertisements and refusal of access to state premises and functions, but also for physical harm and attacks. Last year, I wrote in *Prothom Alo* about the record-setting extension allowed for the 88th time to complete the investigation into the killings of journalist couple Sagar Sarowar and Meherun Runi. Now we know the investigating unit of the Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) has been granted 97th extension for the probe. Most other cases of the slain 23 journalists since 1992, compiled by the Committee to Protect Journalists, either remain unsolved, or justice remains elusive. Can the Press Council take some initiative to ensure protecting journalists and ending impunity for attacking them?

Ministers and some members of the current Press Council have argued that the strengthening of the institution will improve the standard of journalism and help tackle the threats of misinformation or fake news in Bangladesh. The council has also undertaken a scheme to register professional journalists, which is an outdated practice mostly confined to some autocratic countries. No other country in South Asia has such a scheme. According to the Center for International Media Assistance (CIMA), this form of registration is considered as licensing and is used by governments to control the press. There's plenty of reasons to be fearful that the intent here is to curb independent journalism. In this context, voices should be raised to demand that the government abandon the planned amendment of the Press Council Act and allow the industry to formulate a self-regulatory regime.

a new term called "Godi media," which is used to describe the unprecedented growth and expansion of news outlets that represent the coterie formed among politicians belonging to the ruling party, the government, and their corporate owners. Replication of this model in our country can be felt in the environment of the so-called plurality. In addition, allowing concentration of diverse media outlets in the hands of a few has already posed critical division within the industry, which has caused additional challenges to independent news organisations.

The introduction of Digital Security Act (DSA), replacing the much criticised Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Act for its rampant abuse, has a chilling effect on journalism. Since its enactment, editors, journalists, rights activists and opposition parties, all in unison, have been complaining that they no longer feel able to say what they really want to say.

Mahfuz Anam, the editor of this daily, last year questioned why there were so many laws against free media, and listed a dozen of them, including two drafts, that directly or indirectly affect journalism. Weeks later, it was announced that the cabinet had approved, in principle, another law with deeper and wider implications in regulating the media. The amendment of the Press Council Act, if and when approved, will allow the council to impose financial penalties for mistakes deemed to be against national security and public order and causing moral degradation. It will also have powers to take suo motu cognisance of such an offence. The draft amendment increases the number of government representatives in the council, thereby tightening its grip on the supposedly independent institution.

Strangely enough, apart from a few details given by the cabinet secretary after its approval, no further details have been given, let alone make the draft public.

## Press Freedom: A Vital Element for Democracy

In 1993, the United Nations General Assembly declared May 3 as World Press Freedom Day. It is a day to celebrate the fundamental principles of press freedom, to evaluate press freedom around the world, to defend the media from attacks on its independence, and to pay tribute to journalists who have lost their lives practising their profession.

A free and independent press is a vital element in any democracy. It gives citizens the information they need to hold their leaders accountable and promotes economic development. The right to press freedom is enshrined in the

founding documents of the United Nations as well as in many national constitutions.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 1948, recognises the importance of freedom of expression. Article 19 states, "Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers."

By protecting press freedom, we uphold our shared values of

democracy and human rights. Journalists must be able to cover issues without fear of harassment, intimidation or violence. This is necessary to support good governance and ensure that the public is fully informed. Additionally, journalists must have access to information and be able to protect their sources.

The Media Freedom Coalition consists of like-minded countries that advocate for media freedom and the safety of journalists around the world. The undersigned countries of the Diplomatic Network Initiative of the Media Freedom Coalition

in Bangladesh are pleased to commemorate the 30th anniversary of World Press Freedom Day today.

As members of the Media Freedom Coalition, we underscore the importance of recognising the value of press freedom and of protecting it. This concerns governments, owners of media organisations, civil society leaders, political parties, and international organisations. By protecting media freedom, a society can become more inclusive and prosperous. Studies have shown that countries with more press freedom have greater economic growth. The reason for this is simple:

a free press promotes transparency, which increases accountability as it helps reduce corruption and fosters innovation, supporting a business-friendly environment.

A free press is also essential for promoting human rights and social justice. Journalists play a critical role in exposing human rights abuses and violations, and promoting accountability. This is true for every country where a free press exists. Journalists can also promote gender equality by ensuring that women's voices are heard, and their experiences represented.

By ensuring press freedom, a

sound basis is set for societies to develop and to improve through open discussions. The members of the Media Freedom Coalition in Bangladesh enthusiastically look forward to continuing this conversation with all parties.

**Signed,  
The embassies and high commissions of Australia, Canada, Denmark, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Netherlands, Norway, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom, and United States.**



# PREVENTION OF CHILD MARRIAGE in remote and marginalised chars of northern Bangladesh

Friendship in association with The Daily Star organised a roundtable titled "Prevention of Child Marriage in remote and marginalised chars of Northern Bangladesh" on March 16, 2023. Here we publish a summary of the discussion.



**Golam Mortaza, Editor,**  
*The Daily Star Bangla*

Preventing child marriage requires a multifaceted approach. One crucial aspect is ensuring accountability of local government representatives and government officials, who are entrusted with the task to prevent child marriage. Empowering those involved in development work is also essential, as they can become agents of change in their communities and work towards preventing this social menace. Religion can play a powerful role in shaping attitudes and beliefs, so it is vital to engage religious leaders and communities in efforts to prevent child marriage. Addressing financial solvency is also critical, as poverty can be a contributing factor to practices like child marriage.



## RECOMMENDATIONS

A whole-of-society approach is needed to prevent child marriage.

Strengthen child protection system in Bangladesh.

Ensure sufficient funding for the successful implementation of child marriage prevention programmes.

More primary and secondary schools should be established in rural and char areas to ensure education for marginalised people.

Make birth registration compulsory and set up registration facility at union parishad level.

Establish a department for children's affairs in the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs.

NCTB should include education on child rights and measures to prevent child marriage in their curriculum from pre-primary to college level.

Implement vocational training programmes in schools that empower girls with practical skills and knowledge, enabling them to become self-sufficient.

Prioritise comprehensive sexual and reproductive health education and services for girls and women to promote their health and protect their rights.

Ensure the inclusion of women and girls in decision-making processes to promote gender equality and empower them to have a say in matters that affect their lives.



**Ahmed Toufiqur Rahman, Deputy Director (Inclusive Citizenship), Friendship**

Bangladesh has the world's third-highest rate of child marriage, with a prevalence of 51%. According to a World Bank report, the rate is higher in rural areas (60%) than in urban areas (55%), with Rajshahi and Rangpur being the most affected.

The Honourable Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's government has undertaken multiple initiatives to prevent child marriage, including strengthening laws related to child marriage, raising the minimum legal age of marriage, providing girls access to education, providing income-generating activities for girls forming international partnerships developing policies, such as the National Action Plan to Eliminate Child Marriage 2018-2030 and the Child Marriage Restraint Act. Digital initiatives such as the Joy app, Tottho Apa, and a hotline (109) have been launched.

NGOs and other development agencies are also working with various organisations and awareness campaigns at the grassroots, district, and national levels. They empower girls through education, vocational training, leadership, and life skills development programs, while families receive support through financial assistance, livelihood, health, and social services.



**Robert Chatterton Dickson, British High Commissioner to Bangladesh**

Although Bangladesh has achieved significant progress in economic and social development over the past 50 years, the issue of preventing child marriage has not seen similar success. Child marriage not only harms individuals by impeding their health

and ability to live a fully equal life, but it also has harmful effects on society as a whole.

During a visit to the Char areas of Northern Bangladesh, I witnessed how marginalised and impoverished communities live beyond the purview of the government. Friendship, in addition to providing health, education, and livelihood services to the Char people, works to give women a voice in their community.

The policies and initiatives taken at the policy and higher levels need to align with the practical realities of marginalised communities in the Char areas. Friendship's approach is commendable as they base their expertise on respect for the communities and individuals they work with.



**Tapan Karmaker, Executive Director, RDRS**

A major portion of Kurigram district is located in the char areas, encompassing 49 unions. In 2017, RDRS launched a special project, Building Better Future for Girls (BBFG), to address the issue of child marriage in Kurigram district, including the char areas.

One of the project's initial interventions involved enrolling families with girls under 18 at risk of child marriage in the government's Social Safety Net program, which provides economic support to families to prevent them from marrying off their children. While three upazilas in Kurigram have been declared child marriage-free by the district administration after a survey conducted under the Prime Minister's guidance, social security for at-risk girls remains a major concern, particularly in remote Char areas.



**Natalie McCauley, Chief, Child Protection Team, UNICEF**

The child protection system in Bangladesh needs to be strengthened, and the number of social workers should be increased. Currently,

there are just over 3000 social workers, but more than 110,000 are required for the social welfare ministry to fulfill its mandate effectively.

The Child Helpline 1098 received 200,000 calls last year, and it has been able to stop many child marriages. More than 80% of these calls are related to violence, abuse, and exploitation. Unfortunately, nine out of ten children are affected by violence within their homes, pushing families towards harmful practices such as child marriages. We need to support these families in creating safe environments for their children so that they have other options.

Violence against women and children, including child marriage, costs more than 3% of the GDP. Bangladesh loses billions of dollars annually, whereas the cost of hiring one social worker is around 4000 USD a year. Therefore, increased budgets for children's welfare and the creation of a department for children's affairs in the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs are necessary.



**Mosammat Lucky Akhter, Program Manager, Nagorik Uddyog**

From our extensive experience working in disaster-prone areas of Rangpur and Barishal since 2004, it has become evident that families affected by natural disasters are particularly vulnerable to child marriage. Despite our efforts to raise awareness among these communities, families often resort to extreme measures during times of crisis, such as forcing their children into marriage. Our previous mass awareness campaigns have had limited

success, indicating that more targeted and sustained efforts are required at the grassroots level.



**Dr Umme Busra Fateha Sultana, Associate Professor & Chairperson, Department of Women and Gender Studies, University of Dhaka**

It is crucial to prevent early pregnancies and protect the health of young girls who are forced into child marriages. Moreover, providing support for their education and economic independence is essential even after marriage. Additionally, equipping them with self-defence skills and knowledge of legal help is vital.

To raise awareness about the dangers of child marriage, media can play a pivotal role, the Meena cartoon for instance has been an effective tool in creating awareness of social issues.



**Onno Van Manen, Country Director, Save the Children, Bangladesh**

Despite legislation addressing child marriage and sexual violence, there are still loopholes in the system. To empower and support children, particularly girls, it's essential to provide them with access and agency to address their challenges. Unfortunately, girls in char areas often lack access to technology and systems that could assist them. Girls may feel embarrassed or hesitant to come forward, so outreach efforts should be proactive. Incorporating sexual health education into school curricula is necessary. While preventive work with stakeholders is ongoing, child marriages persist because of a lack of negative consequences for facilitators. Addressing this gap is another critical area to address.



**Marie Masdupuy, Ambassador of France to Bangladesh**

Surprisingly, forced child marriages are still prevalent in Bangladesh despite the introduction long ago of family planning programs and their successful outreach to various parts of society.

Unfortunately, adolescent girls in rural areas tend to drop out of school as soon as they reach puberty due to lack of resources and societal pressure to get married early. To combat this issue, I believe that specialised social workers are needed to aid underage children and raise awareness about the negative consequences of child marriage.

Collaboration with governmental programmes and NGOs is crucial in preventing not only child marriage but also intra-family violence.



**Md. Mainul Islam, Acting Country Director & Head of Programme, Norwegian Refugee Council, Bangladesh**

Child marriage in Bangladesh is often a desperate measure taken by families facing economic hardship during natural disasters. To address this issue, we must provide alternative coping mechanisms to families in these situations.

In remote char areas, girls are often forced to drop out of school after primary level due to social pressures and lack of opportunities. We must advocate for the introduction of vocational courses designed for girls in these areas to equip them with life skills and promote self-sufficiency through income generation.



**Nasima Akhter Joly, Secretary, National Girl Child Advocacy Forum**

Nimmi Akhter, a tenth-grade student from Comilla, was forced into marriage without her consent, despite her desire to continue her studies and become self-sufficient. The local Kazi facilitated the marriage. He claimed that since the girl had reached puberty, there was no religious issue with the marriage. Puberty alone cannot be the indicator of a girl's adulthood; it takes a minimum of 18 years for girls' organs to mature for reproductive health. We need to campaign for Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) to ensure the well-being of girls and women.

Simply relying on legal clauses will not be enough to combat child marriage. Women's participation in decision-making processes is essential, as in most cases, the mother and girl are unaware of the decision being finalised.



**Barrister Ayesha Taasin Khan, Senior Director & Head of Inclusive Citizenship Sector, Friendship**

While the Child Marriage Restraint Act has shown some impact in urban areas, rural communities remain largely unaffected, and child marriage continues to persist. The problem is compounded by the fact that the law allows girls to marry at the age of 16 under "special circumstances."

To truly combat child marriage, we need a social revolution that recognises the harm it causes, as well as institutional changes that provide girls with opportunities to improve their lives. One such opportunity is through vocational training programmes in schools that equip girls with the skills and knowledge to generate their income and become self-sufficient, reducing the burden of girls as liabilities.

The government should also take measures to inform girls about the Child Marriage Restraint Act and provide them with avenues to take action through digital platforms or through provisions such as Salish, ADR, etc.. While the Act is a significant step in addressing child marriage, it must be coupled with infrastructure and transformative societal change to have a meaningful impact.



**Mohammad Rafiqul Islam, Director, Head Office, Islamic Foundation Bangladesh**

Religious leaders, particularly Imams, hold a significant role and are respected in society.

They have proven to be effective in the facilitation and dissemination of important information to the public in promoting vaccination and breastfeeding programs in Bangladesh. Aligning social and transformative initiatives with religious morals can ensure sustainability and community acceptance. Islam also has a positive impact on health safety, and Imams can educate their followers on the harmful impacts of early motherhood. In a UNICEF-supported program, Imams emphasised that puberty alone is not a sufficient indicator for pregnancy. Their involvement can be crucial in promoting positive social change.



**Amena Begum, Deputy Inspector General (Protection and Protocol), Special Branch, Bangladesh Police**

The 2017 Child Marriage Restraint Act emphasises the importance of

involving all relevant stakeholders, including GOs and NGOs, at the grassroots level. However, the act doesn't specify who should intervene when child marriages occur. It is important to note that child marriage is a non-cognizable offense, which limits the police's ability to take swift action.

Over the past three years, there have been over four crore calls made to the hotline number 999, but many people are not aware of the hotline number 109. To increase efficiency, it may be helpful to merge or redirect these two numbers. Additionally, a Women, Children, Elderly and Disabled helpdesk, operated by female police officers, has been established in all 659 police stations across the country. Regular supervision of this helpdesk is necessary, and there is a need for more female officers to staff it. Last year, this helpdesk assisted 144,00 women and children.



**M A Akher, Director Planning, Department of Youth Development, Ministry of Youth and Sports**

The Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS) reports that approximately 8 million individuals aged 15-24 in Bangladesh are not engaged in employment, education, or training (NEET). Of this NEET population, 47% are women and 10% are men, accounting for a total of 28.8% of the youth population in the country. To address this issue, the Department of Youth Development has established over 19,800 Youth Clubs nationwide, 6,000 of which are registered with our department. There are also 71 Youth Training Centers across the country, where various training sessions are held throughout the year.

Given the complexity of this situation, we have partnered with the World Bank to propose a training program for individuals between the ages of 15 and 35, with a budget of 4,000 crores BDT. Girls will comprise 80% of the programme's beneficiaries since many young women who are married off early require education and training to become self-sufficient. We also provide soft loans to support sustainable businesses and self-sufficiency for these girls. Moreover, with the help of USAID, we are launching a skill-based training programme for girls aged 15-35 in 250 upazilas across Bangladesh.



**Runa Khan, Founder & Executive Director, Friendship**

Each child marriage prevented is equivalent to saving a life. Collaborative efforts by organisations and the government are essential in preventing child marriage, which is linked to poverty and climate change. Climate change can lead to poverty, which then drives parents to resort to forced child marriages.

We must adopt a holistic approach to tackle the issue of child marriage and create awareness at the grassroots level by involving both men and women. Everyone should understand the grave consequences of child marriage in terms of health, death, and disease. The solution should be comprehensive, and the government and other organizations should work towards alleviating poverty, especially in rural char areas.

The National Curriculum and Textbook Board (NCTB) should incorporate awareness about child rights and anti-child marriage measures from pre-primary to college level. We must provide young girls with inspiring female role models and leaders who can instill hope and self-respect in them.

The police should play a more active role, and we need to address the issue of inaccurate birth certificates for many children.

It is unacceptable for Bangladesh to be the third country in the world with the highest incidence of child marriage, and we must take a holistic approach rather than just planning to act.



**Tanjim Ferdous, In Charge of NGOs and Foreign Missions at the Business Development Team, The Daily Star, & Moderator of the session**

Child marriage stems from deep-seated gender inequality and the notion that girls and women are of lower value than boys and men. It is aggravated by factors such as poverty, inadequate education, harmful cultural practices, and insecurity, with drivers that vary by community and region.

The COVID-19 lockdown has led to a considerable rise in child marriage rates in Bangladesh, while climate change and the resulting displacement of communities have also served as catalysts for this issue.



## Probe committee neutral, affirms Salahuddin

SPORTS REPORTER

The Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) president Kazi Salahuddin believes the investigation committee, formed to look further into the financial irregularities involving former BFF general secretary Abu Nayeem Shohag, will work neutrally and report their findings within 30 working days.

Although the local game's governing body formed a 10-member special committee on April 17 by naming BFF vice-president Kazi Nabil Ahmed as the convener, the committee could not begin proceedings yet.

"He [Kazi Nabil Ahmed] is back in town and will start work within two to three days, and needs 30 working days to complete the investigation," BFF president Kazi Salahuddin informed reporters after a two-and-half hour meeting of the BFF executive committee at the BFF House yesterday.

"The committee will find out whether there were any mistakes from others. Once he gives us the report, then we will decide what to do," Salahuddin informed further, adding the existing eight members excluding two resigned vice-presidents will carry out the investigation.

Asked whether it was possible to form a neutral committee to investigate further, Salahuddin replied, "It is neutral. Are you questioning the integrity of Kazi Nabil Ahmed, who is also a member of parliament?"

The executive committee meeting also approved the inaugural franchise-based Women's Super League which is scheduled to get underway on May 15 with the participation of four teams.

"We discussed a lot of things in the meeting which also approved the Women's Super League, which is the first of its kind in Bangladesh. The whole idea of Women's Super League is made to allow another way to make money for them. The girls will gain experience in future by playing with the foreign players. Now women's football is on top and we also want to keep it in this place," he said.

Salahuddin also informed that they were also mulling to avail the FIFA Forward 3 fund, worth USD 30 lakh, by which they would lay new turf at the Kamalapur stadium in Dhaka and BFF artificial ground, subject to meet the condition of FIFA, as well as floor an open tender for the design of BFF Centre of Excellence in Cox's Bazar, also under FIFA forward programme.

Moreover, the BFF boss informed that technical director Paul Smalley has decided to terminate his contract, which would have run till 2024, with the board after the Englishman arrives in the country on May 14.



Superstar Lionel Messi is currently in Saudi Arabia, enjoying a family holiday. The World Cup winner arrived in the Kingdom on Monday, sharing an image of Saudi Arabia's "unexpected wonders" on social media. The kingdom's Minister of Tourism, Ahmed Al Khateeb, also took to Twitter to welcome the Argentinian footballer to Saudi, sharing images of Messi with his family as they enjoyed various activities together. However, L'Equipe claims that PSG boss Christophe Galtier, along with football advisor Luis Campos, opposed his trip to the Middle East, but Messi went above their heads and got permission from the club's Qatari board. Reportedly, Messi skipped PSG training following their dismal 3-1 defeat to Lorient on Sunday.

PHOTO: TWITTER

## Tigers relax in Chelmsford ahead of start of training

SPORTS REPORTER

The Bangladesh cricket team spent a rest and recovery day in Chelmsford yesterday after arriving in England on Monday to take part in a three-match ODI series against Ireland, which will be part of the ICC Cricket World Cup Super League.

The cricketers will begin training from today at the Leys School cricket ground in Cambridge ahead of the only practice match, scheduled for May 5.

Tamim Iqbal and Co. are staying in Chelmsford, which is more than



an hour's drive from London.

According to Bangladesh Cricket Board senior media and communication manager Rabeed Imam, all the players have reached safely and are looking forward to beginning training.

The cricketers spent time roaming around the city and relaxing during yesterday's day off.

The visitors will take on Ireland in the first ODI on May 9 while the second and third match will be held on May 12 and 14 respectively. All the matches will be staged at the County cricket ground in Chelmsford.

## Tigresses suffer another washout

SPORTS REPORTER

Like the first match, the second game of the three-match series between Bangladesh and hosts Sri Lanka was washed out at the P Sara Oval in Colombo yesterday.

Both teams shared points. This was the fourth ICC Women's Championship game on the trot that the Tigresses saw getting washed out. Bangladesh's final two ODIs on their tour of New Zealand in November last year also endured the same fate. However, it was learned that the organisers are planning to reschedule the second ODI on May 4, shifting the venue to the SSC ground instead of the P Sara Oval.

## India pip Aus at top of Test rankings

AFP, New Delhi

India overtook Australia on Tuesday to go number one in new Test rankings issued by the International Cricket Council, while also retaining the top position in T20s.

England remained number three in Tests but reduced the gap behind the top two teams significantly, the rankings published by the ICC showed.

The new annual rankings reflect all series completed since May 2020 and drop results from the 2019-20 season, the ICC said.

India last topped the Test rankings for a month in December 2021, while Australia have been number one since January 2022 after hammering England 4-0 in the Ashes.

The table remained otherwise unchanged, with South Africa fourth and New Zealand fifth ahead of Pakistan, Sri Lanka, West Indies, Bangladesh and Zimbabwe.

Afghanistan and Ireland have yet to play enough Tests to earn a place in the rankings table.

India remained number one in the T20 rankings, increasing their lead over second-placed England, while New Zealand overtook Pakistan and South Africa to be third.

Australia are sixth ahead of West Indies, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh and Afghanistan.



Nepal made history on Tuesday by qualifying for their first-ever Asia Cup. They beat the United Arab Emirates in the final of the ACC Men's Premier Cup at the TU ground in Kathmandu. The victory also saw them take the final spot in Group A of the Asia Cup alongside giants India and Pakistan.

PHOTO: TWITTER

## Sheikh Russel reach Fed Cup semis

SPORTS REPORTER

A first-half strike from Nigerian forward Kenneth Ikechukwu Ngwoke took Sheikh Russel to the semifinals of the Federation Cup as they secured a 1-0 win against Rahmatganj at the Birshreshtha Shaheed Flight Lt Matiur Rahman Stadium in Munshiganj yesterday.

Sheikh Russel, runners-up of this season's Independence Cup, will face defending champions Abahani on May 16 after Independence Cup champions Bashundarha Kings take on Mohammedan on May 9.

Sheikh Russel got off to a fine start as they controlled the midfield. They went ahead in the 17th minute as Ngwoke brilliantly drove to the far post from a cut-back from Mfon Udoh Sunday.

After resumption, Sheikh Russel were reduced to 10 men after defender Abid committed a second bookable offence in the 58th minute, but Rahmatganj, runners-up in the last edition of the Federation Cup, could not capitalise on that advantage.

Instead, it was Sheikh Russel who went closest to scoring. But Ngwoke squandered an opportunity with only the goalkeeper to beat by driving wide while substitute Dipok Roy also missed the target in stoppage time.

## IPL cricketers not paid enough, says FICA chief

AGENCIES, London

Tom Moffat, the chief executive of the Federation of International Cricketers' Associations (FICA), has urged Indian Premier League players to be "paid fairly and proportionately" amid concerns that cricketers are paid a far lower share of revenue than in other major sports.

In most premier sporting leagues around the world, at least half of revenue is paid to the players in wages. In England's top-flight football league, the Premier League, 71 per cent of league revenue is paid to players. In the USA's National Basketball Association (NBA), players are paid 50 per cent of league revenue in salaries. But in the IPL, players receive just 18 per cent of the revenue that teams earn.

"Players love playing in the IPL but there's no doubt that if you look at it comparatively, as a percentage of overall revenue that the league generates, overall player payments are well behind other analogous sporting leagues," Moffat told Telegraph Sport. "The IPL has changed the game and the BCCI has done a fantastic job - it's one of the leading sporting competitions in the world and that is reflected in the per game value it generates."

"We look forward to continuing to see the IPL and WPL be successful and to players being paid fairly and proportionately..."

FICA, the global cricketers' player union, is affiliated with players' unions from seven of the 12 full member nations - including England, Australia, South Africa, New Zealand and the West Indies.

But there is no players' union in India, which is considered a major obstacle to players pushing to be paid a higher share of IPL revenue.

### CAREER OPPORTUNITY



## NORTH SOUTH UNIVERSITY

Center of Excellence in Higher Education

North South University (NSU), the first private university in Bangladesh, seeks applications from candidates with required qualifications and experiences for the following positions:

Please read the full job description carefully to see if you have the skills, knowledge and experience that NSU are looking for. Only eligible candidates will be contacted by NSU for written examination and interview:

**Coordination Officer for Career and Placement Center: 1 (one) position**

**Job Overview:**

The Coordination Officer is responsible for coordinating and overseeing the implementation of programs and services provided by the Career and Placement Center, CPC. The ideal candidate should have a technical background, including experience in website management and design, an educational background in computer science and engineering, and excellent communication and interpersonal skills to build strong relationships with students, faculty, other administrative staff, and corporates.

**Job Description:**

The officer's responsibility will be divided into two parts.

**1. Technical Responsibilities:**

- Analyze website and application requirements.
- Manage the CPC's website, ensuring its relevance, accuracy, and functionality.
- Troubleshooting application and code issues.
- Testing backend features and testing web applications.
- Code Optimization.
- Write reusable code.
- Ability to lead multiple projects.
- Good working knowledge of algorithms and data structures.
- Understanding of platform architecture and technology, the process of software deployment and environment management.
- Ensure CPC's website has enough space to preserve the database for job and internship postings, employer contacts, and student profiles.

**2. Administrative Responsibilities:**

- Coordinate the development, planning, and execution of career events, including workshops, job fairs, employer information sessions, and other career-related programs and activities, and work in the maintenance of CPC's Facebook, website & LinkedIn.
- Assist with preparing the brochure and banner internally for CPC.
- Assist the Director of CPC in the B-JET (Bangladesh-Japan ICT Engineers Training Program) and B-MEET (Bangladesh-Miyazaki ICT Engineers Educational Training) Project organized by North South University and Miyazaki University Japan.
- Provide technical assistance and support to students, faculty, and staff on issues related to technical fields.

**Academic Qualification:**

- Master's degree preferably MBA along with BSc. in Computer Science with at least 2nd class/ CGPA 3 out of 4.

**Experience:** 2 to 3 years in a relevant field.

**Age:** Not exceeding 32 years.

**Pay Scale:** Tk. 25,383 - 2,538- 63,456 (as per NSU policy).

**Other Terms and Conditions:**

- Experience in Web Development: HTML5, CSS3, PHP (Codeigniter), Bootstrap, JavaScript, MySQL, JQuery
- Version Control: Git
- Other: Adobe Illustrator, Adobe Photoshop, MS Office
- Understanding of object-oriented PHP programming.
- Previous experience creating scalable applications.
- Excellent troubleshooting and communication skills.
- Ability to manage projects.
- Good written and verbal communication skills in English are mandatory.
- Willingness to work on holidays and after office hours, if necessary.
- Third division/ class/ equivalent CGPA of the candidates in any educational level will not be accepted.

**NSU reserves the right not to appoint anyone if suitable candidates are not found.**

**Any prior communication or persuasion to the position will be considered as a disqualification. Interested candidates are requested to apply through [jobs.northsouth.edu](http://jobs.northsouth.edu) by June 02, 2023.**

Department of Administration  
 NORTH SOUTH UNIVERSITY  
 Plot# 15, Block# B, Bashundhara, Dhaka - 1229  
 NSU Job Portal: [jobs.northsouth.edu](http://jobs.northsouth.edu)





## More people now without jobs

Shows BBS survey

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Within a quarter, the number of people unemployed rose by 2.70 lakh to 25.9 lakh, shows data provided by the government.

There were 23.2 lakh jobless people in December, according to the quarterly data from the Labour Force Survey unveiled by the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS) yesterday.

The unemployment rate is currently 3.51 percent, which was 3.2 percent in December.

However, the unemployment number is less than that of the first quarter of 2022 when 29.50 lakh people were without work.

There are 7.11 crore people employed in the country and 4.65 crore of them are men.

Of the employed, 3.19 crore are in the agriculture sector, 1.22 crore in industrial sector, and 2.69 crore in the service sector, read the report.

The youth labour force is 2.73 crore, which was 2.60 crore in December.

According to the previous Labour Force Survey of the 2022 year, the unemployment rate declined to 3.6 percent mainly due to an upward trend in women's and youths' participation in the workforce.

Rizwanul Islam, a former employment sector special adviser at the International Labour Organisation in Geneva, said the seasonal factor might be a reason for the increase in unemployment in agriculture.

Yesterday, the survey report was revealed at a press conference at the National Economic Council of the Ministry of Planning, State Minister for Planning Shamsul Alam was the chief guest.

Shamsul said the data of every quarterly labour force survey report has seasonal factors. "We should not come to any conclusion based on this. We shouldn't get scared."

The state minister said the demand for labour is not constant, it is always fluctuating. "Usually, the January to March period is considered a lean period for the agriculture sector."

"Now the paddy harvesting season has started. Job opportunities in this sector will increase soon. As a result, the number of unemployed people will decrease again," he said.

Among others, Shahanz Arefin, secretary to the statistics and informatics division, BBS Director General Md Matiar Rahman, Labour Force Survey Project Director Aziza Rahman were present at the event.

Matiar said they would be publishing quarterly labour force survey report regularly from now on.

**"Now the paddy harvesting season has started. Job opportunities in this sector will increase soon. As a result, the number of unemployed people will decrease again."**

**Shamsul Alam**  
State Minister for Planning



The official match ball and trophy of Bangladesh's first women's franchise football league was unveiled at a hotel in the capital on Monday. Alongside members of Bangladesh national women's team and celebrities were BFF women's wing chairman Mahfuza Akhter Kiron and K-Sports' CEO & president Fahad Karim. The four-team league is expected to kick off later this month.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

## Polls internal affairs of Bangladesh

Says US state dept

UNB, Dhaka

The US does not want to comment on Bangladesh's upcoming national election.

"I don't have anything else to get into that beyond as it's an internal, domestic election," said Vedant Patel, deputy principal spokesperson at the US Department of State.

He came up with the remarks on Monday when a journalist wanted to know how would the US navigate a situation where, in

SEE PAGE 6 COL 7

## Go tough on graft

HC tells authorities; asks nat'l archive to submit Bangabandhu's speeches, directives on the issue

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday issued some suggestions to prevent corruption and sought the speeches, lectures and directives delivered by Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman in this regard from the government.

The court said the authorities concerned must take a hard line on eradicating corruption and money laundering as their leniencies have been causing such offences to go unabated.

"A Nobel laureate has observed that there are leniencies regarding corruption in South Asian countries. Hard lines must be taken to prevent it."

"Three issues must be kept in mind to stop corruption and money laundering – a system has to be developed; laws and rules must be

followed strict; and accountability to the people must be established," the HC bench of Justice Md Nazrul Islam Talukder and Justice Mohammad Showkat Ali Chowdhury told Anti-Corruption Commission lawyer Khurshid Alam Khan on a suo moto (voluntary) move during its proceedings.

The bench added that corruption and money laundering cannot be eradicated only by the laws, rules and judgements.

It also expressed disappointment regarding the noncompliance of the court's earlier directive, which asked the authorities concerned to submit a report on the Bangladeshi nationals who have purchased homes in Canada's "Begum Para" and deposited money to the banks in Switzerland.

SEE PAGE 6 COL 3

## SUDAN CONFLICT Bangladeshis start leaving Khartoum

MOHAMMAD AL-MASUM MOLLA

"There is a ray of hope at last. I can't express my feeling, my gratitude to the Bangladesh government. We went through hell in the last 15 days. We did not even think we could return home alive."

These were the words of relief spoken by Bangladeshi expatriate Md Saikat during a WhatsApp call with The Daily Star.

He was speaking from a bus that was headed to Port Sudan from the war-torn country's capital, Khartoum.

Like Saikat, a number of Bangladeshis stranded in the capital are on a journey to the northeast African country's port city, from where they will sail to Saudi Arabia before returning to Bangladesh.

"I left behind all that I earned in the last 18 years in Sudan, but I am still happy that I can return to Bangladesh alive."

He said they started yesterday at 9:00am (1:00pm Bangladesh time) for Port Sudan by bus, which was arranged by the Bangladesh embassy in Sudan.

Saikat, however, could not say exactly how many Bangladeshis were on a similar journey for Port Sudan, but said some 11 buses left Khartoum for Port Sudan.

SEE PAGE 6 COL 7



The oral Solid Dosage Unit (SDU) of The ACME Laboratories Ltd. has received prestigious



**US FDA APPROVAL**

We proudly announce that our product 'Chlorzoxazone 500 mg tablet' which was manufactured from Solid Dosage Unit (SDU) of The ACME Laboratories Ltd., Dhulivita, Dhamrai, Dhaka and submitted to US FDA, has been approved by US Food & Drug Administration (US FDA) as per the section 505 (j) of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (FD&C ACT).

This prestigious accreditation will enable ACME to export products to the US market.

A PROUD MOMENT FOR  
**BANGLADESH**

The Material Information of the company is available in the website of the company at [www.acmeglobal.com](http://www.acmeglobal.com)

Follow ACME

