



**P15**  
Green gallery turning grey



**P14**  
The floating vegetable garden on Kaptai Lake



**P12**  
Graft index: Lowest score in 12 years, what's next for us?



**P11**  
US not seeking war with Iran, says Pentagon

## CORRUPTION PERCEPTIONS INDEX 2023

# Bangladesh fares worst in decade and half

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh has dropped two notches in the Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) 2023 of Transparency International and now ranks 10th from the bottom.

This is the lowest rank the country had since 2008. It shares the spot with the Central African Republic, Iran, Lebanon, and Zimbabwe.

Non-fulfilment of the government's commitment to zero tolerance against corruption, intensified corruption in the public sector, and no effective action against money laundering were among the reasons that left Bangladesh facing a "very serious corruption problem", observed the Transparency International Bangladesh, the local chapter of TI.

Among the eight South Asian countries, Bangladesh remains the second last, only above Afghanistan, in score and rank with a measly score of 24 out of 100.

This is the lowest score of the country since 2012 and 19 points lower than the global average of 43.

The country had scored 25 in the 2022 index.

"The performance [of Bangladesh] is disappointing, embarrassing," said Iftekharuzzaman, executive director of TIB, while unveiling the report at a press conference at the TIB office in the capital's Dhanmondi yesterday.

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BNP standing committee member Abdul Moyeen Khan was picked up by law enforcers in the capital's Uttara during the party's nationwide "black flag" procession yesterday. Police officials claimed that they did so out of concern for his security and later sent him home in his car.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

## 12th nat'l polls landmark for democracy

President tells JS at its maiden session

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

President Mohammed Shahabuddin yesterday said the ruling and the opposition parties must play constructive roles in consolidating transparency, accountability, tolerance, human rights and the rule of law.

"It is obvious that there will be differences in political ideologies and views. But the citizens do not expect any difference of opinions in parliament regarding turning the House into the nucleus of democracy and development. I sincerely appeal to all to make parliament more effective and dynamic," he said.

The president was delivering his speech at

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### BANGLADESH AGAIN AMONG BOTTOM 10

2008	10
2009	13
2010	12
2011	13
2012	13
2013	16
2014	14
2015	13
2016	15
2017	17
2018	13
2019	14
2020	12
2021	13
2022	12
2023	10

**The performance [of Bangladesh] is disappointing, embarrassing.**  
IFTEKHARUZZAMAN  
executive director, TIB

### CORRUPTION PERCEPTIONS INDEX BANGLADESH'S SCORE SINCE 2012

2012	26
2013	27
2014	25
2015	25
2016	26
2017	28
2018	26
2019	26
2020	26
2021	26
2022	25
2023	24

### S ASIA RANKING from bottom

Afghanistan	6
Bangladesh	10
Pakistan	15
Sri Lanka	20
Nepal	21
India	25
Maldives	25
Bhutan	53

**Corruption is found more or less around the world but the way Bangladesh is being blamed is not fair at all.**

OBADUL QUADER  
Road Transport and Bridges Minister

## BNP'S BLACK FLAG MARCH Obstructed in different parts of the country

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Police yesterday foiled the BNP's black flag marches in different parts of the country, including the Dhaka city.

Cops picked up BNP standing committee member Abdul Moyeen Khan from the capital's Uttara-12 when he was preparing for taking out a march. However, he was freed within about an hour.

Police claimed that they picked up Moyeen due to security risks. Cops later got him into his car and he left for his home.

Speaking at a brief rally at Uttara-12 before being picked up, Moyeen said, "The Liberation War was fought for democracy, human rights and good governance. But today we don't have those. We have taken to the streets to restore democracy."

The BNP leaders and activists could not take out the black flag march from Uttara as they fled the area fearing arrest.

Mirza Salah Uddin, additional deputy commissioner of Dhaka Metropolitan Police (Uttara Division), said the BNP tried to take out a march without permission.

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## Islami Bank borrows Tk 1,000cr from Sonali breaching rules

MD MEHEDI HASAN

Cash-strapped Islami Bank borrowed Tk 1,000 crore from the state-run Sonali Bank offering interest, in violation of the Bangladesh Bank guidelines for Shariah-based banking.

Shariah-based banks cannot receive or pay interest at all levels. Islami Bank borrowed the amount for 14 days by offering 10.5 percent interest, as per the minutes of Sonali Bank's 85th board meeting held on December 26 last year.

The approval for the extraordinary liquidity support, known as 'call & short notice deposit', was given at the board meeting and the sum was disbursed to Islami the following day.

Islami is yet to repay the full amount even though the tenure of the liquidity support has expired. The Daily Star has learnt from Sonali Bank officials informed with the proceedings. They spoke on the condition of anonymity due to the sensitivity of the matter.

Of the amount, Sonali provided Tk 621 crore beyond its internal limits and the state-run bank informed the issue to the central bank.

Contacted, BB Spokesman Md Mezbaul Haque said he was not aware of the arrangement between the two banks. "I can only comment after knowing the issue."

Md Afzal Karim, managing director and chief executive officer of Sonali Bank, could not be reached for comment despite multiple attempts over the phone and in person.

Islami Bank's MD Mohammed Monirul Moula could not be reached for comment despite repeated attempts.

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## He exchanged barbs, not views

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Housing Minister Obaidul Muktar Chowdhury's first meeting with journalists descended into a ruckus as he engaged in bickering over the media outlet owners' backgrounds.

"Ask me questions after each of you have learnt who your newspaper and TV companies are," he said at a views exchange meeting the housing ministry organised at the secretariat.

He made the comments after a reporter asked for his take on the allegations of corruption at his ministry.

The minister then asked who owned the TV the reporter worked for. Hearing the answer, the minister said, "You go and search about him. Each of us should speak in accordance with the foundations on which we stand."

"I just took over [as a minister]. The prime minister announced zero tolerance for corruption. We will also have zero tolerance for corruption. We won't immerse ourselves in corruption. We won't let others indulge in corruption."

There was a commotion at the views-exchange meeting soon afterwards, as some of the reporters pointed out that

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Obaidul Muktar Chowdhury

## BUSINESS

### Export subsidy lowered for most sectors

The government has cut the export subsidy for almost all sectors to reduce the pressures on state coffers and bring down the rates gradually since the country can't provide such subsidies once it becomes a developing nation. In their immediate reactions, economists welcomed the move while exporters expressed disappointment, saying exports will be hit hard.

Bangladesh used to give cash assistance ranging from 1 percent to 20 percent on export earnings in order to encourage exporters and make them more competitive in international markets.

STORY ON B1



A portion of a road in Aicha village of Barishal's Sadar upazila caved in due to heavy downpour almost three years ago. While the authorities concerned continue to turn a blind eye, locals keep suffering. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: TITU DAS

# DTG

The 18<sup>th</sup> Dhaka Int'l Textile & Garment Machinery Exhibition

DitaTex DYE-CHEM Dhaka

1 - 4 FEB. 2024

ICCB International Convention City Bashundhara

## TOMORROW!

Pre-registration

\*Children under 16 are not admitted to entry.

Bangladesh Textile Mills Association ORKERS Yankers Trade & Marketing Service Co., Ltd. DTGexpo