



40pc were out of school last year

Show BBS survey findings on 5-24 age groups

MOHIUDDIN ALAMGIR

Almost 41 percent of the population aged between five and 24 years were not in educational institutions last year, says a report of Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics.

Since 2019, the out-of-education population rose by 11.45 percentage points, according to Bangladesh Sample Vital Statistics 2023 released by the BBS yesterday.

On July 1 last year, there were 6.43 crore people aged between five and 24, as per the BBS data. This means almost 2.57 crore children and young adults were not in educational institutions last year.

The survey for the report was done on

YEAR	AT EDN INSTITUTIONS	OUT OF EDN INSTITUTIONS
2023	59.28%	40.72%
2022	59.09%	40.91%
2021	60.13%	39.87%
2020	71.54%	28.46%
2019	70.73%	29.27%

SOURCE: BBS

more than 3.08 lakh households.

The people not in educational institutions either had not enrolled in one or dropped out of one, said Alamgir Hossen, director of Sample Vital Registration System project.

"This study did not try to find out why this trend is highly likely that Covid-19 pandemic forced people out of educational institutions," he told this correspondent yesterday.

Prof Siddiqur Rahman, former director of the Institute of Education and Research at the Dhaka University, said as people were financially hit by coronavirus restrictions, many people

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PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

The Banani portion of the Korail slum was razed to the ground after a fire ran through it for an hour and half yesterday afternoon. The blaze started in the area around 4:05pm, and burned down around 200 shanties.

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NRBC Bank's rejoinder, our response

NRBC Bank PLC has sent a rejoinder in response to our report titled "Gun in boardroom" published on March 21, 2024. In addition to the rejoinder, the bank sent detailed written responses to our questions that we emailed to the bank Chairman Tamal Parvez on March 5, 2024, about two weeks before publication.

For most part, the nearly 3,000-word rejoinder deals with issues that are irrelevant to the content of our report. As a policy, The Daily Star does not print such long rejoinders, especially when they do not address the topics of the reporting. Still, since these responses are a follow-up to the verbal answers given by Tamal Parvez during a face-to-face interview on March 6, 2024, we are

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Bangladesh's birth was a long and bloody affair. Although an independent Bangladesh was born through the declaration of independence by Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman in the early hours of March 26, 1971, the first seeds of independence were sown decades earlier. Today we run the first installment of a three-part special series that looks back at some of the seminal events in 1940s, 1950s and 1960s that laid the groundwork before the final push for liberation.

CHRONICLING BANGLADESH'S BIRTH

Inner Group: the first push for liberation

AHMAD ISTIAK

The 1940s witnessed the rise of some of the first movements for self-determination in East Pakistan. Politicians, journalists, and intellectuals like Moazzem Ahmed Chowdhury, Abdul Aziz Bagmar, Sirajul Alam Khan, and many others played a pivotal role in these early struggles for liberation.

Sheikh Mujib, aware and in some cases involved in these efforts, would soon become the most prominent figure leading the liberation struggle in later decades.

This report highlights some of the key movements and groups associated with the struggle, drawing upon accounts from several books on the Liberation War, namely, Dr Mahfuzur Rahman's "Bangali Jatiyotabadi Andolon O Muktiyuddho", Mohiuddin Ahmad's "Protinayak", Afsan Chowdhury's "Bangladesher Swadhinata



Students take out a protest march against the 1962 Sharif Education Policy on a Dhaka street. PHOTO: COLLECTED

Dharabahikotar Itihas", and Morshed S Hasan's "Swadhinatar Potobhumi: 1960 Doshok".

FIRST ATTEMPT TO FREEDOM Inner Group was a clandestine organisation that began laying

the groundwork for Bangladesh's independence even before the formation of Pakistan in 1947.

Founded by Bangalee politician Moazzem Ahmed

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Build society free from sectarianism

PM urges all in message on eve of Genocide Day

BSS, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has called upon all, including global people, to build a society based on equality and free from all kinds of discrimination and sectarianism.

"We follow Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's peace philosophy while running the country," she said in a message on the eve of Genocide Day 2024.

"We do not want war and conflict; killing men, women, and children has dipped us in solemn grief. We believe in peace. If sustainable peace prevails, the country's overall development will accelerate."

"On March 25, 1971, the Pakistani army carried out the most barbaric

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'Bangladesh robbed of \$14b in 3 years'

Says PM's energy adviser on global oil price hike

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh was robbed of \$14 billion in the past three years because of the spike in global oil prices, said Tawfiq-e-Elahi Chowdhury, the prime minister's energy adviser.

"All the oil companies and exporters increased the oil price. In my calculation, they have robbed us of around \$14 billion since 2022. How can an economy be stable if a country's wealth is taken in such a way?"

Chowdhury's comments came at a seminar on "Unpacking the Economic Manifesto of the Awami League: Trends and Challenges for Tomorrow's Bangladesh" in Dhaka organised by the Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies (BIDS).

In the middle of 2020, crude oil prices plummeted to \$25-\$30 a barrel as demand shrank for the global coronavirus pandemic.

But once the impacts of the global health crisis petered out in 2021, the prices began to creep up and it went through the roof after the Ukraine war that began in February 2022.

The higher prices meant Bangladesh had to pay more for fuel, which ate up the foreign currency reserves at an alarming rate. The shrinking reserves meant the dollar appreciated substantially against the taka, raising the prices of practically everything in Bangladesh, an import-dependent country.

Subsequently, inflation hit a decade high. Economic instability hit Bangladesh after the global fuel price started climbing, Chowdhury said, while blaming the Ukraine war for the price hike.

"Had the Russia-Ukraine war not broken out,



Tawfiq-e-Elahi

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Price caps on agricultural products don't work

Says commerce secy

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Setting the prices of produces would not rein in the spiralling prices of essentials, said Commerce Secretary Tapan Kanti Ghosh yesterday.

The price cap on 29 commodities exists on paper only: most of the items are selling at prices much higher than those fixed by the government, he said at a seminar styled "Impact of syndicate and competition on price of essentials" organised by the International Business Forum of Bangladesh (IBFB).

"From my experience over the last three years, I think that fixing the price will not solve the problem because there are so many suppliers here," he said while calling for making the Bangladesh Competition Commission (BCC) more effective in regulating the market.

Ahasanul Islam Titu, the state minister for commerce, differed with Ghosh about the efficacy of price caps.

"It cannot be said that fixing the price of products does not work at all -- in some cases, it

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List of another 118 martyred intellectuals published

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government has published a list of 118 more martyred intellectuals. With this addition, the names of 560 martyred intellectuals have been published in four phases.

Among those listed are teachers, politicians, social workers, doctors, lawyers, service holders, engineers, playwrights, musicians, and cultural activists.

Liberation War Affairs Minister AKM Mozammel Haque unveiled the list yesterday at a press conference held at the ministry.

On April 7, 2021, the Ministry of Liberation War Affairs published the first list containing the names of 191 martyred intellectuals.

The second list of 143 martyred intellectuals was published on May 29, 2022, followed by the third list of 108 martyred intellectuals on February 15, 2024.

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Vermicelli traders of the port city's Chaktai are preparing for their largest sale as Eid-ul-Fitr cannot be celebrated without a bowl of "shemai". At least 90 percent of the country's vermicelli production is used during Eid season, and the production rate also increases in the months leading up to it. However, due to an increase in the price of flour, the ingredient vermicelli is primarily made of, a 35kg basket of regular shemai now costs Tk 1,200-1,500, while that of the special "lachchha" shemai ranges from Tk 1,500 to 2,200. The photo was taken yesterday. PHOTO: RAJIB RAIHAN

MOSCOW TERROR ATTACK IS releases new videos as Russia blames Ukraine

AGENCIES

Islamic State yesterday released new videos of the attack on the Crocus City concert hall outside Moscow that left 137 people dead, doubling down on its claim that it masterminded the attack even as Russia has sought to place the blame on Ukraine.

The Moscow terrorist shooting is the deadliest IS-claimed attack to date on European soil and the deadliest attack in Russia since the 2004 Beslan school siege.

The videos, which were published by IS's news agency Amaq, showed the gunmen filming themselves as they hunted concertgoers through the lobby of the Crocus City Hall and fired at them from point-blank range, killing scores of people. At one point, one of the gunmen tells another to "kill them and have no mercy".

Russia observed a national day of mourning yesterday for the victims of the carnage.

President Vladimir Putin has vowed to punish those behind the "barbaric terrorist attack", saying four gunmen trying to flee to Ukraine had been arrested.

Kyiv has strongly denied any connection to the attack, with President Volodymyr Zelensky accusing Putin of trying to shift the blame.

Putin, in his only public remarks on the attack, made no reference to IS's claims of responsibility.

At least 137 people, including three children, were killed when camouflaged gunmen stormed the Crocus City Hall, in Moscow's northern suburb of Krasnogorsk, and then set fire to the building on Friday evening.

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