



## BUDGET FOR FY25

# 53pc rise in allocation for debt servicing

Spiralling amount will put strain on reserves, say experts

REJAUL KARIM BYRON

The government's allocation to repay foreign debts may reach Tk 57,000 crore in the next budget, a 53 percent rise from the current year, putting further pressure on the country's dwindling foreign currency reserves.

The interest payments for increasing levels of foreign loans in recent years and the tumbling value of the taka against the US dollar have forced the government to set aside more for debt servicing.

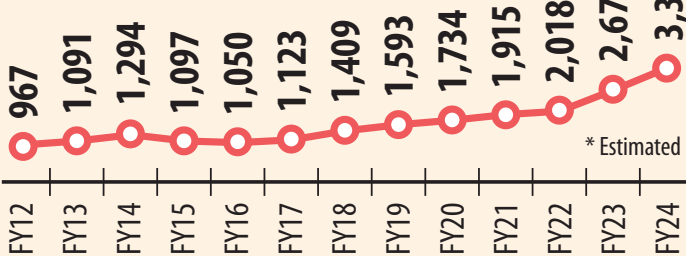
Allocation for foreign debt repayment has been Tk 37,076 crore in the current fiscal year, according to the finance ministry.

### DEBT REPAYMENT

Principal amount and interest

In millions of dollars

SOURCE: FINANCE MINISTRY DATA



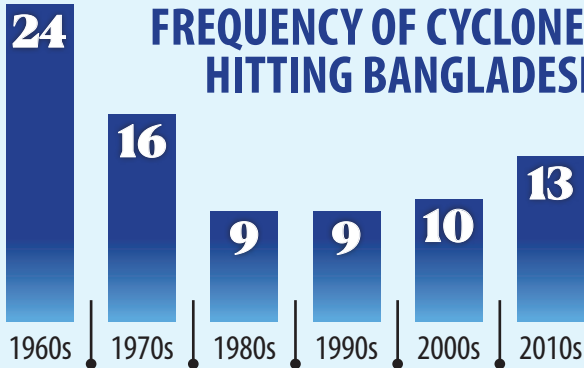
The dollar traded at an average of Tk 109.97 in FY24, according to Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics.

Considering this exchange rate, the government has paid \$3.36 billion in the current fiscal year and will require \$5 billion in the next fiscal year of 2024-2025.

However, an official of the Economic Relations Division (ERD) said the actual amount of the repayment would depend on the exchange rate between the taka and the dollar at the time of repayment.

Bangladesh's foreign debt service requirement has increased over the years, with the amount crossing the \$1 billion-mark for the first time

### FREQUENCY OF CYCLONES HITTING BANGLADESH



### CYCLONES ABOVE 200KMPH WIND SPEEDS

YEAR OF LANDFALL	MAX WIND SPEED	PEOPLE KILLED
Oct 1960	207km/hr	10,000
Oct 1962	200km/hr	11,468
May 1963	203km/hr	11,520
Dec 1965	209km/hr	19,279
Nov 1970	222km/hr	5,00,000
April 1991	225km/hr	1,50,000
Nov 2007 (Sidr)	223km/hr	35,000
May 2020 (Amphan)	240km/hr	20

### CYCLONE REMAL

#### Storm surges feared in 15 dists

May strike today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The deep depression over the Bay turned into Cyclone Remal last night, the Dhaka Met office said.

It asked the Payra and Mongla maritime ports to hoist danger signal No 7 and Cox's Bazar and Chattogram sea ports danger signal No 6.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 2

## Fewer but fiercer since the 90s

Says DoE study

PINAKI ROY

Though Bangladesh is experiencing fewer cyclones than in the 1960s, their intensity has increased, a recent study has found.

In the 1960s, the number of cyclones hitting the Bangladesh coast was 24, which came down to 13 in the 2010s, according to a study conducted by the Department of Environment with the help of

the Center for Environmental and Geographic Information Services (CEGIS).

The country did not experience any super cyclones -- a cyclonic storm which at least packs wind speed of 222kmph -- between 1960 and 1989. However, between 1990 and 2020, at least three of them hit the coast.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 2

### BENAZIR, FAMILY'S 114 ACRES

## All bought while he helmed Rab and police

Show ACC documents

EMRUL HASAN BAPPI and MUNTAKIM SAAD

Former IGP Benazir Ahmed and his family members acquired almost all their land during his tenure as the chief of the police and Rab, according to property records listed by the Anti-Corruption Commission.

ACC documents show that Benazir and his family bought 114 acres through 83 deeds. A total of 112 acres of that land were bought when Benazir served as the inspector general of police and the director general of the Rapid Action Battalion.

They purchased 63.97 acres via 50 deeds during Benazir's tenure as the IGP from 2020 to 2022. Another 48.15 acres were bought through 27 deeds between 2016 and 2019 when he served as the Rab DG.

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### MP AZIM MURDER

## Hitmen were never paid

Say investigators

MOHAMMAD JAMIL KHAN and RASHIDUL HASAN

The assailants who killed Jhenaidah-4 MP Anwarul Azim Anar were not paid the hefty sum they were promised by Aktaruzzaman, who hired them, investigators say.

Aktaruzzaman, known as Shaheen Mia in his hometown Jhenaidah, may have promised them Tk 5 crore or more for killing Azim, said an investigator, adding that the exact amount will be known after he is arrested.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 4

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## Ensure smooth supply of power, gas to factories

### Business leaders urge PM

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Business leaders yesterday urged the prime minister to ensure uninterrupted power and gas supply to their factories. They also demanded the reinstatement of the previous rates of cash incentives on export receipts until the country graduates from the Least Developed Country group in 2026.

The leaders, who met Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at the Gono Bhaban yesterday, wanted different tax benefits in the next budget. They also urged her to ensure that officials of customs and NBR do not harass them.

Led by Mahbubul Alam, president of the Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FBCCI), the meeting discussed the overall business climate and the upcoming national budget with the PM.

They also held a meeting with Salman F Rahman, adviser to the prime minister on private industries and investment, at the office of Bangladesh Investment Development Authority in Dhaka.

Business leaders have been demanding that the import duty on solar panels be lowered as the high tariff is discouraging factories to use them.

A group of businesspeople also held a meeting with Tawfiq-e-Elahi Chowdhury, the power, energy, and mineral resources' adviser to the prime minister, on Wednesday.

They urged the same regarding solar panels and cited the target to produce over 12,000 megawatts of renewable energy as per the Paris Agreement.

Apart from the FBCCI, leaders from Dhaka Chamber of Commerce and Industry; Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association; Bangladesh Textile Mills Association; Bangladesh Knitwear Manufacturers and Exporters Association; cement manufacturers association; and many other chambers and trade bodies attended the meeting.



A student shouts slogans during a march as students occupy the main building of the University of Chile in support of Palestinian people in Gaza, amid the ongoing conflict between Israel and Hamas, in Santiago, Chile, on Friday.

PHOTO: REUTERS

## Israel strikes Rafah defying ICJ's order

Tel Aviv may renew ceasefire talks 'this week'; death toll in Palestinian enclave rises to 35,903

### AGENCIES

Israeli air strikes and artillery pounded Rafah on yesterday, despite the International Court of Justice ordering an immediate halt to its military offensive in the southern Gaza city.

Palestinian witnesses and AFP teams reported Israeli strikes or shelling in Rafah, the central city of Deir al-Balah, Gaza City, Jabalia refugee camp and elsewhere.

The health ministry in Hamas-run Gaza said yesterday that at least 35,903 people have been killed in the territory since October 7. The toll includes 46 deaths over the past 24 hours, a ministry statement said.

In a case brought by South Africa

alleging the Israeli military operation amounts to "genocide", the ICJ ordered Israel to halt its Rafah offensive and demanded the immediate release of hostages still held by Palestinian militants.

The Hague-based ICJ, whose orders are legally binding but lack direct enforcement mechanisms, also instructed Israel to keep open the Rafah crossing between Egypt and Gaza, which Israel closed earlier this month.

In its ruling, the ICJ said Israel must "immediately halt its military offensive, and any other action in the Rafah Governorate, which may inflict on the Palestinian group in Gaza conditions of life that could bring about its physical

destruction in whole or in part".

The UN court ordered Israel to allow UN-mandated investigators "unimpeded access" to Gaza to look into the genocide allegations.

Meanwhile, France's president, Qatar's prime minister and the foreign ministers of Saudi Arabia, Egypt and Jordan held talks Friday on the Gaza war and ways to set up a Palestinian state alongside Israel, the French presidency said.

French President Emmanuel Macron organised the meeting amid growing international concerns over the Israel-Hamas war. It came a few hours after the UN's top court ordered Israel to halt its offensive in the Gaza city of Rafah.

## Rickshaw driver found dead in paddy field

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Jamalpur

Police yesterday recovered the body of an autorickshaw driver from a paddy field in Parpara village of Kandua union under Jamalpur Sadar Upazila.

The deceased was identified as Shahadat Hossain, son of Javed Ali of Pathalia village of Sharilpur union of the upazila.

Quoting family members, Mohammad Mohabbat Kabir, officer-in-charge of Jamalpur Sadar Police Station said Shahadat Hossain left the house with his autorickshaw Friday night but didn't return home.

Later in the morning, locals found him dead in a paddy field in Parpara village and informed police, the OC said.

Police recovered the body and sent it to Jamalpur General Hospital for autopsy.

His autorickshaw was also recovered, but the battery was stolen.

"The body bore several injury marks. No case is yet to be filed over the killing," the OC said, adding that the victim might have been killed by robbers.

## Four children drown

UNB, Sylhet/Chudanga

Four children, including two siblings, drowned yesterday in Sylhet and Chudanga.

In Sylhet, two sisters drowned while swimming in a river in Golapganj upazila.

Suheda Begum, 10, and Majeda Begum, 5, were daughters of Joyanal Ahmed of Fatehpur Paschimpara village of the upazila, said Golapganj Model Police Station Officer-in-Charge Masudul Amin.

Suheda and Majeda drowned while swimming in the Kushiara River near their house in the afternoon. Their bodies were recovered around 3:00pm.

In Chudanga, two children drowned in a pond while playing next to it at Shakharia village in Jibannagar upazila.

Tabassum, 6, daughter of Ashrafal Haque and Ritu, 5, daughter of Raju Ahmed, went missing in the morning. Later, their bodies were found in the pond next to the house.

SM Javed Hasan, officer-in-charge of Jibannagar Police Station, said an unnatural death case has been filed with the police station.

The bodies were handed over to their relatives, added the OC.

### WHAT DO THE STORM SIGNALS MEAN?

**DISTANT CAUTIONARY SIGNAL 1**  
There is a region of squally weather (wind speed of 61kmph) in the distant sea where a storm may form.

**DISTANT WARNING SIGNAL 2**  
A storm (wind speed of 62-88kmph) has formed in the distant deep sea. Ships may face danger if they leave harbour.

**LOCAL CAUTIONARY SIGNAL 3**  
The port is threatened by squally weather (wind speed of 40-50 kmph).

**LOCAL WARNING SIGNAL 4**  
The port is threatened by a storm (wind speed of 51-61kmph) but it doesn't appear that the danger is as yet sufficiently great to justify extreme precautionary measures.

**DANGER SIGNAL 5**  
The port will experience severe weather from a storm of slight or moderate intensity (wind speed of 62-88kmph) that is expected to cross the coast.

**DANGER SIGNAL 6**  
The port will experience severe weather from a storm of slight or moderate intensity (wind speed of 62-88kmph) that is expected to cross the coast.

**DANGER SIGNAL 7**  
The port will experience severe weather from a storm of light or moderate intensity (wind speed of 62-88kmph) that is expected to cross over or near the port.

**GREAT DANGER SIGNAL 8**  
The port will experience severe weather from a storm of great intensity (wind speed of 89kmph or more) that is expected to cross the coast.

**GREAT DANGER SIGNAL 9**  
The port will experience severe weather from a storm of great intensity (wind speed of 89kmph or more) that is expected to cross the coast.

**GREAT DANGER SIGNAL 10**  
The port will experience severe weather from a storm of great intensity (wind speed of 89kmph or more) that is expected to cross over or near the port.

**FAILURE OF COMMUNICATION 11**  
Communications with the Storm Warning Centre have broken down and local officers consider that a devastating cyclone is approaching.

## Fewer but fiercer since the 90s

FROM PAGE 1

"We had a general conception that the number of cyclones has been increasing in the Bay due to climate change. But it is the harshness or intensity of the cyclones that is increasing, not the numbers," said BUET Professor Rezaul Rahman after reviewing the study titled "Projection of Sea Level Rise and Development of Digital Elevation Models in Support of SLR Decision Making".

Analysing the data on cyclones that made landfall on the Bangladesh coast from 1960 to 2020, meteorologists found that 24 cyclones hit the country in the 60s, while only 16 hit the country in the next decade. There were nine cyclones each in the 80s and 90s, 10 in the 2000s, and 13 in the 2010s.

The analysis considered a weather event as a cyclone only if its wind speed was greater than or equal to 63kmph (34 knots).

From 1990 to 2020, there were three super cyclones – one in April 1991, Sidr in 2007 and Amphan in 2020.

Of the around 80 tropical cyclones that form across the world's waters, 5.5 percent form in the Bay of Bengal. Around 17 percent of the 508 cyclones that formed in the Bay over the last century have made landfalls in Bangladesh.

Bangladesh is particularly vulnerable to tropical cyclones which usually from late April to early

November.

The formation of cyclones largely depends on sea surface temperatures reaching 26-27 degrees Celsius.

From 1951 to 1987, the temperature had been on a constant rise, increasing the intensity of cyclones, the study said.

The devastating impacts of cyclones are measured not only by the storm's severity but also by the extent of loss and damage to human life and property.

The cyclones of 1970 and 1991 caused high waves leading to the flooding of the country's coastal regions and causing the deaths of over 500,000 and 138,000 people respectively.

Sidr hit Bangladesh in 2007 with heavy rains, strong winds and storm surge, resulting in the death of around 3,000 people and damage to property worth around \$450 million, according to reports.

Speaking to The Daily Star, Professor Emeritus Ainun Nishat of BRAC University and a leading climate expert, said though the number of cyclones has been decreasing, the sea surface temperature is on the rise and so, many cyclone-like weather events are taking place in the Bay.

"While we can't avoid cyclones, we can take precautionary measures like building our embankments properly. Being well prepared will help reduce the catastrophic impacts of cyclones," he added.

## Storm surges feared in 15 dists

FROM PAGE 1

The maximum sustained wind speed within the 54km of Cyclone Remal's eye was 62kmph and it could increase up to 88kmph, said Met officials.

State Minister for Disaster Management and Relief Md Mohibur Rahman yesterday said Remal was expected to make landfall in the coastal districts between Satkhira and Cox's Bazar by this evening.

The coastal districts of Satkhira, Khulna, Bagerhat, Pirojpur, Jhalakhati, Barguna, Bhola, Patuakhali, Barishal, Noakhali, Laxmipur, Feni, Cumilla, Chattogram, Cox's Bazar, and their offshore islands and chars are likely to be inundated by storm surges of 3-5 feet above the normal astronomical tide.

Abul Kalam Mallik, a meteorologist at Bangladesh Meteorological Department, said the cyclone will head towards the coast at a speed of 12 to 15kmph.

"If it gathers strength, it may gain speed," he added.

However, Indian Meteorological Department (IMD) said Remal may have wind speeds of up to 120kmph.

Speaking at a press briefing at the Secretariat, State Minister Mohibur yesterday said nearly 4,000 shelter centres have been readied in the coastal districts with adequate amount of dry food.

"We have 80,000 volunteers ready to tackle the situation and all necessary preparations have been made," he added.

The state minister also warned of heavy rain and landslides in the hilly areas.

Yesterday, Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority (BIWTA) suspended operations of all launches from the Dhaka River Port.

In a notice, the BIWTA said operation of all launches will remain halted from 10:00pm yesterday until further notice to ensure safety.

## 53pc rise in allocation for debt servicing

FROM PAGE 1

In 2012-13, the amount went past \$2 billion. The following year, Bangladesh paid \$2.67 billion in debt servicing. The amount is going to be over \$3 billion in the current fiscal year.

In the first nine months of FY24, debt service repayment in both principal and interest amounted to \$2.57 billion, a 49 percent increase year on year.

Interest payments alone reached \$1.05 billion in July-March. This was the first time the interest payment crossed the \$1-billion mark. It was \$485 million in the first nine months of FY23.

Prof Mustafizur Rahman, a distinguished fellow at the Centre for Policy Dialogue, said spending \$2 billion or \$3 billion in servicing debts would not be a problem if the forex reserves were \$46 billion, which was the case in early 2022.

When the reserves are less than \$20 billion, spending \$5 billion to repay loans becomes difficult because the payment has to be made in foreign currencies, and for foreign currencies, the country needs the earnings, he said.

On May 21, the reserves stood at \$18.61 billion, central bank data showed.

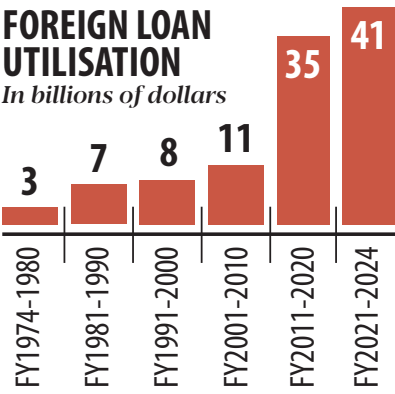
"In the next few years, debt servicing will be a major issue, and we should be careful in managing the debt repayment and try our best to earn more through export and remittance," Prof Mustafizur said.

Besides, the government needs to

demonstrate zero tolerance on capital flight, which often takes place through hundi, he said.

The economist said the government should be careful in choosing and implementing projects and ensure the desired outcome of the schemes.

With its rising per capita income, Bangladesh's access to cheap loans is decreasing and foreign borrowing is also



becoming costlier.

According to an ERD report, the country now has to borrow at the costlier market-based rates to cover the development spending.

The interest rate risk is high when the debt portfolio is dominated by market-based rates because the volume of the payment is based on the vagaries of the global economy.

## Hitmen were never paid

FROM PAGE 1

However, Aktaruzzaman, a Bangladesh born US citizen is believed to have fled to New York on May 18.

Requesting anonymity, an officer of a law enforcement agency said the assailants were operatives of the Purbu Banglar Communist Party (PBCP).

Even 24-year-old Jihad Hawladar, who dismembered the corpse, was an operative of the PBCP. He used to live illegally in Mumbai where he worked as a butcher.

Amanullah, who was in charge of the killing mission, was a PBCP leader, said the officer.

Aktaruzzaman gave them money to travel to Kolkata and stay there.

After they were done, the killers only had Rs 4.30 lakh they found on Azim, the officer said.

When the lawmaker, who used to run a gold smuggling racket with Aktaruzzaman, reached India and went to his friend Gopal Biswas' house, he had Rs 10,000. Gopal then gave him Rs 4.20 lakh, the officer said, quoting Amanullah, who along with Celesty Rahman and Tanvir Bhuiyan, is on an eight-day remand.

The West Bengal CID yesterday said it may seek Aktaruzzaman's extradition from the US, so that a trial can be held in India.

"India has an extradition treaty with the US. Bangladesh does not. We may seek his extradition to India because the crime occurred here," a senior CID

officer said, requesting anonymity.

Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan yesterday said the government was working with India, Nepal, Interpol, and the US to bring Aktaruzzaman to Bangladesh.

Azim went to Kolkata on May 12 and stayed the night at his friend Gopal's house. He left the next day, saying he had a doctor's appointment. Gopal later received a couple of texts from Azim's mobile phone that said there was no need to call him. On Wednesday, India and Bangladesh police said the MP was murdered in a flat in New Town, Kolkata.

An officer at a law enforcement agency in Bangladesh said some of the accused tried to kill Azim in India before.

In mid-January, Aktaruzzaman along with Celesty Rahman and another woman named Arisha went to Kolkata and invited Azim to meet them there. But the latter did not fall into the trap, said another source.

Harun Or Rashid, additional commissioner (DB) of the Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP), said the accused previously failed twice in their attempts to kill the lawmaker.

They planned to kill the MP in the country before the last national election, he told reporters on Mintoo Road.

"Their plan was to take him to that flat in Kolkata and keep him there for two days during which they would blackmail him into giving them money

through hundi," he said.

"They used chloroform to make the lawmaker unconscious. As he did not regain consciousness, he was killed. Then they disposed of the body."

"After that, the killers went to different places with the MP's mobile phone to confuse everyone."

"The killers first took him to the flat, and then took one of his phones and went to another place. Besides, the killers came to the Beanpole border with four mobile phones after killing him."

According to investigators, the accused named Sayem and Faisal changed their appearance by shaving their heads.

They even tried to get the lawmaker's political rivals framed for the murder.

Asked how the investigation will make progress as the body is yet to be found, Harun said, "We will analyse everything. The accused are giving information. We are not disclosing everything for the sake of the investigation."

"Besides, the Kolkata police have found evidence, therefore, a murder case has been filed [in Kolkata], Indian police are investigating this murder case very seriously."

"A team of Indian police is investigating here in Bangladesh. They are interrogating the accused [arrested in Dhaka]."

A three-member team of detectives will go to India soon to investigate the murder, said Harun, adding a government order has been issued in this regard.

[Our correspondent in New Delhi contributed to this report.]



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## Govt for inclusive development

### Hasina tells Buddhist community leaders



UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday reiterated that the Awami League government is dedicated to the socioeconomic development of all citizens, regardless of their religion.

"I want to make one thing clear: we aim to build up our country without considering religion or caste. We work for the people and their socioeconomic upliftment," she said.

The prime minister made these remarks while exchanging pleasantries with religious leaders and eminent personalities of the Buddhist community at Gono Bhaban on the occasion of Buddha Purnima.

Hasina emphasised her government's commitment to progress and unity.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 6



Little Raisa cannot stop laughing as soon as her elder sister Sathi scoops up their pet cat in her arms and shows it to her. The photo was taken in Khulna's Khalishpur area yesterday.

PHOTO: HABIBUR RAHMAN

## A legacy that lives on

### Nation celebrates 125th birth anniv of Nazrul



UNB, Dhaka

The 125th birth anniversary of Kazi Nazrul Islam, Bangladesh's national poet, was celebrated yesterday.

Born in Churulia village, West Bengal in 1899, Nazrul's works inspired resistance against injustice and oppression. His fiery poetry and creative genius have left an indelible mark on Bangla literature.

Marking the day, various government and non-government organisations, along with cultural platforms, organised programmes, including cultural performances and discussions on Nazrul's life and legacy.

The poet's birth anniversary was also observed in Mymensingh and Daulatpur, Cumilla, locations of special significance to him.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 2

## BANGABANDHU SHILPA NAGAR

## RHD to turn 10km road into 4-lane

### It will enhance connectivity with Dhaka-Ctg Highway, port

TUHIN SHUBHRA ADHIKARY

With the Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Shilpa Nagar expected to revolutionise the country's trade, the roads authority is planning to make its connectivity smoother with the Dhaka-Chattogram Highway and the Chattogram Sea Port.

The Roads and Highways Department (RHD) is going to turn the existing 10km road, which connects Shilpa Nagar with the important highway, into a four-lane one.

The agency has submitted a development project proposal, involving Tk 563.29 crore, to expand the road, which was proposed as Sheikh Hasina Swarani.

The Project Evaluation Committee of the Planning Commission is expected to hold a

meeting soon, an official said.

The Shilpa Nagar, built on about 33,800 acres or 136.86 square kilometres of land in Mirsarai, was launched by Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in November 2022.

The biggest economic zone in Bangladesh is located 200km from Dhaka, 60km from Chattogram city and 70km from Chattogram Port and the Shah Amanat International Airport.

Bangladesh Economic Zones Authority, the implementing agency of the flagship economic zone, aims to attract investments of \$20 billion for the Shilpa Nagar by 2030, generating employment opportunities for around 14 lakh people.

Till January, five companies have started commercial operations at their industrial units in the industrial zone.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

## SOLAR INSTALLATION

## '20pc EPZ spaces can add 222MW to nat'l grid'

### Speakers tell event

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

An additional 222 megawatts could be added to the national grid if only 20 percent of open spaces within eight Export Processing Zones are utilised for solar installations, according to a study.

The study, conducted by Estiaque Bari, senior lecturer at the Department of Economics, East West University, also said over 333MW could be added to the national grid if 30 percent of open spaces can be utilised.

The findings were unveiled at a roundtable organised by Change Initiative at The Daily Star Centre in the capital.

Zakir Hossain Khan, chief executive at Change Initiative, said, "If 80 percent of spaces and household rooftops come under the net metering, the power generation will be massive and the country will be highly benefited."

Net metering is a billing tool that allows one to send the excess energy the panels generate to the local grid in exchange for credits on monthly electric bills.

The study outlined several challenges hindering the widespread adoption of rooftop solar systems in EPZs, including the lack of

### CHALLENGES

» Lack of comprehensive policy

» High tax on solar equipment

» Weak transportation systems

» Inefficient energy transmission

### RECOMMENDATIONS

» More funding

» Govt subsidies

» Promoting net metering system

» Project-based solar initiatives

comprehensive policies, high taxes and duties on solar equipment, weak transportation

SEE PAGE 4 COL 7

## 'Ansar Al Islam formed new group to run activities'

### Rab says after arresting 3 members of 'Shahadat'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Rapid Action Battalion arrested three members of "Shahadat, a new organisation based on the ideology of banned militant outfit Ansar Al Islam", in separate drives in Dhaka and Narayanganj on Friday.

The arrestees are Ismail Hossain, 25, recruitment head of "Shahadat", and its regional trainers Jihad Hussain alias Huzaifa, 24, and Aminul Islam, 25.

Quoting the arrestees Rab Legal and Media Wing Director Commander Arafat Islam at a press briefing yesterday said the arrestees are actually the members of Ansar Al Islam.

But the leaders formed the new organisation, Shahadat, as the name, Ansar Al Islam, is known to all and sometimes it is difficult to continue activities under the banner, the Rab official said.

The number of members of this organisation is more than 100. Ismail, who was the head of the recruiting wing of Ansar Al Islam, is the head of the "Shahadat" group, Commander Arafat Islam said.

The three were arrested from Dhaka's Gulistan and Narayanganj's Signboard area, the Rab official said at the briefing at Karwan Bazar.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

## 'Prescribe generic names of medicine'

### Experts say it will promote competition, lower healthcare costs

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Generic names of medicine should be written in prescriptions, a practice followed by most developed countries, said speakers at an event yesterday.

Health experts also said even neighbouring India has made it mandatory to prescribe medication this way. Bangladesh lacks such law or guideline, they added.

They were speaking at a policy dialogue programme titled "Can the use of generic names in prescriptions effectively control aggressive Drug Marketing in Bangladesh?", organised by the Institute of Health Economics at Dhaka University.

Experts expressed concern over the prevailing practice of using brand names in prescriptions. They argued that this practice not only reduces competition in the medicine market but also contributes to the increased burden of healthcare costs on patients and their families.

Prof Ahmedul Kabir, additional director general (admin) of the Directorate General of Health Services, emphasised the need for holistic reform in the healthcare sector.

Prof Syed Abdul Hamid of the Institute of Health Economics at DU pointed out the limitations faced by the Directorate General of Drug Administration in ensuring quality control and uniform pricing of generic medicine due to a shortage of human resources.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1



PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

Commuters travel through dust, which has covered the entire area as road work proceeds without necessary measures to curb pollution in the capital's Tilkatuli area. Yesterday, Dhaka ranked third on the list of cities worldwide with the worst air quality with an AQI value of 132.

## Canada deputy minister arrives in Dhaka

### To discuss Rohingya, Indo-Pacific issues

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Canada's Deputy Minister of International Development Christopher MacLennan arrived in Bangladesh yesterday evening to discuss the ongoing Rohingya crisis and advance the Indo-Pacific Strategy.

During the two-day visit, he will meet with officials and development partners to discuss Canada's international assistance in the context of Bangladesh's graduation from Least Developed Country status in 2026 and opportunities to leverage Canada's Indo-Pacific Strategy in Bangladesh, according to a statement of the Canadian High Commission in Dhaka.

MacLennan will also have discussions about the ongoing response to the Rohingya refugee crisis and the situation at the border.





## Aziz Khan next chair of Unicef Int'l Council

### CITY DESK

Unicef has announced Muhammed A z i z Khan as



the incoming chair of the Unicef International Council, succeeding the inaugural chair, Maria Ahlstrom-Bondestam.

He will assume the position in November this year, a press release issued by Unicef said yesterday.

The Unicef International Council is a unique community of approximately 150 private philanthropists and partners who want to optimise their philanthropic investments for children by bringing together their funding, leadership, and expertise.

Together, International Council members have invested more than US\$ 552 million in Unicef, in support of children around the world.

Aziz Khan is a businessman, and founder and Trustee of the Anjuman and Aziz Charitable Trust (AACT), together with his wife Anjuman Khan. He and his family have been part of the Unicef International Council since 2022.

## Prescribe

FROM PAGE 3

Prof Mushtaq Hossain, a public health expert and former adviser to the Institute of Epidemiology, Disease Control and Research, stressed the importance of shifting focus away from medicine-centric medical care and advocated for a public health movement to demand prescriptions with generic names.

Shikha Ganguly, a physician at the Department of Obstetrics and Gynaecology of Dhaka Medical College Hospital, said doctors support the idea of using generic names in prescriptions.

She emphasised the need for strict adherence to rules by pharmacies, including the presence of registered pharmacists in each outlets.

Experts also said prescribing medicine using generic names can potentially lower healthcare costs by promoting competition, reducing out-of-pocket expenses, and empowering consumers to make informed decisions about their medical needs.

They also stressed the importance of ensuring quality control and regulatory measures in the pharmaceutical sector to effectively implement this practice.

## PRAYER TIMING

MAY 26

Fazr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib	Esha
AZAN 4-05	12-45	5-00	6-40	8-00
JAMAAT 4-40	1-15	5-15	6-45	8-30

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

**OFFICE SPACE TO-LET**  
JCX Business Tower-  
Bashundhara R/A  
Space: 10,030 SFT  
Contact: 01730014316, 01711526212



PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

Fishermen catch fish in a pond leased for the weekend. They pooled Tk 2,000 each for the opportunity to fish in this waterbody, teeming with Rui, Katla, and Pangas. The photos were taken in Gazipur's Dhirasram area on Friday.



# 7 killed in road crashes

### STAR REPORT

At least seven people were killed and four injured in road accidents in four districts in last two days.

In Chattogram, two people died while two others were injured after the CNG-run auto-rickshaw carrying them collided with a bus on Chattogram-Khagrachhari regional highway in Hathazari yesterday.

The deceased are Abdul Motaheb Tuku, 70, and Md Absar, 50. The incident took place around 1:30pm in Muhuri Battala area of Mirjapur union, said Mofiz Uddin Bhuiyan, officer-in-charge of Najirhat Highway Police.

The auto-rickshaw driver lost control over the steering after a speeding private car tried to overtake it. To avoid collision, the auto-rickshaw stopped in the middle of the busy road and got hit by an oncoming passenger bus.

The injured were sent to Hathazari Upazila Health Complex, said police.

In Jashore, a truck driver was killed and two people were injured when the vehicle hit a tree beside Jashore-Magura road in Sadipur area of Jashore yesterday. Arijul Islam, 30, died on the spot.

The accident took place around 7:00am after the driver of the truck lost control over the steering.

In Tangail, two people were killed as a covered-van hit a lorry from behind in Kalihati upazila yesterday.

Covered-van driver Alamgir Hossain, 39, of Jashore; and his

around 6:00am.

In Mymensingh, a couple was killed as a bus ran them over on Dhaka-Mymensingh highway in Bhaluka upazila on Friday night.

Abbas Ali, 70, and his wife Hajera Khatun, 60, died on the spot. The accident happened while



PHOTO: RAJIB RAIHAN

The mangled auto-rickshaw after accident in Chattogram yesterday.

helper Mohammad Shariful, 18, died on the spot, said police.

The incident took place on Dhaka-Tangail-Bangabandhu Bridge Highway near Pungli Bridge

they were crossing the highway in Hobirbari Aamtoli area, said police.

Police seized the bus but its driver managed to flee.

## 'They are not real politicians'

### Quader says about those involved in violence

#### STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Those involved in "violence" are miscreants and must be punished for the sake of national interest, said Awami League General Secretary Obaidul Quader yesterday.

"Those involved in beating police and Ansar members to death in broad daylight, and attacking the residence of the chief justice and journalists are not real politicians," he said.

Quader said this after laying wreaths at the grave of Kazi Nazrul Islam near Dhaka University.

"We have no agenda to send political leaders and activists to jail. Individuals involved in arson and arms trading are subject to legal action and imprisonment based on severity of their offenses."

# A legacy that lives on RHD to turn 10km

FROM PAGE 3

At Dhaka University, Vice-Chancellor Prof ASM Maksud Kamal led a gathering of teachers, students, and staff at Aparajeo Bangla at 6:15am to lay floral wreaths at Nazrul's tomb.

A discussion on Nazrul's life and works followed.

State Minister for Cultural Affairs Naheed Ezaher Khan and ministry officials placed wreaths at the poet's grave at 6:30am followed by Bangla Academy members.

The ministry has planned a three-day "Nazrul Utsab 1431" starting from May 25 at Chhayanaout Sangskriti Bhaban, Dhanmondi.

Nazrul, who wrote 2,600 songs, 600 poems, three novels, and 43 articles, began his career while serving in the British Army in 1917. His famous

poem "Bidrohi" (The Rebel) was published in 1921. He later launched the magazine "Dhumketu" (The Comet) in 1922. His active participation in the Indian independence movement led to multiple imprisonments by British authorities.

Nazrul's works, rich in themes of freedom, humanity, love, and revolution, opposed religious, caste, and gender discrimination. His contributions to Bangla music include creating the genre "Nazrul Geeti", encompassing 4,000 songs.

In 1942, Nazrul began losing his voice and memory due to Pick's disease, a rare neurodegenerative ailment. In 1972, his family moved to Bangladesh at the government's invitation. DU awarded him an honorary post-doctoral degree in 1974, and he received the Ekushey Padak in 1976.

Nazrul passed away in Dhaka on August 29, 1976, but his legacy endures.

FROM PAGE 3

RHD has built a 10km road from the Barotakia area at Dhaka-Chattogram Highway to the Shilpa Nagar in 2022, Mohammad Jahed Hossain, superintendent engineer (Chattogram circle) of RHD said.

After launching the Shilpa Nagar, the Prime Minister's Office directed officials to turn the road into four-lane to facilitate vehicular movement, he told The Daily Star yesterday.

He said they have already acquired most of the land for the expansion

under the previous project. He said it would require three years to implement the project.

The existing road is the only road to connect Shilpa Nagar, he said.

Replying to a question, he said the Shilpa Nagar authorities have proposed to build two more connecting roads.

"Currently, a study is going on to expand the Dhaka-Chattogram Highway. Decision regarding their proposal would be taken upon completion of the study," he added.

## Ansar Al Islam formed

FROM PAGE 3

During primary interrogation, Ismail said the organisation is being run by a person named Salahuddin, currently residing abroad, the Rab official said.

Its other members are training in different parts of the country, including

Dhaka, Chattogram, Jashore and Satkhira, he added.

Ismail, a madrasa student in Narayanganj, met Salahuddin about a year ago and joined him. Meanwhile, Jihad is a madrasa teacher while Aminul is a garment worker.

# Move to confiscate Benazir's assets an eyewash: Rizvi

UNB, Dhaka

BNP Senior Joint Secretary General Ruhul Kabir Rizvi yesterday claimed that the move to freeze bank accounts and confiscate all assets of former IGP Benazir Ahmed is nothing more than an "eyewash".

"Do you think the government's intelligence agencies were unaware of the incidents involving Benazir Ahmed... They surely knew, but didn't take any action," Rizvi said.

He said the decision to freeze Benazir's accounts and seize all assets stemmed from international pressure and public discourse.

He also claimed that the government would protect Benazir -- as during his tenure as IG of Police and DG of Rab -- he indulged in killings and extrajudicial executions of opposition leaders and committed crimes against humanity as per its directives.

# Specify who wants a new state carved out of Bangladesh

### Manna asks PM

UNB, Dhaka

Nagorik Oikya President Mahmudur Rahman Manna yesterday urged the prime minister to clarify who are conspiring to create a Christian state taking parts from Bangladesh and Myanmar.

Addressing a sit-in, he expressed scepticism whether any foreign nation actually approached the PM with such an offer.

The Jatiyatabadi Motor Chalak Dal organised the event in front of Jatiya Press Club.

Manna said the PM made up a story saying that she was offered a hassle-free reelection in the January 7 polls if she allowed a foreign country to build an airbase in Bangladesh territory.

"We want to know from the prime minister, which person, which government, and which country made that offer," Manna said.

# 20pc EPZ spaces

FROM PAGE 3

systems, and inefficient energy transmission and distribution networks.

It also underscored the need for reforms in the EPZ Act to facilitate the adoption of net metering systems by industries.

To address these challenges and capitalise on the potential of solar energy, the study

proposed a range of short-term and medium-term recommendations. Short-term recommendations include increasing the size of funds under Bangladesh Bank's refinancing

scheme and introducing government subsidies for firms operating in industrial clusters. Medium-term

recommendations focus on promoting net metering systems in industrial clusters, prioritising Economic Zones, and implementing project-based solar initiatives in existing EPZs.

Abul Khayer Md Aminur Rahman, member (power) at Bangladesh Energy Regulatory Commission, reiterated the government's commitment to generating 40 percent of electricity from clean energy sources by 2041.

However, Rahman acknowledged the challenges faced in implementing solar projects in EPZs, citing difficulties in overcoming bureaucratic hurdles.

He proposed allocating a portion of wheeling charges for net metering implementation in EPZ areas to benefit both sides.

Mohammad Hossain, director general of power cell at Power Division, advocated for increased solar power utilisation as an alternative to address the country's persistent gas crisis.

Nurul Akhter, president of the Solar and Renewable Energy Association, stressed the importance of raising awareness about solar net metering among industrial entrepreneurs. He underscored the potential of net metering to significantly meet electricity demand in factories.

Mohammad Nasiruddin Miah, executive engineer of Desco, Siddique Zobayer, a former member of Sustainable and Renewable Energy Development Authority, and representatives from both government and private sectors spoke at the event.



## Eastern Bank PLC.

HEAD OFFICE, 100 GULSHAN AVENUE, DHAKA-1212

## TENDER NOTICE

Eastern Bank PLC. (EBL) invites sealed bids from bona fide/eligible suppliers for the following services/items:

- Lot 1: Servers
- Lot 2: Laptop and Desktop Computers
- Lot 3: MySQL Enterprise Edition
- Lot 4: Remote Access Software
- Lot 5: Video Wall Display Solution

Interested bidders are requested to collect the RFP document electronically by sending an email from their official email address to [bidit@ebi-bd.com](mailto:bidit@ebi-bd.com) mentioning lot & item names, name of the company and the authorized contact person, mailing address, telephone & mobile phone numbers on or before **Tuesday, 4 June 2024**. Queries to be mailed by **Thursday, 6 June 2024**.

Bids prepared in accordance with the instructions contained in the RFP document must be submitted in two separate envelopes, clearly marking 'Technical' and 'Financial' offers on the envelopes to the Office of the Chairman, Purchase Committee, Head Office, Eastern Bank PLC., 100 Gulshan Avenue, Dhaka-1212 on or before **Thursday, 13 June 2024**.

Tenderers are allowed to bid for all lots or any lot separately. Any bid not submitted separately against each lot will be rejected. However, common documents need not to be submitted for multiple lots, submission with one lot is enough.



## সতর্কীকরণ বিজ্ঞপ্তি

এতদ্বারা সংশ্লিষ্ট সকলের অবগতির জন্য জানানো যাচ্ছে যে, জনাব প্রান্ত শিকদার (রাসেল), পিতাঃ তপন শিকদার, মাতাঃ ফেনশি শিকদার, গ্রামঃ ধুপীপাড়া, উত্তর ধুবং, ডাকঘরঃ ধুবং ৪৭২০, কুতুবদিয়া, কক্সবাজার; জিডি ট্রাকিং নং: OEAWMH, জিডি নং: ৫৩০, জাতীয় পরিচয়পত্র নং-১৯৫৩৬২৭৬৬৬; "র‍্যাংকস পেট্রোলিয়াম লিমিটেড"-এ বিগত জানুয়ারী, ২০২৩ খ্রিষ্টাব্দ হতে চুক্তিভিত্তিক "বিক্রয় প্রতিনিধি" হিসেবে চট্টগ্রাম মহানগর অঞ্চলে কর্মরত ছিলো। কর্মরত থাকা অবস্থায় প্রতিষ্ঠানের নিয়মভঙ্গ করে বিভিন্ন ব্যক্তি ও প্রতিষ্ঠানের সাথে ব্যক্তিগত ও সংঘবদ্ধ ভাবে আর্থিক অনিয়মে যুক্ত হয় এবং উদ্দেশ্যপ্রনোদিত ভাবে প্রতিষ্ঠানের ব্যবসায়িক সুনাম ক্ষুণ্ণ করার লক্ষ্যে গোপনে কার্যকলাপ পরিচালনা করে; এবং বিগত ২৫ মার্চ ২০২৪ খ্রিষ্টাব্দ হতে কোনরূপ পূর্ব নোটিশ ব্যতীত কর্মস্থলে অনুপস্থিত থাকে ও মোবাইল নম্বরসহ সকল যোগাযোগ মাধ্যম বন্ধ করে দেয়।

প্রতিষ্ঠানের ব্যবসায়িক নিয়মভঙ্গ করে আর্থিক ক্ষতিসাধন ও প্রতিষ্ঠানের সুনাম ক্ষুণ্ণ করার জনাব প্রান্ত শিকদার (রাসেল)-এর বিরুদ্ধে প্রতিষ্ঠানের পক্ষ হতে চাকরিচ্যুতকরণ ও আইনী ব্যবস্থাসহ সর্বপ্রকার পদক্ষেপ নেয়া হয়েছে।

এমতাবস্থায়, জনাব প্রান্ত শিকদার (রাসেল)-এর সহিত কোনরূপ আর্থিক লেনদেন কিংবা "র‍্যাংকস পেট্রোলিয়াম লিমিটেড"-এর পক্ষ সম্পর্কীয় কোন ব্যবসায়িক কার্যক্রম পরিচালনা হতে বিরত থাকার জন্য সংশ্লিষ্ট সকলকে আহ্বান করা হচ্ছে।

আহ্বানে

**র‍্যাংকস পেট্রোলিয়াম লিমিটেড**  
৩৮-৭, তেজগাঁও শিল্প এলাকা, ঢাকা ১২০৮

# জমি বিক্রয়

### বসুন্ধরা

বসুন্ধরা **M** ব্লকে প্রাতিষ্ঠানিক প্লট ৫৯ কাঠা জমিতে **G+9 and 2 Basement** রাজউক অনুমোদিত প্ল্যানসহ বিক্রয় করা হবে।

### আজিজ সড়ক

**১০০% পেপার OK**

শহীদ আব্দুল আজিজ সড়কে (বসুন্ধরা সংলগ্ন) ১২.৯৪ শতাংশে **G+6** এবং ৭.০৯৫ শতাংশে **G+6** ২টি বিল্ডিং জায়গাসহ বিক্রি করা হবে।

সরাসরি যোগাযোগ-

**01332 518462 / 01332 518463**





PHOTO: STAR

# Spectre of another exodus looms

Over 100 families at risk as Jamuna erosion worsens in Pabna

AHMED HUMAYUN KABIR TOPU, Pabna

A decade ago, an entire village in Natun Varenga union under Pabna's Bera upazila went underneath the Jamuna river. Displaced and homeless, the villagers sought refuge near the Mujib Bandh, a flood protection embankment. Roughly a kilometer away from the water's edge, they began anew. Brick by brick, they rebuilt their lives, resurrecting their village from the ashes. They named the settlement Moricha -- after the name of the village that was swept away. However, after a decade later, the community is under the threat

of losing everything to the river yet again. The spectre of another exodus looms large, shattering the fragile peace they've managed to establish. Over the last couple of weeks, erosion has taken a severe turn, devouring the banks just ahead of the monsoon. Locals fear the erosion may turn worse in the monsoon. "The present situation brings back horrors from a decade back, when I lost all my lands and homestead to the river, when it engulfed Moricha village entirely," said Md Lutfor Rahman. Md Alamgir Hossain from Leulai Ghat area, said, "As water level of Jamuna has swelled up in the last two weeks, it started devouring vast

swathes of croplands in Moricha (new) and Leulai villages on the river banks. At least one kilometre stretch of the river bank has already been eroded." Md Abu Daud, chairman of Natun Varenga union parishad, said, "Over a hundred families, as well as Leulai graveyard and other establishments are under threat." "We have already informed Bangladesh Water Development Board," he added. Contacted, Amitav Chowdhury, executive engineer of BWDB in Bera upazila, said experts have already visited the affected areas. "Preparation is on to launch protection work in the affected areas soon," he added.

## Man killed, brother hurt in knife attack

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A man was stabbed to death and his brother was injured in an attack by an assailant at their house in the capital's Shahinbagh area early yesterday. The deceased was identified as Oliullah Roni, 29. The victim's elder brother, Rafiq Mia, 31, was injured while he was trying to save Roni, according to police. He said one Morshed, 38, who was known to the brothers, went to their tinshed house on Shahinbagh Mosque street and attacked Roni with a knife around 2:30am. When Rafiq tried to intervene, Morshed also attacked him fleeing the scene, said Sub-Inspector Yunus Ali Faraji of Tejgaon Police Station. Both the brothers were taken to Dhaka Medical College Hospital around 3:30am where doctors declared Roni "brought dead", said the SI Faraji. He said drug-related dispute might have led to the murder. They are investigation the incident, said the police official. Roni's body has been sent to the Dhaka Medical College morgue for autopsy.

## Put pressure on India to ensure water flow in the dry season

Speakers urge government

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh's geophysical condition is now critical due to the unilateral withdrawal of water from over a hundred shared rivers by a neighbouring country, speakers said at a discussion yesterday. The government must put immediate pressure on the neighbouring country to ensure water flow during the dry season, speakers also said. They were addressing a discussion titled "Uniform River Water Distribution: Perspective Padma Teesta." The Workers' Party organised the event at the Dhaka Reporters Unity in the capital. Author Mahbub Siddiqi said the Ganges Treaty of 1996 will expire in 2026. Unless it is renewed, there will be no negotiated arrangement for Ganges water sharing or agreed basis for negotiations on other rivers in the post-2026 period. So it must be reviewed by a powerful committee. There must be a guarantee clause in the renewed treaty like 1977, he added. Mahbub also pointed out discrepancies in the number of shared rivers between Bangladesh and India, stressing the need for expert intervention to prepare an accurate list and notify India accordingly.

Additionally, he called for compensation from India for the economic losses Bangladesh has suffered since 1975 due to the Farakka Barrage. He said bilateral discussions alone cannot resolve water issues and advocated for the formation of a regional water forum or commission under the supervision of international organisations. Nazrul Islam Hakkani, president of Teesta Bachao, Nodi Bachao Sangram Parishad, voiced concerns about the Teesta's plight, stressing the urgency of addressing water-sharing treaties and implementing comprehensive water and river system management. He said, "We cannot solely rely on domestic initiatives for Teesta management. We need a dual approach in this regard."

Rashed Khan Menon talked about the prolonged discussions between Bangladesh and India regarding the Teesta water-sharing treaty and urged caution to safeguard Bangladesh's interests. Journalist and water activist Sheikh Rokan also shared insights during the programme. Workers' Party General Secretary Fazle Hossain Badsha was also present.

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

Office of the Jail Super  
Rangamati District Jail  
www.prison.rangamati.gov.bd

Memo No. 58.04.8400.113.03.001.24-1069(5)

Date: 23-05-2024

e-Tender Notice

This is to notify all concern that the following tender is invited in the National e-GP Portal.

SL. No.	e-Tender ID No.	Name of goods	Publishing date & time	Closing date & time
01	987765	Procurement of Dietary Articles of package -01 for the period of July, 2024 to December, 2024.	26-05-2024 & 09:00	09-June-2024 & 11:00
02	989512	Procurement of Dietary Articles of package -02 for the period of July, 2024 to December, 2024.	26-05-2024 & 09:00	09-June-2024 & 11:00
03	987767	Procurement of Dietary Articles of package -05 for the period of July, 2024 to December, 2024.	26-05-2024 & 09:00	09-June-2024 & 11:00
04	987768	Procurement of Dietary Articles of package -06 for the period of July, 2024 to December, 2024.	26-05-2024 & 09:00	09-June-2024 & 11:00
05	987770	Procurement of Dietary Articles of package -07 for the period of July, 2024 to December, 2024.	26-05-2024 & 09:00	09-June-2024 & 11:00
06	987771	Procurement of Dietary Articles of package -08 for the period of July, 2024 to December, 2024.	26-05-2024 & 09:00	09-June-2024 & 11:00
07	987772	Procurement of Dietary Articles of package -09 for the period of July, 2024 to December, 2024.	26-05-2024 & 09:00	09-June-2024 & 11:00
08	987773	Procurement of Dietary Articles of package -10 for the period of July, 2024 to December, 2024.	26-05-2024 & 09:00	09-June-2024 & 11:00
09	987774	Procurement of Dietary Articles of package -11 for the period of July, 2024 to December, 2024.	26-05-2024 & 09:00	09-June-2024 & 11:00
10	987775	Procurement of Dietary Articles of package -12 for the period of July, 2024 to December, 2024.	26-05-2024 & 09:00	09-June-2024 & 11:00
11	987776	Procurement of Dietary Articles of package -13 for the period of July, 2024 to December, 2024.	26-05-2024 & 09:00	09-June-2024 & 11:00

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 registration in the xx National e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) is required. The fees for downloading the e-Tender documents from the National e-GP System Portal have to be deposited online through any registered bank's branches up to 11:30 on 09-June-2024. Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal and from e-GP help desk ([helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd](mailto:helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd)).

GD- 858

Mohammad Didarul Alam  
Jail Super (Current Charge)  
Rangamati District Jail  
02333342742  
[jailsuperrangamati1@gmail.com](mailto:jailsuperrangamati1@gmail.com)

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

Office of the Upazilla & Family Planning Officer  
Naria, Shariatpur  
E-mail: [naria@uhfpo.dghs.gov.bd](mailto:naria@uhfpo.dghs.gov.bd)

Memo No. e-GP/tender/msr/notice/506

Date: 25/05/2024

Re-eTender Notice

e-Tenders are invited to the National e-GP System Portal ([www.eprocure.gov.bd](http://www.eprocure.gov.bd)) for the Procurement of the following goods:

Tender ID No.	Tender name	Tender document selling/ downloading date & time	Tender closing & opening date & time
991413	Procurement of Medicine for the Financial year 2023-2024	26-May-2024 11:00	09-June-2024 12:00
991414	Procurement of Surgical Instrument for the Financial year 2023-2024	26-May-2024 11:00	09-June-2024 12:20
991415	Procurement of Linen for the Financial year 2023-2024	26-May-2024 12:00	09-June-2024 13:00
991416	Procurement of Guaze, Bandage, Cotton for the Financial year 2023-2024	26-May-2024 12:00	09-June-2024 13:00
991417	Procurement of Chemical Re-agent for the Financial year 2023-2024	26-May-2024 12:30	09-June-2024 14:00
991432	Procurement of Furniture for the Financial year 2023-2024	26-May-2024 11:30	09-June-2024 14:00

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, registration in the National e- GP System Portal ([www.eprocure.gov.bd](http://www.eprocure.gov.bd)) is mandatory. The fees for the downloading the e-Tender documents from the National e-GP System Portal have to be deposited online through any registered bank's branches up to particular date and time specified on the tender notice.

Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal and from e-GP help desk ([helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd](mailto:helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd)).

25/05/24

Dr. Kamrul Zamadder  
UH&FPO  
Upazilla Health Complex  
Naria, Shariatpur

GD- 860

গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার

বাংলাদেশ পুলিশ

উইমেন সাপোর্ট এন্ড ইনভেস্টিগেশন ডিভিশন

ঢাকা মেট্রোপলিটন পুলিশ

তেজগাঁও, ঢাকা-১২১৫।

উন্মুক্ত দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি

৭ জ্যৈষ্ঠ, ১৪৩১

তারিখ- ২১ মে, ২০২৪

স্মারক নং- ৩৬৮/তিসি/ডব্লিউ এস এন্ড আই ডি/২০২৪,

স্মারক নং- ৩৬৮/তিসি/ডব্লিউ এস এন্ড আই ডি/২০২৪, তারিখ- ২১/০৫/২০২৪ খ্রি।

১. মর্যাদা

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(From left) Arfan Nisho, Ashfaque Nipun, Masud Ali Khan, Azmeri Haque Badhan, and Tasnia Farin receiving awards.

PHOTOS: COLLECTED

# MERIL-PROTHOM ALO AWARDS 2023

## Glamour and talent shine bright at new venue

The highly anticipated 25th edition of the Meril-Prothom Alo Awards, one of Bangladesh’s most prestigious entertainment events, dazzled the capital on Friday (May 24) evening. Celebrating its silver jubilee, this year’s ceremony was grander than ever, adding an extra layer of excitement and significance.

### ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT DESK

This year’s event took place at the Grace Convention Hall at the United Convention Centre in the capital’s Uttara.

The awards honoured outstanding achievements across various categories, including web-series, short films, feature films, and web-films. The night also featured the Popular Choice Awards, which recognised the most beloved actors, actresses, singers, and newcomers, as voted by the audience.

Esteemed veteran artiste Masud Ali Khan was awarded the Meril-Prothom Alo Lifetime Achievement Award 2024. Masud Ali Khan, an Ekushey Padak-winning artiste, received the award in recognition of his steadfast commitment to the nation’s cultural sphere. Noted artist Rafiqun Nabi had the honour of presenting the award, a crest, and a cheque of Tk 3 lakhs to Masud Ali, accompanied by Anjan Chowdhury, managing director of Square Toiletries Limited, and Matiur Rahman, editor of Prothom Alo.



Mosharraf Karim and Dilara Zaman

The audience, filled with admiration, gave a standing ovation to this distinguished artiste. Masud Ali Khan’s acting career spans seven decades, during which he has made significant contributions to theatre, television, and film.

Amongst the notable winners, the web series *Mohanagar-2* received the Best Web-Series Award from the critics, while *Aam Kathaler Chhuti*



Mehazabien Chowdhury

was named Best Film. Ashfaque Nipun and Mohammad Nuruzzaman were celebrated as Best Directors for *Mohanagar-2* and *Aam Kathaler Chhuti*, respectively. In the short film category, Sakib Fahad was awarded Best Director for *Shomoy Shob Jane*.

Tariq Anam Khan was honoured as Best Actor for *Buk Pockete Jibon*, and Tanjim Saiyara Totini took home



Tariq Anam Khan

Best Actress for her performance in *Shomoy Shob Jane* in the short film categories.

The Critics’ Choice Awards also recognised outstanding performances in web-series and web-films. Azmeri Haque Badhan won Best Actress in the web-series category for *Guti*, while Tasnia Farin for *Nikosh* and Leon Ahmed for *Aam Kathaler Chhuti* were awarded Best



Nurzat Imrose Tisha

Actress and Best Actor, respectively, in the web-film category.

Robiul Alam Robi, Abu Sayeed Rana, Zahin Faruq Amin, and Shankha Dasgupta won Best Screenplay Writer for *Guti* in the web-series category, while Moumita Hussain received the same accolade for *Shomoy Shob Jane* in the short film category.

The Popular Choice Awards

celebrated audience favourites. Naznin Nahar Niha was named Best Newcomer Actress, while Abanti Sithi and Imran Mahmudul took home Best Female Singer and Best Male Singer awards, respectively.

Mehazabien Chowdhury for *Ananya*, Afran Nisho for *Punorjonmo Antim Porbo* and *Surongo*, and Nurzat Imrose Tisha for *Something Like an Autobiography* were honoured as the Best Actors and Actresses in their respective categories under the popular category.

The jury board from Critics’ Choice (film and web-film) included directors Akram Khan, N Rashed Chowdhury, and Kamar Ahmad Simon. The panel of Critics’ Choice (short-film) consisted of Wahida Mollick Jolly, Jayanta Chattopadhyay, and Rokeya Prachi.

The star-studded evening concluded with the iconic song *Tumi Ki Dekhechho Koblu*, leaving the audience with lasting memories of a night that celebrated the best of Bangladeshi entertainment.

# NEWS

## Peace prevails in 7 Indian states

FROM PAGE 12  
fire on April 4 last year.

The other projects include Valiant Freedom Fighter Sheikh Fazlul Haque Moni Sarani (an 8-lane road), Hossain Shaheed Suhrawardy Shishu Udyan, and Nazrul Sarobar.

Speaking at the ceremony, Hasina said the government is dedicated to transforming Dhaka into a city that ensures a high quality of life for its residents.

“The people of this area [Old Dhaka] will benefit and can live a beautiful life. We are working toward this goal,” she stated.

The PM also highlighted the government’s initiatives to improve connectivity between Dhaka and other

districts.

“We want to build a ring road in Dhaka to facilitate easier inter-district communication,” she said, acknowledging the previous lack of significant road infrastructure in the eastern and western parts of Dhaka.

“The government has already built a metro rail, expressway, and many other roads, with several more metro rail projects under construction to ease road communication,” she added.

She noted that the division of Dhaka into North and South aims to provide better services to the people.

“For the betterment of the city dwellers, the government has relocated the Dhaka Central Jail to Keraniganj,”

## ‘It’s false and fallacious’

FROM PAGE 12  
Army personnel in UN Peacekeeping Missions.

The press release said the Bangladesh Army “rigorously follows the UN’s stringent selection and vetting protocols to ensure that only the most qualified and thoroughly vetted individuals are deployed. These measures underscore the Army’s commitment to upholding the highest standards of conduct and professionalism in peacekeeping missions.”

Furthermore, DW did not seek comments from the Bangladesh Army regarding the allegations presented in the documentary which “raises

concerns about the aim and objective of the documentary.”

It said the documentary focused on defaming a law-enforcing agency in Bangladesh by showing irrelevant video footage.

“It was totally a biased media projection, which has largely compromised the credibility of the documentary. It has also raised questions about the motive behind it.”

Bangladeshi peacekeepers deployed in foreign missions have earned a reputation for their dedication, professionalism, and humanitarian approach, the release reads, adding that 131 Bangladesh Army personnel have made the supreme

she said. In its place, a museum, a school, and a children’s park have been built. There are also plans to construct an amusement park there, she said.

The prime minister mentioned the government’s allocation of land to build a modern campus for Jagannath University. “We have already prepared the design for Jagannath University, and the work in this regard will be completed quickly,” she assured.

Sheikh Hasina called upon Dhaka city residents to do their part in maintaining a beautiful and healthy environment. She urged everyone to keep their homes and surrounding areas clean to prevent waterlogging and the breeding of mosquitoes.

sacrifice and 239 sustained injuries while serving under the UN flag, embodying the spirit of selflessness and commitment to global peace.

Moreover, the Bangladesh Army has a spotless record with no human rights violations while serving under the UN, a distinction shared by only a few countries, it adds.

“Given these facts, it is crucial for media outlets to adhere to the principles of fair and balanced reporting, especially on issues as vital as international peacekeeping. Misrepresentation and insufficient diligence can lead to eroding the credibility and effectiveness of peacekeeping forces globally,” it reads.

## Sixth phase sees 59pc turnout

FROM PAGE 12  
voted today are: Bihar (8 seats), Haryana (all 10 seats), Jammu and Kashmir (1 seat), Jharkhand (4 seats), Delhi (all 7 seats), Odisha (6 seats), Uttar Pradesh (14 seats) and West Bengal (8 seats).

After the sixth phase, polling will be completed in 486 constituencies.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi is seeking a rare, third straight term in a vote which pits his Hindu nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) against an alliance of more than two dozen opposition parties, including main rival Congress.

India’s weather bureau this week issued a heatwave “red alert” for Delhi and surrounding states where tens of millions of people casted their ballots yesterday.

The India Meteorological Department warned of heightened health risks for infants, the elderly and those with chronic diseases.

Paramedics were on hand with oral

hydration salts at polling stations in Delhi, where mist machines, shaded waiting areas and cold water dispensers have also been installed by the Election Commission due to concerns about the heat.

“We hope that people will overcome the fear of the heatwave and come and vote,” Delhi Chief Electoral Officer P Krishnamurthy told Reuters.

Modi also urged people to “vote in large numbers” in a message on social media platform X yesterday.

It was not clear which party would gain from a lower turnout.

The temperature in the capital hovered around 42C (107.6F) but felt like 49C (120.2F) at 2:00pm, the weather department said, prompting many voters to question why polls were not held when the weather was “more conducive”.

The key candidates in the sixth phase are India’s Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan (BJP) from Sambalpur (Odisha), Manoj Tiwari

(BJP) and Kanhaiya Kumar (Congress) from North East Delhi, Maneka Gandhi (BJP) from Sultanpur (Uttar Pradesh), Mehbooba Mufti (PDP) from Anantnag-Rajouri (Jammu and Kashmir), Abhijit Gangopadhyay (BJP) from Tamluk (West Bengal) and BJP’s former chief minister of Haryana Manohar Lal Khattar (Karnal). In Delhi, a bevy of high-profiled BJP and Congress politicians made their way to the polling booths to cast their votes including President of India Droupadi Murmu, Vice President Jagdeep Dhankar, Foreign Minister S Jaishankar, Congress leaders Sonia Gandhi, Rahul Gandhi and Priyanka Gandhi Vadra and India’s Chief Election Commissioner Rajiv Kumar.

Voting for the 543-member Lok Sabha is being held in seven phases. The seventh and final round of polling will be held on June 1 across 57 constituencies, including Kolkata.

The vote counting is scheduled for June 4.

## Curtains close on Cannes 2024

FROM PAGE 12  
distinguishably led by revered American filmmaker Greta Gerwig as president.

The closing, like the opening, was hosted by French actress Camille Cottin.

Seasoned visionaries like Francis Ford Coppola for “Megalopolis” and David Cronenberg for “The Shrouds” returned to this year’s festival with their highly-anticipated projects. Bringing their signature styles to the festival, European powerhouses Jacques Audiard and Yorgos Lanthimos attended the festival for their films “Emilia Perez” and “Kinds of Kindness” respectively.

Global auteurs Jia Zhangke from China and Payal Kapadia from India presented their unique perspectives through “Caught by the Tides” and “All We Imagine as Light”.

Sean Baker with “Anora” and Paul Schrader with “Oh Canada” showcased the robust American indie presence, while emerging talents Andrea Arnold with “Bird” and Coralie Fargeat with “The Substance” pushed boundaries

through their works.

In terms of the Un Certain Regard honours, Chinese director Guan Hu’s film “Black Dog” triumphed over 17 other titles to win the top prize in the festival’s second-most prestigious competitive category.

“The Story of Souleymane” won the Un Certain Regard Jury Prize. The film by Boris Lojkine follows an African immigrant in Paris navigating the challenges of getting work and legal status. Lead actor Abou Sangare received the Best Actor award for his performance.

Anasuya Sengupta made history by being the first Indian actress to clinch the Cannes Best Actress Award for her role in “The Shameless”. Directed and written by Bulgarian filmmaker Konstantin Bojanov, the film follows Renuka, who flees a Delhi brothel after killing a police officer.

Roberto Minervini for “The Damned” and Rungano Nyoni for “On Becoming a Guinea Fowl” tied for the Best Director title.

## All bought while he helmed Rab

FROM PAGE 1  
The ACC also found that Benazir’s family acquired 1.75 acres through five deeds in 2014 when he was the commissioner of Dhaka Metropolitan Police.

Most of the land was registered under his wife Jissan Mirza’s name.

On Thursday, Judge Mohammed Ash-Shams Joglul Hossain of the Metropolitan Senior Special Judge’s Court of Dhaka ordered the confiscation of the former IGP’s assets in connection with corruption allegations.

Following the order, Benazir’s 33 bank accounts will be frozen and properties listed under the 83 deeds will be confiscated, said court sources.

“Steps have been taken to send copies of the court order to those offices which would implement the order,” ACC Public Prosecutor Mahmud Hossain Jahangir told The Daily Star yesterday.

During the hearing on an ACC petition at the court on Thursday, the public prosecutor said Benazir is accused of amassing illegal assets, worth hundreds of crores of taka, at home and abroad, by abusing power, irregularities, and corruption. The properties were registered in his

name and also in the names of his wife and three children.

Of the land in question, at least 81 acres were registered under Jissan’s name, 7.60 acres under Benazir’s name, and the remaining 26 acres under the names of his three daughters and some relatives.

The ACC did not specifically mention the properties owned by each of Benazir’s three daughters. The graft watchdog, however, found that a land over 13 acres was registered under the name of Farhin Rishta in Sahapur of Gopalganj, the hometown of the former IGP.

The ACC found that Benazir and his family purchased 97.86 acres in Gopalganj Sadar upazila, 0.47 acres in Tungipara, 11.49 acres in Kotlipara and 2.47 acres in Cox’s Bazar.

On some deeds, Jissan was named as the chairperson of Savanna Bangladesh, an organisation which owns a farm, a nature park, an eco-resort, a country club, and a venture named Southern Business Initiative.

Jissan was not known to have any profession during the tenure of her husband’s time in service. But Benazir in a video message later claimed that his wife and daughters own a farm.

Benazir was among the seven former and current Rab officials

sanctioned by the United States in December 2021 for human rights violations.

Allegations of massive wealth accumulation through corruption and irregularities against Benazir surfaced recently after a national daily ran report.

The Daily Star could not reach Benazir for comments yesterday. He did not respond to several calls.

In a Facebook video, Benazir claimed that the corruption allegations against him were false and fabricated.

On April 18, the ACC decided to launch an enquiry into the alleged corruption by the former IGP. The commission formed a three-member committee to conduct the investigation, ACC Secretary Khorsheida Yasmin told a press briefing on April 22.

The following day, the High Court directed the ACC to submit a progress report on the enquiry into the reported allegations against Benazir and his family members.

On May 23, the graft watchdog submitted a report to the Metropolitan Senior Special Judge’s Court of Dhaka and prayed for confiscation of the assets of Benazir and his family members.







## Young people being ignored, neglected

### We must get off this suicidal path

Bangladesh is facing enormous economic challenges caused by both external and internal factors. But it is also in a deep moral crisis, as corruption and lawlessness have spread their tentacles in every sphere of society. Among the most affected are young people who are supposed to be our future leaders. But how optimistic are they about their own future? Do we know how they feel or what they think? Most importantly, do our leaders even care?

These are burning questions that our policymakers and all those in positions of power must think of and try to answer. In a population of 169.8 million, almost 28 percent are between the ages of 15 and 29. Having so many young people would put any country at a natural advantage, but to reap the benefits of this demographic dividend, the right policies, opportunities, and visions need to be there. Unfortunately for Bangladesh, it is this very vital demographic that is being completely neglected.

A recent column in this paper has brought this issue to the fore, citing a survey of young people aged 16-35 that offered some damning findings: that 55.3 percent of the respondents think Bangladesh lacks peace, 71.5 percent are not comfortable about expressing their views publicly, and 68.6 percent are frustrated with the education system. An overwhelming 89 percent said corruption affected their wellbeing. They also cited unemployment, inflation, and climate change as contributing reasons. It is no wonder, then, that so many young people see no future for them in their own country; a large number are looking for opportunities to migrate to other countries.

Educationists and potential employers have been crying themselves hoarse about the lack of skills of young people applying for jobs. Only a miniscule percentage actually qualify and get employment. Those who are left behind either stay jobless or take up low-paying jobs in the informal sector. Many become involved in criminal or corrupt activities, which seem to offer the only means to survive. Crime in the name of student politics has also turned many young people away from politics. The rising number of criminals connected to power and wealth, who get away with the most heinous crimes, has created a deep mistrust in the system. The perception is that there is no justice for the ordinary person. When young people see their seniors taking the unethical route and getting away with it, they either become disillusioned and frustrated, or decide to follow suit. The number of teenage gangs committing serious crimes such as extortion and murder is on the rise.

The lack of role models, the trend of rewarding corruption and punishing honesty, the widening gap between the rich and the poor, and a huge dearth of opportunities to acquire the right education and skills for the desired employment or entrepreneurship—these are some of the overriding factors robbing our youth of their potential.

The high dropout rates in secondary schools, the prevalence of child marriage (with a staggering 41.6 percent of girls still married under 18), and 39.88 percent of the youth being involved neither in studies nor in work—these are foreboding indicators of economic and social decline, hurting the future of both our young generation and country at large. A nation that does not pay attention to the anxieties gripping most of its young people is just plain suicidal. We, for our own sake, must get off this dangerous path.

## SUVs for bureaucrats amid economic woes?

### Govt cannot waste public money like this

Last year, a proposal to buy 261 SUVs—worth about Tk 1.46 crore each—for deputy commissioners (DCs) and upazila nirbahi officers (UNOs) was approved. But after severe criticism against the backdrop of a struggling economy, the government decided to halt the buying process. It is, therefore, quite puzzling to see the revival of that decision, especially when the country's economic condition has worsened. Going ahead with this decision, rather than using facilities that are already available, will be nothing but a waste of public money.

On May 11, Bangladesh's foreign reserves fell below the \$19 billion-mark for the first time in 11 months; on May 21, it stood at \$18.61 billion. Despite the crisis of dollars, it is quite baffling that the government is okay with importing these vehicles which will likely further impact the reserves. As per a report by *Prothom Alo*, officials say foreign currency won't be used to buy the cars, but the parts will be imported and assembled to make them, which, as they admitted, will require foreign currency. It's clear that this logic does not stand. The authorities are going through with this decision after the taka further depreciated against the dollar, standing at approximately Tk 117. This means the initial total expenditure—Tk 381 crore—will increase. This is nothing but an ill-considered initiative.

The rationale for buying these vehicles originally was to ensure that the national election was successfully conducted, maintaining law and order. Now, the public administration ministry has a new reason: to maintain the efficiency of public works. These changing arguments diminish the declared need to buy these SUVs. Maybe this is why the administration is pushing the move in a clandestine manner. Reportedly, the public administration and finance ministers bypassed the purchasing committee to approve the proposal, which points to ill-intent. As an expert has stated, this sets a dangerous precedent for moving other questionable proposals in this manner.

Last month, food inflation hit 10.22 percent—the first time it hit double digits in five months—while non-food inflation stood at 9.34 percent. When our people are struggling to make ends meet, how can the government be this liberal while spending their hard-earned money, that too going against its own austerity policy? We strongly urge the authorities to reconsider this initiative, and prudently evaluate all financial decisions to restore our economic health.

# In a parliament of businessmen, conflicts of interest reign supreme



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### KALLOL MUSTAFA

In parliamentary democracy, parliamentary standing committees are important tools for holding the government accountable. These committees, consisting of members of both the government and opposition parties in various democratic countries, scrutinise the activities of the respective ministries of the government, review the proposed draft laws, and investigate corruption allegations.

As the absolute dominance of the ruling party has been established in the National Parliament of Bangladesh, the parliamentary committees are not seen to play any strong role in bringing the relevant ministries of the government to account. According to Article 188(2) of the Rules of Procedure of the National Parliament, "No member shall be appointed to a Committee who has a personal, pecuniary or direct interest in any matter which may be considered by that Committee." But due to the dominance of the ruling party and businessmen in parliament, these conflicts of interest have so far not been considered during the formation of parliamentary standing committees.

A study conducted by Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB) on the matter showed that, according to the information declared in their affidavits submitted to the Election Commission, the members of six committees of the 9th Parliament and five committees of the 10th Parliament had committee-related business involvement. But according to information collected from the local level on 38 members of 11 committees included as case-studies, 19 of these members of nine different committees had business in related areas. There have been allegations of exerting influence for promoting personal or business interests during decision-making within the committees. Besides, allegations of influence-peddling in decision-making have also been reported in instances where the ministers of relevant ministries are ex-officio members and where former ministers were appointed as chairs of the concerned standing committees.

The current 12th National Parliament is no exception in this regard. With an overwhelming majority comprising Awami League nominees and party supported "independent" candidates, 50 parliamentary committees were formed within just five working days of starting of the Parliament, of which 39 are related to the activities of various ministries. The remaining 11 committees are on parliamentary affairs. According to a report in *The Daily Star*, many

members of 20 parliamentary standing committees own businesses in sectors they are supposed to watch over.

For example, Shamim Osman, a member of the standing committee on labour ministry, owns the garment factory "Wisdom Knitting Mills", while another member of the committee, SM Al Mamun, is involved in ship-breaking yards. Golam Kibria Tipu, a member of the parliamentary standing committee on shipping, has several launches.

Nizam Uddin Hazari, who has a manpower export business, is a member of the parliamentary committee on the Ministry of Expatriates' Welfare and

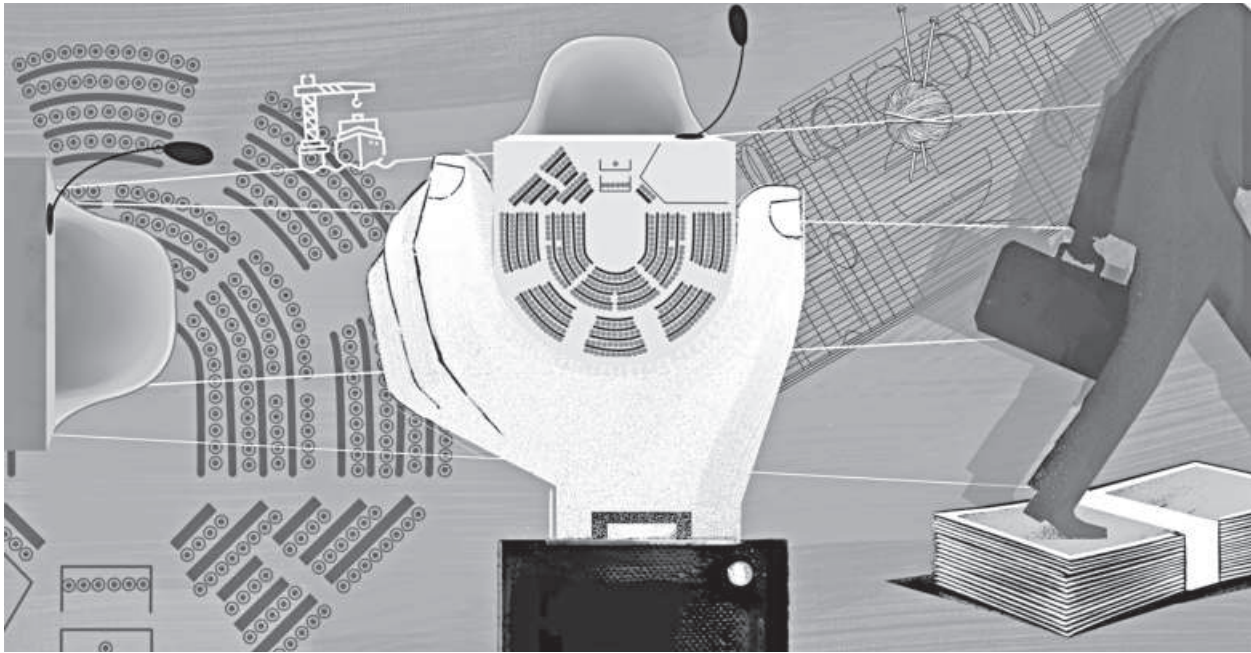
the chairman of the parliamentary standing committee on Ministry of Commerce. Former foreign minister AK Abdul Momen is the chairman of the committee on Ministry of Foreign Affairs, while former finance minister AHM Mustafa Kamal is the chairman of the parliamentary body on Ministry of Finance. The same can be said for former ministers and state ministers who are now members of standing committees on the ministries of land, planning, agriculture, fisheries, CHT affairs, expatriate's welfare, housing, and youth and sports.

In fact, it's not just the parliamentary committees. The entire Parliament is dominated by businessmen. According to a report by *Prothom Alo*, the number of businessmen in the 12th National Parliament is at least 199, almost two-thirds. They include several former presidents of the Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce & Industries (FBCCI), and owners of various groups of companies. At least 15 businessmen from the garment sector

benefit while preventing the drafting or formation of laws and policies against their class interests.

Because of this state-business nexus, businessmen in key sectors like banking, apparel, or power and energy are deciding what the laws, policies or incentives will be. The case of amending the Bank Companies Act in June 2023 to increase the term of directors of banks from nine years to 12 years can be discussed as an example. As reported by *The Daily Star*, the version of the bill that was first placed in the Parliament did not seek to amend the tenure of the bank directors. And according to *Prothom Alo*, the written proposal for this extension was prepared by the Bangladesh Association of Banks (BAB), an organisation of private bank entrepreneurs and directors. This proposal, with little to no edits, was eventually submitted by a member of parliament of the government party in the form of an amendment, which was passed by the Parliament without any discussion.

Due to this state-business



VISUAL: ANWAR SOHEL

Overseas Employment. Selim Mahmud, member of the parliamentary standing committee on the Ministry of Power, Energy and Minerals is a consultant on international laws and energy related issues. Abdur Rauf, another member of the committee, has petrol pump businesses. Mohammad Ali, who works as a contractor, is a member of the standing committee on the Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development and Co-operatives.

Moreover, as many as 12 MPs who were ministers and state ministers of the last government are appointed as chairmen of related standing committees, which may create obstacles in independent and objective scrutiny of allegations of corruption of the ministry during the former minister's tenure. For example, former commerce minister Tipu Munshi is

alone have been elected as members of Parliament. In 1973, 25 percent of the 283 members in the first National Parliament were lawyers, 23.67 percent were businessmen, 14.84 percent were farmers, 12.36 percent were politicians and 9.89 percent were teachers. Since then, the share of businessmen in the Parliament has only increased year-after-year and, as a result, there is almost no representation of people from other classes and professions in the current Parliament.

This has led to a dominance of businessmen in the policy-making of the state, which they are using to increase the expanse of their business and wealth. As there is no effective opposition party in the Parliament, there is no opportunity to bring these businessmen under accountability. They are making or amending laws and policies for their own

entanglement. Parliament enacted the Quick Enhancement of Electricity and Energy Supply (Special Provisions) Act 2010 with immunity provisions. Under the protection of this law, one power and energy project after another have been implemented without competitive bidding, leading the country's economy to bear the burden of excessive capacity charges and increased energy imports. For this same reason, garment industry owners get more benefits from the government than any other sector in the country, including tax exemptions, cash assistance, exemption from customs duties, low interest loans from the Export Development Fund (EDF) and import of duty-free raw materials.

Democratic accountability of the government cannot be ensured unless this state-business nexus is brought to an end.

# Government mishandling of personal data: Where does it end?



Zarif Faiaz  
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### ZARIF FAIAZ

The news of a handful of government employees selling the personal data of citizens—including National Identity (NID) card numbers and phone call details—has raised alarms in the last few days. On May 21, this newspaper reported that a few crooked government employees were stealing the sensitive personal data of citizens from the national intelligence servers and selling it in exchange for money in over 750 groups, pages, and profiles on different social media platforms.

In a world that makes sense, this news would have made a much bigger splash. Not here though. Here, we are too used to indifference. The National Telecommunication Monitoring Center (NTMC), the body that discovered the breach, did notify the Anti-Terrorism Unit (ATU), and RAB 6, the two government security units harbouring the accused officials, and the two units did assure that appropriate actions are being taken. But there's no guarantee that this will be the last of such incidents.

Indeed, the NTMC itself was accused

of mishandling our data not too long ago. In November last year, *WIRED*, an American magazine, published a story on the NTMC leaking sensitive, private data of the citizens. *WIRED* claimed that NTMC was unknowingly publishing scores of personal data—phone numbers, names, blood groups, professions, parents' names—through an insecure database linked to its system. *WIRED* reported that hackers had gained access to this insecure database and proceeded to steal and sell the data.

NTMC denied the leak to the local media later but the proof *WIRED* presented in its investigation was quite comprehensive. The leak was discovered and confirmed by Viktor Markopoulos, a cybersecurity researcher who was the first to identify the earlier massive data leak from the Office of the Registrar General, Birth and Death Registration where over 50 million citizens' personal data remained exposed online for anyone to grab through a simple Google search.

Incidents like these are not

uncommon in the country. With a poor record of cybersecurity, Bangladesh has been home to some truly eyebrow-raising breaches in recent years. In March last year, hackers stole over 100 gigabytes worth of personal data from Biman Bangladesh, the state carrier, and demanded \$5 million in ransom.

In July, notorious hacker group ALPHV stole over 170 gigabytes of sensitive personal data—including employees' names, passport and NID information—from Bangladesh Krishi Bank's servers and demanded a large sum as ransom. In October of the same year, this newspaper reported that NID information of citizens was available for sale in a Telegram channel managed by unknown miscreants. Most notably, the entirety of the stolen funds from the 2016 Bangladesh Bank heist that made numerous international headlines, has still not been fully recovered.

Has anyone at the highest levels of the government stopped to think, for a moment, about the consequences of these massive data leaks? From identity theft to financial scam, small and large, the possibilities are dangerously endless. A Bangladeshi I know who resides in Finland only found out last week that his personal MFS account was terminated because apparently another account was opened with his same NID details the week before, and you can only have one account against each NID. The poor fellow—and his NID—never left Finland in the last two years.

A victim claimed that his NID was

used to create an MFS account in his name, while he never even picked up his card from his hometown. Another person I know found out last month that there was an MFS account created in his name and phone number while he has no idea who or how.

This is just the tip of the iceberg: the few cases that get disclosed, the few cases that get discussed and dissected. If one looks deeply into the issue, there's bound to be many more incidents like these. Who will take the blame for the many lapses in our cybersecurity? Why should we, tax paying, law-abiding citizens, be okay with our data being sold off to scammers and hackers?

Is our government really that careless, or just completely incapable of even comprehending the graveness of the situation that they put us in? The government generally loves to boast about "Digital Bangladesh" and "Smart Bangladesh." Higher-ups of the government proudly boast our "robust" IT infrastructure, our data centres, our booming freelancing economy and routinely incite tech giants to open local bases of operations. Are these incidents of data breach and data leaks not contradictory to the very image of the smart, digital, developed Bangladesh that they are desperately trying to portray or advertise? In the end, the question that really matters is, where does this mayhem stop? With a lack of accountability, disciplinary actions, and in many cases any acknowledgement at all, the answer—with complete and total despair—is seemingly never.





Where is the time-bound plan for universal secondary education in Bangladesh? PHOTO: STAR

# We need a universal school education programme



Dr Manzoor Ahmed is emeritus professor at BRAC University, chair of Bangladesh ECD Network, adviser to the CAMPE Council, and Associate Editor of the International Journal of Educational Development.

MANZOOR AHMED

A fifth round of primary school development programme (PEDP5) for the next five years is under consideration by the government and development partners as the PEDP4 comes to an end this year. But should we not initiate the first universal school education programme (USEPI) instead?

A roundtable was hosted on May 9 involving government officials, NGOs, parents and students by the Campaign for Popular Education (CAMPE) on the topic of educational opportunities for out-of-school children. It was reported that compared to about 18 million children enrolled at the primary school stage, at least 10 million children of 6-14 years never enrolled in a school or dropped out early without acquiring basic literacy, which severely limited their life opportunities. This phenomenon of children's deprivation of education has been a longstanding feature of primary education even after a compulsory education law was adopted in 1990. The provisions of the law enjoining the obligations of the state and the parents have never been fully implemented.

As a response to this situation, non-formal primary education (one-room, one-teacher community school, free of cost to parents and managed by the sponsor NGO, viz., BRAC) was introduced in the mid-1980s. Through a course of three-four years, the 8 to 14-year-old children completed the equivalent of five years of primary education and a large majority went on to secondary school. The model served the purpose of educating out-of-school children remarkably well. By the mid-1990s there were over a million students, two-thirds girls, served at any one time in over 30,000 single-room, non-formal primary schools run by BRAC and smaller NGOs. International donors, impressed by the model's success, funded it, relieving impoverished families of the cost burden.

Donor environment and the government's attitudes shifted by the end of the 1990s. A sub-sector project for primary education was launched in 1997 by the government, which was actually a combination of several separate projects, and was retrospectively called primary education development programme I. As a sequel, and designed more as a coordinated sector (actually, a sub-sector) programme for primary education, PEDPII was begun in 2004. The so-called "sector-wide approach" or SWAP became the buzzword both with donors and the government. One significant characteristic of SWAP was that all international education assistance would be directed to SWAP and controlled by the government. Thus the NFPE programme of BRAC was largely cut off from donor assistance and the successful NFPE run by NGOs languished due to lack of funding.

In the four rounds of PEDP from 1997 to 2024, some \$20 billion (roughly Tk 1,50,000 crore) have been spent. Over 80 percent has been domestic funds from the government. But except for the expansion of enrolment and physical facilities, which still

remain inadequate, the outcome in learning has been disappointing. An assessment has shown that the majority of children, after five years of primary schooling, do not acquire basic literacy and numeracy at a functional level.

As part of PEDPII (2004-2011), an NFPE-type project called Reaching Out-of-School Children (ROSC) started with a grant from the World Bank. Its management and supervision were kept in the hands of the Directorate of Primary Education, instead of engaging the successful NGOs such as BRAC and others with proven track record to manage the project. Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies (BIDS) in an evaluation in 2014 found that "the project was implemented fully in terms of numbers.... [but] schools were established without taking the need of the community into consideration... and school management and monitoring were also weak in most cases." The outcome, therefore, was disappointing in contrast to the NGO-run NFPE.

Under PEDPIII and IV (2011-17 and 2018-24), ignoring the weaknesses and poor outcome of ROSC, a similar government-controlled approach (this time by the Bureau of Non-Formal Education, or BNFE, under the Ministry of Primary and Mass Education) was followed, although the name of the project was now changed to "the second chance" education project. The Covid pandemic led to shutting down the project in 2021. It reopened on a reduced scale in 2023. But its learning outcome and management problems make many sceptical about the project's value and its future.

The round-table organised by CAMPE was an occasion for the project's direct beneficiaries—students, parents, teachers and BNFE staff—to make a plea for the continuation and accommodation of the second chance in the forthcoming PEDP V, the shape and size of which are to be considered now. Some have expressed their grievances about poor management, corruption, lack of transparency and accountability, and a lack of motivation and responsibility among personnel which led to disappointing results.

Some of the speakers (including myself) argued for a basic rethinking than just accommodating in PEDP V the current model of "second chance," which with its present management structure has not worked very well. The relevance and value of a fifth round of primary education development up to class V in government primary schools itself need to be rethought, some speakers pleaded.

Some basic questions arise if this line of rethinking is pursued. Is a subsector programme up to class V meaningful, when the SDG4 goal is for achieving quality, equity and inclusion (pre-primary, primary and in secondary education) for all children by 2030? Moreover, how can we reconcile the aspiration of an upper middle-income country by 2031, and a developed country by 2041, keeping large proportions of children and youth deprived of education up to secondary level?

Where is the time-bound plan for universal secondary education in Bangladesh, consistent with the aim of Smart Bangladesh and skilled youth?

In this context, how rational is the reported government decision to proceed with a plan for extending primary education up to class VIII by introducing classes VI-VIII in primary schools? Presumably, the Directorate of Primary Education would take control of junior secondary schools which offer lessons up to class VIII.

Two observations are pertinent here. Primary education up to class VIII as a compulsory and universal stage of education is a 50-year-old idea broached first in the 1974 Qudrat-e-Khuda Commission report and reiterated in the Education Policy 2010. But in all these years, this goal has not been implemented. This plan is now outmoded and irrelevant, when universal secondary-level school education is the worldwide norm and an imperative for Bangladesh's human development needs.

Secondly, repackaging the old plan of primary education up to class VIII is designed to fit the existing bureaucratic structure of two ministries for school education, rather than reshaping the organisational structure to meet the need of the programme. In other words, why shouldn't all school education, K-12, be brought under one ministerial jurisdiction, like everywhere else in the world? Thus, a coordinated and holistic school education development can be carried out. A turf battle between the two ministries has thwarted the implementation of universal education up to class VIII.

Coming back to the decision about extending primary level to class VIII, there are good technical reasons for not putting classes VI-VIII into primary schools. The nature of learning content and pedagogy begins to diverge from class VI onward from the primary level up to class V. At this level, the focus is on foundational skills of language and math which all primary teachers are expected to handle. From class VI onward, the learning content is divided into subjects and disciplines which require specifically trained teachers for these subjects. It will be impractical and expensive to try to provide for these additional teachers in primary schools if classes VI-VIII are inserted there. Indeed, this has been a problem in some 700 primary schools where the higher "primary" classes were introduced a few years ago. These schools are struggling to provide a credible educational experience to their students in the higher classes.

What is a pedagogically sound and logistically pragmatic way forward? First, school education should come under one ministerial jurisdiction so that a coordinated and total school development programme is undertaken. Secondly, the primary level up to class V with its distinctive features of foundational focus on literacy in the national language and the four arithmetic functions should be retained. Classes VI-XII should be regarded as the secondary stage with appropriate subject- and discipline-based provisions for teachers and learning facilities. We need to design and implement the first Universal School Education Programme (USEP I). A step-by-step, time-bound plan needs to be prepared for high-quality school education for all children in all localities of the country, so that no child is deprived of school education of acceptable quality.

# How we can mitigate the effects of rising inequality



AN OPEN DIALOGUE  
Dr Abdullah Shibli is an economist and works for Change Healthcare, Inc., an information technology company. He also serves as senior research fellow at the US based International Sustainable Development Institute (ISDI).

ABDULLAH SHIBLI

"The question is whether Bangladesh's strong economic performance can be sustained. As matters stand, the country's prospects are excellent, but there are risks that policymakers will need to take into account," wrote Kaushik Basu a few years ago. The question he posed is still on everyone's mind.

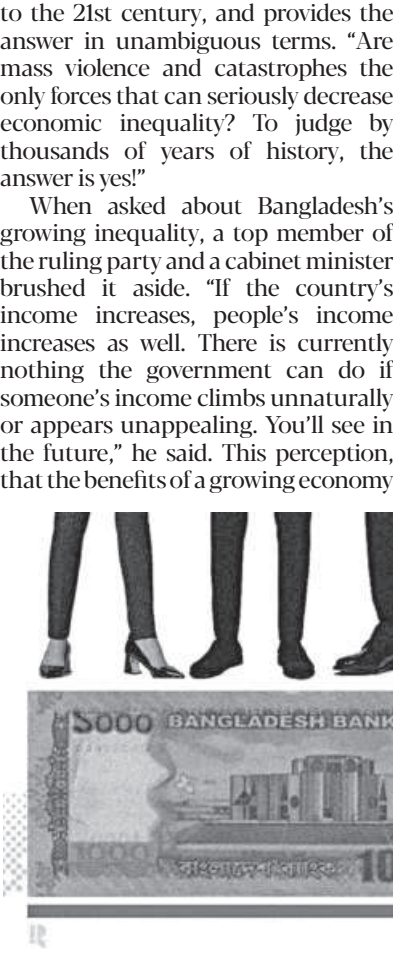
So, what are the risks that Basu, the former chief economist at the World Bank, is referring to? The growing level of income and wealth inequality is undoubtedly one of them. Inequality in Bangladesh is rising, slowly but steadily. And it poses a very severe risk to our economic development and social stability. The government and society at large have to pay attention and work on the issue on an ongoing and sustainable basis.

The data from the past Household Income and Expenditure Surveys (HIES) carried out by the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics over the last two decades clearly indicate the trend pointing to the rising levels of income and wealth inequality. Whether we take the well-known measure, the Gini coefficient, or an alternative measure, such as the Palma ratio, and compare the income share of the top 10 percent with the income share of the bottom 40 percent, the signs are clear. We are heading towards a very unequal society.

The final report of HIES 2022 released by BBS last December showed that the top 10 percent of households increased their share of wealth to 40.91 percent, around 2.83 percentage points rise in the past six years. In 2016, their share of wealth was 38.09 percent and 35.84 percent in 2010.

One of UN's Sustainable Development Goals, SDG 10, is unequivocal about the deleterious effects of an increasingly unequal society. First, it can weaken trust in public institutions and undermine democratic governance. Secondly, inequality threatens long-term social and economic development, harms poverty reduction, and destroys people's sense of fulfilment and self-worth. Finally, this, in turn, can breed crime, disease and environmental degradation. Obviously, all this also may also result in political unrest and stunted progression in other dimensions.

The Princeton economic historian Walter Scheidel paints a more ominous scenario. In his book "The Great Leveler: Violence and the History of Inequality", he offers a panoramic view from the Stone Age



VISUAL: REHNUMA PROSHOON

will eventually benefit the lower rungs of the income scale, has been known as the "trickle down" theory but has been discredited in serious economic and political studies.

Qazi Kholiquzzaman Ahmad, the eminent economist who worked closely with the current regime over the last decade and a half, recently conceded that the concentration of wealth and income has reached epic heights leading to an erosion of our societal values. Dr Ahmed was the Chairman of Palli Karma-Sahayak Foundation (PKSF), the largest government agency for sustainable poverty reduction through employment generation.

At this critical point, the government must redouble its efforts to reduce the gap between the super-rich and the rest of society. The programmes to fund rural development and skills training must be strengthened. Youth unemployment and underemployment rates are at an all-time high. One of the reasons for rising inequality is the failure to pull

emerging markets experiencing an increase in civil unrest over the past five years. Alarmingly, Bangladesh ranks seventh highest on political risk related to civil unrest, according to the report.

As the new government consolidates its power, it can take up the issue of inequality, poverty, and social programmes as a priority. There are three lines of attack: skills training for the young and the experienced workers to keep up with global trends as technology shifts labour demand from routine low- to mid-level skills to new, higher-level skills; fiscal policy including estate and wealth tax to reverse the concentration of wealth as crony capitalism strengthens its grip on the economy; and foster policy to face head-on the forces that lead to "unequal distribution of capital income with rising market power and economic rents enjoyed by dominant firms in increasingly concentrated and winner-takes-all markets" (Brookings Institution, "Rising Inequality: A major Issue of our time", 2023).

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

Jail Super Office

District Jail Manikganj

[www.prison.manikganj.gov.bd](http://www.prison.manikganj.gov.bd)

Memo: 58.04.5600.085.04.018.2024-1230(6)

Date: 25/05/2024

e-Tender Notice

This is to notify all concern that the following tender is invited in the National e-GP Portal.

SL No.	Tender Package No.	Tender ID No.	Name of goods tender	Publishing, closing date & time
01	Package No-1	988216	Supply of Dietary article Package No-1 for the period of July/2024 to December/2024	26-May-2024 10:00:00 10-Jun-2024 10:00:00
02	Package No-2	988756	Supply of Dietary article Package No-2 for the period of July/2024 to December/2024	26-May-2024 10:00:00 10-Jun-2024 10:20:00
03	Package No-3	Nil	Nil	Nil
04	Package No-4	988788	Supply of Dietary article Package No-4 for the period of July/2024 to December/2024	26-May-2024 10:00:00 10-Jun-2024 10:40:00
05	Package No-5	988826	Supply of Dietary article Package No-5 for the period of July/2024 to December/2024	26-May-2024 10:00:00 10-Jun-2024 11:00:00
06	Package No-6	988880	Supply of Dietary article Package No-6 for the period of July/2024 to December/2024	26-May-2024 10:00:00 10-Jun-2024 11:20:00
07	Package No-7	988929	Supply of Dietary article Package No-7 for the period of July/2024 to December/2024	26-May-2024 10:00:00 10-Jun-2024 11:40:00
08	Package No-8	989010	Supply of Dietary article Package No-8 for the period of July/2024 to December/2024	26-May-2024 10:00:00 10-Jun-2024 12:00:00
09	Package No-9	989035	Supply of Dietary article Package No-9 for the period of July/2024 to December/2024	26-May-2024 10:00:00 10-Jun-2024 12:20:00
10	Package No-10	989118	Supply of Dietary article Package No-10 for the period of July/2024 to December/2024	26-May-2024 10:00:00 10-Jun-2024 12:40:00
11	Package No-11	989158	Supply of Dietary article Package No-11 for the period of July/2024 to December/2024	26-May-2024 10:00:00 10-Jun-2024 13:00:00
12	Package No-12	989179	Supply of Dietary article Package No-12 for the period of July/2024 to December/2024	26-May-2024 10:00:00 10-Jun-2024 13:20:00
13	Package No-13	989189	Supply of Dietary article Package No-13 for the period of July/2024 to December/2024	26-May-2024 10:00:00 10-Jun-2024 13:40:00

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, registration in the National e-GP 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 ([helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd](mailto:helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd)).

20240525

Md. Bazlur Rashid Akhanda

Jail Superintendent

District Jail Manikganj

GD- 856



## Urgent global action is needed to combat antimicrobial resistance

A new Lancet Series calls for urgent global action on antimicrobial resistance (AMR) to prevent 750,000 deaths annually through available vaccines, water and sanitation, and infection control methods. Authors stressed the need for intensified efforts in promoting vaccination, ensuring access to safe water and sanitation, and implementing hospital infection control to reduce infections and antibiotic use.

The series highlights that nearly 5 million of the 7.7 million global deaths from bacterial infections annually are associated with antibiotic-resistant bacteria. To address this, expanding access to both existing and new antibiotics is crucial. Increased investment in affordable and accessible antibiotics, vaccines, and diagnostics is also essential.



Key recommendations include improving infection prevention methods, such as hand hygiene and equipment sterilisation, which could save up to 337,000 lives a year. Universal access to safe drinking water and effective sanitation could prevent around 247,800 deaths, while expanding pediatric vaccination programs could save 181,500 lives.

AMR disproportionately affects vulnerable groups, including infants, the elderly, and chronically ill patients. Without prioritising AMR now, the global death toll from resistant infections will continue to rise, threatening progress on sustainable development goals.

The series calls for ambitious global targets for 2030, including a 10% reduction in AMR-related mortality and reductions in inappropriate antibiotic use in humans and animals. An independent scientific body is also proposed to guide policy implementation and inform new targets. Immediate global action is essential to preserve the effectiveness of antibiotics and safeguard public health.

# PROTON BEAM THERAPY

## A leap in cancer treatment

### STAR HEALTH REPORT

Cancer treatment has evolved significantly over the past few decades, and Singapore General Hospital (SGH) stands at the forefront of this revolution with its novel proton beam therapy facilities.

Proton beam therapy represents a significant advancement in the field of oncology. Unlike traditional radiation therapy, which uses X-rays to destroy cancer cells, proton beam therapy employs protons—positively charged particles. The key advantage of protons is their ability to deliver a high dose of radiation directly to the tumor while minimising damage to surrounding healthy tissues. This precision reduces side effects and improves the quality of life for patients.

Dr Michael Wang, Chairman, Division of Radiation Oncology, National Cancer Centre Singapore, provided a comprehensive overview of the technology. “Proton beam therapy allows us to target tumours with sub-millimeter accuracy,” Dr Wang explained. “This is particularly beneficial for treating tumors located near critical structures, such as the brain, spine, and eyes.”

The facility itself is a marvel of modern engineering. The heart of the system is a cyclotron—a particle accelerator that generates protons and directs them toward the patient’s tumour. The beam is meticulously controlled using advanced imaging and computer systems to ensure precise delivery.

During my tour, I observed a session where a young boy named Paul (name disguised to protect identity) was receiving treatment for a brain tumour. His parents, visibly relieved by the

advanced care, shared their experience. “When we first learned about Paul’s diagnosis, we were devastated,” his mother recounted. “But the doctors here gave us hope. Proton therapy has been a game-changer for us.”

Paul lay still on a treatment table, surrounded by state-of-the-art equipment. The room was calm and quiet, a stark contrast to the anxiety often associated with cancer

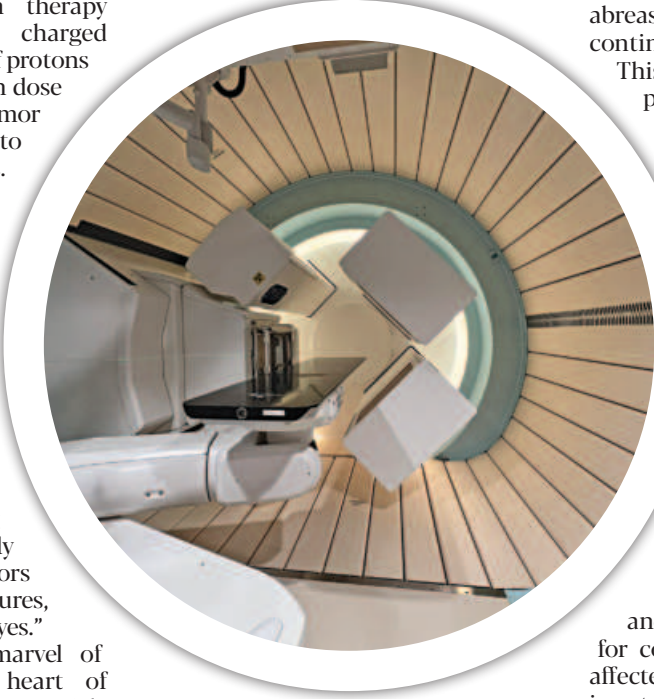
physical treatment but also on the emotional and psychological well-being of our patients. Our multidisciplinary team includes oncologists, radiologists, nurses, and counselors who work together to provide comprehensive care.”

The implementation of proton beam therapy at SGH is part of a broader strategy to enhance cancer treatment in Singapore. The hospital collaborates with international institutions to stay abreast of the latest advancements and continuously improve its protocols. This global perspective ensures that patients receive the best possible care based on the latest scientific evidence.

However, proton beam therapy is not without its challenges. The technology is expensive, and the treatment facility requires significant investment. Dr Wang acknowledged these hurdles but emphasised the long-term benefits. “The initial costs are high, but the potential to improve patient outcomes and reduce long-term healthcare costs makes it a worthwhile investment.”

SGH’s dedication to innovation and patient care is a beacon of hope for countless individuals and families affected by cancer. Proton beam therapy is not just a technological advancement; it represents a new era of precision and compassion in oncology.

In a world where cancer remains one of the most formidable health challenges, facilities like SGH’s Proton Therapy Center offer a glimpse of a brighter future. With continued research and collaboration, the promise of more effective and less invasive cancer treatments is becoming a reality, one proton at a time.



treatment. The proton beam moved silently, guided by the expertise of the medical team. In just a few minutes, the session was over—another step in Paul’s journey toward recovery.

SGH’s commitment to patient care goes beyond the technical aspects. Prof Tan Hiang Khoon, Deputy CEO, SGH, highlighted the hospital’s holistic approach. “We focus not only on the



## Protecting youth from tobacco and nicotine industry

The World Health Organisation (WHO) and Stopping Tobacco Organisations and Products (STOP), a global tobacco industry watchdog, have launched “Hooking the next generation,” a report highlighting how the tobacco and nicotine industry targets youth through product design, marketing campaigns, and policy manipulation.

Ahead of World No Tobacco Day on May 31, the report reveals that 37 million children aged 13-15 years globally use tobacco, with adolescent e-cigarette use often exceeding adult rates. In the WHO European Region, 20% of 15-year-olds reported using e-cigarettes in the past month.

Despite progress in reducing tobacco use, e-cigarettes and new nicotine products pose a grave threat to youth. Studies show e-cigarette use increases the likelihood of conventional cigarette use among non-smoking youth by nearly three times. The industry markets products with candy-like flavors to attract children, contributing to nicotine addiction.

WHO calls for strong regulations to protect youth, including smoke-free public places, bans on flavored e-cigarettes, higher taxes, and increased public awareness. Youth advocates globally are exposing these deceptive practices and advocating for a tobacco-free future.

By uniting efforts, governments, public health organisations, civil society, and empowered youth can protect future generations from tobacco and nicotine addiction.

Source: World Health Organisation

## Managing ovarian cancer in young women

### STAR HEALTH DESK

Women aged 55 to 63 are most likely to get ovarian cancer, but it can also occurs in younger women. About one-third of cases are in women under 55, and 1 in 10 are under 45. Younger women face unique challenges, such as impacts on careers, children, and future family planning. Fortunately, they often have better long-term outcomes with the most common type of ovarian cancer compared to older women.

**Why ovarian cancer happens:** Ovarian cancer is more common after menopause. The exact cause is often unknown, but risk factors include:

- Being overweight or obese
- Smoking
- Having children later, or not having children
- Previous breast cancer
- A family history of ovarian, breast, or colorectal cancer
- Inherited cancer syndromes

About 25% of ovarian cancers are linked to inherited gene variants. These genes can increase cancer risk and are inherited from parents. Talk to your doctor if you have a family history or genetic concerns.

**Symptoms and diagnosis:** Symptoms of ovarian cancer can include unusual vaginal discharge, bloating, loss of appetite, feeling full quickly, abdominal or back pain, frequent or urgent urination, and constipation. Persistent symptoms for more than two weeks should be discussed with a doctor.

Diagnosis involves reviewing medical history, performing a pelvic exam, and conducting tests like ultrasounds, CT scans, MRIs, laparoscopy, biopsies, and blood tests.

**Types and stages of ovarian cancer:** Most ovarian cancers (epithelial cancers) start on the ovary’s surface and are less common in younger women. Other types affecting younger women include:

- **Borderline tumours:** slow-growing, treated with surgery only.
- **Germ cell tumours:** start in egg cells, often treated with surgery and chemotherapy.
- **Granulosa and Sertoli-Leydig cell tumours:** rare, develop in supportive ovarian tissue, usually treated with surgery and sometimes chemotherapy.

**Treatment for younger women:** Treatment typically involves surgery, possibly including a hysterectomy (removal of the uterus, ovaries, and fallopian tubes) and chemotherapy. For less advanced cancers, fertility-sparing surgery may be possible. This involves removing only one ovary and fallopian tube, allowing for future pregnancies. If fertility-sparing surgery is not an option, freezing eggs or embryos before treatment can preserve fertility.

Some chemotherapy can induce early menopause, so discussing fertility preservation options with specialists is crucial.

**Other considerations for younger women:** Younger women with ovarian cancer may face financial, career, and family concerns. Social workers can provide financial assistance and work-related support. Communicating simply and honestly with children about the diagnosis helps them cope. Counselling for the patient and family can be beneficial. Keeping open lines of communication with loved ones and seeking support from those in similar situations can ease the emotional burden. Remember, everyone’s coping mechanisms are different, so be patient and seek help when needed.



## Free medical camp in Cumilla

### STAR HEALTH REPORT

Evercare Hospital Dhaka, the first JCI-accredited hospital in the country, conducted a free medical camp to provide free heart treatment to children in Cumilla district, says a press release.

Dr Tahera Nazrin, a Senior Consultant, Coordinator, and Founder of the Paediatric Cardiology Department of Evercare Hospitals, provided free treatment to the children in the outpatient department by conducting diagnostics and echocardiograms. The initiative is dedicated to providing world-class cardiac medical care to children in need.

The free medical camp was held at Al-Islam Hospital and Diagnostic Centre at Debidwar in Cumilla district on Friday, May 17, 2024. The free medical camp was inaugurated by Md Abul Kalam Azad, honourable Member of the Parliament of Cumilla Debidwar 4 constituency.

Dr Tahera Nazrin, Senior Consultant, Coordinator, and Founder of the Paediatric Cardiology Department of Evercare Hospitals is renowned for her expertise in paediatric cardiology. She is making a pioneering and special contribution to the treatment of heart diseases in underprivileged children in society.

Evercare Hospital Dhaka is a 425-bed multi-disciplinary super-specialty tertiary care hospital, offering all types of healthcare with state-of-the-art medical, surgical, and diagnostic facilities. Built on an area of 4 lakh 35 thousand square feet, the hospital has been ensuring the highest quality of services to patients of all levels in Dhaka with the latest technology-rich medical services and medical professionals.

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## Unprecedented bans in hockey

### Abahani, Mariners named joint champions

SPORTS REPORTER

In an unprecedented decision, Bangladesh Hockey Federation (BHF) yesterday slapped suspensions of various tenures on 14 players and 10 officials, including veteran Mohammedan player Rasel Mahmud Jimmy and Mohammedan manager Ariful Haque Prince, following a meeting of the governing body yesterday.

The BHF also slapped monetary fines on a number of clubs after disciplinary committee's decisions on the recently-concluded Dhaka Premier Division League were forwarded to the governing body by the league committee.

The suspensions on players ranged from two matches to 12 matches while the suspensions on officials ranged from a couple of matches to lifetime bans. Some of the suspended players and officials were also foreigners who came here to play or coach the sides in the 11-team league.

Meanwhile, Abahani and Mariner Youngs Club were declared joint champions of the league, which saw chaos on April 19 after Mohammedan had refused to complete the last match against Abahani following brawl between the two teams over a decision by a foreign referee.

Both Abahani and Mariners had ended on top with 37 points each, and even though the federation had repeatedly asked the clubs to engage in a playoff, neither were willing, citing shortage of time.

BHF's general secretary Mominul Haque and vice-president Abdur Rashid Shikdar read out the decisions to reporters following the meeting, which was attended by 27 out of 29 members.

"Both clubs had asked for two months' time because they had visa/ NOC issues to sort out for foreign players," Sayeed told reporters. "However, we couldn't allow that much time since we had to start the first division and the second division leagues."

The suspensions on players and officials, meanwhile, were based mostly on referees' match reports of disciplinary issues on individual matches of the league, with Mohammedan's Jimmy receiving the toughest suspension of 12 matches.

"Jimmy had stopped play 173 times for a duration of 216 minutes in 14 matches, which does not bode well for a player of 19 year international career," Mominul said.

Among the officials, Mohammedan manager Ariful Haque Prince was suspended from club activities for four years while Mohammedan's adviser coach Gobinathan Krishnamurthy – a former coach of the Bangladesh national team – was handed a lifetime ban from Bangladesh hockey.

Mominul said that every club or individual who have been handed punishment will have the right to appeal.



# WILL HATHURUSINGHA continue receiving free pass?

SHABAB CHOWDHURY

"We win as a team, we lose as a team," is a cliché that members of the Bangladesh team often resort to while reading out from their age-old scripts, explaining disappointing losses.

If that is indeed the case then the team management spearheaded by head coach Chandika Hathurusingha should be taking a share of the blame for Bangladesh's plight. The Tigers hit a new low when they lost a T20 World Cup build-up series against the USA – an associate nation ranked 10 places below the Tigers.

While the fact remains that the kind of cricket the current Bangladesh side has been playing in the lead-up to the T20 World Cup can be deemed abhorrent and at times inexplicable, Hathurusingha's role in the mess could also be brought into question.

When so much credit is given to the coaches when the Tigers are on a good run, why should they evade criticism when the same side fails to show signs of life?

Renowned coach Mohammad Salahuddin, in an interview with The Daily Star, pointed out that the coach has little to do when the team does well but when things go south, the coach has to take responsibility and work his expertise to nurture the players, solve the puzzle to pull them out of a slump.

More than a year into his contract, Hathurusingha got to see both sides of the coin. In 2023, Bangladesh whitewashed defending champions England, and Afghanistan won a series against Ireland at home and claimed their maiden T20I win over New Zealand in the BlackCaps' backyard. But less than a year since enjoying their best ever run in the shortest format, the Tigers spiralled down to their lowest point, displaying a severe lack of continuity.

Shouldn't the coach be held accountable for a lack of foresight that saw Bangladesh back to square one?

When Hathurusingha was re-appointed to the head coach role last year, it was expected that the Sri Lankan, who has been known for his authoritative style of management, would be able to restore stability.

Instead, it is during his reign that the frosty relationship between Shakib Al Hasan and Tamim Iqbal came to the fore like never before, disrupting the

opted for far more drastic steps while changing the management – including the sacking of coaches at times. But when it comes to Hathurusingha, the board seems reluctant to demand accountability.

Is it that the BCB is deliberately not pointing fingers at Hathurusingha as it would eventually bring the board in the firing line?

It can be argued that the 54-year-old Sri Lankan has struggled to impact improvements in players and often to bring out the best in them. Sure, it is a player's fundamental duty to be concerned about upgrading himself but that aspect also has to be complemented with the guidance of the coaches.

In Hathurusingha's second stint, he has backed the likes of Liton Das and Soumya Sarkar almost unconditionally, but only to see the duo disappoint time and again.

Particularly, in Liton's case, could it not be said that his continuation in underperforming was aggravated only because the Hathurusingha-led team management failed to realise when to drop the classy right-hander and when to have him return to the national side?

The argument from the team management has always been that Liton is "just one innings away from regaining his form" as if he would be able to just go out there and magically get his head sorted enough and not throw his wicket away by playing three successive scoops like he did against Zimbabwe.

When defining a coach's role or considering his impact, Hathurusingha's shortcomings in extracting the best out of his players are in stark contrast to what former fast-bowling coach Otis Gibson and Allan Donald did to produce Bangladesh's best-ever pace unit.

Unfortunately, in this regard, Hathurusingha's efforts are yet to be reflected through his team.

**Is it that the BCB is deliberately not pointing fingers at Hathurusingha as it would eventually bring the board in the firing line?**

harmony of the side in all formats. The fallout between Tamim and Shakib is nothing new in the Bangladesh cricketing fraternity and was bound to be laid bare in public at some point – preferably after they had ended their careers – shouldn't Hathurusingha take some blame for not being able to manage two of the greatest egos in the country's cricket?

Heading into another major event, this time the T20 World Cup in the USA and the West Indies, things look a lot bleaker for the men in red and green.

A pivotal figure of the team, mainly responsible for designing game plans and 'man managing', Hathurusingha could also be blamed for failing to set the tone of the type of cricket the Tigers played in successive series against feeble Zimbabwe and USA.

Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) has

## Brothers Union relegated again

SPORTS REPORTER

After spending one season in the top-tier of Bangladesh's professional football structure, Brothers Union were relegated to the Bangladesh Championship League on Saturday.

The Gopibagh outfit, who had earned promotion back to the Bangladesh Premier League after winning the BCL in the 2022-23 season, moved back to the second tier after losing 3-2 against Sheikh Russel KC in their penultimate league fixture at the Muktiyoddha Smriti Stadium in Rajshahi on Saturday.

The Oranges have seven points with a game still to play, but with Rahmataganj MFS – the next-worst team in the 10-team table – a fair six points ahead, there is no way for Brothers to move out of the bottom of the table even if the Old Dhaka outfit lose their last match.

Eleta Kingsley had given Brothers a sixth-minute lead but goals from Sumon Reza and Ahror Umarjonov within the next five minutes had Sheikh Russel in the drivers' seat. Kingsley scored again in the 18th minute – his sixth goal of the campaign after joining the Gopibagh outfit midseason – but Chandon Roy's 31st minute strike sealed Brothers' fate.



**Bangladesh Kabaddi Federation's general secretary and DMP Commissioner Habibur Rahman, flanked by captains of 12 participating countries, unveils the trophy of the Bangabandhu Cup International Kabaddi tournament at the Shaheed Suhrawardy Indoor Stadium in Mirpur yesterday. The 12-nation tournament will get underway today, with hosts and three-time defending champions Bangladesh taking on South Korea.**

PHOTO: STAR

## SHORT CORNER

**Nadal 'not 100% certain' 2024 French Open will be his last**

"There is a good chance that it will be my last French Open, but I cannot say that I am 100% certain that it will be the last," said Rafael Nadal, who has won the French Open 14 times and will celebrate his 38th birthday on June 3.

**The World Cup mission is yet to start: Lipu**

Chief selector Gazi Ashraf Hossain Lipu expressed his frustration over Bangladesh's performance against hosts USA, but he is looking forward to how the Tigers perform in the all-important mega event: ICC T20 World Cup 2024.

**Copa America to feature its first female referees**

Next month's Copa America will be the first edition of the continental men's football tournament to have female referees, South America's soccer governing body (CONMEBOL) said on Friday.

Read the full stories on The Daily Star website

# Cummins and Co plot to spoil Kolkata's party

AFP, Chennai

Australia's World Cup-winning captain Pat Cummins will need a spectacular turnaround to secure another major title tonight, when his Sunrisers Hyderabad face Kolkata Knight Riders in the Indian Premier League final only five days after a heavy loss.

Fast bowler Cummins, for whom Hyderabad paid \$2.5 million in the

IPL auction, led Australia to both the world Test championship title and an ODI World Cup triumph last year.

"Very practical guy, very humble, very empathetic with his fellow team-mates and coaching staff," Hyderabad assistant coach Simon Helmot said of Cummins.

"He is into the statistics, gets the information he needs against a particular opposition in certain conditions. Doesn't waste time in team meetings, our team meeting today went for 35 seconds," he told reporters.

Hyderabad have racked up record IPL totals of 277 and 287 in a high-scoring tournament, with Cummins' astute leadership and rotation of bowlers also an advantage when defending totals.

Standing in Cummins' way will be fellow Australian and Kolkata quick Mitchell Starc, who rattled Hyderabad's top order in the first qualifier.

Left-arm quick Starc became the most expensive player in IPL history when Kolkata paid \$2.98 million for his services, overtaking Cummins in the same auction in December.

Starc justified the outlay when he returned figures of 3-34 at the world's biggest cricket stadium on Tuesday, including bowling fellow Australian and Hyderabad opener Travis Head for a duck.

Kolkata, led by India's Shreyas Iyer, have been the side to beat in the competition and topped the 10-team table with 20 points in the league phase.



● Kolkata and Hyderabad have faced off 27 times in the tournament's history, with Kolkata winning on 17 occasions and Hyderabad clinching just nine victories and one game ended in a tie.

● Considering appearances in the final, Kolkata have won two titles (2012 and 2014) in three attempts while Hyderabad won once (2016) in two outings.

● Kolkata are still the only team to chase down a 200-run target in an IPL final, a feat achieved in 2014.

● Kolkata's Rinku Singh, who is among the four travelling reserves for India, is the sole representative in the IPL final among the extended 19 members of the India squad for the T20 World Cup 2024.



**Manchester United forward Alejandro Garnacho and captain Bruno Fernandes celebrate scoring the opening goal in yesterday's English FA Cup final at Wembley stadium in London, after the former took advantage of a mix-up on the edge of the Manchester City penalty area in the 30th minute, paving the way for an unlikely 2-1 victory and their 13th FA Cup title.**

PHOTO: AFP







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# Peace prevails in 7 Indian states as govt stopped arms smuggling

## Says PM, promises a better Dhaka

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday highlighted the significance of the Awami League government's efforts to stop arms smuggling from Bangladesh to Indian separatist groups in the northeastern states.

"As a result, peace prevails in the seven sister states of India. The Awami League has done this, and it is a significant accomplishment," she added.



"We want to build a ring road in Dhaka to facilitate easier inter-district communication."

PM SHEIKH HASINA

The prime minister made the remarks during a ceremony inaugurating several development projects in Old Dhaka, including the construction of a new 10-storey Bangabazar Nagar Wholesale Market.

The original market was destroyed by a

SEE PAGE 6 COL 1



A soil-laden truck crashes into a metro rail pillar in the capital's Agargaon intersection around 5:00am yesterday. Later in the morning, police towed the vehicle away.

PHOTO: STAR

# Sixth phase sees 59pc turnout

Polling completes in 486 out of 543 constituencies

OUR CORRESPONDENT, New Delhi

Indian voters braved temperatures of nearly 45 degrees Celsius (113 Fahrenheit) in parts of the country as they headed to polling stations in the penultimate phase of the world's largest election yesterday.

More than 111 million people in 58 constituencies across eight states and federal



territories are eligible to vote in the general election's sixth phase. According to the Indian Election Commission's voter turnout app, the turnout was 59.06 percent at 7:45pm. The overall turnout in the same phase of the last election in 2019

was about 63 percent.

The states and union territories which

SEE PAGE 6 COL 1

## DW DOCUMENTARY 'It's false and fallacious' Says ISPR

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Inter-Services Public Relations Directorate yesterday said the Deutsche Welle (DW) documentary titled "Torturers deployed as UN peacekeepers" is "false and fallacious".

In a press release, it said the documentary presents a misleading portrayal of Bangladesh

SEE PAGE 6 COL 1

# Workover makes gas worth Tk 2,590cr usable

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Following successful workover procedures, a well at the Titas Gas Field resumed production yesterday, generating around 12 mmcfd (million cubic feet per day).

A workover project for the existing Titas-14 well began on March 19. Authorities completed the procedures on May 21 with the local rig Bijoy-11.

The well has an estimated reserve of around 40 billion cubic feet (BCF) and it can continue to produce gas for the next 10 years, according to a press release from the Ministry of Power, Energy and Mineral Resources.

The estimated price of the gas reserve is Tk 2,590 crore and around Tk 75 crore has been spent to conduct the workover, the press release said.

The Titas Gas Field operates under Bangladesh Gas Field Company Limited, which has five other such fields, namely, Habiganj, Bakhrabad, Narshingdi, Meghna and Kamta.

There are 39 gas wells under these six fields that produce around 560 million cubic feet of gas per day (mmcfd).

# Curtains close on Cannes 2024

SHANJY CHOWDHURY

The 77th Cannes Film Festival concluded yesterday, leaving behind a trail of scintillating premieres, captivating performances, and the award-season buzz.

This year's edition offered a diverse feast for cinephiles — from projects by established cinematic titans to the works of burgeoning talents.

The Cannes Film Festival 2024 official competition's nine-member jury was

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## SUN PHARMA SETS UP NEW MANUFACTURING PLANT IN MEGHNA INDUSTRIAL ECONOMIC ZONE (MIEZ)

INAUGURATION MARKS A SIGNIFICANT EXPANSION FOR SUN PHARMA IN BANGLADESH

**Sun Pharmaceuticals (EZ) Limited-** a subsidiary of Sun Pharma, the fourth largest global specialty generic pharmaceutical company has inaugurated its factory in Meghna Industrial Economic Zone (MIEZ), Sonargaon, Narayanganj on May 25, 2024. The state-of-the-art facility is equipped with latest technology and conforms to cGMP standards. Hon'ble Adviser to the Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina on Private Industry and Investment **Mr. Salman Fazlur Rahman, MP**, inaugurated the factory as Chief Guest. Hon'ble High Commissioner of India to Bangladesh, His Excellency **Mr. Pranay Kumar Verma**; Executive Chairman (Senior Secretary), Bangladesh Economic Zones Authority (BEZA) Mr. Shaikh Yusuf Harun; Chairman & Managing Director, Meghna Group of Industries (MGI) Mr. Mostafa Kamal; Director General, Directorate General of Drug Administration (DGDA) Major General Mohammad Yousuf; President, Bangladesh Association of Pharmaceutical Industries and Chairman & MD, Incepta Pharmaceuticals Ltd. Dr. Abdul Muktedir; Dean (Acting), Faculty of Pharmacy, University of Dhaka Prof. Dr. Firoj Ahmed were present as Special Guests in the groundbreaking ceremony. It was hosted by senior Sun Pharma official, Mr. Indranil Sen- Regional Head (MENA/Bangladesh) along with local leadership team lead by Mr. Sanjay Basu (Country Head- Bangladesh).