



An electrifying performance by Eagles dance troupe dazzles guests at the bti-The Daily Star Stellar Women-2023 gala at the Banquet Hall of the Kurmitola Golf Club last night.

PHOTO: STAR



## BCL leader arrested over activist's murder

Admits to police about opening fire

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Brahmanbaria

A Chhatra League leader has been arrested for his involvement in the murder of a BCL activist, who was shot dead in broad daylight in Brahmanbaria during the fourth phase of the upazila polls on Wednesday.

Prior to his arrest, Hasan Al Farabi Joy was expelled from his post as vice president of BCL's district unit.

Farabi was directly involved in the murder of BCL activist Ashrafur Rahman Ijaz, said Mohammad Shakhawat Hossain, superintendent of Brahmanbaria police, at a press conference in his office yesterday.

A court sent Farabi to jail yesterday afternoon, a day after the victim's father filed a case against 16 people, including Farabi, in connection with the murder.

A team from the Detective Branch (DB) of police arrested Farabi from Kutubpur village under Atpara upazila of Netrakona on Friday morning, said the SP.

After the arrest, Farabi told police where he dumped the pistol used in the murder. Subsequently, the pistol was retrieved from a bush in Bhatpara village under Brahmanbaria Sadar Upazila, said SP Shakhawat.

During primary interrogation, Farabi admitted that he opened fire at a victory procession brought out by Ijaz and others before the announcement of the results of the Sadar upazila parishad election.

The police official also mentioned that Farabi had a conflict with Ijaz. A heated argument took place between them at a polling centre on Wednesday morning. Later in the afternoon, Farabi opened fire on the victory procession.

## POST-POLLS VIOLENCE Journo attacked by defeated candidate

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Jamalpur

A local journalist was allegedly assaulted by a defeated upazila vice chairman candidate and her supporters in Bakshiganj upazila, Jamalpur early yesterday.

Masud Ul Hasan, 35, Bakshiganj correspondent of the daily Samakal, filed a written complaint with the local police against four named people and five to six unnamed others.

According to the complaint, as Masud was returning home on his motorcycle from his office, a group of people ambushed him when he reached Russell Amin Market 12:15am, leaving him injured. They also vandalised his motorbike and snatched his camera.

Atiq Mia and his wife defeated female vice chairman candidate Masuma Yasmin Smrity led the attack, Masud alleged in his complaint.

Hearing his scream, locals rescued him and took him to Bakshiganj Upazila Health Complex.

Masud said he has no dispute with Masuma Yasmin Smrity, adding that she might have attacked him for not working in favour of her in the recent upazila parishad election.

This correspondent could not reach the accused over the phone for their comment.

Abdul Ahad, officer-in-charge of Bakshiganj police station said they received a complaint in this regard. "We are looking into the matter."

The president and general secretary of Bakshiganj Press Club condemned the attack and demanded the immediate arrest of the attackers.

Jamalpur Zilla Press Club formed a human chain also demanding immediate arrest and exemplary punishment of the attackers.



**"Now, we see that 60 percent of attendees in village high schools and colleges are women. This didn't happen overnight. The government provided various facilities to women, offered incentives and implemented numerous measures that led to their enormous empowerment."**

RAM OBAIDUL MUKTADIR  
Chowdhury, housing and public works minister



**"bti has unwavering commitment towards women empowerment and with this aim The Daily Star has initiated the Stellar Women Awards-2023 for those who have enormous contribution to the society in different sectors, including education, development, art, culture."**

NALAKA HETTIARACHCHI,  
CEO of bti



**"Through this initiative, we're honouring those women who've been working for the society and having a profound impact in building the nation, despite facing enormous challenges. The stories of these stellar women and their determination will inspire and empower other women in the society."**

FR KHAN, bti managing director



**"The main theme of this whole effort is to highlight the brilliant roles that women are playing in the country. The leadership emerging at practical, enterprise, company, and small business levels is setting a trend and contributing significantly to the nation's progress."**

MAHFUZ ANAM, editor and publisher of The Daily Star

## Power gets a third of Tk 108,240cr subsidies

FROM PAGE 1

Capacity payments reached Tk 28,000 crore in 2022-23, a major leap from Tk 5,600 crore in 2017-18, said the study.

In the current fiscal year, it was Tk 32,000 crore, according to officials of Bangladesh Power Development Board (PDB).

Contacted, Mohammad Hossain, director general of the Power Cell, said, "It is not true that the subsidy money is spent to pay capacity charges. The PDB buys electricity from the Independent Power Producers at a higher rate than we sell [at a lower rate] to the distributor companies and consumers. What we get as subsidy is used to fill the up."

The PDB pays for gas and fuel used by the power plants, he said. "The volatile prices of fuel in the global market and devaluation of the taka

against dollar are raising power generation costs.

"We only slightly increased power prices and have plans to hike more. But we are still spending more for each unit of electricity."

Khondaker Golam Moazzem, research director at the CPD, said capacity payments and higher energy prices in the international market were making the subsidy necessary in 2024-25.

Even after raising power prices several more times, the government will still need to subsidise the sector because power plants that are in the pipeline will soon require capacity charges, he said.

By retiring the inefficient and old power plants and getting rid of the provision for capacity charge when a plant does not produce electricity, the

government can reduce the burden, he said, but the focus is not there.

The government has plans to raise power tariffs three to four times a year to lower subsidies over the next three years.

Electricity price was raised by 5 percent in February this year and three times last year.

A finance ministry official, requesting anonymity, said, "Power price is being raised slowly while generation costs have risen rapidly."

Prof Mohammad Tamim, former adviser to a caretaker government, said, "If subsidy is withdrawn, the cost of power will rise and drive up inflation."

In the new budget, the government allocated Tk 7,000 crore for importing liquefied natural gas (LNG), up from Tk 6,000 crore in the

current fiscal year.

### OTHER SUBSIDIES

Considering the rising costs of living, food subsidy has been raised to Tk 7,250 crore from the current year's Tk 6,916 crore.

Ahasanul Islam Titu, state minister at the commerce ministry, told a press conference yesterday that more people will get subsidised food.

"We plan to have shops in designated areas under the Open Market Sale programme," he said.

In the agriculture sector, Tk 17,533 crore was allocated in the proposed budget last year, but the amount reached Tk 25,644 crore in the revised budget. In the new budget, the amount is Tk 17,261 crore.

The government will provide Tk 9,025 crore to the export sector in the form of incentives.

## Hasina gets warm welcome

FROM PAGE 1

foreign leader to have reached the Indian capital for the event at the Rashtrapati Bhavan at 7:20pm, the Indian external affairs ministry tweeted.

"This visit of one of our most valued partners will further strengthen close and deep-rooted bonds of friendship," said the ministry.

It also tagged pictures of Hasina being warmly received by External Affairs Secretary Muktesh Pardeshi, Bangladesh High Commissioner to India Mustafizur Rahman and Indian High Commissioner to Bangladesh

Minister of Nepal Pushpa Kamal Dahal and Prime Minister of Bhutan Tshering Tobgay, have accepted the invitation to attend Modi's oath-taking, the Indian external affairs ministry said in a statement yesterday.

"The visit of the leaders to attend the swearing-in ceremony of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi for his third consecutive term is in keeping with the highest priority accorded by India to its 'Neighbourhood First' policy and 'SAGAR' vision," the ministry said.

Muizzu was a surprise addition to the list of invitees, especially amid the



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina is greeted by a group of Manipuri dancers who performed as she arrived at Palam Air Force Station, the VIP airport in New Delhi, yesterday to attend the oath-taking ceremony of her Indian counterpart Narendra Modi.

PHOTO: PTI

## Laurels for women breaking the barriers

FROM PAGE 1

"But since the Awami League-led government assumed office, it has been tirelessly working to change the country and improve the fate of women."

He mentioned how the government promoted women with opportunities in various top positions in different government agencies, security forces, and other sectors.

The minister also said, "Now, we see 60 percent of the attendees in village high schools are girls. This didn't happen overnight."

Managing Director of bti FR Khan, who was the guest of honour, gave the welcome speech. "We're very happy that The Daily Star is with us for this prestigious event."

"Through this initiative, we are honouring the women who have been working for the society and profoundly impacting the nation-building, despite facing enormous challenges. The stories of these stellar

women and their determination will inspire and empower other women in the society."

Mahfuz Anam, editor and publisher of The Daily Star, in his speech thanked bti for taking this initiative and said, "For The Daily Star and me personally, it's a proud privilege to be here at this absolutely brilliant event. More so, it's an honour to be the partner of bti on this great journey. I must confess that when bti first proposed the idea to us, we were a bit surprised because no real estate company had come forward with such an initiative before ...

"The main theme of this whole effort is to highlight the brilliant roles that women are playing in the country. The leadership emerging at practical, enterprise, company, and small business levels, is setting a trend and contributing significantly to the nation's progress. Through this award, each of the women

honoured has inspired many of us."

CEO of bti Nalaka Hettiarachchi thanked the audience, the winners, The Daily Star, and the chief guest for being present.

"Bti is unwavering in its commitment towards women empowerment, and with this aim bti and The Daily Star have initiated the Stellar Women Awards-2023 for those who made enormous contributions in different sectors, including education, development, art, and culture. We are honouring them to recognise their contribution and innovation, and provide financial assistance."

He urged other women, who believe they are making such contributions, to register for next year's edition of the awards.

The awardees were handed over crests, cheques and scarves at the end of the programme.

The 2024 categories for the initiative were also launched.

## Rahul nominated

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early next week.

Parliamentary regulations require the opposition leader to come from a party that commands at least 10 percent of the lawmakers in the 543-seat lower house.

The post has been vacant for 10 years because two dismal election results for Congress — once India's dominant party — left it short of that threshold.

Tuesday's election results increased the party's parliamentary representation from 52 to 99 seats.

A statement from the Congress executive said that "many challenges" remained in the party's road to reclaiming its credibility and returning to government in the future.

"The people of India have spoken — the Congress has been given another chance," the statement said.

"It is now up to us to build on it. We must and we will."

Modi and his Hindu-nationalist BJP ruled outright for the past decade but failed to repeat its previous two landslide wins this time, despite widespread expectations of another easy triumph.

strained ties between India and the Maldives since his election last year on the back of an "India Out" campaign.

The opposition INDIA bloc is yet to get invitation for attending the swearing-in of Modi.

Replying to a question from reporters, Congress leader Jairam Ramesh said his party was yet to get any invite for the swearing-in. "If and when we get it, we as INDIA bloc will take a collective decision."

In Kolkata, West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee yesterday made it clear that her party Trinamool Congress would not attend Modi's oath-taking.

Hasina is scheduled to return Dhaka tomorrow.