

## IGP Mamun's tenure extended for second time

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government yesterday again extended the tenure of Inspector General of Police Chowdhury Abdullah Al-Mamun, this time for one year under contract.

The public administration ministry issued a circular, signed by its deputy secretary Bhaskar Debnath Bappi, in this regard.

On January 9 last year, his tenure as IGP was extended for a year and a half under contract.

Police sources said it was the first time that an IGP was given two extensions.

According to the circular, he will serve as IGP for one more year under conditions of the contract mentioned in the previous circular that extended his tenure last year.

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Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina being presented with a framed painting of the Padma Bridge at a rally in Munshiganj yesterday. The rally was organised on the occasion of the closing ceremony of Padma Multipurpose Bridge Project.

PHOTO: PID

## A corrupt taxman and his 'blessed' in-laws

**Faisal, his relatives undervalued their properties in official documents, claims ACC**

DIPAN NANDY

"When you rise, lift others [read in-laws in this case] with you" – even if it means bending a few rules along the way.

Quazi Abu Mahmud Faisal, former first secretary of the National Board of Revenue (NBR), seems to have lived up to these words.

Faisal, who was recently transferred to the Bogura office of NBR, has been under the spotlight recently for allegedly amassing a staggering Tk 1,000 crore illegally, as claimed by the ACC. But it's not just Faisal whose fortune has risen exponentially thanks to his government job; his in-laws too seem to have hit the jackpot.

Faisal has purchased a 2,990-square-foot flat in Siddheshwari and 10 katha of land in Meradia, Dhaka, in the names of Ahmed Ali, his father-in-law, and Momtaz

Begum, his mother-in-law.

The values of these properties were strategically undervalued in official documents.

Although the Siddheshwari flat was purchased in the name of Ahmed Ali on paper, in reality, it's Faisal and his family who have been living there for a year, according to locals.

The flat, located on the 10th floor of one of the four buildings in Rupayan Swapno Niloy in Siddheshwari, was shown to be bought for Tk 95.50 lakh.

The market value of the 2,990-square-foot flat is Tk 1 crore, according to an ACC document submitted to the court. The Daily Star has a draft copy of the document.

Bazlur Rahman, who has been living in the area over the past three decades, also finds the official valuation "unbelievable".

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## In police, 'benefits are for seniors'

Say disgruntled junior cops who haven't been promoted for years, and even decades

MOHAMMAD JAMIL KHAN and SHAHEEN MOLLAH

Thirteen years ago, Md Halim (name changed) was promoted to police inspector.

Since then, he has served as officer-in-charge at various police stations in Dhaka.

His name was enlisted for promotion to assistant superintendent of police (ASP) in 2017, but six years later, he is still waiting for the call.

"It seems the authorities do not think we are capable, or else they would have given us the promotion," he told The Daily Star recently.

"All benefits are for seniors. Why shouldn't we get the promotion after working 10 to 12 years in the field? It's embarrassing for me and my family."

According to the Police Headquarters database, around 655 inspectors and 115 Traffic Inspectors were listed for ASP promotion in 2017, and 291 inspectors and 72 TI were listed in 2016. Additionally, at least 515 inspectors were listed in 2012 and 2014.

These officers, who joined

between 1991 and 1999, have completed 25 to 33 years of service and will retire soon.

Over the past year, junior officers have met with the home minister, inspector general of police, and other top officials to address the promotion crisis.

In response, PHQ in a

ranks are grade nine, so no additional salary would be required.

The Daily Star has obtained a copy of the letter.

Mazharul Islam, general secretary of the Bangladesh Police Association, said, "We have placed our demands to the government several times.

**Although ASPs were supposed to be promoted to additional SPs after five years, 113 officials of the 36th BCS and 97 officials of the 37th BCS are still waiting after six and five years, respectively. Promotions for the 35th and 36th BCS batches won't be possible until 2027, and the 37th BCS until after 2030.**



recent letter informed the home ministry that no ASP posts are currently available.

While some ASP posts will be vacant by 2028, they are insufficient for the large number of awaiting officers.

PHQ requested the ministry to create 300 supernumerary (officials who hold the same position and perform the same duties after their elevation) ASP posts.

Both inspector and ASP

It is our legal demand and we hope the government will address our demands soon."

The PHQ letter also requested the creation of 350 supernumerary Additional SP posts, as officials of the 35th BCS have not been promoted despite serving as ASPs for about seven years.

There are around 114 ASPs in the 35th BCS.

Although ASPs were supposed to be promoted to additional SPs after five years,

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## MoUs with India one-sided

**Speakers tell Ganatantra Mancha rally**

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The recently signed memorandums of understanding (MoUs) between India and Bangladesh are one-sided and unbalanced, said leaders of Ganatantra Mancha, an alliance of several opposition parties, yesterday.

They said these deals favoured India's dominance over Bangladesh's economy, security, and governance. During a rally in front of Jatiya Press Club, they also said the people of Bangladesh have rejected the MoUs with India that go against the country's interests, said a press release by the platform.

The leaders criticised the deals signed during Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's recent visit to India, which

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## 'On this journey, no one cares if you live or die'

Migrants face violence, rights violation on journey through Mediterranean, says UNHCR report

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Refugees and migrants, including Bangladeshis, continue to face extreme forms of violence, human rights violations, and exploitation on land and sea routes through the African continent towards its Mediterranean coastline.

The information was disclosed in a report titled "On This Journey, No-one Cares If You Live or Die" (volume 2), which was released by UNHCR, International Organisation for Migration and Mixed Migration Centre yesterday.

Risks and abuses reported by refugees and migrants include torture, physical violence, arbitrary detention, death, kidnapping for ransom, sexual violence and exploitation, enslavement, human trafficking, forced labour, organ removal, and robbery, alongside collective expulsions and refoulement, said the report.

It also said at least 1,180 people died while crossing the Sahara between January 2020 and May 2024, but the number could be much higher.

During the same period, around 7,115 people were reported

to have died or gone missing in the Mediterranean Sea, it adds.

The report states that the Central Mediterranean route starts in East and West Africa and the Horn of Africa, leading

Maghreb countries, where people reach their destination or move towards the European Union, crossing the sea.

The report builds on data collected by IOM, MMC, and

through Libya reported the country to be risky, followed by Ethiopia (62 percent), Algeria (55 percent), and Guinea (33 percent), among other countries. The report says the main



**At least 1,180 people died while crossing the Sahara between January 2020 and May 2024, but the number could be much higher.**

to the Mediterranean.

It also said people from many countries, including Bangladesh, travel through Dubai, Istanbul, or Cairo to reach the route's North Africa section, which leads through the desert to and through

UNHCR from January 2020 to March 2023, for which refugees from a total of 59 different countries were interviewed.

Also, 66 percent of respondents who were interviewed in or transited

departure points to cross the Mediterranean Sea include the coastal cities of Zuwara and Misratah in Libya and Sfax in Tunisia.

People traditionally start their sea voyage from Libya to go

to Italy, but during the first half of 2023, people departed from Tunisia more, with a 137 percent increase from 2022.

In 2022, the most common nationalities entering Europe through the Northern Africa region were Egyptian, Tunisian, and Bangladeshi.

For January-August 2023, the main nationalities arriving in Italy were Guinean (14 percent), Ivorian (13 percent), Tunisian (11 percent), Egyptian (7 percent), Bangladeshi (7 percent), and Pakistani (6 percent).

Among the top ten nationalities arriving in Italy through the Central Mediterranean route during 2018-2022, Syrians had a 95.23 percent asylum application acceptance rate, followed by Sudanese (83.25 percent).

By contrast, the "protection rate" of Bangladeshis was lower (13.40 percent).

In a joint statement, the organisations called for concrete, route-based protection responses to save lives and reduce suffering, as well as a push to address the root causes of displacement and drivers of irregular movements.

## Keep your phone safe, or it may end up in India

Transnational phone smuggling gangs active

MUNTAKIM SAAD

If you lose an iPhone in Bangladesh, chances are it has already been sold at an unbelievably cheaper price in one of the many states of India.

Likewise, smartphones stolen in the neighbouring country make their way to Bangladesh and are sold at far below the market price.

On November 7 last year, Ferdous Miah, a deputy jailer from Dinaipur, was robbed in Dhaka's Dhanmondi area, losing his Samsung S23 Ultra mobile phone.

After filing a GD and using a tracking app, he located the phone months later in Gujarat, India.

Following coordination with Indian authorities, he received news of its recovery on March 1 and the phone was returned via parcel shortly thereafter.

Meanwhile, Religious Affairs Minister Md Faridul Haque Khan's mobile phone was stolen in Jamalpur on April 30, but was found in Malaysia a month later. Detectives investigating the incident busted a gang and seized 63 stolen mobile phones from their possession.

There are transnational rackets active in Bangladesh and India that are smuggling stolen and unauthorised mobile phones between the two countries, law enforcers found.

The issue re-emerged on June 30 when Dhaka Metropolitan Police recovered a stolen iPhone belonging to a Kolkata resident from Keraniganj, Bangladesh.

Moutusi Ganguly, an Indian resident, lost her phone in Kolkata's Park Circus area on July 26, 2023.

Her daughter, Ashmita Ganguly, tracked the phone to Bangladesh by using technology.

Nearly a year later, Shahjahanpur Police recovered the device.

Ashmita submitted a general diary to the Bangladesh Deputy High Commission in Kolkata and communicated with Sub-inspector Milton Kumar Deb Das of Shahjahanpur Police via WhatsApp.

"I tried to track the phone 25-30 times over the last year before finally recovering it from Keraniganj. A man had purchased the iPhone for only Tk 17,000," said SI Milton to The Daily Star.

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## Met office predicts rain across country

UNB, Dhaka

Bangladesh Meteorological Department (BMD) has predicted rain or thundershowers in all divisions including Dhaka over the 24 hours from 9:00am yesterday.

"Light to moderately heavy rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty wind is likely to occur at most places over Rangpur, Rajshahi, Dhaka, Mymensingh, Khulna, Barishal, Chattogram and Sylhet divisions with moderately heavy to very heavy at places over the country," said Met office.

The highest 54mm of rainfall was recorded in Chandpur yesterday.

Day and night temperatures may remain nearly unchanged over the country. The country's highest temperature was recorded in Chuadanga at 33.5 degrees Celsius yesterday while the lowest was in Teknaf at 23.7 degrees Celsius.