



"He miscalculated. For all our common enemies now, he is Russian – and therefore unpredictable and dangerous."

Former Russian president Dmitri Medvedev on the arrest of Telegram CEO Pavel Durov



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Timing of polls 'a political decision'

Says Yunus in address to nation, asks people to fix interim govt's mandate, tenure



- Measures to be taken so that no one can ever turn country into a police-state
- Clauses of laws which hinder freedom of expression to be amended
- Justice to be ensured for all extrajudicial killings, enforced disappearances
- Police, bank commissions to be formed for reforms

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Urging the people to set the interim government's tenure and mandate, Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus yesterday said when the elections will be held is "completely a political decision".

"Everyone is eager to know when our government will depart. The answer lies in your hands. It is up to you to decide when to bid us farewell. We are not the people to rule the country," he said in a 26-minute televised address to the nation yesterday evening.

He went on to request the people to discuss and prescribe what is the least the interim government needs to do.

"We can get a guideline from this discussion," Yunus said, adding, "But the political decision is the ultimate decision. And political decisions will only come from political discussion."

In his first address to the nation, the chief adviser also assured that he would not seek to extend his tenure.

He said the members of the advisory council took up the responsibilities at the

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Saiful Islam and his daughter Sadia Akter cry as they meet after four days in the Lalpol area in Feni yesterday. Saiful said he could not contact his daughter as a severe flood cut all communication in the area.

PHOTO: REUTERS

50 injured as Ansars clash with students

Ansars earlier besieged Secretariat to press home their demands



STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Despite the government's assurance of fulfilling their demands, ansar members continued demonstration by blocking the Secretariat gates yesterday and clashed with students and people.

At least 50 people were injured. The clash broke out around 9:20pm as the students and the people tried to drive away the demonstrators demanding nationalisation of their jobs, said witnesses.

During the clash, the groups hurled brick chunks at each other and chased each other.

At least 40 injured took treatment at Dhaka Medical College Hospital till 11:00pm, said Bachchu Mia, inspector of DMCH police outpost.

Hasnat Abdullah, one of the conveners of Anti-discrimination Student Movement, was also injured during the clash.

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FLASH FLOODS

'We had no clue what was coming'

Says victim in remote area of Noakhali; 10 lakh still marooned

MD ABBAS

When Tuhin Rana, a private company employee in Dhaka, heard last week that floodwaters were entering his remote village in Noakhali, he called his parents and wife who had just given birth and told them to stay safe.

Tuhin thought his family members, natives of the coastal region, would know how to cope with the disaster.

But on Thursday, he found their phones unreachable and read about the devastation the floods were causing.

one-foot deep water in the house," he told this correspondent.

"They are drinking unsafe water. Water in the hand pumps is not clean. I am feeling helpless. They had no idea what was coming."

Most residents of the area took shelter at Batakandi Model School and College. But they also do not have enough food, water and sanitation, locals said.

"Some people set up kitchens and provided food. But they ran out of money. Due to the lack of boats in the area, barely

any relief materials reach here."

Tuhin's family members are among millions in Noakhali, Feni, and Cumilla districts who have been suffering for the past four days.

In Noakhali, eight upazilas were still flooded. Due to a bout of downpour yesterday, the situation worsened.

"I found my elderly parents sitting on the bed of our hut to stay dry. They had not eaten cooked food in two days. My wife and newborn were taken to a safer place by the neighbours. There is still



Some people set up kitchens and provided food. But they ran out of money. Due to the lack of boats in the area, barely any relief materials reach us.

Tuhin Rana, resident of Noakhali

Yesterday, Tuhin reached his home after nearly an 18-hour journey, which usual took five hours, because the roads were flooded and he had to wait for hours to find boats.

"I found my elderly parents sitting on the bed of our hut to stay dry. They had not eaten cooked food in two days. My wife and newborn were taken to a safer place by the neighbours. There is still

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MOBILE SERVICE DURING DISASTERS

No contingency system despite available funds

Telecom ministry fails to set up system in two years

MAHMUDUL HASAN

The telecom ministry has failed to establish a National Emergency Telecommunication System (NETS) to maintain telecommunication and internet services during disasters despite starting the initiative almost two years ago.

In September 2022, following a devastating flood in Sylhet that rendered most of the mobile towers nonfunctional, the Posts and Telecommunications Ministry formed a 12-member committee to develop NETS.

The committee was tasked with formulating a specific plan for NETS, including technical aspects, management and maintenance of the system.

However, the ministry has yet to furnish any plan. Moreover, some organisations listed as committee members are unaware of the committee's existence.

"As far as we know, we haven't been invited to the committee in the last two years – such a system is very essential to ensure smooth communication during the different types of natural disasters," said Bangladesh Red Crescent Society, which was named as a member of the committee.

Every time a cyclone, flood, or other natural disaster strikes Bangladesh, affected individuals first lose access to mobile networks when they need connectivity the most to seek help.

This disruption is primarily due to extended power outages: the standard battery backup duration for base transceiver stations ranges from four to eight hours.

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Mazumder, Sarafat's bank accounts to be frozen

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Bangladesh Financial Intelligence Unit (BFIU) yesterday asked banks to freeze the accounts of Nazrul Islam Mazumder, the chairman of Exim Bank and Nassa Group, and Chowdhury Nafeez Sarafat, former chairman of Padma Bank, and their family members.



Nazrul Islam Nafeez Sarafat

In separate letters, the anti-money laundering agency instructed the lenders to keep the accounts frozen for the next 30 days in the first phase. The intelligence unit also instructed the banks to suspend their locker facilities.

Sarafat and Mazumder, also the chairman of the private bank owners' forum Bangladesh Association of Banks (BAB) since 2008,

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EDN INSTITUTIONS

Forcing people to resign may lead to collapse

Says edn adviser

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Education adviser to the interim government, Professor Wahiduddin Mahmud, said yesterday that forcing individuals in educational institutions to resign could lead to the collapse of the administrative system.

Speaking at a meeting with ministry officials, the adviser said legitimate complaints against individuals will be addressed, but forced resignations are not an option.

The adviser said that established rules and regulations govern the process of appointments and transfers in government educational institutions, and there is no room for coercion.

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All-rounder Mehedi Hasan Miraz (L) runs in to celebrate with teammates after dismissing Pakistan batter Agha Salman during the fifth day of the first Test against Pakistan at the Rawalpindi Cricket Stadium yesterday. Miraz's four wickets in the second innings helped Bangladesh register a historic 10-wicket victory, their first-ever in the format against Pakistan.

PHOTO: AFP

A statement victory for Tigers

AL-AMIN

When opener Zakir Hasan swept off-spinner Agha Salman down to the square-leg boundary for the winning runs at the Rawalpindi Stadium yesterday afternoon, it marked the end of Bangladesh's long wait for a Test win against Pakistan.

The 10-wicket triumph in the first of the Two-Test series on a dramatic fifth and final day was not just a win, but a true statement of courage, commitment, self-belief and discipline that deserved to be preserved for posterity.

There are so many heroes in Bangladesh's first ever Test win against Pakistan after 13 unsuccessful attempts. The only occasion the Tigers came close to winning before this was in Multan in 2003 when a portly Inzamamul Haq robbed them with an unbeaten 138 in the second innings, with Pakistan winning by one wicket.

However, there was no Inzy this time around when Bangladesh, riding on an invaluable 117 run first-innings lead, went for the final push for an unlikely win on an otherwise flat track.

Resuming on 23-1 on a 'never trust a fifth day pitch', Pakistan stumbled to 105-6 by lunch with the Bangladesh spin duo of Shakib Al Hasan and Mehedi Hasan Miraz getting some purchase and eventually sharing seven wickets between them.

However, it was right-arm pacer Hasan Mahmud, bowling a probing line throughout the Test, who drew the first blood early in the morning by having Pakistan captain Shan Masood caught behind for 14.

Lanky Nahid Rana with his raw pace then had the 'big fish' Babar Azam, who chopped onto his stumps a widish delivery outside the off-stump for 22.

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PHOTO: RAJIB RAIHAN, RASHED SHUMON

Floodwater is yet to recede around Feni General Hospital, where medical services remained suspended for the past four days. While there were still no doctors present, some nurses reported to duty yesterday and provided basic medical care to those in need. **Top right**, Volunteers repair a section of the Dhaka-Chattogram Highway in Feni's Lalpol area yesterday after the floodwaters receded there. The road was damaged after being submerged for four days. **Bottom right**, student volunteers at Dhaka University moved their food-packing operation to the gymnasium yesterday after the space inside the TSC got filled with donated relief supplies for flood victims. More supplies were stored outside the gym and in the gallery.



Timing of polls 'a political decision'

FROM PAGE 1
call of the students and have been carrying out their duties with utmost diligence as a team.

Seeking blessings from the people, he said the government does not want to lose the opportunity to build a new Bangladesh, earned through the blood of the students and the people.

"If we lose this opportunity now, we will be defeated as a nation. We want to remain committed to the martyrs, the injured, and the surviving students so that we do not lose this achievement."

He said local government institutions will be empowered, and decentralisation of power will be ensured to strengthen democracy.

Necessary reforms to the administration, judiciary, Election Commission and the electoral system, and law and order would be made to ensure free flow of information and a free, fair, and participatory election.

"The aim of these [reforms] will be the initiation of an accountable political system against corruption, looting, and genocide," Yunus said.

The chief adviser said after the fascist government leader fled the country in the face of public wrath, they want to build a country where the human rights of every citizen are completely protected.

"We have one goal — an open, democratic, exploitation free, and non-communal Bangladesh. We are one family. We have one goal. We are committed to ensuring that no division can disrupt our dream," said the Nobel Peace Prize winner.

He said Bangladesh was built with the supreme sacrifice of several millions, but it has been destroyed by fascism and tyranny.

The country had been changed so much that even an autocrat's peon can accumulate illegal wealth of Tk 400 crore without any obstruction.

"They have crippled the education sector; looted banks and the stock market; set world records in project expenditures; plundered resources openly; turned law enforcement

agencies into puppets of their party; snatched away freedom of speech; and violated human rights. These are just the tip of the iceberg," he said.

To consolidate power, he said, "The fascist government curbed the people's constitutional power and rights. Their misrule, corruption, injustice, repression, and farce in the name of justice endangered public safety."

Millions of people were deprived of their voting rights for years and the autocrat not only took the nation's ownership, it also handed it over to its families and party people, he said.

Yunus thanked the people for their support for his government's efforts to bring reforms and said, "We realise that you have high expectations of us. We are determined to meet these expectations."

However, the long-standing absence of democracy and 15 years of fascist rule left the interim government with challenges as big as mountains.

"But we are ready to take up the challenge," he said, urging all to have patience.

He called on all not to force the immediate fulfilment of their demands, threaten individuals at work, mount pressure to lodge cases, or attack people at courts.

"These actions will tarnish the glory and potential of the revolution of student and people, and hinder the efforts to build a new Bangladesh," Yunus said.

He said the government had to begin the job of rebuilding the country on a fragile structure, which is contrary to public interest.

The government wants to build Bangladesh in such a way that the people become the source of all power in the true sense. "We must succeed in the task of reforming... There is no alternative to this."

DON'T OBSTRUCT OUR WORK
Regarding agitations and road blocks by different groups for realising their demands, Prof Yunus said rallies have been held daily at the Secretariat,

around his office, and in various places in the city.

"We understand that you have suffered a lot and have grievances pent-up over the past 16 years. If you do not let us work, all paths to reducing the sufferings will remain closed. My earnest request to you that allow us to work," he said.

The chief adviser urged the agitating groups to submit their demands to them in writing and assured everyone of taking measures

- Education sector to see massive reforms
- Work to update the curriculum has started
- Urged to have patience for administrative reforms
- Measures taken to curb inflation, price hike of essentials
- Polls after necessary reforms
- All advisers will reveal their affidavits
- Ordinance to be made to appoint an ombudsman
- Remittance through official channels urged
- Groups urged to make demands in writing, not demonstrate

to solve the issues in line with the law.

MEASURES FOR FLOOD VICTIMS
Prof Yunus said the government took all out measures at government and private levels to ensure that the flood-hit people return to a normal life at the soonest.

"We have initiated discussions so that we can work together with neighbouring countries and domestic

stakeholders to prevent floods in future," he said.

INSTRUCTIONS TO FORCES
Prof Yunus alleged that the army, police, BGB, and Rab have been disgraced as they were used for enforced disappearances and torture.

"They are the pride of the country. We do not want to see the image of an entire force get tarnished due to some overenthusiastic members.

"We want to identify the criminals and punish them so that no member of the patriotic forces, police, or Rab dares to engage in murder, enforced disappearances, or torture at anyone's command," he said.

Prof Yunus further said that he instructed the defence forces, police, and all other forces to identify and bring to justice those among them who were directly involved in murder, enforced disappearances, killings, or physical and mental torture.

Lists of those who have been made to disappear or were murdered are being prepared, he said.

He said the government is also at the final stages of establishing a "July Genocide Memorial Foundation", led by him, to preserve the memory of the martyrs of the mass uprising.

CORRUPTION
The chief adviser said a committee has already been formed to prepare a white paper on the corruption, money laundering, anti-public interest agreements, looting in the name of projects, and other crimes committed over the last 15 years.

"The entire country is submerged in a sea of bribery. Please advise us on how we can get out of this. If we can advance on this issue, I believe this government will have left an important contribution to the country," he said.

'WE ARE ALL EQUAL'

Putting emphasis on the need for unity, Prof Yunus said the government's responsibility is to bind all people of the country as a family.

"There will be disagreements in a family. There will be arguments. But we are brothers and sisters; we are

parents. We are not enemies of each other. We will not consider anyone an enemy because of their opinions, religion, or gender.

"We all are equal. No one is above or below anyone else. We would like to establish this concept in all areas of national life," he said.

REFORMS IN SECTORS
The chief adviser talked about reform initiatives in various sectors, including banking, judiciary, police, education, health, and agriculture.

He said the government took initiatives to ensure good governance in the banking sector, which was turned into a den of "plunderers and the corrupt".

Skilled personnel are being recruited in this sector, he said, adding that a banking commission will be formed for long-term reforms in the sector.

He said a roadmap will be prepared and made public soon.

Immediate measures are being taken to address the extreme disorder in the stock market, transportation sector, and other areas. Besides, steps were taken to control the prices of essential commodities and inflation.

He said efforts were being made to free the judiciary from corruption and political influence. Measures were taken through a specific process to ensure the independence and accountability of the judiciary.

"Justice will be ensured for all extrajudicial killings, enforced disappearances, murders, abductions, and other heinous crimes committed by the fascist government. Everyone involved in these crimes will be brought to justice.

"Steps have been taken, including becoming a party to the international convention on enforced disappearances," he said.

Prof Yunus said a police commission will be formed to make the force people-centric, politically neutral, and accountable.

Necessary reforms will be made under the commission's leadership

in line with the UN investigation and other agencies' reports, he said, adding, "Measures will be taken to ensure that no one can turn Bangladesh into a police state ever again."

Prof Yunus asserted that the free flow of information and freedom of the press will be ensured.

Legal and other barriers to free flow of information will be removed and repressive provisions in laws that obstruct freedom of expression will be amended, he said.

"We are committed to ensuring people's right to information."

He said the previous government unleashed anarchy in the education sector and this government's top priority will be massive reforms to the sector. The curriculum will also be updated promptly.

Yunus said, "All of our advisers will disclose their assets in the shortest possible time. This will be made regular and mandatory for all government officials gradually."

He said an ordinance will be enacted to appoint an Ombudsman in line with the constitution.

The chief adviser mentioned that necessary reforms will be brought to the health sector while farmers' interests will be protected so that they receive fair prices for their produce.

He said, "Development that destroys and pollutes rivers, canals, wetlands, hills, forests, soil, and air is not sustainable in the long term. Our government will give utmost importance to protecting the environment and climate."

Yunus said the government will maintain friendly relations with all countries and the foreign policy will be based on mutual trust, faith, and cooperation.

Through political unity, necessary reforms will ensure that women, children, people with disabilities, religious minorities, indigenous people, and all citizens of this country are entitled to equal protection under the law, he said.

A statement victory for Tigers

FROM PAGE 1

A vintage Shakib then struck twice in the space of six overs, leaving Pakistan tottering at 104-5. Shakib lured both first-innings centurion Saud Shakil and Abdullah Shafique to come down the wicket, with the former missing the ball completely while the latter miscuing an attempted heave at point to Shadman Islam.

Shadman then plucked a stunning low catch at slip off Mehedi to see the back of Salman for a duck, leaving Pakistan in deep trouble at lunch.

Wicketkeeper-batter Mohammad Rizwan, who hit a superb 171 not out in Pakistan's first innings total of 448-6 declared, tried to take the fight to the opposition by blending caution with aggression.

But once he was dismissed by Mehedi, Pakistan's second innings folded for 146, leaving Bangladesh with a simple task of scoring 30 runs to win with more than a session in hand.

Shadman and Zakir stroked those runs in 6.3 overs, sparking wild celebrations at the Bangladesh dressing room.

It was Bangladesh's seventh overseas Test victory and the most decorated one after the success against New Zealand in Mount Maunganui in 2022.

This was a Test where Bangladesh,

for a change, demonstrated the hallmark of a quality Test side after languishing as a mediocre one for the most part of their journey since 2000.

The young pace bowling unit, spearheaded by Shoriful Islam, more than matched the Pakistan heavyweights of Shaheen Shah Afridi and Naseem Shah. Shoriful finished with three wickets in the match, however, the figure hardly reflected how well he bowled with the new ball.

Even though the Tigers have developed a tendency of buckling under pressure once their opponents put on a massive total, in Rawalpindi, they were not intimidated after Pakistan amassed 448. Rather, they grafted and then prospered with such conviction, rarely seen before.

Coming into the side after two years, opener Shadman anchored the innings with a solid 93. Mominul Haque also played his part with 50 and Liton Das provided the necessary thrust in the middle. His 56 off 78 balls was a spectators' delight, especially the three boundaries and a massive six that he smote in one over off Naseem.

Mehedi demonstrated his all-round ability with a priceless 77.

But the best came from the best batter of the country — an ageless Mushfiqur Rahim. The little right-

hander was in a league of his own with an imperious 191, laced with 22 fours and a six.

It was his masterclass knock that propelled Bangladesh to 565 in their first essay and that priceless lead. He dominated two century stands — 114 runs for the sixth wicket with Liton and 196 for the seventh wicket with Mehedi.

The pocket-size dynamo, nicknamed Mr. Dependable in the Tigers' ranks, hardly allowed anything to get past his watertight defence and was sublime in his stroke-play during his more than three-session vigil at the wicket.

An epitome of hard work and discipline, Mushfiqur is the only wicketkeeper-batter who has three double hundreds under his belt. He might have missed a fourth, but his latest knock was a special one considering the context and could be a good manual for up-and-coming cricketers.

Champion all-rounder Shakib had to endure a lot due to some disturbing developments back home. He did not contribute with the bat, but struck with the ball when it mattered most.

As a key member of the team, Shakib would desperately need mental peace more than anything else when the second Test starts at the same venue on August 30.

50 injured as Ansars clash with students

FROM PAGE 1

Critically wounded Asif Hawladar, Dhaka University correspondent of Prothom Alo, was undergoing treatment at a city hospital.

The situation turned violent after over a thousand students and others, many of them equipped with sticks, went to the Secretariat, hearing that Ansar members blocked the Secretariat even after getting assurance of fulfilling their demand, said witnesses.

Several conveners of the Anti-discrimination Student Movement asked students to gather at the Raju Memorial Sculpture to march towards the Secretariat. Terming the Ansar members 'agents of autocracy', the students started marching towards the Secretariat around 9:00pm.

When they reached the Secretariat, there were chases and counter-chases between ansar members and students.

At one stage, students and others were able to drive away the ansar members around 9:45pm, witnesses said.

Later, army personnel were seen at the spot. The situation started getting normal after 10:00pm, and Gate 3 of the Secretariat was opened at 10:30pm so that officials who were stuck inside could go home, said witnesses.

After the clash, a group of people were seen beating up dispersed ansar members at different places.

After the incident, Nahid Islam, information and broadcasting adviser, said the demonstration by ansar members is part of a conspiracy as they continued their programme even after getting

assurance of meeting their demand.

"We will take legal action against those involved in the conspiracy," he said while talking to the media in front of the Secretariat.

Maj Gen Abdul Motaleb Sazzad Mahmud, director general of Ansar and VDP, told The Daily Star last night, "Those who continued the demonstration even after getting the assurance are not Ansar members. They are outsiders... they came with an additional set of clothes and their intention was different."

"They did not want any solution. We will take lawful action against those people."

He said they have a separate disciplinary force called battalion Ansar, who did not join the demonstration.

In the evening, Home Affairs Adviser Lt Gen (ret'd) Jahangir Alam Chowdhury told a press briefing at the Secretariat that he assured the demonstrating ansar members of abolishing the "mandatory leave system".

He said this after an hour-long meeting with representatives of the Ansar members.

A seven-member committee was formed with Ansar and VDP DG Maj Gen Abdul Motaleb as convener, and its Director Jahanara Akter as member secretary to find a solution to their demand.

The committee has been asked to submit a report within seven working days, according to a notification issued by the home ministry's Public Security Division.

The report then will be sent to an

inter-ministerial committee that will make necessary decisions based on the recommendations, said the home adviser.

Asked about the "mandatory leave system", the Ansar DG said according to the regulations, a member is sent on a six-month mandatory leave after working for three consecutive years. During the time, they are not paid.

"An initiative has been taken to abolish the system. After this, their jobs will be considered regular."

At the briefing, Nasim Miah, a convener of the Ansar demonstration, said they were temporarily withdrawing their programme. "The Ansar members will return to work. We will look into the decision and then we will announce our next course of action, as our main demand is nationalisation of our job."

But the demonstrating ansar members did not accept the decision and vowed to continue their demonstration. They even stopped the vehicle of the home affairs adviser as it was leaving the Secretariat, a top official of the home ministry told The Daily Star.

"The adviser then called an emergency meeting to address the situation around 8:00pm. But the meeting ended without any decision as students drove away the demonstrators," the official said.

There are three branches of Ansar: General Ansar, Battalion Ansar, and Village Defence Party (VDP).

In another development, Dhaka Metropolitan Police last night banned all rallies, meetings, or demonstrations near the Secretariat and the residence of the chief adviser until further notice.

Vested quarter spreading propaganda against media

Says CA office

BSS, Dhaka

A vested quarter is spreading propaganda against media using the name of the Anti-Discrimination Student Movement, said Chief Adviser's office in a message yesterday.

The quarter was asking people not to collaborate with media outlets that did not support or cooperate with the Anti-Discrimination Student Movement, it said.

The vested quarter also threatened that if anyone cooperates with these media outlets, he or she will be insulted, defamed and fired, it added.

The CA office said the leaders of the Anti-Discrimination Student Movement have informed the office that such letters or lists of media outlets are fake.

They, as well, urged all not to be confused over such letters or lists.



Women passengers travel in their designated compartment on the metro rail, as its operations resumed yesterday after over a month of suspension. Despite the closure of two key stations, metro rail services are back on track, which were suspended on July 18 amid violence centring the quota reform protests.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

China pledges to strengthen ties with Bangladesh

Ambassador meets Dr Yunus, donates \$20,000 for flood victims

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

China said yesterday that the political changeover in Bangladesh is its internal affairs. The country has expressed its continued commitment to enhancing bilateral relations with Bangladesh.

Chinese Ambassador to Bangladesh Yao Wen conveyed this message during a meeting with Chief Adviser Dr Muhammad Yunus at the State Guesthouse Jamuna.

"No matter what changes have taken place in Bangladesh, China's commitment to developing China-Bangladesh relations remains unchanged," Ambassador Yao said, according to a statement from the Chinese embassy.

He congratulated Dr Yunus on his new role and reiterated China's principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of other countries.

Yao emphasised China's support for Bangladesh's sovereignty, independence, and stability, and expressed Beijing's readiness to assist Bangladesh's interim government in its reform and development efforts.

He also highlighted the importance of pragmatic cooperation and the implementation of agreements between the two nations.

Dr Yunus urged China to relocate some of its solar panel factories to Bangladesh to aid in the country's green transition and boost exports.

He also called for increased imports of Bangladesh goods to China and enhanced collaboration in technology, disaster management, education, and agriculture.

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'The crisis has united us'

Student-led relief efforts continue for fourth day



NILIMA JAHAN

From children donating their savings from tiffin money to women offering their jewellery, from street beggars donating a part of the alms received in a day to corporate entities donating a day's salaries of their staff – the people of Bangladesh have joined in a united effort to support those devastated by the recent flash floods, contributing in every way possible.

Truckloads of clothing, dates, flattened rice, puffed rice, salt, sugar, water, candles, rice, oil, lentils, saline, lighters, water purifying tablets, soap, and sanitary napkins are being transported to the flood-affected areas, while the cash received are being used to buy more relief materials.

Till 4:00pm yesterday, more than Tk 4.39 crore have been collected at TSC of Dhaka University.

Under the leadership of the Anti-Discrimination Student Movement, general students of DU and seven affiliated colleges, as well as volunteers from other educational institutions, have joined in to collect, sort, package, and load relief items to the trucks.

Hasnat Abdullah, a coordinator of the platform, wrote on his Facebook page, "Fascism had divided us, but the crisis united us again. The relief you provided is a testament of peoples' trust on us, and we are giving a detailed account of it."

Md Rakib Hossain, a volunteer and master's

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First cyclone Remal, now floods: Khulna villages submerged again

15,000 stranded, locals join hands to fix breached embankment

DIPANKAR ROY, Khulna

Cyclones, river erosions, and floods – people in coastal Bangladesh have been fighting natural disasters on a regular basis, and each year is turning out to be increasingly more challenging than the previous one due to climate change.

Just this year, thousands in Khulna lost their livelihoods as a tidal surge triggered by cyclone Remal swept through their homes and villages.

Just when things turn normal, another disaster strikes.

Take the case of 13 villages in Deluti union under Khulna's Paikgachha upazila for example.

Just when the people there were healing from the aftermath of cyclone Remal, the recent floods have left their areas submerged for the last four days.



Embankments getting breached too easily despite repeated repair work also adds to their misery.

The locals have blamed the Bangladesh Water Development Board for using substandard



Thousands of villagers, including around a thousand women, work tirelessly to repair a breached embankment near Kalinagar village. The dyke was breached four days ago, completely submerging thirteen villages. The locals have blamed the BWDB for using substandard materials during repair works.

PHOTO: HABIBUR RAHMAN

materials during repair works.

At least 15,000 residents of the aforementioned villages have been stranded.

Hundreds of villagers have left their homes behind to take shelter on nearby higher grounds.

Earlier on Thursday afternoon, the embankment near Kalinagar village in the union was breached, which led to the inundation of Kalinagar, Darun Mallik, Gopi

Pagla, Telikhali, Syedkhali,

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MURDER CASE

Palak, Tuku placed on 7-day remand

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday placed six people, including ex-state minister for ICT Zunaid Ahmed Palak and former deputy speaker Shamsul Haque Tuku, on a seven-day remand.

They were remanded in a case filed over the death of Khalid Hasan Saifullah, a 11th grader, in the capital's Lalbagh area during the quota reform protests on July 18.

The other accused are Arif Khan Joy, former deputy sports minister; Tanbir Hasan Shaikat, general secretary of DU Chhatra League; Ahmad Hossain, Awami League organising secretary; and Rear Admiral Mohammad Sohail, former chairman of Chattogram Port Authority.

Dhaka Metropolitan Magistrate Arobia Khanam passed the order after Md Akkas Mia, sub-inspector of Lalbagh Police Station and

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Legal notice seeks list of presidential pardons of 33yrs

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A Supreme Court lawyer yesterday served a legal notice seeking a list of convicted persons whose sentences have been waived, commuted and suspended by presidents between January 1991 and July 2024 under Article 49 of the constitution.

The article says, "The President shall have power to grant pardons, reprieves and respites and to remit, suspend or commute any sentence passed by any court, tribunal or other authority."

Barrister Md Omar Farooq sent the legal notice to the secretaries at the ministries of home, law, cabinet division and the president's office, asking them to provide him with the list in 15 days.

The lawyer requested the notice recipients to explain under which process those convicted persons' sentences have been commuted or suspended.



Bottled water in large stocks on sale in the capital's Karwan Bazar yesterday amid the high demand for clean drinking water during the ongoing floods.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN



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A leading finance company who has operations in capital market and financing & investment activities is looking for an experienced and qualified professional for the **Chief Executive Officer (CEO)** position.

How to Apply: Interested and eligible candidates can apply for the position at the following link: <https://hotjobs.bdjobs.com/jobs/jobs/bdjobscareer4a.htm> or scan QR given below.

Application Deadline: September 07, 2024

Location: Dhaka



Scan to Apply

First cyclone Remal

FROM PAGE 3
Syedkhali village who took shelter on the embankment in Sadhur Ghat area, said she used to earn a living by hatching and rearing ducks and selling those in the market.

"The incubator was damaged by floodwater and more than 30 ducks floated away. Almost everything in the house was destroyed. The flood left me destitute overnight," she said.

Many other villagers shared similar plights. **RESIDENTS REPAIRING EMBANKMENTS**
Meanwhile, several thousand villagers, including around a thousand women, were seen yesterday noon working voluntarily to repair the breached portion of the embankment.

Different organisations from Khulna and other districts have also lent a helping hand to the

villagers by providing relief materials.

Students were seen distributing food items to those who sought shelter on other parts of the embankment.

Ripon Kumar Mandal, chairman of Deluti Union Parishad, said the flood damaged numerous homesteads and washed away shrimp enclosures and crop fields.

"There is no other way to save the people of this union without sustainable embankment," he added.

Contacted, Ashraf Alam, executive engineer of BWDB-2 in Khulna, said the river's water level rose by 3-4 feet higher compared to normal tide, which led to the embankment getting breached.

"Locals have been working to repair it while we are providing technical support. The repair work will be completed within tomorrow [today]," he added.

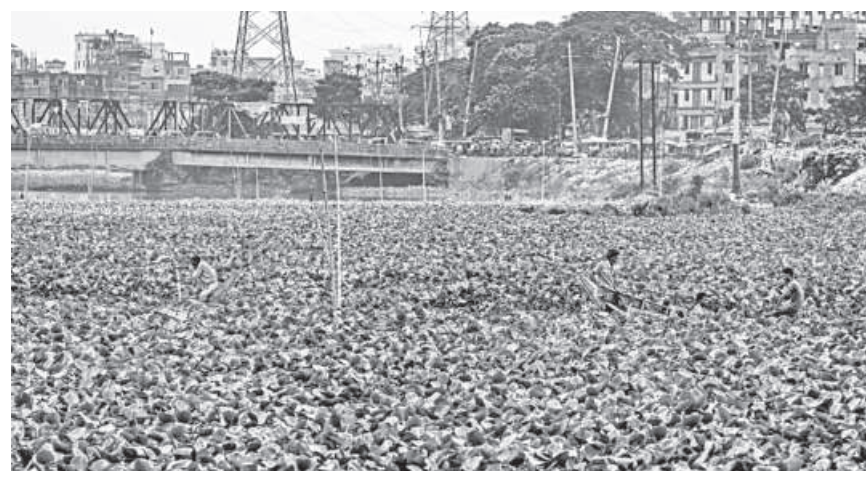


PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON
Boats struggle to navigate through a dense layer of water hyacinth covering this portion of the Old Buriganga river, disrupting communication between Kamrangir Char and Lalbagh areas in the capital. The photo was taken recently.

Firearms licences issued over

FROM PAGE 5
operate under significant pressure and often lack adequate rest.

He mentioned that a policy decision for police reform has been made, although it is still in the early stages.

He added that reform initiatives would eventually extend to other forces under the ministry, including Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB), Department of Narcotics

Control (DNC), Bangladesh Coast Guard, Ansar and VDP, Fire Service and Civil Defence, Bangladesh Jail, and the Department of Immigration and Passports. Deputy Head of Mission of the French Embassy in Dhaka, Guillaume AUDREN de KERDREL, and senior officials of the Ministry of Home Affairs were also present at the meeting.

In another meeting with senior police officials at Police Headquarters,

the home adviser said any breach of discipline by Bangladesh Police would not be tolerated.

"Corruption must be stopped at all costs. There will be no concessions in case of breaching discipline," he said.

Meanwhile, Dhaka Metropolitan Police has appointed new officers-in-charge at 25 police stations, DMP Commissioner Mainul Hasan issued an order in this regard yesterday.

Palak, Tuku placed on 7-day

FROM PAGE 3
investigation officer of the case, produced them with a 10-day remand petition for each of them.

In the petition, the IO said involvement of the accused with the incident was primarily found true.

On August 19, the victim's father, filed the case against former prime minister Sheikh Hasina, Anisul Huq, Salman F Rahman, and 49 others with Lalbagh Police Station.

The case document mentioned that Khalid

participated in the Anti-Discrimination Student Movement.

On July 18, law enforcers indiscriminately fired at the students with direct support from the accused, resulting in Khalid being fatally shot, it added.

Earlier in the day, Tuku, Palak, and Shaikat were produced before another court on completion of their 10-day remand in a case filed with Paltan Police Station over the death of rickshaw-puller Kamal Mia in the city's Paltan area on July 19.

Meanwhile, Arif Khan Joy was produced before another Dhaka court on completion of a five-day remand in a case filed over the death of grocery shop owner Abu Saeed in Dhaka's Mohammadpur on July 19.

Ahmad Hossain and Sohail were produced before another Dhaka court on completion of their four-day remand in a case filed over the killing of a shop owner, Nabin Talukder, in Dhaka's Paltan on July 19.

Six killed

FROM PAGE 5
Chanchal, 38, of Madhyapara area of Brahmanbaria town; and Shaheen Chowdhury, 48, of Nayanpur village of Sadar upazila.

Confirming the matter, Mohammad Mozaffar Hossain, OC of Brahmanbaria Sadar Model Police Station, said police recovered the bodies and kept those in Brahmanbaria General Hospital morgue for autopsy.

The injured are being treated in Akhaura Upazila Health Complex, he added.

In Munshiganj, a motorcyclist died as he lost control over steering and hit the railing of Basiya Bari bridge in Dhipur union of Tongibari upazila yesterday.

The deceased, Sohan Sheikh, 17, was a resident of Jashlong village in the upazila.

The accident took place at around 12:30pm. Sohan died on the spot. His body has been handed over to family without autopsy, said Ansar-uz-Zaman, in-charge of Dighirpar Police Outpost.

NSU faculty

FROM PAGE 5
of agitated students, an individual incited them to engage in "mob justice" and even encouraged them to throw an administration member off the rooftop.

Videos of this life-threatening provocation have been widely circulated on social media, according to the statement.

"As members of the community who work for a respectful and peaceful academic and working environment for all, we wholeheartedly condemn such actions," the statement read.

China pledges

FROM PAGE 3
The Chief Adviser expressed hope for continued Chinese support for the Rohingya crisis and recalled his positive experiences in China, including the establishment of Yunus Centres at Chinese universities.

Ambassador Yao

presented a \$20,000 donation to Bangladesh's Flood Relief Fund and announced a \$100,000 contribution from the Chinese Red Cross for flood-affected people.

The crisis has united

FROM PAGE 3
student of DU's history department, said, "Now we urgently need to focus on cooked food, items like diapers, milk, and baby clothes. Our activities will continue till flood situation improves," he added.

The platform has announced to move the mass relief collection to DU's Central Field, as TSC has no space left to keep more relief materials. The TSC booth will now accept only cash and emergency medicine, said Lutfar Rahman, a coordinator.

Similarly, students of Jahangirnagar University launched a campaign titled 'Jahangirnagar Stands with Flood Victims' on August 22. Fundraising and donations have been taking place at the new Arts Building, university gates, nearby areas, and along the Dhaka-Aricha highway.

People from all walks of life have contributed to raise Tk 33 lakh and other relief items till yesterday. The funds and materials are being gathered at the new Arts Building, while two trucks with 1,957 relief packets and a van with baby food left for flood-affected areas yesterday morning.

The students of private universities are not sitting idle either.

AIUB's social welfare club 'Shomoy' raised over Tk 5 lakh and distributed it to flood victims in Feni on Saturday.

Students of Fareast International University collected and packed relief items and 20 volunteers will be heading with those for Feni today, said Amina Akter, a student.

Many individuals are personally collecting funds and sending relief items to flood-hit people.

"I have already sent five lots of clothes, each with 120 sacks. Each sack has 200 pieces of clothing. My domestic help and others are washing the clothes and packing those to be sent to flood victims," said Farhana. Advocate Noorjahan Kabir from Uttara collected Tk 4 lakh and two truckloads of clothes from her neighborhood and hopes to send those soon.

Samanta Islam, 12, a 6th-grader at Monipur School and College, said she has donated her tiffin money for flood relief.

[Additional reporting by Sirajul Islam Rubel and Sakib Ahmed.]

৩ বীর (লংগদু জোন) মাইনীমুখ আর্মি ক্যাম্প দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি

১। আভিযানিক ও নিরাপত্তা সক্ষমতা সুদৃষ্টি লক্ষ্যে অপারেশন উত্তরণে নিয়োজিত সেনাসদস্যদের জন্য বিভিন্ন প্রকৃতির ক্রম বাবদ অপারেশন কন্ট্রোলিং ব্যয় নির্বাহ করা হবে। উক্ত ক্রম কার্যক্রম সম্পন্ন হওয়ার নিমিত্তে বাংলাদেশ সেনাবাহিনীর তালিকাভুক্ত আর্মি টিকাদারদের নিকট হতে সীলমোহরযুক্ত প্যাডে দরপত্র আহবান করা যাচ্ছে।

২। সিডিউল এবং বিস্তারিত তথ্যের জন্য ৩ বীর (লংগদু জোন), মাইনীমুখ আর্মি ক্যাম্পে যোগাযোগ করার জন্য অনুরোধ করা হলো। প্রতিটি সিডিউলের মূল্য ১,০০০.০০ (এক হাজার টাকা মাত্র) টাকা যা আগামী ২৮ আগস্ট ২০২৪ তারিখ হতে বিরক্তের জন্য প্রস্তুত থাকবে।

৩। আর্মি টিকাদারদের আগামী ০৫ সেপ্টেম্বর ২০২৪ তারিখ ১০০০ ঘটিকার মধ্যে ৩ বীর (লংগদু জোন সদর) এর আর্সিপ গেটে রক্ষিত টেন্ডার বাজে দরপত্র জমা করতে হবে।

৪। সর্বনিম্ন দরদাতাকে ১০% সিকিউরিটি মানি (ফেরতযোগ্য) দরপত্র গৃহীত হবার পর কার্যক্রম গ্রহণের পূর্বে পে-অর্ডার/ব্যাংক ড্রাফটের মাধ্যমে অর্পিতব্য, ৩ বীর বরাবর জমা করতে হবে।

অধিনায়ক
৩ বীর
মাইনীমুখ আর্মি ক্যাম্প
লংগদু জোন, রাজমাটি পার্বত্য জেলা
মোবায় ০১৮৪১-৩০২৬১৪

আইএসপিআর/সেনা/২০২৪/৪৪২
২৫/০৮/২৪

ফিফ-২৬১

ফরিদপুর পৌরসভা

স্থাপিত : ১৮৬৯খ্রিঃ
ফরিদপুর, বাংলাদেশ।

e-mail: faridpurmaya@yahoo.com, website: www.faridpurmunicipality.com

স্মারক নং-ফগপৌরঃ/প্রকৌঃ/২০২৪/৫৭; তারিখঃ ২৫/০৮/২০২৪ইং

"নোটিশ"

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(মোঃ তানজির রহমান)
পৌর নির্বাহী কর্মকর্তা ও
সদস্য-সচিব দোকান বরাদ্দ কমিটি
ফরিদপুর পৌরসভা।

GD-258

EXPRESSION OF INTEREST (EOI) FOR CONSULTANCY SERVICE

Qualified consulting firms or individuals are requested to submit separate EOI (Expressions of Interests) for the following two projects:

Project A: A comprehensive Procurement Manual outlining the organization's policies, procedures, in light of PPR 2008 and best practices .

Project B: A feasibility study with objective data for educational programs to be offered by a new private university.

● Submit complete portfolio/skills profile/similar work experience along with the EOI
● Shortlisted firms/individuals would be called to discuss scope of work before asking for financial proposal.

Qualified firms or individuals with adequate resources, experience, and track record interested in any of the project requested to submit their respective **Expression of Interest (EOI) before 12 PM on September 22, 2024**

Ahsanullah University of Science and Technology
Address: 141-142 Love RD, Tejgaon I/A, Dhaka-1208
Email: registrar@aust.edu, Tel: 02-8870422 Extn.: 103

www.aust.edu/ces/eoi

খুলনা পানি সরবরাহ ও পয়ঃনিষ্কাশন কর্তৃপক্ষ
Khulna Water Supply & Sewerage Authority
৭ নং রক্তভেট জেটি ঘাট রোড, জোড়াসাঁটা নিকটবর্তী, খালিশপুর, খুলনা-৯০০০।

স্মারক নং: ৪৬.০৭.০০০০.০০৩.০৭.২৩.৩৫.২৪.৩৭২ তারিখ: ২৫/০৮/২০২৪ খ্রি:।

e-Tender Notice

e-Tender is invited in the National e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) for the procurement of:

Tender ID No.	Package No.	Description of Goods/Works	Last Selling Date and time	Closing Date and time	Opening Date and time
1009885	KWASA-G-HDPE Pipe-fittings-24-25	Supply of HDPE House Connection & Main Pipeline Repair Pipe-fittings to Khulna WASA Store for Financial year 2024-2025.	22-Sep-2024 17:00	23-Sep-2024 11:30	23-Sep-2024 11:30
1010370	KWASA-G-PumpMotor-24-25	Supply of 5 Nos. 10 HP Submersible Pump Motor Set for Financial year 2024-2025.	22-Sep-2024 17:00	23-Sep-2024 12:00	23-Sep-2024 12:00
1010380	KWASA-G-HandPump-24-25	Supply of 6 No. Hand Pump Complete Set & its Parts to Khulna WASA Store for Financial Year 2024-25.	17-Sep-2024 17:00	18-Sep-2024 11:30	18-Sep-2024 11:30

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 (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) is required.

The fees for downloading the e-Tender Document from the National e-GP System Portal have to be deposited online through any registered Bank Branches.

Further Information and Guideline are available in the National e-GP System Portal and e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).

Khan Salim Ahmed
Superintending Engineer
Khulna WASA
Phone No: +88-02 4777022973

GD-252

Bangladesh Krishi Bank
Head Office
83-85 Motijheel C/A, Dhaka-1000
Estate & Engineering Department
Phone - 02223384539; E-mail : dgmengineering@krishibank.org.bd

BKB/HO/EED-2(220)/2024-25/236 Date: 25/08/2024

"e- Tender Notice (OTM)" (Re-Tender)

Previous Tender ID- 1000575

This is to notify all concern that the following tender has been published through National e-Government Procurement Portal (<https://www.eprocure.gov.bd>)

Sl	Tender ID, Tender Package and Reference No.	Name of Tender	Tender Documents Last Selling Date and Time	Tender Closing & Opening Date and Time	Tender Method
01	1010343, 64/2023-2024, Reference No.: HO/EED-2(220)/2024-25/236 Dated: 25/08/2024	Modernization works of Bangladesh Krishi Bank, Staff College, Mirpur, Dhaka.	Date: 17-09-2024 Time: 17:00	Date: 18-09-2024 Time: 12:00	OTM

This is an online tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the national e-Government Procurement Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-Tender registration in the National e-Government Procurement Portal (<https://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) is required.

Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-Government Procurement Portal (<https://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) and you can also ask help from e-gp help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).

Sd/-
(Md. Anowarul Azim Khan)
Deputy General Manager

GD-260

CIVIL AVIATION AUTHORITY OF BANGLADESH
Office of the Director
Shah Amanat International Airport, Chattogram.

e-Tender Notice (OTM)

SL No	Tender ID	Reference No.	Name of Works	Tender Closing Date & Time	Remarks
1.	1009803	30.31.0000.121.07.001.24.81	Supply and Commissioning of VCCS Fan at SAIA, CTG.	08-Sep-2024 15:30	Re-Tendered

This is an online tender, where only e-Tenders will be accepted in e-GP portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-Tender, please register on e-GP system portal. (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>)

নং-৩০.৩১.০০০০.০৫১.১১.০০১.২৪/৪৫৮
তারিখ: ২৫/০৮/২০২৪ খ্রিঃ

(Group Captain) Pasim Ahmed, (psc)
Director
Shah Amanat International Airport, Chattogram

GD-255



Vegetable prices in Chattogram markets have surged due to floods and transportation disruptions.

Vegetable prices soar in Ctg

Green chilli now Tk 550-700 per kg

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Prices of vegetables in Chattogram city's kitchen markets have surged in the last few days, driven by the flooding on highways and the suspension of transport services.

Green chilli is currently being sold at Tk 550 to Tk 700 per kg, tomatoes at Tk 590 per kg, and other vegetables ranging from Tk 90 to Tk 520 per kg at the retail level in Chattogram.

This correspondent visited several kitchen markets, including those in the 2 No Gate, Kazir Dewri, and Karnaphuli Complex areas, and observed similar pricing trends across all locations.

At the city's prime wholesale market in Riazuddin Bazar, most stalls were found empty. Several vegetable vendors attributed the price hikes to the floods and the resulting transportation crisis, which have significantly reduced supply.

The ongoing flood situation and subsequent supply shortages have severely impacted retail kitchen markets in the city. Retail traders said vegetable prices have increased by at least 70 to 100 percent in the last three days.

Last Friday, I sold gourd at Tk 50 per kg, whereas the current price ranges from Tk 90 to Tk 100. Additionally, the price of green chilli, which was Tk 250 per kg on Friday, has surged to Tk 590.

ABUL HASHEM
Vegetable trader

In retail markets, bottle gourd, pumpkin, and sweet gourd are being sold at Tk 90 per kg, brinjal at Tk 140, beans at Tk 250, cauliflower at Tk 580, pointed gourd at Tk 140, snake gourd at Tk 120, bitter gourd

at Tk 150, ladyfingers at Tk 100, and cucumbers at Tk 110 per kg.

Abul Hashem, a vegetable trader at Kazir Dewri retail market, said, "Last Friday, I sold gourd at Tk 50 per kg, whereas the current price ranges from Tk 90 to Tk 100. Additionally, the price of green chilli, which was Tk 250 per kg on Friday, has surged to Tk 590. "Prices of all types of vegetables have increased due to low supply in the market," he added.

Nurul Alam, a wholesale trader and owner of Shah Amanat Trading at Riazuddin Bazar, explained that a significant portion of the vegetables supplied to Chattogram city originates from markets in Sitakunda, Mirsarai, Feni, Noakhali, and Cumilla regions.

Recent flooding has severely impacted crop yields in these areas, leading to a reduction in vegetable supply by approximately 60-70 percent.

Written exams of 46th BCS suspended

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The written tests of the 46th BCS examination, scheduled to be held between August 28 and September 9, were suspended yesterday due to unavoidable circumstances.

The Bangladesh Public Service Commission issued a press release in this regard. The date and time of the tests (compulsory and post-related subjects) will be notified through a press release at an appropriate time, said the press release signed by Ananda Kumar Biswas, exam controller (cadre) of BPSC.

NSU faculty condemn violence on campus

STAR REPORT

Faculty members of North South University yesterday condemned the incidents of violence and intimidation that occurred on the university campus on August 21.

In a press statement, they said a group of individuals entered the NSU campus armed with firearms and verbally assaulted several faculty members present on the premises.

The statement claimed that during a gathering

SEE PAGE 4 COL. 6

PRAYER TIMING	
AUGUST 26	
Fazr	Zohr
Asr	Maghrib
Esha	
AZAN 4-30	12-45 4-45 6-33 8-00
JAMAAT 5-05	1-15 5-00 6-36 8-30
SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION	

Firearms licences issued over last 15yrs suspended

Home adviser discusses issues of law and order, police reform with French ambassador

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Ministry of Home Affairs has suspended all firearms licences issued to civilians over the past 15 years during the tenure of the Awami League government.

Licensed arms holders have been instructed to deposit their firearms and ammunition at the nearest police station by September 3, according to a circular issued by the Public Security Division of the ministry.

The circular, signed by Md Johirul Haque, senior assistant secretary of the ministry, states that licences granted between January 6, 2009, and August 5, 2024, are suspended.

The suspension came hours after Home Affairs Adviser Lt Gen (retd) Jahangir Alam Chowdhury met French Ambassador to Bangladesh Marie Masdupuy at the Secretariat yesterday.



During the meeting, various issues such as law and order, police reform, and the recovery of illegal arms were discussed.

The ambassador expressed concern over arms looted from different police stations, to which the home adviser responded that a crackdown would be launched soon to recover these weapons.

Jahangir also noted that while the law and order situation in Bangladesh is gradually improving, certain challenges remain due to various public demands and protests.

However, he expressed optimism that the situation would improve in the near future.

The ambassador also inquired about government efforts to reform the police force.

Jahangir explained that the police

SEE PAGE 4 COL. 3

Six killed in road crashes

STAR REPORT

At least six people were killed and nine others injured in separate road accidents in Mymensingh, Barishal, Brahmanbaria and Munshiganj districts.

In Mymensingh, a freedom fighter was killed in a road accident on Dhaka-Mymensingh highway in Boiler area of Trishal upazila yesterday morning.

The victim, Md Shafiqul Islam, 75, was a resident of Boiler Boro Pukurpur area in the upazila and was a retired manager of Krishi Bank, police said.

Shafiqul was crossing the highway around 11:00am when speeding motorcycle hit him, leaving him critically injured, said Md Kamal Hossain, officer-in-charge of Trishal Police Station.

He was taken to Mymensingh Medical College hospital where doctors declared him dead. A case was later lodged with the police station in this connection, the OC added.

In Barishal, a woman and her son were killed and four others were injured as their

three-wheeler was hit by a Dhaka-bound passenger bus of Jamuna Line Paribahan from opposite direction on Dhaka-Barishal Highway in Gournadi upazila yesterday.

The deceased were identified as Soma Begum, 30, and her son Azmain, 3, of Islampur village under Babuganj upazila of the district.

The incident took place at around 1:30pm in Bezhar area.

All six passengers of the three-wheeler were injured in the accident and were taken to Barishal Sher-e-Bangla Medical College Hospital, where Soma and her son were declared dead, said Golam Rasul, OC of Gournadi Highway Police Station.

In Brahmanbaria, a CNG-run auto-rickshaw hit a motorcycle, leaving its rider and pillion dead, while five passengers of the auto-rickshaw including its driver sustained injuries.

The incident took place in Koddia area of Brahmanbaria Sadar upazila yesterday noon.

The deceased are: Mahibul Islam

SEE PAGE 4 COL. 5

GOVERNMENT OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF BANGLADESH Power Division Bangladesh Secretariat, Dhaka. Invitation for Tender (OTM)

1	Ministry/Division	Power Division, Ministry of Power, Energy and Mineral Resources		
2	Procuring Entity Name	Power Division, Ministry of Power, Energy and Mineral Resources		
3	Procuring Entity Code	Not used at present		
4	Procuring Entity District	Dhaka, Bangladesh		
5	Invitation for	Stationary goods, Desktop Computers & ICT Equipments, Printer Toner.		
6	Invitation Ref No	27.00.0000.043.07.028.24.472		
7	Date	25.08.2024		
KEY INFORMATION				
8	Procurement Method	OTM		
FUNDING INFORMATION				
9	Budget and Source of Funds	Revenue/GOB		
10	Development Partners (if applicable)	Not Applicable		
PARTICULAR INFORMATION				
11	Tender Package No.	01 (2024-2025)		
12	Tender Package Name	Procurement of Stationary goods, Desktop Computers & ICT Equipments, Printer Toner.		
13	Tender Publication Date	26.08.2024		
14	Tender Last Selling Date	09.09.2024 Time: 3:00 PM		
15	Tender Closing Date and Time	10.09.2024 Time: 12:00PM		
16	Tender Opening Date and Time	10.09.2024 Time: 12:30 PM		
Name & Address of the office(s)				
Power division, Bangladesh Secretariat, Dhaka.				
17	Selling Tender Document (Principal)	Assistant Secretary (Admin-3), Power Division, Room # 212, Building # 6, Bangladesh Secretariat, Dhaka.		
	Selling Tender Document (Others)	Accounts officer, Power Division, Secretariat Link Road, Biddut Vabon (level-10), Dhaka.		
	Receiving Tender Document	Assistant Secretary (Admin-3) Power Division, Room # 212, Building # 6, Bangladesh Secretariat, Dhaka.		
	Opening Tender Document	Senior Assistant Secretary (Admin-1), Power Division, Room # 205, Building # 6, Bangladesh Secretariat, Dhaka.		
INFORMATION FOR TENDERER				
18	Eligibility of Tender	The tenders should be well Experienced with (1) Trade License (2) Incomes Tax Certificate (TIN) (3) Vat Registration Certificate (3) Bank Solvency Certificate (4) Minimum 3(Three) successful completion Certificate within last 3(Three) years etc.		
19	Brief Description of Goods	Lot-01 (Stationary goods), Lot-02 (Desktop Computer & ICT Equipments) & Lot-03 (Printer Toner).		
20	Brief Description of Related Services	Not Applicable		
21	Price of Tender Document (Tk)	LOT (1, 2 & 3) Tk. 1,000/- (Per Lot)		
Lot No	Identification of Lot	Location	Tender Security Amount (Tk)	Complementary equipment's
22	Lot-01 Stationary goods, Lot-02 Desktop Computer & ICT Equipments, Lot-3 Printer Toner.	Power Division Bangladesh Secretariat, Dhaka.	Lot-01 for Tk. 18,000/- Lot-02 for Tk.25,000/- Lot-03 for Tk. 15,000/-	Ready stock or purchase/supply from main dealer/reputed company of Bangladesh within 30 days from the date of issue work order. The Tenderer Must submit sole distributor certificate /distributor authorization letter along with tender document. The authorization letter (for lot-2) in favor of majority product must be granted.
Name of Official Inviting Tender				
Power Division				
Designation of Official Inviting Tender				
Assistant Secretary (Admin-3)				
Address of Official Inviting Tender				
Room # 212, Building # 6, Power Division, Bangladesh Secretariat, Dhaka.				
Contact details of Official Inviting Tender				
Tel. 02223390024			E-mail: Admin-3@pd.gov.bd	
24 The Procuring Entity reserves the right to accept or reject all or any tender.				
25 Special Condition: This invitation for tender notice will be available at Power Division's Website.				

গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার
বাংলাদেশ পুলিশ
পুলিশ সুপারের কার্যালয়
ঠাকুরগাঁও
গাড়ী ভাড়া নেয়ার দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি-২/২০২৪-২০২৫

"The Public Procurement Regulation-2008" ও তৎপরবর্তী সংশোধনী মোতাবেক আগামী ২০২৪-২০২৫ অর্থ বৎসরে ঠাকুরগাঁও জেলার মাঠ পর্যায়ে পুলিশ ইউনিটসমূহের (থানা/ফাঁড়ি/ক্যাম্প) নিয়মিত অপারেশনাল কার্যক্রম পরিচালনার জন্য জাড়ায় চালিত গাড়ী ব্যবহারের জন্য পেশেন্টাল/ডিজেল সম্বলিত মাইক্রোবাস/প্রাইভেট কার/পিকআপ সরবরাহের নিমিত্ত যোগ্যতা সম্পন্ন বাংলাদেশের প্রকৃত ঠিকাদার/মালিক ঠিকাদারী প্রতিষ্ঠানের নিকট হতে সীল মোহরযুক্ত খামে দরপত্র আহবান করা যাচ্ছে।

১	মন্ত্রণালয়/বিভাগ	৯	১০	১১
২	সংস্থা	১০	১১	১২
৩	দরপত্র সম্পাদনকারীর প্রধান	১১	১২	১৩
৪	দরপত্র সম্পাদনকারীর জেলা/সংস্থা	১২	১৩	১৪
৫	দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি নং ও তারিখ	১৩	১৪	১৫
৬	দরপত্র পদ্ধতি	১৪	১৫	১৬
৭	বাজেট ও অর্থনৈতিক খাত	১৫	১৬	১৭
৮	দরপত্র প্রকাশের তারিখ	১৬	১৭	১৮
৯	দরপত্র সিডিউল সর্বশেষ প্রান্তির তারিখ	১৭	১৮	১৯
১০	দরপত্র জমা প্রদানের সর্বশেষ তারিখ ও সময়	১৮	১৯	২০
১১	দরপত্র খোলার তারিখ ও সময়	১৯	২০	২১
১২	দরপত্র মূল্যায়নের তারিখ ও সময়	২০	২১	২২
১৩	দরপত্র সম্পাদনকারী অফিস ও ঠিকানা	২১	২২	২৩
১৪	দরপত্র প্রান্তির স্থান	২২	২৩	২৪
১৫	দরপত্র খোলার স্থান	২৩	২৪	২৫
১৬	দরপত্র দাতার যোগ্যতা ও দরপত্রের সহিত যে সকল কাগজ জমা দিতে হবে	২৪	২৫	২৬
১৭	দরপত্র আহবান কর্তৃপক্ষের নাম	২৫	২৬	২৭
১৮	দরপত্র আহবানকারী কর্মকর্তার পদবী ও ঠিকানা	২৬	২৭	২৮

১৯	শ্রুতি	কাজের বিবরণ	সিডিউলের মূল্য (অফেরতযোগ্য)	দরপত্র জামানতের পরিমাণ	কাজ সম্পন্ন করার সময়
১.	২০২৪-২০২৫ অর্থ বৎসরে ঠাকুরগাঁও জেলার মাঠ পর্যায়ে পুলিশ ইউনিট সমূহের (থানা/ফাঁড়ি/ক্যাম্প) নিয়মিত অপারেশনাল কার্যক্রম পরিচালনার জন্য মাইক্রোবাস/প্রাইভেট কার/পিকআপ সরবরাহের কাজ।		৭০০/-	৫০,০০০/-	২০২৪-২০২৫ অর্থ বৎসর

২০ বিশেষ শর্তাবলীঃ

- বাড়ি বা প্রতিষ্ঠানের স্বত্বাধিকারীর সীল স্বাক্ষরযুক্ত প্যাকে আবেদন পূর্বক অফিস চলাকালীন সময় পর্যন্ত সিডিউল সংগ্রহ করা যাবে (ছুটির দিন ব্যতীত)
- দরপত্র সংক্রান্ত অন্যান্য তথ্যাবলী সিডিউল সংগ্রহকালে নিম্নস্বাক্ষরকারীর কার্যালয় হতে জানা যাবে।
- পিপিআর আইন/২০০৬ ও পিপিআর বিধিমালা/২০০৮ তৎপরবর্তী সংশোধনী এবং সিডিউলে সংযুক্ত সকল শর্তাবলী কার্যকর হবে।
- নির্ধারিত তারিখ ও সময়ের পর সিডিউল বিক্রয় এবং দরপত্র গ্রহণ করা হবে না।
- দরপত্র আহবানকারী কর্তৃপক্ষ যে কোন সময় কারণ দর্শানো ব্যতীত দরপত্র বাতিলের ক্ষমতা সংরক্ষণ করেন।
- কর্তৃপক্ষ সর্বশেষ দরপত্র গ্রহণ করতে বাধ্য মনে এবং কোন কারণ দর্শানো ব্যতিরেকে যে কোন দরপত্র গ্রহণ কিংবা বাতিল করার ক্ষমতা সংরক্ষণ করেন।

(৪x৯)

২৫/৮/২৪
(উত্তম প্রসাদ পাঠক, পিপিএম-সেবা)
পিপি-৮০০৮১২৫৭২
পুলিশ সুপার, ঠাকুরগাঁও।
ফোন- ০২৫৮৯৯০১৯৬০, ফ্যাক্স- ০২৫৮৯৯০১৯৬০
E-mail-spthakurgaon@police.gov.bd

Censor board shouldn't exist

TANZIKA AMIN



SHAH ALAM SHAZU

Following a hiatus of nearly six weeks, Tanzika Amin is back on set, shooting for a new series on Maasranga Television. Directed by Nazrul Islam Raju, this drama highlights the complexities of city life.

Tanzika revealed that her role has an interesting angle—the character is a girl who's eager to leave the country, introducing a subtle yet distinct variation to the storyline.

Regarding her return to filming, the actress shared, "I spent some time abroad in London. Upon coming back, I noticed significant changes in the country. After settling in, I resumed shooting. It feels great to be back on set."

The *Bakul Fuler Mala* actress has also begun working on a new web-series. She mentioned that all the details have been finalised, but she remained tight-lipped about the director and the title of the story.

In the meantime, the former Lux star is eagerly anticipating the release of her film, *Omimangshito*, directed by Raihan Rafi. She shared, "I completed the movie last year, and it was submitted for censorship, but it has been held up."

Tanzika Amin, visibly frustrated, expressed, "After submitting the film to the censor board, it was shuffled from one desk to another, causing significant delays. We put in a tremendous amount of effort to complete the project, only for it to get stalled at the censor board

in the end."

She added that with the changes happening in the country, everything seems to be starting afresh. When asked if *Omimangshito* would now finally go through the censorship process, she confidently responded, "It will definitely go to the censor board and be released. I firmly believe that."

The actress shared that the film's narrative centres around a couple who are both journalists. She takes on the role of the female lead, a character named Neeru.

Reflecting on her experience portraying a journalist, Tanzika mentioned, "I had played a journalist in a drama many years ago, but stepping into the shoes of a female journalist in a film after so long was a refreshing experience. The role brought its own set of challenges, which made it all the more rewarding."

When asked about her experience working on *Omimangshito*, the actress shared that the film was a challenging journey. She recounted various intense moments during the shoot that left her with physical scars. "I poured my heart and soul into this project. Even after cameras stop rolling, I found it difficult to shake off the story and character—I was completely absorbed," Tanzika explained.

With growing curiosity surrounding the film, some have speculated that it mirrors the tragic story of Sagar-Runi. Addressing this, Tanzika clarified, "The film portrays a story of barbarism, reflecting the many brutal realities in our society. It's the story of a journalist couple, and it's undeniably a heart-wrenching story. However, it isn't based on any specific individual's life."

When asked about the debate surrounding the need for a censor board, the actress expressed a strong opinion, stating, "I believe the censor board shouldn't exist. Filmmakers should

have the freedom to tell their stories as they envision them, without interference. A director's role is to bring a wide range of narratives to the screen, and they shouldn't be hindered by censorship. Films that were previously blocked, such as *Saturday Afternoon*, should now see the light of day."

The artiste further emphasised the importance of books and films as educational tools, saying, "People gain knowledge and insights by engaging with literature and cinema. Just as there are stories of brutality, there are also stories filled with positivity. If directors are constrained, we won't see the productions of quality work."

Reflecting on the present situation, she added, "I'm optimistic that something remarkable is on the horizon. So far, 99 percent of developments have been positive. Let's see how things unfold."



PHOTOS: SHEIKH MEHEDI MORSHED



Dhaka's theatre troupes unite to support flood victims with charity shows

The capital's theatre community has come together to support flood victims, with troupes such as Ethic, BotTola, and Anuswar, deciding to donate the proceeds from their performances to aid those affected by the disaster.

Ethic returned to the Dhaka stage on Saturday (August 24) with the play *Haari Phatibe* at the Nilima Ibrahim Auditorium of the Bangladesh Mahila Samity at 7 pm.

Meanwhile, BotTola will revive their popular play *Bannayetherium* on August 30 at 6pm at the Mahila Samity in celebration of their anniversary. The troupe has pledged to donate all proceeds from this performance to aid children in flood-affected areas.

Putul finally finds flood-hit family



Renowned singer Saja Sultana Putul has finally located her sister, Sanjida Akhter Kona, and the rest of her family members after days of searching amid the devastating floods in the country, with the help of the community.

Though facing a shortage of drinking water, they are safe, the singer informed yesterday. Putul expressed deep gratitude on social media, particularly to Lops Sharkar, who located them.

The ongoing floods have impacted 5.1 million people across 12 districts. Communication blackouts, especially in Feni, left many families, including Putul's, unable to reach loved ones. As the waters begin to recede, Putul hopes for her family's safe return and urges compassion for flood victims during this crisis.

NEWS

Hasina made accused in 12 more cases

FROM PAGE 12

Rahim, an accused in the BDR carnage case, died in jail on July 29 of that year.

Advocate Abdul Aziz, son of deceased Abdur Rahim, filed the case with the court of Dhaka Metropolitan Magistrate Md Akhtaruzzaman.

Mosharraf Hossain Kajol, the then public prosecutor of the BDR mutiny case, and former lawmakers Sheikh Fazle Noor Taposh, Sheikh Fazlul Karim Selim, Sheikh Helal, and Mirza Azam are among the accused in the case.

Hasina and 48 others were sued in a case filed over the death of university student Sheikh Ashabul Yamin at the Savar Bazar bus stand during the quota reform movement on July 18.

The victim's uncle, Abdullah Al Kabir, filed the case with a Dhaka court. In a viral video, Yamin, a student of the Military Institute of Science and Technology (MIST), was seen being dropped on the road by the law enforcers from their armoured van. He was still alive at the time.

One Masud Rana filed a case with another Dhaka court against Hasina and 24 others over the death of his brother-in-law, Babu Mollah, in the Hatirjheel area on July 19.

Hasina and 21 others were sued over the death of Golam Nafiz, 17, at the Farmgate area of Tejgaon on August

1. Rafiqul Islam filed a case with the court of Dhaka Metropolitan Magistrate Mohammad Nurul Huda Chowdhury.

Nasir Uddin filed a case with a Dhaka court against Hasina and 18 others over the death of shop employee Jasim Uddin, 35, in the Uttara Paschim area on July 18.

Upon separate hearings, the four magistrates recorded the statements of the complainants and asked the officer-in-charges (OC) of the police stations concerned to register the complaints as the First Information Report (FIR).

Yesterday, Rizia Begum, 36, filed a case with the court of Dhaka Metropolitan Magistrate Saddam Hossain against Hasina and 33 others over the death of his nephew journalist Mehedi Hasan near the Kazla Toll Plaza over Hanif Flyover in Jatrabari during quota protests on July 18.

Babul Mia, 42, also filed a case with the court of the same magistrate over the death of one Jisan against Hasina and 26 in Matuail on July 20, while Mamunur Rashid, 34, filed a case against Hasina and 27 others over the death of his brother-in-law Yusuf Mia Sanoar in Shani Akhra area on July 20.

Another case was filed against Hasina and 13 others over the death of Mahamudur Rahman Soikot, 19, in Mohammadpur on July 19.

Besides, 30-40 unnamed police officers and members were also accused.

In Narsingdi, Angur Mia, the brother-in-law of the slain Jaman Mia, filed a murder case against Hasina and two others with a local court.

The court directed the Madhabori Police Station officer-in-charge to record it as an FIR.

Local Awami League leaders and activists, at the behest of the named accused, opened fire on a peaceful student protest on July 21. Jaman was shot while overseeing the protest and later succumbed to his injuries on July 25 at Dhaka Medical College Hospital.

In Rangpur, a murder case has been filed against 150 individuals, including Hasina and her sister, Sheikh Rehana, with a local court over a clash between student protesters and law enforcement agencies during a student movement in Rangpur on July 19.

A shop worker, Momdel Hossain, who was forced to amputate his left leg from the knee, filed the case. The court asked Kotwali Police Station to record it as an FIR.

In Pirojpur court, Hasina and 13 others, including five Rab members, were sued in an abduction case filed by Babul Hawlader, father of Sunny Hawlader, who was a victim of enforced disappearance in 2013.

The then Rab director general Mokhlesur Rahman was among the accused.

Now Social Islami Bank freed

FROM PAGE 12

The new board was constituted as per section 45 of the Bank Companies Act, 1991 to protect the interests of depositors and ensure good governance, said the BB letter to the SIBL managing director.

The move to dissolve the board comes after a group of SIBL officials requested the BB governor to do so following the fall of the Sheikh Hasina government on August 5.

Alam is said to be a close associate of Hasina.

The group and its associates took out Tk 4,200 crore from the bank,

which came under S Alam's control in 2017, according to central bank documents.

However, the actual amount taken is in the neighbourhood of Tk 15,000 crore, which would be about 41 percent of the bank's total outstanding loans at the end of last year, according to the bank's officials who spoke on the condition of anonymity.

The amount given to S Alam and its associate companies has left the bank with a deficit in its current account balance with the central bank for more than a year.

To plug the deficit, the central bank provided special liquidity support to the lender without any collateral on the orders of former BB governor Abdur Rouf Talukder.

As of August 7, the bank faced a current account deficit of Tk 2,877 crore with the central bank.

The liquidity support was stopped after Ahsan H Mansur took charge in the middle of August.

At the end of 2023, SIBL had Tk 9,568 crore in default loans but it showed only Tk 1,644 crore, according to a recent BB investigation.

UN calls for stepping up

FROM PAGE 12

The UNHCR welcomed Bangladesh's renewed commitment to the refugees, set forth by the interim government's Chief Adviser Professor Muhammad Yunus. "We echo Dr Yunus's call for continued solidarity from the international community through consistent financial support and helping to ensure their 'eventual repatriation to Myanmar, with safety, dignity and full rights'."

"Bangladesh's humanitarian spirit, at a time of transition for the Bangladeshi people, deserves global appreciation," the statement said.

A dignified and sustainable return to Myanmar remains the primary solution to this crisis, the UN agency said, calling on the international community to demonstrate the political will to make this possible.

Highlighting the ongoing conflict between Myanmar forces and rebels in Rakhine, the UNHCR also called on the Bangladesh authorities to ensure that civilians fleeing the violence in Myanmar are allowed access to protection in Bangladesh.

UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres also called on all parties to the conflict in Myanmar to end the violence and ensure the protection of civilians, said his spokesperson Stephane Dujarric in a briefing.

Guterres also appealed to strengthen regional protection efforts, provide access to conflict-affected communities and further support host countries.

Julie Bishop, the UN secretary-general's special envoy on Myanmar, is engaging all stakeholders, including regional actors, to move towards an inclusive Myanmar-led process for sustainable peace and national reconciliation, Dujarric said.

These are important steps to create conditions conducive to the voluntary, safe, dignified, and sustainable return of the Rohingya people to Myanmar, he said.

US Secretary of State Antony Blinken has said that the ongoing humanitarian crisis and human rights violations in Myanmar are making life even harder for many of the country's ethnic and religious minority groups, especially the Rohingya people.

In a statement yesterday, he said the US stands with the survivors of the Rohingya genocide and is committed to providing life-saving assistance to affected members of Rohingya communities and those affected by the crisis.

Over the past seven years, he said, the US has contributed nearly \$2.4 billion and is also conducting extensive documentation of the atrocities and abuses committed against Rohingya and all civilians.

"Our support for the people of Burma in their aspirations for a democratic, inclusive, and peaceful future is unwavering, as are our calls on all parties to protect civilians from harm."

The Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade said the country continues to support international accountability for human rights violations and other abuses.

In a statement, it called on the Myanmar regime to take a different path — cease violence, engage in dialogue and grant safe and unimpeded humanitarian access.

"We support ASEAN's efforts to resolve the crisis through the work of the ASEAN Chair and Special Envoy and consistent with the Five Point Consensus. We continue to support the people of Myanmar and their aspirations for a return to the path of democracy."

Interim govt to be given

FROM PAGE 12

According to him, Bangladesh has to clean up all the rubbish of the past and build a truly democratic country — a task completed by the former caretaker government led by Justice Latifur Rahman in just three months before it organised a fair election.

"We want to allow the interim government a reasonable time to reform all the institutions of the state to hold an acceptable election. But the time will not be indefinite," he said.

The BNP secretary general blamed India for the ongoing floods and criticised the neighbouring country for its position on sharing water from the common rivers with Bangladesh.

"Parts of the country have been affected by severe floods that were not witnessed in the last 15 years. This terrible flood happened because India opened their dams without any prior alert," he said.

Fakhrul also alleged BNP leader M Ilias Ali became a victim of enforced disappearance because he stood up to

India's water-sharing policy.

"The bilateral contract of sharing transboundary river water has not been established yet. They (India) are using water aggression as a weapon. Protests against this water aggression started from Sylhet which was led by M Ilias Ali. As a result, he was forcefully disappeared," he said.

Asked about the whereabouts of Ilias, he said, "We are not sure whether he is alive or not. We are not given any specific answer from the organisations involved but we are keeping up pressure to know what happened to all the people who faced enforced disappearance. We have earlier submitted all details to the UN. A UN investigation team arrived in Bangladesh to investigate the matter. We are hopeful."

Fakhrul claimed around 700 BNP leaders and activists were subjected to enforced disappearance while more than 1.45 lakh cases were filed against over 6 million BNP activists in its struggle for democracy since 2012 — which he said was "unbelievable".

BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia was freed through the mass movement but she never bowed to the power, Fakhrul said and added now the party is battling legally several cases against its acting chairman Tarique Rahman.

Fakhrul accused Hasina of attempting to establish a one-party rule. "Sheikh Mujib was a leading figure in the liberation movement of the country and was in the government from 1972 to 1975 with people's support. But he decided to initiate a one party rule, formed BKSAL and dissolved all other political parties. Sheikh Hasina followed in his footsteps and finalised the preparation for a one-party system, but failed in the face of the resistance of the general students."

The BNP secretary general promised to repeal the Digital Security Act, which is now the Cyber Security Act, if the party forms the government after the election.

"In the previous regime, people could not speak out for fear of the Digital Security Act. Journalists were suppressed by this law. Now people have regained freedom of speech," he said.

Telegram CEO arrested in France

REUTERS, Paris

Pavel Durov, the Russian-born billionaire founder and owner of the Telegram messaging app, was arrested at Le Bourget airport outside Paris shortly after landing on a private jet late on Saturday and placed in custody, a police source said.

There was no official confirmation from France of the arrest, which French and Russian media have also reported, saying that Durov, 39, was arrested shortly after arriving at Le Bourget airport on a private jet from Azerbaijan.

France's BFM and TFI said that Durov, who has dual French and United Arab Emirates citizenship, was arrested as part of a preliminary police investigation into allowing possible criminality due to a lack of moderators on Telegram and a lack of cooperation with police.

Durov faces possible indictment, according to French media yesterday.

Yemen Houthis hail Hezbollah strikes

Renew threats to launch their own assault on Israel

AGENCIES

Yemen's Iran-backed Houthi rebels praised attacks by Lebanon's Hezbollah on Israel yesterday and renewed threats to launch their own assault in response to Israeli strikes on a port in Yemen.

"We congratulate Hezbollah and its Secretary-General on the great and courageous attack carried out by the resistance this morning against the Israeli enemy," the Houthis said in a statement after Hezbollah said it had launched a large-scale attack with rockets and drones.

The Yemeni rebels said the "strong and effective response ... confirms that the resistance is capable, strong and honest in its promise and threats."

The Houthis pledged to launch their own attacks against Israel in response to July 20 strikes that targeted a rebel-run port in the coastal city of Hodeida. "We reaffirm once again that the Yemeni response is definitely coming," the statement said.

The strike on Hodeida came a day after the Houthis launched their

first deadly strike on Israel -- a drone attack in Tel Aviv that killed an Israeli civilian, reports AFP.

Israel's response destroyed much of the port's fuel storage capacity and killed at least nine people, according to the rebels.

The Houthis are fighting Israel as part of Iran's so-called "axis of



resistance", which includes militant groups in Iraq, Syria and Lebanon.

Since November, the Yemeni rebels have launched a flurry of missile and drone strikes on Israel-linked shipping in the Gulf of Aden and the Red Sea.

Meanwhile, Egyptian President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi yesterday

warned America's top general during a meeting of the dangers of a major conflict in Lebanon.

US Air Force General C Q Brown, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, arrived in Egypt hours after a significant missile exchange between Israel and Lebanese Hezbollah, reports Reuters.

In a statement, Sisi's office said the Egyptian leader told Brown that the international community needed to "exert all efforts and intensify pressures to defuse tension and stop the state of escalation that threatens the security and stability of the entire region."

"(Sisi warned) in this regard of the dangers of opening a new front in Lebanon, and stressing the need to preserve Lebanon's stability and sovereignty," the statement read.

Sisi yesterday called for a "decisive stance from the international community" and a stronger response "to joint Egyptian-American-Qatari efforts" for a ceasefire and hostage-prisoner exchange, which would enable a "path to calm and stability in the region," his office said.

EAST UKRAINE Reuters staff missing in Russian strike on hotel

REUTERS

A member of the Reuters team covering the war in Ukraine was missing and two others were hospitalised after a Russian strike on a hotel in the eastern Ukrainian city of Kramatorsk.

In a statement, the news agency said that the Hotel Sapphire, where a six-person Reuters crew was staying, was hit by a strike on Saturday.

"One of our colleagues is unaccounted for, while another two have been taken to hospital for treatment," the agency said.

"Three other colleagues have been accounted for. We are urgently seeking more information, working with the authorities in Kramatorsk, and supporting our colleagues and their families. We will give an update when we have more information," it added.

US PRESIDENTIAL RACE Harris raises \$540m since launching her campaign

REUTERS, Washington

Democrat Kamala Harris has raised \$540 million in little more than a month since she began her race for US president, with a surge of donations flowing in during the Democratic National Convention last week, her campaign said yesterday.

A memo released by Harris' campaign manager, Jen O'Malley Dillon, said the \$540 million raised included \$82 million that came in during convention week and is a sign of Democratic enthusiasm for her candidacy.

"This is the most ever for any presidential campaign in this time span," she said.

Vice President Harris became a candidate for president on July 21 when President Joe Biden stepped aside under pressure from fellow Democrats concerned about his cognitive ability after he stumbled during a June 27 debate against Republican Donald Trump.

SOUTH CHINA SEA ROW China, Philippines clash in disputed waters

REUTERS, Manila

The Philippines and China clashed in disputed waters of the South China Sea yesterday over what Manila said was a resupply mission for fishermen, the latest in a series of sea and air confrontations in the strategic waterway.

The incident overshadows efforts by both nations to rebuild trust and better manage disputes after months of confrontations, including a violent clash in June, in which a Filipino sailor lost a finger.

The Philippines yesterday accused China of "aggressive and dangerous manoeuvres" to block the resupply mission. China's coast guard, meanwhile, said it had taken "control measures" against a vessel that had "illegally" entered the waters and repeatedly approached Chinese ships in a dangerous manner.

In the incident near the Sabina Shoal, the Philippine South China Sea task force said Chinese vessels rammed and used water cannons against a Philippine Bureau of Fisheries ship transporting food, fuel and medical supplies for Filipino fishermen.

For its part, the Chinese coast guard said the Philippine ship "ignored repeated serious warnings and deliberately approached and rammed" China's law enforcement boat, resulting in a collision. It added that responsibility for the collision lies entirely on the Philippine side.

No contingency system despite available funds

FROM PAGE 1

After September 2022, when the initiative was taken, Bangladesh faced a number of cyclones and floods that severely disrupted telecommunication. If an emergency system had been in place, people's suffering from lack of communication would have been much less.

For instance, Cyclone Mocha in May 2023 knocked down most of the towers in Cox's Bazar, while Cyclone Remal in May left more than 55 percent of the mobile towers dysfunctional.

Were the NETS in place, the government would not have needed to spend about Tk 50 lakh to provide diesel to keep network towers operational in flood-affected areas in Feni at present.

The posts and telecommunication secretary was the convener of the committee and the director general

of the Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission's systems and services division was assigned as the member secretary.

The Director General of the Department of Disaster Management (DDM) was also made a member of the committee.

Razwanur Rahman, the DDM DG, told The Daily Star he has not been made aware of such an initiative.

Md Mushfiqur Rahman, secretary for Posts and Telecommunications, could not be reached for comment. However, a senior official in the ministry said the initiative hasn't progressed much.

The committee was also supposed to present a budget proposal for the NETS in the social obligation fund (SoF) council meeting.

SoF of the BTRC is a fund designed to support the expansion of telecommunication services in underserved

areas. And the major contributors to the SoF are telecom operators.

But no such proposal has been placed at the meeting of the SoF council in the last two years, according to the meeting minutes.

At the meeting of the SoF council in April this year, which took place after one and half years of the formation of the committee, a project for NETS was proposed.

But in the next meeting, in late July, there was no mention of the project.

The meeting discussed the projected cost of Tk 835 crore for different projects in fiscal 2024-25. However, the NETS was not included in the list of projects, according to the document.

"The prolonged delay in implementing the NETS is a critical oversight, especially when the SoF is readily available," said Abu Nazam M Tanveer Hossain, a telecom policy expert.

Given Bangladesh's

vulnerability to natural calamities, a national telecommunications emergency plan (NETP) and system are essential for coordinating relief efforts and saving lives, he said.

Immediate action is needed prioritising high-risk areas, network neutrality and tailored contingency plans for different emergencies.

"This will enhance our disaster response and safeguard our citizens effectively," he said, adding that the International Telecommunication Union's Strategic Target 3.5 mandates that all countries have a National Emergency Telecommunication Plan by 2023.

The International Telecommunication Union (ITU) is a specialised agency of the UN responsible for many matters related to information and communication technologies.

The ITU provided a deadline to the

respective national telecommunication operators to come up with a detailed NETP by 2023, said Shahed Alam, chief corporate and regulatory officer at Robi.

The NETP is an overall document that includes not only the regulatory framework for disaster risk management but also all activities and actions that need to be developed and implemented in each of the phases of the disaster management cycle beyond the ICT sector.

In the case of any global pandemic or any other natural calamities, NETP plays a pivotal role in dealing with specific crises for a country.

Against this backdrop, the BTRC arranged a workshop with relevant stakeholders for developing a NETP for Bangladesh, according to Alam.

"Unfortunately, no effective measures have been implemented yet based on the

recommendations that came up from the workshop. We believe that immediate implementation of NETP will pave the way for smoothly implementing the NETS."

Forcing people

FROM PAGE 1

according to a press release from the ministry.

He also highlighted the potential consequences of administrative disruptions, noting that teachers and staffers could face delays in receiving their salaries and allowances if the system falters.

Wahiduddin reiterated the need to maintain stability in the education sector with the goal of restoring discipline in educational institutions amid the ongoing transition.

He further emphasised the importance of maintaining proper relationships between teachers and students, saying that no one should be personally humiliated.

Mazumder, Sarafat's bank accounts to be frozen

FROM PAGE 1

are the owners of the Bangla daily Dainik Bangla. Both men are big beneficiaries of the Awami League government of the past 15 years.

Mazumder leveraged his position as the BAB chairman to change critical policies for the banking

sector such that it favoured his businesses as well as take loans bypassing rules and regulations, according to people with knowledge of the matter.

For instance, at the 654th board meeting of Janata Bank in 2021, a Tk 261 crore interest waiver facility was approved

for two concerns of Mazumder's Nassa Group: Nassa Taipei Spinners and Nassa Spinners.

The central bank initially rejected the facility as Janata approved the waiver violating banking norms but later walked back on the decision.

To ensure his access to

the power centre, he would collect funds from banks and personally hand the cheque over to the former Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, he said.

Sarafat, who hails from Gopalganj like Hasina, exerted his influence to get a host of facilities for the cash-strapped Padma Bank

and get a licence for a non-bank financial institution in a crowded sector.

The Anti-Corruption Commission recently started investigating Sarafat over allegations of seizing the Padma bank and embezzling Tk 800 crore from the stock market.

We had no clue

FROM PAGE 1

In Feni, several remote upazilas remained inaccessible by road, even as waters were receding. Mobile networks have not yet been fully restored, and many areas are still without electricity.

Locals said there is now a severe shortage of drinking water and food.

Meanwhile, three new deaths -- one each in Noakhali, Cumilla, and Rangamati -- were reported yesterday, taking the toll from the floods to 21. Two people were reported missing in Moulvibazar.

People started returning to their villages in Brahmanbaria, Lakshmipur, Sylhet, Moulvibazar, Habiganj, K h a g r a c h a r i, Chattogram, and Cox's Bazar as the flood situation was improving there.

Many huts have collapsed and thousands have lost almost all their belongings, including farm animals and stored crops.

According to the disaster management ministry, the floods marooned over 10 lakh people in 11 districts and the total number of those directly affected was over 52 lakh.

At least 73 upazilas have been severely impacted.

The authorities opened 3,654 shelters, providing refuge to over 4 lakh people.

MISERABLE CONDITION Yunus Sikder, a resident of the Bangla Bazar area in Begumganj, Noakhali, said thousands were suffering from a shortage of food.

"I spent all my savings on food and water. Now we are forced to drink dirty water," he said.

Although the water has been receding, the situation remains particularly dire in Feni and Cumilla, where relief materials have not reached many remote areas because trucks broke down on flooded roads, and there is no boat to carry them.

People stranded in Cumilla were also suffering from shortage of food and drinking water.

In some places of Feni, helicopters of the army, navy, air force, RAB, and BGB are delivering relief goods to remote areas. The floods have caused extensive damage to fish farms and livestock, with losses estimated at Tk 411 crore, according to the government.

[Anwarul Haider from Noakhali, and Khalid Bin Nazrul from Cumilla contributed to this report.]

Advertisement for Bangladesh Kheti Unnayan Corporation (BKUC) regarding agricultural services and equipment. Includes contact information and a table of services.

Official notice from the Government of Bangladesh regarding an e-Tender Corrigendum. Includes details about the tender process, contact information, and a table of corrigendum details.

BJMC is still incurring losses!

Govt must overhaul the jute sector, revive its past glory

It is surprising that more than four years after the Awami League government closed the 25 state-run jute mills, the Bangladesh Jute Mills Corporation (BJMC) is still counting losses for them. According to a report by Prothom Alo, in FY 2023-24, the corporation incurred a loss of over Tk 180 crore, while over Tk 137 crore was spent on salaries and allowances for employees who are sitting idle. For instance, the Demra-based Latif Bawani Jute Mills Limited, which was shut down in July 2020, is still having to pay its 184 staff members. A similar situation prevails in other closed jute mills. The question is, why has the BJMC failed to take a decision about its idle workforce in all these years?

Back in 2020, the government had promised that all the mills would be reopened after equipping them with modern technologies under different types of ventures such as public-private partnership, etc. It also promised to give jobs to the laid-off workers once the mills reopened. However, we have not seen any such initiatives since. What BJMC did instead was that it leased out 14 of the 25 mills to different private organisations. Unfortunately, half of them reportedly do not even have the expertise to run such facilities, and therefore couldn't start their production. On what basis were those mills leased out then? Also, isn't leasing them out to private entities without modernising them a clear breach of the government promise?

Given the worldwide demand for jute-based products and the potential of this sector within the country, we think the interim government should take urgent initiatives to revive this sector. Of course, if needed, the government can work together with private institutions but there is no alternative to revamping the BJMC so that it can take the lead in this regard. This would also create job opportunities for thousands of workers including those who used to work in the sector and are now living in dire conditions.

Reviving the sector is all the more important because of the global campaign to reduce the use of plastic products. Bangladesh can be a part of this drive by rejuvenating the sector since jute-based products can actually be a great alternative to plastic goods and bags. Our scientists have invented some jute-based products, such as the biodegradable Sonali Bag, which has a great potential. However, we have not succeeded in popularising them due to the reluctance of the relevant authorities. Such attitudes must change.

About the idle BJMC workforce, we think the government should take a quick decision about transferring them to other government factories or institutions. Another option is to let go of these officials by paying them their dues since the BJMC should not be incurring such huge losses year after year. However, the government's long-term goal should be to completely overhaul the BJMC and the jute sector so that the latter can make profits again.

We must undo legacy of data distortion

BBS must be able to provide accurate data

Bangladesh has long suffered from a lack of reliable official data thanks to the Awami League regime that often fabricated data to align with its political narratives and cover up unflattering truths. From economy to public health to education to energy, this trend was allegedly prevalent across key policy areas. While we are yet to learn of the full extent of data manipulation or the damage caused by it, a report by Bonik Barta digs deep into the economic sector, highlighting how top officials were involved in such practices.

Reportedly, former finance minister AHM Mustafa Kamal, particularly during his tenure as planning minister in 2014-2019, played an active role in this regard. Under his leadership, an influential syndicate within the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS) controlled data processing to manipulate key economic indicators such as inflation and growth, leading to misguided policies that failed to address the real economic conditions and ultimately hurt the country. For example, from 2015 to 2019, Bangladesh's growth was overstated by 3.5 percent, according to World Bank. Such manipulations allowed the government to show continuous growth in line with its Five-Year Plans. The BBS also manipulated the Consumer Price Index (CPI) by increasing the number of items in the inflation basket from 420 to 749, thus diluting the impact of rising prices for essential goods and keeping inflation figures artificially low.

The trend of data distortion was not limited to Kamal's period at the planning ministry, nor was BBS the only party complicit in it. In fact, many key state institutions were also similarly compromised, which shows how centrally planned this whole data propaganda campaign was. It was only in July that we got to learn of a shocking discrepancy of \$14 billion in our export data, which was apparently orchestrated by officials at the National Board of Revenue (NBR) and Export Promotion Bureau (EPB). Instances like this likely abound, even if those were not always reported. It is because of such statistical manipulations that the World Bank's Statistical Capacity Indicator showed a fall in Bangladesh's methodology score from 70 in 2014 to 30 in 2020.

Against this backdrop, the importance of overhauling our entire data regime cannot be overstated. Accurate data are the backbone of effective policy-making, whereas manipulated data can lead to disastrous consequences, as it has in our case. To address this problem, experts have made various recommendations including establishing an independent data commission to oversee the data evaluation processes; appointing seasoned statisticians to key positions in BBS instead of admin cadre officers; conducting regular external audits of official data to detect discrepancies; and implementing legal reforms to criminalise data manipulation. These steps have become essential to undo the damage done by the previous regime and put Bangladesh back on a path of progress.

Charting a new course

Political settlement and constitutional reform in post-autocratic Bangladesh



Faiz Ahmad Taiyeb writes on sustainable development and is a public policy critic. He has several books to his credit, including *Fourth Industrial Revolution and Bangladesh*, *'Bangladesh: Development Trajectory And Democracy Deficit'*, and *'50 Years of Bangladesh Economy'*.

FAIZ AHMAD TAIYEB

Bangladesh stands at a critical juncture following the fall of Sheikh Hasina's regime, with renewed discussions on state reform and political settlement. The process of constitutional reform is crucial to re-establish democratic governance and stability. Currently, three schools of thought dominate the discourse: revolutionary constitution-building, standard constitutional reform coupled with a referendum, and reform based on Professor Mushtaq Khan's political settlement theory. Here, I would like to explore each approach in detail, highlighting their implications for Bangladesh's future.

Revolutionary constitution building
Revolutionary constitution building involves drafting a new constitution by the parties that led the revolutionary movement. This approach allows the architects of the revolution to embed fundamental changes that address systemic issues and rectify power imbalances. Advocates of this method argue that it can create a constitution that is truly reflective of the revolutionary ethos and aspirations of the populace.

Nevertheless, this approach is fraught with challenges. The exclusion of other political forces in the drafting process can lead to a lack of consensus and national unity. Moreover, the revolutionaries may lack experience in statecraft, leading to practical difficulties in governance. There is also the risk of replacing one form of autocracy with another, as the new constitution could entrench the power of the revolutionaries without adequate checks and balances.

Proponents argue that while constitutional change was not the initial target of the movement, the dire need for reform has emerged following mass killings and severe human rights abuses under the previous regime. These actions transformed the state into a one-party system, undermining democratic rights and stifling opposition through extra-judicial killings and enforced disappearances.

Given these circumstances, scholars supporting this school of thought contend that a revolutionary constitution is necessary to eradicate the old power structures and prevent a recurrence of such autocratic practices. This approach aims to embed new democratic values and frameworks reflective of the people's aspirations for a just and equitable society.

Standard constitutional reform with referendum

Standard constitutional reform involves amending the existing constitution through legal procedures and ratifying these changes through a public referendum. This process ensures that the populace has a direct say in the governance structures that affect their lives. Proponents argue that this method enhances the legitimacy of the government and ensures that reforms reflect the will of the people. Moreover, it allows for gradual change, which can maintain stability during the transition period.

However, this approach faces



VISUAL: FATIMA JAHAN ENA

significant challenges. There is a risk that entrenched political interests may influence the reform process, potentially undermining the democratic aspirations of the population. Additionally, public opinion can be swayed by populist rhetoric, which may lead to decisions that do not necessarily reflect long-term national interests.

After the mass upheaval and the interim government's rise to power, the urgency for constitutional reform has intensified. Advocates argue that reforms validated through a referendum will have legitimacy and sustainability. This method emphasises the political process, highlighting the importance of political parties and the elite power nexus in adhering to new legal frameworks.

This school of thought stresses the necessity of integrating reforms across society and politics, ensuring that changes are not only top-down but

also enjoy grassroots support. Political parties must pledge to implement these reforms as part of a broader political settlement, involving businessmen, bureaucrats, agencies, and civil society. This comprehensive approach aims to foster a participatory democratic process where students and labour groups can protest against misdeeds, keeping the political settlement open and accountable.

Reform based on the political settlement theory

Professor Mushtaq Khan's political settlement theory offers a different lens for constitutional reform. This theory emphasises the importance of acknowledging the distribution of power and interests among various groups in society. By considering the existing power dynamics, reforms can be more inclusive and pragmatic, potentially leading to greater political and economic stability.

Implementing this theory involves complex negotiations among different power holders, ensuring that reforms are inclusive and pragmatic. However,

political settlement should be linked with development. How can a political settlement contribute to political stability and economic development? What measures can be taken to accelerate development in Bangladesh? With Bangladesh experiencing jobless growth and a Gini coefficient of about 0.5, how can economic growth be balanced with efforts to reduce inequality? What strategies can be recommended to resolve the current economic crisis and restore both political and macroeconomic stability in Bangladesh?

I am inviting Bangladeshi intellectuals to navigate constitutional reforms, power balances, and inclusive development pathways through such questions. A comparative analysis of these approaches reveals their respective strengths and weaknesses. Revolutionary constitution building offers comprehensive change but risks exclusion and potential autocracy. Standard reform with a referendum provides legitimacy but may be susceptible to manipulation by entrenched interests. Khan's political settlement theory seeks a nuanced balance of power but is challenging to implement. A hybrid model that incorporates elements of each, engaging public participation, revolutionary ideals, and pragmatic power-sharing, could pave the way for a more inclusive, stable, and democratic Bangladesh.

When it comes to state reform versus political settlement through exercise of power, how can a well-crafted constitution mitigate the tendency of the current power structure in Bangladesh to foster dictatorial governance? Additionally, can a near-perfect constitution eliminate authoritarian rule, financial exploitation, and discrimination?

The power players in Bangladesh—politicians, businessmen, bureaucrats, and other influential power elites (partners in crime)—often operate beyond the bounds of existing

What made the flood so severe



Minamul Haque is the former director general of River Research Institute.

MINAMUL HAQUE

In the case of the recent flooding, the precipitation centre that caused it is in Tripura. As a result, the areas surrounding Tripura are experiencing severe floods. Brahmanbaria is situated to the south of Tripura, while Moulvibazar and Habiganj are located to the east.

This situation has led to widespread flooding across these regions. The intense precipitation in Tripura has caused several rivers to overflow. Some rivers have flowed towards the south, some to the north, and others to the southeast, creating an unusual situation.

Rivers in Bangladesh typically flow from the north to the south towards the Bay of Bengal, but that is not always the case. For example, the Gomati River flows from the eastern side of Tripura, through the Dhalai district, passing between two mountain ranges. There is a dam on the first mountain range, where water is collected to produce electricity. Such reservoirs are also used as flood control mechanisms. In the event of heavy precipitation, the dam gates can be opened slowly to release some water, but this has a limit. When the water exceeds this limit, the dam overflows, leading to flooding.

However, the flooding is not solely

due to the dam overflow. For instance, the Khowai River originates in Tripura, and there is a barrage at its mouth. There is also a barrage at the origin of the Gomti River. These barrages don't hold much water, so opening or closing them does not directly cause flooding. The flooding is more connected to the opening of gates at the Teesta River, which is connected to the Ganges and the Farakka Barrage.

The situation should be handled diplomatically, with a proper understanding of the hydrological dynamics of the Ganges, Teesta, and other rivers. A well-informed strategy is essential. The government should consider ratifying the United Nations Watercourses Convention of 1997, which has been pending in Bangladesh for a long time.

These barrages can hold a significant amount of water, and when they are opened, the heavy flow contributes to flooding downstream.

This time, the flooding was primarily caused by excess rainfall. The army, when mobilised with proper resources and coordination from the state, can play a crucial role in managing such disasters by providing logistical support, such as speed

boats and other necessary equipment. However, the current government, being newly in power, may not be fully prepared to take immediate and decisive action. Instead, it is engaging in heavy rhetoric, often adopting an aggressive stance toward India, which is not the right approach.

The situation should be handled diplomatically, with a proper understanding of the hydrological dynamics of the Ganges, Teesta, and other rivers. A well-informed strategy is essential. The government should consider ratifying the United Nations Watercourses Convention of 1997, which has been pending in Bangladesh for a long time. This could be a significant step forward. The interim government's adviser on environment and water resources, Syeda Rizwana Hasan, has suggested taking the river

sharing issue onto international platforms, but to do that, Bangladesh first needs to ratify the convention, as going to the UN without accepting the convention will not be effective. Some have alleged that the previous government did not accept the convention due to India's influence, but this government should not adopt the same stance.

As for our roles as ordinary citizens, first, we must refrain from panicking,

and what mechanisms can achieve a more equitable shift in power dynamics?

For organisational and institutional reform, firstly, the questions of what exactly constitutes an institution, according to theoretical frameworks, and how are institutions currently organised in Bangladesh must be addressed. Is there any institution at all, are not they mere organisations? What are the strengths and weaknesses of formal and informal institutions in Bangladesh, and how do they function within the broader institutional framework?

Given the monopolisation and inefficiency in various institutions such as the judiciary, public administration, and the Bangladesh Bank, how can a political settlement positively influence these institutions to enhance their effectiveness and reduce corruption?

Unlike a constitution, a political settlement is not a formal document. What practical foundations construct a political settlement? How does a political settlement impact policy design? What types of institutions are necessary to create effective policies that are free from the influence of powerful groups?

Lastly, political settlement should be linked with development. How can a political settlement contribute to political stability and economic development? What measures can be taken to accelerate development in Bangladesh? With Bangladesh experiencing jobless growth and a Gini coefficient of about 0.5, how can economic growth be balanced with efforts to reduce inequality? What strategies can be recommended to resolve the current economic crisis and restore both political and macroeconomic stability in Bangladesh?

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as difficult as it may be. In situations like this, panicking can often cause further trouble. People who have their own families to look after should treat them as a first priority. Apart from that, individuals whose families are not dependent on them may engage in volunteering in the flood-affected areas, if they have a financial surplus or can collect funds for flood relief.

As for precautionary measures for future disasters, there isn't a lot to be done on an individual level. As flooding is a recurring natural event in Bangladesh, it is often difficult to avoid it completely.

In recent years, the number of young children who cannot swim has gone down significantly compared to the number from a few decades ago. Therefore, parents should take the initiative to teach their children how to swim, which is an essential life skill even without considering the floods. Being more proactive in learning how to swim, as well as teaching others, is something all of us can focus on.

On an institutional level, the Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief, as well as the Ministry of Youth and Sports, should utilise their resources to provide relief and support. The army has already assisted in rescue operations, which should inspire the relevant ministries to use their resources and use self-motivation to help in any way possible.

Even though the interim government is still in its early stages, they should guide the individual efforts by different groups of volunteers in conjecture with utilising the state apparatus. This can ensure that the flood-affected victims are getting the help that they need.



VISUAL: ANWAR SOHEL

Bangladesh's path to principled governance



Shafiqul Islam is director of Water Diplomacy, professor of civil and environmental engineering and professor of Water Diplomacy at the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy at Tufts University in the US.

SHAFIQU L ISLAM

The 2024 uprising and the regime's exit were dramatic. While the country has seen other uprisings in 1952, 1969, and 1990, each unique in its own way, the current situation is still evolving. It is too early to determine what lessons can or can't be learned from similar uprisings in Tunisia, Egypt, and Sudan. The question isn't just about drawing inspiration from these examples but understanding what will work in Bangladesh and why. Many ideas abound, but which ones will work in Bangladesh?

Diagnosing the problem

There is a deep and growing disconnect between the elites and the vast majority of Bangladeshis—a gap that has widened over the decades. But this divide isn't just economic or cultural; it's moral. The moral fabric of the nation has been ruptured, with integrity taking a backseat to self-interest and corruption.

This disconnect is perhaps best captured by the metaphor of the "sheeter pakhee"—a term often used to describe expatriates, who return to Bangladesh when it's convenient, much like snowbirds who migrate to warmer climates during winter. To those who live through the harsh realities year-round, western expatriates are seen as outsiders who swoop in and out, offering opinions and solutions without truly understanding the day-to-day struggles of the common people.

The "sheeter pakhee" metaphor also reflects the behaviour of many elites within Bangladesh who, much like the rich family in the film *Parasite*, have detached themselves from the realities of the common people, living in a bubble of privilege. These elites have often acted as parasites, thriving off the resources and labour of the masses while contributing little to the well-being of the broader society.

Many Bangladeshi elites have funnelled billions of hard earned foreign currencies—earned primarily from the remittance of expatriate labourers and the sweat of ready-made garment workers—into securing their "second home" in a foreign land, whether it be in Dubai, the United States, Canada, or elsewhere. This parasitic relationship has only exacerbated the divide, creating a system where the few prosper at the expense of the many.

Ahmed Sofa, a revered Bangladeshi writer, highlighted this disconnect years ago, noting how the urban elites, who wield significant power, have become increasingly detached from the realities of the common people. These elites are more foreign in Bangladesh than foreigners or expats. This detachment has only grown as technology and social media have made the lifestyles of the elite more visible, amplifying the sense of injustice and inequality.

Over the years, this divide has become more pronounced. The elites have funnelled their looted wealth into securing foreign havens, while the common people have struggled to survive on meagre incomes. This isn't just about money; it's about the erosion of a shared national morality. As my late father often remarked, "The question isn't which elite can be bought, but at what price." This sentiment reflects a broader decline in values where almost anything—and anyone—can be bought.

Reflecting on this decline, it's important to remember where Bangladesh started. In 1976, a book titled *Bangladesh: The Test Case of Development* captured global attention. At that time, many feared Bangladesh wouldn't survive as an independent nation. Yet, after a famine, several military coups, catastrophic floods, and disastrous cyclones, Bangladesh not only survived but has prospered, defying the dire predictions of the 1970s.

So, how did Bangladesh transition from a "test case" to a model of development, ingenuity, and resilience? The answer lies in the collective spirit, adaptability, and resilience of its people—qualities that must now be harnessed to address the moral and institutional crises that threaten to undermine these hard-won gains. This moral decline has seeped into the very core of Bangladesh's institutions, leading to widespread cynicism and a loss of trust in those who are supposed to lead. The disconnect between the elite decision-makers and the common people is not just a symptom; it's a crisis.

Thesis-antithesis-synthesis

Imagine a new Bangladesh by first acknowledging the extent and impact of this disconnect. The prevailing thesis is that the problems stem from autocratic governance, while the emerging antithesis suggests

that democracy will solve all issues. However, democracy isn't a cure-all. Aristotle recognised this dilemma thousands of years ago—democracies can become tools for the elites, oppressive to the common people.

There are broadly two types of democracies: 1) where foundational principles like the rule of law, popular sovereignty, and the separation of powers are upheld; and 2) where these ideals are abused. Bangladesh, despite 12 national elections, falls into the latter category. The 2024 uprising was a manifestation of the people's frustration with a system that served the elites.

Even the first type of democracy is not without its flaws. Take the United States, for example, where basic rights are more or less secured, but the democratic process is heavily influenced by elite interests. Lobbyists wield significant power, and incumbents enjoy an overwhelming advantage, with re-election rates often exceeding 90 percent. This raises questions about how much power truly resides with the people.

What can Bangladesh learn from other recent uprisings? For example, what happened in Tunisia between 2011 and 2024, why the Islamic Brotherhood in Egypt only stayed in power for 300 days after overwhelmingly winning a fair election, and why a massive popular uprising in 2018 in Sudan led to a brutal civil war?

By carefully examining examples of the two types of democracies in other countries and focusing on actionable, context-specific strategies, Bangladesh can synthesise a governance model that works for its people—Boishamma Birodhee Jonogon (BBJ)—a regime that upholds equity, inclusion, and justice while remaining pragmatic in its implementation. This is where the idea of principled pragmatism comes into play. The BBJ model must be rooted in core principles like fairness and justice, but it should also be adaptable. This approach requires flexibility in applying principles to real-world situations, ensuring that interventions are not only ideal in theory but also viable in practice.

Two actionable ideas

With BBJ, it is crucial to question both the thesis of autocracy and the antithesis of democracy, and instead, imagine a synthesis that mirrors President Lincoln's ideal of a government "of the people, by the people, for the people."

Assuming unbridled corruption and a compromised judiciary as two of the most pressing issues, two actionable ideas can be suggested. First, a community protection platform could incorporate the principles of an ombudsman. An independent and empowered Office of Ombudsman can play a pivotal role in curbing corruption. For instance, in Tanzania, the Prevention and Combating of Corruption Bureau has made significant strides in reducing corruption. Similarly, the Philippines' ombudsman has been instrumental in holding public officials accountable, with the office being responsible for the prosecution of several high-profile corruption cases. In Bangladesh, such a platform could not only serve as a watchdog but also actively engage citizens in reporting corrupt practices.

Second, the judiciary in Bangladesh must be strengthened to ensure its independence, transparency, and accountability. The judiciary needs to be independent from and accountable to the other branches of government. For example, in South Africa, the Constitutional Court has played a crucial role in safeguarding democracy by making landmark decisions that uphold the constitution, even against the wishes of powerful political figures. In Bangladesh, judicial reforms may focus on: a) introducing a more transparent and merit-based judicial appointment process, similar to the Senate confirmation process in the US; b) developing mechanisms for greater transparency in judicial proceedings, such as publishing court decisions, detailed opinions including majority, and dissenting opinions; and c) providing a clear mandate to the judiciary to prevent it from being co-opted by political parties.

In designing and implementing these reforms, the BBJ needs to recognise that any reform will require creative thinking and the fallibility to admit that many initial interventions may not work as anticipated. This means being flexible to adapt to changing circumstances and learning by doing to continuously improve processes and mechanism that serve the interests of all citizens. I invite all to suggest actionable ideas, using real-world examples, on how best to initiate a systemic reform in Bangladesh with trackable and measurable impacts. With collective input and wisdom, at this opportune time, it is possible to create a BBJ Manifesto of governance that is neither autocratic nor democratic but a synthesis of both. Such a synthesis must focus on crafting and safeguarding institutions that are independent, principled, and pragmatic.

Banking sector issues that the new governor should address



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MD MAIN UDDIN

The economy of Bangladesh is heavily dependent on the banking sector as 86 percent of financial intermediation is conducted through banks. But this reliance has led to many problems for the economy in general and the banking sector in particular. Commercial banks typically provide small and short-term loans to a wide range of borrowers. By offering small loans to many borrowers, banks can build a well diversified portfolio, which is crucial for minimising risk. A short-term loan with high turnover rate can be issued multiple times a year, increasing profit. However, instead of granting small loans, our banks tend to prioritise large loans, which they are able to do within the legal framework.

A large loan is defined as one that constitutes at least 10 percent of a bank's capital. A bank can sanction a loan of up to 25 percent of its capital to finance power sector projects. Within this framework, just four such borrowers could take up all of the bank's capital. If these borrowers default, the bank would become insolvent.

A bank can grant a borrower 15 percent of its capital as funded loans, which require immediate disbursement, and 20 percent as non-funded loans, which require delayed disbursement. As such, a borrower can get a loan of up to 35 percent of the bank's capital. In such a scenario, only three borrowers can deplete the bank's entire capital. In case of export financing, a borrower can receive a loan of up to 50 percent of the bank's capital, with the funded exposure not exceeding 15 percent of the bank's capital. In this case, only two borrowers could consume the bank's capital. When banks issue large loans, they fail to build a diversified investment portfolio, leading to an imbalance between risk and return.

The availability of large loans hinders the growth of our stock market. Banks are involved in indirect finance, where they collect funds from depositors and lend them to borrowers. Borrowing from banks is easier because borrowers are accountable to banks, not to the depositors. In contrast, stock markets are involved in direct finance where borrowers have to obtain funds directly from the suppliers of capital. Here, borrowing firms have to win over suppliers of funds through their performance, ultimately reflected in their share prices. In an efficient market, it is very difficult for less creditworthy borrowers to raise funds. However, due to our banking sector being plagued by ill governance, less creditworthy borrowers—with political connections—can easily convince banks to grant loans.

When banks provide long-term loans from their short-term deposits, it imposes major risks on their depositors. Granting large loans goes against the basic principle of bank lending, as it creates maturity mismatch wherein depositors' claims to the bank mature earlier than banks' claims to borrowers. This can lead to liquidity problems, making it difficult for banks to honour customers' cheques. Large loans are also more likely to default. In contrast, small loans contribute significantly to the economy by reducing income inequality between the rich and the poor, and the default rate for small loans is low. Therefore, every bank

should allocate a certain percentage of its funds for small loans.

Restrictions should be placed on single-borrower exposure and large loans from banks. As a result, large borrowers will turn to the stock market—and policymakers will be more diligent in developing this market from its precarious condition.

Bangladesh Bank (BB) regularly discloses non-performing loans (NPLs)—the latest reported amount is Tk 1,82,295 crore, compared to just Tk 22,481 crore in 2009. However, there is always doubt about the accuracy of its reported NPL figures. A true picture of distressed assets should include not only NPLs but also write-off loans, rescheduled loans, and loans stuck in courts. This would provide a more accurate assessment of the banking sector's asset quality. The NPL rate of 10.11 percent in 2023, as reported by BB, would increase to roughly 30 percent if all distressed assets were considered. In an attempt to reduce the ever-growing NPLs, the central bank has frequently changed loan classification rules, deviating from

needed to be maintained, and a case was required to be filed against the borrower. Later, the unpaid portion of an NPL was reduced from five to three years, allowing banks to quickly remove their worst loans from the balance sheet.

If BB wants to reduce NPLs, the nexus between business and politics must be broken so that politically connected individuals cannot intentionally default on loans. Good governance and adequate legal infrastructure—relevant laws, courts and impartial judges—need to be established. Borrowers have to be evaluated properly before loan sanctioning. Rules for loan rescheduling, restructuring and write-off must be strictly enforced.

According to the Basel Accords, banks in Bangladesh need to maintain a minimum capital of 12.5 percent of risk-weighted assets. Some banks consistently face capital deficit. Data shows that the capital shortfall of 10 private and public banks in the country reached Tk 39,655 crore in 2023. The capital base of our banks is also relatively low because of high NPLs and low reinvestment of profits. Bank owners are more interested in taking profits as dividends rather than reinvesting them as retained earnings.

There is also continuous capital flight from rural to urban areas. Data shows that even though rural areas supplied nearly 13 percent of deposits in 2010, they obtained only 8 percent of advances. The supply of deposits by rural people increased to 21 percent in



According to the Basel Accords, banks in Bangladesh need to maintain a minimum capital of 12.5 percent of risk-weighted assets. PHOTO: STAR

international standards. Despite these efforts, the usual growth of NPLs has not been curbed.

When a loan becomes non-performing, BB permits loan rescheduling where a loan is renewed or extended under circumstances that are beyond the control of the borrower. The rescheduling is allowed a maximum of three times, examining the causes for the loan's non-performance. The down payment for rescheduling ranges between 10 and 30 percent of the outstanding loan and the time limit never exceeds three years.

For the past decade, loan rescheduling has been permitted by breaking existing rules. Moreover, in 2015, a loan restructuring facility was provided to 15 large borrowers with loans of Tk 500 crore and above, upon receiving a down payment of only 2 percent of the outstanding loan amount. The loan terms were extended to 10 years.

There are huge political repercussions when NPLs rise. While there is less fuss about write-off loans, a write-off loan represents the worst state of NPLs. The amount of write-off loans stood at Tk 51,560 crore in 2023, up from Tk 15,300 crore in 2009. BB also relaxed the rules for loan write-off. Earlier, to write a loan off, it needed to remain unpaid for five years, a 100-percent provision

of advances—a capital flight of 9 percentage points to urban areas. The misuse of loans by wilful defaulters in urban areas poses a threat to rural depositors. To address this, more opportunities for using loans in rural areas should be created.

The overall expenditure management of banks is still not efficient. Data indicates that the expenditure-income ratio was around 99 percent on average between 1991 and 2000. It declined considerably to 73 percent in 2010 before increasing to 81 percent in 2023. These high ratios may be attributed to high staff salaries, provision for default loans, and high corporate tax rates. The elevated expenditure should be controlled as it is offset mainly against low pay to depositors.

Despite the large number of banks in our country, many people are still outside the banking network. This is a contradiction. The rural poor are less interested in maintaining bank accounts, while the urban poor keep their money in semi-formal and informal repositories. So, should we reduce the number of banks through merger and acquisition? Once the number of banks is reduced, it might be beneficial to increase their branches to spread services to remote areas and take advantage of economies of scale. These decisions should be made prudently.

গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার
বিভাগীয় বন কর্মকর্তার কার্যালয়
সামাজিক বন বিভাগ, দিনাজপুর

পুনঃ ইজারা দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি

এ মর্মে সকলকে অবগত করা যাচ্ছে যে, নিম্নস্বাক্ষরকারী কর্তৃক নিম্নের ছকের বর্ণনা এবং পুনঃ ইজারা দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তির শর্ত মোতাবেক সীমাহীনকৃত খামে উপস্থিত দরদাতার নিকট হতে দরপত্র আহ্বান করা যাচ্ছে।

বিজ্ঞপ্তি নং ও তারিখ	কাজের নাম	দরপত্রের ছকপত্র বিক্রয়ের স্থান	দরপত্রের ছকপত্র বিক্রয়ের শেষ তারিখ	প্রতিটি ছকপত্রের মূল্য (অফেরতযোগ্য)	ইজারা দরপত্র দাখিলের তারিখ ও সময়	ইজারা দরপত্র দাখিলের স্থান	ইজারা দরপত্র খোলার স্থান তারিখ ও সময়
পুনঃ ইজারা বিজ্ঞপ্তি নং-০৬/২০২৪-২৫ (২য় বার) তারিখ-২৫/০৮/২৪খ্রিঃ	রামসাগর জাতীয় উদ্যানের আশ্রয়স্থল শিশু পার্কে প্রবেশ ফি আদায়	রেঞ্জ কর্মকর্তার কার্যালয়, সদর রেঞ্জ ও তত্ত্বাবধায়কের কার্যালয় রামসাগর জাতীয় উদ্যান	১৭/০৯/২৪ খ্রিঃ (ছুটির দিন ব্যতীত অফিস চলাকালীন)	১০০০/- (এক হাজার) টাকা মাত্র।	১৭/০৯/২৪ খ্রিঃ সকাল ১০.০০ ঘটিকা হতে দুপুর ১.০০ ঘটিকা পর্যন্ত	নিম্ন স্বাক্ষরকারীর কার্যালয় এবং জেলা প্রশাসকের কার্যালয়, দিনাজপুর	নিম্ন স্বাক্ষরকারীর কার্যালয় ১৮/০৯/২৪ খ্রিঃ বিকাল ২.০০ ঘটিকা
পুনঃ ইজারা বিজ্ঞপ্তি নং-০৭/২০২৪-২৫ (৩য় বার), তারিখ-২৫/০৮/২০২৪	রামসাগর জাতীয় উদ্যানের প্রধান প্রবেশ গেট এর প্রবেশ ফি আদায়।	উদ্যান, দিনাজপুর।	১৭/০৯/২৪ খ্রিঃ (ছুটির দিন ব্যতীত অফিস চলাকালীন)	১০০০/- (এক হাজার) টাকা মাত্র।	১৭/০৯/২৪ খ্রিঃ সকাল ১০.০০ ঘটিকা হতে দুপুর ১.০০ ঘটিকা পর্যন্ত	নিম্ন স্বাক্ষরকারীর কার্যালয় এবং জেলা প্রশাসকের কার্যালয়, দিনাজপুর	নিম্ন স্বাক্ষরকারীর কার্যালয় ১৮/০৯/২৪ খ্রিঃ বিকাল ২.০০ ঘটিকা
পুনঃ ইজারা বিজ্ঞপ্তি নং-০৮/২০২৪-২৫ (৫ম বার), তারিখ-২৫/০৮/২০২৪	কেন্দ্রিয় ইকো-পার্কের প্রধান প্রবেশ গেট এর প্রবেশ ফি আদায়	ভারপ্রাপ্ত কর্মকর্তার কার্যালয়, পল্লভাড়া এস এফ এন টি সি ও রেঞ্জ কর্মকর্তার কার্যালয়, সদর রেঞ্জ, দিনাজপুর।	১৭/০৯/২৪ খ্রিঃ (ছুটির দিন ব্যতীত অফিস চলাকালীন)	১০০০/- (এক হাজার) টাকা মাত্র।	১৭/০৯/২৪ খ্রিঃ সকাল ১০.০০ ঘটিকা হতে দুপুর ১.০০ ঘটিকা পর্যন্ত	নিম্ন স্বাক্ষরকারীর কার্যালয় এবং জেলা প্রশাসকের কার্যালয়, দিনাজপুর	নিম্ন স্বাক্ষরকারীর কার্যালয় ১৮/০৯/২৪ খ্রিঃ বিকাল ২.০০ ঘটিকা

১৮-০৮-২০২৪
বিভাগীয় বন কর্মকর্তা
সামাজিক বন বিভাগ, দিনাজপুর

GD-250

NAYAKRAJ RAZZAK

A new man in the 1960s

While the elite group relished the cosmopolitanism of the Ayub regime, on the other end were the grim and emaciated masses—workers, porters, peasants, and rickshaw pullers with bidis tucked behind their ears, street urchins staring into the glass windows of toy stores, and angry, impoverished students with little hope for jobs and a better future. In this situation, seeing a young man in his early twenties like Razzak—jolly, full of life, and pleasant—was definitely refreshing.

MOHAMMAD AFZALUR RAHMAN

In the often-treacherous world of showbiz, there is always “something else” beyond mere skill, charisma, and looks that contributes to stardom. A hero is unique, irreplaceable, and reigns until the time of another hero arrives. A hero representing a specific era in film often signals something new, marking the arrival of his time and distinguishing him from the hero of the previous generation. The identifiable traits in a star usually cannot be replaced by those of another, as in a Fordist-Taylorist model of enforced standardized methods. Therefore, there is an element of irreplaceability in a star.

Irving A. Thalberg, Hollywood’s “boy wonder” producer, saw this in stars. He famously said that in movies, more than anything else, the actor is “the thing.” If Thalberg is one of the founders of what André Bazin called the “genius of the system,” there is another strand of filmmaking. François Truffaut learned from Jean Renoir that the actor portraying a character is more important than the character itself.

Representative film stars, particularly those who play leading roles, frequently embody larger-than-life or deeply relatable characters on screen, so these portrayals and the presence of the stars allow us to explore the historical contexts in which such heroes became possible.

Razzak, who earned the honorific title of Nayakraj, meaning “the king of heroes,” is widely recognized as the most famous and successful movie star in the Bangladeshi film industry. By the mid-1960s, his presence loomed large on the silver screen of Bengali cinema in East Pakistan, and it never “got small.” Over a career spanning more than half a century, in addition to immense cinematic success, Razzak achieved the status of a cultural



Nayakraj Razzak (January 23, 1942 - August 21, 2017)

Bengali cinema and played a crucial role in rekindling Bengali cultural nationalism. Coincidentally, both the famous Six-Point Demands and *Behula* appeared in the same year—1966.

Bengali film enthusiasts had been trying to establish a film industry in East Bengal since the early 1950s. From the mid-1950s to 1962, most of the films produced in East Bengal were Bengali. However, during the heyday of Ayub Khan’s rule, many Bengali film producers turned to making Urdu films, as Bengali cinema faced hostility from the government, both in terms of opportunities and censorship. For instance, in 1963, there were sixteen films under production in East Pakistan, but only three were in Bengali.

At this juncture, Zaheer Raihan and Salahuddin turned the tide for Bengali cinema by deciding to make folk-fantasy genre films. It seems that while Bengali filmmakers were struggling, they figured out that films based on folklore and legends lent an element of originality and authenticity, making them distinct from others’ stories. Hegel identified legends, ballads, and traditions as fugitive, shadowy elements, and poetic expressions belonging to a nation’s half-awakened state. Perhaps these “dim and hazy forms” have a profound connection to the people’s psyche, which explains *Behula*’s success. Equally significant was the role played by Razzak. Filmmakers and movie lovers discovered in Razzak a hero they could capitalise on and relate to. Zaheer Raihan understood this, which is why he was adamant about casting Razzak, despite reservations from many.

Razzak may not have been the most manly actor in the traditional sense, nor even the best in terms of acting skill. When he arrived in Dhaka, the film scene was not empty—there were already good actors who had a certain degree of acceptance in romantic, tragic, or social hero roles. Yet, at a time when Bengali cinema was struggling to carve out a niche in East Pakistan, Razzak brought a unique affective quality to the screen that resonated with the masses. All the established stars before him were involved in both Bengali and Urdu films. Razzak was the first star who concentrated solely on Bengali films.

Razzak’s immense popularity among the masses and the high demand from filmmakers can be gauged by the fact that between *Behula* in 1966 and 1970, he was cast in nearly 45 leading roles, with almost all of them being commercially successful. By 1972, he had completed his 100th film—a testament to his popularity and inevitability in the industry.

It is true that Razzak was, on the surface, modelled after other heroes of the subcontinent, most notably Uttam Kumar. Directors likely cast him with the image of those heroes in mind, seeing a resemblance or shadow of them in Razzak. Even his fans and cinema-goers noticed similarities between Razzak and these established movie stars. However, despite the outer resemblance to other stars, the characters he portrayed—righteous youngest sons, unemployed youths, writers, and protesting students—brought originality and authenticity to his roles, shaped by the specific historical and sociological context of the time.

To understand what Razzak brought to the screen, we need to look at 1960s East Pakistan. The 1960s in East Pakistan were marked by stark contrasts, despite Ayub Khan’s well-publicised narrative of development and progress. Signs of

modernisation and the availability of modern amenities were evident. However, only a select few could bask in the affluence generated by the military-bureaucratic dictatorship—primarily upper echelon government employees, a few businessmen, and successful professionals like doctors and university professors.

While the elite group relished the cosmopolitanism of the Ayub regime, on the other end were the grim and emaciated masses—workers, porters, peasants, and rickshaw pullers with bidis tucked behind their ears, street urchins staring into the glass windows of toy stores, and angry, impoverished students with little hope for jobs and a better future. In this situation, seeing a young man in his early twenties like Razzak—jolly, full of life, and pleasant—was definitely refreshing.

A star represents social reality and thus reflects the desires of the people. When we see Razzak in the films of the 1960s, it’s impossible not to notice his fresh and jovial presence. We see him coming back from university, dancing and singing to “Neel Aakash Niche Ami Rasta Cholechi Eka.” He is going out with Kabori, Sujata, or Shabnam on romantic and amatory adventures in the Garden of Ramna, on a boat on the river, or in a popular couple’s spot on the outskirts of Dhaka. Razzak exudes a sense of newness. He often arrives late to a rendezvous, playfully coaxing and cajoling his sweetheart for making her wait. The song of persuasion and flattery by a prospective lover, “Aynate Oi Mukh Dekhbe Jakhon,” or the beautifully poetic and romantic song of courtship, “Tumi Je Amar Kobita,” embody something new for the audience.

indicative of something new. He first appears during the *Prabhat Phery* on February 21st, singing the anthem of the language movement. Throughout the film, he is rarely seen inside the house. Instead, he is always outside—at the Shaheed Minar, at Curzon Hall, or leading protests with fellow students, workers, and peasants. When he returns home from the *Prabhat Phery*, barefoot, he enters without tiptoeing. When his domineering sister scolds him for being out and threatens to end his education, he barely pays attention. Unlike others in the family, Razzak’s character is distinctively defiant, shrugging off the house’s prescribed strict rules and norms.

His character in *Jibon Theke Neya* embodies the spirit that poet Shamsur Rahman eloquently wrote about in his poem, where the grandfather, astonished, wonders, “Who is it that frequents this old house?” He is like the character Rahman cast from the resounding streets of 1969—the teenagers, full of life, who ignored the cautionary tales of their elders, rolled up their shirt sleeves, and swiftly joined the unadulterated exultation of the endless processions. It is worth noting that in 1971, much like his movie character, Razzak took to the streets to protest against the military dictators of Pakistan.

If we are to use the hackneyed but relevant phrase that social change is first reflected in the arts, then it can be said that Razzak, as a star, was contemporaneous with—or even a progenitor of—the youths who would soon participate in mass movements and the liberation war. If workers, students, writers, and intellectuals were agents of the changing sixties, so too was Razzak through the more popular medium of cinema. We cannot downplay the political and cultural significance of the popular cultural expressions embodied in the characters Razzak portrayed in his movies during the sixties.

Razzak’s life itself tells the story of a tumultuous and fascinating time when national identity, belonging, and prospects were in flux. Born in 1942 into a well-to-do Muslim family in the predominantly Hindu neighbourhood of Naktala in Kolkata, he lost both parents at a young age. This void was filled by the care of his elder siblings and the avuncular love of his neighbours, both Hindu and Muslim. As a lively and energetic adolescent, Razzak was a natural choice for school sports, recitations, and annual plays.

Before long, it was acting that captivated him the most, fuelled by the vibrant theatre and cultural activities in his neighbourhood. Razzak often recalled with pride that cultural luminaries like Chhabi Biswas, Sabitri Chatterjee, Manju Dey, and Ravi Bhattacharya lived in his para. He reminisced that the theatre and cultural milieu of his locality ignited his passion for acting. Not only did he observe these figures, but he also had the opportunity to learn from them. He

nights rehearsing, honing his craft with unwavering dedication.

It was with Piyush Bose that Razzak first visited the film studios in Kolkata’s Tollygunge, where he met his screen idol and the iconic star of the time, Uttam Kumar. These visits sparked in Razzak the dream of becoming a movie star. In the meantime, he once fled to Mumbai, where he completed a nine-month course to hone his acting skills.

In Satyajit Ray’s *Nayak*, the protagonist Arindam Mukherjee’s theatre guru, Shankar Da, warns his talented disciple about the lures and traps of the dazzling but hollow life of the film industry. “You will become a puppet in the hands of the director,” he cautions. Shankar Da, a stern moralist, is convinced of the pure and high art of the theatre world, contrasting it with the money, corruption, and treachery of the film industry. Unlike the Shankar Da of real life, Razzak’s real-life Shankar Da, Piyush Bose, took the middle path. While deeply invested in theatre, Piyush Bose was also involved in filmmaking. He cast Razzak in a few minor and uncredited film roles. He wanted his disciple to be successful, but at the same time, he seemed acutely aware of the challenges a Bengali Muslim youth would face in the Kolkata film industry, which was already saturated with established and talented actors.

As Razzak struggled to find opportunities in Tollygunge, Piyush Bose suggested that he try his luck in East Pakistan, a burgeoning film industry. Bose introduced him to several members of the East Pakistani film fraternity who frequented Kolkata for film-related work. Anyone familiar with the post-partition social and cultural realities of East and West Bengal would understand the implications of Bose’s advice. In a Muslim-majority country, it would likely be easier for a Muslim youth like Razzak to succeed as an actor. Given the political and cultural milieu of the time, such advice from experienced individuals to the younger generation was common, considered pragmatic, and offered in good faith.

However, to Razzak, despite East Pakistan being just across the border, it seemed like a far and wild country. Naturally, the glittering film studios of Kolkata or Mumbai were far more enchanting to him than the unknown prospects in East Pakistan.

In interviews and autobiographical essays, Razzak often reflected on his upbringing in a predominantly Hindu neighbourhood, emphasising that he never experienced any discrimination nor harboured ill feelings towards Hindus. He was everyone’s favourite “Raja.” However, in an autobiographical essay published in Bichitra in 1992, he did hint at noticing a Hindu-Muslim divide within the film industry.

Razzak’s decision to migrate to East Pakistan after the riots of 1964 mirrors the experiences of many others who were heartbroken, saddened, and deeply affected by witnessing how long-familiar communities could turn hostile during communal riots. Initially, Razzak planned to move to Mumbai, the heart of India’s film industry. However, Piyush Bose convinced him otherwise, noting that Mumbai was already overcrowded and that Bengalis were not faring particularly well there. Consequently, Razzak arrived in East Pakistan as a refugee at a time when many were moving in the opposite direction—from East Pakistan to West Bengal.

As a young boy, Razzak regularly acted in Salil Sen’s immensely popular partition-based play *Notun Ihudi*, which was staged in major theatres across Kolkata as well as in various neighbourhoods. Razzak gained popularity and praise for his portrayal of Mohan, the youngest child of an East Bengali Hindu refugee family in Kolkata, who struggles to help his family survive in the cruel post-1947 days. It is both interesting and ironic that, to some extent, Razzak played the role of Mohan in real life as well.

In the aftermath of Partition, many artists migrated from one country to another. While they left behind their birthplace and familiar surroundings, they also played a pivotal role in rebuilding the new societies they arrived in, which were often scarred by division and bitterness. Against this backdrop of loss, these artists made immense contributions to the process of recovery by creating beauty through their art. We often overlook this aspect of the subcontinent’s history. Even as these artists enriched their adopted countries, their personal views of leaving behind home remained untaunted. Over time, they became loved and accepted by all, transcending borders and divisions. Razzak is a shining example of this group of artists.

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A scene from *Behula*

Razzak’s life itself tells the story of a tumultuous and fascinating time when national identity, belonging, and prospects were in flux.

icon. What kind of hero was Razzak, considering his arrival, rise, and elevation to prominence coincided with a time when the political and cultural life of Pakistan’s eastern province was undergoing unprecedented changes? Razzak’s significance is related to and needs to be understood in the context of the time when the political and cultural realities of East Pakistan were presenting new possibilities.

After a period of struggle and uncertainty upon arriving in East Pakistan as a refugee from West Bengal, Razzak’s first major cinematic break came with *Behula*. Based on the *Mangal-Kavya* and directed by Zaheer Raihan, this movie is one of the most significant cinematic creations in East Bengal. Razzak’s entry in the film was not marked by the typical dazzling, low-angle shot often reserved for heroes. His entrance was rather natural and spontaneous. As Lakhindor, the beloved youngest and only surviving son of the wealthy merchant Chand Saudagar, Razzak walks into the frame unwittingly and, without much care, enters the realm ruled by the snake-goddess Manasa Devi, carrying a peacock—an animal that the deity views as an arch-enemy.

Behula was an instant blockbuster. In this movie, Razzak as Lakhindor is cursed by the snake goddess Manasa due to her wrath against his father. From halfway through the film, Razzak had to portray a dead character whose body is taken to heaven by his wife, Behula. Yet the audience felt deep sympathy for this character and discovered the star they had longed for. Rafiuddin Babu, the writer of the only biography available on Razzak, has rightly said, “From the cursed Lakhindor, there occurred his radiant rise.” It was a significant film not only for Razzak’s career but also for revitalising Bengali cinema. The success of *Behula*, much like *Rupban*, released a year earlier, helped sustain



Poster of *Jibon Theke Neya*



Poster of *Behula*

These culturally and aesthetically significant songs encapsulate this new spirit and possibility.

What I want to convey about Razzak’s acceptance becomes more tangible in *Jibon Theke Neya*, another Zaheer Raihan film that stands as the most significant cinematic creation in the history of Bangladeshi cinema. This powerful political film was set against the backdrop of the mass movements of 1969 and was released in 1971. Razzak, as part of an ensemble cast, plays one of the main characters—a student leader living under the oppressive rule of his autocratic sister, who governs the household with an iron fist, much like Ayub Khan ruled the country. The film was an allegory for the military dictatorship of Ayub.

Although Razzak’s character is crucial to the movie, he has less screen time than some of the other key characters. Yet, the way his character is portrayed is both distinctive and

fondly remembered that after his first school theatre performance, where Chhabi Biswas was the guest of honour, Biswas gently admonished him for turning his back on the audience while on stage. For some time thereafter, Razzak learned recitation and acting techniques from Chhabi Biswas.

Although it was his school teacher who introduced him to the world of theatre and acting, it was Piyush Bose, the founder and director of Rangasabha, who became his true mentor in the art of acting. Once Razzak became involved in theatre activities, it wasn’t long before he fell in love with the craft, making acting his passion. The enchanting world of performance, which would later bring him fame, may have also provided refuge for the orphaned Razzak. In a television interview, he shared that during his adolescent and early adult years, acting was all he could think about. He spent countless days and

TIGERS ROAR

- ➔ Bangladesh's 10-wicket in Rawalpindi yesterday is the Tigers' first Test win in 14 overall meetings against Pakistan. The Tigers drew one in 13 before this contest.
- ➔ This is the first time that Bangladesh won a game against Pakistan in Pakistan in 21 matches across formats.
- ➔ The win also saw Bangladesh jump from eighth to sixth position in the World Test Championship points table.
- ➔ Bangladesh have now won against nine Test-playing nations. Only India and South Africa remain unbeaten against the Tigers.
- ➔ Pakistan have suffered a 10-wicket loss at home for the very first time in Tests.
- ➔ Pakistan were bundled out for 146 in the third innings -- their lowest team total against Bangladesh in Tests.
- ➔ Bangladesh's first innings total of 565 is now the highest for the Tigers in a winning cause.
- ➔ Shakib Al Hasan is now the most successful left-arm spinner in cricket's history with 707 wickets, surpassing New Zealand's Daniel Vettori who has 705.
- ➔ Mushfiqur Rahim, who was adjudged player of the match for his 191-run knock, has now won seven POTMs -- most by a Bangladeshi player.



Bangladesh players, all 16 in the two-match Test series against Pakistan, were in a jubilant mood at the dressing room following their historic 10-wicket victory against Pakistan on the fifth day of the first Test at the Rawalpindi Cricket Stadium yesterday.

PHOTO: FACEBOOK

Shanto lauds Shakib's 'unique' way of turning things around

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh skipper Najmul Hossain Shanto lauded the team effort in Rawalpindi following a 10-wicket win -- the very first Test win in Pakistan -- and signified the effort the players put during preparations.

The birthday boy lauded special performances such as Mushfiqur Rahim's 191, Mehedi Hasan Miraz's four-wicket haul and a three-for from Shakib Al Hasan.

"Really special moment for us and we are really happy because of the way everyone showed their character in these hot conditions. The way we practised over the last 15 days, did all the right things off the field are why we got the results.

"Obviously it was a team effort. Mushfiq bhai's innings was outstanding and it helped our team go forward but overall if you see the match and our batting and bowling and fielding, it was a team effort," Shanto said when focus was drawn to Mushfiqur's knock, Mehedi Hasan Miraz's spells and the pacers' grit.

What Shakib attained, though, was true to his cricketing spirits, fit for a legend. Accused in a murder case back home, criticisms of his performances getting more vocal, Shakib overcame his personal situation and pulled out a special performance.

SCORES IN BRIEF

PAKISTAN
1st innings: 448-6 dec (Rizwan 171, Shakeel 141; Mahmud 2-70, Shoriful 2-77)

BANGLADESH
1st innings: 565 all out (Mushfiqur 191, Shadman 93, Miraz 77, Naseem 3-93)

PAKISTAN
2nd innings: 146 all out (Rizwan 51, Shafique 37; Miraz 4-21, Shakib 3-44)

Result: Bangladesh won by 10 wickets and lead the two-match series 1-0

Player of the match: Mushfiqur Rahim

Bangladesh's team selection had put faith on their spinners and the spinners finally came into play on Day 5. Shakib bowled 16 overs on the trot between morning and tea sessions; his variations, mind games all being employed to pacify Pakistan's resistance. He brought his flight and trajectory into play to bag both Saud Shakeel and Abdullah Shafique, arguably the backbone of the Pakistan batting.

A spin web in conjunction with Miraz saw the duo pick up seven wickets together, with Miraz bagging four for 21 and Shakib getting three for 44.

Shanto was asked about Shakib's mentality, which helps him turn things around. Shanto said it was what the team expected.

"When he [Shakib] takes the field to represent the country, from what I understand, he is very dedicated as a person. He does everything that's required to win. He pushes aside everything in his personal life to one side to think and focus on what he can do for the team, what he can do to help a junior cricketer and things like that," Shanto said.

"Doing these sorts of things in a unique way to be in a situation like that and still being able to bring out a performance like that and to give his inputs, especially in bowling, is outstanding. This is what we expect from him and hopefully in the next game we are expecting something even better," he added on Shakib.

Bangladesh's Tiger-like HUNT IN PINDI

Inzamam [Ul Haq] was extraordinary and a few umpiring decisions did not go our way. It was bad luck overall. It bothered us for quite a while. Everything could've been different if we won. I think this win could be the start of a new dawn for Bangladesh in Tests because winning away from home, especially against Pakistan in Pakistan is a big thing. We don't play well consistently in Tests; it can be a start.

Alok Kapali



ASHEFAQ-UL-ALAM

For years, the moniker of 'The Tigers' has been a point of derision for the Bangladesh cricket team.

Online trolls have pounced on every opportunity to mock the Bangladesh team by using this nickname, scoffing at the players by calling them plastic Tigers and in some cases 'Toygars'.

The underlying theme of all of these mockeries is the same -- the trolls draw attention to the irony of calling Bangladesh, a team that often falls short against top opponents, 'The Tigers', one of the deadliest predators on planet earth.

However, the presumed deadliness of tigers is often exaggerated. In reality, tigers are far from the most efficient predators in the wild. The success rate of Bengal Tigers is estimated to be around 10-20 percent, making them in a sense an apt symbol for the Bangladesh cricket team, especially in Tests.

Across three formats, Bangladesh's average win percentage is 32.67 percent, but in Tests, the percentage comes down to 13.98 percent, inside the success range of the Bengal Tigers.

And much like how a successful hunt of a tiger is no less than a spectacle, when Bangladesh finally manage to win a Test match after many unsuccessful attempts, it becomes a sight for sore eyes.

On Sunday at the Rawalpindi Cricket Stadium, the Najmul Hossain Shanto-led Bangladesh side presented one such

spectacle when they defeated Pakistan in a Test match for the very first time.

And, in a sense, the 10-wicket win in Rawalpindi was not too different from how tigers hunt in the wild.

A tiger stealthily closes in before cinching its incisors on the neck of its prey, and Bangladesh did something similar, making slow progress for four days before going for the kill on Day 5.

Aided by the fifth day wicket and

Heading into the final day, Bangladesh had their noses slightly ahead in the contest, however, the likeliest conclusion was still a draw.

But the match suddenly sprung into life in the morning of Day five when, like hungry predators, the Bangladesh bowlers pounced on the Pakistan batters.

Headed by the fifth day wicket and



After winning the toss, the pacers did their job on the rain-hit opening day, reducing Pakistan to 21-3 at one point.

The Pakistan batters fought back on Day two on the placid surface but Bangladesh ended the day with the satisfaction of foiling Pakistan's plan of taking wickets late in the day.

The third and fourth day saw Mushfiqur Rahim script his epic 191, and four other batters stepping up with half-centuries to power Bangladesh to a first innings lead of 117.

by some careless shot-making from the Pakistanis, the Bangladesh attack, led by spinners Mehedi Hasan Miraz and Shakib Al Hasan, bundled out Pakistan for 146, setting up a 30-run target which the batters chased without breaking a sweat. After 13 unsuccessful attempts, Bangladesh finally managed to triumph over Pakistan in Tests. However, if Bangladesh want to at least match a tigers' hunting success rate in Tests against Pakistan, they will have to win the next match and sweep the series 2-0.



I've been asked a lot whether I've been able to forget the sorrow of the Multan Test. To that, I say no. That was a special Test. We were in the first three years of our Test status. But I am proud of this victory. Our team beat Pakistan by dominating them. We've won a thrilling Test. Nothing drastic happened with the pitch, apart from the Shaheen [Shah Afridi] dismissal. We must be proud of the bowling on the fifth day.

Habibul Bashar

SAFF U-20 CHAMPIONSHIP Bangladesh face strong India in semis

SPORTS REPORTER

Hoping to bounce back from their defeat against Nepal in their final group match a couple of days ago, Bangladesh will be taking on tournament favourites India in the second semifinal of the SAFF U-20 Championship at the ANFA Complex in Lalitpur, Nepal today.

The match will kick off at 3:15 pm (Bangladesh Time), with the winners playing hosts Nepal, who yesterday beat Bhutan 4-1 in a shootout following a 1-1 draw in regulation time, in the final on August 28.

Before leaving for Nepal, Bangladesh coach and players vowed to play the final and win the regional youth championship in which they finished runners up three times out of five editions.

However, getting to the final now seems to be an uphill task, especially since the way Bangladesh played in their 2-1 defeat against Nepal. In that game, a fumble from captain and goalkeeper Mehedi Hasan Srabon saw Nepal score the opener and then extend the lead just minutes later. Bangladesh did manage to pull a goal back that was not enough.

Since that defeat, Bangladesh coach Maruful Haque held a few mental-recovery and tactical sessions to boost the players.

According to Maruful, Bangladesh can make it into the final if they go into the match hungry

for a positive outcome.

"The players showed their dedication, hard work, and effort in the last two days and they have really been hungry for victory," said Maruful.

"If they can take this hunger into the match against India, I believe we can move into the final. If the boys can start the match with the mentality of bouncing back, then we hope we can advance to the final," Maruful added.

Captain Srabon also sounded optimistic.

"If we can play in line with the tactic of the coach, we can hope to leave the ground with



a positive result," said Srabon, adding that the players must stick to the plan and not get driven by their emotion.

Bangladesh have won only twice against India, losing thrice and drawing twice in the eight matches they played in the previous five editions.

Djokovic eyes Slam record

AFP, New York

Novak Djokovic, fueled by an emotional Olympic triumph, has new Grand Slam records in his sights at the US Open, where title rival Jannik Sinner hopes to shake off a doping controversy.

Defending champion Djokovic can become the oldest Open era champion at the tournament if he secures a fifth title, a record he would share with Jimmy Connors, Pete Sampras and Roger Federer.

The 37-year-old would also move to 25 Grand Slam triumphs, taking him clear of the 24 he currently shares with Margaret Court.

The final Grand Slam of the year comes at a critical time for Djokovic. This year he was succeeded as Australian Open champion by Sinner who also relieved him of his world number one ranking.

Carlos Alcaraz took his French Open title with the Spanish crowd pleaser then sweeping Djokovic off court in a one-sided Wimbledon final.

However, Djokovic, returned to the clay courts of Roland Garros to stun Alcaraz in the Olympic final.

Sinner, meanwhile, arrives after an emotionally draining doping investigation, in which he escaped a lengthy ban after officials accepted his explanation that the banned substance entered his system as a result of contamination from a support team member.

The 23-year-old Italian had twice tested positive for clostebol, a banned anabolic



agent, back in March. The International Tennis Integrity Agency announced this week he had been cleared of wrongdoing -- a day after he won the Cincinnati Masters.

"I'm just happy that it's finally out," said Sinner, who fired his physiotherapist and trainer in the wake of the affair.

Alcaraz, who won his first major at the US Open in 2022, was badly bruised by his defeat to Djokovic in the Olympic final.

He lost his cool in a second-round exit at Cincinnati and tweaked an ankle in practice at Flushing Meadows, but insisted he'd be "100 percent" for his first-round match on Tuesday.

Defending women's champion Coco Gauff has endured a worrying dip in form in recent weeks, raising doubts

over whether she could become the first woman since Serena Williams in 2014 to successfully defend her US Open crown.

A stormy third-round exit from the Olympics was followed by early defeats in Toronto and Cincinnati.

Five-time major winner and world number one Iga Swiatek, the 2022 champion, made the Cincinnati semi-finals where she was defeated by Aryna Sabalenka.

Sabalenka, the Australian Open champion and runner-up to Gauff in New York last year, is another contender in a wide-open field that also features Wimbledon winner Barbora Krejickova and Olympic gold medallist Zheng Qinwen.



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Now Social Islami Bank freed from S Alam Group

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

After Islami Bank, S Alam Group's control over Social Islami Bank ended yesterday after the Bangladesh Bank decided to dissolve the board of the Shariah-based bank that was heavily dominated by individuals linked to the conglomerate.



The central bank dissolved the previous 11-member board, whose chairman Belal Ahmed is the son-in-law of S Alam Group chairman Mohammad Saiful Alam. Five more relatives of Alam including his sister Badrun Nessa Alam and nephew Mahmudul Alam were on the board of SIBL.

The Bangladesh Bank also constituted a five-member board including Rezaul Haque, a sponsor director of the bank.

The other directors are Maqsuma Begum, former BB executive director; M Sadiqul Islam, professor at the department of finance at the University of Dhaka; Md Morshed Alam Khandakar, former deputy managing director of Rupali Bank; and Md Anwar Hossain, a chartered accountant.

SEE PAGE 6 COL 4



Marking seven years since the Myanmar military launched a brutal crackdown in Rakhine state, leading to a mass exodus of the Rohingya people to Bangladesh, the refugees yesterday held a rally at a camp in Ukhiya, Cox's Bazar.

PHOTO: MOKAMMEL SHUVO

Hasina made accused in 12 more cases

10 filed over killings during protests, 1 over ex-BDR official's death

STAR REPORT

Former prime minister Sheikh Hasina was accused in 12 more cases filed in Dhaka and elsewhere yesterday.

Ten of these cases were filed over killings that took place during the recent student protest.

Besides, a case was filed over the death of a former official of the then Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) in 2010 while the father of a victim of enforced disappearance filed an abduction case.

Hasina is now facing 61 cases, including 51 for murder, seven for crimes against humanity and genocide, and two for abduction.

Former Awami League ministers Obaidul Quader, Asaduzzaman Khan Kamal, Anisul Haq, and Jahangir Kabir Nanak, and former inspector general of police Chowdhury Abdullah Al-Mamun are among the accused in the cases.

Hasina, former army chief Aziz Ahmed, and 11 others were sued yesterday over the death of Abdur Rahim, the former deputy

SEE PAGE 6 COL 1



Janmashtami today

BSS, Dhaka

Janmashtami, one of the major festivals of the Hindu community commemorating the birth of Lord Sri Krishna, will be celebrated nationwide today with due religious fervour and gaiety.

According to Hindu mythology, Lord Vishnu incarnated in this world as Sri Krishna in the prison of Raja Kansa on this day – the eighth day of the dark fortnight in the Bhangla month of Bhadra. Lord Vishnu has taken on mortal form through the ages to protect the good and pious from malevolent forces by establishing truth, justice, and beauty in society.

Sri Krishna's birth is usually observed on the eighth day (ashtami) of the Krishna Paksha (dark fortnight) in the month of Shraban or Bhadra.

SEE PAGE 6 COL 6

ROHINGYA REFUGEES UN calls for stepping up funding

Urges donors to do more, says Bangladeshis can't be left to shoulder the crisis alone

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

The United Nations has called for sustained commitment from international partners to support the protection of nearly one million Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh and to help secure solutions for a lasting end to their plight.

The call came as the world observed Rohingya Genocide Remembrance Day yesterday, seven years after about 750,000 members of Rohingya ethnic minority group fled a brutal military crackdown in Myanmar's Rakhine State and took shelter in Bangladesh.

The UN Refugee Agency UNHCR in a statement yesterday said the international community supported Bangladesh in ensuring protection and basic needs, but in recent months security issues and funding uncertainties undermined all but the most critical and life-saving assistance.

It urged donors and private actors to step up their funding to the Rohingya response, mentioning that humanitarian agencies have appealed for \$852 million to assist 1.35 million people, including Rohingya refugees and hosting Bangladeshi communities, in 2024.

"The Rohingya people deserve our best, as do the generous people of Bangladesh who cannot be left to shoulder this crisis alone."

SEE PAGE 6 COL 4

131 officials promoted to addl secys

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The public administration ministry has promoted 131 joint secretaries to additional secretaries.

The ministry issued a gazette yesterday saying that the officers promoted to the post of additional secretary can directly join at the ministry or send their joining letter by e-mail (sal@mopa.gov.bd). The gazette was signed by Deputy Secretary Alamgir Kabir.

The notification stated that if any allegation is raised against any of the promoted additional secretaries in future, the government reserved the right to amend or cancel this order.

The interim government has so far promoted 223 officers from deputy secretary to joint secretary in two phases as the promoted officials claimed that most of them were deprived of promotions during the rule of Awami League.

On August 5, Sheikh Hasina resigned from the post of prime minister and fled to India following a massive uprising.

Fears of all-out ME war grow

Israel, Hezbollah in Lebanon trade missiles across border

AGENCIES

Hezbollah launched hundreds of rockets and drones at Israel early yesterday, as Israel's military said it struck Lebanon with around 100 jets to thwart a bigger attack, in one of the biggest clashes in more than 10 months of border warfare.

Missiles were visible curling up through the dawn sky, dark vapour trails behind them, as an air raid siren sounded in Israel and a distant blast lit the horizon, while smoke rose over houses in Khiam in southern Lebanon.

The extent of damage was not immediately clear and Hezbollah indicated it was not planning further strikes yet, while Israel's foreign minister said the country did not seek a full-scale war.

Lebanon's health ministry said three people were killed in the Israeli raids in the country's south. One Israel navy soldier was killed and two wounded during combat in northern Israel, the Israeli military said.

Any major escalation in the fighting, which began in parallel with the offensive in Gaza, risks morphing into a regional conflagration drawing in Hezbollah's backer Iran and Israel's main ally the United States.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu warned that the strikes in

Lebanon were "not the final word" in his country's military campaign against Hezbollah.

Yesterday's strikes came as negotiators were meeting in Cairo in a last-ditch effort to conclude a halt to the fighting in Gaza.

- Hezbollah attacks follow murder of its commander
- Netanyahu warns strikes in Lebanon 'not the final word'
- Egypt hosting talks aimed at brokering Gaza truce

The Iran-backed Lebanese group said it had fired 320 Katyusha rockets towards Israel and hit 11 military targets in what it called the first phase of its retaliation for Israel's assassination of Fuad Shukur, a senior commander, last month.

Israel's military said it had foiled a much larger attack with pre-emptive airstrikes after assessing that Hezbollah was preparing to launch the barrage, using 100 jets to strike more than 40 Hezbollah launch sites in southern Lebanon, reports Reuters.

Hasina urges all to stand by flood victims

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Awami League president Sheikh Hasina yesterday urged countrymen to stand by the flood-affected people.

She also called upon leaders, activists, supporters of her party and its front and associate organisations, and people of all sociocultural backgrounds and professions to unite and support the flood victims.

Expressing concerns over the recent floods, Hasina said that the flood has suddenly taken a serious turn in some south-eastern districts of the country.

Hasina, the immediate-past prime minister of the country who resigned and fled to India in the face of a student-led mass uprising, said she had directed all to prepare in early July to tackle a severe flood.

"Earlier, we successfully helped the flood victims and handled the post-flood situation as leaders and activists of the Awami League and its associate bodies came forward."



Ex-minister Dastagir Gazi, Golap arrested

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Former Textile and Jute Minister Golam Dastagir Gazi and Awami League Central Publicity and Publications Secretary Abdus Sobhan Golap were arrested in Dhaka yesterday.

Police arrested Golam Dastagir from a house in Pirergoli area of Shantinagar in the capital around 3:00am, said Mollah Mohammad Khalid Hussain, officer-in-charge of Paltan Police Station.

Golam Dastagir was kept at the DB office as the Paltan Police Station remains badly damaged after it was vandalised during the recent violence, the OC said. "A group of people besieged the house after knowing his location there. On information, police rushed there and arrested him," he added.

He is accused in a case filed in Narayanganj, the OC added.

Gazi Group Chairman, Golam Dastagir Gazi, an industrialist turned politician, was elected from Narayanganj-1 for four consecutive terms.

For his contributions in the Liberation

SEE PAGE 6 COL 6



A Palestinian patient is assisted to flee Al-Aqsa Martyrs Hospital after the Israeli army ordered the evacuation of nearby areas in Deir Al-Balah in the central Gaza Strip yesterday.

PHOTO: REUTERS

Interim govt to be given reasonable, not unlimited time

Fakhrul says about holding election

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

The BNP wants to give the interim government reasonable but specific time to hold an acceptable election by reforming all the institutions, the party's Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir said yesterday.

He made the remarks at a discussion with journalists organised by district and city units of BNP at a conference hall in Sylhet.

"The interim government headed by Prof Dr Muhammad Yunus is leading the country towards stability. While the country is turning around, Sheikh Hasina, residing in India, is plotting a deep conspiracy. But the conspiracy will not succeed," Fakhrul said.



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