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Speakers at the event titled, "Building a Disability-Inclusive and Supportive Workplace Culture in Bangladesh", jointly organised by The Daily Star and Access Bangladesh Foundation at The Daily Star Centre in the capital yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

## PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

## Policy solutions key to their inclusion in job sector

Speakers tell seminar

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Hawa Islam, a graduate with hearing and speech disabilities, endured discrimination and disrespect while working in several job sectors in Bangladesh. Eventually, she ended up without a job and is currently struggling financially.

"I have worked hard to develop my skills to earn a living, but my disabilities became major obstacles. Employers don't assess my abilities; instead, they exclude me as soon as they learn about my situation. I've applied for 25 jobs but haven't received a single call for an interview," said Hawa.

The remarks came during an event titled "Building a Disability-Inclusive and Supportive Workplace Culture in Bangladesh," jointly organised by The Daily Star and Access Bangladesh Foundation at The Daily Star Centre yesterday.

Another speaker, Akash Rahman, who has cerebral palsy, recounted the struggles

he faced before securing a job and having his own family.

Nazmus Sakib, diversity and inclusion officer of UNDP, said,

**Keeping their limitations in mind, a suitable workplace and work environment must be created for them in the government and private sector by including it in the policy.**

MAHMUDUL HASAN  
Assistant Director  
of SWID Bangladesh

"Barriers are created by the system, which results in the skills of people with disabilities not being expressed. Time and opportunity are not given to

them while answering questions during vivas. In this way, their talent is disregarded."

"Disability is not a homogeneous group. They have the capacity and skills to go into employment, but our social conditions and ecosystem do not support it," he added.

Nazma Ara Begum Poppy, national project support officer at UN Women Bangladesh, said no separate studies are done to assess the barriers women with disabilities face, so there are no solutions.

These women are also more likely to be sexually harassed at work, she added.

"Our roads are not disability-friendly. We require help from other people to move around. The existing disability act does not mention any special facilities for women either," she said.

Both Nazmus and Nazma are persons with visual disabilities.

Mahmudul Hasan, assistant director of Society for the

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## Govt to phase out outdated vehicles

### Ministry sits with stakeholders today

TUHIN SHUBHRA ADHIKARY

The government is going to take measures to remove outdated vehicles from Dhaka city, aiming to reduce air pollution.

The road transport and bridges ministry is going to hold a meeting today with the stakeholders to devise a plan on how to drive out the vehicles from the streets, an official said.

The move came at a time when the number of outdated vehicles rose to over 75,000 across the country, according to Bangladesh Road Transport Authority (BRTA) data.

Besides, the environment ministry has already written to BRTA to remove buses and minibuses older than 20 years and trucks and lorries older than 25 years from the roads.

Air pollution, a major issue for the capital, is one of the greatest environmental risks to health. With over two crore residents, Dhaka often tops the list of cities with the poorest air quality, according to Air Quality Index (AQI) data.



**According to BRTA, 28,761 registered buses and minibuses are over 20 years old. Of them, 10,556 are in Dhaka. A total of 46,481 registered trucks, lorries, and other heavy vehicles have crossed 25 years. Of them, 14,683 are in Dhaka.**

Older vehicles tend to emit more toxic gases due to incomplete combustion of fuel. The older the vehicle, the more pollution it causes, experts said.

Besides, the old and unfit vehicles are considered one of

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## ARTICLE 70

## SC lawyer files petition challenging its legality

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A Supreme Court lawyer filed a petition with the High Court yesterday challenging the legality of Article 70 of the constitution which deals with cancellation of membership of a lawmaker for voting against his or her political party.

Lawyer Md Eunus Ali Akond, in the petition, said an Appellate Division bench led by the then chief justice Surendra Kumar Saha observed in the constitution's 16th amendment case in 2017 that Article 70 is contradictory to the constitution, which has been upheld by the apex court recently.

"This article should be scrapped, and I have again filed the petition challenging its legality. Its hearing may be held next week," he said.

## DENGUE OUTBREAK 2024

## Oct deadliest month so far

HELEMUL ALAM

Despite seven days still remaining before the end of the month, October has already become the deadliest month this year in terms of deaths and cases from dengue.

With seven more deaths reported in the 24 hours till yesterday morning, the total death toll this year has now risen to 264.

Of the deaths, 108 were recorded in the first 23 days of October.

Dengue claimed 80 lives in September, according to Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS).

Out of a total of 53,196 cases this year, over 20,000 people were infected in this month alone, the data show.

Experts have attributed the surge in dengue fatalities this year to the nationwide lack of mosquito control measures by the relevant authorities. Besides, late hospitalisation, multiple infections, and false detection are also blamed for the rise.

GM Sairur Rahman, an entomologist at National University, said this year the two Dhaka city corporations did not take adequate measures to identify and destroy active clusters of Aedes mosquitoes and their larvae. Moreover, the absence of surveillance in the district towns has been a major reason behind the outbreak, he said.

"The government should have effective surveillance to identify dengue hotspots. This will enable local government departments, community organisations, and educational institutions to conduct targeted interventions," he said.

"Creating a body to control mosquito population and breeding



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## US charge d'affaires meets chief adviser

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Charge d'Affaires of the United States Embassy in Dhaka Helen LaFave met with Chief Adviser Muhammad Yunus at State Guest House Jamuna yesterday.

During the meeting, they discussed various issues of mutual interest, building on key points raised in recent discussions between the chief adviser, US President Joe Biden, and Secretary of State Antony Blinken.

LaFave told the chief adviser that a high-level US delegation is set to visit Bangladesh in the coming weeks to further discuss matters related to the ongoing cooperation.

Professor Yunus also talked about the reform initiatives his interim government has implemented, mentioning that six major reform commissions have already begun consultations with stakeholders across the country.

## 'If needed we'll form revolutionary govt'

### Says Chhatra Odhikar Parishad

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Demanding the immediate resignation of President Mohammed Shahabuddin, Bangladesh Chhatra Odhikar Parishad President Bin Yamin Mollah yesterday said they will form a revolutionary government if necessary.

He made the comment at a press conference at the Madhur Canteen in Dhaka University.

"Students and people have no trust in Mohammed Shahabuddin as he made the controversial comment on Shiekh Hasina's resignation. We want to give a two-day ultimatum to the president to resign from his post. After his resignation, if necessary, we will form a revolutionary government," said Bin Yamin Mollah.

Chhatra Odhikar Parishad held the press conference demanding the resignation of the president and the banning of Awami League and its associate organisations.

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## SAGAR-RUNI MURDER

## Four-member task force formed

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government yesterday formed a four-member task force to investigate the murder case of journalist couple Sagar Sarowar and Meherun Runi, which has remained unresolved for 12 years.

The chief of the Police Bureau of Investigation (PBI) has been made the convener of the task force. The home affairs ministry issued a notification in this regard.

An additional inspector general rank officer of the police directorate, an additional inspector general rank officer of the CID, and a director rank officer of the Rab will be members of the task force.

The task force has been asked to submit its report to the High Court within six months after

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## Involve the youth in combating child marriage

Speakers tell BLAST event

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a programme yesterday emphasised the importance of incorporating youth into various government plans and policies to effectively combat child marriage.

They also highlighted the need for coordinated efforts among NGOs to address the issue.

These recommendations were shared during a views exchange meeting titled "The Role of Youth in Ending Child Marriage and the Way Forward," organised by the Bangladesh Legal Aid and Services Trust (BLAST) at The Daily Star Centre in Dhaka.

Barrister Sara Hossain, honorary executive director of BLAST, stressed the need to provide girls with sufficient opportunities for education and employment to promote self-reliance, which is a key strategy in preventing child marriage.

Media personality Farzana Brownia pointed out that many girls in rural areas are married off due to the lack of social security. She emphasised the importance of ensuring social protection for girls as a means of ending child marriage.



A group of HSC students, who failed or got poor results, entered the Secretariat and staged a protest yesterday, demanding reevaluation of their results. Police were eventually able to disperse the gathering and detained over 50 students. Earlier, on October 20, students entered the Secondary and Higher Secondary Education Board office in the Bakshibazar area and staged protests.

PHOTO: COLLECTED