



GDP growth lowest in five quarters

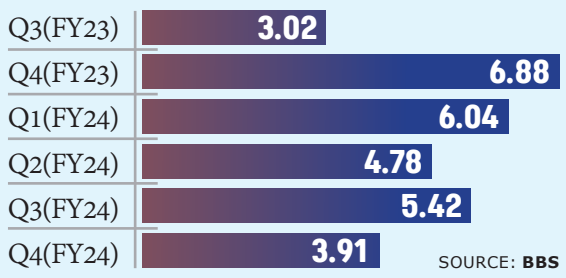
BBS data show it fell to 3.91pc in April-June

REJAUL KARIM BYRON

Bangladesh recorded its lowest economic growth in the past five quarters in the last quarter of fiscal 2023-24 due to contractionary monetary and fiscal policies to tackle the dwindling forex reserves and high inflation.

Between April and June this year, the GDP grew by 3.91 percent, according to the latest published quarterly data by the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS) yesterday. A year earlier, the country clocked in 6.88 percent GDP growth.

QUARTERLY GDP GROWTH IN %



In the previous quarter, the GDP grew by 5.42 percent, as per the latest release from BBS, down from the 6.12 percent announced by the previous Awami League government.

One of the reasons behind the low growth could be that BBS did not manipulate data as before, said Selim Raihan, executive director of the South Asian Network on Economic Modelling.

"The economy suffered such low growth at a time when the country's political scenario was calm."

Over the past two years, the economy faced high inflation and dwindling foreign currency reserves, he said.

At the end of May, gross foreign reserves dropped to \$18.7 billion, while the net reserves were about \$4.5 billion

SEE PAGE 2 COL 4



Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus visits the Gono Bhaban, the former official residence of deposed prime minister Sheikh Hasina, yesterday. The Gono Bhaban will be transformed into a museum commemorating the July uprising. Story on page 2.

PHOTO: PID

'Ban all political activities of AL, 10 other parties'

Writ filed by 3 student leaders also seeks to debar them from future polls

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Three leaders of the Anti-Discrimination Student Movement yesterday filed a writ petition with the High Court, seeking rules to ban all political activities of the Awami League and 10 other parties, and debar them from all future elections.

They also sought a rule to declare the parties "terrorist organisations" for the "indiscriminate killing of citizens, destroying democratic institutions, and unconstitutionally usurping the state of power".

In a separate petition, they sought a rule to cancel the results of the three national elections held in 2014,

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

BB PROBE INTO UNION BANK 'S Alam staffer' took Tk 118cr sans approval

MD MEHEDI HASAN

A "staffer of S Alam Group" took out Tk 118 crore from Union Bank without any approval or following any banking norms, indicating how the controversial business conglomerate used the bank.

During a recent inspection, Bangladesh Bank also discovered that money was withdrawn from the bank even after its board was reconstituted in August.

The inspection team found the Chattogram-based business group and its associate companies took out Tk 17,229.10 crore from the bank through scams and irregularities, which is 67 percent of its total disbursed loans.

Outstanding loans of the lender stood at Tk 25,507 crore till December last year, BB data shows.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 4

BNP mulls rallies in Nov to press for polls roadmap

Will to keep an eye on the president issue

MOHAMMAD AL-MASUM MOLLA

BNP is considering rallies next month to push for a roadmap to election while keeping a close watch on the issue of the president's probable removal.

The party high-ups have already discussed the programmes, which will be finalised soon, said its leaders.

"Once the decision is finalised, we may hold rallies in every district and divisional city next month," a BNP standing committee member told The Daily Star last night, wishing not to be named.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1



PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

Low land being filled illegally with wet sand, pumped from a cargo vessel via the pipe, near the bank of the Shitalakkhya in Narayanganj's Haziganj area. Such illegal activities by the local influential people contribute to environment degradation and waterlogging in Narayanganj city. The photo was taken yesterday.

AL-linked tycoons siphoned off \$17b

S Alam, allies took \$10b from banks, BB Governor Ahsan Mansur tells the Financial Times

STAR REPORT

Bangladesh Bank Governor Ahsan H Mansur has accused tycoons linked to the toppled Sheikh Hasina regime of working with members of the country's powerful military intelligence agency to siphon \$17 billion out of the banking sector during her rule.

In an interview with the Financial Times, Mansur — who was appointed Bangladesh Bank governor after Hasina fled the country in August — said the Directorate General of Forces Intelligence had helped force takeovers of leading banks.

Mansur said an estimated Tk 2 trillion (\$16.7 billion) had been spirited out of Bangladesh after the bank takeovers, using methods such as loans made to their new shareholders and inflated import invoices.

"This is the biggest, highest robbing of banks by any international standards," he said. "It didn't happen on that



Ahsan H Mansur

SEE PAGE 2 COL 4

ABU SAYED KILLING '72 students, 2 teachers involved'

Finds Begum Rokeya University, bans politics for teachers, staffers

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Rangpur

A probe body of Begum Rokeya University has found involvement of 72 students, two teachers, and seven officers and staffers in the killing of Abu Sayed during quota reform protests in Rangpur.

They may face legal, academic, and administrative actions, VC Shawkat Ali told a press briefing on the BRU campus after the university's syndicate meeting yesterday afternoon.

He added that the university authorities will file a murder case against them.

Academic action may include cancellation of studentship or suspension, depending on severity of their involvement in the crime, he added.

SEE PAGE 6 COL 6

grameenphone

1st time in Bangladesh

Probashi Pack
Away from my country yet at home
Keep your SIM active for 3 and 5 years with this pack

Visit: grameenphone.com

Chief adviser for making Gono Bhaban a museum fast

BSS, Dhaka

Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus yesterday asked advisers to fast-track the construction of the museum at the Gono Bhaban commemorating the July-August mass uprising.

Prof Yunus gave the instructions when he visited the former official residence of ousted prime minister Sheikh Hasina.

"The museum should preserve the memories of her misrule and the anger people expressed when they ousted her from power," Prof Yunus said.

Hundreds of thousands of protesters entered the Gono Bhaban on August 5, hours after Hasina fled to India.

Protesters expressed their anger by drawing graffiti and writing protest notes on the walls of the rooms at the Gono Bhaban.

SEE PAGE 6 COL 3



Farmers tending to cauliflower plants at Mukamtola in Shibganj upazila of Bogura, one of the biggest vegetable-producing areas in the country. They grow this winter vegetable in a banana orchard. The photo was taken recently.

PHOTO: MOSTAFA SHABUJ

Seek SC's opinion for removing president

2 political parties tell movement leaders

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Two political parties yesterday suggested seeking the Supreme Court's opinion for removal of President Mohammed Shahabuddin from office.

In their discussions with the delegations from the Anti-Discrimination Students Movement and Jatiya Nagorik Committee, leaders of the Amar Bangladesh (AB) Party and Gono Odhikar Parishad (Kibria-Faruk faction) made the suggestion.

However, Ganatantra Mancha, an alliance of six political parties, told the student leaders that it would not be wise to take any decision in this regard excluding any political party that was part of the mass uprising.

In the first meeting of the day, the AB Party leaders suggested sending a reference to the Supreme Court for advice on the removal of the president, as they believe that if the president is not removed or if he does not resign from office, it may cause a great national crisis.

They made the remark during the discussion held at the AB Party's central office in Bijoyagar in the capital.

SEE PAGE 7 COL 5

Ban all political activities of AL

FROM PAGE 1

2018 and 2024 under the AL government.

These polls were held without lawful authority and had no legal effect, the petition said.

It sought another rule asking why the MPs elected from these 11 parties in the three elections would not face sedition charges.

HC directives were sought to cancel the benefits they received from the government, including plots and duty-free vehicles.

However, the interim government has so far taken no decision to ban any political party, Chief Adviser's Deputy Press Secretary Abul Kalam Azad Majumder said at a press briefing at the Foreign Service Academy yesterday, reports BSS.

Abul Hasnat aka Hasnat Abdullah, convenor of the movement, Sarjis Alam, a key coordinator of the movement now serving as the general secretary of the July Martyr Memorial Foundation, and Hasibul Islam, an assistant coordinator, submitted the writ petitions through their lawyers.

The 10 other political parties mentioned in the petitions are the Jatiya Party (Ershad), Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal (JSD), Bikalpadhara Bangladesh, Tarikat Federation, the Communist Party of Bangladesh (CPB), Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), Jatiya Party (Manju), Ganatantra Dal, Marxist-Leninist (Barua), and the Socialist Party of Bangladesh.

The address of JSD mentioned in the petition belongs to ASM Abdur Rab-led JSD. According to the Election Commission, two other political parties with almost similar names are registered with them. They are JSD, led by Hasanul Haq Inu, and Bangladesh JSD.

The petitions mentioned Marxist-Leninist (Barua) as a political party without giving an office address, but no registered political party has such a name.

The petitions did not mention the office address of the Socialist Party of Bangladesh. Bangladesh Samajtantrik Dal (BASAD) uses the Socialist Party of Bangladesh as their name in English.

Advocate Ahsanul Karim, a lawyer for the petitioners, told The Daily Star that he would move the petitions before the HC bench of Justice Fatema Najib and Justice Sikder Mahmudur Razi for their hearing today.

Karim said he may bring some changes in the prayer portions of the petitions.

Sarjis later told reporters after a meeting with the AB Party in the evening that the movement leaders would appear before the media after the "necessary edit" of the petitions within a day or two.

He clarified they did not seek a ban on the Awami League or cancellation of its registration in the petitions.

"We don't want to bring any false allegations, a practice which was prevalent in the last 16 years," he said and added the people of entire Bangladesh will "give testimony in favour of the petitions".

The petitions were filed just six days after the interim government on October 23 banned AL's student wing Bangladesh Chhatra League as per the Anti-Discrimination Student Movement's demand.

The movement on October 22 also demanded that the government declare the three national elections between 2014 and 2024 illegal.

Their other demands included the confiscation of assets of those who were elected MPs in these elections, and legal measures to bar them from participating in future elections.

Only 12 political parties took part in the 2014 elections, boycotted by the BNP-led 20 Party Alliance, CPB and BASAD. LDP was a member of the BNP's alliance.

All 39 registered parties contested the 2018 elections, but the opposition alleged large-scale ballot-box stuffing the night before the election day. The BNP got six seats in the election. Its MPs resigned in December 2022.

The BNP, CPB, LDP, JSD (Rab) and several other political parties boycotted the elections again in January 2024. As many as 28 political parties, mostly small ones, joined the elections.

Hasina was ousted on August 5 after the quota reform protests turned into an anti-government movement led by the student platform against discrimination.

At least 868 people, as per the health ministry, were killed and thousands injured during the July-August uprising. Hasina fled the country while over a dozen former ministers were arrested.

THE PETITIONS

One of the petitions filed by the movement leaders said over 1,000 individuals were killed, more than 20,000 people critically injured, 400 lost their eyesight and over 11,000 individuals were illegally detained nationwide during the "July Massacre" spearheaded by AL and its affiliates.

The true extent of the killings and the brutalities perpetrated by the Hasina regime and its collaborators remain obscured due to severe restrictions on the dissemination of information, the petition said.

It alleged hospitals were barred from sharing data, CCTV footage was confiscated, and some victims were buried without identification.

These were done at the behest of the regime, hence the action of the

Hasina-led Awami League amounts to terrorism, according to the petition.

Four respondents — the law ministry, home ministry, Election Commission and inspector general of police — are liable to be directed to ban all political activities of the 11 political parties by declaring them terrorist organisations, reads the petition.

The petitioners said the AL "evidently exhibited anti-constitutional aims that undermine Bangladesh's democratic framework, akin to the criteria outlined in German law for banning a political party, and engaged in violently suppressing all political opponents in the country, manipulating electoral processes, eroding judicial independence, and disrupting the democratic order of the nation".

The AL and its affiliates resorted to "unconstitutional means, including killings, mass arrests, attacks, fictitious lawsuits, enforced disappearances, and murders of their own citizens, demonstrating a disturbing pattern of state-sponsored violence and repression against their own people, which amounts to terrorism and as such ban be imposed on all political activities of these parties and debar them from participating in all upcoming elections", the petition added.

In another petition, they stated that the AL and its 14 Party Alliance orchestrated the 10th, 11th, and 12th general elections held in 2014, 2018 and 2024 under the dictates of Hasina "by manipulating the bureaucratic system, the Election Commission, and police and intelligence agencies which undermined public confidence in the electoral process and violated the constitutional mandate".

Hasina abolished the caretaker government system "to facilitate electoral manipulation, ultimately leading to rigged elections by committing fraud upon the constitution in a most illegal manner", the petition said.

"As such, these elections are liable to be declared to have been done without lawful authority and of no legal effect," it added.

It also said the MPs elected in these elections received plots in various government projects, imported luxury vehicles duty-free, and other remuneration and grants, despite the "absence of proper elections".

So, the National Board of Revenue is required to be directed to recover the benefits received by them, the petition said.

The other respondents to this petition are the law ministry, Election Commission, Rajdhani Unnayan Kartripakkha, Bangladesh Road Transport Authority and the 11 political parties.

Rahman.

BNP's allies will also hold programmes to press home the same demands, the sources added.

BNP standing committee member Amir Khosru Mahmud Chowdhury yesterday said reforms should be carried out on the basis of political consensus.

Speaking at a programme, he said 10 commissions have been formed to come up with reform proposals, and they will submit reports within 90 days. "But new demands are being made. I don't know whether the reform commissions and the interim government support those demands. These issues seem contradictory," he said without referring to any issue.

On October 23, three top BNP leaders met Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus and warned him of a potential constitutional crisis that may stem from the president's removal.

Syed Emran Saleh Prince, joint

secretary general of BNP, said holding rallies and processions will be part of the party's ongoing organisational activities.

"We should step up our political activities as various issues are surfacing."

BNP leaders said the interim government's main mandate is to hold a free and fair general election to fulfil the nation's expectations, as people were deprived of their voting rights in the last three parliamentary polls.

"We can assume how much time the government needs to hold an election. We are ready to give that time. But if that time is over, we will do whatever is necessary," Gayeshwar Chandra Roy, BNP standing committee member, said at a discussion yesterday.

He said his party was ready to wait for the election, but the government has to declare a specific time for the polls.

GDP growth lowest in five quarters

FROM PAGE 1

less, according to data from the Bangladesh Bank.

"There was no private investment while imports also shrunk. So, the latest data highlights the real picture of the economy," said Raihan, also a professor at the University of Dhaka's economics department.

At the end of June, export earnings dropped by 5.89 percent and imports by 10.61 percent.

Raw material imports declined by 15.9 percent in the last fiscal year, while capital machinery import fell 23.86 percent, according to BB's letters of credit settlement statistics.

BBS's latest quarterly data shows the country's industry grew by 3.98 percent, down from 10.16 percent a year earlier.

The service sector grew by 3.67 percent in the fourth quarter of fiscal 2023-24, down from 4.82 percent a year earlier.

The agriculture sector grew by 5.27

percent during the quarter, down from 6.55 percent a year earlier.

In May this year, BBS published provisional GDP data for fiscal 2023-24, which projected a 5.82 percent growth.

However, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) estimated Bangladesh's GDP growth was 5.4 percent last fiscal year, while the World Bank projected 5.2 percent growth.

Bangladesh's real GDP growth is estimated to have moderated in fiscal 2023-24 driven by weak consumption and export growth on the demand side, said the WB in its "Bangladesh Development Update" released this month.

Despite the improvement from the previous year, private consumption growth was still lower than the average of 5.7 percent in the previous decade, as elevated inflation affected consumption through reduced purchasing power.

"Government consumption slowed to coordinate fiscal policy with the contractionary monetary policy carried

out in response to the high inflation," it said.

Capital expenditure also remained muted with the implementation rate of the annual development programme at only 80.9 percent in fiscal 2023-24.

Exports growth also moderated in fiscal 2023-24 due to rising input costs, weak global demand and supply chain disruptions.

On the supply side, industrial growth is estimated to have moderated to 5.8 percent in fiscal 2023-24.

Industrial growth was affected by lower imports caused by a shortage of foreign currency in the banking system, rising interest rates and high energy prices.

Gas supplies were disrupted due to lower domestic production and the damage caused by cyclone Remal to one of the two floating storage and regasification units in Bangladesh.

Construction growth also slowed due to a rise in the building material price index by 6.1 percent and a decline in demand, the report added.

AL-linked tycoons siphoned off \$17b

FROM PAGE 1

scale anywhere, and it was state-sponsored and it couldn't have happened without intelligence people putting guns [to former bank CEOs'] heads."

The governor said Mohammed Saiful Alam, founder and chair of industrial conglomerate S Alam, and his associates had "siphoned off" at least \$10 billion "as a minimum" from the banking system after taking control of banks with the help of the DGFI. "Every day they were granting loans to themselves," he said.

In a statement issued by law firm Quinn Emanuel Urquhart & Sullivan on behalf of Saiful Alam, the S Alam Group said there was "no truth" to Mansur's allegations.

"The co-ordinated campaign of the interim government against the S Alam Group and several other leading businesses in Bangladesh has failed to respect even basic principles of due process," it said.

"It has already undermined investor confidence and contributed to the deterioration of law and order," the statement said. "Given the Group's record and contributions, we find the accusations by the governor...surprising and unjustified."

The Inter Services Public Relations Directorate, which handles media inquiries for Bangladesh's armed forces, did not respond to a request for comment and the DGFI could not be reached for comment.

Hasina was in power for a total of two decades in Bangladesh, a country

of 170 million people and the world's second-largest garments exporter, but her rule was marred by allegations of vote rigging, the jailing and torture of opponents, and widespread corruption.

The interim government headed by Nobel laureate Muhammad Yunus that took power after her flight has repeatedly vowed to recover funds it claims were misappropriated by members of the regime and their associates.

Mansur, a former IMF official who told the FT last month that he had sought the help of the UK to probe the overseas wealth of allies of Hasina, said board members of leading banks had been targeted under her rule.

The board members were "hijacked from their houses" by intelligence officials, taken to other locations such as hotels, and told "at gunpoint" to sell all their shares in the banks to S Alam and to resign their directorships. "At one bank after another they did it," he said.

One former bank CEO told the FT he had been forced to resign the position as part of a forcible takeover. Mohammad Abdul Mannan, formerly CEO of Islami Bank Bangladesh, one of the country's largest lenders, said he came under pressure from "people associated with the then government" from 2013.

This included pressure to recruit board members suggested by the Prime Minister's Office and a search by "people related to government agencies" of a hotel room used by one of the bank's foreign directors.

Mannan said that in January 2017 he was diverted on his way to a board meeting and taken to see a senior defence official, then kept for a full working day to force him to resign.

"They prepared bank letters on fake stationery," said Mannan, who was appointed chair of First Security Islami Bank by the central bank in September. "I had to sign a resignation letter."

S Alam diversified into banking over the past decade. The group's website says it has "significant investment" in seven banks, including Islami Bank Bangladesh and First Security Islami Bank.

Mansur said Bangladesh aimed to recover stolen funds after completing an audit of about a dozen mostly bankrupt banks taken over during Hasina's time in government. "We want to use that audit as evidence in the court of law internationally and domestically," the governor said.

Bangladesh's interim government moved to block sales of shares in the banks after the Hasina regime collapsed. Mansur said authorities now planned to sell stakes in the banks to "good quality national or international strategic investors" in order to recapitalise them. The central bank also planned to set up an asset management firm to manage or dispose of the banks' distressed assets.

He said Bangladesh would also seek to recover money taken out of the country by hiring international law firms to try to attach assets held by the banks' shareholders in Dubai, Singapore, the UK or elsewhere.

BNP mulls rallies in Nov

FROM PAGE 1

Insiders said the party believes the issue of President Mohammed Shahabuddin's removal and "intentional" audio leaks of former prime minister Sheikh Hasina are part of a big conspiracy by a vested quarter to create a constitutional vacuum, which would ultimately delay the national election. That is why the party is considering street programmes.

"By holding programmes in November, we want to make our stance clear to the people," said a senior BNP leader who is involved in the process.

BNP has already begun talks with the like-minded political parties about the issue.

At the street programmes, it will press for an election roadmap, measures to check the price hike of essentials, and withdrawal of cases against its Chairperson Khaleda Zia and acting chairman Tarique

S Alam staffer took Tk 118cr

FROM PAGE 1

The central bank conducted the inspection last month based on the financial statement of the bank until December 2023.

S Alam Group and its beneficiaries got money out from the ailing bank even after the board of the shariah-based lender reconstituted by the central bank on August 27 this year.

The central bank inspection report said the Union Bank's Panthapath branch gave a loan of Tk 118.63 crore to a customer without any approval of the lender's head office.

The inspection team found a mobile phone number on the account opening form, but it was switched off.

The inspection report said the customer who got the loan is an employee of S Alam group as per the information provided by the bank.

The central bank detected that the beneficiaries of the loan belong to S Alam Group.

Union Bank approved Tk 11,423.13 crore loans to 247 beneficiaries of companies of S Alam Group, and now the outstanding loans of the companies

have stood at Tk 17,229.10 crore, the inspection report says.

The bank management and board were directly involved in approving the loans to their names and transferring the money to different accounts of the controversial group and its associate companies, it added.

Before reconstituting the board of Union Bank, many members of the S Alam family were in the board of the bank.

S Alam Group Chairman Mohammad Saiful Alam's siblings Halima Begum, Osman Goni, and Md Rashedul Alam along with his wife Marzina Sharmin and nephew Mohammad Mostan Billah Adil were in the board.

The inspection team found that Mudaraba Term Deposit Receipt (MTDR), which offers returns by depositing money for fixed period based on Mudaraba principles of Islamic Shariah, of Saiful Alam was cashed at Muradpur and Bandartila branches of Chattogram of the bank on August 11 and then the money was transferred to Khatunganj branch.

On September 3 and 9, bank Managing Director ABM Mokammel

Hoque Chowdhury, considered a close ally of S Alam, withdrew Tk 2.32 crore from the bank when customers failed to get their deposited money back.

The Daily Star tried to reach Mokammel, who is absconding, over the phone but failed.

In August, Md Rashedul Alam, brother of S Alam, withdrew Tk 8 crore from Kodomtali branch of Chattogram and transferred the money to various accounts; Arshad Mahmood, a relative of S Alam, withdrew Tk 4.22 crore from Lichibagan branch of Chattogram; and a trading house of S Alam Group withdrew Tk 12.29 crore from Khatunganj and Agrabad branches, the BB probe has found.

The bank officials helped withdraw and transfer the money violating the central bank guidelines, the report mentions.

Its current Chairman Md Farid Uddin Ahmed and Deputy Managing Director Shafiuddin Ahmed did not respond to our phone calls and Whatsapp texts.

S Alam Group Chairman Mohammad Saiful Alam could not be contacted for comments. Union Bank got its licence in 2013.

Fire stations to be built in 32 upazilas

Says home adviser

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Home Affairs Adviser Lt Gen (ret'd) Jahangir Alam Chowdhury (ret'd) yesterday said initiatives will soon be taken to build fire service stations in 32 upazilas across the country.

"Currently, there are no fire service stations in 32 upazilas in the country. Fire service stations will be built in the upazilas as soon as possible," he said.

He said this while speaking to journalists after visiting the Fire Service and Civil Defence (FSCD) headquarters in the capital.

He said a place has been allotted in Munshiganj's Gazaria for building a training academy for the fire service.

The home adviser also assured that the issue of increasing the risk allowance for the officials and employees of the fire service department will be considered.



The DND canal along the Dhaka-Chattogram highway in Fatullah has been encroached upon by shops and different settlements. Such encroachment of waterbodies keeps going unabated in different parts of the country, causing severe environmental and waterlogging issues. The photo was taken recently.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

Drives against teen gangs strengthened

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Inspector General of Police (IGP) Md Mainul Islam has directed all unit heads to strengthen ongoing special drives against various crimes -- including robbery, extortion, drug trafficking, and illegal activities -- being committed by "teenage gangs".

They have also been directed to help enhance traffic management.

The IGP provided these directives in a special message yesterday, according to a media release issued by the Media and Public Relations wing of Police Headquarters.

The special drive has been underway since October 18 and is also working towards finding people who attacked protesters during the anti-discrimination movement, the release says.

As of October 27, over 200 robbers, extortionists, and criminals have been arrested through these drives.

Also, six listed criminals, 1,140 individuals involved in attacks on the anti-discrimination student movement, 1,144 persons related to narcotics, and 55 illegal weapon holders have also been apprehended.

Combing operations are being conducted under these drives in crime-prone areas. In addition to permanent police checkpoints, temporary ones have been established.

Teen gangs, top criminals behind mugging surge

Say law enforcers on Mohammadpur; Dhanmondi residents too in fear

SHAHEEN MOLLAH and MOHAMMAD JAMIL KHAN

Teen gang members and top-listed criminals were behind the rise of mugging, theft, and robbery incidents in the capital's Mohammadpur.

Even a group of people were involved in selling machetes and knives to the culprits.

The law enforcers disclosed the findings yesterday, following the arrest of 34 individuals, including members of teen gangs, in 24 hours till Sunday night.

"We have managed to arrest 34 in the last 24 hours. Among them, 22 were arrested during a joint drive with the army. They were shown arrested in previously filed cases," Hafizur Rahman, Inspector (investigation) of the Mohammadpur Police Station told The Daily Star.

The 22 were arrested from Dhaka Udyan, Chand Udyan, and Geneva Camp during the joint drive, said a press release by Inter-Service Public Relations (ISPR).

Rubul Kabir Khan, deputy commissioner of the Tejgaon Division Police, said they have arrested two blacksmiths on the charge of selling machetes to teen gang members.

Law enforcers recovered 40 machetes from the arrestees.

"We have already increased joint drive, block raid, check posts, and patrolling in Mohammadpur

to prevent criminal activities. Strict legal action will be taken against the patrons of the teen gang members," he said at a media briefing yesterday.

During a visit yesterday, this newspaper found two temporary police outposts set up inside the Geneva Camp to maintain law and order.

There are 20 police members in each outpost, sources said.

Dhanmondi residents claimed that they are already passing days in fear, as mugging incidents, similar to those in Mohammadpur, also took place in the Dhanmondi area over the last couple of weeks.

Referring to the four recent killing incidents in the Geneva camp, DC Ruhul Kabir said those incidents occurred centring asserting dominance of drug traders.

"We are collecting information and conducting operations," he added.

On Saturday night, the joint

operations arrested 45 suspects and seized nine sharp weapons.

Meanwhile, the Ramna Division of the Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP) also increased vigilance.

A high official of the Ramna Division said, "We are fearing that the teen gang members and muggers may change locations and focus on Dhanmondi due to continuous drives in Mohammadpur."

Meanwhile, Dhanmondi residents claimed that they are already passing days in fear, as mugging incidents, similar to those in Mohammadpur, also took place in the Dhanmondi area over the last couple of weeks.

Law enforcers even failed to detect criminals, they added.

For instance, on October 19 around 7:00pm, four unidentified people wearing helmets snatched away Tk 50 lakh from an individual by firing gunshots from road 8/A of the area.

The victim Rasel Ali is the manager of a money exchange institute.

A case was filed with Dhanmondi Police Station a day later.

But police have yet to trace any criminals or the snatched money. Md Masud Alam, deputy commissioner of Ramna Division Police, admitted the fact and said they are working tirelessly.

"Some incidents may have

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

'AYNAGHAR' Commission working to find out those involved

UNB, Dhaka

Chief Adviser's Deputy Press Secretary Mohammad Abul Kalam Azad Majumder yesterday said the relevant commission is looking into who were specifically involved in torturing people, keeping them confined to "Aynaghars" or secret prisons.

"There are many involved in torturing people. The commission will look into who are specifically involved," he told reporters, adding that no specific force is identified or no specific individual is made responsible.

The interim government made it clear that whoever is involved will be brought to justice, Azad said while responding to a question at a media briefing at the Foreign Service Academy in the capital.

"The government has this commitment," he added.

Chief Adviser's Press Secretary Shaiful Alam said a panel (commission) is working to know how many Aynaghars were there in the country and once the commission submits its report, the overall scenario will come to light.

"You will get a complete picture once the commission submits its report," he said.

Volker Turk in town to discuss rights situation

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

UN Human Rights Chief Volker Turk is set to arrive in Dhaka today to discuss the updates on Bangladesh's human rights situation in the aftermath of the political changeover.

The possibility of opening an office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) here will also be discussed.

During the two day visit, he is scheduled to hold meetings with Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus, Foreign Affairs Adviser Md Touhid Hossain, Law Adviser Prof Asif Nazrul, Home Adviser Lt Gen (ret'd) Jahangir Alam Chowdhury, as well as a group of students from the University of Dhaka.

Turk is arriving in Dhaka days after the completion of a visit by the UN Fact-Finding Mission that investigated the human rights violations and abuses in the context of the July-August uprising.

The five-member mission will submit a report and put forward recommendations for the Bangladesh authorities to hold those responsible accountable.

"Volker Turk is likely to take stock of the progress in terms of human rights in Bangladesh after the political changeover," an official at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs told The Daily Star recently.

A UN official said the United Nations does not care about which regime is in power, adding that the rights violations and abuses that have taken place since the fall of Awami League will also come under the purview of Turk's visit.

"There were incidences of mob justice, and there are questions about those," the official added.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

Need global unity to address climate change

Says Rizwana

BSS, Dhaka

Environment, Forest and Climate Change Adviser Syeda Rizwana Hasan yesterday stressed the need for global unity in addressing climate change.

"It's time that developed nations uphold their commitments to support the most affected countries," she said while speaking as the Chief guest at the COP29 reception hosted by the European Union in Gulshan, Dhaka.

Rizwana highlighted the disproportionate climate challenges faced by vulnerable nations.

"Bangladesh, despite contributing minimally to global emissions, bears one of the highest burdens of climate impacts. We need equitable solutions that recognise the realities of nations on the frontlines of climate change," she said.

The adviser said Bangladesh's resilience must be matched with robust, sustainable support

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1

SCHOOL ENTRY Applications from Nov 12, selection through lottery

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Ministry of Education yesterday published an admission policy for non-government schools at the secondary, lower secondary, and primary levels.

Student selection and admission in these schools for the 2025 academic year will be conducted through a digital lottery system.

The application process for both government and non-government schools will start online from November 12 and will continue till November 30.

The lottery will take place in December, according to the Directorate of Secondary and Higher Education.

The Secondary and Higher Education Division issued the policy, specifying that students may be admitted to entry-level classes till ninth grade, depending on seat availability, with a maximum of 55 students allowed per section.

Meanwhile, some 40 percent seats in non-government schools within Dhaka metropolitan areas will be reserved for students residing in respective localities, while five percent seats will be allocated under the freedom fighter quota.

As per the National Education Policy 2010, children aged 6 and older are eligible for admission.

However, students must be between 5 and 7 years old as of January 1 and December 31 of the entry year, and their ages must be verified through an attested copy of their birth certificate, submitted with the

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1



Four men push a cart carrying steel rods on the Buriganga Second Bridge in Old Dhaka's Badamtali area, defying rules, as slow-moving vehicles are banned from operating on the bridge. While the plying of such vehicles can cause traffic congestions on the bridge, carrying steel rods openly in this manner can also pose risks of accidents. The photo was taken recently.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

Need global

FROM PAGE 3
from the global community. European Union Ambassador to Bangladesh Michael Miller commended Bangladesh's proactive role in environmental conservation and climate resilience, as well as its participation in the Global Climate Resilience Network. Ambassadors of European countries, the environment secretary, international delegates, government representatives, environmental stakeholders and youth climate activists were also present.

Applications

FROM PAGE 3
admission application. For students with special needs, age requirement may be relaxed for up to five years, according to the policy. The digital lottery process for admission will be conducted centrally by the Directorate of Secondary and Higher Education. The Secondary and Higher Education Division will set the digital lottery's date, time, and application fees.



Rasel and Islam Sheikh collect Kaash Phool (Kans grass) straws and load them onto a van. They bundle these together and then sell them at a local market for Tk 10 per bundle. The photo was taken from the Aranghata area of Khulna recently. PHOTO: HABIBUR RAHMAN

2 ASIs go missing after jumping into the Padma

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kushtia
Two policemen went missing as they jumped into the Padma river during an alleged attack by miscreants in Kumarkhali upazila of Kushtia early yesterday. The missing policemen are assistant sub-inspectors Sadrul Alam and Mukul Hossain. Also, two members of Koya Union Parishad -- Sanwar Hossain and Anwar Hossain -- were injured during the attack. Locals said Sanwar and Anwar along with four policemen went to the Padma river on a boat where some fishermen were fishing around 4:00am defying the government ban. Sensing the presence of the police, a group of miscreants attacked them and beat them up mercilessly, leaving the two UP members injured. At one stage, ASIs Sadrul and Mukul jumped into the river. Some fishermen alleged that the policemen went there to loot the fish caught by the fishermen illegally although they were not supposed to conduct any drive there. Upazila Senior Fisheries Officer Mahmudul Hasan said there was no information of a drive against illegal netting in the Padma. Palash Kanti Nath, additional superintendent of police, said that a team of police conducted a drive to rescue the missing policemen.

Sensing the presence of the police, a group of miscreants attacked them and beat them up mercilessly, leaving the two UP members injured. At one stage, ASIs Sadrul and Mukul jumped into the river.

OFFICE TO-LET

163/2B Gulshan Avenue, Gulshan-2, Dhaka.
Brand new 14 storied building. Few floor is available for rent. Each floor 4500 sft, 2 parking. 2 gate, 2 lift 2 stair, full backup generator. Multinational Company, NGO, Corporate office preferred. Please contact: 01790-55 77 99

প্লট বিক্রয়

ধানমন্ডি সাতমসজিদ রোডে বাণিজ্যিক প্লট বিক্রয় হবে।
বিস্তারিত: ০২৯৯৬৫-৭৯০৪৯৯

Teen gangs, top criminals

FROM PAGE 3
taken place in Dhanmondi... we have managed to detect and arrest criminals in some incidents, and we are working regarding the others. We have already increased vigilance, and patrolling to ensure visible policing and prompt action," he told The Daily Star yesterday. Meanwhile, in a press

release yesterday, the ISPR said the army has been working across the country to ensure the security of public and important government installations, and control the law and order situation. The army will continue its tough stance in this regard, the release added. Meanwhile, Inspector General of Police (IGP) Md Mainul Islam yesterday

directed all the unit heads to strengthen the ongoing special drive against various crimes including robbery, extortion, drug trafficking, and illegal activities of "teen gangs," as well as to enhance traffic management. The IGP provided this directive in a special message, according to a media release issued by Police Headquarters.

Request for Proposal (RFP)

International Labour Organization (ILO) Dhaka invites proposals for Hiring a Service Provider for Skills Profiling, Assessment of Challenges and Development of Economic Reintegration Framework for Return Migrant Workers. The bidding documents can be downloaded from the United Nations Global Market Place (UNGM) at <https://www.ungm.org/Public/Notice/251130>
The deadline for submission of proposal is Sunday, December 01, 2024, by 04:30 PM (BST time).

Govt to create

FROM PAGE 3
Community clinics are the government's lowest-tier healthcare framework. They offer health, family planning, and nutrition services. People can also receive 30 types of medicines, free of charge, from these clinics. Bangladesh is one among the few countries that tried to provide free medical services to people at the community level through various public-health facilities, said Dr A M Zakir Hussain, chairman of Community Clinic Health Support Trust. Regarding the creation of 14,000 new post, Hussain said these positions are currently under the

development budget. They are now being created on a temporary basis under the revenue budget. Currently, there are around 15,000 community clinics operating across the country. Of those, 8,500 community clinics need to be repaired, said an official of the Community Clinic Health Support Trust. These clinics are open six days a week from 9:00am to 3:00pm, except on Fridays and other public holidays. A Community Health Care Provider (CHCP) manages each clinic, with a preference for local women in this role, assisted by a Health Assistant and a Family Welfare Assistant.

Volker Turk

FROM PAGE 3
Volker Turk will propose setting up an office of OHCHR during his meeting. Whether or not such an office will be allowed to be set up in Bangladesh will depend on how the discussion goes in Dhaka, said officials concerned. "This is not a new proposal. The UN spoke about this in previous years too. But the previous government was reluctant about it," an official said.

Usually, the OHCHR sets up its offices in countries where the human rights situation is grave. The situation in Bangladesh is not like that. Human rights are also sometimes used as a political tool against certain countries, he added. OHCHR has offices in 18 countries and stand-alone offices, including in Burkina Faso, Cambodia, Chad, Colombia, Guatemala, Guinea, Honduras, Liberia, Mauritania, Mexico, Niger, Palestine, the Syrian Arab Republic (based in Beirut), Sudan, Tunisia, and Yemen. The UN Human Rights chief will also discuss media freedom and the implementation of the UN recommendations regarding the Cyber Security Act. Turk will meet the chief justice, the army chief and heads of several reform commissions, said a statement of OHCHR. He will also address an event at Dhaka University and meet with students involved in the recent movement. He will hold meetings with the UN agencies and members of diplomatic missions in Bangladesh. Turk will hold a news conference in Dhaka on October 30.

Job Opportunity at Texperts India Private Limited.

"Texperts India Private Limited is India Based Textile Sourcing Company. For Bangladesh Liaison Office Require Following Candidates:"
Position Vacancy Education & Experience
1. Manager Fabrics Division 01 (One) Textile Background Minimum 08-10 years Fabrics in Textile.
Deadline: 27th November 2024
Possible date of joining: 01st January 2025
Candidates Should Send their CV this
E-Mail Address: admin.bd@thetexperts.com

Master of Professional Accounting (MPA) Program
Accounting & IS, FBS, DU (Apply to 15th Batch)
> A Prestigious Masters Program with major in Accounting, > assistance for Professional Accounting (CA), > Progress to ACCA (9 papers exemption).
Application Last Date: 21 November, 2024. Office Hours: 2:00 pm to 9:00 pm
Test Date: 22 November, 2024 at 2:30 pm (Written) & 4:00 pm (Viva Voce)
Address: Room: 5058, MBA Building (Fee Tk.1,500) Cell: 01912146788; 01922478641
Website: mpa-ais-du.com; facebook.com/duaismpa; Form link: cutt.ly/mpaform

Request for Quotation: Bancassurance Project

BRAC Bank PLC. delivers a full array of banking services to individuals as well as business entities with a network of 187 Branches, 53 Sub-branches, 329 ATMs, 457 SME Unit Offices and 1,080 Agent Banking. Currently the Bank is seeking for a vendor to develop Bancassurance Project for the bank.
A Request for Quotation (RFQ) for Technical Offer Submission for Bancassurance Project was issued earlier on October 16, 2024. The proposal submission date has been extended up to November 6, 2024. The RFQ along with details of the bidding process can be found on the bank's website: <https://www.bracbank.com/en/information/e-tender>
Interested eligible bidders are requested to submit the technical offer by November 6, 2024 as per the mentioned bidding process.

INVITATION FOR TENDER (IFT)

01.	Procuring entity name	Real Estate & Housing Association Of Bangladesh (REHAB)
02.	Invitation For	Event, Media & Food Management For REHAB Fair-2024 Date: 24 - 28 December, 2024, Venue: BICC, Dhaka.
03.	Tender Package Name	A. Event B. Media C. Food
04.	Tender Last Selling Date & Time	07 November 2024 at 12:00 pm
05.	Tender Dropping Last Date & Time	07 November 2024 at 02:00 pm
06.	Tender Opening Date & Time	07 November 2024 at 03:00 pm
07.	Name & Address of The Office Selling Tender Document	REHAB, National Plaza (5th Floor), 1/G Free School Street, Sonargaon Road, Dhaka-1205.
08.	Eligibility of Tenderer	According to Tender Date Sheet (TDS)
09.	Brief Description of Work	Event, Media & Food Management
10.	Contact Details of Official Inviting Tender	Tel. No. 9614606, 9614607, 9632570-74 Info@rehab-bd.org, Web Site: www.rehab-bd.org
11.	Price of Tender Document (Non-Refundable)	Event Part : 30,000/- (Taka) Media Part : 20,000/- (Taka) Food Part : 10,000/- (Taka)
12.	Special instructions	a) REHAB reserves the right to accept or reject any/all tenders without assigning any reason. b) Tender method will be one stage two envelope's system.

Real Estate & Housing Association of Bangladesh

UTTARA BANK PLC.
HEAD OFFICE
47, Shahid Bir Uttam Asfaqus Samad Sarak
Motijheel C/A, Dhaka-1000
PRICE SENSITIVE INFORMATION
This is for kind information of all concerned that the Board of Directors of the Bank in its 820th meeting held at 3:00 p.m. on Monday, 28 October 2024 approved the unaudited Financial Statements of the Bank for the 3rd quarter ended on 30 September 2024 and disclosed the following financial indicators of the Bank:
Financial Results:
Particulars Consolidated Solo
01 Jan. to 30 Sep. 2024 01 Jan. to 30 Sep. 2023 01 Jul. to 30 Sep. 2024 01 Jul. to 30 Sep. 2023 01 Jan. to 30 Sep. 2024 01 Jan. to 30 Sep. 2023 01 Jul. to 30 Sep. 2024 01 Jul. to 30 Sep. 2023
Net Profit after Tax (Taka in crore) 315.82 195.90 121.82 75.27 319.28 197.76 122.20 76.26
Earnings Per Share (EPS) in Taka 3.82 2.37 1.48 0.91 3.87 2.39 1.48 0.92
Net Operating Cash Flow Per Share (NOCFPS) in Taka 9.68 (6.62) - - 9.72 (6.56) - -
Financial Position:
Particulars Consolidated Solo
As at 30 September 2024 As at 30 September 2023 As at 30 September 2024 As at 30 September 2023
Net Asset Value (NAV) Taka in crore 2,479.22 2,154.87 2,473.06 2,144.01
Net Asset Value Per Share (NAVPS) in Taka 30.02 26.10 29.95 25.96
By order of the Board
(MUHAMMAD KHALED BASHAR)
General Manager & Secretary
Date: Dhaka 28 October 2024

PRAYER TIMING
OCTOBER 29
Fazr Zohr Asr Maghrib Esha
AZAN 4:50 12:45 4:00 5:32 7:15
JAMAAT 5:25 1:15 4:15 5:35 7:45
SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার
প্রধান উপদেষ্টার কার্যালয়
তেজগাঁও, ঢাকা।
উন্মুক্ত দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি
১। মঞ্জুরা/বিভাগ প্রধান উপদেষ্টার কার্যালয়
২। সংগ্রহকারী দপ্তরের নাম প্রধান উপদেষ্টার কার্যালয়, তেজগাঁও, ঢাকা
৩। দরপত্র আহ্বানের সূত্র ০৩.০০.২৬৯০.০৮-২.৪৬.০০৬.২৪
৪। তারিখ ২৭/১০/২০২৪
৫। শী জনা আহ্বান করা হয়েছে প্রধান উপদেষ্টার কার্যালয়ে সরকারি কাজে ব্যবহারের জন্য ০২ (দুই) টি Canon R5 Mark II ক্যামেরা ও ক্যামেরার বিভিন্ন অ্যাংশ ক্রয়
৬। সংগ্রহ পদ্ধতি উন্মুক্ত দরপত্র পদ্ধতি
৭। বাজেট ও সর্বোচ্চ অফ ফার্ড প্রধান উপদেষ্টার কার্যালয়ের সংশ্লিষ্ট খাতে বরাদ্দকৃত বাজেট
৮। দরপত্র প্যাকেজের নাম প্রধান উপদেষ্টার কার্যালয়ে সরকারি কাজে ব্যবহারের জন্য ০২ (দুই) টি Canon R5 Mark II ক্যামেরা ও ক্যামেরার বিভিন্ন অ্যাংশ ক্রয়
৯। সিডিউল ক্রয়ের স্থান ও সময় প্রধান উপদেষ্টার কার্যালয়ের ৪নং স্টেট, দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি পরিকার প্রকাশের তারিখ হতে ১১/১১/২০২৪ তারিখ পর্যন্ত প্রতিদিন অফিস চলাকালীন সময়
১০। দরপত্র দলিলের মূল্য পরিচালক (প্রশাসন), প্রধান উপদেষ্টার কার্যালয়, ঢাকা এর অনুকূলে ৫০০/- (পাঁচশত) টাকা প্-অর্ডার/ব্যাংক ড্রফট (অফেরতযোগ্য)
১১। দরপত্র গ্রহণের শেষ তারিখ, সময় ও স্থান ১৩/১১/২০২৪ তারিখ, সকাল ১১:০০ টা, প্রধান উপদেষ্টার কার্যালয়ের ৪ নং স্টেটে রক্ষিত টেকার বাজে
১২। দরপত্র ঘোষণা/মুদ্রায়নের তারিখ ও সময় উপস্থিত দরদাতাদের সম্মুখে (যদি উপস্থিত থাকেন) ১৩/১১/২০২৪ তারিখ দুপুর ১২:০০ টা
১৩। দরপত্র গ্রহণকারী ও ঘোষণা দপ্তর পরিচালক-২৫ (প্রশাসন), প্রধান উপদেষ্টার কার্যালয়, তেজগাঁও, ঢাকা-১২১৫
১৪। দরপত্র দাখিলকারী প্রতিষ্ঠানের যোগাযোগ দরপত্র আহ্বানকারী প্রতিষ্ঠানের হালনাগাদ ট্রেড লাইসেন্স, হালনাগাদ আকার রিটার্ন সনদ, হালনাগাদ জ্যাক নিবন্ধন, অফিসিাল ব্যাংক কর্তৃক ইস্যুকৃত আর্থিক স্বাক্ষরতার পত্র, সংশ্লিষ্ট কাজের উপর অভিজ্ঞতার সনদপত্র ১ম স্টেজের গেজেটেড কর্মকর্তা কর্তৃক সত্যায়িত করে দরপত্রের সাথে দাখিল করতে হবে
১৫। দরপত্র আহ্বানকারী কর্মকর্তার নাম ও ঠিকানা এ. কে. এম. মনিরুজ্জামান, পরিচালক (প্রশাসন)
১৬। দরপত্র আহ্বানকারী কর্মকর্তার ঠিকানা প্রধান উপদেষ্টার কার্যালয়, তেজগাঁও, ঢাকা-১২১৫
১৭। দরপত্র আহ্বানকারী কর্মকর্তার যোগাযোগের মাধ্যম টেলিফোন: +৮৮০২৫৫০২২৪০৫ ই-মেইল: section.dir.15@pmo.gov.bd
১৮। কর্তৃপক্ষ সকল দরপত্র গ্রহণ বা বাতিল করার ক্ষমতা সংরক্ষণ করেন
১৯। দরপত্র গ্রহণ ও মুদ্রায়ন পাবলিক প্রকিউরি স্টেট রিসিসম ২০০৮ অনুসরণ করা হবে।
(এ. কে. এম. মনিরুজ্জামান)
পরিচালক (প্রশাসন)
ফোন: +৮৮০২৫৫০২২৪০৫
ই-মেইল: section.dir.15@pmo.gov.bd
GD- 812

Hasina trying to incite violence from India: BNP

UNB, Dhaka

BNP Senior Joint Secretary General Ruhul Kabir Rizvi yesterday expressed concern that deposed prime minister Sheikh Hasina is once again trying to incite violence and bloodshed in Bangladesh from India.

"An audio of Sheikh Hasina's conversation was leaked on Sunday, in which she instructs the Jubo League and Chhatra League to prepare for armed resistance. It means she's issuing threats of bloodshed," he said while speaking at a programme in Azimpur area of the capital. He urged all to stay alert to ensure that the student-led mass movement does not fail.

Meanwhile, BNP senior leader Mirza Abbas at an event yesterday said AL would struggle to regain political influence if BNP and Jamaat-e-Islami maintain their alliance.

Speaking at a memorial organised by Jamaat at the Institution of Engineers, Bangladesh, Abbas said, "The nation cannot progress while Hasina's cohorts are in different positions, as they are devising various plots. However, if Jamaat and BNP work together, the Awami League will not be able to stage a comeback."

"We now desire a Bangladesh without the Awami League... the Awami League and democracy cannot coexist," he added.



PHOTO: STAR

BARGUNA'S GAZIPUR CANAL

Bridge work drags on for 5 years

SOHRAB HOSSAIN, Patuakhali

The Local Government Engineering Department initiated construction of a bridge over Gazipur Canal in Barguna's Amtali upazila on January 1, 2019 at a cost of Tk 4.23 crore.

The 48-metre-long and 7.5-metre-wide bridge, once completed, is expected to enhance direct road communication between Amtali and Patuakhali's Galachipa upazilas.

Even though the construction work was supposed to be completed within 19 months on September 29, 2020, it is still incomplete.

Even after extension of deadline twice, with the bridge expected to be completed by June this year, the work is still incomplete, largely due to the contractor's negligence, said sources at LGED in Amtali upazila.

More than 200 students need to cross the canal daily to attend their classes at several educational

institutions located on the west side of the canal. Also, several thousand people from both sides of the canal commute on the route regularly.

"As the new bridge has yet to be constructed even in five years, we have to take a longer route for access to the other side," said Shammi Akhtar, an eighth-grader of Gazipur Fazil Madrasa.

Shahidul Islam, principal of the madrasa, said the number of students has come down due to inconvenience with commute.

According to sources, a contractor from Patuakhali named Abul Kalam Azad got the work order for the bridge's construction. He, however, later sold the work to Tanveer Ahmed Dipu, another contractor from Patuakhali.

A show cause notice was issued to the contractor on September 15 from the office of executive engineer of LGED in Barguna for abandoning

the work. The notice mentioned that the work order will be cancelled unless the contractor resumes the work within seven days.

Md Idris Ali, upazila engineer of LGED, said an application has been submitted to the executive engineer requesting to cancel the work order.

Abul Kalam Azad, the original contractor, said, "I sold the work order to another contractor. I don't know why he couldn't finish the job."

Tanvir Ahmed Dipu cited various reasons for the delayed work, including the pandemic as well as hike in price of construction materials. "I have talked to the LGED's executive engineer in this regard. Hopefully the work will be completed within 2-3 months."

Contacted, Mehdi Hasan Khan, executive engineer of LGED in Barguna, said process to cancel the contractor's work order is underway.

DURGA PUJA Fake news was spread to create instability: CID

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Some fake news and false information were circulated on social media centring the recently held Durga Puja to embarrass the interim government and create an unstable situation in the country.

SN Md Nazrul Islam, deputy inspector general (DIG) of cyber police centre of the Criminal Investigation Department, said this while replying to a reporter's query at the CID headquarters yesterday.

"Although there were no direct rumours against the government, it was spread centring the Durga puja that ended recently. We have put out some counter-narratives after identifying the rumours," he said.

Nazrul further said, "In some cases, we had to write to Facebook to remove the content and posts. The Facebook authorities responded to it."

The CID organised a press briefing following the arrest of a private university student -- Fazle Hasan Anik, 24. In the last two years, Anik has blackmailed at least 15 females by hacking the Facebook IDs of more than 50 people.

Based on intel, the CPC team arrested Anik in Uttara on Sunday.

A case was filed with Mohammadpur Police Station.

Dengue claims 3 more lives

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Three more deaths due to dengue were reported in the 24 hours leading up to yesterday morning, raising the total fatalities from the mosquito-borne disease in Bangladesh to 280 this year.

Two deaths were reported in the Dhaka South City Corporation and one in Dhaka North City Corporation.

During this period, 1,197 patients were hospitalised, according to the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS).

Currently, 3,970 patients are receiving treatment in various hospitals across the country. Since January 1, 2024, a total of 58,108 dengue cases have been reported.

Last year was particularly severe, with 1,705 deaths recorded, making it the deadliest year on record. The DGHS recorded 321,799 dengue cases and 318,749 recoveries in 2023.

SC extends stay order on Sohel Rana's bail

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Appellate Division of the Supreme Court yesterday extended its chamber judge's October 2 order that stayed a High Court order granting ad-interim bail to Rana Plaza owner Md Sohel Rana in a case filed over deaths during the collapse of the factory building in April 2013.

The apex court also asked the HC to dispose of in two months the rule that the High Court issued asking the state why Sohel Rana should not be granted permanent bail in the case.

The stay order on the HC's ad-interim bail for Rana will continue till disposal of the rule, and therefore, he cannot get released now, his lawyer Mohammad Shishir Manir told The Daily Star.

A three-member bench passed the order following a petition filed by the state challenging the HC's ad-interim bail to Sohel Rana.

Following a bail petition filed by Sohel, the HC on October 1 granted ad-interim bail to him for six months and also issued a rule asking the state to explain why he should not be granted regular bail in this case.

Office of the Dinajpur Pourashava Dinajpur. e-Tender Notice-03/2024-25 (APP ID-205616 & 204864). e-Tenders are invited in e-GP system Portal (http://www.eprocure.gov.bd) by Dinajpur Pourashava, District: Dinajpur for the procurement of: [Table with 5 columns: Sl. No., Package Number, Name of Works, e-Tender ID No., Tender Last selling (Date & Time), Tender Closing (Date & Time)]

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh Department of Environment E-16, Agargaon, Sher-E-Bangla Nagar, Dhaka-1207 www.doe.gov.bd Invitation for Tender 02 (2024-2025) [Table with 25 rows detailing tender information, including eligibility, brief description of services, and procurement entity details]

My daughter wishes for someone special in my life

BADHAN

SHAH ALAM SHAZU

The gorgeous and courageous Azmeri Haque Badhan has carved out a name in both Bangladesh and India with her powerful performances. From her portrayal of Rehana in *Rehana Maryam Noor* to Heena in *Khufiya*, she is recognised for pushing boundaries and embracing versatility in her roles. The actress celebrated her 41st birthday yesterday and spoke with The Daily Star about her celebration and upcoming projects.

This year, the actress chose a quiet celebration at home, enjoying her favourite dishes prepared by her mother. "Special days need to be celebrated with special people. I couldn't ask for more," she shared.

This birthday brought a heartfelt moment from her daughter, Michele Amani Saira, who expressed her wish for her mother to find a companion. "My daughter is growing up, and she sees how I've walked this path alone. This year, she wished for me to have someone in my life," Badhan revealed. "I've faced a lot of fear and trauma, and only someone who truly understands me could walk with me on this journey."

Reflecting on her life's direction, the *Guti* actress said, "I'm very focused. Everything is moving positively, and life is beautiful. Life is all about meaningful work and it holds significance for me."

Currently, she's preparing to resume

filming *Esha Murder* this November, directed by Sunny Sanwar, where she portrays a police officer. "Female-led stories are rare in our industry, and I'm grateful to the director for centering a woman in this narrative. The story is compelling. It's exciting to play a role that's often reserved for men," she added.

Set for release next year, Badhan is eagerly anticipating viewers' reactions to her role as a team-leading police officer in *Esha Murder*.

"I'm very focused. Everything is moving positively, and life is beautiful. Life is all about meaningful work and it holds significance for me."

Badhan also recently wrapped up filming *Master*, directed by Rezwan Shahriar Sumit, where she plays a supporting role as an UNO (Upazila Nirbahi Officer). The film is set to be released next year.

Praising the project's careful handling, she expressed her satisfaction with the team and the story. She shared, "The director handled the project with great care and Nasir *bhai* leads the cast. I worked with an excellent team on a remarkable story, and I'm very pleased with both."

Although she had an Indian film project scheduled for this year, it has been postponed to next year, giving fans more to look forward to.

Anonno Mamun's 'Makeup' faces new ban by Appeals Committee

Anonno Mamun's film *Makeup* has been officially banned by the Appeals Committee under the newly enacted Certification Act of 2023, citing violations of subsection 12 (1), as announced by the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting.

According to the notice, the decision came after a review by the Appeals Committee members.

Starring Tariq Anam Khan, Ziaul Roshan, and Nipa Ahmed Real, *Makeup* was initially banned by the Bangladesh Film Censor Board in 2021. A recent appeal by Celebrity Production was denied, citing sub-section 12(1) of the Bangladesh Film Certification Act, 2023. Unauthorised screenings will lead to confiscation and possible legal action.



Bappa Mazumder and Tania welcome their baby girl

Renowned singer-songwriter and music director Bappa Mazumder has become a father once again, welcoming a baby girl with actress Tania Hossain. Bappa, thrilled with the news, shared his joy with Prothom Alo, expressing his excitement over becoming a father to a daughter.

This morning, at a private hospital in Panthapath, Dhaka, Bappa and Tania celebrated the arrival of their daughter. Bappa mentioned that they have not yet chosen a name for their daughter.

The couple's journey together began on May 16, 2018, with an engagement surrounded by family at Tania's home in West Panthapath, Dhaka, followed by an intimate wedding ceremony on June 24.



PHOTO: SHEIKH MEHEDI MORSHED

NEWS

Homemaker murdered

FROM PAGE 12

the apartment. Since the incident, the building's caretaker and their chauffeur have been missing from duty. Police suspect they might be involved. Efforts are underway to apprehend them, the police officer said.

The victim's son has filed a murder case in connection with the incident.

A recent surge in violent crimes has sparked widespread concern as the capital continues to experience frequent incidents of murder, robbery, mugging, and theft.

In a separate incident, police recovered the body of a woman, with her throat slit, from a furniture factory in Dhaka's Uttar Badda area early yesterday.

The deceased was identified as Amena Akter, 32, of Alinagar village

in Bhola Sadar upazila.

Her body was recovered shortly after midnight Sunday from the factory, owned by Ramzan Mia, said Fatema Siddika Soma, sub-inspector (SI) of Badda Police Station.

The SI said, "Informed around 10:00pm, we arrived at the scene and found the woman's body inside the factory premises. The victim's throat had been slit."

Ramzan was taken to the police station for questioning, she added.

Amena's husband, Mintu Mia, has been missing since the incident.

Amena had been living with her husband in a rented house in the Baganbari area of Uttar Badda.

Police suspect that Amena was murdered sometime between 8:00pm and 10:00pm on Sunday.

Sarjis against mass arrest

FROM PAGE 12

good accommodation and other reasons, Sarjis said.

Among the remaining 20 percent, many misused their power; some oppressed dissenters, while others aspired to leadership positions within the hall units, he said.

The most significant contributions to the first phase of the movement came from those 80 percent students who had to join BCL for different reasons, he said.

If certain BCL members had not come out from the halls, the other students would not have had the courage to join the protests, Sarjis added.

These BCL members' participation also prevented the BCL leadership from stifling the protests, Sarjis said.

"Now the question is if I should label these students from the halls with the BCL tag and put them in the banned category. The answer is: 'No'." "I'll never support mass arrest solely targeting those who were

members of the BCL on the campus. This cannot happen."

Sarjis continued, "Those who stood beside me in the struggle for justice, risking their lives against the obstacles created by the BCL, are my brothers. I'll support them. The truth remains the truth, regardless of what anyone else may say."

Sarjis had previously been involved in BCL politics. He had been elected member of Amar Ekushey Hall council during Dhaka University Central Students' Union and hall council polls in 2019 from the BCL panel.

The interim government banned BCL on October 23 as a "terrorist organisation" for brutal and deadly attacks on students during the mass uprising, and its misdeeds in the past 16 years.

Hundreds of leaders and members of BCL's DU and hall units were accused in two cases filed earlier over attacks on DU students on July 15. Some of them have already been arrested.

75 students

From page 12
committee's report, 75 students from different academic years of Chattoogram Medical College, including 14 intern doctors of the hospital, have been suspended. The punishment was given as the allegations of breaching discipline were proved.

"The decision was taken last

Sunday at the academic council's meeting on maintaining a fair environment on campus."

According to the suspension order, the learning environment of the college has been "severely disturbed" due to the accused students' anti-disciplinary activities, including illegally occupying dormitories and engaging in violence.

Race against the clock for govt

FROM PAGE 12

meetings with the stakeholders to ensure timely distribution."

Distributing the books on time was a challenge for the previous Awami League government for the past three years as well.

It had failed to deliver over three crore textbooks for classes eight and nine this academic year and in 2022 and 2023; students had to wait till March for all their textbooks.

In 2021, the pandemic had caused a delay in the textbook distribution process.

The newly appointed interim government has decided to revert to the 2012 curriculum instead of continuing with the one introduced in 2022.

It has also decided to remove "exaggerated" historical information or "unnecessary" glorification of any individual in textbooks for the upcoming academic year.

Last year, the government had to print around 31 crore textbooks for the current academic year. However,

because of changes in the curriculum, the number of books increased to 40 crores for 2025.

The Printing Industry Association said that completing all printing by the end of this year is "virtually impossible". It has urged the NCTB to expedite manuscript finalisation and consider relaxing tender conditions to speed up the printing process.

Tofael Khan, president of the Bangladesh Textbook Printing and Marketing Association, said, "NCTB should have a structured plan to ensure timely textbook distribution, but it appears they have fallen short. Given the current situation, delivering all books on the first day of the academic year doesn't seem possible."

He said the NCTB is still revising textbooks under the older curriculum and is yet to issue tenders for classes eight, nine and 10. "However, even if the tenders are issued soon, multiple steps are required before printing can begin."

Tofael further said that this

600 officials to be considered for jt

FROM PAGE 12

To be eligible for promotion to joint secretary, an official must serve at least five years as a deputy secretary, according to the guidelines for officials' promotion. However, the 24th BCS batch officers have already served in the post for over six years.

According to sources, the government also plans to promote deputy secretaries, who joined the BCS administration cadre from other cadres, to joint secretary. This will be done after promoting the officials from the regular batches.

Although the promotion guidelines stipulate that officials who joined the BCS administration cadre service from other cadres should be

promoted alongside their peers from regular BCS batches, this has not happened smoothly.

A total of 194 deputy secretaries feel "deprived" of promotions.

Wishing anonymity, one of those officials said, "The mindset of treating non-admin cadre officials as 'stepbrothers' must change to ensure an unbiased and merit-based public administration. Ensuring promotions following the Public Service Commission's merit list and the seniority of the respective batches is essential."

Around 1,600 officials are currently serving as deputy secretaries against the sanctioned posts of about 1,000.

The public administration ministry's promotion guidelines

time the NCTB is committed to using higher quality paper for the textbooks, which has been a long-standing demand from stakeholders. However, the supply of that paper might be short if all work orders are issued simultaneously, as guidebook publishers typically print during the same period.

He also said there was a lack of coordination within the NCTB, adding that while the new top admin appears committed, they lack experience, and support from lower-ranking officials is inconsistent. "Without better coordination, the NCTB could face further challenges."

NCTB Chairman Prof AKM Reazul Hassan acknowledged the challenges. "Yes, there are hurdles as we are newly appointed in the body, but we're still hopeful of completing the printing within this year."

He said the board is considering relaxing some conditions for smaller printing firms and adding them in the process to speed up printing works.

stipulate that 75 out of every 100 deputy secretary posts has to be filled from the administration cadre officials and the remaining 25 from the officials from other cadres.

Since the interim government took office on August 8, a number of contractual appointments have been made at the senior secretary, cabinet secretary, and principal secretary levels.

As many as 118 senior assistant secretaries have been promoted to deputy secretary, 225 deputy secretaries to joint secretary, and 131 joint secretaries to additional secretary in three phases.

The officials had claimed that they were denied promotions during the Awami League's 16-year rule.

Chief adviser for making Gono Bhaban

FROM PAGE 2

The chief adviser said a replica of the "Aynaghar" where Hasina's notorious security agencies secretly detained hundreds of dissidents and opposition activists should also be built at the museum at the Gono Bhaban.

The "Aynaghar" should remind visitors of the torture inflicted on the

prisoners, he said.

Advisers Adilur Rahman Khan, Nahid Islam, and Asif Mahmud accompanied the chief adviser during the visit.

Prof Yunus asked the advisers to consult with experts on museums.

He told them to finalise proposals for the museum by December.

Nahid, a student leader-turned-adviser, said misdeeds of the Hasina

regime will be portrayed at the museum.

He said they were consulting with foreign experts to know how they constructed memorials commemorating their revolutions and uprisings.

Mahfuj Alam, special assistant to the chief adviser, was also present during the visit.

Abu Sayed

FROM PAGE 1

In case of administrative action, the officers and staffers may be terminated or suspended, said the VC.

Abu Sayed, a 12th batch BRU student, was shot dead by police during a student-led protest on July 16. His killing intensified the student movement demanding reforms in the quota system in government jobs that toppled the Hasina regime on August 5.

On August 18, Sayed's elder brother Ramzan Ali filed a murder case, naming 17 suspects.

The university authorities formed a committee to find those involved in the killing. VC Shawkat yesterday disclosed the probe body's findings that were presented before the syndicate meeting.

"The syndicate has decided to file cases against them [72 students, two teachers, and seven officers and staffers]," Shawkat told The Daily Star.

The probe body earlier issued notice requesting the 81 to appear before the committee and submit their statements.

None of the teachers, officers and staffers has so far approached the committee. Several students appeared before the body and made their statements, the VC said.

The two teachers are Moshir Rahman, of the mathematics department, and Asaduzzaman Mandol Asad, of the public administration department, also former general secretary of BRU Teachers Association.

Meanwhile, the BRU syndicate yesterday also decided to ban politics of its teachers, officers and staffers.

"The decision was made to keep the university free from any chaos and anarchy," the VC added.

"Neither any teacher nor any officer and employee of this university will be allowed to be involved with any political party and join political activities. If anyone's involvement with any political party is found, they will be suspended."

Earlier, on August 12, BRU banned student politics on the campus.

Over 100 teachers, officials, employees and students of the university have been remaining absent from their offices and classes since the death of Sayed on July 16, said the VC.

Some of the teachers, officers and employees sent multiple letters seeking leave, but the BRU authorities did not grant their leaves.

Carbon cuts 'miles short' of 2030 goal

WMO warns

AFP, Paris

Greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere reached new record highs in 2023, the UN warned yesterday, with countries falling "miles short" of what is needed to curb devastating global warming.

Levels of the three main greenhouse gases all increased yet again last year, said the World Meteorological Organization, the UN's weather and climate agency. Carbon dioxide was accumulating in the atmosphere faster than ever, up more than 10 percent in two decades, it added.

And a separate report by UN climate change found that barely a dent is being made in the 43 percent emissions cut needed by 2030 to avert the worst of global warming.

UKRAINE WAR

N Korean unit deployed to Russia's Kursk region: Nato

REUTERS, Brussels

Nato Secretary General Mark Rutte said yesterday he could confirm that North Korean troops have been sent to Russia and that North Korean military units have been deployed to the Kursk region.

"The deepening military cooperation between Russia and North Korea is a threat to both Indo-Pacific and Euro-Atlantic security," Rutte told reporters after Nato officials received a briefing from a South Korean delegation.

Meanwhile, Russia said it took another village in eastern Ukraine, south of the city of Pokrovsk where its forces have been advancing for months. Moscow's forces, outnumbering and outgunning Ukrainian army, advanced fast towards Pokrovsk since summer.



Palestinians gather to buy bread from a bakery, amid the Israel-Hamas conflict, in Khan Younis in the southern Gaza Strip yesterday. The amount of international aid entering Gaza has plummeted to its lowest level all year, according to UN data, while a global hunger monitor has also warned of a looming famine.

PHOTO: REUTERS

Iran to 'use all available tools' to respond to attack

Tehran warns Israel

AGENCIES

Tehran will "use all available tools" to respond to Israel's weekend attack on military targets in Iran, Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesperson Esmail Baghaei said yesterday.

Iran previously played down Israel's air attack on Saturday, saying it caused only limited damage, while US President Joe Biden called for a halt to escalation that has raised fears of an all-out conflagration in the Middle East.

Speaking at a weekly televised news conference, Baghaei said: "(Iran) will use all available tools to deliver a definite and effective response to the Zionist regime (Israel)".

The nature of Iran's response depends on the nature of the Israeli attack, Baghaei added, without elaborating. Earlier in the day, top commander of Iran's Revolutionary Guards had warned Israel it would face "bitter consequences" after its attack on Iranian military sites.

Guards chief Hossein Salami, quoted by Tasnim news agency, said Israel had "failed to achieve its ominous goals" with its air raids on Saturday.

Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei said on Sunday that Iranian officials should determine how best to demonstrate Iran's power to Israel, adding that the Israeli attack should "neither be downplayed nor exaggerated".

ISRAEL'S NORTH GAZA ASSAULT

100,000 residents trapped: Palestinians

REUTERS, Cairo

Israeli tanks thrust deeper into two north Gaza towns and a historic refugee camp yesterday, trapping around 100,000 civilians, the Palestinian emergency service said, in what the military said were operations to root out regrouping Hamas militants.

The Israeli military said soldiers captured around 100 suspected Hamas members in a raid into Kamal Adwan hospital in the Jabalia camp. Hamas and medics have denied any militant presence at the hospital.

The Gaza Strip's health ministry said at least 19 people were killed by Israeli airstrikes and bombardment yesterday, 13 of them in the north of the shattered coastal territory.

The Palestinian Civil Emergency Service said around 100,000 people were marooned in Jabalia, Beit Lahiya and Beit Hanoun without medical or food supplies.

The death toll from Israel's retaliatory air and ground onslaught in Gaza has reached 43,020, the Gaza health ministry said in an update yesterday,

with the densely populated enclave widely reduced to rubble.

The emergency service said its operations had ground to a halt because of the three-week-long Israeli assault back into the north, an area where the military said it had wiped out viable Hamas combat forces earlier in the year-long offensive.

As talks led by the US, Egypt and Qatar to broker a ceasefire resumed on Sunday after multiple abortive attempts, Egypt's president proposed an initial two-day truce to exchange four Israeli hostages of Hamas for some Palestinian prisoners, to be followed by talks within 10 days on a permanent ceasefire.

There was no public comment from Israel or Hamas, who have stuck to irreconcilable conditions for ending the war.

Gaza's offensive has kindled wider Middle East conflict, raising fears of global instability, with Israeli forces invading south Lebanon to stop Hezbollah rocketing northern Israel in support of fellow Iran-backed militant group Hamas in Gaza.

The death toll from Israel's retaliatory air and ground onslaught in Gaza has reached 43,020

BAPEX Bangladesh Petroleum Exploration and Production Company Limited (BAPEX)
BAPEX Bhaban, 4, Kawran Bazar C/A
Dhaka-1215
www.bapex.com.bd

Number: 28.09.0000.033.99.007.20.97 Date: 28 Oct 2024

Notice

Subject: Extension of Tender Document Selling, Tender Submission & Closing Date.

Tender No.	Last selling date of tender document	Tender closing date & time	Tender opening date & time
BAPEX/ADMIN/INT/TEN-1259/2024	15.00 Hrs. (BST) on 17.12.2024 instead of 03.11.2024	11.00 Hrs. (BST) on 18.12.2024 instead of 04.11.2024	11.30 Hrs. (BST) on 18.12.2024 instead of 04.11.2024

All other terms & conditions of these tender will remain unchanged.

GD-814 **General Manager (Administration)**

Trump

FROM PAGE 12

1798 Alien Enemies Act law to deport immigrants with criminal records.

A long list of opening speakers varied widely from former pro wrestler Hulk Hogan to former New York City Mayor Rudy Giuliani to Trump's sons Eric and Don Jr.

Some used racist and misogynistic language in warming up a capacity crowd.

Giuliani, a former personal lawyer to Trump, falsely claimed that Harris was "on the side of the terrorists" in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Government of the people's Republic of Bangladesh
Bangladesh Meteorological Department
Storm Warning Center
E-24, Agargaon, Dhaka-1207
www.bmd.gov.bd

No. 23.09.2680.174.07.020.24.2880 Date: 28 October 2024

e-Tender Notice

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 Documents of following packages from the National e-GP system portal have to be deposited online through any registered Bank branches.

Sl. No	Package Description	Tender ID	Package No.	Tender/Proposal document last Selling date & time	Last date & time for Tender/Proposal security Submission	Tender/Proposal closing & opening date & time
1.	Supply of Caustic Soda Flakes & Ferrosilicon	1029066	Chemical/2024-2025	11-Nov-2024 13.00	11-Nov-2024 14.00	11-Nov-2024 15.00

Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP system portal (<http://www.helpdesk.eprocure.gov.bd/>)

(Dr. Md. Shameem Hassan Bhuiyan)
Deputy Director (Current Charge)
Phone: 41025720

GD-811

গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার

সংস্কৃতি বিষয়ক মন্ত্রণালয়
বাংলাদেশ সচিবালয়, ঢাকা
www.moca.gov.bd

দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি

১.	মন্ত্রণালয়	: সংস্কৃতি বিষয়ক মন্ত্রণালয়
২.	সংস্থা	: সংস্কৃতি বিষয়ক মন্ত্রণালয়
৩.	দরপত্র আহ্বানকারীর নাম ও ঠিকানা	: সহকারী সচিব (প্রশাসন), সংস্কৃতি বিষয়ক মন্ত্রণালয়, ঢাকা।
৪.	কাজের নাম	: পেন্সিফিকেশন অনুযায়ী একটি নতুন মাইক্রোবাস (হায়েস) সরবরাহ।
৫.	দরপত্র আহ্বানের সূত্র ও স্মারক	: ৪৩.০০.০০০০.১১১.২৬.০০১.২৪-৩৩০, তারিখ: ২৮ অক্টোবর ২০২৪
৬.	ক্রয়/সংগ্রহ পদ্ধতি	: উন্মুক্ত দরপত্র পদ্ধতি
৭.	বাজেট বরাদ্দের উৎস	: রাজস্ব বাজেট, ২০২৪-২০২৫ অর্থবছর।
৮.	দরপত্র দলিল/সিডিউল বিক্রয়ের সর্বশেষ তারিখ ও সময়	: ১২ নভেম্বর ২০২৪, তারিখ অফিস চলাকালীন পর্বত।
৯.	দরপত্র দলিল/সিডিউল বিক্রয়ের স্থান	: প্রশাসন-১, সংস্কৃতি বিষয়ক মন্ত্রণালয় (ভবন-৬, কক্ষ-১০১০, বাংলাদেশ সচিবালয়, ঢাকা) এবং বাংলা একাডেমি, শাহবাগ, ঢাকা।
১০.	দরপত্র জমা দেয়ার সর্বশেষ তারিখ, সময় ও স্থান	: ১৩ নভেম্বর অক্টোবর ২০২৪, তারিখ বেলা ১.০০ ঘটিকা। প্রশাসন-১, সংস্কৃতি বিষয়ক মন্ত্রণালয় (ভবন-৬, কক্ষ-১০১০, বাংলাদেশ সচিবালয়, ঢাকা) এবং বাংলা একাডেমি, শাহবাগ, ঢাকা।
১১.	দরপত্র খোলার তারিখ ও সময়	: ১৩ নভেম্বর অক্টোবর ২০২৪, তারিখ বেলা ২.০০ ঘটিকা। প্রশাসন-১, সংস্কৃতি বিষয়ক মন্ত্রণালয় (ভবন-৬, কক্ষ-১০১০, বাংলাদেশ সচিবালয়, ঢাকা) দরদাতাদের উপস্থিতিতে (যদি কেহ উপস্থিত থাকেন)।
১২.	দরপত্র দলিল/সিডিউল মূল্য	: ১,৫০০/- (এক হাজার পাঁচশত) টাকা মাত্র (অন্যত্রয়োধ্য)।
১৩.	সরবরাহযোগ্য মালামালের সংক্ষিপ্ত বিবরণী	: পেন্সিফিকেশন অনুযায়ী একটি নতুন মাইক্রোবাস (হায়েস) সরবরাহ।
১৪.	দরদাতার ন্যূনতম যোগ্যতা	: ক) দরদাতাকে সরবরাহকারী প্রতিষ্ঠান হতে হবে এবং সে মর্মে দরপত্রের সাথে প্রমাণপত্র দাখিল করতে হবে। খ) দরদাতার হালসনের ট্রেড লাইসেন্স, আয়কর সনদ, ভ্যাট রেজিস্ট্রেশন সনদ এবং ব্যাংক স্বাক্ষরিত সনদ-এর সত্যায়িত অনুলিপি দরপত্র দলিল/সিডিউল বিক্রয়ের সময় দেখাতে হবে এবং পরবর্তীতে দরপত্রের সাথে জমা দিতে হবে। গ) দরপত্রের সাথে সচিব, সংস্কৃতি বিষয়ক মন্ত্রণালয়-এর অনুমুখে যে কোন তফসিলী ব্যাংক থেকে দাখিলকৃত দরের ৩% জামানত হিসেবে (ফেরতযোগ্য) পে-অর্ডার/ব্যাংক ড্রাফট সংযুক্ত করতে হবে। ঘ) সরবরাহকারী হিসেবে ন্যূনতম ০৪ (চার) বছরের অভিজ্ঞতা থাকতে হবে। ঙ) সরকারি আধা-সরকারি প্রতিষ্ঠানে গত ০৩ (তিন) বছরে মাইক্রোবাস সরবরাহের ন্যূনতম ০২ (দুই)টি কার্যকর সফলভাবে সম্পাদনের অভিজ্ঞতা থাকতে হবে। প্রতিটি কার্যকর মূল্য হবে ন্যূনতম ৫০.০০ (পঞ্চাশ লক্ষ) লক্ষ টাকা। চ) ন্যূনতম ৫০.০০ (পঞ্চাশ লক্ষ) লক্ষ টাকার ব্যাংক ব্যালেন্স/ক্রেডিট লাইন থাকতে হবে। ছ) শ্রমসম্মত ব্র্যান্ডের মাইক্রোবাস সরবরাহ করতে হবে।
১৫.	দরপত্র আহ্বানকারীর নাম, পদবী ও যোগাযোগের ঠিকানা	: সহকারী সচিব (প্রশাসন), সংস্কৃতি বিষয়ক মন্ত্রণালয়, বাংলাদেশ সচিবালয়, ঢাকা। admin1@moca.gov.bd , ফোন: ৫৫১০০১৯০
১৬.	কর্তৃপক্ষ কোনো কারণ দর্শানো ব্যতিরেকে যে কোনো অথবা সকল দরপত্র বাতিল অথবা গ্রহণের ক্ষমতা সংরক্ষণ করেন।	

মুহাম্মদ মোয়াজ্জেম হোসেন

সহকারী সচিব (প্রশাসন-১)

ফোন: ৫৫১০০১৯০

ইমেইল: admin1@moca.gov.bd

জিডি-৮১০

The Daily Star

FOUNDER EDITOR: LATE S. M. ALI

Improve security in Dhanmondi

Police must ensure safety of residents, restore law and order

We are alarmed by the steady stream of reports on rising mugging and looting incidents in certain parts of Dhaka. Recently, much attention has been focused on criminal activities in Mohammadpur, but troubling accounts from Dhanmondi reveal a similar escalation in this area as well, leading to residents living in fear, particularly after nightfall.

According to a report by *Prothom Alo*, criminals have been openly mugging pedestrians and commuters, sometimes in broad daylight. Certain pockets in Dhanmondi are said to be especially vulnerable, where muggers regularly prowl in search of targets. A collection of CCTV footage of some incidents, recently aired by Jamuna TV, showed criminals ganging up on victims, armed with sharp weapons and, at times, firearms. Take the case of Rasel Ali, a foreign currency dealer who was mugged at Road 8A on the evening of October 19. Four helmet-donning individuals jumped on him, fired blank shots to scare onlookers, and snatched away Tk 50 lakh that he was carrying.

Residents of Dhanmondi have been living with this menace since law and order fell into disarray after the ouster of the Awami League government on August 5. But unlike Mohammadpur, the incidents in Dhanmondi have not garnered as much attention, resulting in limited or lukewarm response from the law enforcement agencies, as per the *Prothom Alo* report. For example, a mother recounted how police refused to register a formal complaint when her school-going son was mugged on Dhanmondi Road 8/1 on September 3.

The police force has reportedly yet to recover from the demoralisation and crisis of confidence caused by the attacks on police stations following the events of August 5, and is consequently failing to do their job properly. This has created a security vacuum that the criminals are exploiting. But this cannot go on. Public safety has been under constant threat due to inadequate police presence on the streets and their tepid response to rising criminal activities.

As we know, following Mohammadpur residents' ultimatum for increasing security measures, the army has set up temporary camps in the area and is conducting joint operations. Dhanmondi, too, deserves appropriate attention from the law enforcement authorities. That said, the involvement of the army is but a temporary fix. To restore law and order effectively, both in Dhaka and nationwide, the police force needs to regain its footing. We reiterate our call to the interim government to ensure urgent provision of necessary resources—such as additional armed vehicles and reinforcements—so that the police can adequately protect the public. If the police wish to regain public trust, they must be proactive in ensuring the safety of all citizens.

We must revitalise home textile sector

Ensure adequate gas supply, resolve dollar crisis

We are concerned about the current state of the home textile sector that has been struggling to regain its lost work orders over the past two years. Reportedly, due to the doubling of gas prices in Bangladesh and a significant devaluation of the Pakistani rupee against the US dollar, many work orders shifted to Pakistan. This shift, combined with a prolonged gas crisis, unstable exchange rates, and rising production costs, has forced numerous factories to shut down, further eroding the sector's competitive edge in the export market. Recent labour unrest and ongoing political instability in the country have worsened the situation further. If these issues are not addressed, the home textile sector will continue to incur losses in the future.

It may be recalled that this sector had experienced notable growth in 2021, with exports surpassing the \$1 billion mark, registering a remarkable 49.17 percent year-on-year increase. That momentum carried over into 2022, with exports rising by another 40-odd percent to \$1.62 billion. However, as the gas crisis intensified, home textile exports—including bedsheets, tents, rugs, etc.—dropped, with earnings falling to \$1.09 billion. In FY 2023-24, exports further declined by 2.05 percent to \$851.01 million, according to the Export Promotion Bureau (EPB). Industry insiders attribute this downturn to the persistent gas crisis that began in early 2023, following the then government's 150.41 percent hike in gas prices, from Tk 11.98 per unit to Tk 30 per unit. With soaring production costs, many exporters were unable to secure new orders, leading to a shift of international business to Pakistan.

To revitalise the sector, the government must prioritise uninterrupted gas supply to home textile mills so that they can operate at full capacity. As home textile production relies heavily on gas for processes like running steam boilers and dyeing fabrics, the sector's energy needs cannot be sustainably met by imported gas alone. It is crucial, therefore, for the government to explore and develop domestic gas fields rather than relying solely on imports. Unlike Pakistan, which produces much of its own raw materials, Bangladesh depends on external markets, making the ongoing dollar crisis an additional hurdle. That needs to be resolved, too.

We urge the government to take necessary steps to stabilise the sector and support its needs. Doing that will not only help the home textile sector recover but also secure its long-term position in the global market.

THIS DAY IN HISTORY



China ends one-child policy

On this day in 2015, it was announced that China was ending its one-child policy; beginning in 2016, couples could have two children.

12 steps to tame inflation



MACRO MIRROR

Dr Fahmida Khatun is executive director at the Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD) and non-resident senior fellow of the Atlantic Council. Views expressed in this article are the author's own.

FAHMIDA KHATUN

Inflation is a pressing issue in Bangladesh, and controlling it is crucial for maintaining economic stability, preserving purchasing power, and fostering sustainable growth. It has been rising for too long, however. Ten years ago, in September 2014, point-to-point general inflation was 6.84 percent, and food inflation was 7.63 percent, which rose to 9.92 percent and 10.40 percent, respectively, in September 2024 (Monthly Economic Trends, Bangladesh Bank). So, over this 10-year period, general inflation increased by 45 percent, while food inflation rose by over 36 percent.

On the other hand, the average monthly income from employment across 10 different categories increased from Tk 11,493 in 2013 to Tk 13,669 in 2022, representing an increase of 18.93 percent (Labour Force Survey, Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics). This discrepancy highlights the severe pressure that inflation has been placing on low- and fixed-income groups.

Of course, the previous government can be blamed for failing to control inflation. It was slow to take proactive measures, such as implementing monetary and fiscal policies to counter it. Now, expectations from the interim government are mounting as prices have yet to show signs of reduction. And the Bangladesh Bank has increased policy rates to tighten the money supply.

However, relying solely on monetary policy to control inflation will not be effective in Bangladesh. Clearly, where market inefficiencies and mismanagement prevail, the monetary policy cannot function optimally. Oligopolistic behaviour and market manipulation disrupt the natural balance of supply and demand, which typically helps stabilise prices. We have seen prices rise for domestically produced goods even when supply has been adequate, often due to the influence of syndicates creating artificial shortages to maximise profits. So, addressing these behaviours is critical.

During the previous government, rent seeking by organised groups, including local party cadres, was common. Law enforcement personnel were also known to extort money from vehicles transporting goods from various districts to marketplaces. Another issue was the deliberate creation of artificial shortages by syndicates. Unfortunately, even now, such malpractices are prevalent. True,

recent floods in several parts of the country have affected production, but government imports of certain commodities have not brought down prices, indicating that these malpractices continue to play a significant role in driving prices up.

In light of the high inflation and continuous erosion of purchasing power, the interim government must take all possible measures to provide relief to the public. There are 12 issues that policymakers should consider for short- and medium-term action on inflation.

First, fiscal and monetary policies must be coordinated to tackle inflation effectively. For much of the previous fiscal year, the monetary policy was expansionary, while



Over the last 10-year period, general inflation increased by 45 percent, while food inflation rose by over 36 percent.

FILE PHOTO: AFP

government spending remained high. Moreover, the non-performing loans (NPL) in banks have been continuously increasing, with a part of it potentially entering the market. Additionally, the previous government relied heavily on borrowing from both the central bank and commercial banks. This over-dependence on Bangladesh Bank to meet the budget deficit was evident in 2023. In such a situation, Bangladesh Bank struggled to control inflation effectively, as it had become a lender to the government. Therefore, tightening monetary policy alone is insufficient to control inflation. A more comprehensive approach integrating both fiscal discipline and monetary tightening is essential to achieve meaningful results.

Second, high indirect taxes on

imported goods, often passed on to consumers, should be reduced or withdrawn. Recently, the interim government reduced import taxes on a few items, including rice. It must be ensured that the benefits of reduced import tariffs are passed on to consumers. Given that Bangladesh's tax-to-GDP ratio is low, the tax department is hesitant to forgo import taxes. However, streamlining the tax system and improving compliance could enhance government revenue, supporting more sustainable fiscal policies.

Third, the quality of public spending must be improved and reoriented towards more urgent issues. Energy subsidies are particularly harmful from both financial and environmental perspectives. Therefore, more funds should be allocated to social safety net programmes and climate adaptation. Since food comprises a large portion of household expenditure for poor families, high inflation has worsened their socioeconomic conditions, pushing many towards and even below the poverty level. Therefore, subsidy reform programmes are crucial for reallocating resources to protect the

poor from rising prices. Of course, transparency and accountability are essential to ensure that such support reaches the right beneficiaries.

Fourth, prudent foreign exchange reserve management is crucial to maintain the stability of the taka. The depreciation of the taka against the US dollar has contributed to rising inflation by increasing import costs. Enhanced competitiveness among Bangladeshi exporters can increase foreign currency inflows, which would support the taka. Controlling capital flight is also an important step to stabilise the currency and reduce inflationary pressures from imported goods.

Fifth, food distribution through initiatives such as Open Market Sales (OMS) and Food Friendly Programme (FFP) should be enhanced.

Sixth, cash support for vulnerable populations should be increased.

Seventh, since food inflation significantly contributes to overall inflation, agricultural production should be promoted through modern techniques and technologies to increase productivity and food supply. Improvements in rural infrastructure, such as roads and storage facilities, can reduce post-harvest losses and enhance supply chain efficiency, helping to stabilise food prices. Farmers should also be provided with financial and technical support to build resilience to price fluctuations and increase agricultural output.

Eighth, reducing supply chain disruptions is essential to curb inflation. Increased investments in logistics and transportation infrastructure can enhance supply chain efficiency, reducing costs and inflationary pressures.

Ninth, to mitigate supply shocks of essential commodities, the government should expand its trade partnerships. Timely imports of essential items can prevent sudden crises that lead to exorbitant prices.

Tenth, the government should ensure sufficient procurement from farmers at fair prices. This can help reduce inflation by increasing market efficiency, stabilising prices, and guaranteeing fair returns for farmers.

Eleventh, improving the connection between growers and markets is essential. By engaging directly with markets, farmers can obtain better returns since intermediary margins are eliminated, which also reduces consumer prices.

Twelfth, digital platforms, such as e-commerce websites and mobile apps, can empower farmers by allowing them to connect directly with buyers, bypassing traditional intermediaries. This improves price transparency and reduces reliance on middlemen. Preparations, such as digital literacy training and internet access, will be necessary for this approach.

Therefore, controlling rising inflation in Bangladesh requires a multifaceted approach that combines various policies. This multidimensional approach demands collaboration among multiple ministries and departments, the private sector, farmers, and other stakeholders.

Time to enable Competition Commission to dismantle syndicates



Shuvadeep Paul is attached officer (senior assistant judge) at the law ministry of Bangladesh and a MEXT (YLP) fellow at the Kyushu University in Japan, specialising in competition law. He can be reached at pshuvo97@gmail.com.

SHUVADEEP PAUL

Price fixation of essential commodities has long been an issue in Bangladesh. Although supply is more or less sufficient, consumers continue to suffer from artificially induced shortages and consequent high prices of products. No one can deny the existence of syndicates—groups of businesses manipulating the market—and their role in inflating prices. Although concrete data on price fixing or market syndication is hard to come by, the impact of such activities is quite evident, as reflected in the exorbitant prices of essentials like eggs, onions, rice or potatoes. Besides the agricultural sector, other sectors have also been similarly manipulated by unscrupulous businessmen for undue profits. The question is, who should be responsible for curbing these syndicates? The most logical answer is the Bangladesh Competition Commission (BCC).

Market syndication is not uncommon in the world, and various countries try to combat it through their competition commissions or antitrust agencies using various mechanisms, such as administrative fines, civil

enforcement, criminal prosecution, private enforcement, etc. However, the best enforcement mechanism is one that is suited to the context of the country where it is applied. In Bangladesh, the Competition Act, 2012, authorises the BCC to impose significant administrative fines on cartels, defined in the act as “any person or association of persons who, by explicit or implicit agreement, limit or control or attempt to limit or control the production, distribution, sale, price, or transaction of goods or services to establish a monopoly.”

The BCC can initiate inquiries into alleged cartels either on its own or based on complaints. However, proving such offences remains challenging due to difficulties in gathering evidence as well as a lack of incentives for whistleblowers or information providers.

Hence, the law should incorporate provisions that can address these challenges and encourage information sharing. One widely adopted approach in this regard is the “leniency mechanism” that offers incentives for cartel members who

provide information leading to a successful investigation. More than 60 jurisdictions in the world have been using this mechanism. A leniency programme allows the authorities to accumulate all kinds of information, documents, and communication from one or more cartel members. The evidence collection process is usually cost-effective and reliable. Through this mechanism, any member of a cartel or syndicate can come forward to disclose information to the competition authority, which, if leading to the disruption of the cartel, can earn the informant incentives or full or partial immunity from penalties, as prescribed by a country's law.

For example, we have recently heard of some corporate profiteers creating a market syndicate to control prices of eggs in the country. Allegedly, they control the egg market from the capital by sending a short text or social media message to all wholesalers and traders, informing them about the price they have set for eggs. There is an allegation that they make extra profits by fixing prices under the pretext of supply shortages. So, if an insider comes forward with information that could expose this conspiracy, it could enable the BCC to dismantle the syndicate. In return, the informant could be awarded incentives like full or partial immunity from administrative fines imposed by the BCC. This sort of leniency can be incorporated into the Bangladeshi competition law, and fine reduction guidelines can be adopted based on the standards of international organisations like OECD,

ICN, UNCTAD and ASEAN as well as the best practices followed by countries around the world.

Another timely action that the BCC can take is having its investigation teams conduct “dawn raids”. The approach would allow BCC to enter any premises unannounced to search for evidence of anti-competitive practices. Many countries around the world are applying this strategy to do unannounced inspections in suspicious places or organisations.

Therefore, we urgently need to amend the Competition Act, 2012, and introduce interventions like the “leniency mechanism” and “dawn raids” to strengthen anti-cartel enforcement and protect consumers from the impacts of price manipulation. The BCC should also ensure enacting guidelines or policies suited to Bangladesh's context. Since it is under the Ministry of Commerce, the latter has to oversee the process of these reforms. Moreover, the BCC should solicit opinions and advice from experts, judges, administrative authorities, and other stakeholders to ensure effective policy creation and advocacy.

Ultimately, we must bolster our competition commission's authority to help dismantle the market syndicates, monopolies, and cartels. Modern anti-cartel enforcement mechanisms are necessary and should be introduced without delay to provide much-needed relief for our consumers and ensure fair market practices across the economy.

‘Corruption is hijacking our development process’

Md Shamsul Hoque, professor of civil engineering at the Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (BUET), talks about the inefficiencies, corruption, and other obstacles plaguing development projects in Bangladesh’s transportation sector in an interview with Monorom Polok of The Daily Star.

Why are our development projects so costly and time-consuming?

The primary issue is the influence of a powerful syndicate formed during the previous government’s tenure. This syndicate is a well-organised network of beneficiaries that do not want to make projects cost-effective because they directly profit from inflated budgets. The larger the project, the greater the hidden profits for them, allowing them to easily conceal their earnings. Directly or indirectly, they benefit from keeping projects costly and inefficient.

This syndicate doesn’t want to take advice, no matter how much guidance is offered, because reforming the system would threaten their profits. Even if the political leadership changes—say, if BNP replaces Awami League—only their political portfolio would change, meaning the same group of beneficiaries would continue operating. This culture of profiteering through inflated project costs is too embedded to be dismantled easily.

This syndicate doesn’t want to take advice, no matter how much guidance is offered, because reforming the system would threaten their profits. Even if the political leadership changes—say, if BNP replaces Awami League—only their political portfolio would change, meaning the same group of beneficiaries would continue operating. This culture of profiteering through inflated project costs is too embedded to be dismantled easily.

What is your role in the newly formed task force to reframe development strategies, and what do you aim to achieve?

My focus within the committee is infrastructure, while most members bring expertise in economics. From my experience, I can say with certainty that unless we dismantle or overhaul this corrupt system, our development will continue to suffer in



Md Shamsul Hoque

the long run. Given our large population and limited land, unplanned and inefficient infrastructure will only worsen the situation.

The situation is especially concerning with regard to the trend of high-cost projects. We are setting world records for expenses, yet corruption is hijacking our development process. Certain groups, both within the government and private sector, benefit from this, and they have no interest in changing the status quo.

Can you give specific examples of mismanagement in current development projects?

A key example is the way our transport sector is structured; political leaders do not want the sector to be well-organised because it would dry up their sources of extortion. The transport system could be streamlined, but doing so would reduce illicit profits that politicians and other influential figures enjoy.

Development projects are similarly riddled with issues. From procurement and contracts to other shady dealings, substantial benefits trickle down to a range of individuals—from politicians and ministers to ministry secretaries. Everyone is in on it. They’ve created a narrative that the country is undergoing massive transformation, but the reality is that self-interest, not public

interest, is driving this transformation.

Take, for instance, Dhaka’s metro system, particularly Metro-6 (from Motijheel to Uttara North). When the metro system was first planned, it was intended to transform public transport in the city, but the costs have since skyrocketed, and the project is taking much longer to complete than initially expected. If you compare our metro costs and timelines to those of similar projects in India and Indonesia, we are spending almost twice as much as India and one-and-a-half times more than Indonesia, with considerably longer completion times.

Why has the metro project’s cost escalated so drastically, and how is this impacting people?

The metro project was supposed to provide affordable and efficient transportation for the public, but that is far from the reality. The costs are now so high that only the middle and upper-middle classes can afford it, excluding the poor who most need affordable options. We should have developed a cost structure that ensures accessibility for all.

Look at cities like Kolkata and Jakarta, where metros were built at much lower costs and in less time. In Dhaka, we’ve gone over our budget and are running behind schedule. When you borrow money in foreign currency

for projects, you need to have a solid business model to repay those loans efficiently, but we seem to have missed that crucial aspect.

The core problem is that the people overseeing these projects are more focused on spending and procurement, which are opportunities for them to make money. They aren’t interested in providing efficient services to the public. This inefficiency results in projects like Metro-6 being far more expensive than necessary.

How can these problems be addressed? What reforms are needed to make future projects more efficient?

First and foremost, we need to dismantle the syndicates and shadow networks profiting from development projects. This requires political will and a fundamental restructuring of how development projects are planned and executed.

We also need to start appointing experts with domain knowledge to lead these projects, rather than individuals who have little understanding of modern public transport or infrastructure systems. If we had professionals who knew how to plan and manage these projects, delays and cost overruns would be significantly reduced.

Another solution is to consider private-sector involvement in certain areas of operation. Many governments no longer rely on civil servants to run complex infrastructure projects because they tend to be less efficient. The private sector can introduce systems that enhance productivity and reduce costs by creating competitive environments where services are delivered more effectively.

For instance, in the mobile phone industry, as more users join, companies reduce rates and offer better services. If we applied the same model to public transport, we could make the metro system more affordable and more efficient over time. Additionally, we should explore other non-operational revenue sources, like commercial development and advertising, which can help subsidise operational costs.

How can Bangladesh balance large capital projects like the metro with more flexible, low-cost solutions?

In a city like Dhaka, where population density is extremely high, focusing solely on a metro system will not solve all our transportation problems. In fact, the current plan for Metro-6 and other future metro lines only serves a small portion of the population.

For example, if we were to invest \$30 billion in a full metro network, it would only serve 17-20 percent of the city’s population. Meanwhile, bus systems, if managed and regulated properly, could serve 40 percent of the population at a fraction of the cost. The 2005 Strategic Transport Plan (STP), which focused on creating an efficient transport system for the city, considered some of these factors. We need to prioritise systems that offer the best return on investment for the majority of the population.

Additionally, we should look into alternatives like light rail and monorail, which are cheaper and more flexible. Light rail, for example, can navigate winding routes and access areas where building a full metro line would be too expensive. These systems are being used successfully in cities like Singapore and Hong Kong, and we should seriously consider them for Dhaka’s unplanned and densely populated areas such as Old Town, Basabo, Mohammadpur, etc.

So, what is the way forward for Dhaka’s public transport system?

We need to think about inclusivity and sustainability. Currently, the metro system mainly benefits those living in certain areas, while large segments of the population, especially those in Dhaka’s eastern and western edges, are excluded. These areas lack public transport options, and building a metro system there would be too costly.

This is where alternatives like monorails and light rail come in. They can be built on smaller infrastructure, like narrow pillars, and have a much smaller footprint, making them more suitable for areas with limited space. These systems would provide affordable transport options to millions of people who are currently left out.

Ultimately, we need to move away from the mindset that only big, expensive projects are the solution. By investing in a mix of transport modes—metros, buses, light rail—we can create a transport ecosystem that works for everyone, not just the elite.

If we continue as we are, we risk creating a system that serves a small portion of the population while draining the country’s resources. Maintenance costs will skyrocket, revenue will fall short, and eventually, these projects could become financial burdens or “white elephants.” The time to make thoughtful, data-driven decisions is now. Without it, future generations will bear the brunt of today’s mistakes.

Making the climate change battle inclusive



Farah Kabir is the country director of ActionAid Bangladesh.

FARAH KABIR

Climate change is a global crisis. Raising awareness is not enough; we must provide people with the information and tools to combat the effects of climate change. It is fundamental to engage in activism, campaigns, and advocacy and organise dialogues and conferences to discuss how to reduce the effects of climate change. To be effective and truly transformative, respect for and promotion of gender equality, women’s rights, marginalised groups, youth leadership and indigenous community must be central to climate action.

Participation in climate and environmental decision-making is a human right and the equal participation of people belonging to all genders generates more effective and sustainable outcomes. Women are underrepresented when it comes to decision-making regarding climate negotiations. At COP 28, there were only 34 percent of women across all national delegations, compared to 31 percent at COP 14 in 2008. Only two percent of the delegations at COP 28 had an equal number of men and women, while 79 percent had more men than women, representing the ongoing disparity in women’s participation in climate negotiations.

Besides, there is still the Sustainable Development Goals financing gap estimated at \$4 trillion annually for developing countries, with the Global South being affected disproportionately. Loss and damage are closely related to the concept of “just transition” and equity because the world’s most climate-vulnerable countries are often the lowest contributors to climate change, yet heavily affected by it. With COP 29 ahead, there is an urgent need to agree on a new climate finance goal of \$5 trillion

annually to address climate loss and damage. This climate finance should be channelled through well-planned and targeted actions with transparency and accountability. Global leaders should come forward and commit to addressing issues needed to combat climate change and to support the countries that are more vulnerable and prone to natural disasters occurring as a result of climate change.

Meanwhile, fossil fuel burning must be prohibited to avoid the worst impacts of the climate crisis. Over \$677 billion in subsidies is being poured into fossil fuel and industrial agriculture sectors annually, fuelling greenhouse gas emissions. Developed countries are the primary beneficiaries of these

Over \$677 billion in subsidies is being poured into fossil fuel and industrial agriculture sectors annually, fuelling greenhouse gas emissions. Developed countries are the primary beneficiaries of these subsidies, which are contributing to global temperature rise and biodiversity loss.

subsidies, which are contributing to global temperature rise and biodiversity loss. The energy demand has increased worldwide due to economic advancement and development and a major part of the energy demand is met by fossil fuels. Although Bangladesh

has remained resilient, natural resources are depleting rapidly and negatively impacting the environment which is accelerating climate change, therefore making it crucial to reduce the dependency on fossil fuels and slow down climate change to build a habitable world for future generations.

Moreover, in Bangladesh, 40 percent of the population lacks access to safe water, highlighting the urgent need for action. It

solutions. Involving women in developing funding criteria and resource allocation helps prioritise projects that directly benefit communities, and enhance resilience and adaptive capacity. When women and minorities participate actively in shaping technologies and solutions, we foster creativity and innovation that are essential for tackling climate challenges. This needs to happen at global climate discussions and at



The unique perspectives and experiences of the youth must be incorporated into climate change policies to address the diverse impacts of climate change on different communities.

PHOTO COURTESY: ACTIONAID BANGLADESH

is crucial to acknowledge how vulnerable populations, particularly women, are disproportionately affected by water-related crises. With limited access to resources and decision-making power, women have to encounter challenges that are different in nature from those faced by men. It is reported that women starve during a disaster when there is a crisis and food shortage to feed their children and other family members. Women are exposed to new forms of risks when they have to move to flood or cyclone shelters. Displaced women and girls who move to temporary shelters or embankments are in even higher risk categories with reports of child marriage or trafficking. Women’s empowerment in climate action is crucial for creating effective and sustainable

national levels.

The other aspect that is necessary to incorporate is the unique perspectives and experiences of the youth which can lead to innovative approaches for addressing the diverse impacts of climate change on different communities. Equity and youth leadership are important for the future and the government should plan to invest in these areas. Similarly, Indigenous communities deeply connected to the land suffer disproportionate impacts, highlighting the importance of Indigenous knowledge and rights in conservation efforts. People with disabilities also face unique challenges in climate-related disasters, necessitating inclusive emergency planning and infrastructure to address accessibility barriers and health conditions worsened

by environmental changes. Empowering marginalised groups enables their meaningful participation in decision-making processes and ensures equitable access to resources and opportunities.

Bangladesh has been resilient in the face of formidable climate challenges. There is no question that a collaborative spirit unites Bangladesh to protect and strengthen communities against climate adversities. However, the inclusion and integration of different perspectives into national policies and sustainable development plans must be focused on, in order to guarantee that the needs and knowledge of the underrepresented are recognised and addressed, leading to more equitable and effective climate interventions.

Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC) embody governments’ commitments to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and adapt to climate change. If designed effectively, NDCs, alongside the voluntary National Adaptation Plan (NAP), can provide an effective framework to guide gender-responsive national climate action and include it in Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) and disaster response as well. Unfortunately, when we dived deeper, we found that most climate strategies across South Asia remain gender-blind, pointing to the stark reality that as climate disasters cause devastation across the region, women, girls, youth and other marginalised groups continue to be overlooked, excluded and left behind in government responses.

We need to ensure an intersectional approach to climate action that incorporates the needs and priorities of women and girls, youth, marginalised groups, and Indigenous communities. Existing and new policies should reflect and address issues of climate justice in terms of budget and allocation that is gender-sensitive and gender-responsive. Incorporating gender considerations and insights of youth, Indigenous and marginalised groups into new climate policies and frameworks, will pave the way to foster synergies between gender equality, climate action, and sustainable development, leading to more cohesive and effective policy responses.

Can a hybrid workplace model save Dhaka from losing work hours?

A hybrid workplace paradigm offers employees freedom and support by combining in-person and remote work. More autonomy and a better work-life balance increase employee engagement in a mixed workplace. Employers gain from developing a more dependable, productive, and healthier workforce.

ESRAT SADIYA

If you are a working individual, you may have also complained about the terrible traffic in Dhaka when commuting to work lately. The persistent heat and terrible rain have exacerbated the situation. Bangladesh is squandering over 82 lakh working hours every day, according to a recent BSS News article. Dhaka's traffic congestion is expected to cost the economy \$6.5 billion a year in lost productivity, fuel waste, and health costs, according to the BUET-run Accident Research Institute (ARI). This indirectly reduces the country's GDP by 6 to 10 percent yearly.

Ahmad Saif, an employee from a tech-based sister concern of a well-known airline, claims that the gridlock and hours of waiting in traffic from Mirpur to Tejgaon-Gulshan Link Road wear him out and reduce his productivity. Not only him, but every worker will be aware of the pressing problem; this is not an isolated incident.

What potential solution is there for this issue? What are some strategies to increase output while decreasing time? The solution lies in the idea of a hybrid workplace.

A hybrid workplace paradigm offers employees freedom and support by combining in-person and remote work. More autonomy and a better work-life balance increase employee engagement in a mixed workplace. Employers gain from developing a more dependable, productive, and healthier workforce.

Recent global surveys highlight that a significant majority of high-growth companies have adopted hybrid work models. An international survey highlighted that 63% of high-growth companies have adopted hybrid work models. In these transformative times, such strategies are not mere luxuries but necessities. A recent BBC report states that between 2020 and 2022, more than half

of Iceland's workforce had accepted the offer of reduced hours, including four-day work weeks. By last year, Iceland's economy expanded by an impressive 5%, outpacing most European countries.

According to the research by Iceland's Association for Sustainability and Democracy (Alda), key findings into these reduced work hours paint a compelling picture. 62% of workers on reduced hours reported being more satisfied with their schedules. On the economic end, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) noted Iceland's strong economic performance, highlighting its exceptional growth rate compared to European peers, despite the global economic challenges facing other nations.

Is this model, though, relevant to every industry, and particularly in Bangladesh? According to Ahmad, this will be tremendously beneficial for tech-related businesses. "It will be more efficient for us to complete our task in three days while working from home for two days. This will save us time and energy and ultimately boost our productivity. Also, if offices

coordinate and allow employees to attend in-person offices on alternating days, traffic can be considerably reduced."

It does, however, have some drawbacks. "It is not practical for production and

sales-based businesses like us", according to A S M Sadman Sakib, Deputy Manager of Production at a reputable global corporation. "Even if all of our machines are fully automated, we still need to work in person. On the other hand, if we can develop a workforce capable of concurrently maintaining operations during our absence, we see the potential to transition to a somewhat hybrid approach."

There are a few drawbacks to working-from-home adoption. These include inadequate infrastructure, unreliable internet access, loneliness, excessive screen time, an unbalanced work-life schedule owing to irregular work hours, low employee engagement, and a decreased sense of camaraderie among coworkers. Conversely, it gives workers more freedom to spend time with their families and has also encouraged companies to realise that many tasks can be completed just as well from home.

However, the question still stands: given the benefits and drawbacks of the hybrid workplace model in a city like Dhaka where

traffic congestion greatly reduces productivity at work and costs time, could a well-balanced hybrid approach help to truly improve work-life balance while also increasing productivity? Time will tell.



ILLUSTRATION: ZARIF FAIAZ

JOBS SPOTLIGHT

UNDP

Youth Engagement Analyst

Deadline: November 1

Eligibility:

Master's degree or equivalent in Law, Public Administration, Political Science, Economics, Development Studies, Public Policy, International Relations, Human Rights, or any other relevant field.

Minimum experience: 2-4 years



Standard Chartered Bank



Analyst, Credit Initiation

Deadline: October 30

Eligibility:

University degree with a major in Business Administration, Finance, Accounting, Economics, or related disciplines.

Minimum experience: 1-2 years

Wipro

Operations Support System Engineer



Deadline: N/A

Eligibility:

Bachelor of Science (BSc) in CS/ CSE with experience in application management in a large organisation.

Minimum experience: 3-5 years

Pathao

Senior Software Engineer (Backend)



Deadline: October 30

Eligibility:

Prior experience in backend development, with a strong focus on PHP and related frameworks (Laravel, Symfony, etc.).

Minimum experience: 5 years

FOR MORE DETAILS AND THE APPLICATION LINKS, SCAN THE QR CODE BELOW.



"If everyone is moving forward together, then success takes care of itself."

HENRY FORD

Driving sustainable growth in Bangladesh's garment sector through local service providers

MAISHA ISLAM MONAMEE

The RMG sector remains one of the most significant sectors in the economy of Bangladesh, employing millions and contributing substantially to GDP. Industry leaders have been increasingly aware of the need for improvement in workforce skills, productivity, and inclusion, particularly at the entry and semiskilled levels. This realisation has driven collaboration with international agencies, local consultancy firms, and garment factories themselves to explore customised training programs that address the same with sustainability.

Historically, factories in Bangladesh have depended on international consultancy firms to deliver customised, workplace-based training programs, which, although effective, came at a high operational cost. The high cost of training services has often deterred smaller factories from providing training to upskill their workforce. One might ask, if there is demand for such services, why haven't local firms ramped up efforts to offer them? The answer lies in the significant risk and investment required to launch such services, which many local consultancy firms lack the capacity to undertake. To address this challenge, the Building Youth Employability Through Skills (BYETS) project by Swisscontact began collaborating with local consultancy firms, first by building their capacity to deliver high quality training and sharing financial risk as they reach out to various factories to market their services.

The initiative has a twofold objective: first, to foster an environment where local firms can build stronger reputations, networks, and service sales with factories; and second, to increase factories' awareness of the service packages offered by local providers, ultimately reducing the industry's reliance on foreign consultants and lowering operational costs. Local consultancies are also seeing their business expand dramatically through these programmes, earning the trust of factories and building networks that facilitate further development opportunities.

Jamshed Al Zubaidi, Project Manager at Triangulum, a local firm that partnered with the project, says,

"Collaborating with the BYETS project has allowed us to share risks and establish a dedicated training services wing within the RMG sector. By expanding our outreach to Tier 1 and Tier 2 RMG factories, we have gained valuable exposure within the industry."

For workers, it is transformative, too. Belal Hossain, a master trainer at Karim Textiles Limited, spoke about how the moment he went through this training programme was a turning point in his career. "I started off as a senior operator only a year ago," he said, "but after the training, everything changed." Hossain and five colleagues from the company underwent intensive training that equipped them to train ten batches of factory employees to become master trainers. "Eight of these batches were related to technical skills, while two offered a multiskilled approach," he explained.

Currently, seven local consultancy service providers are delivering training on Sewing Methodology Training (SMT), Low Performance Improvement (LPI), and Productivity Improvement in 22 factories across the Dhaka and Chittagong divisions, with a target to reach 40 factories by the end of 2026. Several providers have already reported developing new service packages for these factories since they began collaborating with BYETS.

The demand for consultancy-led, workforce-oriented training mirrors a bigger industry movement toward greater inclusion and sustainability. Factories that have adopted these training models talk of measurable improvements in productivity and product quality and overall worker morale. Industry leaders believe that such initiatives not only address the immediate operational needs but also lay the foundation for a much more resilient and adaptive workforce moving forward as the sector evolves.

With that prospect of continued development and the implantation of digital learning solutions, these local service providers are expected to extend their reach and ensure training access, even in the most remote regions. This model shows how industry-wide collaborations can strengthen local consultancies, advance the workforce, and place Bangladesh's RMG sector at the forefront of sustainable and inclusive growth.

Microsoft CEO Satya earned \$79.1 million in 2024, filings reveal

NEXT STEP DESK

Microsoft CEO Satya Nadella's annual compensation rose significantly to \$79.1 million for fiscal year 2024, marking a 63% increase from the previous year. The increase, disclosed in a company filing last week, is attributed primarily to stock awards, which surged as Microsoft's market valuation surpassed \$3 trillion.

Nadella's stock-based compensation grew to approximately \$71 million, up from \$39 million in 2023. His total earnings in fiscal 2023



OpenAI.

In addition to stock awards, Nadella received a cash incentive of \$5.2 million, less than the \$10.7 million he was eligible for. The CEO reportedly requested a reduction in light of several cybersecurity breaches reported during the fiscal year.

Nadella's compensation ranks high among leading tech executives. For comparison, Apple's CEO Tim Cook earned \$63.2 million in 2023, while Nvidia CEO Jensen Huang, whose company dominates the AI-chip market, received \$34.2 million for fiscal 2024.

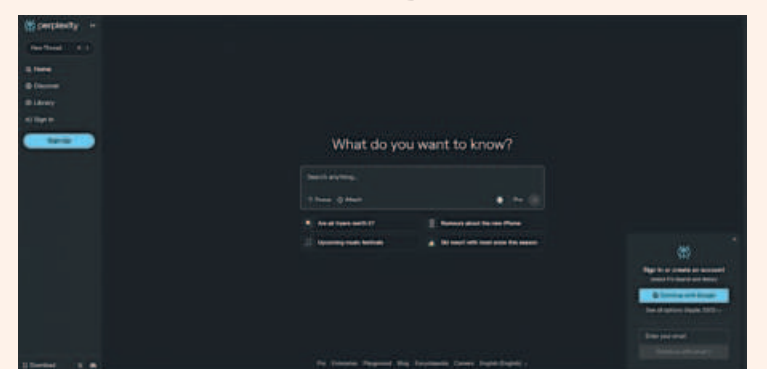
were reported at \$48.5 million. Microsoft's shares gained 31.2% in the fiscal year ending 30 June 2024, a boost driven partly by the company's strategic investment in

Perplexity AI in talks to raise valuation to \$8 billion in new funding round

NEXT STEP DESK

Perplexity AI, the artificial intelligence company backed by Jeff Bezos, has entered fundraising talks to more than double its valuation to over \$8 billion, according to a report by The Wall Street Journal. The company is reportedly seeking to raise around \$500 million in the new funding round.

This potential increase in valuation comes as Perplexity AI continues to attract investor interest. The company, which is also backed by Nvidia, has seen rapid growth, with its estimated annualised revenue reaching approximately \$50



million based on recent sales figures.

The move signals confidence from investors in Perplexity AI's ability to compete in the rapidly expanding AI industry. The talks

come as artificial intelligence companies worldwide are seeing a surge in demand and investment amid advances in machine learning and AI technologies.

Markram feels 'no pressure' on WTC final chances

SPORTS REPORTER from Chattogram

South Africa's stand-in skipper Aiden Markram is excited by their chances of qualifying for the final of the ICC World Test Championship 2023-25, but feels his side need to take it one game at a time.

The Proteas are currently fifth in the nine-team competition with a point percentage (PCT) of 47.62 after beating Bangladesh in the first Test by seven wickets in Mirpur last week.

South Africa have five games left in the ongoing cycle – the second Test against Bangladesh in Chattogram and a couple of two-Test series against Sri Lanka and Pakistan on home soil.

If they defeat the Tigers and then clean sweep Pakistan and Sri Lanka at home, they would end up with a PCT of 69.44, which is better than the current table leaders India's PCT of 62.82.

Even though the outcomes of other series will also come into play, if South Africa win their next five Tests, chances of them playing the final for the very first time is quite high.



Still, Markram did not want to look too far ahead and wanted to keep their feet on the ground.

"I don't think it really adds pressure for us. It's just an exciting opportunity," the South African opener said in yesterday's press conference in Chattogram, which also experienced a power cut.

"So that's almost how we're trying to view it. Probably still need to win a lot of the remaining matches and we've got five left. Five Test matches is a lot of cricket to be played... We can go session by session, game by game and hopefully give ourselves a good chance," he said, adding that he expects a different wicket in Chattogram compared to Mirpur.

"Just based on the nets, there's slightly true bounce, slightly quicker off the wicket. So, we'll look at the wicket now and come to conclusion regarding the team and things like that. It's slightly different from Dhaka as the venues are different from each other," he said.



In-form Tajjul Islam will look to lead Bangladesh's spin attack once again to stage a comeback in the second Test of the two-match series against South Africa, starting today at the Zahur Ahmed Chowdhury Stadium in Chattogram. However, the Tigers will hope that their batters, including Liton Das, have left their current form in Dhaka where they dished out dismal displays in the first Test.

PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

Tigers pursue revival at unforgiving ZACS

SAMSUL AREFIN KHAN FROM CHATTOGRAM

Bangladesh will look to bounce back in Chattogram during the series concluding second Test against South Africa, scheduled to start today, in an attempt to avoid a series defeat against a SENA country on home soil after 14 years.

After losing the series opener by seven wickets within the fourth day in Dhaka, the Tigers find themselves under serious pressure, and their abysmal track record at the Zahur Ahmed Chowdhury Stadium (ZACS) in recent years leaves little room for optimism.



drawing seven.

The pressure on the Tigers stems not only from their poor batting performance following the successful Pakistan Tests but also from off-field issues. The latest emerged when captain Najmul Hossain Shanto expressed a desire to step down from the role after this series.

Shanto, who had an extended batting practice session in the nets amid scorching heat and humid conditions yesterday, seemingly skipped the pre-match press conference intentionally, prompting team management to send left-arm spinner Tajjul Islam in his place.

Tajjul, who earlier had a playful practice session with spin coach Mushtaq Ahmed – the latter seen batting against Tajjul and uncapped Hasan Murad at the nets – was made uncomfortable by a barrage of questions about Shanto's stance.

Initially, Tajjul avoided commenting on the issue, saying he was unaware of it. Later, however, he admitted that some players may face problems with off-field

issues cropping up right before a match – a quite regular occurrence in Bangladesh cricket over the past year or so.

The left-arm spinner, who crossed 200 Test wickets milestone with eight scalps in the preceding fixture, also addressed that the batters are failing to meet expectations, stressing on the need to convert the starts into big scores and build partnerships.

"To be honest, we are not performing as a unit... Everyone is working hard and trying their heart and soul. But nothing is happening," he said, adding that the team management might field an extra bowler, given the hot weather and expected flat pitch in store.

However, after wicketkeeper-batter Jaker Ali Anik was ruled out of this Test following a concussion sustained during Sunday's training, the team management may field an extra pacer alongside Hasan Mahmud. Bangladesh are also likely to go with a three-pronged spin attack, featuring Tajjul, Mehedi Hasan Miraz, and local boy Nayeem Hasan.

Meanwhile, South Africa are a much-relieved team after ending their decade-long drought of Test wins in the subcontinent. Yet the weather is a concern for them, noted stand-in skipper Aiden Markram, requiring the Proteas to "start from zero" in this contest.

"From a weather point of view, there isn't too much we can do besides hydrating well and making sure to keep our bodies in the healthiest way," Markram said.

"... It's a brand new game... We place emphasis on that, and when we do, not just here but anywhere in the world, we can start on the front foot," he concluded.

Final is a 50-50 game, says Tohura

SPORTS REPORTER

Prior to Bangladesh team's departure for Nepal for the SAFF Women's Championship, there was much hullabaloo over the absence of self-exiled forward Sirat Jahan Swapna, who had made a tremendous contribution to the team's regional title with four goals in 2022.

As replacement for Swapna, the names of younger forwards like Mosammat Sagorika, Shamsunnahar Jr and Saurav Akanda Prityoften emerged while Tohura Khatun hardly grabbed any headlines due to her injury.

But come the 2024 SAFF Women's Championship, the diminutive forward from Kalsindur has hogged all the spotlight with five goals against India and Bhutan and earning player of the match award in both matches as Bangladesh stormed into their second successive final.

With Tohura on fire, the countrymen will be expecting a repeat of her brilliance in the final against Nepal to deliver the back-to-back titles to the country.

"I think the two best sides have come into the final and it will be a 50-50 game. Nepal are a strong opponent and the team that will take their chances will come out victorious. We will give our 100 percent in the final," Tohura told The Daily Star over phone from Kathmandu yesterday.

Out of the five goals, Tohura scored three from outside the box – all left-footed wonders – while the other two were clever finishes from inside the box.

"I actually learnt goal-scoring skill with continued practice. Every player has contribution behind my goals because it is not possible to score five goals in two matches without the support. I think we have been playing good football as a team and my goals are outcomes of the team's overall hard work," said Tohura, whose last goal prior to the current campaign was in a friendly fixture against Singapore in December, 2023.

Tohura has been quite consistent in domestic competition as well, scoring 33 goals in 28 matches of Bangladesh Women's League in the last three seasons. She has many goals in age-group international tournaments as well.

Under the guidance of Peter Butler, the women in red and green have been playing high-line defense and aggressive football by building up attack from both flanks. The players never looked satisfied with a one-goal or a two-goal lead. Instead, they kept pressing, resulting in big wins against India and Bhutan.

Asked to compare between the 2022 and the 2024 squads, Tohura, who had scored one goal in the last campaign, said, "The squad of 2022 was strong because as that team became champions. The current one is a good side too and playing well. I will call it a strong team once we become champions."



Sylhet off the mark, Dhaka on top

SPORTS REPORTER

Sylhet Division cruised to a six-wicket win over Chattogram Division, while defending champions Dhaka Division gained the upper hand against Rangpur Division on the third day of the National Cricket League (NCL) fixtures yesterday.

Resuming the day at 130 for two in their second innings and needing 90 runs to win, Sylhet – who started their campaign with a draw against Dhaka – coasted to victory in 18.1 overs, with Pinak Ghosh (62 not out) guiding the chase at the Sylhet International Stadium Academy Ground.

Meanwhile, Dhaka achieved a handy 74-run lead over Rangpur after being all out for 327 in 90.3 overs at Savar's BKSP Ground-3, courtesy of a 204-run stand between Ashikur Rahman Shibli and Joyraj Sheikh.

Opener Shibli struck his maiden first-class century, a 129-run knock off 186 deliveries, laced with 10 fours and five sixes, before becoming leg-spinner Rishad Hossain's only scalp. Joyraj, on the other hand, fell for 87 before Mukidul Mugdho cleaned up the tail to end with three for 48. At stumps, Rangpur reached 28 for two in 14 overs.

Elsewhere, at Khulna's Sheikh Abu Naser Stadium, Khulna Division declared on 408 for nine against Barishal Division, featuring Anamul Haque Bijoy's 95. Tanvir Islam was Barishal's standout bowler, bagging four wickets for 124 runs.

Barishal, in reply, reached 28 without loss as the four-day encounter gears towards a draw after the opening day saw no play and only 34.2 overs were possible on day two.



Ashikur Rahman Shibli

'We try not to focus too much on history'

Former South Africa captain Ashwell Prince is currently working as the batting coach of his country. The 47-year-old had previously worked with Bangladesh as a batting consultant from August 2021 to February 2022, but resigned from his position with nine months still left on his contract. On Monday, before South Africa's final training session in Chattogram ahead of their second Test against hosts Bangladesh, Prince talked to The Daily Star's Samsul Arefin Khan. The excerpts of the interview are as follows:

The Daily Star (DS): This South Africa side is relatively younger to the ones that have toured Bangladesh before. How do you see their growth as a unit?

Ashwell Prince (AP): It's a young team in terms of Test cricket. But if you look at the experience they have as cricketers, they aren't that young. They haven't toured the sub-continent a lot and they haven't been to Bangladesh before. But they have been around first-class and professional cricket for a long time. We try to use all of that experience and plug it into the situation we are facing.

DS: On a hostile wicket in Mirpur, your batting unit performed brilliantly in the first Test, which helped your side win their first Test in Asia in 10 years. How satisfied are you with their performance?

AP: There are a few factors that we are encouraged about. Kyle Verreynne played really well and scored his second Test hundred. [Wian] Mulder played really well, scoring his highest Test score. Obviously, at some stages of the innings, we were under pressure. But the way the guys reacted under pressure, that's really encouraging.

DS: How did you prepare the batters for this series, where you would play two Tests on two very different surfaces in Dhaka and Chattogram.

AP: The preparation was very much the same. The guys focused on their strengths, they focused on how to score runs rather than to survive. We knew that Mirpur will be a certain challenge. Having said that, every batting innings starts on zero for every individual. When you start your innings, you have to assess the condition and see what you are able



to do in those particular conditions. So, we try not to focus too much on history.

DS: South Africa are currently fifth in the World Test Championship standings. How do you view your chances of playing the final?

AP: Obviously, winning a Test match had a positive effect on our position. We moved

up a few places. But then New Zealand won [against India] and they went ahead of us again. So, that will always change as long as the matches keep happening. But from our point of view, we want to keep ourselves in a position where it is in our hands. We don't want to be dependent on others.

DS: Kyle Verreynne and some others used sweeps and reverse-sweeps to good effect in the first Test. Is that part of South Africa's strategy to counter the Bangladesh spinners?

AP: When you are going to the middle, you have to express your skillset. And if it means using sweeps and reverse-sweeps, it's not as if they are doing it because they have no other options. Those are the things that they are good at and we try to encourage the batsmen to play to their strengths.

DS: What are your thoughts on their [Bangladesh] recent struggles?

AP: I think it's a little bit harsh to say they are struggling. They have just come from a tour in Pakistan where they were successful. Batting is hard, I think people need to understand that. Sometimes fans want massive performances every game. It's not always possible. From our point of view, we respect the Bangladesh team and their batting lineup. We have prepared for them to play well, and hopefully we can play a little bit better.



Man Utd sack Ten Hag

AFP, London

Manchester United sacked manager Erik ten Hag on Monday after a disastrous start to the season with former Red Devils striker Ruud van Nistelrooy named interim boss.

United dropped to a lowly 14th in the table after suffering their fourth defeat in nine league games at West Ham on Sunday and have won only one of their last eight games in all competitions.

They are also 21st of 36 teams in the Europa League table, having drawn their three opening fixtures.

"Erik ten Hag has left his role as Manchester United men's first-team manager," said a club statement.

"Erik was appointed in April 2022 and led the club to two domestic trophies, winning the Carabao (League) Cup in 2023 and the FA Cup in 2024.

"We are grateful to Erik for everything he has done during his time with us and wish him well for the future."

THE NATION'S LARGEST ROD MANUFACTURER

WITH MORE CAPACITY, WE ARE MORE READY TO BUILD TOMORROW'S BANGLADESH

BSRM building a safer nation

HIGHEST SELLING CEMENT for more than 20 YEARS

SHAH CEMENT

Homemaker murdered in Mirpur DOHS

Tk 15 lakh cash, 10 bhori gold looted from ex-air force officer's home

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The wife of a retired air force officer was killed at their residence in the capital's Mirpur DOHS area allegedly by robbers, who later reportedly made away with Tk 15 lakh cash and 10 bhori gold in the middle of the day.

Police found the victim's hands and feet tied and injury marks around her neck when they recovered her body around 3:30pm on Sunday.

The deceased, identified as Farah Diba, 60, was the wife of Kazi Abdul Matin, retired wing commander of the Bangladesh Air Force.

The couple lived with their son and daughter in an apartment on Road 10 at Mirpur DOHS. At the time of the incident, the victim was home alone.

Adil Hossain, inspector (investigation) of Pallabi Police Station, told The Daily Star yesterday that the woman was likely strangled to death between 10:00am and noon on Sunday. Later when her family members returned home and discovered her body, they informed the police.

The inspector added that the family reported Tk 15 lakh in cash and 10 bhori of gold jewellery missing from

SEE PAGE 6 COL 1



Workshops that make trunks keep those on a footpath near the DNCC kitchen market in the capital's Karwan Bazar, obstructing pedestrians. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

'BREACHING DISCIPLINE' 75 students of Ctg medical college suspended

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Chattogram Medical College and Hospital authorities have suspended 75 students, including 14 intern doctors, of different academic years for being involved in "anti-disciplinary activities".

Meanwhile, 11 students who were accused of the same were let go with a warning.

The decisions were taken at a meeting of the college's academic council last Sunday, and came into effect yesterday.

Of the 75, seven were suspended for two years, 15 for a year and half, 39 for a year and 14 for six months.

Brigadier General Mohammad Taslim Uddin, director of CMCH, told The Daily Star, "A 12-member investigation committee, headed by Professor Dr Hasanuzzaman, was formed a month and a half ago [after allegations against the students surfaced]. Based on the recommendations made in the

SEE PAGE 6 COL 1

COX'SBAZAR AIRPORT Flight ops extended till 10:00pm

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Cox's Bazar

Flight operations have been extended until 10:00pm at Cox's Bazar Airport from Sunday.

Earlier, the airport remained operational until 7:30pm, said Golam Mortuza Hossain, manager of the airport.

He said 16 flights operated on the Cox's Bazar-Dhaka route on Sunday, with Air Astra and Novair conducting nighttime flights.

With winter approaching, he said the number of tourists are expected to rise further as flight operation hours have been increased.

Hossain said advanced safety and security measures, and necessary technologies for night operations have long been in place at the airport.

More flights can be operated now, he added.

According to people related with tourism business, with this change, visitors can fly from Dhaka in the morning, explore the beach and local attractions, and return on a night flight, boosting convenience and encouraging tourism growth.

FREE TEXTBOOK DISTRIBUTION Race against the clock for govt

ARAFAT RAHAMAN

The government is racing against time to print the textbooks for free distribution among primary and secondary school students on January 1, 2025 – the first day of the upcoming academic year.

According to officials from the National Curriculum and Textbook Board (NCTB) and members of the printing industry, the printing process just began on Saturday, while the textbook revisions for all grades remain incomplete.

In previous years, nearly 50 percent of the textbooks would typically have been printed by this time. However, the delay this year casts a doubt over the timely printing of over 40 crore copies of textbooks for over four crore students by the end of this year.

Since 2010, the government has been distributing free textbooks for primary and secondary students at the start of each academic session.

According to NCTB officials, a major reason for this delay is the current political situation, which began with the quota reform movement in early July resulting in the fall Sheikh Hasina on August 5.

They, however, expressed optimism, saying it may still be possible to deliver the textbooks on time with full cooperation from the printing sector and other stakeholders.

Prof Riad Choudhury, member (textbook) of NCTB, said, "We've nearly completed the textbook revisions, and the manuscripts for classes one to three have been sent to the press [for printing]. The remaining books will follow soon."

About distribution concerns, he said, "Unavoidable circumstances in July and August have posed these challenges. But we're holding regular

SEE PAGE 6 COL 3

Sarjis against mass arrest of BCL members

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Sarjis Alam, a coordinator of the Anti-Discrimination Student Movement, said



yesterday that he did not favour mass arrest of Dhaka University students solely because of their affiliation with recently banned Bangladesh Chhatra League.

He clarified his position in a Facebook post last night, saying many students, including those from the movement, had been compelled to join BCL in the past.

Sarjis also said his post was specifically about DU, where the protests were primarily led by students residing in the halls until July 15.

Those familiar with DU halls know that students had to participate in BCL programmes and attend meetings, according to him.

About 80 percent of the BCL's hall committees were typically comprised of students who joined the organisation to secure

SEE PAGE 6 COL 1

'600 officials to be considered for jt, deputy secys'

BAHARAM KHAN

The government is considering promoting around 600 officers from the 24th and 30th BCS batches to joint secretary and deputy secretary, according to officials in the public administration ministry.

The initial process for these promotions is almost complete, and the Superior Selection Board, headed by the cabinet secretary, is likely to commence meetings next month to pick the officials for these positions.

"The process is underway to promote the officials from the 24th and 30th BCS batches to joint secretary and deputy secretary. However, it's yet to be decided officials from which batch would be promoted first," said Md Abdur Rouf, additional secretary at the public administration ministry.

Officials said 316 deputy secretaries from 24th Bangladesh Civil Service (BCS) batch, who joined service in 2005, are under consideration for promotion to joint secretary. Besides, 291 senior assistant secretaries from the 30th BCS batch, who entered public service in 2012, are being evaluated for promotion to deputy secretary.

Some officials from other BCS batches, who were denied promotions previously, are also being considered for the post of joint secretary.

This is the first regular promotion initiative taken by the incumbent interim government since it took office on August 8. Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus himself is handling the portfolio of the public administration ministry.

Within around one month after taking office, the government promoted officials to deputy secretary, joint secretary, and additional secretary in three phases focusing on those deemed "deprived" during Sheikh Hasina's rule.

Around 850 officials are currently serving as joint secretaries against the sanctioned posts of about 300.

SEE PAGE 6 COL 3

ALLEGED THREATS Four journos held after banker takes own life

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Noakhali

Police arrested four journalists in Lakshimpur yesterday in connection with the death of a junior officer of the Ramganj branch of Palli Sanchay Bank.

The arrests were made after Sharmeen Akhter, the wife of the victim, Mostafa Tarek Iqbal Patwary, 44, filed a complaint on Sunday accusing the journalists of threatening her husband and inciting her husband to take his own life, said Mohammad Abul Bashar, officer-in-charge of Ramganj Police Station.

Zakir Hossain Mostan, Ramganj correspondent of Ittefaq; Belayet Hossain, Ramganj correspondent of Jaijaidin; Zakir Hossain Ramganj correspondent of Samakal; and Shakhawat Hossain Ramganj correspondent of Manobkantha are the arrestees.

According to other journalists of the locality, Patwary reportedly jumped off the roof of a five-

SEE PAGE 7 COL 5

SPORT

2nd BD-SA Test starts today

Bangladesh will take on South Africa in the second Test of the two-match series at the Zahur Ahmed Chowdhury Stadium in Chattogram today. The hosts have added uncapped wicketkeeper-batter Mahidul Islam Ankon in place of injured Jaker Ali. The Tigers are 1-0 down in the series after losing the first Test in Mirpur by seven wickets and will fight it out to save the series, which has World Test Championship points at stake. The first day of the match will be broadcast live on T Sports and GTV from 10:00 am.

STORY ON PAGE 11



Smoke rises from the site of an Israeli airstrike that targeted the area of Nabatieh in southern Lebanon yesterday, amid the ongoing war between Israel and Hezbollah.

PHOTO: AFP

Trump rally filled with vulgar, racist remarks Calls Harris a 'very low IQ individual'

US PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION

07 DAYS TO GO

REUTERS, New York

Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump headlined a rally at New York's Madison Square Garden on Sunday evening that began with a series of vulgar and racist remarks by allies of the former president.

Trump, a New York celebrity for decades, hoped to use the event at the iconic venue known for Knicks basketball games and Billy Joel concerts to deliver his closing argument against Democratic candidate Kamala Harris, even though the state last backed a Republican presidential candidate in 1984.

Trump spoke repeatedly about his plans to halt illegal immigration and deport migrants he described as "vicious and bloodthirsty criminals" if he wins the November 5 election.

"On day one I will launch the largest deportation program in American history," he said. "I will rescue every city and town that has been invaded and conquered."

Trump called Harris a "very low IQ individual" and drew cheers from supporters for his tough-on-migrants rhetoric.

He vowed to ban sanctuary cities, which refuse to cooperate with the federal government in enforcing immigration laws, and to invoke the

SEE PAGE 7 COL 3