



**Students selling essentials without profit in Moulvibazar**  
P5



**Israeli strikes on Lebanon's Bekaa Valley kill 60**  
P7



**A radical overhaul of economy can save the planet**  
P8



**How an interim government can be successful**  
P9

## Justice Zubayer leads EC search committee

Gazette in a day or two, says Asif Nazrul

MOHIUDDIN ALAMGIR

In a major development, the interim government yesterday formed a six-member search committee led by Justice Zubayer Rahman Chowdhury, a judge of the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court, to constitute a new Election Commission.

The other members of the committee are Justice AKM Asaduzzaman, a judge of the High Court Division; Nurul Islam, comptroller and auditor general (CAG); Mobasser Momen, chairman of Bangladesh Public Service Commission; eminent personalities CR Abrar, executive director of the Refugee and Migratory Movement Research Unit, and Prof Zeenatun Nesa Tahmida Begum, former Dhaka University teacher and ex-PSC chairman, according to government sources.

In line with the Appointment of the Chief Election Commissioner and Other Election Commissioners Act 2022, two judges were nominated by the chief justice, two eminent personalities by the president, and the CAG and BPS chairman are in the committee because of their job status.

The government may issue a gazette containing the names of the search committee members "once the chief

**The development comes amid BNP and some other parties calling for a roadmap to the 13th national election.**

adviser signs it" in a day or two, Law Adviser Prof Asif Nazrul told reporters after a meeting with Volker Turk, the United Nations high commissioner for human rights, at the Secretariat.

Asif Nazrul said the chief adviser might have even signed the gazette by then.

The development comes amid BNP and some other parties calling for a roadmap to the 13th national election.

Asif Nazrul said, "The interim government has begun its journey towards the next general election. The search committee for constituting a new Election Commission has been formed.

"Previous national elections were fake. So, there is not much to talk about the voter list. The voter list will be updated, and it'll be done through a transparent process. The interim government will hold a proper election."

Asked when the election will be held, he said, "It will depend on a number of factors."

According to the law, once a search committee is formed, it takes no longer than 15 work days to propose to the president the names of 10 individuals, two for each membership of the Election Commission. The president then picks the chief election commissioner and four election commissioners and forms the EC.

The posts of election commissioners fell vacant after chief election commissioner Kazi Habibur Awal and four election commissioners resigned on September 5, just a month after a mass uprising led to the fall of the Hasina-led government.

According to Appointments of the Chief Election Commissioner and other Election Commissioners Act 2022, the president forms a six-member search committee led by an Appellate Division judge nominated by the chief justice.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 2



Students of seven colleges affiliated with Dhaka University demonstrate blocking the Science Lab intersection yesterday demanding transformation of their colleges into a new independent public university. The protest led to heavy traffic congestion in and around the area. Story on page 3.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

## Don't rush into serious decisions

Tarique tells govt best to go slow with constitutional, security matters

UNB, Dhaka

Stating that the government should not make any hasty decisions regarding constitutional matters, BNP acting chairman Tarique Rahman yesterday called upon all to maintain national unity at any cost to resist any plot by the evil quarters.

Exchanging greetings virtually with the Hindu community members, the BNP leader said there are ongoing discussions among the political parties and also within the government regarding the formation of the interim government. "Some are raising questions about why the interim government has been sworn in under the current constitution or whether it is a revolutionary government."

Tarique, who is staying in London, said such questions could hinder the government's dynamism, which may ultimately lead to a diversion from its objectives.

"So, the BNP thinks it is essential to avoid making hasty decisions on matters directly related to national security or constitutional provisions. Instead, a well-thought-out and well-considered approach should be followed, making it easier to address any future challenges."

The BNP leader said some differences among the political parties have surfaced after the fall of Sheikh Hasina's regime on August 5. "But I believe our goal is the same – establishing a discrimination-free, democratic, and humane Bangladesh. Therefore, BNP does not see any room for misunderstanding among the political parties."

Tarique said he believes that if the people's political and economic



SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

## Petitions against AL, 10 parties withdrawn

3 student leaders filed those 'without consulting others'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Three leaders of the Anti-Discrimination Student Movement yesterday withdrew the two writ petitions they had filed against the Awami League and 10 other political parties, and the past three general elections.

Their lawyer Ahsanul Karim withdrew the petitions, which were filed on Monday, from the High Court.

He told the HC bench of Justice Fatema Najib and Justice Sikder Mahmud that his clients would not proceed with the petitions.

The bench then rejected the petitions as "not pressed", meaning they were not presented properly.

The lawyer, however, did not disclose the reasons behind the withdrawal.

"My clients have instructed me not to proceed with the petitions before the court. I don't know the reason behind the decision," he told The Daily Star yesterday.

On Monday, Abul Hasnat aka Hasnat Abdullah, convener of the movement; Sarjis Alam, one of its key coordinators who is now the general secretary of the July Martyrs Memorial Foundation; and Hasibul Islam, an assistant coordinator, submitted two

SEE PAGE 2 COL 5

## New voter list to take 10 months

Yunus briefed on pre-polls process

BAHARAM KHAN

The Election Commission Secretariat has informed Muhammad Yunus, the chief adviser to the interim government, earlier this month about the preparations needed to hold a free and fair election as political parties' calls for polls grow louder.

Usually, the process starts with the chief election commissioner informing the president. Given the absence of a functioning EC, the Chief Adviser's Office was informed about the process. The Daily Star has learnt from people involved with the proceedings.

It was conveyed to Yunus that the first step to holding a credible election would be a comprehensive voter list and preparing one could take nine to 10 months.

If the EC is reconstituted by December, a voter list could be ready by the end of 2025.

It would take at least one month for data collection, SEE PAGE 2 COL 5



## Historic chance for genuine democracy

Says Volker Turk; OHCHR to open office in Dhaka soon

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

UN rights boss Volker Turk has said Bangladesh has an historic opportunity to renew and revitalise a genuine democracy after the student-led mass uprising.

The United Nations high commissioner for human rights made the remarks in his speech addressing students at Dhaka University on the first day of his two-day visit to Bangladesh yesterday.

He said youths seized the moment to put the country on a different pathway after struggling with divisive politics for decades.

"Bangladesh now has an historic opportunity to renew and revitalise a genuine democracy. To deliver deep reform,"

Through this, the country can start a "process of truth, justice and healing" and ensure that the benefits of development are enjoyed by all people.

This is also an opportunity to rebuild the country on a "foundation of equality – where every voice is heard and valued, irrespective of class, gender, race, political ideology or religion".

He offered some observations in his speech. First, a human rights approach calls for truth, justice, and healing for recent events and past human rights violations.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 2



## ISSUE OF PRESIDENT

### We will urge govt to form all-party council for advice

Say student movement leaders, Nagorik Committee

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The student movement against discrimination and Jatiya Nagorik Committee yesterday said it would urge the government to form an all-party council, which would advise the interim government about who should be the president.

"The parties will decide who will be the president and in what procedure after reaching a consensus," said Nasiruddin Patwari, convener of the Jatiya Nagorik Committee.

Two student leaders and four members of the committee met leaders of the Left Democratic Alliance to discuss their proposal.

"We believe all political parties should collectively decide who should be the president. Our only concern is the person assuming the role should not have a fascist agenda," Patwari told reporters after the meeting.

Masud Rana, coordinator of the LDA, said, "One of the critical tasks of this government is to hold discussions with political parties and determine necessary reforms... We don't morally

SEE PAGE 2 COL 5



Traders have set up makeshift used furniture shops on the footpath right underneath the footbridge near Ideal School and College in the capital's Motijheel, making it difficult for pedestrians to pass. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

## Info ministry asks BFIU to probe 28 journalists

20 lose press accreditation

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The information ministry has asked the Bangladesh Financial Intelligence Unit to probe 28 journalists.

The journalists include nine editors, former editors, and organisational heads.

The BFIU has already sent out correspondences seeking the bank account details of these journalists, according to sources in the unit.

A letter from the information ministry was sent to the BFIU chief on October 22.

The nine current and former editors and organisational heads named in the letter are Naem Nizam, editor of Bangladesh Pratidin, Zahirul Islam Mamun, chief executive officer of ATN News, Syed Borhan Kabir, editor of Bangla Insider, Alamgir Hossain, editor of Samakal, Rezaul Karim Lotus, editor of The Daily Sun, Sheikh Jamal Hossain, editor of Dainik Mukhpatro, Subhash Chandra Singh Roy, editor of ABN News24, Santosh Sharma, editor and publisher of Kalbela, and Rafiqul Islam Ratan, former editor of Swadesh Pratidin.

The list also includes Farida Yasmin, former president of the Jatiya Press Club and Shaban Mahmud, the former government's press minister in New Delhi.

SEE PAGE 10 COL 4





Despite Lalbagh Fort being a heritage site and laws prohibiting the plastering of banners or posters on its walls, *inset*, political parties continue to disregard these regulations. Previously pasted with Awami League posters, the walls are now covered with BNP ones.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

## DU AFFILIATED 7 COLLEGES Commuters suffer as students stage blockade

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

City dwellers had to endure immense suffering yesterday as students of seven colleges affiliated with Dhaka University blocked the Science Lab intersection for around five hours.

The students blocked the intersection, which is one of the busiest in the city, around 12:15pm, demanding the formation of a separate autonomous university for their institutions.

Due to the blockade, vehicular movement through the Science Lab intersection remained halted, forcing many commuters to walk to their destinations, said eyewitnesses.

Aayush, a student at a school in Dhanmondi-3, usually can get back to his home in Segunbagicha from school within 40 minutes via Science Lab, after his school ends around 1:30pm.

However, yesterday, due to a blockade and heavy traffic, he could not move past the Science Lab area.

Then he decided to go home in a different way. He somehow made his way through different roads to reach Farmgate Metro Station and took the metro rail to get home. The entire journey took him around two and a half hours in total.

Several other commuters shared a similar plight.

Witnesses said the students first gathered inside Dhaka College campus around 11:00am and later took to the street.

Nayim Hawlader, a student of Dhaka College and one of the organisers of the movement, said, "We demand a separate university as we have been suffering academically and experiencing severe session jam."

"Initially we wanted to get rid of the issues, but the DU authorities did not take any step to free us from the session jam. So, we started demanding the cancellation of affiliation with DU," he said.

Their demands also include immediately forming a commission to establish a university for the seven affiliated colleges, a draft proposal from the commission within 30 days, and assurance from Dhaka University that there will be no session jams until the new university is established.

Meanwhile, commuters may have to suffer again today as the students have threatened to continue their programme and block the intersection for eight hours, starting from around 9:00am.

## PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

### Include them in dev plans

#### Discussants at seminar

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

People with disabilities should also be included in the overall development of the state, said speakers at a seminar yesterday.

Titled "Accessibility to judiciary system for people with disabilities", the seminar was organised by Women with Disabilities Development Foundation (WDDF) at The Daily Star Center in the capital.

Speakers said despite national and international laws, as well as policies to

**Despite national and international laws, as well as policies to establish a discrimination-free society, none of these are being implemented to boost the inclusion of persons with disabilities.**

establish a discrimination-free society, none of these are being implemented to boost the inclusion of persons with disabilities. They discussed the barriers persons with disabilities faced when trying to access the judiciary system.

The social welfare ministry, as well as other ministries, should take the responsibility to include people with disabilities in the overall development of the country, they recommended.

Neelima Akhter, executive director (additional secretary) of Dhaka Transport Coordination Authority, said, "We're working to introduce disability-friendly vehicles."

Ashrafun Nahar Misti, executive director of WDDF, presented an article from various researches there.

## Prioritise disability issues in media

### Speakers tell event

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

To ensure positive and year-round representation of disability issues, more sensitive policies need to be developed and implemented urgently within the media, said speakers at a discussion yesterday.

They stated that the focus on political and routine topics in media business structures often overshadows social issues.

This causes the coverage of disability issues to primarily be event driven and centred around specific days, rather than becoming a regular topic of discussion, they added.

While some media outlets have taken steps in this area, the speakers expressed that the disability issues still do not receive adequate attention in media.

These remarks were made during the discussion titled "Disability Equality in the Media," organised by SoMaSHTE, with the support of Unesco at a city hotel.

Noore Jannat Proma, communication and information sector lead at the Unesco Dhaka Office, stressed the importance of strongly including disability in media frameworks.

"Disability is often perceived negatively; despite some visible efforts, the desired level of sensitivity is still lacking in both the media and corporate sectors. Identifying existing gaps and taking action for progress is essential."

The speakers also pointed out that the absence of a robust information system complicates accurate reporting on these crucial topics.

To improve positive representations of disability issues in the media, they recommended increasing sensitivity, implementing effective policies, and building capacity to handle disability-related content with greater awareness.

Speakers also recommended creating disability-friendly infrastructure, providing necessary support for hiring people with disabilities in the media, producing content on disability topics, fostering sensitivity among policymakers in the media industry, and adopting technical measures to ensure that people with disabilities can access and engage with media content.

The discussion was moderated by Mir Masruzzaman, executive director of SoMaSHTE.

Partha Shankar Saha, assistant news editor at Prothom Alo; Kamrun Nahar, joint news editor at Views Bangladesh; Rita Bhowmik, senior reporter at Kalbela; Swapna Chakraborty, staff reporter at Janakantha; Atika Rahman, senior reporter at RTV; Tania Rahman, senior reporter at Ekattor TV; and Nilima Jahan, staff reporter at The Daily Star, were present among others.

**Disability is often perceived negatively; despite some visible efforts, the desired level of sensitivity is still lacking in both the media and corporate sectors. Identifying existing gaps and taking action is essential.**

NOORE JANNAT PROMA  
Communication and information lead,  
UNESCO Dhaka

## US opposes religious discrimination in any process

### Says Matthew Miller

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

The US opposes any religious discrimination in any process in Bangladesh, said US State Department Spokesperson Matthew Miller.

He made the comment at a press briefing in Washington on Monday, when asked about reports suggesting that 252 sub-inspectors of Bangladesh police were dismissed from final recruitment, allegedly excluding all Hindu officers.

When asked if the State Department has any response regarding the religious discrimination in the Bangladesh law enforcement hiring process, Miller said, "So, I haven't seen that report, but obviously we believe that the -- well, let me say obviously we would oppose any religious discrimination in any process in Bangladesh or anywhere in the world."

"We believe that the people of Bangladesh should be able to exercise their fundamental freedoms, including the freedom of expression, the freedom of assembly," he said.

Asked how the State Department is working with Bangladesh authority

SEE PAGE 4 COL 6

## 15TH AMENDMENT HC allows BNP to place arguments

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday allowed BNP to place arguments before it on the rule that questioned the constitutionality of the 15th amendment that scrapped the non-partisan caretaker government system.

The HC bench of Justice Farah Mahbub and Justice Debashis Roy Chowdhury granted a petition filed by BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir.

Senior lawyer Advocate Zainul Abedin and Barrister Md Badruddoza Badal moved the petition.

The bench is scheduled to hold a hearing on the rule today that questioned the constitutionality of the 15th amendment of the constitution.

The 15th amendment bill was passed by the parliament on June 30, 2011, and signed into law on July 3 of the same year. It abolished the caretaker government system introduced by the 13th amendment in 1996.

The law also recognised Sheikh Mujibur Rahman as Father of the Nation and increased the number of reserved seats for women in parliament from 45 to 50.

Following the amendment, three general elections were held with Sheikh Hasina in the prime minister's office.

Earlier, the HC bench allowed Jamaat-e-Islami to place arguments before this court in connection with the case, the party's lawyer Mohammad Shishir Manir told The Daily Star.

Another HC bench led by Justice Naima Haider on August 19 this year issued the rule asking the respondents to show causes as to why the Constitution (15th amendment) Act, 2011 should

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

## Former agri minister arrested in Dhaka

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Former agriculture minister Abdus Shahid was arrested in the capital's Uttara area yesterday.

A team of police arrested Shahid him from a house at Sector-10 of Uttara, Hafizur Rahman, officer-in-charge of Uttara West Police Station, told The Daily Star.

Shahid, former lawmaker from Moulvibazar-4 and also former chief whip of the Jatiya Sangsad, is accused in several cases filed with Uttara west and other police stations, said the OC.

In September this year, the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) decided to launch an inquiry against Shahid on charges of abusing power, engaging in various irregularities, and amassing wealth through corruption.

## DRIVES IN MOHAMMADPUR 108 arrested in last 3 days

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

As part of the ongoing special joint operations in the capital's Mohammadpur, the law enforcers arrested 29 more suspects for their alleged involvement in mugging, robbery, and extortion.

The Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) and the Police Headquarters (PHQ) in two separate media releases disclosed the updates yesterday.

With the arrest, the total number of arrests has now risen to 108 in the last three days.

The ISPR release said an army team raided the Geneva camp in Mohammadpur on Monday night and arrested seven people, including drug dealer Bunia Sohel.

Two pistols, 20 rounds of bullets, and locally made weapons were recovered from the spot.

Besides these seven, in separate drives, the police arrested 13 people, and the Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) arrested nine.

Hafizur Rahman, Inspector (investigation) of the Mohammadpur Police Station, told this correspondent that they have set up two temporary police outposts inside the Geneva Camp to maintain law and order.

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

On Saturday, residents, including students, held a demonstration in front of Mohammadpur Police Station, demanding enhanced security. Locals also gave a 72-hour ultimatum to improve the law and order.

Later on Saturday evening, the joint forces arrested 45 people from Mohammadpur and adjoining areas.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 7



Numerous vehicles lay abandoned across the Mansurabad Police Lines dumping field in the port city. These vehicles were seized due to invalid documentation or for their involvement in certain cases, but now they just take up space and decay in this open field without any proper process for their disposal. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: RAJIB RAIHAN

Shahiduzzaman Beltu no more

OUR CORRESPONDENT,  
Jhenaidah

Shahiduzzaman Beltu, a former lawmaker, passed away due to cardiac arrest at Jhenaidah Sadar Hospital on Monday night. He was 78.



Shahiduzzaman was elected as a member of parliament (MP) four times from the Jhenaidah-4 constituency representing the BNP.

He left behind his wife, a son, a daughter, and a host of relatives to mourn his death.

He was laid to rest in his family graveyard in Hashanhati village following three namaz-e-janazas yesterday.



Traffic police stopped and seized all of these rickshaws for illegally plying the VIP road near Manik Mia Avenue yesterday. An initial lack of police presence following August 5 enabled many rickshaw pullers to start plying such roads. Recently, traffic police have started conducting drives against such illegal activities.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

108 arrested

FROM PAGE 3  
On Sunday, 34 more people were arrested in different areas of Mohammadpur, of which 22 were arrested in joint drives.

According to sources, the criminal activities centring the Geneva camp in Mohammadpur have increased in recent times, especially during the changing circumstances after the fall of the Awami League government on August 5.

The criminal gangs, along with members of the teen gangs, got involved in different criminal offences, including mugging on different roads and areas of Mohammadpur.

Meanwhile, mugging has also been taking place in the neighbouring Dhanmondi area.

According to sources, five cases of snatching have been filed with Dhanmondi

Police Station this month alone.

In addition, 16 snatchers have been arrested. However, local sources said that the mugging incident is happening almost every day on Mirpur Road and Satmasjid Road in Dhanmondi.

They alleged that there were no police or law enforcers in these areas during those incidents.

Md Masud Alam, deputy commissioner of Ramna Division Police, told The Daily Star, "Some incidents may have 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."

5 get life sentence

FROM PAGE 5  
On September 2, Takir's body was found in a pond near their home.

Police arrested Rabiullah in the area on November 3. The other four suspects were arrested at different

times. The convicts admitted to abducting and killing Takir to steal a gold chain from his neck.

Two of the convicts, Rabiullah and Hannan, remain at large.

PRAYER TIMING OCTOBER 30

Table with prayer times for Fajr, Zohr, Asr, Maghrib, and Esha.

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

Shahjalal Islami Bank PLC. Corporate Head Office: Shahjalal Islami Bank Tower, Plot-04, Block-CWN(C), Gulshan Avenue, Dhaka-1212, Bangladesh. Phone: +88 02 222283457. TENDER NOTICE: Procurement of 04 (four) unit Servers of the Bank.

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Ex-NSI acting DG and was the lone Bangalee officer of Pakistan Army to fight the 1971 war and killed around 500-600 people on March 28 near the cantonment, said Motiur Rahman, the case's investigation officer.

HC allows BNP saw three consecutive failed elections and it ultimately led to the July 2024 uprising and the fall of the government on August 5, 2024.

ব্যাংকিং ও কার্পাস শিল্প উন্নয়ন সঙ্কল্প বিধায়ক মন্ত্রণালয় সোনারগাঁও, নারায়ণগঞ্জ. লোক ও কার্পাস শিল্প উন্নয়ন কর্মসূচী ২০২৪.

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ALIF INDUSTRIES LIMITED. PRICE SENSITIVE INFORMATION. This is for information of all concerned that the board of directors of Alif Industries Limited in its board meeting held on 28th October, 2024 at 5:00 pm at its registered office Bilquis Tower (9th floor), Road# 46, House# 06, Gulshan-02, Dhaka-1212 has approved the audited financial statements for the year end June 30, 2024 and took the following decisions:



Kali Haldar and Sumita Haldar catch crabs during high tide in the Jhapjhapia River near their home. Every day, they bring fishing nets to the river, bundling the crabs they catch to sell at Tk 60 per kg in the local market. This photo was taken near the Pankhali Ferry Ghat in Dacoep upazila, Khulna yesterday.

PHOTO: HABIBUR RAHMAN

## 506 more Rohingyas relocated to Bhasan Char



**STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Cox's Bazar**

Abul Kalam, 27, who was going to Bhasan Char with his family from Rohingya Camp-15, said "Criminal activities have escalated in the camp. I don't feel safe to live there with family, so we are leaving for Bhasan Char."

With this, the total number of Rohingyas in Bhasan Char shelter rose to 37,946.

According to sources at the Refugee Relief and Repatriation Office, more than 35,000 Rohingyas were earlier transferred to Bhasan Char in 24 phases.

Last on March 1 this year, some 1,242 Rohingyas were taken to Bhasan Char.

The Bhasan Char Shelter Project was implemented on 13,000 acres with 120 cluster villages at a cost of Tk 3,950 crore from the government's own funds to accommodate a total of 1 lakh displaced Rohingyas from Myanmar.

## A market without profit

### Students selling essential commodities at lower prices in Moulvibazar

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Moulvibazar

Students under the banner of Anti-Discrimination Student Movement have launched a temporary, non-profit market in Samshearnagar area of Moulvibazar, selling around 15 essential commodities at lower prices.

The move comes as a respite to many low-income families who have been struggling to make both ends meet amid spiralling prices of essentials in recent times triggered by market manipulation and mismanagement.

Visiting the market recently, this correspondent observed that residents were able to purchase various vegetables and shrimps at significantly lower prices.

Potatoes and brinjals were being sold at Tk 20-30 less prices compared to local shops and kitchen markets.

Coriander leaves were being sold at Tk 100 per kg, brinjals Tk 60, radish Tk 40, gourd and pumpkin Tk 30, pointed gourds Tk 40, shrimp Tk 40, chillies Tk 130 and cucumber Tk 30.

The platform currently offers



a range of 15 products, including essential vegetables and shrimp, while continuing to explore ways to expand its offerings.

Zakaria Emon, a coordinator of the platform in Moulvibazar, emphasised that their efforts aim to support consumers struggling with inflated prices, and ensure fair prices for customers.

Appreciating the initiative, Setara Begum, a local resident, expressed hope that the initiative will also include other necessities like fish and meat at fair prices to benefit the consumers.

Sadek Hosain, another local, called for better market supervision to prevent exploitation and ensure affordability.

## 'WAR CRIMES' Ex-NSI acting DG Ohaidul gets bail

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The International Crimes Tribunal yesterday granted bail to Oahidul Haque, former acting director general of the National Security Intelligence, in a case filed for allegedly committing crimes against humanity and genocide during the 1971 Liberation War.

The three-member tribunal, led by its chairman Justice Md Golam Mortuza Mozumder, passed the order following a petition filed by Oahidul's lawyer Abdus Sattar Palawan.

"We were able to convince the tribunal that the previous government initiated this case as part of politically motivated harassment," he said.

Oahidul, 78, has been in custody for six and half years in the case despite his poor health, the lawyer also said.

"We presented medical records showing his condition, and based on his health, age, and long-time custody, the tribunal decided to grant him bail," he added.

The defence lawyer

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

## 5 get life sentence for killing boy

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Munshiganj

A Munshiganj court yesterday sentenced five people to life imprisonment in a case filed for the murder of a boy.

In the verdict, Judge Dr Mohammad Alamgir also fined Rabiullah, Hannan Mia, Abul Hossain, Maina Mia, and Anwar Hossain Tk 10,000 each; in default, they will have to serve an additional year in jail, according to court sources.

According to the case, the parents of Takir left him at home on August 31, 2010, in Fultala, Sadar upazila, and went to a market in Munshiganj town.

Upon their return around 4:00pm, they could not find the 10-year-old. Following this, his mother, Jharna Begum, filed an abduction case with Sadar Police Station on September 1.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 7

**The People's Republic of Bangladesh**  
National board of Revenue  
Bangladesh Regional Connectivity project 1:  
National Single Window Implementation and strengthening Customs Modernization  
IDEB Bhaban (10<sup>th</sup> floor), 160/A, Kakrail, Dhaka

Memo no. 1(192) Active items/ Hardware /NSW/2024/2265 Date: 29.10.24

**Subject:** Addendum to bidding document for supply and Installation of Hardware and Infrastructure (network, communication, cabling etc.) and standard software for NSW solution; other network, communication equipment, structure, Hardware and cabling: Server & Storage and Network & Security components for NSW Server Room & DR. Bangladesh Regional Connectivity project 1: Request for Bids (RFB) No. NBR-GD2A.1.

**Addendum No. 6**

This is for the information of all Bidders concerned that the following amendments have been made for the procurement mentioned in the subject above;

Ref	Existing Entry	Amended entry
SI No. of 6, SPN ITP-23.1 & 26.1	The deadline for Bid Submission is: Date: October 30, 2024, Time : 14.00 hours.	The deadline for Bid Submission is: Date: November 28, 2024, Time : 14.00 hours.
	Date & Time for Bid Opening October 30, 2024, Time :14:30 hours	Date & Time for Bid Opening November 28, 2024, Time :14:30 hours

All the terms and conditions of bidding Documents (RFB) NBR-GD2A.1 shall remain unchanged. This Addendum No. 6 shall be considered an integral part of the Bidding Documents and shall be binding on all Bidders who have obtained or will obtain the Bidding Documents from the Purchaser.

*Jewel Ahmed*

(Jewel Ahmed)  
Project Director  
Bangladesh Regional Connectivity project 1:  
National Single Window Implementation and strengthening Customs Modernization  
Email: pdnsw.nbr@gmail.com

GD-820

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স্মারক নম্বর-৩৬.০৬.০০০০.০০১.০৭.৩৮১.২২.১১৬(১)

**e-Tender বিজ্ঞপ্তি**

পেটেন্ট, শিল্প-সুরক্ষা ও ট্রেডমার্কস অধিদপ্তর (ডিপিডি) এর নিম্নবর্ণিত দরপত্র e-GP পোর্টালে প্রকাশিত হয়েছে।

SI No.	e-Tender ID	Name of goods
১	1028017	01. Procurement of 16 (Sixteen) Computer with UPS and 16 (Sixteen) Black and White Laser Printer 02. Installation and related services.

আগ্রহী প্রতিষ্ঠানকে [www.eprocure.gov.bd](http://www.eprocure.gov.bd) সাইটের মাধ্যমে দরপত্র অংশগ্রহণের জন্য অনুরোধ করা যাচ্ছে।

মোঃ জিহুর রহমান  
পরিচালক (প্রশাসন ও অর্থ)  
ফোনঃ ২২৩৩৫৭৮০১

ফিঃ-৬২২

**সদর দপ্তর আর্মি সিকিউরিটি ইউনিট, ঢাকা সেনানিবাস**  
দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি  
অর্থ বৎসর ২০২৪-২০২৫

সি	দরপত্রের নাম	কম্যান্ডাট, আর্মি সিকিউরিটি ইউনিট, ঢাকা সেনানিবাস
১	কাজের নাম	১। ২০২৪-২০২৫ অর্থ বৎসরের বাজেট কোড [কোড নং ১১৯০৬০১১০৪২০০/০২৩১০০১ প্রিন্সিপাল (এটিকি সাধারণ)] হতে উপ-বরাদ্দ অর্থ খারা নিয়ন্ত্রিত বাজেট প্রয়োগ করা/সংস্কার। ক। সূত্র প্রিন্সিপাল নিশ্চিতকল্পে সদর দপ্তর এএসইউ এবং শাখা এএসইউ এর 'সৈনিকিক বায়, প্রিন্সিপাল সনাক্ত করা, স্টেশনারী ক্রয় বিভিন্ন প্রিন্সিপাল/জায়ার পরিচালনার বায়, প্রিন্সিপাল সনাক্ত করা, ফায়ারিং স্ট্রিট হাওয়ার বহন, প্রিন্সিপাল ও অনুশীলনের জন্য অস্ত্রপূরণ ও শস্যাদানী এবং প্রিন্সিপাল সনাক্তকরণ অন্যান্য বায় নির্বাহী বাদ। নোটে সূত্র নং ২০.০১.৯০১.০২৬.০২.০১৪.০১.২৫.০৭.২৪/এএসইউ তারিখ ২৫ জুলাই ২০২৪। খ। সূত্র প্রিন্সিপাল নিশ্চিতকল্পে সদর দপ্তর এএসইউ এবং শাখা এএসইউ এর প্রিন্সিপাল ছাউনী সংস্কার, প্রিন্সিপাল মার্ট সংস্কার, পারিবারিক প্রিন্সিপাল সনাক্তকরণ সামগ্রী ক্রয় ও বেসামরিক বায়বীয় প্রিন্সিপাল স্থান্যনা ও সুবিধাদির উন্নয়ন/সংস্কার/সমন্বয়, বিভিন্ন ক্যাডার/প্রিন্সিপাল পরিচালনা, ডিএমএ ও প্রিন্সিপাল সনাক্তকরণ অন্য যে কোন রক্ষনাবেশক বায় নির্বাহী বাদ। নোটে সূত্র নং ২০.০১.৯০১.০২৬.০২.০১৪.০১.২৫.০৭.২৪/এএসইউ তারিখ ২৫ জুলাই ২০২৪। গ। সূত্র প্রিন্সিপাল নিশ্চিতকল্পে সদর দপ্তর এএসইউ এবং শাখা এএসইউ এর জীভা দল সমূহের খেলোয়াড়দের অভিরিক্ত খাদ্য ভাড়া, খেলোয়াড়দের জন্য বিজয় সন্ধানী, বিভিন্ন প্রতিযোগিতার বায়, ক্রীড়া দলের বেসামরিক প্রিন্সিপাল কোচ ও অন্যান্য ব্যক্তিবর্গের মাসিক সন্ধানী এবং এডসনক্রান্ত বিবিধ প্রিন্সিপাল বায় নির্বাহী বাদ। নোটে সূত্র নং ২০.০১.৯০১.০২৬.০২.০১৪.০১.২৫.০৭.২৪/এএসইউ তারিখ ২৫ জুলাই ২০২৪।
২	দরপত্রের বিবরণ	২। ২০২৪-২০২৫ অর্থ বৎসরের বাজেট কোড [কোড নং ১১৯০৬০১১০৪২০০/০২৩১০০১ প্রিন্সিপাল (এটিকি সাধারণ)] হতে উপ-বরাদ্দ অর্থ খারা নিয়ন্ত্রিত বাজেট প্রয়োগ করা/সংস্কার। ক। সদর দপ্তর এএসইউ এর সূত্র প্রিন্সিপাল নিশ্চিতকল্পে প্রিন্সিপাল স্থান্যনা নির্মাণ, সংস্কার ও উন্নয়ন এবং এডসনক্রান্ত বিবিধ বায় নির্বাহী বাদ। নোটে সূত্র নং ২০.০১.৯০১.০২৬.০২.০১৪.০১.১৭.০৯.২৪/এএসইউ তারিখ ১৭ সেপ্টেম্বর ২০২৪।
৩	জামানতের পরিমাণ	উল্লেখিত প্রত্যক্ষান্বিতী ক্রয়/স্থান্যনা ছাপার নির্মিতে ৭৫০/- টাকা (অফেরতযোগ্য, প্রত্যেক সিভিল এর জন্য) নগদ প্রদান পূর্বক সদর দপ্তর আর্মি সিকিউরিটি ইউনিট হতে সিভিল ক্রয় করা যাবে।
৪	দরপত্র ক্রয়ের আবেদন পত্রের সাথে দাখিলযোগ্য সনদপত্রাদি	ক। সিভিল বর্ণিত প্রকারের একক মূল্য ও মোট মূল্য সফলিত থাকার অফার (সকল মূল্য বাংলাদেশী টাকায় উল্লেখ করণীয়)। খ। বৈধ ট্রেড লাইসেন্স (সত্যায়িত ফটোকপি)। গ। বৈধ টিআইএন সনদপত্র (ফার্মের টাকায় সত্যায়িত ফটোকপি)। ঘ। প্রকৃতকারী কর্তৃক অথরাইজেশন পত্র (প্রযোজ্য ক্ষেত্রে)। ঙ। ফাইলিং তথ্য (প্রযোজ্য ক্ষেত্রে)। চ। ইতিপূর্বে বিদেশ থেকে আত্মদানীকৃত চালান এবং কাস্টম পরিশোধকৃত ডাউটারের সত্যায়িত ফটোকপি (যদি থাকে)।
৫	দরপত্র বিক্রয় ও পেমেন্টের তারিখ	জাতীয় পরিচয়ন দরপত্র বিক্রয় প্রকাশের দিন হতে আগামী ১৪ নভেম্বর ২০২৪ তারিখ ১৪০০ ঘটিকা পর্যন্ত।
৬	দরপত্র দাখিলের শেষ তারিখ	১৭ নভেম্বর ২০২৪ তারিখ ১১০০ ঘটিকা পর্যন্ত এবং উল্লেখিত সময়ের পর কোন দরপত্র গ্রহণ করা হবে না।
৭	দরপত্র দাখিলের স্থান	ক। আর্মি সিকিউরিটি ইউনিট, সদর দপ্তর আর্মি সিকিউরিটি ইউনিট। খ। সড়পত্র, ক্রয় কমিটি সরাসরি দরপত্র দাখিল করতে হবে।
৮	দরপত্র খোলার তারিখ	১৭ নভেম্বর ২০২৪ তারিখ ১১০০ ঘটিকা সকল দরদাতাদের উপস্থিতিতে দরপত্র খোলার হবে।
৯	কাজ শেষ করার তারিখ	কার্যদেয় প্রদানের তারিখ হতে ১৫ দিনের মধ্যে।
১০	অন্যান্য শর্তাবলী	দরপত্র তফসীলে বর্ণিত বিধাযসমূহ যথাযথভাবে পালন পূর্বক দরপত্র দাখিল করতে হবে।

বিঃ দ্রঃ কর্তৃপক্ষ কোন কারণ দর্শানো ব্যতিরেকে দরপত্র উল্লেখিত প্রযা সামগ্রী/সরঞ্জামাদির পরিমাণ কম/আধা/বাড়ানো এবং যে কোন দরপত্র গ্রহণ কিংবা বাতিল করার ক্ষমতা সংরক্ষণ করেন।

**কমান্ডাট**  
আর্মি সিকিউরিটি ইউনিট  
ঢাকা সেনানিবাস

আই এস পি আর/সেনা/২০২৪/৬৪৪  
২৯/১০/২৪

GD- 824

# MOUSUMI'S wait for 'Noya Manush' comes to an end

SHAH ALAM SHAZU

Mousumi Hamid is all set to make her return to the silver screen with *Noya Manush*, directed by Sohel Rana Boyati. This new film, marking her comeback after a long hiatus, has recently received clearance from the Film Certification Board.

In a recent interview with The Daily Star, Mousumi shared her excitement, stating, "I'm eagerly awaiting the release of this new film. It feels wonderful to have a new project of mine hitting cinemas again after so long. Audiences will get to see a new side of myself in *Noya Manush*."

She continued, "We went through a lot of hard work to bring *Noya Manush* to life—not just me but the whole team. Filming in the *char* area was especially challenging, and we had to immerse ourselves in the lives and culture of the locals. It was an experience that demanded dedication from everyone involved."

Reflecting on the project, she added, "We had to travel to the *char* area multiple times for filming. The role itself was quite demanding, adding yet another defining moment to my career."

"I had the opportunity to observe their lives (Char community) closely. They're wonderful people. During the shoot, they embraced us warmly, and their kindness will stay with me for a long time," the actress recalled.

She also praised her co-star, saying, "Rawnak Hasan *bhai* delivered an exceptional performance. Our director has put his heart into this film, and as a debutante, his dream has come to life through *Noya Manush*."

Addressing her fans, she added, "To be honest, the true heart of any film is its audience. As an artiste, I am already endlessly grateful to them for all the support they have given me. I urge everyone to watch the film in theatres when it's released." The film is expected to be released next month.

At the moment, Mousumi is also busy filming a new television series. "Next month, I'll begin shooting for another new series," she shared, giving a glimpse into her busy schedule.

She also completed shooting for a new musical project, set in the scenic locations of Bandarban and Cox's Bazar and directed by Tasnova Tabassum Atoshi. While the film's title is yet to be finalised, the actress shared her thoughts on the experience, saying, "We were completely immersed in nature while filming. The storyline is wonderful as well."

In addition to cinema, the actress has been actively working on OTT platforms, with several of her performances receiving a warm reception from audiences. She hinted at more OTT projects on the horizon, adding, "There's a good chance I'll be working on something new for OTT soon. I'm hopeful it will turn out to be something special."

Wrapping up the conversation, Mousumi shared her unwavering dedication to acting, saying, "I dream of creating work that audiences will remember forever. I've been fortunate to receive so much love, and I hope to hold onto that always."



PHOTO: SHAHREAR KABIR HEEMEL



## 'Mirzapur' film announced, fan-favourite characters to return

The hit Amazon Prime Video series *Mirzapur* is expanding into a movie, thrilling fans, especially with the return of the beloved character Munna *bhaiya*, portrayed by Divyendu.

Last Monday, the series' creators announced plans for a *Mirzapur* movie, promising a fresh storyline that brings back iconic characters like Kaleen *bhaiya* (Pankaj Tripathi), Guddu Pandit (Ali Fazal), and Munna Tripathi.

Created by Puneet Krishna and directed by Gurmmeet Singh, the series will be adapted into a standalone film, slated for release in 2026.

Eight weeks after its theatrical release, the film will stream on Amazon Prime in India and over 240 regions.

Produced by Excel Entertainment, the series premiered in November 2018, followed by a second season in October 2020 and a third in July 2024.



## Mehazabien starrer 'Kajal' now streaming on Amazon Prime

Mehazabien Chowdhury starrer drama *Kajal* has joined Amazon Prime's Bangladeshi lineup, premiering on October 28 with English subtitles for international viewers.

Directed by Mohammad Mostafa Kamal Raz, the story centres on the poignant relationship between a father and daughter, featuring veteran actor Tariq Anam Khan in a key role.

The drama includes the song *Mamoni*, written by Jony Haque and performed by Pallabi Roy and Payel Tripathy.

Originally released on February 13, 2022, on Cinemawala's YouTube channel, *Kajal* adds to the growing list of Bangladeshi projects on Amazon Prime, which includes notable titles like *Rickshaw Girl* and *Made in Bangladesh*.



## Shilpakala Academy announces week-long Jatra festival

Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy is all set to launch a seven-day Jatra Festival, celebrating the enduring tradition of *Jatra Pala*, a folk theatre form deeply rooted in Bengal's cultural heritage. Recognised as a powerful medium of reflection on rural life and social realities, Jatra remains beloved for its unique blend of entertainment and societal introspection.

In the spirit of post-July Revolution rejuvenation, Shilpakala Academy seeks to reinvigorate cultural expressions across all social layers. With the theme "In fear, we falter; in defiance, we are Bangladesh," the festival will run from November 1 to November 7 at Mukto Moncho in Suhrawardy Udyan in the capital.

Each evening from 6pm to 9pm, seven registered Jatra troupes from around the country will present a variety of plays focused on historical themes and socially relevant topics, showcasing the depth and vibrancy of this art form.

The festival's opening ceremony on November 1 will feature key figures in the cultural community, including Israfil Mazumdar, a leader from the 1969 mass uprising, esteemed Jatra artiste Anima Dey, Shilpakala Academy Director General Dr Syed Jamil Ahmed, and Theater and Film Department Director Faiz Zahir.

The festival will open with the play *Nihoto Golap* by Surubhi Opera, written by Agontuk and directed by Kabir Khan.

On November 2, New Shamim Natya Sangstha will present *Anarkali*, penned by Prasad Krishna Bhattacharya and directed by Shamim Khandakar.

November 3 will feature *Meghe Dhaka Tara*, performed by Bongo Bani Opera. Nor-Narayan Opera will perform *Lalon Fakir* on November 4. Bondhu Opera will showcase *Apon Dulaal* on November 5. *Phoolan Devi* by Sharmin Opera is set to take November 6 while the last date has been provided to Jatrabandhu Opera to perform *Nawab Siraj-ud-Doula*.

# OTT platforms prepare for a spooky Halloween night



RAKSHANDA RAHMAN MISHA

Halloween is upon us, and we've lined up some spine-tingling releases to make your October 31 even more haunting. From two chilling Bangladeshi OTT originals to a lineup of global horror projects that promise to keep you up all night, here's what's in store:

**'Adhunik Bangla Hotel' (Chorki)**

Following the success of *Pett Kata Shaw*, *Adhunik Bangla Hotel* on Chorki is set to deliver another chilling experience. Mosharraf Karim takes on three eerie personas across this anthology series, where local delicacies carry sinister twists.

The first episode, *Boal Macher Jhol* (Boal fish curry), debuts at midnight on October 31, with subsequent episodes *Khashir Paya* (goat trotters) and *Hasher Salun* (duck curry) releasing over the following two weeks, each one peeling back layers of dark secrets.

**'Bibhabori' (Deepto Play)**



Deepto Play's highly anticipated horror project *Bibhabori* dives into supernatural suspense, inspired by Anish Das Apu's *Moddhorater Khabar*. The story follows Neetu, a young student from a low-income family, as she navigates eerie happenings and takes on a babysitting job during a lunar eclipse—a night rumoured to summon hungry spirits. Her rare "golden blood" attracts attention from something sinister, setting the stage for a terrifying ordeal.

Streaming begins on Deepto Play this Halloween, October 31.

**'Nikosh Chhaya' (Hoichoi)**

The second instalment of Hoichoi's *Bhaduri Mosh* series, *Nikosh Chhaya*, directed by Parambrata Chattopadhyay, follows occult expert Niren Bhaduri (Chiranjeet Chakraborty) as he confronts a dark tantric who commands the demon Genu. This season escalates into brutal supernatural battles



and terrifying rituals, plunging viewers deep into the shadows.

Releasing on October 31, *Nikosh Chhaya* is packed with bone-chilling visuals and intensity.

**'Don't Come Home' (Netflix)**

Netflix's Thai horror series *Don't Come Home* tells the story of Varee (Woranuch Bhirombhakdi) and her daughter Min as they encounter unexplainable horrors in the haunted Jarukanant mansion. When Min vanishes without a trace, pregnant police officer Fah (Pitchapa Phanthumchinda) begins investigating, only to uncover a web of terrifying secrets within the mansion's walls.

Premiering October 31, *Don't Come Home* is a must-watch for fans of atmospheric horror.

You can thus prepare for a Halloween filled with scares and supernatural suspense, streaming across diverse platforms to stay engrossed through the night.



## 60 killed in Israeli strikes on Lebanon's Bekaa Valley

REUTERS, Beirut

Israeli strikes on Lebanon's Bekaa Valley overnight killed more than 60 people across a dozen towns, the district governor said yesterday, the deadliest day yet in the area in more than a year of hostilities.

Rescue workers were still pulling bodies out of the rubble yesterday morning.

Israel has ramped up its air strikes across Lebanon over the last month, saying it is targeting Lebanese armed group Hezbollah. Lebanese officials, rights groups and residents of affected towns say the strikes are indiscriminate.

No evacuation orders were given for any of the towns struck overnight. District governor Bachir Khodor said 67 people had been killed and more than 120 wounded and the death toll was expected to rise.



A woman carries a child while crossing from Lebanon into Syria, as she flees the ongoing hostilities between Hezbollah and Israeli forces, at the Masnaa border crossing, Lebanon. The photo was taken on Monday and released yesterday. PHOTO: REUTERS

### Hezbollah elects Naim Qassem as head to succeed Nasrallah

"That's only the people who've been removed from under the rubble and we still don't have the final toll. This is the most violent day for Baalbek in the last year," Khodor told Reuters.

The toll included nine people killed in Ram, its mayor Nazih Noun said, including a woman and her four children.

"It's quiet now, but we don't know how we can carry on with the funerals given the security situation," Noun told Reuters. Large swathes of the Bekaa Valley are Hezbollah strongholds.

Meanwhile, Hezbollah said yesterday it had elected deputy head Naim Qassem to succeed Secretary General Hassan Nasrallah, who was killed in an Israeli air attack on Beirut's southern suburb over a month ago.

The group said in a written statement that its Shura Council had elected Qassem, 71, in accordance with its established mechanism for choosing a secretary general.

## Israeli strike kills 93 in north Gaza town

20 children among dead; dozens injured; fears grow over Israel's ban on UN aid agency

REUTERS, Cairo

At least 93 Palestinians were killed and missing and dozens wounded in an Israeli strike on a residential building in the northern Gaza town of Beit Lahiya yesterday, the Gaza health ministry said.

Medics said at least 20 children were among the dead.

"A number of victims are still under the rubble and on the roads, and ambulance and civil defense crews cannot reach them," the territory's health ministry said.

Later yesterday, Ismail Al-Thawabta, the director of the government media office, put the number of fatalities at 93.

There was no immediate Israeli comment. The Israeli military has frequently questioned figures on death toll published by the Hamas media office, saying they were often exaggerated.

- ▶ Doctors forced to evacuate Kamal Adwan Hospital
- ▶ Healthcare system in north Gaza collapsed
- ▶ Death toll in enclave rises to 43,061

Video footage obtained by Reuters showed several bodies wrapped in blankets on the ground outside a bombed four-storey building. More bodies and survivors were being retrieved from under the wreckage as neighbours rushed to help with rescue.

"There are tens of martyrs (dead) - tens of displaced people were living in this house. The house was bombed without prior

warning. As you can see, martyrs are here and there, with body parts hanging on the walls," Ismail Ouaida, a witness who was helping to recover bodies, said in the video.

The health ministry said yesterday those wounded in the strike could not receive care as doctors had been forced to evacuate the nearby Kamal Adwan Hospital.

The death toll from Israel's retaliatory air and ground onslaught in Gaza has risen to 43,061, the Gaza health ministry said.

Yesterday's strike came a day after Israel's parliament passed a law to ban the UN relief agency UNRWA from operating inside the country, alarming some of Israel's Western allies who fear it will worsen the already dire humanitarian situation in Gaza.

## Houthi target 3 ships in Red Sea, Arabian Sea

REUTERS

Yemen's Houthis said on Monday that they targeted three ships in the Red Sea and Arabian Sea, attacks they called part of their efforts to enforce a naval blockade on Israel.

Houthi military spokesperson Yahya Sarea said in a televised address the vessels were targeted for attempting to approach ports bound for Israel.

According to the latest data from ISEG, all three targeted vessels were Liberia-registered. One of the vessels, identified by the Houthis as Motaro, was last seen off Yemen's western coast in the Red Sea, en route from Egypt's Suez Canal to Shanghai.

Another vessel, the SC Montreal, was reportedly targeted in Arabian Sea while travelling from Port Victoria to Salalah, Oman.

## US PRESIDENTIAL RACE

### For many, economy is personal and they blame Democrats

REUTERS, Detroit

Tiesha Blackwell, 24, voted for Joe Biden in 2020 but says she is casting her ballot for Republican former president Donald Trump this year, and high food and housing prices are a chief reason.

Blackwell, who lives southwest of Detroit in the battleground state of Michigan, says she has a better job now, but her rent has since doubled after she was forced to move, and her grocery and utility bills have soared.

"I'm not worse off than I was four years ago," Blackwell said on the sidelines of a rally featuring Trump's running mate JD Vance in Detroit this month.

"But compared to then, things are really, really high out here. I went from paying \$575 to now I pay \$1,100 just for rent. I remember ground chuck was \$2.99 a pound. Now it's \$4.99. Everything is higher."

The United States' post Covid-19 economic recovery has been the envy of the developed world, with strong consumer spending and business and federal investment helping the economy dodge a predicted recession.



Stock markets are at record highs, jobs and wages are growing fast, unemployment is low and inflation is now below January 2020 levels after a spike in 2022.

But prices for food, rent, utilities and treats like dining out are all well above 2019 levels, because of complex factors the US government has limited impact on, like labor costs, lack of competition and supply chain issues.

Many Americans are in a constant state of sticker shock.

That may explain why voters in the seven battleground states that will determine the winner of the November 5 election have a negative view of the economy, with 61 percent saying it is on the wrong track in a Reuters/Ipsos poll this month, and 68 percent saying the cost of living was on the wrong track.

Vice President Kamala Harris, the Democratic nominee, and Trump have proposed different fixes.

Harris has promised to fight price gouging and boost a child tax credit, while Trump has proposed cutting taxes on overtime pay, imposing blanket tariffs on imports that he says will bring manufacturing back to the US and mass deportation of immigrants.

Trump's proposed tariffs and deportation threats will drive up prices for goods and services, many economists say, while Harris' price-gouging ban is untested on a federal level.

Still, when asked which candidate had the better approach on issues, Trump led on the economy - 46 percent to 38 percent, this month's Reuters poll showed.

People who study economics say they feel voters' frustration even if they don't think Trump's plan will help.



Rescuers recover the body of a person from under the debris of a private house which was hit by a Russian missile strike in Kharkiv, Ukraine yesterday. The Russian army advanced 478 sq kms into Ukrainian territory in October, a record since March 2022 in the first weeks of the war, according to an analysis. PHOTO: REUTERS

## Indian army kills 3 rebels in J&K

AFP, Srinagar

Indian troops shot dead three suspected rebels in Jammu and Kashmir (J&K) hours after gunmen sprayed a military convoy and an ambulance with bullets, the army said yesterday.

Muslim-majority Kashmir has been divided between rivals India and Pakistan since their independence from British rule in 1947 and is home to a long-running insurgency.

Gunmen fired on the army convoy in the early hours of Monday in the mountainous southern Akhnoor area, near the unofficial border with Pakistan.

Soldiers launched a hunt for the attackers and reported that three militants had been killed.

"After round the clock surveillance throughout the night, an intense firefight unfolded today morning resulting in a significant victory for our forces," the army's White Knight Corps said in a statement.

"Relentless operations and tactical excellence has led to the elimination of three terrorists."

At least 500,000 Indian troops are deployed in Kashmir, battling an insurgency that has killed tens of thousands of civilians, soldiers and rebels since 1989.

Earlier this month, gunmen killed seven people near a construction site for a strategic road tunnel to Ladakh, a high-altitude Himalayan region bordering China.

On Friday, Indian officials said five people - including three soldiers - were killed in an ambush on an army convoy. New Delhi regularly blames Pakistan for arming the militants and helping them launch attacks, an allegation Islamabad denies.

The army says more than 720 rebels have been killed since Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government cancelled the territory's limited autonomy in 2019.

In early October, Kashmir held its first elections since 2014 for a regional assembly for the territory of some 12 million people.

"Establishment of Facilities for the Development of Light Engineering Sector and E-waste Processing"-Project, BCSIR  
Dr. Quadrat-I-Khuda Road, Dhanmondi, Dhaka-1205

### Invitation for Tender (IFT)

1.	Ministry/Division	Ministry of Science and Technology					
2.	Agency	Bangladesh Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (BCSIR)					
3.	Procuring entity name	Project Director, "Establishment of facilities for the development of light engineering sector and e-waste processing"					
4.	Procuring entity district	Dhaka					
5.	Invitation for	National Tender					
6.	Invitation ref. no.	39.02.0000.034.014.002.24.031, 39.02.0000.034.014.002.24.032					
7.	Date	29.10.2024					
8.	Procuring Method	Open Tender Method (OTM)					
9.	Budget and source if fund	GoB					
10.	Project Code	224356900					
11.	Project Name	Establishment of Facilities for the Development of Light Engineering Sector and E-waste Processing					
12.	Tender package name	Supply, Installation of Machineries and Others					
13.	Tender last selling date	27.11.2024 at 1:00 PM					
14.	Tender closing date and time	28.11.2024 at 1:00 PM					
15.	Tender opening date and time	28.11.2024 at 2:00 PM					
16.	Name and address of the office(s)	Selling tender document 1) Office of Project Director, "Establishment of Facilities for the Development of Light Engineering Sector and E-waste Processing", PP&PDC, BCSIR, Quadrat-I-Khuda Road					
	-Receiving tender document	-do-					
17.	Opening tender document	-do-					
18.	Eligibility of tender	As per Tender Document					
19.	Brief description of goods	As Per Specification					
20.	Brief description of related services	As Per Specification					
	Package No	Lot No	Identification of Lot	Location	Price of tender Document In Taka	Tender security	Completion time in /month
21.	GD31	Lot A	Water Treatment Plant	PP&PDC, BCSIR, Dhaka	1000/ (Non-refundable)	2.5% of the quoted price	2 months
		Lot B	Microwave Digester		1000/ (Non-refundable)		
	GD32	Lot A	Image Analysis Software	1000/ (Non-refundable)			
22.	Name of official inviting tender	Dr. Aninda Nafis Ahmed					
23.	Designation official inviting of tender	Project Director					
24.	Address of official inviting	PP&PDC, BCSIR, Quadrat -I-Khuda Road					
25.	Contract details of official inviting tender	Project Director, Tel- +8802-9635155, Email: adhi88bd@yahoo.com					
26.	The procurement entity reserves the right to accept or reject any or all tenders without assigning any reason.						

28.10.2024  
(Dr. Aninda Nafis Ahmed)  
Project Director

## The Daily Star

FOUNDER EDITOR: LATE S. M. ALI

### Don't let the growth slowdown persist

Govt must stabilise the economy, restore business confidence

As expected, Bangladesh recorded its lowest economic growth in five quarters during the final quarter of the 2023-24 fiscal year, as the government implemented contractionary monetary and fiscal policies to address dwindling foreign exchange reserves and high inflation. According to the latest quarterly data published by Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS), GDP grew by only 3.91 percent from April to June this year.

This slowdown should not come as a surprise, given that the interim government inherited an economy devastated by the Awami League regime's corruption and mismanagement. In a recent interview, the Bangladesh Bank governor accused tycoons linked to the former administration of siphoning off \$17 billion from the banking sector—a massive outflow that may be a global record for any country. Recovering from such severe setbacks will require substantial time and effort. Another important factor to consider is the mass data manipulation—including of GDP figures—under the previous regime, making comparisons with past data potentially misleading.

Nevertheless, if we look at the previous quarter, the GDP grew by 5.42 percent, down from the 6.12 percent announced by the previous government. This suggests that economic growth did suffer a significant setback. And that was primarily due to tightening monetary and fiscal policies to control inflation and prevent a further decline in our foreign reserves. However, beyond these measures, the government must address other bottlenecks driving high prices, such as possible market manipulation by syndicates, high transportation costs, supply chain constraints, and supply shortages. Simultaneously, it must work swiftly but judiciously to recover stolen assets siphoned abroad by AL-linked individuals, confiscate their domestic assets for resale, and renegotiate costly, one-sided deals with foreign entities. Such measures could boost foreign reserves and increase fiscal flexibility.

Reportedly, imports of raw materials declined by 15.9 percent in the last fiscal year, while imports of capital machinery fell by 23.86 percent. While some of this reduction may be linked to a decrease in illicit financial outflows, much of it points to declining economic activity, further evidenced by downturns across the service, agriculture, and industrial sectors over the past year.

It should be noted that part of this decline has been influenced by political instability, reduced business confidence, and decreased consumer spending. Therefore, while implementing structural reforms across various sectors, including the economy, the interim government must prioritise restoring political stability and business confidence. To achieve this, it should increase private sector engagement in its decision-making processes—including by potentially appointing an adviser from the private sector—to explore ways to boost economic activity in the short to medium term.

### Restore canals, check prolonged flooding

Plight of canal in Habiganj calls for proper interventions

Irrespective of where a canal or river is located in the country, hardly any waterbody has managed to escape the reach of land grabbers, especially those with political connections. The story of a canal within the haor region of Habiganj's Lakhai upazila is no exception. Over the last 20 to 25 years, nearly 15km of this 20km canal has been filled in and overrun with shops, houses, and other structures. This has compromised the natural drainage system of the haor, which connects to the Sutang River, causing waterlogging and inundating adjacent croplands for prolonged periods.

According to a report in this daily, most of those who encroached on this canal are local Awami League leaders and their cronies. The former chairman of the Lakhai upazila parishad, currently a fugitive following Sheikh Hasina's fall on August 5, had even built an approach road to his house occupying part of the canal. Unfortunately, when it comes to the encroachment of waterbodies and other natural resources, there seems to be hardly any difference between AL and BNP, with the names of two BNP men and their relatives coming up among the alleged grabbers.

However, with a non-political government now in place and Syeda Rizwana Hasan, an environmentalist of considerable repute, serving as the adviser for environment, forest, and climate change, there is renewed hope that the authorities will take drastic actions to restore the canal, and all such bodies, by evicting the occupiers and removing illegal structures. Influential individuals sometimes exploit the vulnerability of locals as a pretext for encroaching on waterbodies, but such excuses should not impede eviction drives. In a climate-vulnerable country like Bangladesh, restoration of water bodies such as canals is becoming increasingly crucial. The prolonged flooding witnessed this year in the eastern region, where clogged and encroached waterbodies prevented floodwaters from draining, should serve as a warning call for us.

So, we urge the government to take urgent steps to restore these local waterbodies. However, a proper eviction process with sufficient notice issued to the occupiers must be followed. At the same time, ensuring post-eviction monitoring to prevent grabbers from reoccupying the canal area—a practice observed frequently under the previous regime—is also crucial.

### THIS DAY IN HISTORY

### Ottoman Empire signs treaty with Allies

On this day in 1918, aboard the British battleship Agamemnon, anchored in the port of Mudros on the Aegean island of Lemnos, representatives of Great Britain and the Ottoman Empire signed an armistice treaty marking the end of Ottoman participation in World War I.

# A radical economic shift is needed to save the planet



Shamir Shehab is a public policy analyst focused on the intersection of climate change, environmental sustainability, and development. He is managing partner at Catalyzing Sustainable Transformation (CaST) Network.

SHAMIR SHEHAB

At The New York Times Climate Forward, an event held in New York in September this year that discussed the climate threats faced by Bangladesh, Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus was quite direct in saying that the current economic system is driving global environmental destruction and climate breakdown. This is a remarkable stance given that only a handful of world leaders dare to call out the big elephant in the room or even discuss this inconvenient truth.

Yunus termed the current economic framework “wrong” because it rewards destruction. The fundamental problem, according to him, is that modern economies are built around one destructive principle: maximising profit, even at the expense of the environment. The endless cycle of “buy, buy, buy” inevitably leads to waste, which is the very engine of the economy, while it's also driving environmental and climate crises. Every purchase fuels the fire that's burning down our home. For example,

**In the relentless pursuit of profit in our current economic structure, we ignore the immense cost of the environmental damage being inflicted on the planet. Six out of the nine planetary boundaries—critical thresholds that keep Earth habitable—are already overshoot beyond their safe operating limits. These boundaries are interconnected, meaning a breach in one area affects other areas.**

deforestation may contribute to an increase in the GDP, but it destroys ecosystems too. Similarly, tiger prawn farming in Bangladesh's southwestern coastal districts, promoted for export earnings, has wreaked havoc on the environment and local livelihoods by increasing soil salinity. This illustrates how destructive practices are justified in the name of economic growth, even as they threaten the very foundations of sustainable life and livelihood.

In the relentless pursuit of profit in



VISUAL: ANWAR SOHEL

our current economic structure, we ignore the immense cost of the environmental damage being inflicted on the planet. Six out of the nine planetary boundaries—critical thresholds that keep Earth habitable—are already overshoot beyond their safe operating limits. These boundaries

boundaries stays long beyond their safe limits, the future of our planet is in jeopardy.

The chief adviser also noted that the current economic model has created staggering wealth inequality: a tiny group of elites are hoarding unimaginable wealth while the majority struggle to survive. The richest one percent has more wealth

Giorgos Kallis and others argue that the current consumption level and growth projections in the Global North will make it impossible to meet the Paris Agreement's goal to limit global warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius. Several reports and scientific models support this grim forecast that our current global effort is far off the track in limiting temperature rises. Continuing along the current trajectory, even with green growth, will lead to warming far above two degrees Celsius, threatening ecological collapse and the sixth mass extinction.

What, then, is the way out of the current destructive economic model? It's simple: we need to discard GDP growth as the sole measure of progress and adopt a more holistic indicator that accounts for social, ecological and economic well-being. Beyond GDP or well-being, the approach to development that prioritises equality and holistic progress, rather than simply increasing wealth for a select few, is gaining traction among economists and experts in other fields, who are calling for a new measure—one that values human well-being and planetary health over the bloated bank accounts of billionaires.

In Bangladesh, a student-led mass uprising has brought the Yunus-led interim government to power. They enjoy a broad mandate to implement sweeping reforms to rebuild the nation. Unlike elected political governments, which are less likely to pursue such reforms for transformative change, the interim government has a unique opportunity to lay the groundwork for a new economic system that Yunus called for at The New York Times event.

By establishing a commission on “well-being economy,” the interim administration could lead the charge in developing a new metric to replace GDP as the primary measure of social, economic, and political progress. The chief adviser has influential friends and allies around the world, who would be ideal candidates to serve on such a commission. A new economic system focused on social, ecological, and economic well-being—rather than GDP growth that exacerbates inequality, environmental degradation, and climate breakdown—could align with the hopes and aspirations of 17 crore people of the country, paving the way for a truly new Bangladesh.

## We need to protect depositors from bank boardroom misuse

Farhan Masuq is lecturer of law at Bangladesh University of Professionals (BUP). Khushnuma Khan is a barrister at law.

FARHAN MASUQ and KHUSHNUMA KHAN

We need to protect depositors from bank boardroom misuse

In recent times, we have had a barrage of reports showing how, during the tenure of the Awami League regime, politically influential or affiliated directors in private banks abused their power to misappropriate general depositors' savings through illegal or unethical practices. These include sanctioning loans without due diligence, waiving or writing off loans and their interest, extending or rescheduling loans without reasonable grounds, making bank investments without proper feasibility studies, etc. Such poor governance resulted in an unprecedented misappropriation of depositors' money over the last decade or so.

While most malpractices in the banking sector stem from inadequate supervision and poor accountability practices by the central bank, the loopholes within the existing legal framework on banking governance also play a significant role. Corrupt individuals and their allies managed to legalise their wrongful actions by using some flawed provisions of the Bank Company Act, 1991 (amended up to 2023)—the primary legislation governing the banking sector. To identify the weaknesses in the legal provisions regarding accountability and transparency, it is crucial to understand the functions and powers of a bank's board of directors.

Legally, a board of directors is the highest decision-making body in a bank, responsible for formulating and implementing policies, risk management, internal controls, internal audits, and compliance. In short, the board oversees all business and administrative actions of a bank. So having a well-balanced and accountable board is paramount, especially as a bank holds and manages the funds of depositors. However, malpractice in the banking sector often begins when influential individuals take control of the board. The question is, does the current banking legislation prevent a bank from falling under the control of

directors, it is legally possible for five out of seven members on a board to be from a single family or its affiliated companies, allowing it to control the board. Such a concentration of control within a family raises ethical and legal concerns. For instance, appointing family members and associates to key positions in a bank could lead to conflicts of interest, where personal interests might overshadow depositor interests. Moreover, favouritism and incompetence may lead to poor compliance and thereby increase the risk of financial mismanagement and misappropriation.

Furthermore, according to an amendment to the Act passed on June

**While most malpractices in the banking sector stem from inadequate supervision and poor accountability practices by the central bank, the loopholes within the existing legal framework on banking governance also play a significant role.**

vested interests? The answer is somewhat affirmative.

Section 14Ka of the Act states that the shares of a bank cannot be accumulated in the hands of an individual, particular family, or company—and it bars them from acquiring more than 10 percent of shares in a banking company. Moreover, Section 15 restricts the number of directors from one family to three at a time, while Section 23 allows two additional directors from the same family's affiliated or controlled company or institution.

But since a bank, being a public limited company, must have at least three members on its board, including at least two independent

21, 2023, an individual can serve as a director for 2 consecutive years and may be reappointed after a three-year break. Such a lengthy tenure can allow directors to entrench themselves and misuse their position for personal gain rather than safeguarding depositor interests. All these vague and legally tenuous provisions of the Bank Company Act can open avenues for vested interests to amass control over banks.

Beyond the formation of the board, the most critical issue is ensuring transparency and accountability among directors. The Act mandates that directors, managing directors or chief executives, and senior management officials disclose the



# Who will win the US elections?



Ramisa Rob  
is in charge of Geopolitical  
Insights at The Daily Star.

RAMISA ROB

With just a week to go, predictions of “who will win” the knife-edge US presidential elections has become table talk of sorts. Among US nationals, there’s a strange aura of burn-out anxiety; a new report by the American Psychological Association (APA) showed that 7 out of 10 adult US citizens feel stressed about the upcoming elections. And with the past four years tainted with two wars, genocides, moral reckonings and increasing polarisation, the US election results will affect lives much beyond its borders.

Polls, as we know, are not always great at predicting results. Even if they were, most polls show that it’s a toss-up; Donald Trump and Kamala Harris are essentially at 50-50 if one takes the margin of error into account in the key swing states. Trump has never been this close to any of his previous Democratic rivals in polls in the past two election bids. Polls underrepresented the “hidden” Trump voters in both 2016 and 2020. The presumed lack of knowledge has now led some people to conclude that Trump will win. But it’s really just up in the air with many probable

outcomes. Trump may very well win, with a landslide even, but so could Harris.

Alternatively, it could be a tight election, with a marginal win for either Harris or Trump. It could be a tie, too, and go up to the House of Representatives, which is majority Republican, so that would mean that Trump will win. Yet, it could be a repeat of the debatable Bush vs Al Gore presidential race in 2000, where a close election result could

messages from unknown numbers paid by the “Republican Accountability Pact,” where former Trump supporters in Michigan say that they will not be voting for Trump because of the insurrection on January 6, 2021. These strategies, presumably by the Harris campaign, haven’t been under the media spotlight as much. The Trump campaign’s tendency to use AI and woo voters—such as the fake image of Trump surrounded

or not voting for Harris, who’s been complicit with Biden.

But it must be noted that Arab Americans are not a large enough population in the swing states to drastically affect the outcomes. It could also be that many Arab Americans will still vote for Harris over Trump on the issue of Palestine, as the latter is more favoured by right-wing extremists in Israel and incendiary in his rhetoric against Palestinians. The

It is not impossible for Donald Trump to win the popular vote, and it is not impossible for Harris to win the Electoral College but not the popular vote, which just reflects that this election is truly in uncharted waters. It could very well be that it’s the 2016 or 2020 movie all over again, but it could also be a different script altogether.

When predicting elections, political scientists historically considered incumbency as an advantage. Between 1986 and 2012, of 14 sitting US presidents seeking re-election, 11 did indeed win. But the US, like most other countries, is in a different era now where the conventional political wisdom does not apply anymore. It’s an era of profound political distrust and dissatisfaction. In 2020, anti-incumbency fervour against Donald Trump favoured Joe Biden, especially for the disaster that was Trump’s handling of the Covid pandemic.

But the incumbency theory cannot be applied in this election either; it’s an election between a notorious former president who lost re-election four years ago, and the current questionable vice-president after the incumbent president dropped out. Technically speaking, Kamala Harris is the incumbent as she did not distance herself from the Biden-Harris administration, and failed to address the shortcomings of the current policies to offer people with a new package deal. Biden’s track record could work against her. But one can also look at it differently: Harris is a woman of colour, the first female vice-president, and she is not in her 80s. The idea of Kamala Harris as the president of the US offers a fresh image. Yet, this could also work against her as racism and sexism prevail. One can pull out many scenarios, even bizarre ones, and the conversations can go in circles till November 5. The reality is that we will only know the predicted winner only after the maps of Pennsylvania, Michigan and Wisconsin go red or blue.

The uncertainty surrounding a global phenomenon such as the US elections is amplified in the current times, as there’s an answer to everything on social media; the mainstream media too, is filled with predictions and probabilities like a game. But despite all these thorough political analyses of all different scenarios, we can still say we just don’t know. If one is sure that “Trump will win” or “Harris will win,” it is nothing but a guess.



Presidential Candidate Milk Chocolates sold in Hudson stores at John F. Kennedy Airport in New York, US, taken on October 25, 2024.

PHOTO: RAMISA ROB

**The uncertainty surrounding a global phenomenon such as the US elections is amplified in the current times, as there’s an answer to everything on social media; the mainstream media too, is filled with predictions and probabilities like a game. But despite all these thorough political analyses of all different scenarios, we can still say we just don’t know.**

lead to weeks of recounting and go up to the Supreme Court to be settled.

One reason why it’s so difficult to predict the outcome or even form a remotely trustworthy gut instinct is because Trump has somewhat rusted and Kamala Harris has run an unexpectedly centrist campaign, bringing in old school Republicans like Liz Cheney and talking about owning guns more than student debt forgiveness, to win over Republican voters in swing states. By contrast, she has championed populist economic policies like reduced healthcare and housing costs for the middle class.

There’s also a black hole regarding strategies deployed by both candidates to mobilise voters. A registered Democrat in Michigan revealed they receive text

by Black voters—is more documented, but we still don’t know the extent of their disinformation campaign, which previously proved ridiculously successful in convincing many MAGA supporters that the Democratic election of 2020 was rigged.

For resident voters, domestic issues such as the economy and healthcare matter more than foreign policy. But foreign policy is an issue on voters’ minds. For example, 70 percent of Trump voters and 54 percent of Harris voters listed it as a major factor for their votes, according to a survey by Pew Research Center in September. Many who deeply care about the genocide perpetrated by Israel, especially Arab Americans who have lost family members in Gaza or Lebanon, also see it as a decisive factor for not voting at all

game changer for Harris would only occur if large numbers of Arab voters along with the youth and Black voters in the swing states decided to vote for Trump or pro-Palestinian independent candidate Jill Stein, or not vote at all.

The national sentiment as a whole is unclear; even the popular vote is up in the air. Trump lost both popular votes against Joe Biden and Clinton, who he defeated in the Electoral College, which historically favours Republicans. Trump has made substantial gains in non-competitive states like New York and California, where Harris, though leading, is underperforming as a Democrat. Republicans also won the House popular vote for the midterm elections in 2022, in less competitive states including California.

## Venezuela’s experience with democracy

As Nicolas Maduro secured a third term in Venezuela in July 2024, despite claims and evidence that the opposition leader won, Freddy Guevara, former vice-president of the Venezuelan Parliament and a key opposition voice against Maduro’s dictatorship, speaks with Sarzah Yeasmin, contributor to Geopolitical Insights, in an exclusive interview sharing why the nation could not successfully transition to a democracy.

In 2019, Venezuela’s interim government was formed by the national assembly to restore democracy and challenge the government of Nicolas Maduro—the successor of Hugo Chavez—who was accused of committing election fraud by Juan Guaidó, who declared himself the interim leader. It was a “double state situation” as Maduro was still in power. The interim government’s main mandate was to bring down Maduro and restore democracy, but it was only a constitutional and political tool without the power to fully govern. The constitutional framework of Venezuela allows for the interim government to exist for transitional leadership, but its application can be contentious and politically charged. In 2022, the interim government was dissolved. Earlier in 2021, Freddy Guevara was arrested for crimes against the state and sent to solitary confinement. After his release, to this day, Guevara continues to be one of the most prominent voices against Venezuela’s dictatorship.



Freddy Guevara

PHOTO: COURTESY

**By late 2022, the Maduro government of Venezuela became more popular than the interim government. What were the forces at play?**

The Venezuelan interim government operated under a unique set of challenges. It gained popularity in Venezuela for several reasons: many Venezuelans were frustrated with Maduro’s government, which faced allegations of corruption, economic mismanagement, and human rights abuses. Guaidó represented a potential alternative. There was initial international support: the interim government received backing from the United States and many Latin American nations, which added legitimacy to Guaidó’s claim. But as it was formed while Maduro was still in power, the interim government never had full control of the country’s institutions.

Over time, two major issues led to the interim government’s downfall. First, every year that we failed to oust Maduro, the interim government had to extend its mandate. As the next presidential election approached, political leaders became concerned that Guaidó was using his position to prolong his stay in power, potentially to run for president himself. This fear was one of the key reasons for the dissolution. Second, there were accusations of corruption within the interim government, which created distrust and were amplified by the Maduro regime and

internal opposition forces.

It’s important to note that the forces at play included both authoritarian influences and internal opposition struggles. These dynamics ultimately caused the collapse of the interim government and underscored the importance of unity and transparency in fragile political transitions. The combination of unmet expectations, internal conflicts, and external pressures led to the loss of popular support for the interim government, even though most Venezuelans still wanted Maduro out.

**What marked the tipping point of a democratic and thriving Venezuela into a dictatorship?**

We can look at examples from various countries: Venezuela, Tunisia, Bolivia, Nicaragua, and Egypt. These nations experienced a democratic transition but later reverted to authoritarian rule. While the specifics differ, there are common trends. First, the role of security forces is critical. In many countries, if the armed forces are not committed to the rule of law and democratic governance, they become accomplices to authoritarianism. So it’s essential to cultivate a democratic culture within security institutions.

Second, the independence of key institutions like the judiciary and electoral bodies is vital. These institutions provide checks and balances and hold leaders

accountable. When they are compromised, it becomes easier for authoritarian regimes to hijack the system. Third, transitional governments need to focus on delivering tangible results. It’s not just about the institutional framework but also about addressing the population’s immediate needs. Finally, all major political actors and societal stakeholders—such as unions, students, and the media—need to be included in the democratic process. When there’s a shared commitment, it’s harder for one party to dominate.

In Venezuela, take the case of 1998, when failure to update our political agreements and economic inequality, combined with the media’s detachment from democratic norms, led to the election of Hugo Chavez, who quickly dismantled democratic institutions, leading us down the path to dictatorship. Initially, the *El Pacto de Punto Fijo* pact provided stability and ensured that political actors agreed to share power, but the system stopped adapting to the changing economic realities, particularly when our oil-dependent economy collapsed. Instead of evolving, the political landscape became rigid, preventing innovation. As economic inequality and corruption increased, many people grew frustrated with the system. The media, which should have played a neutral role, began promoting anti-system leaders. All of this created a perfect storm

that allowed Chavez, an authoritarian leader, to rise to power.

**What arenas of public policy should an interim government address, and what would democratic reform look like in its initial stages and in the long term?**

The role of an interim government isn’t to create long-term development because they won’t have the time and resources to achieve that. The first goal should always be to improve people’s perception of democracy and show them that this shift can benefit their lives. For social and economic rights, interim governments should be focusing on a segment of the population where the government can have the most impact. This could involve just two or three key measures in sectors that are politically and socially significant. It might sound pragmatic, even Machiavellian, but I believe that for an interim government, it’s about survival and transitioning towards democratic stability. If a country is in a war,

takes patience, and often people aren’t willing to wait. They become frustrated and seek faster, more authoritarian solutions.

**What role can international actors and allies play to help create democratic institutions in countries like Venezuela, which are prone to one-party rule?**

We’re now dealing with global powers and economic alliances that have far-reaching impacts. For example, in Venezuela’s case, sanctions from the US have affected citizens more than the regime, which still manages to amass resources. When it comes to authoritarian governments, international support—whether active or passive—can be critical. The biggest issue arises when international actors view a country as a battleground for their own geopolitical interests. If any other country for that matter, finds itself in the middle of a power struggle between giants, the focus shifts away from the country’s development or democratic processes. Instead, it becomes

**Democracy requires people to be willing to make trade-offs. Every political system involves trade-offs, but in a democracy, those trade-offs are often more visible and painful because they involve giving up things that may feel existentially important to you. People have to be willing to accept that their goals may take time to achieve, and they have to pursue them within the system’s rules. This takes patience, and often people aren’t willing to wait.**

the economy and policies are all centred around winning that war. The same logic applies here.

It’s important to remember that democracy isn’t just about the mechanics of voting—it requires a society that’s willing to compromise. And that’s the hard part. It demands patience, time, and a willingness to acknowledge that sometimes you won’t get everything you want. Authoritarian systems, by contrast, impose decisions from the top down, so they often seem more efficient or decisive.

There’s more to it: democracy requires people to be willing to make trade-offs. Every political system involves trade-offs, but in a democracy, those trade-offs are often more visible and painful because they involve giving up things that may feel existentially important to you. People have to be willing to accept that their goals may take time to achieve, and they have to pursue them within the system’s rules. This

about serving the interests of foreign powers.

I hope that democratic nations will recognise their responsibility to support legitimate democratic movements. Take Tunisia, for example. During one of our conversations, Tunisian President Moncef Marzouki mentioned that while the international community was providing institutional and technical support for democracy, what Tunisia really needed was financial help to support its people. If people don’t see immediate improvements in their quality of life, they lose faith in the democratic process. Democratic transitions need both moral and financial support. It’s not enough to simply back the idea of democracy; the international community has to understand that interim governments or new democratic regimes need financial aid to address immediate needs and stabilise their populations.



## Bangladesh upbeat about defending SAFF title

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh are upbeat about defending their SAFF Women's Championship title as they square off against Nepal in today's final at the Dasharath Stadium in Kathmandu, with the match kicking off at 6:45pm Bangladesh time.

Bangladesh's disappointing 1-1 draw against Pakistan in their tournament opener and midfielder Monica Chakma's subsequent comments to media regarding the team's head coach had apparently reflected an unhappy family.

However, everything started changing with the crucial match against India where coach Peter Butler kept his faith on the experienced guns, who totally outclassed the five-time champions to step into the semifinals with a big 3-1 win before storming into the final with a 7-1 thrashing of Bhutan.

"Having crossed different odds, the girls have come to this stage and I always try to motivate them and try to keep them united on the ground. I think there will be no shortage of anything on the ground tomorrow [Wednesday]



and we will be trying to play the way we have played in the last three matches," captain Sabina Khatun said yesterday.

"I think the crowd will enjoy the match because it will not be easy for either side. It will be a tough match -- a 50-50 game," said the experienced campaigner.

Coach Peter focused on the process to be right in the final.

"A lot of respect to the opposition Nepal in terms of their unity. I think there

will be a lot of our factors involved in the game tomorrow but our belief is that we go with the right attitude and the right focus and talents," the Englishman said.

Bangladesh are just one hurdle away from being crowned back-to-back champions and proving that their maiden title two years ago was not a fluke.

Former coach Golam Rabbani Choton's charges were not the favourites two years ago either, but they did beat the

➤ Nepal have never won SAFF Women's Championship despite playing in five finals before.

➤ Bangladesh played in two finals before -- losing to India in 2016 and beating Nepal in 2022.

➤ Bangladesh have only one victory against Nepal in 12 meetings, with five draws and six matches won by Nepal.

home side, cheered on by a vocal crowd, 3-1 to win the title for the first time. These two teams have played against each other three times since, all of those matches ending in draws.

Nepalese forward Sabitra Bhandari, who scored the equaliser against India in the semifinals, is expected to be a big threat for Bangladesh. However, the suspension to on-form Nepalese forward Rekha Poudel will be a big relief for the women in red and green.

## BCB asked to amend constitution

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) is set for an important meeting today with many important discussions to be held. The board is currently operating without any standing committee since Faruque Ahmed took charge of the BCB presidency following the resignation of Nazmul Hassan Papon.

Two separate letters have been sent to the BCB on October 28 and 29 from the National Sports Council (NSC), asking for clarification. The one sent on October 28 sought clarification on how many directors' positions are vacant due to absence from three consecutive board meetings, according to Clause 15.2 of the BCB constitution.

Following the fall of the Awami League government, many BCB directors have remained absent. The NSC also sought to learn whether any steps have been taken regarding fulfilling the vacant posts, according to section 13.4 of the BCB constitution.

In another letter dated October 29, NSC wrote that it feels the need for forming a sub-committee to reform the BCB constitution. The NSC letters mentioned that issues discussed in the said letters are very important.

The board is also expected to discuss the issue of Shakib Al Hasan's selection for the upcoming ODI series against Afghanistan in UAE. The all-rounder was set to play in his final Test in Mirpur but was advised not to come to the country by Sports Adviser Asif Mahmud. Shakib, who had already travelled to Dubai to return to the country, left without playing his final Test.

Shakib had said that he would bid goodbye to international cricket with the 2025 Champions Trophy. However, selectors remained unsure whether to pick him for the upcoming series in UAE until discussion with the board and the BCB president.

Meanwhile, all-format skipper Najmul Hossain Shanto had expressed wish to step down from captaincy and the BCB is yet to officially comment on the issue.

## Naeem and Co grind out draw for Rangpur

SPORTS REPORTER

Rangpur Division remained second in the NCL standings after the second round following a draw against Dhaka Division on Day Four at BKSP Ground 3 yesterday.

Rangpur were 101 for five in the 57th over but Naeem Islam played a heroic knock under pressure, notching 75 off a whopping 246 deliveries. Tanbir Hayder helped close down one end, remaining unbeaten on 21 off 126 deliveries. After Naeem's dismissal, Rishad Hossain scored an unbeaten 19 off 58 deliveries to help seal the draw as Rangpur reached 165 for seven in 101 overs in their second innings. Earlier, Rangpur had managed 253 in the first innings before Dhaka had posted 327 in the first innings.

Suvagata Hom was the pick of the Dhaka bowlers with two wickets for 18 runs in 16 overs. Day 1 of the four-day match had seen no play due to wet outfield.

In another drawn second round game at Sheikh Abu Naser Stadium, Barishal opener Abdul Mazid hit 134 as they reached 287 for three against Khulna Division, who had declared their first innings at 408 for nine.

## Safe approach pegs TIGERS BACK ONCE AGAIN

SAMSUL AREFIN KHAN from Chattogram

A penchant for opting for a safe approach once again forced Bangladesh onto the backfoot on the opening day of their series-deciding second and final Test against South Africa in Chattogram yesterday.

Having taken little to no lesson from selecting a batter-heavy eleven during their seven-wicket defeat in the first Test, the Tigers once again opted to go with just four regular bowlers and eight genuine batters in their side for this series' final World Test Championship fixture -- a game that Bangladesh must win to level the series.

Given the historical trend of the Zahur Ahmed Chowdhury Stadium offering batting-friendly wickets coupled with the fact that the weather in the port city has been very hot and humid in the last few days, the Tigers' selection process made very little sense.

Even the Proteas showed in the last Test, played in a much slower Mirpur surface, that having a properly balanced side was key -- their pacers scalped 13 wickets in that game while Hasan Mahmud, Bangladesh's sole seamer, was left ruing for not being able to bowl from 'both ends'.

Bangladesh did add one more pacer for the Chattogram Test -- pairing Hasan with Nahid Rana. However, the Tigers' choice of opting for only two spinners -- all-rounder Mehedi Hasan Miraz and left-armed Taijul Islam -- was just as baffling as



PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

it was logical for South Africa to go with three pacers and two spinners.

When Bangladesh's newly-appointed coach Phil Simmons was made to answer queries as to what led to such a selection, things got clearer that it was the fear of batting collapse and the defensive mindset of preparing for 'a draw' from the onset saw the Tigers repeat such a questionable approach.

"It was [done after] a lot of consideration. There was a lot of talk about it [the team combination], and this what we came up with at the end," Simmons told reporters in Chattogram yesterday.

"There was a thought [given] to go

with a fifth bowler. First of all, you can win a Test. And if you get to a stage where you can't win it then you must be able to save it. This came into the equation and we decided to go this way," Simmons added, making it apparent where the priorities lie.

Unsurprisingly, South Africa batters made hay on Day 1 with opener Tony de Zorzi and Tristan Stubbs notching maiden tons to power the tourists to 307-2 at stumps, frustrating the Bangladeshi bowlers the entire day under scorching heat.

Bangladesh pacers Hasan and Nahid bowled 13 overs each, staying wicketless,

while the two spinners Taijul (30) and Miraz (21) had to account for most overs. Part-time spinner Mominul Haque had to chip in with four overs, further proving that the Tigers were missing a fifth regular bowler who could have made things a lot easier for the other four bowlers in Chattogram's batting paradise.

Taijul was the one to take both the Proteas wickets to fall on the day -- removing stand-in skipper and opener Aiden Markram (33 off 55) and Stubbs (106 off 198) late in the day to end a massive 201-run stand with De Zorzi, who remained unbeaten on 141.

Although the concussion of Jaker Ali Anik and Liton Das' fever at the eleventh hour had an impact on the selection process in the Chattogram Test, it was clear that the defensive approach of the team management has once again seen the Tigers on the back foot just after Day 1.

### SCORES IN BRIEF

Bangladesh vs South Africa

2ND TEST, DAY 1

South Africa 1st innings: 307 for two (De Zorzi 141 not out, Stubbs 106, Markram 33, Bedingham 18 not out; Taijul 2-110, Miraz 0-95, Mahmud 0-47)

### LIST OF WINNERS

- Men's Ballon d'Or: Rodri (Esp/Man City)
- Women's Ballon d'Or: Aitana Bonmati (Esp/Barcelona)
- Johan Cruyff trophy: Carlo Ancelotti (Ita/Real Madrid)
- Johan Cruyff trophy: Emma Hayes (Eng/Ex-Chelsea women's coach)
- Gerd Mueller trophy: Kylian Mbappe (Fra/ex-PSG), Harry Kane (Eng/Bayern Munich)
- Raymond Kopa trophy: Lamine Yamal (Esp/Barcelona)
- Lev Yashin trophy: Emiliano Martinez (Arg/Aston Villa)
- Socrates Prize: Jenifer Hermoso (Esp/Tigres Monterrey)
- Best men's team: Real Madrid
- Best women's team: Barcelona

## Rodri's Ballon d'Or: Deserved or not?

NABID YEASIN

Rodri becoming the first Manchester City player to win the Ballon d'Or award for the best player in the world on Monday did come as a surprise to many, and with ample reasons too as he pipped favourite Vinicius Junior of Real Madrid and Brazil to lift the most prestigious individual award in football.

While Vinicius' claim to the award can not be undermined -- given he had been the most influential player for Real Madrid in a season that they won the Champions League, LaLiga and Super Copa -- doubts could not be made about the City star's credentials.

It's just that the Ballon d'Or award has been dominated so much by attacking players over the years that seeing a midfielder bag it, especially when he was not even made favourite to win it while running against a prolific attacker like Vinicius, was bound to raise eyebrows.

Central midfielders don't often appear in the race for the Ballon d'Or, let alone win it -- a fact that could easily be established that in the last 17 years, only two midfielders won the award. The last one to win was Croatia and Real Madrid midfielder Luka Modric in 2018 and before him, it was Brazil's Kaka in 2007 -- and Kaka was hardly a traditional midfielder.



"This cannot be achieved alone, I am very lucky to be surrounded by players who make me better every day. Thanks to the staff, to the club workers, without you we would not achieve so much success."

Barcelona and Spain star Aitana Bonmati said on Monday after winning her second successive women's Ballon d'Or, having led her club to a historic continental quadruple of titles and claiming the Nations League with her country.

Not only midfielders, the criteria for winning the Ballon d'Or award is such that it sort of creates a barrier for any player other than a forward to win it -- the last defender to win the award was Fabio Cannavaro in 2006 and the only goalkeeper to ever win it was Russia's Lev Yashin in 1963.

The main three criteria for the award include individual performances, decisive and impressive character; team success, performances and achievements; and player behaviour, class and fair play. And, in that regard, a strong case for Rodri winning it could be made.

Rodri was one of the main figures for City in 2023-24, starting more matches (50) than any of his teammates, while he also played the most minutes (4,325) to help the English side an unprecedented fourth successive Premier League trophy. He was also named the best player at the Euro 2024, propelling Spain to a record-extending fourth title.

How pivotal Rodri was for Pep Guardiola last season could be gauged

just from the matches he missed -- in the nine games Rodri didn't feature, City won just five, losing four of them.

Playing 50 games in all competitions for City, Rodri had 22 goal involvements (9 goals, 13 assists), having never previously register more than seven goals or over seven assists in a single campaign.

Rodri became the first-ever Manchester City player to win the Ballon d'Or, and the first player from the Premier League to do so since Cristiano Ronaldo in 2008 when he was at Manchester United

Passing is the ultimate trait of a midfielder and Rodri dominated in that aspect as well, averaging 111.2 passes per 90 minutes with an accuracy of 92.3% which accounted to more passes per 90 than any other player from Europe's top five leagues in all competitions.

Rodri also set a new Premier League record (since 2003-04) for successful passes (3,359) and successful passes in the opposition's half (2,122) in a single season last year.

Hence, a deep look at Rodri's credentials might just be able to make things a bit clear as to why the journalists from 100 top-ranked FIFA nations voted him in ahead of Vinicius -- even though choosing a winner in a voting method is never free of bias.

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## BTTC wants duty free rice imports

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Bangladesh Trade and Tariff Commission (BTTC) has requested the government to temporarily withdraw import duty on rice to increase the supply and, in turn, contain the price of this staple food in the local markets.

To this end, the BTTC sent a report to the commerce ministry, food ministry, and the National Board of Revenue (NBR) yesterday.

According to Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics, food inflation has remained above 10 percent for six consecutive months since April this year.

Although the price of fine rice remained unchanged over the last month, medium and coarse varieties, which are consumed the most, saw a 1.74 percent and 1.9 percent increase, respectively, over the same period, said the BTTC report.

A reason for the increase can be attributed to the back-to-back floods and inclement weather that have caused damage to standing paddy crops across the country.

SEE PAGE 10 COL 3



A Palestinian boy cries as he carries the body of a child, who was killed in Israeli strikes, at Al-Aqsa Martyrs Hospital in Deir Al-Balah in the central Gaza Strip yesterday.

PHOTO: REUTERS

## ACC chairman, 2 commissioners quit their jobs

DIPAN NANDY and MD ABBAS

Chairman and two commissioners of the Anti-Corruption Commission resigned yesterday.

ACC Chairman Moinuddin Abdullah, commissioners Asia Khatoun and Zahirul Haque stepped down, citing personal reasons, said sources at the anti-graft body.

This development came roughly a month after the interim government formed the Anti-Corruption Reform Commission, led by Transparency International Bangladesh Executive Director Iftekharuzzaman.

The commission has been tasked with proposing essential reforms to enhance the effectiveness, independence, and impartiality of the ACC.

According to section 10 of the Anti-Corruption Commission Act 2004, the commission members submit their resignation letters to the president through the Cabinet Division, Aktarul Islam, ACC deputy director and public relations officer, told journalists.

Under the ACC Act, any member wishing to resign must submit a letter of resignation to the president at least one month in advance.

The resignations of the Moinuddin-led commission have raised a question about how the commission will function until the reform commission submits its report.

There had been allegations against the commission that it failed to hold politically influential people involved in money laundering and corruption accountable.

Contacted, Iftekharuzzaman, chief of the ACC Reform

SEE PAGE 10 COL 1

## Trump courts religious voters

Harris talks jobs as millions vote early

**US PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION**

**06 DAYS TO GO**

REUTERS, Atlanta

Republican Donald Trump on Monday evening appealed to religious voters in the southern swing state of Georgia as his campaign distanced itself from racist remarks by supporters that could alienate key voter groups.

Millions of Americans have already cast their vote before the November 5 election, which national polls including the latest one from Reuters/Ipsos, and surveys in swing states, show is a close race between Trump and his Democratic rival Kamala Harris.

In Georgia, where in-person early voting ahead of Election Day is expected to total up to 70 percent of ballots, Trump courted religious voters during a National Faith Advisory Board event.

"I think this is a country that needs religion," Trump said. "They're trying to stymie you, this new administration, this new radical left group of people."

But he faces pressure over his rally in New York on Sunday, where a comedian called Puerto Rico a "floating island of garbage," prompting a backlash from Latino celebrities and criticism from both Republican and Democratic politicians. The Trump campaign has said the joke did not reflect their views.

Some 46 million Americans have voted already, according to the Election Lab at the University of Florida, including some 2.8 million people in Georgia and 1.9 million

SEE PAGE 10 COL 3

## AL govt put finance adviser, BB governor in legal trouble

ASIFUR RAHMAN and SUKANTA HALDER

The immediate past Awami League government's failure to settle an international arbitration claim has left Bangladesh in a legal tangle in the US, leading to a surprise judicial order against two top officials of the interim government during their official visit to Washington last week.

The judicial order for Finance Adviser Salehuddin Ahmed and Bangladesh Bank Governor Ahsan H Mansur to appear before a US court to testify has since been recalled following an appeal by the Bangladesh government.

The issue goes back to the first tenure of the Awami League government led by Sheikh Hasina. The dispute with Smith Cogeneration, a US power company, involves a \$1.5 million performance bond that was forfeited by the Bangladesh Power Development Board (PDB) two decades ago.

In 1999, the PDB forfeited the bond money after cancelling the contract with the company for setting up a 100MW barge-mounted power plant in Haripur, Narayanganj.

PDB officials justified the move. They said Smith Cogeneration, which was awarded the job on October 14, 1997, failed to start the construction work within the scheduled commercial operation date (COD).

The company had sought a revision of the deadline, but the PDB rejected the plea, cancelled the deal and forfeited the bond money.

"All the procedures were followed during the cancellation process," incumbent PDB Chairman Md Rezaul Karim told The Daily Star yesterday.

Smith Cogeneration failed to meet the deadline, he said, adding, "Even, no instruments or materials were found at the construction site at the time. There were no activities, which was why the deal was cancelled."

**On March 1, 1999, Smith filed a lawsuit at the International Court of Arbitration against the PDB and the government of Bangladesh, claiming \$35.02 million in damages.**

He said he came to know about the long saga only this month after taking office.

### THE ARBITRATION

On March 1, 1999, Smith filed a lawsuit at the International Court of Arbitration under International Chamber of Commerce (ICC) against the PDB and the government of Bangladesh. It claimed \$35.02 million from Bangladesh in damages.

The court, located in the UK, gave its verdict on October 30, 2003, after several hearings between 2002 and 2003. No representatives from Bangladesh attended the court proceedings.

The verdict said, "Smith has established a claim against the PDB for lost profits, lost development costs and lost fees in the sum of \$10.42 million. The Tribunal orders that the PDB shall pay costs of the arbitration assessed by the ICC at \$6.2 lakh and the sum of \$5.2 lakh toward the legal costs and disbursements incurred by Smith."

The court also slapped a 4 percent interest until the payment was completed. Since then, Smith Cogeneration tried multiple times to get the money in vain, leading to the current amount of \$31.9 million including interest.

The company also went to multiple courts in the US as well as the Court of Session in Scotland's Edinburgh to recognise and enforce the UK verdict.

Latest on October 16, it wrote to the PDB, asking the finance adviser and the BB governor by name to appear before a US court to testify on October 23.

The court on Thursday issued "bench warrants for the arrest" for the two officials, who were on an official visit there to attend annual meetings of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank Group.

The warrants were subsequently stayed. Asked about latest letter, the PDB chief said, "Upon receiving the notice from Smith Cogeneration, we have appointed lawyers in the US but they could not prepare the documents before the hearing of October 23."

He said both the PDB and the previous Bangladesh governments decided to skip the court proceedings on instructions of

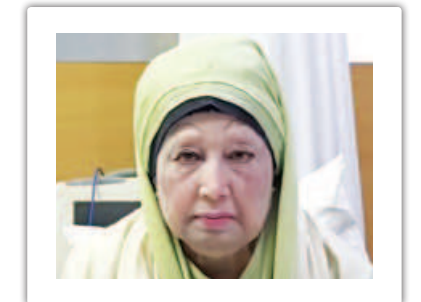
SEE PAGE 10 COL 4

## BETTER TREATMENT

### Khaleda, if able, to leave for London soon

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia will be taken to London first and then to another country for advanced treatment very soon, if her condition allows, her personal physician Prof AZM Zahid Hossain said yesterday.



"Considering her health, we have started preparations to take her to a multidisciplinary hospital abroad as quickly as possible," he said while talking to journalists.

"As part of the process, we are securing a long-haul specialised air ambulance and making necessary communications. She [Khaleda] will initially be flown to London, where, after a brief stopover, she will be taken to the country where there are multidisciplinary medical

SEE PAGE 10 COL 1

## Nasa finds 'green spots' on Mars

INDEPENDENT.CO.UK

Nasa has found shocking "green spots" on Mars. On Earth, those spots can be a mark of the activity of microbes. Nasa cautioned that there is nothing to indicate the same is happening on Mars - but noted that it was an interesting and unexpected feature in the rock that could be an important find on the planet.



The discovery was made when the Perseverance rover scraped away at a bit of the rock on the Martian surface. The 5 centimetre patch that it left showed what Nasa called a "striking array" of colours in the rock, with white, black and green patches.

One of the biggest surprises was the dark green coloured spots that were found in the patch. They are made up of dark-toned parts with fuzzy and light-green rims around them.

On Earth, we have red rocks that are made that colour from oxidised iron, which is the colour of rust or the red in our blood. In similar rocks to those on Mars, green spots of this kind can be seen, and form when water runs through the sediment before it hardens into rock, which changes the chemical reaction and leaves behind a different, green colour chemical.



**EYES ON THE PRIZE:** Bangladesh captain Sabina Khatun and her Nepalese counterpart Anjila Tumbapo Subba pose for a photograph with the SAFF Women's Championship trophy at the Dasharath Stadium in Kathmandu on Tuesday as they gear up for today's grand finale. Bangladesh, the defending champions, will want to repeat their final victory against the same opposition at the same venue two years ago while the hosts will look to end their final jinx with a first-ever title.

PHOTO: SAFF

## Canada, UK, EU slap new sanctions on Myanmar

AFP, London

The EU, UK, and Canada yesterday announced fresh sanctions targeting the Myanmar junta's access to "military materiel, equipment and funds".

The new curbs, against entities supplying aviation fuel and equipment to Myanmar's military, were aimed at constraining its "ability to conduct airstrikes on civilians", according to Britain.

It said the month of August saw the highest number of airstrikes on record by the Myanmar military, killing dozens of civilians and amounting to "gross human rights violations".

The sanctions -- the latest by Western countries since a February 2021 military coup ousted Aung San Suu Kyi's government -- target six entities involved in providing aviation fuel or restricted goods to the junta.

They bolster several previous rounds of curbs against suppliers of aviation fuel to the military and arms

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1