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5 EDN INSTITUTIONS Academic life of 40,000 in disarray Classes, exams halted following series of clashes

ARAFAT RAHAMAN

Academic activities in five major educational institutions in Dhaka remain suspended for the past week amid multiple incidents of clashes, affecting at least 40,000 students.

- Classes remain suspended in at least five colleges
- Multiple exams cancelled across 10 educational institutions
- DMRC suffered significant losses
- Authorities call for permanent solution
- Special assistant to education adviser says 'situation contained'

The absence of effective measures by the authorities concerned has added to uncertainty over when these institutions will return to normalcy.

The institutions are Government Shaheed Suhrawardy College and Kabi Nazrul Government College, which are among the seven institutions affiliated with Dhaka University, Dr Mahbubur Rahman Mollah College (DMRC), Dhaka National Medical Institute Hospital and St Gregory High School and College.

On Sunday and Monday, students of these institutions engaged in separate clashes, halting academic activities.

The clashes also prompted the DU authorities to postpone final examinations of first- and fourth-year students of all seven affiliated colleges. The five other affiliated colleges are Dhaka College, Eden Mohila College, Begum Badrunnesa Government Mohila College, Government Titumir College, and Mirpur Government Bangla College.

Principals of the colleges expressed concerns over the disruption of academic activities due to infrastructural damage, calling for prompt and permanent solutions to resume normal operations.

Ashraf Chowdhury, managing director of DMRC, which will remain closed until Saturday, said they might not be able to start academic activities even next week considering the amount of damage done to the institution.

"We'll try to resume official work next week. If we can repair the damages and get the classrooms ready for the students, we'll try to resume classes the week after," he told The Daily Star.

Prof Kakoli Mukhopadhyay, principal of Shaheed Suhrawardy College, said, "We've been trying to restart academic activities in our college, but we've been

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After having been waiting since 7:00am, these women from lower-income groups engage in a scuffle as desperation runs high for their share of kitchen essentials at subsidised prices from a TCB truck on the capital's Manik Mia Avenue. The truck arrived around 12:00pm.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

WHEN DIGITAL SPACE BECOMES A PARADISE FOR HARASSERS

In the era of technology, gender-based violence too has taken a new form. Cyberbullying and online harassment has become weapons of choice for perpetrators in the digital space -- from messaging apps to social media platforms. In our next column for 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence, Mahiya Tabassum details how navigating cyberspace often becomes traumatic for women in Bangladesh.

STORY ON PAGE 9

Political parties strongly endorse press freedom

Call for an end to intimidation of
the media during talks with Noab

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Political parties yesterday expressed their unwavering support for press freedom, highlighting its vital role in strengthening democracy and securing the nation's future.

They blasted the recent attacks on the press and called for an immediate end to such activities. They also cautioned that if such activities go on, the aspirations of the July uprising would not be fulfilled.

Top leaders of 13 political parties made these remarks at a views-exchange meeting on "Independent Journalism and Media Institutions Under Threat".

The Newspaper Owners' Association of Bangladesh (Noab) organised the programme at the Pan Pacific Sonargaon Hotel.

Speaking at the event, BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhru Islam Alamgir said it is quite unfortunate that he had to discuss press freedom in a free environment after the fall of a fascist regime.

"Over the last 15 years, people, including political

PHOTO ON PAGE 4

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\$14b lost to capital flight a year during AL years Finds committee preparing white paper

REJAUL KARIM BYRON and
ASIFUR RAHMAN

Bangladesh has lost around \$14 billion a year on average to capital flight during the Awami League's 15 year tenure, according to the draft report of the committee preparing a white paper on the economy.

The actual amount of capital flight could not be determined due to time constraints, The Daily Star has learnt from members of the 12-member committee. However, a separate chapter has been prepared on the topic using scientific methodology, government documents and global reports.

The committee, which was formed on August 28, was given three months

to prepare the report to inform on the true state of the economy, battered from years of mismanagement and data obfuscation.

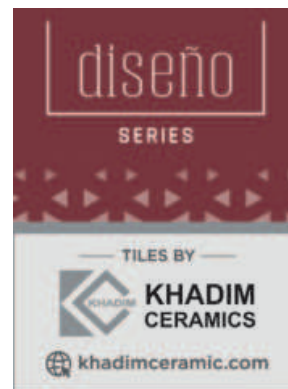
"We have incorporated the ways money laundering takes place and how it could be stopped," said one of the committee members asking not to be named.

Earlier on November 2, Transparency

International Bangladesh said \$12 to \$15 billion was siphoned out of the country in a year over the last 15 years.

Bangladesh lost approximately \$8.27 billion on average between 2009 and 2018 only from mis-invoicing of values of import-export goods by traders to evade taxes, according to the

SEE PAGE 2 COL 5



Liquid waste from chemical and dyeing factories being discharged into the Buriganga in the capital's Shyampur area. Several fish species in the river have all but disappeared. The photo was taken recently.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

Polls date after reforms Two advisers say at press briefing

BSS, Dhaka

The government will announce the date of the national election immediately after completing the reforms, Syeda Rizwana Hasan, environment, forest, and climate change adviser, reiterated yesterday.

She said six reform commissions are supposed to submit their reports by December 2024, but some commissions have informed them that they may need one or two more weeks to submit their reports.

"We are repeatedly saying that we will go for elections as soon as possible after completing the reforms. The primary work of holding the polls has been completed. The Election Commission has been formed," Rizwana told a press briefing at Foreign Service Academy in the capital.

Speaking at the briefing, Adviser Mahfuj Alam said the country's people sacrificed their lives to bring reforms to

the state and that is why the polls would be held after completing the reforms.

Responding to a query over assassination attempts on the coordinators of Anti-Discrimination Student Movement, Rizwana said there is no scope to see it lightly.

The coordinators continue to make efforts to unite the nation, which hits the interest of many people, the environment adviser said, adding that the issue of the coordinators' security was raised at the meeting of advisory council yesterday.

"The government is not taking the issue lightly," she said, adding the relevant agencies of the government are conducting investigations into the incident.

About the security in courts, the adviser said all should remain calm to this end and refrain from destructive activities.

Chief Adviser's Press Secretary Shafiqul Alam was also present at the briefing.

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Hajj registration deadline extended till December 15

UNB, Dhaka

The government has extended the Hajj registration deadline for 2025 to December 15 to prevent last-minute hassles.

The Ministry of Religious Affairs announced this change through a notice signed by Deputy Secretary Md Rafikul Islam yesterday.

The notice said the registration period for both government and private Hajj pilgrims now runs until December 15, 2024. During this period, pilgrims can complete their initial registration by depositing Tk 3 lakh and must finalise their registration by paying the full amount for the Hajj package.

The notice added that no further extensions will be given after this deadline. Pilgrims must complete all necessary procedures within the stipulated timeframe.



Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus holds a meeting with Jamaat-e-Islami Ameer Shafiqur Rahman at the state guest house Jamuna yesterday. Shafiqur led a Jamaat delegation to the meeting.

PHOTO: PID

Bangladeshi fisherman shot by Myanmar Navy

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Cox's Bazar

A Bangladeshi fisherman sustained injuries after being shot by the Myanmar Navy while fishing near Saint Martin's Island in Teknaf, Cox's Bazar, said BGB yesterday.

Mohammad Ershad, 40, has been taken to Teknaf for advanced medical care.

The incident occurred Wednesday around 3:00pm in the Baddar area of the southeast Bay of Bengal, close to St Martin Jetty.

The fishing trawler Ershad was aboard inadvertently entered Myanmar's waters in the Baddar area due to an engine failure, said Major Mohammad Ishtiaq Murshed, acting commanding officer of the Teknaf-2 BGB Battalion.

"At that time, a ship of the Myanmar Navy stationed there opened fire at the trawler. Ershad was shot in his arm."

The navy then provided first aid to the injured fisherman before releasing him and the other crew, along with their trawler. "Inquiries are being made in this regard."

Cops identify 8-10 attackers

FROM PAGE 1

between followers of Chinmoy, former ISKCON leader and also spokesperson for Sammilita Sanatani Jagaran Jote, and law enforcers and lawyers on Tuesday.

The arrestees are Rajib Bhattacharya alias Sumon, Bobi Chowdhury, Abdul Kaium, Kowshik Chowdhury, Abir Dey, Robin Das, and Jewel Das, said police.

With these seven, 34 people, including seven murder suspects, have been arrested, according to police.

Officer-in-Charge Fazlul Kader Chowdhury of Kotwali Police Station said, "We have scrutinised the CCTV footage of the area and found 8 to 10 who took part in the killing. Of them, four to five were seen hacking the lawyer."

"We got some names and are trying to arrest them."

OC Fazlul was transferred last night.

Several police officers told this paper that they have identified 8-10 suspects from footage.

Meanwhile, Shuvo Kanti Das, a fourth semester student of LLB at the BGC Trust University, was expelled yesterday after alleged evidence of his involvement in the murder surfaced.

BGC Trust University's Deputy Registrar Salauddin Shahareir told The Daily Star, "Soon after photos [allegedly of the murder incident] went viral on the social media, his classmates and other students identified him in the photo. The university made the decision based on students' information and evidence."

"The university did not launch any investigations on its own in this matter," he said.

The Daily Star could not verify the authenticity of the photos in question.

LAWYERS ON STRIKE

Members of Chattogram District Bar

Association refrained from attending court proceedings for the second day yesterday, protesting the murder of Saiful and demanding arrest of his killers.

All proceedings at the 74 courtrooms in Chattogram were suspended due to the strike. Wearing black badges, lawyers demonstrated in the court building area since yesterday morning.

Some former students of International Islamic University Chittagong, Premier University, and Chattogram Law College, who practise law at the courts, also took part in the protest under separate banners.

Addressing the programme, CDBA President Najim Uddin Chowdhury alleged that police failed to control the situation despite having proper support. He came down heavily on the CMP commissioner's role.

"On Tuesday, when the Chinmoy supporters were not letting the prison van move, there was a huge deployment of police, army, and BGB personnel in front of district administration office. Why didn't you call them?" he asked.

"We want to know from the CMP commissioner how Chinmoy got a megaphone inside the prison van ...," said Najim.

He urged the lawyers not to represent those accused of Saiful's murder.

Meanwhile, deposed prime minister Sheikh Hasina in a statement has condemned the killing of Saiful and demanded punishment to the culprits. She also slammed the arrest of a top leader of the Sanatani community and demanded his immediate release, read a post on the official Facebook page of the Awami League.

AFP, Tehran

A general in Iran's Revolutionary Guards was killed in Syria yesterday during fighting between Syrian government forces and jihadists, an Iranian news agency reported.

Tehran has been a staunch ally of Syrian President Bashar al-Assad during the civil war that broke out in 2011, providing military advisers.

The worst fighting in years broke out in northern Syria this week between jihadists and the army.

"General Kioumars Pourhashemi, one of Iran's senior advisers in Aleppo, was killed in an attack carried out by takfiri terrorist mercenaries," Tasnim news agency reported.

In Shia-majority Iran, the term 'takfiri' generally refers to jihadists or supporters of radical Sunni Islam.

Academic life

FROM PAGE 1

witnessing such chaos in many institutions. To address these challenges, we need a permanent solution, which can help us act promptly."

The college announced that its academic activities will remain halted until December 2, while Kabi Nazrul Government College remained shut until yesterday since the clash erupted on Monday (November 25). It has not given a date of reopening till the filing of this report at 9:00pm last night.

On November 24, students of DMRC went to Dhaka National Medical Institute Hospital to protest an alleged medical mistreatment of a fellow student.

At one point, they vandalised the hospital, compelling the institute authorities to postpone all MBBS and BDS classes from November 26 to 28.

As some students of Shaheed Suhrawardy College, located near the hospital, intervened, the DMRC students attacked and vandalised that college as well.

St Gregory High School and College also came under attack at that time, leading to suspension of all classes, and exams until yesterday. The authorities of the institution yesterday said they will begin classes on Saturday.

On November 25, in response to the attack, students of Suhrawardy College, with support from students of other DU-affiliated colleges like Kabi Nazrul Government College, severely vandalised the 11-storey DMRC building, leading to a series of clashes and chases.

In a separate incident, students of Bangladesh University of Textiles (Butex) and Dhaka Polytechnic Institute got locked in a clash on November 24 night, resulting in the suspension of nine exams of Butex.

Since the fall of the Sheikh Hasina-led government, the education sector has been in a state of instability. Several protests were held at different institutions across the country as students demanded the resignations

Political parties strongly endorse press freedom

FROM PAGE 1

activists, had been in constant fear of being sued or landing in jail for writing in newspapers or speaking out. It is unfortunate that even after a mass uprising, attacks on media outlets remain a concern," he said.

He said the BNP always fought for freedom of speech, right to vote, and democracy.

"Some people are attempting to divide the people. Certain remarks are being made that could lead to complete anarchy. Together, we must stop this; or else, the sacrifices of the students and the masses will go in vain."

Fakhru pointed out that certain actions lead to depoliticisation at times, which must be consciously avoided. He said that an elected government is the best option, but imposing control on it or on democracy is unacceptable.

"Creating anarchy or acting recklessly would lead the nation towards the gravest danger."

Urging caution, he warned against taking actions that could allow the ousted prime minister Sheikh Hasina to manipulate incidents from abroad and this would ultimately spoil the opportunity to rebuild the nation.

He reaffirmed his party's commitment to protect freedom of the press, freedom of expression, and voting rights at all costs.

Andaleev Rahman Partho, chairman of Bangladesh Jatiya Party, said it is not unlikely that press freedom would be under threat after the fall of such a fascist regime.

He said that when the interim government assumed office on August 8, the media outlets had said that the government should stay in power for two to three years. "They also said there is no difference between an Awami League government and that of the BNP's, and that the two parties are two sides of the same coin. This view of the media hurts us."

Partho said no one should think that if one government is replaced by another one, nothing will change. "Thinking along such line is another form of fascism."

"It is ultimately up to the people to decide. A gap has been created between political parties, the government, and the media. Many have tried to capitalise on this gap."

He also said the interim government has failed to keep in touch with the people.

"Had the government maintained more matured informal and formal relationships with the political parties, these problems would not have arisen."

Terming the incumbent government a weak government, Partho said no one can expect they would be protected by such a weak administration.

"Only a people's government, be it good or bad, can be held accountable. A political government can stand by the media and protect it."

Hamidur Rahman, assistant secretary general of Jamaat-e-Islami, said democracy and independent

journalism are intrinsically linked.

He said his party thinks any attempt to weaken independent journalism is a conspiracy to undermine the state.

"Such actions constitute a new conspiracy aimed at obstructing the path of democracy and paving the way for the return of old fascism."

Highlighting Jamaat's continued support for independent journalism, Hamidur said, "Arson and other attacks and vandalism targeting newspaper offices are regrettable. We do not support such activities."

He called for a national consensus to address any such crisis.

Nagorik Oikya President Mahmudur Rahman Manna said, "When you talk about practising inclusive politics and democracy, you will also have to accept the idea of letting a hundred flowers to bloom. You cannot gag any opinion. Democracy is undoubtedly the rule of the majority, but at the same time, you must also acknowledge you cannot muzzle the minority communities."

He said every opinion must be allowed to be expressed.

"From this perspective, I believe that be it the Prothom Alo, The Daily Star, or any other newspaper or TV channel, they must be granted full freedom. If we cannot foster the expression of diverse opinions freely, it will be difficult for us to move forward."

Zonayed Saki, chief coordinator of Ganosamhati Andolon, said press freedom was the "key verdict" of the 1971 Liberation War and the 2024 mass uprising.

"For that, we need to stand for the media and its rights. Even if a media outlet is ideologically opposed to me, I will stand for its rights as well."

He said he believes there should be one standard for everyone.

"Even if we do not consider a particular media outlet ideologically correct, it still has the right to exist as a media entity. Ideological and political debates will continue, but committing a nuisance in front of a newspaper office aligns with fascist practices. Shutting a media outlet is an extension of this approach, and everyone should realise this."

Saki said there can be criticisms, and ideological differences among the people, but their freedom of speech should not be obstructed by any means.

"These issues should be clearly mentioned in the constitution in future."

There should be no compromise on press freedom because people rely on the media, he added.

Nasiruddin Patwary, convener of the Jatiya Nagorik Committee, called for unity among the stakeholders to resolve the problems facing the media through dialogue.

"Those who have resentment or complaints about any particular media outlet can resolve those issues through discussions," he said.

Nasir urged the media owners, workers, political figures, and all other stakeholders to come to a common platform so that no media house

in the country would fall victim to aggression.

"Wherever there is an attack, we will collectively stand against it," he added.

Bazlur Rashid Firoz, general secretary of Bangladesh Samajtantrik Dal, said attacks on newspapers and media outlets are effectively assaults on democracy and the mass uprising of 2024. "To counter these attacks, we must unite and move forward collectively."

Saiful Haque, general secretary of the Biplobi Workers Party, described the slaughter of a cow for a feast in front of a newspaper office as an unbelievable, unimaginable and worrying act.

Condemning the incident, he said, "The question of who was behind this remains unaddressed. Who will uncover this? There must be provocation and instigation behind it."

Communist Party of Bangladesh General Secretary Ruhin Hossain Prince criticised the arbitrary cancellation of the accreditation cards of some journalists and filing of murder cases against some others.

He said people must stand united against the attacks on the media.

Rashed Khan, general secretary of Gono Odhikar Parishad, said his party strongly believes in freedom of speech and freedom of press.

"If the journalists cannot write independently even after the mass uprising, it would be deeply saddening."

He said the media did not play its due role over the past 15 years, and the authorities should investigate into this failure.

Mujibur Rahman Manju, member secretary of Amar Bangladesh (AB) Party, highlighted a "gap" between the media stakeholders and those protesting against some media outlets.

"It was the government's responsibility to engage with the demonstrators outside the Prothom Alo office. What could have been resolved through discussion has instead been allowed to evolve into an ideological or commercial issue."

Manju suggested that the Media Reform Commission or the Noab make recommendations to prevent such incidents.

Maulana Imtiaz Alam, assistant secretary general of Islami Andolan Bangladesh, said, "We believe in freedom of the media and we want to assist them. However, the media also need to make sure it do not write or say anything that goes against the belief of the majority. The media also need to show respect to our belief."

Jalaluddin Ahmed, joint secretary general of Bangladesh Khelafat Majlish, urged the owners of media outlets not to discriminate between political parties while running news on them.

Reading out a written statement, Noab President AK Azad expressed deep concern that at a time when media outlets should be operating in a pressure-free environment after the mass uprising, some newspapers and media houses are still facing threats, and even warnings of closure.

He said incidents such as laying siege to newspaper offices in the name of protests, creating chaos, attacking regional offices, and obstructing the distribution of newspapers in different parts of the country are totally unacceptable.

These actions are fostering an atmosphere of fear and intimidation, posing a serious threat to press freedom, he said.

"The actions and campaigns against the Prothom Alo and The Daily Star are not merely protests or expression of dissent, rather those involve issuing threats, making provocative statements, spreading hatred, creating chaos outside their offices, and resorting to violence whenever possible. Such actions are causing financial losses to the newspaper industry."

Azad stressed the need for taking strong measures against such undemocratic activities that threaten press freedom.

He said the safety of the media outlets and their employees must be ensured at all costs.

The Noab leader called upon all political parties to assist and cooperate with the media to safeguard press freedom.

Mahfuz Anam, executive member of Noab and also the president of the Editors' Council, said the media want to see an end to the oppressive measures taken to suppress independent journalism and stifle the press over the last 15 years.

He said the media had hoped that the situation would improve after the mass uprising, allowing journalists to carry out their duties freely and independently.

"Unfortunately, independent journalism is being attacked in new ways, which is highly condemnable and alarming. We believe political parties play a significant role in supporting independent journalism," said Anam, also the editor and publisher of The Daily Star.

He urged political parties to ensure press freedom.

Muntasir Ali, joint secretary general of Khelafat Majlish, also spoke at the event.

Khalekuzzaman, adviser of Basod; Maj (ret'd) Abdul Wahab, convener of AB Party; Jahangir Hossain, senior joint secretary general of Khelafat Majlish, and its Joint Secretary General Mahabubul Haque; and Abdul Kaiyum, central publicity affairs secretary of Islami Andolan Bangladesh, were present at the meeting, moderated by Dewan Hanif Mahmud, editor and publisher of daily Bonik Barta.

Shahidullah Khan Badal, Noab vice-president and publisher of New Age; Matiur Rahman, editor and publisher of Prothom Alo; Nurul Kabir, editor of New Age; Altamash Kabir, editor of Dainik Sangbad; Saiful Alam, editor of daily Jagantor; Shamsul Haque Zahid, editor of Financial Express; Mozammel Haque, editor of daily Karatoa; and Mostafa Mamun, editor of Desh Rupantar, were also present.

Protecting nature key to a healthy Dhaka

Says architect at icddr,b discussion

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Water bodies, canals, agricultural land, and wetlands in Dhaka are being increasingly encroached upon and filled to create plots, harming the environment, according to Kazi Khalid Ashraf, director general of the Bengal Institute for Architecture, Landscapes, and Settlement.

Speaking at an event, marking the 64th anniversary of icddr,b, at Sasakawa Auditorium in Mohakhali, Ashraf criticised the practice of filling water bodies in the name of development. He proposed that to build a healthy city, architectural design and planning must integrate nature.

Ashraf said infrastructure should not only be functional, but should also serve as a tool for healing. "Buildings should be designed in a way that preserves nature,"

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Discussants at a roundtable titled "Strengthening NHRC: Towards an Independent and Credible Oversight Body", jointly organised by UNDP and The Daily Star at The Daily Star Centre in Dhaka yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

NHRC must be free from political, state influence

Experts propose major reforms

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

National Human Rights Commission should be independent and people-centric, said speakers at a roundtable yesterday.

The commission must take a decentralised approach to effectively address human rights violations, they added.

They also recommended strengthening the commission's investigative powers, improving its structural capacity, and ensuring its independence from political and bureaucratic influence.

The remarks were made at the event, titled "Strengthening NHRC: Towards an Independent and Credible Oversight Body", jointly organised by UNDP and The Daily Star at The Daily Star Centre.

Supreme Court lawyer Jyotirmoy Barua highlighted significant challenges in the practical implementation of the National Human Rights Commission Act, 2009, despite its provision of statutory independence.

He noted flaws in the appointment process, where the president, guided by a government-influenced selection committee, appoints NHRC members.

He also pointed out funding issues, with 75 percent of NHRC's budget reliant on donors, compromising its autonomy.

Dhaka University Law Professor Sheikh Hafizur Rahman (Karzon) said NHRC was established more as a formality than with a meaningful goal.

A toothless commission, with no executive power will remain ineffective, merely existing as a symbolic body with no real impact.

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'16 DAYS OF ACTIVISM' Make justice more accessible for victims

Say speakers at MJF event on gender-based violence

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Access to justice should be easier when it comes to any sort of gender-based violence (GBV). Police and the judiciary must actively work to prevent violence against women, said speakers at a discussion yesterday.

They made the remarks at an event, titled "Towards Beijing +30: UNiTE to End Violence against Women and Girls", organised by Manusher Jonno Foundation (MJF) at its auditorium in the capital, observing "16 days of activism against Gender-based Violence 2024".



Women with physical disabilities, members of the hijra community, and young women from various professions shared their struggles and stories at the event.

Mohammad Al Mamun, director of National Legal Aid and Services Organisation, said, "The number of women seeking legal aid is increasing yearly. If the judiciary and judges work to prevent GBV and more punitive measures are taken, it will help."

Gitanjali Singh, representative of UN Women, said, "Although we survived the pandemic, we haven't been able to eliminate the pandemic of violence against women. Every 10 minutes, a woman is killed by her partner somewhere in the world. Bangladesh has laws

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Dengue cases cross 90,000 mark

Experts worry over prolonged season

REASONS FOR DENGUE SURGE	SOLUTIONS TO CONTROL DENGUE
Ineffective mosquito control	Early preventive measures
Unfavourable weather conditions	Proactive case identification
Lack of early intervention	Nationwide tracking system
Inadequate public awareness	Awareness campaigns
Insufficient surveillance	District-level surveillance

HELEMUL ALAM

With 837 new dengue cases reported yesterday, the total number of cases this year has surged past 90,000.

This is an alarming rise as the year enters November, a time when cases typically start to decline.

The Directorate General of Health Services reports 482 deaths, with the total number of dengue cases reaching 90,440 as of yesterday.

Experts are attributing the prolonged dengue season to ineffective mosquito control measures, favourable weather conditions for mosquito breeding, and the failure to implement preventive actions during the lean period earlier in the year.

Entomologist Manzur Chowdhury pointed out that the unusual combination of high

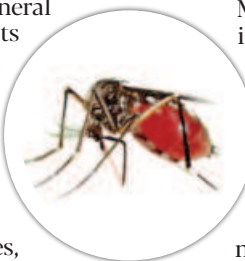
humidity and warm temperatures in November has created ideal breeding conditions for Aedes mosquitoes. "This level of dengue transmission in November is uncommon, as cases usually decrease at this time. Warmer temperatures have allowed mosquito populations to thrive," he said.

Manzur stressed that early intervention could have limited the spread. "If authorities had acted during the lean period from January to March, the outbreak could have been controlled," he said.

He also highlighted the need for more comprehensive measures beyond mosquito control. "Authorities focus on killing mosquitoes, but we also need to prevent the virus from spreading through human movement," Manzur said.

Manzur cited Kolkata's approach in

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INCIDENTS AT SC Chief justice expresses concern

UNB, Dhaka

The office of the chief justice of Bangladesh yesterday expressed deep concern over the unprecedented incidents that unfolded on the Supreme Court premises the day before, as well as other recent events within judicial premises nationwide.

In a statement, the Chief Justice's Office reaffirmed its commitment to maintaining the smooth operation of the justice delivery system across the country.

All developments are being closely monitored to ensure that the judicial processes remain undisturbed despite the challenges, it added.

To prevent a recurrence of such incidents, the office of the chief justice has implemented comprehensive measures within the Supreme Court, as well as in district judge's offices and magistracies.

The chief justice has also issued clear directives for all courts and tribunals to continue their functions normally, emphasising the judiciary's crucial role in serving the nation's greater interest.

'Consider me as an adviser from Rangpur'

CA tells Abu Sayed's family



PHOTO: BSS

BSS, Dhaka

Chief Adviser Prof Yunus yesterday said he considered himself a son of Rangpur as he was moved by the bravery and sacrifice of July uprising martyr Abu Sayed.

"Consider me as an adviser from Rangpur," said Prof Yunus while welcoming the family members of martyr Abu Sayed at his office in Tajgaon, Dhaka.

The chief adviser handed over the certificate of the Shahid Abu Sayed Foundation to the family members of martyr Abu Sayed during a brief ceremony on the day.

Mokbul Hossain, the father of Abu Sayed, received the certificate.

Md Liton Mia, a nephew of Abu Sayed, was also present on the occasion. The chief adviser enquired about the health condition of Abu Sayed's parents and assured them of all support from the government.

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Rokeya Begum passes away

A CORRESPONDENT, Feni

Rokeya Begum, mother of eminent journalist Tipu Sultan, head of

reporting of Prothom Alo, died on Wednesday night while undergoing treatment at a hospital in Feni at the age of 75.

She was suffering from different old-age complications like diabetes and heart diseases.

Rokeya left behind six sons, a daughter and a host of well-wishers to mourn her death.

She was buried at her family graveyard at Sonapur village under Feni Sadar upazila yesterday. Several journalists' association expressed deep shock at her death.



Participants at a views exchange meeting with political leaders on recent attacks on independent journalism and media outlets. The event was organised by the Newspaper Owners Association of Bangladesh at the Sonargaon hotel in Dhaka yesterday.

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

Dengue cases cross

FROM PAGE 3

India, where all fever cases are tested for dengue, Zika, and malaria from the start of the year. "This proactive method is absent in Bangladesh," he said.

He also called for better tracking of all dengue cases, including asymptomatic ones.

"Currently, the DGHS only records hospitalised patients, which is a small fraction of the total cases. A nationwide system to monitor all dengue cases is crucial," he added.

He also suggested declaring dengue a reportable disease from January to June, which would help better track cases and eliminate mosquito breeding sites.

Entomologist GM Saifur Rahman from the National University of Bangladesh agreed that the lack of effective control measures has contributed to the outbreak.

"This year, we have not seen weather conditions that reduce mosquito populations, and Aedes mosquitoes are still breeding in large numbers,"

he said.

He pointed out that rural areas, where people lack awareness of mosquito breeding, are particularly vulnerable.

Both experts stressed the need for identifying asymptomatic dengue patients, who make up 70-80 percent of cases and act as reservoirs for the virus. "Without tracking these patients, controlling the spread of Aedes mosquitoes is nearly impossible," Saifur warned.

Both Manzur and Saifur emphasised that colder weather is crucial for slowing the virus's spread by reducing mosquito breeding.

"The presence of the dengue virus across the country and ineffective control measures have allowed the outbreak to continue," Saifur concluded.

The experts are urging for coordinated action from the government, including improved surveillance, early intervention, and increased public awareness, to control the spread of the virus in the coming months.

ISKCON denies

FROM PAGE 5

communications with the government and administrative authorities. Regrettably, certain groups continue to deliberately spread false propaganda against our organisation and make unreasonable demands, such as banning ISKCON," he added.

He also highlighted that certain individuals, including Chinmoy Krishna Das (whose arrest triggered the recent unrest), Lilraj Gaur Das and Swatantra Gauranga Das, had been previously removed from the organisation for violating its rules.

ISKCON Bangladesh President Satya Ranjan Baroi said, "The allegations are an attempt to tarnish our religious and social reputation."

Satya expressed condolences for the family of Saiful Islam Alif and urged authorities to bring the perpetrators to justice.

In addition, in a statement on X (formerly Twitter), ISKCON said, "ISKCON, Inc. stands with Sri Chinmoy Krishna Das. Our prayers to Lord Krishna for the protection of all these devotees."

NHRC must be free

FROM PAGE 3

"The NHRC should function as an independent watchdog. Unfortunately, the commission was weakened over the past 15 years, failing to hold law enforcement or state officials accountable," he said.

"A toothless commission, with no executive power will remain ineffective, merely existing as a symbolic body with no real impact," he added.

Dr Kazi Maruful Islam, professor of development studies at Dhaka University, also stressed that people within the NHRC must be held accountable.

"To make the institution more people-centric, it must strengthen its engagement with people," he said.

Bangladesh Mahila Parishad General Secretary Maleka Banu said the NHRC was born from long advocacy and activism, with women at the forefront of its establishment.

"However, the institution has failed to live up to its vision. The NHRC must take responsibility for addressing the numerous human rights violations occurring daily. Recruitment should prioritise experts who are sensitive to women's rights and gender issues," she added.

Prothom Alo Joint Editor Sohrab Hasan said that when powerful entities, such as the state or political parties, violate human rights, the NHRC struggles to address it.

"The NHRC must be independent in every sense — free from political or state control — and willing to take bold actions to hold the powerful accountable," he said.

Naripkko founding member Shireen Huq expressed her disappointment regarding

the NHRC's failure to address critical issues like the death penalty, which is a gross violation of human rights.

Additionally, the commission must have the power to conduct independent investigations into all forms of violations, she stressed.

Sabina Yasmeem Lubna, senior programme manager at Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), Embassy of Switzerland, also said that their evaluations have revealed systemic flaws in NHRC recruitment and capacity-building.

"Many members lack the necessary expertise, and budgets are often underutilised. This inefficiency undermines the commission's effectiveness," she added.

NHRC Secretary Sebastin Rema said while we have high expectations of the NHRC, the organisation needs structural reform to strengthen its impact.

Dr Kamal Uddin Ahmed, former NHRC Chairman, acknowledged the commission's rigid structure, likening it to an authoritarian setup.

"We want an independent NHRC, but challenges persist. Staff fall into a gray area without proper benefits, and despite provisions for its own budget, this is not implemented," added.

He criticised inefficient budget allocations, saying, "Funds are unavailable for essential activities, while allocated elsewhere unnecessarily."

Dr Kamal called for removing budgetary constraints to enable the NHRC to fulfill its mandate effectively.

The event was moderated by Tanjim Ferdous, in charge, NGO and Foreign Mission, The Daily Star.

ICT orders

FROM PAGE 5

The tribunal, headed by Justice Md Golam Mortuza Majumder, gave the order following the prosecution's request.

A case had been filed with the court in this regard after those allegations were brought against them by victims and their families.

Talking to reporters, Public Prosecutor Gazi MH Tamim told reporters that an application has been submitted to arrest and produce the former Rab officials before the tribunal.

He said victims have made direct allegations of forced abductions followed by severe torture, which the ICT's investigative body has found to be credible in its initial probe.

With the 2024 amendment, enforced disappearances by law enforcers are now recognised as a criminal offence, he said.

Alep Uddin and Mohiuddin Farooqui are currently in jail over the Jobayer killing case with Jatrabari Police Station.

Make justice more

FROM PAGE 3

and policies related to gender-based violence, but their implementation remains weak."

Stephanie St Laurent Brassard, second secretary of the Canadian High Commission, said, "While working on gender equality, we must also consider individuals beyond the male-female binary. Efforts from the grassroots to policy-making levels are essential."

Referring to Ain o Salish Kendra data, Ruma Sultana, programme coordinator of MJF, said out of the 4,787 rape cases from January 2020 to September 2024, less than one percent of perpetrators were punished. Under the Domestic Violence Prevention and Protection Act 2010, domestic violence against women is not considered a criminal offence. The lack of adequate punishment under the act makes lawyers reluctant to take such cases, leaving women and children victims without legal remedies.

Katharina Koenig,

deputy team leader of the Citizenship-Civic Engagement Fund, emphasised the need for collective efforts to combat GBV.

Shaheen Anam, executive director of MJF, said, "In Bangladesh, women's empowerment has progressed in many areas. However, due to religious, cultural, and social practices, this progress has stalled. Our position on child marriage in this subcontinent is very shameful due to lack of accountability of various government institutions. As climate change worsens, violence against women in vulnerable areas increases. It's essential to include these women in climate action plans."

"The state should take the responsibility of building a women-friendly society. Violence against women will not stop until there is equality between men and women, women are respected at home and outside, and their contributions are recognised," she added.

Protecting nature

FROM PAGE 3

allowing people to breathe freely," he said.

He called for the creation of public spaces near rivers, canals, and wetlands and for infrastructure to be built in a way that preserves these areas. "Rivers, canals, and water bodies are natural public spaces," Ashraf said.

However, he said current urban development trends are harmful, with water bodies being filled to construct buildings, a practice less prevalent in rural areas. He argued that identifying Dhaka's waterways should be the top priority for urban planning.

A healthy city, he explained, doesn't need to be beautiful but must ensure access to basic healthcare, food security, safety, and open natural

spaces. Ashraf criticised the lack of guidelines for sidewalks and the conversion of public spaces into parking areas, which worsens traffic congestion.

Regarding new housing projects, Ashraf warned that real estate developers are filling wetlands to build high-rise apartments, without considering the need to preserve agricultural lands.

"The future of Dhaka lies in preserving wetlands and agricultural lands while developing housing," he said.

In his welcome address, Dr Tahmeed Ahmed, executive director of icddr, highlighted the organisation's contributions to global health, including its role in WHO's approval of Cecolin, the fourth single-dose HPV vaccine for public use.

77000 SQFTS Land for Rent in TONGI MILLGATE

Location : Tongi Mil Gate (adjacent to the west side of the 12-story warehouse of Dhaka Power Distribution Company/DPDC), Machimpur (100 meters north of Tongi Biswa Ijtima ground, east of Turag River), Tongi (Gazipur). ***Area : 77,000 square feet. Suitable for :** This land is available for rent exclusively to foreign companies, corporate houses, renowned multinational companies, and leading domestic pharmaceutical companies. **Preference** will be given to multinational/reowned domestic pharmaceutical companies/foreign industrial groups capable of constructing multi-story buildings at their own expense on a long-term lease. **Features :** The plot is enclosed and secured by a high boundary wall on all four sides. Valuable heavy machinery can be stored on the plot. The industrial plot faces south and is located on a 100 feet road on the south, 40 feet road on the west, and 60 feet road on the north. Plot dimensions: 320 feet frontage x 240 feet depth. The plot currently allows for the transportation, loading, and unloading of goods in lorries/covered vans/containers.

Contact : 01819370272
For urgent needs: 01711520549

anwarulchowdhury58@gmail.com
info@maicobd.com



Export Import Bank of Bangladesh PLC.

Registered Office: 'EXIM Bank Tower', Plot # 15, Road # 15, Block # CWS (C) Gulshan-1, Dhaka-1212, Bangladesh

Price Sensitive Information

This is for information of all concerned that Bangladesh Securities and Exchange Commission (BSEC) has accorded its consent vide letter ref: BSEC/CFD/CRD/DS-261/2024/311; dated: November 28, 2024 to Export Import Bank of Bangladesh PLC. for raising of capital through issuance of Unsecured, Non-Convertible, Redeemable, Floating Rate Exim 6th Subordinated Bond of BDT 2,500,000,000 (two hundred fifty crore) only through private placement in cash consideration. The consent has been accorded subject to compliance of relevant laws and regulatory requirements as per BSEC (Debt Securities) Rules, 2021 and adherence to the conditions imposed by BSEC under Section- 2CC of the Securities and Exchange Ordinance, 1969. The purpose of the issue is to strengthen the capital base of the Bank.

The Key features of the said issuance are as below:

Particulars	Details
Name of the issue	EXIM 6 th Subordinated Bond
Type of instruments to be issued	Unsecured, Non-Convertible, Redeemable, Floating Rate Subordinated Bond
Number of securities and total size of the issue to be offered	Total Bonds (securities) to be issued: 5,000 nos Total Issue Size: BDT 2,500,000,000
Face value and issue price	BDT 500,000 Per Bond

The information memorandum regarding the above bond will be published in the company's website (www.eximbankbd.com) within 03(three) working days.

Dated, Dhaka
November 28, 2024.

Sd/-
Md. Monirul Islam
Company Secretary

PRAYER TIMING

NOVEMBER 29

Fazr	Juma	Asr	Maghrib	Esha
AZAN 5-10	12-30	3-45	5-19	7-00
JAMAAT 5-45	1-15	4-00	5-22	7-30

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

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বাংলাদেশ পল্লী বিদ্যুতায়ন বোর্ড
কর্মচারী প্রশাসন পরিদপ্তর
সদর দপ্তর ভবন, নিকুঞ্জ-২, খিলক্ষেত, ঢাকা-১২২৯।

"নিয়োগ বিজ্ঞপ্তির সংশোধনী"

এতদ্বারা জানানো যাচ্ছে যে, বাংলাদেশ পল্লী বিদ্যুতায়ন বোর্ড-এর রাজস্বখাতভুক্ত পদে স্মারক নং- ২৭.১২. ০০০০.০২৫.১১.১৮৩.২৩-৭২৯, তারিখ: ০৭-১১-২০২৪ খ্রি. মোতাবেক গত ১১-১১-২০২৪ খ্রি. তারিখে প্রকাশিত নিয়োগ বিজ্ঞপ্তির বিপরীতে ক্রমিক- ১০ ব্যতীত অন্যান্য পদে আবেদনের ক্ষেত্রে অখ্যাদেশ নং- ১১, ২০২৪ এর নির্দেশনা অনুযায়ী প্রার্থীদের সর্বোচ্চ বয়সসীমা অনূর্ধ্ব ৩০ এর পরিবর্তে অনূর্ধ্ব ৩২ বৎসর প্রতিস্থাপিত হবে। উল্লেখ্য, উক্ত নিয়োগ বিজ্ঞপ্তির অন্যান্য শর্তাবলী অপরিবর্তিত থাকবে।

বাংলাদেশ পল্লী বিদ্যুতায়ন বোর্ড
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বাপবিদ্যো/অন/ ২৪১১-৭৩) ২০২৪-২০২৫

GD-1063

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Office of the Executive Engineer, RHD
Road Division, Rajbari
Phone: 02478807728

e-Tender Notice 06/RRD/2024-2025 (OSTEM, NCT)

The below tenders are online Tenders where only e-Tenders will be accepted in e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-Tender, please register on e-GP system portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>). For more details please contact help desk contact numbers.

Tender ID	Package No.	Name of works	Tender/Prosal Document last selling Date and Time	Tender Opening Date and Time
1042942	01/a-GP/PMP Road/RRD/20 24-2025 (Re-tender)	PMP (Road-Major) for Construction of DBST at Ch.1+200 to Ch.6+230, Ch.6+730 to Ch.7+075, Ch.7+185 to Ch.12+345, Ch.12+455 to Ch.16+475 & Ch.16+625 to Ch.18+975 ; Rigid pavement at Ch.7+100 to Ch.7+160 (Goalandah level crossing), Ch.12+370 to Ch.12+430 (Khankhanapur level crossing) & Ch.16+500 Km to Ch.16+600 (Basantapur level crossing) and Wearing Course at Ch.02+047 to Ch.02+970 & Ch.03+020 to Ch.03+400 (Daulatdia four lane Right Side) of Daulatdia-Faridpur (Goalchamot)-Magura-Jhenaidah-Jessore-Khulna-Mongla (Digraj) National Highway (N-7) Road under Road Division, Rajbari during the year 2024-2025.	30-Dec-2024 17:00 hours	31-Dec-2024 13:30 hours

28-11-2024
Md. Rajos Khan
ID No-602334
Executive Engineer (C.C.):RHD
Rajbari Road Division, Rajbari.

GD-1076

Play stronger role to protect rivers: Bela

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Encroachment, dumping of industrial, tannery and solid wastes, mismanagement of household garbage, and faulty demarcation of rivers and waterbodies are the main reasons behind disappearances of many waterways, said speakers at a discussion yesterday.

They also identified unplanned urbanisation and drainage systems and criminalisation of politics as vital reasons in this regard.

Bangladesh Environmental Lawyers Association organised the discussion at YMCA in Savar yesterday.

Addressing the discussion as the chair, Taslima Islam, acting chief executive of Bela, pointed out that even though the organisation has filed numerous cases centring environmental issues in Savar upazila, the court's directives are not being followed properly.

She called upon the administration to play an effective role in implementing the court orders to protect the environment, rivers and water bodies, and urged everyone to raise awareness to this end.

"Environmental protection is not only the responsibility of the administration, but local residents also need to work from their respective positions," she added.

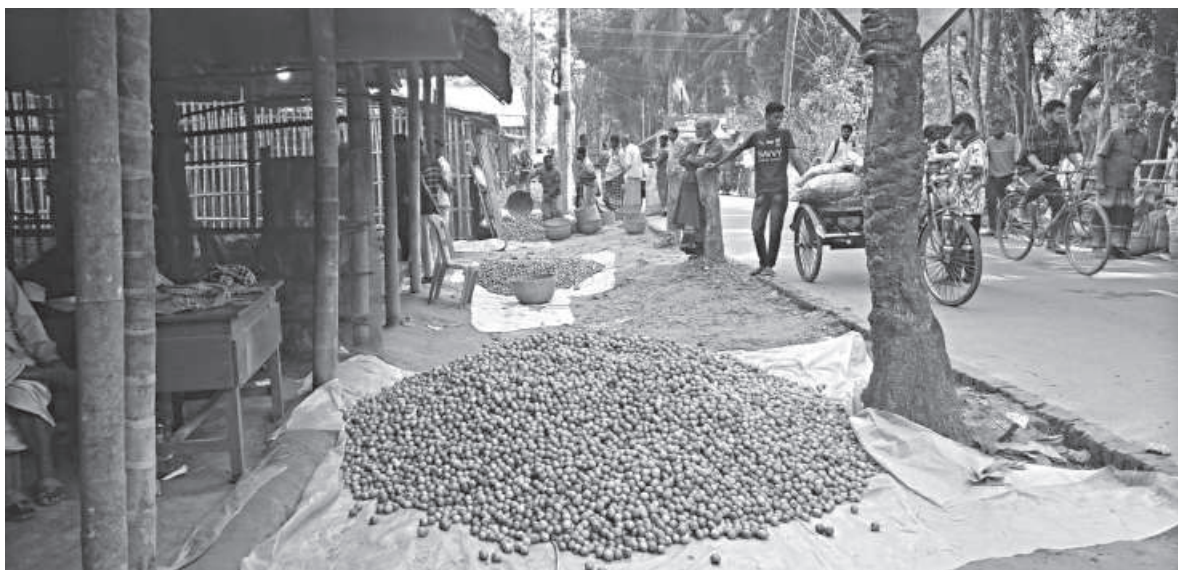
Addressing as the chief guest, Abu Bakar Sarkar, upazila nirbahi officer of Savar upazila, called for formulating development project proposals centring the upazila.

He advised industries to conduct their activities in accordance with the law to curb pollution, and called for setting up of specific dumping zones to dispose of domestic wastes instead of discarding those in the open.

He also sought collective cooperation towards environmental development, curbing encroachment and pollution, and saving the water bodies in Savar.

In the meeting, assistant commissioner (Land) of Savar recommended regular eviction drives against illegal encroachers of rivers and water bodies, and taking effective steps to prevent re-encroachment.

M Shamsul Haque, general secretary of Savar River and Environment Development Council, presented the keynote paper.



Kachua's betel nuts poised for national branding

PARTHA CHAKRABORTTY, Bagerhat

The upazila administration in Bagerhat's Kachua upazila has spearheaded an initiative to brand and promote high-quality betel nuts, the product the upazila is most known for, across the country.

The initiative aims to highlight the region's reputation as a top producer of premium betel nuts.

"Kachua's betel nut is unmatched in size, quality, and yield. To further its recognition, we have formed a dedicated committee to oversee the branding and marketing of this exceptional local product," said KM Abu Naushad, upazila nirbahi officer of Kachua.

Meanwhile, the Kachua market was seen bustling with traders busy

selling betel nuts freshly harvested from the plantations across the upazila.

The large, ripe betel nuts were being sold by farmers for Tk 600-800 per "kuri" (a collection of 231 pieces of betel nuts), while smaller ones were priced at Tk 500-550 per "kuri."

"On Monday and Thursday, over 1,000 sacks of betel nuts, or approximately 14,000 kuri, are traded at Kachua market to be supplied across the country," said Narayan Chandra Bowali, a seasoned betel nut trader.

A similar scene was witnessed at Badhal Bazar, one of the largest markets in the region.

"Badhal Bazar sells double the volume of betel nuts on market days

(Sunday and Thursday) compared to Kachua market. The size and quality of these betel nuts are exceptional, making these much sought after," said Kamrul Islam, a trader at Badhal Bazar.

Underlining the potential of Kachua's betel nuts for a larger market presence, UNO Naushad said their initiative is also a part of a broader effort to showcase the upazila's agricultural excellence and ensure local products get the deserved recognition.

The branding push is also expected to boost local economic growth, create more opportunities for farmers and traders, and establish Kachua's betel nuts as a national standard for quality, he added.

ISKCON denies involvement in lawyer's murder

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Leaders of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON) Bangladesh yesterday refuted allegations linking the organisation to the murder of lawyer Saiful Islam Alif in Chattogram.

They said the claims were baseless and part of a malicious campaign.

At a press conference at ISKCON Bangladesh's headquarters, General Secretary Charu Chandra Das Brahmachari said, "A series of false, fabricated, and malicious campaigns have been targeting ISKCON Bangladesh, particularly in connection with recent events. These efforts are aimed at discrediting our organisation and creating societal unrest."

The leaders categorically denied any involvement in the murder, which occurred near the Chattogram court premises, and in the related movements.

"We have already clarified the matter multiple times through press conferences and official

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3

ABDUCTION, TORTURE

ICT orders to produce two ex-Rab officials

DU CORRESPONDENT

International Crimes Tribunal yesterday ordered to produce two former Rapid Action Battalion officials before it on December 2.

As per preliminary findings, allegations of abduction and torture against them have been found to be credible by the court's investigation agency.

The accused are identified as Mohiuddin Faruque and Md Alep Uddin.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 6



A quilt and mattress shop owner shows his products to customers. As winter starts to arrive, the demand for quilts and mattresses is on the rise. However, rising prices seem to be a common complaint among buyers. The photo was taken on Kazi Nazrul Islam Road in Bagerhat recently.

PHOTO: PARTHA CHAKRABORTTY

Murshidpur Darbar Sharif looted, torched

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Mymensingh

An unruly mob of over a hundred once again attacked the Doja Pirer Darbar, also known as Murshidpur Darbar Sharif, in Sherpur Sadar upazila, yesterday.

This marks the second attack on the shrine in three days.

On Tuesday, a clash ensued following an attack on the shrine which resulted in one casualty.

Yesterday's attack continued for some three hours during which the mob torched the shrine reportedly before looting it.

On Tuesday morning, they attacked the shrine, leaving more than 10 persons injured.

One of the injured, identified as Hafez Uddin, 40, a local resident, died at a Dhaka hospital on Wednesday.

His namaz-e-janaza was scheduled at the local Jamshed Ali Memorial Degree College ground, half a kilometre away from the shrine, at 10:00am yesterday.

Before the janaza, funeral attendees got enraged, leading to the attack on the shrine.

Police, Rab, and army personnel deployed in the area tried to avert the situation but were overwhelmed by the number of attackers.

Contacted, Sherpur Superintendent of Police Md Aminul Islam said additional police personnel were deployed in the area.

Md Jubaidul Alam, officer-in-charge of Sherpur Sadar Police Station, said a case was filed over Tuesday's attack against 25 named and 500 unidentified others.

"Two people have already been arrested and sent to jail."

Kuet suspends 12 including 5 professors

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Khulna University of Engineering and Technology has suspended five professors, six officers, and one employee following allegations of actively obstructing the anti-discrimination student movement.

The decision was made during the university's 94th Syndicate meeting held earlier this month.

The suspended professors are Dr Mihir Ranjan Halder, Mechanical Engineering Department; Dr Muhammed Alamgir, Civil Engineering Department; Dr Shivendra Shekhar Shikder, Physics Department; Dr Sobhan Mia, Mechanical Engineering Department; and Dr Pintu Chandra Sheel, Computer Science and Engineering Department.

They have also been accused of being involved in student-teacher harassment, spreading political influence, and violating Section 44(5) of the Kuet Act, 2003.

The allegations were found to be true following a preliminary investigation.

Additionally, six officers and one staff member have been temporarily suspended for allegedly securing appointments through illegal means.

SONADIA ISLAND SC upholds HC order to protect mangroves

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Supreme Court yesterday upheld a High Court order that directed the government to immediately stop destruction of mangrove forests in Sonadia Island and neighbouring areas, including Gatiabanga, Taziakata and Hamidardia in Cox's Bazar.

Justice Md Rezaul Haque, chamber judge of the Appellate Division of the SC, passed no order on a leave to appeal petition filed by six locals.


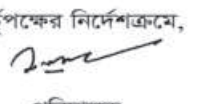
The chamber judge, however, asked the HC to dispose of the rule issued over this matter in two months.

Senior lawyer Md Ruhul Quddus Kazal argued for the appellants, while lawyers Mohammad Shishir Manir and Saddam Hossen appeared for the writ petitioners during hearing yesterday.

Following a writ petition, the HC on October 23 ordered officials concerned of the government to demolish all illegal shrimp projects from Sonadia Island and neighbouring areas, take appropriate legal action against the persons involved in the destruction of the mangroves, and submit a compliance report before this court within 90 days.

The HC also issued a rule asking the respondents (officials) to explain why they should not be directed to protect the mangroves under the Bangladesh Environment Conservation Act, 1995.

In the writ petition, the petitioners annexed a report published in The Daily Star on May 20 last year under the headline "Destroying the last line of defence: Coastal residents at great risk of cyclones as mangrove forests cut down, leased and grabbed for development".

<div style="text-align: center;">  <p>বাংলাদেশ বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় মঞ্জুরী কমিশন University Grants Commission of Bangladesh আগারগাঁও, শেরেবাংলা নগর, ঢাকা-১২০৭ website: www.ugc.gov.bd</p> </div>	
স্মারক নংঃ ৩৭.০১.০০০০.১৩১.৪১.০০৬.২৩-৩১৭২	তারিখঃ ১৩ অগ্রহায়ণ ১৪৩১ বঙ্গাব্দ ২৮ নভেম্বর ২০২৪ খ্রিস্টাব্দ
ভর্তিচ্ছু শিক্ষার্থীদের জন্য কয়েকটি বেসরকারি বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের বর্তমান অবস্থা সংক্রান্ত সর্বশেষ তথ্য জনস্বার্থে এবং অভিভাবক ও শিক্ষার্থীদের জ্ঞাতার্থে জানানো যাচ্ছে যে, বেসরকারি বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় আইন, ২০১০ এর অধীনে বর্তমানে ১১৫টি বেসরকারি বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের অনুমোদন রয়েছে। তন্মধ্যে শিক্ষা কার্যক্রম পরিচালিত হচ্ছে ১০৬ টি বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ে। যে সকল বেসরকারি বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ে মামলা মোকদ্দমাসহ বিভিন্ন ধরনের সমস্যা বিরাজমান সে সকল বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের তালিকা পূর্বের ধারাবাহিকতায় প্রকাশ করা হলো। উল্লেখ্য, বেসরকারি বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়সমূহের হালনাগাদ তথ্য নিয়মিতভাবে কমিশনের ওয়েবসাইটে আপলোড করা হয়।	
ক) অবৈধ ক্যাম্পাস ও অবৈধভাবে শিক্ষা কার্যক্রম পরিচালনাকারী বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় (০৩ টি) (১) ইবাইস ইউনিভার্সিটি: বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়টির সাময়িক অনুমতিপত্রের মেয়াদ উত্তীর্ণ হওয়ায় বেসরকারি বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় আইন, ২০১০ এর ১২(১) ধারা অনুযায়ী বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়টির কার্যক্রমের আর কোন আইনগত ভিত্তি নেই। এ বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়টির অনুমোদিত কোনো ক্যাম্পাস ও ঠিকানা এবং চ্যাপেলের তথ্য বাংলাদেশের মহামান্য রাষ্ট্রপতি কর্তৃক নিয়োগকৃত ভিসি, প্রো-ভিসি ও ট্রেজারার নেই তথা বৈধ কোন কর্তৃপক্ষ নেই। এছাড়া বোর্ড অব ট্রাস্টিজ নিয়ে দ্বন্দ্ব এবং আদালতে মামলা রয়েছে। ফলে বেসরকারি বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় আইন, ২০১০ অনুযায়ী ইবাইস ইউনিভার্সিটি এর একাডেমিক, প্রশাসনিক, আর্থিক, বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের ভর্তি, পরীক্ষা ও ইহার ফলাফল এবং প্রদত্ত একাডেমিক সনদের আইনগত কোন বৈধতা নেই। (২) আমেরিকা বাংলাদেশ ইউনিভার্সিটি: বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়টির সাময়িক অনুমতিপত্রের মেয়াদ উত্তীর্ণ হওয়ায় বেসরকারি বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় আইন, ২০১০ এর ১২(১) ধারা অনুযায়ী বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়টির কার্যক্রমের আর কোন আইনগত ভিত্তি নেই। বর্তমানে এ বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়টির অনুমোদিত কোনো ক্যাম্পাস ও ঠিকানা এবং চ্যাপেলের তথ্য বাংলাদেশের মহামান্য রাষ্ট্রপতি কর্তৃক নিয়োগকৃত ভিসি, প্রো-ভিসি ও ট্রেজারার নেই তথা বৈধ কোন কর্তৃপক্ষ নেই। ফলে বেসরকারি বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় আইন, ২০১০ অনুযায়ী আমেরিকা বাংলাদেশ ইউনিভার্সিটি এর একাডেমিক, প্রশাসনিক, আর্থিক, বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের ভর্তি, পরীক্ষা ও উহার ফলাফল এবং প্রদত্ত একাডেমিক সনদের আইনগত কোন বৈধতা নেই। (৩) দি ইউনিভার্সিটি অব কুমিল্লা: বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়টির সাময়িক অনুমতিপত্রের মেয়াদ উত্তীর্ণ হওয়ায় বেসরকারি বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় আইন, ২০১০ এর ১২(১) ধারা অনুযায়ী বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়টির কার্যক্রমের আর কোন আইনগত ভিত্তি নেই। বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়টিতে চ্যাপেলের তথ্য বাংলাদেশের মহামান্য রাষ্ট্রপতি কর্তৃক নিয়োগকৃত ভিসি, প্রো-ভিসি ও ট্রেজারার নেই তথা বৈধ কোন কর্তৃপক্ষ নেই। ফলে বেসরকারি বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় আইন, ২০১০ অনুযায়ী দি ইউনিভার্সিটি অব কুমিল্লা এর একাডেমিক, প্রশাসনিক, আর্থিক, বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের ভর্তি, পরীক্ষা ও ইহার ফলাফল এবং প্রদত্ত একাডেমিক সনদের আইনগত কোন বৈধতা নেই।	
খ) কয়েকটি বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের বর্তমান অবস্থা নিম্নরূপ: (১) ভিক্টোরিয়া ইউনিভার্সিটি অব বাংলাদেশ: নির্ধারিত সময়ে স্থায়ী ক্যাম্পাসে শিক্ষাসহ সকল কার্যক্রম স্থানান্তরে ব্যর্থ হওয়ায় কমিশন কর্তৃক পরবর্তী নির্দেশ না দেওয়া পর্যন্ত ০১ জানুয়ারী, ২০২৩ তারিখ থেকে নতুন শিক্ষার্থী ভর্তি বন্ধ রয়েছে এবং তা এখনও বহাল রয়েছে। তবে উক্ত তারিখের পূর্বে চলমান কোর্সে ভর্তিকৃত শিক্ষার্থীদের শিক্ষা কার্যক্রম চলমান থাকবে। (২) সেন্ট্রাল ইউনিভার্সিটি অব সায়েন্স অ্যান্ড টেকনোলজি (ঢাকা): বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়টির সাময়িক অনুমতিপত্রের মেয়াদ উত্তীর্ণ হয়েছে। বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়টিতে বর্তমানে মহামান্য রাষ্ট্রপতি/চ্যাপেলের কর্তৃক নিয়োগকৃত ভাইস চ্যাপেলের নেই। অদ্যাবধি ট্রেজারার নিয়োগ এবং শিক্ষা মন্ত্রণালয় কর্তৃক মনোনীত অডিট ফর্ম দ্বারা অডিট করা হয়নি। এছাড়া, প্রতিষ্ঠালগ্ন হতে বোর্ড অব ট্রাস্টিজ গঠন সংক্রান্ত জটিলতা, পারস্পরিক দ্বন্দ্ব ও মামলা চলমান রয়েছে। এসকল কারণে কমিশন কর্তৃক পরবর্তী নির্দেশনা না দেওয়া পর্যন্ত ২২-০২-২০২৪ তারিখ থেকে সেন্ট্রাল ইউনিভার্সিটি অব সায়েন্স অ্যান্ড টেকনোলজি-এর সকল প্রোগ্রামে নতুন শিক্ষার্থী ভর্তি বন্ধ রয়েছে এবং তা এখনও বহাল রয়েছে। তবে উক্ত তারিখের পূর্বে চলমান কোর্সে ভর্তিকৃত শিক্ষার্থীদের শিক্ষা কার্যক্রম চলমান থাকবে। (৩) সাঁউদার্ন ইউনিভার্সিটি বাংলাদেশ: এই বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের নামে একাধিক মামলা মহামান্য আদালতে বিচারাধীন রয়েছে। বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের আর্থিক, একাডেমিক ও প্রশাসনিক বিষয়ে তদন্ত কার্যক্রম চলমান রয়েছে। (৪) দারুল ইহসান বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়: আদালতের আদেশবলে দারুল ইহসান বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় এবং ইহার সকল আউটার ক্যাম্পাস বন্ধ ঘোষণা করা হয়েছে। একই সাথে দেশের সকল বেসরকারি বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের আউটার ক্যাম্পাস বন্ধ করা হয়েছে। (৫) কুইল ইউনিভার্সিটি: ২২-১০-২০০৬ তারিখে সরকার কর্তৃক বন্ধকৃত। পরবর্তীতে ২২-১০-২০০৬ তারিখের বাতিল সংক্রান্ত প্রজ্ঞাপন শর্ত সাপেক্ষে ০১ বছরের জন্য প্রত্যাহার করা হয়। শর্তটি হলো "০১ (এক) বছরের মধ্যে কুইল বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের অর্পিত শিক্ষা কার্যক্রম সংক্রান্ত সকল শর্ত পূরণ করতে হবে। বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় কর্তৃপক্ষ যদি সকল শর্ত পূরণ করতে সক্ষম না হন তবে শিক্ষা কার্যক্রম সংক্রান্ত এই সাময়িক অনুমতি তাত্ক্ষণিক বাতিল হবে"। উল্লেখ্য, শর্তানুযায়ী নির্ধারিত সময়ের মধ্যে কুইল ইউনিভার্সিটি শিক্ষা কার্যক্রম শুরু করতে সক্ষম হয় নাই। (গ) উপাচার্য: বেসরকারি বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়সমূহে অর্জিত ডিগ্রির মূল সার্টিফিকেট-এ স্বাক্ষরকারী হবেন সংশ্লিষ্ট বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের মহামান্য রাষ্ট্রপতি তথা আচার্য কর্তৃক নিয়োগকৃত ভাইস-চ্যাপেলের এবং পরীক্ষা নিয়ন্ত্রক। শিক্ষা কার্যক্রম পরিচালনাকারী ১০৬টি বেসরকারি বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের মধ্যে মাত্র নয় রাষ্ট্রপতি কর্তৃক নিয়োগকৃত উপাচার্য রয়েছে ৭৪টি বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ে। কমিশনের ওয়েবসাইটে (www.ugc.gov.bd) এতদসংক্রান্ত বিষয়ের সময়ে তালিকা আপডেট করা হয়।	
এমতাবস্থায়, বেসরকারি বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ে ভর্তির ক্ষেত্রে শুধুমাত্র সরকার ও বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় মঞ্জুরী কমিশন কর্তৃক অনুমোদিত বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের অনুমোদিত ক্যাম্পাসে এবং অনুমোদিত প্রোগ্রামে ভর্তি হওয়ার জন্য ইউজিসির ওয়েবসাইট (www.ugc.gov.bd) থেকে তথ্য সংগ্রহপূর্বক ভর্তি হওয়ার জন্য বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় মঞ্জুরী কমিশন কর্তৃক পরামর্শ দেয়া হলো। বেসরকারি বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়সমূহের জন্য প্রযোজ্য ক্ষেত্রে তারকা (*) চিহ্নসহ কমিশনের ওয়েবসাইটে (www.ugc.gov.bd) হালনাগাদ তথ্য আপলোড/প্রদর্শন করা হয়ে থাকে। তদুপরি, কেউ কোনো অননুমোদিত বেসরকারি বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের অননুমোদিত ক্যাম্পাসে বা অনুমোদিত প্রোগ্রামে বা অনুমোদিত প্রোগ্রামে কমিশন নির্ধারিত আসন সংখ্যার বিপরীতে অতিরিক্ত আসনে ভর্তি হয়ে প্রভাবিত হলে এবং পরবর্তীতে কোনো আইনগত সমস্যা সৃষ্টি হলে কিংবা বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় বন্ধ ঘোষিত অথবা প্রোগ্রাম বাতিল হলে বা অনুমোদিত আসন সংখ্যার অধিক আসনে ভর্তি হয়ে সনদ বাতিল হলে তার দায়-দায়িত্ব বাংলাদেশ বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় মঞ্জুরী কমিশনের উপর বর্তাবে না।	
<div style="text-align: right;"> কর্তৃপক্ষের নির্দেশক্রমে,  পরিচালক বেসরকারি বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় বিভাগ </div>	
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TAWSIF'S 'ROCKSTAR' dreams come true

RAKSHANDA RAHMAN MISHA

"I have always been fond of grey characters, but three years ago I was mostly playing comedic characters, as my audiences and directors wanted to see me in those roles. However, after the pandemic, I finally got the chance to pursue what I've always wanted—roles in psychological thrillers," confessed an ecstatic Tawsif Mahbub.

Breaking away from his conventional comedic roles, the popular small-screen actor is eager to challenge himself as an actor. From playing a serial killer to a professor and now a rockstar, he is ready to mould himself to fit each performance.

According to Tawsif, it felt as though playing a rockstar came naturally to him. He used to be a bassist and manager of his musical band The Manager, before pursuing acting.

"I always wanted to perform as a rockstar but before I could head towards achieving it, I left music to become an actor. I also had a desire to tell a story that incorporated elements of my real life. Performing on stage hence came naturally to me, as I had already performed in 100 stage shows as a band member," explained the actor.

In *Didha*, the actor played the role of a musician in front of organic audiences who came to watch the shooting. "Our director, Mohidul Mohim *bhai*, wanted to make the concert scene grand, and since the shoot took place at Cox's Bazar, I decided to create an event page a week before the shoot to let my fans know where we would be filming."

"As a result, hundreds of people showed up, along with individuals who were already at the shooting spot. I had to keep the audience engaged because filming scenes requires a lot of time. When the performance scene was

rolling, I acted, and when the director called 'cut,' I became the host to keep the crowd entertained," added the actor.

The drama *Didha* starring Tawsif and Keya Payel is scheduled to be released by the end of this month on Sultan Entertainment's YouTube channel.

On the other hand, the *Chader Haat* famed actor, who is an extrovert at heart, transformed himself into a solemn and serious professor for his role in Vicky Zahed's directorial *Chokro* for iScreen."

"I had to play a 40-something-year-old philosophy professor called Humayun, who is deeply knowledgeable about the human psyche. To fit into the role, some of my hair was dyed gray. The dialogues were lengthy, so I had to memorise them," he stated when speaking about the character.

"As someone who typically enjoys a more spontaneous approach to acting, I even had to read research papers to prepare for the role.

It was challenging but, in the end, people's appreciation made up for it."

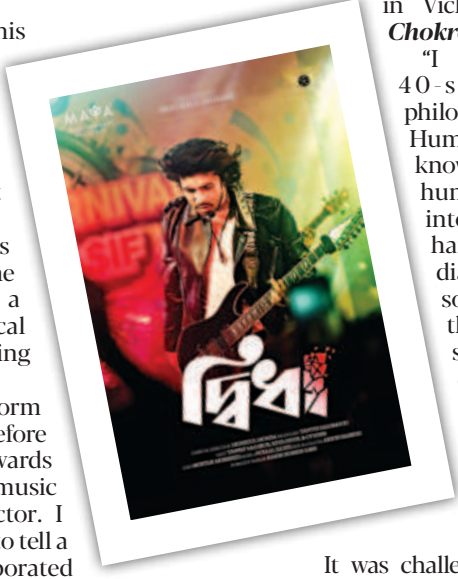
Earlier this year, the actor was seen playing the role of a serial killer in Vicky Zahed's *Hajot*, which was released on Club 11 Entertainment's YouTube channel. Fans were confident that it was indeed the prequel to the *Punorjonmo* universe.

However, Tawsif laughed at the assumption and said, "Who told you that?" The actor neither denied nor accepted it as a prequel. Instead, he left it to the director to decide whether to make it a part of the universe.

"Vicky is renowned for his plot twists, so for my role as Iqbal Haque in *Hajot*, I had to keep a subtle approach, portraying the character in a way that made him appear without suspicion."

"Then, in a shocking turn at the end, it is revealed that Iqbal was the serial killer all along. We managed to keep the audience on the edge of their seats right up to the finale," the actor reflected.

Upon being asked about his rising OTT popularity and whether he would leave TV dramas, the actor replied, "My audience is my power, and I never want to let go of that. Unless I choose to focus on films, which might require me to step away from the small screen, I have no intention of leaving. I love dramas and enjoy working on television productions," affirmed the actor.



Barry Keoghan cast in Beatles biopic, says Ringo Starr

Barry Keoghan is stepping into the shoes of legendary drummer Ringo Starr in an upcoming Beatles biopic directed by Sam Mendes, as revealed by Starr himself.

In a recent interview with Entertainment Tonight, the iconic Beatles drummer confirmed that the Oscar-nominated actor, known for *The Banshees of Inisherin* and *Saltburn*, will portray his character in a series of Beatles films.

The 84-year-old musician expressed his approval of the casting, stating, "I think it's wonderful." He then humorously added, "I hear he's already learning the drums, but hopefully he doesn't get too good at it."

The production has secured the life and music rights of the surviving members of the band and the estates of John Lennon and George Harrison.

Tabu teases 'Dune Prophecy' entry with new look

Tabu fans have eagerly awaited her debut in *Dune: Prophecy*, the prequel to Denis Villeneuve's sci-fi epic. She has now announced the date of her character's debut in the series.

On Wednesday, Tabu revealed her look as Sister Francesca in *Dune: Prophecy* on Instagram. Dressed in black with a veil and piercing eyes, she exudes both menace and elegance.

She captioned the post, "Prepare for a new Sister to show her strength." The episode will premiere on December 15 on HBO Max and on December 16 in India on Jio Cinema.



NEWS

OCs demand logistical support

FROM PAGE 12
saying that police stations play a key role as the primary hub of police services.

He emphasised the need for OCs to take responsibility for addressing citizens' concerns.

"People seeking services at police stations must receive the assistance they expect. As OCs, it is your duty to ensure this," Commissioner Sazzat said.

He stressed, "Every police activity revolves around the station, making

your role crucial. Perform your responsibilities diligently."

About the police force's reputation, the commissioner opined that the image of the force suffered in the past due to the actions of certain over-ambitious officers.

"I expect no complaints against any of you. Perform your duties with integrity. While I don't wish to take action against anyone, no leniency will be shown if complaints arise," the DMP commissioner warned.

He asked the OCs to gain public

trust through exemplary behaviour and efficient delivery of service.

Commissioner Sazzat also stressed the importance of building stronger relationships between the police and the public.

"The more connections you establish with people, the more information you will gather. This information will enable you to prevent crimes before they take place. Additionally, ensure cases are resolved through proper and thorough investigations."

The harmony among people

FROM PAGE 12
We believe that this relationship will never be broken. The immense respect and love that we have for each other will never be lost. Bangladesh is that kind of country, and we are that kind of citizens," said the HC bench.

Additional Attorney General Aneek R Haque and Deputy Attorney General Md Asad Uddin informed the HC bench that three cases have been filed in connection with Tuesday's violence, 33 accused have been arrested in the cases, and six people, who were involved in the killing, have been identified by

scrutinising CCTV footage.

Aneek said the government is dealing with the issue of ISKCON with priority. Then the HC said this court has been assured that the state machinery is working on this issue.

"The government is responsible for the security of the state. We believe that the interim government is working with great dedication. We have confidence in them," said Justice Farah Mahbub.

The HC also hoped the government will remain cautious about maintaining law and order and protecting the lives

and properties of the people.

On November 27, Supreme Court lawyer Md Monir Uddin placed some newspaper reports about ISKCON before the HC bench and appealed to the bench to issue a suo motu (voluntary) order on the government to ban its operations and impose section 144 in Chattogram, Rangpur, and Dinajpur.

The court on that day asked the attorney general to inform this court about what steps the government has taken regarding ISKCON's recent activities.

SC proposes formation of judicial council

FROM PAGE 12
the candidates.

If the Judicial Appointment Council is formed, transparency and accountability will be ensured in the recruitment of judges to the Appellate and High Court divisions, Supreme Court's Special Officer Muajjem Hussain told The Daily Star.

He said the proposal was prepared after conducting detailed research on the laws, regulations, SC decisions, customs, and relevant issues related to the appointments of judges in different countries.

There are independent and impartial commissions or similar institutions for appointing SC judges in many countries, including England, Ireland, Kenya, Malaysia, and South Africa, according to Muajjem.

The draft of the proposed ordinance was earlier sent to both Appellate and High Court division judges, seeking their opinions. As many as 15 judges sent their opinions to the SC, he said.

Contacted, Law Secretary Sheikh Abu Taher told this correspondent that he did not know whether his office

received the proposal from the SC.

Formulating a law for the appointment of SC judges under the constitution is a longstanding demand from different sections of people, particularly the Supreme Court Bar Association.

In an address to lower court judges on September 21 after assuming office, Chief Justice Syed Refaat Ahmed announced a roadmap for reforms in the judiciary. He said he would take steps for the formulation of a law on the appointment of SC judges and the establishment of a separate secretariat for the judiciary.

In a previous proposal sent to the law ministry on October 27, the SC proposed the establishment of a separate secretariat for the judiciary. The proposal aims to make the judiciary truly independent, separate it from the executive branch effectively, and bring an end to the law ministry's control over the lower courts.

WHAT CONSTITUTION SAYS

Article 95(l) of the constitution states that the chief justice shall be

appointed by the president, and the other judges shall be appointed by the president after consultation with the chief justice.

A person shall be qualified for appointment as a Supreme Court judge if he or she has "qualifications as may be prescribed by law", according to article 95(2) (c).

Article 98 states that the president may appoint one or more duly qualified persons to be additional judges of a division of the Supreme Court if the president is satisfied that the number of judges of that division should be increased. The tenure of these judges will not exceed two years as the president may specify.

Or, if the president thinks fit, may require a judge of the High Court Division to sit in the Appellate Division for any temporary period.

"Provided that nothing in this article shall prevent a person appointed as an additional judge from being appointed as a judge under article 95 or as an additional judge for a further period under this article," article 98 adds.

Efforts on to identify violence instigators

FROM PAGE 12
responsibility. When the instigators post something, many others are copying it. They are ordinary people like us who spread a lot of things without understanding. As a result, unrest is taking place."

Asked who the instigators are or whether they have any particular identity, and what their motives are known so far, Colonel Intekhab said, "I cannot tell their identity exactly. Instigators will always be there. But it is our, the ordinary people's responsibility not to be provoked."

In reply to a question if there was a lack of intel, he said, "I would not call it a lack of intelligence. We are working in coordination with everyone on intelligence gathering. I have already explained that in some cases we have to think a lot. That is why many may think that the law enforcement agencies did not take appropriate steps."

There are reports that the joint forces have been involved in crimes during operations.

Asked how many personnel involved in such crimes have been identified and

what action has been taken against them, Col Intekhab said retired and incumbent members of the army may have been found involved.

"I do not have specific information right now. However, every allegation is being investigated. Some investigations have been completed. As far as I know, various disciplinary measures have been taken — ranging from four years to one year in jail, and dismissal from service," he said.

After the arrest of Chinmoy Das, the leader of a Hindu group, a lawyer was killed in Chattogram during clashes between Chinmoy's supporters, law enforcers and lawyers.

Asked why steps were not taken to prevent violence although the situation was already tense, Colonel Intekhab said, "The death is definitely very painful. But due to law enforcers' presence and quick response, a major incident was avoided."

At the start of the briefing, Colonel Intekhab reviewed the army's activities over the past two weeks, starting from November 13.

During this period, the army seized 24 illegal firearms and 365 rounds

of ammunition. They responded to 40 incidents of unstable situations and cleared 18 road blockades in industrial zones. The army also addressed 63 disorderly situations, including those related to political conflicts, educational institutions, and government offices.

The army apprehended 1,328 individuals linked to various criminal activities, including 228 people involved in drug-related offences. They played a key role in ensuring the peaceful celebration of religious and cultural festivals, collaborating with Buddhist organisations to protect 444 monasteries across the country.

The army officer also highlighted the ongoing efforts against the Kuki-Chin National Front, an armed separatist group in Chattogram Hill Tracts. Since April, the army has arrested 179 KNF members or collaborators and seized 60 weapons, along with a significant amount of ammunition and military equipment.

Throughout this period, the army has faced substantial challenges, with 122 personnel injured, and one officer killed in the line of duty.

Don't pave way for the return of fascism

FROM PAGE 12
being orchestrated to divert the nation's course.

Fakhrul said the nation must now unite under a single goal: building a truly democratic state by re-constituting parliament after implementing necessary reforms.

"We should all refrain from creating division. Keeping the unity intact, we must move forward using the scope

[created through the mass upsurge].

"It is also our misfortune that, even after 53 years of independence, we have not been able to ensure a peaceful transfer of power."

He also called on people from all walks of life, including writers, artists, and intellectuals, to play a responsible role in inspiring the nation to achieve the desired goal.

Fakhrul said writers and artists have

long played a vital role in reshaping the state. "But this was not evident during the movement against the fascist regime of Hasina."

He added that building a democratic Bangladesh and fostering a democratic culture through necessary reforms is a challenging task. "We must accomplish this through the united efforts of people from all sectors of society."

The programme was presided over by former deputy minister and Organising Secretary of the BNP Executive Committee Asadul Habib Dulu. BNP Standing Committee Member Mirza Abbas and Joint Secretary General Shahid Uddin Chowdhury Annie attended as special guests.

out initiatives such as "Notun Kuri", a programme designed to discover talent in various disciplines. "If the BNP forms a government in the future, we will reinstate programmes like Notun Kuri to identify and train talented individuals to meet national and international standards."

Ensuring that players excel in international competitions, Tarique proposed focusing on honing their skills in their chosen sport.

He also emphasised the importance of skill development for future generations. "Shaheed President

PRO-IMRAN KHAN MARCH

Pakistan journo probing protest deaths arrested

AFP, Islamabad

A Pakistani journalist investigating alleged fatalities during protests in support of jailed ex-prime minister Imran Khan has been arrested under anti-terror laws, his lawyer said yesterday.

This week more than 10,000 marchers flooded Islamabad, defying a ban on public gatherings before being evicted in a sweeping security crackdown.

The government said at least five security personnel were killed whilst Khan's Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) party allege at least 10 of their own were shot dead by security forces. Government ministers have denied the allegations.

Matuallah Jan, a presenter for TV channel Neo News with a popular YouTube channel, and another reporter were investigating the claims at Islamabad's PIMS Hospital when they were detained late Wednesday, his lawyer Imaan Mazari said.

"They were trying to ascertain the total number of deaths," she told AFP. "They were doing their journalistic duties."

She said the second journalist was released but Jan has remained in custody.

Islamabad police issued a report accusing him of drug possession and assaulting an officer whilst under the influence.

A case "has been registered under the Anti-Terrorism Act for the attempted murder of a policeman on duty", the report said.



Women holding placards shout slogans during a protest demanding justice for victims killed in the recent ethnic clashes in Jibram in Imphal east of India's Manipur state yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

Putin praises Trump

Questions whether he is safe after attempts on his life

REUTERS, Astana

Russian President Vladimir Putin yesterday praised US President-elect Donald Trump as an experienced and intelligent politician and questioned whether he was safe after attempts on his life.

Speaking to reporters after a summit in Kazakhstan, Putin said he had also been shocked by how Trump's family and children had been criticised by political opponents during the US election campaign, reports Reuters.

Trump, 78, was holding a campaign rally in Butler, Pennsylvania - a key state in the November 5 election - when a 20-year-old man with an AR-15-style rifle got close enough to shoot at the former Republican president from a rooftop.

One shot hit Trump's upper right ear, leaving his face streaked with blood, but he was not severely wounded. His campaign said he was doing fine.

‘We lost a generation’

Lebanon’s education crisis deepens as half of public schools converted to shelters

THOMSON REUTERS FOUNDATION, Beirut

As the skies fell quiet over Beirut this week, displaced Lebanese piled into cars and headed south for home, but any return to normality remains elusive given their economy was already in freefall even before war broke out last year and no solutions seem at hand.

A ceasefire between Israel and the Iran-backed armed group Hezbollah came into effect at dawn on Wednesday after conflict escalated in September with Israel launching heavy bombing raids across the country and sending troops into south Lebanon.

Although the fighting has stopped - at least for now - hard days lie ahead for a worn-out people who were already reeling from multiple crises since the economic implosion of 2019.

The crisis has hit education especially hard.

At least 500 public schools, roughly one in two in what is a badly under-funded sector, were converted into shelters in recent months to house many of the 1.2 million people fleeing the fighting, Save the Children said last month.

And 2024 marks the sixth



straight year that Lebanon's 1.5 million children faced significant disruptions to schooling, worsening their long-term physical and mental outlook, it said.

Ameer Shweekh is one of those children. Forced to flee his home in the southern city of Tyre two months ago, the 13-year-old got a place at the Omar El Zeeny public school in a working class neighbourhood in Beirut when the school year started this month.

Shweekh said he still logs onto online classes from his former

school when he finishes his new studies each afternoon. But he knows he is falling behind, especially in coding - there are simply no computers at his new school.

The education community has only received 19 percent of the donor funding it needs this year, said Janhvi Kanoria, a director at Education Above All (EAA), a Qatar-based global education foundation.

"We have a lost generation in Lebanon," she told the Thomson Reuters Foundation in an interview.

LANKA RAINS

Six children among 12 killed

Storm heads to India

AFP, Colombo

Sri Lankan rescuers yesterday recovered the drowned corpses of six children, taking the number killed in torrential rains to 12, as a powerful but slow-moving storm headed towards India.

More than 335,000 people in Sri Lanka have been forced to flee after their homes were flooded, Colombo's Disaster Management Centre said.

It said two men driving a tractor and trailer which had been transporting the six children in the eastern Amara district when it was swept away in floods, were still missing.

Air pollution from fires linked to 1.5m deaths a year: study

AFP, Paris

Air pollution caused by fires is linked to more than 1.5 million deaths a year worldwide, the vast majority occurring in developing countries, a major new study said yesterday.

This death toll is expected to rise in coming years as climate change makes wildfires more frequent, according to the study in The Lancet journal.

The international team of researchers looked at existing data on "landscape fires", which include both wildfires that rage through nature and planned fires such as controlled burns on land.

Around 450,000 deaths a year from heart disease were linked to fire-related air pollution between 2000 and 2019, the researchers said. A further 220,000 deaths from respiratory disease were attributed to the smoke and particulates spewed into the air by fire.

From all causes around the world, a total of 1.53 million annual deaths were associated with air pollution from landscape fires, said the study.



বাংলাদেশ ডেভেলপমেন্ট ব্যাংক পিএলসি.			
হেড অফিস, ঢাকা।			
এস্টাবলিশমেন্ট এন্ড কমন্ সার্ভিস ডিপার্টমেন্ট			
ওয়েবসাইট www.bdbi.com.bd .			
বিষয়ঃ স্টাফবাস ভাড়ার দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি।			
বাংলাদেশ ডেভেলপমেন্ট ব্যাংক পিএলসি, হেড অফিসের কর্মকর্তা/কর্মচারীদের অফিসে আনা-সেবার জন্য ২০১৮ সাল বা তৎপরবর্তী মডেলের নিম্নলিখিত ০৮টি কটে ০১/০১/২০২৫ তারিখ হতে পরবর্তী ২(দুই) বসন্তের মেয়াদে ভাড়া করার নিমিত্তে পরিবেশ ত্রিতাদার প্রতিষ্ঠান/প্রকৃত বাস মালিকদের (মালিক না হলে মালিকের সম্মতিপত্রসহ) নিকট হতে সীলমোহরকৃত দরপত্র আহ্বান করা যাচ্ছেঃ-			
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০১.	বরপা - বরপা বাজার - তারাবো বিশ্বদেও - স্টাফ কোয়ার্টার - বাশের পুল - কনোপাড়া - ভাস্করসে - কাজলা - যাত্রাবাড়ি - টিকাতুলি - মেহের হানিক ক্রাইওভার (যাওয়া) - মতিবিল (বিভিবিএল ভবন)।	ন্যূনতম ৪০	১ টি
০২.	টিগাপাড়া - মৌচাক - সানারপাড়া - মাতুয়াইল মেডিকেল - শনির আমড়া - মেহের হানিক ক্রাইওভার - গোলাপবাগ - মালিকনগর - টিগাপাড়া - মতিবিল (বিভিবিএল ভবন)।	ন্যূনতম ৩০	১ টি
০৩.	দক্ষিণ বান (সরদার বাড়ী) - দক্ষিণ বান বাজার - কাজী বাড়ী - পাণ্ডুয়াই - এয়ারপোর্ট - কাওলা বিলকেন্ড - কুড়িল বিশ্বদেও- মুনো ফিউচার পার্ক - নতুন বাজার - বাজা - রামপুরা - মালিবাগ চৌধুরীপাড়া - মালিবাগ - মৌচাক ক্রাইওভার - শাকিলপুর - কাকরাইল মোড় - মতিবিল (বিভিবিএল ভবন)।	ন্যূনতম ৩০	১ টি
০৪.	বাংলা কলেজ - টোলপারগা - মিরপুর-১ - রাইনখোলা - কর্মাস কলেজ - শিয়ালবাড়ী মোড় - রূপনগর রোড - আরামবাগ রোড - মিরপুর-১১ - মিরপুর-১০ - কাকীপাড়া - শেওড়াপাড়া - তালতলা - আগারগাঁও - ফার্মগেট - কারওয়ান বাজার - বাংলা মোটর - মন্ডা ভবন - সড়িকাঙ্গর মতিবিল (বিভিবিএল ভবন)।	ন্যূনতম ৩০	১ টি
০৫.	নারায়ণগঞ্জ (চাষাড়া) - জেলা পরিষদ - ফতুল্লা স্টেডিয়াম - জালকুড়ি - উইঘর - রত্ননাথপুর - সাইনবোর্ড - সামান্ন মার্কেট - রায়েরবাগ - কাজলা - মেহের হানিক ক্রাইওভার - টিকাতুলি - মতিবিল (বিভিবিএল ভবন)।	ন্যূনতম ৩০	১ টি
০৬.	রাজারবাগ (কলীবাড়ি) - কনমতলা মোড় - বাসাবো (ছারপুকু লাইব্রেরী) - বৌদ্ধ মন্দির - মুনো টিগাপাড়া মোড় - মতিবিল (বিভিবিএল ভবন)।	ন্যূনতম ৩০	১ টি
০৭.	নরীনগর (বাইশমাইল) - সাভার বাজার - গাবতলী - কল্যাণপুর - শ্যামলী - কলেজ গেইট - আসাদ গেইট - কল্যাণ - কলাবাগান - গ্রীল রোড (আসা) - মিরপুর রোড (যাওয়া) - সাইন্সপার - শাহবাগ - মতিবিল (বিভিবিএল ভবন)।	ন্যূনতম ৩০	১ টি
০৮.	বন্দী (ফেরাজী হাসপাতাল) - দক্ষিণ বন্দী - মাদারটেক টোরাঙ্ক - গোয়াড় ট্রেন্স স্ট্যাড - তিলপাড়া (ঢাকা হোটেল) - বিলগাঁও টোরাঙ্ক (যাওয়া) - বিলগাঁও তালতলা - বিলগাঁও আপন কফি হাউজ (আসা) - বিলগাঁও ক্রাইওভার - শাহজাহানপুর - মতিবিল (বিভিবিএল ভবন)।	ন্যূনতম ৩০	১ টি
০২। এ সংক্রান্ত টেন্ডার সিডিউল বাংলাদেশ ডেভেলপমেন্ট ব্যাংক পিএলসি, হেড অফিস, লেভেল-৯ এর এস্টাবলিশমেন্ট এন্ড কমন্ সার্ভিস ডিপার্টমেন্ট, ঢাকা হতে ১,০০০.০০ (এক হাজার) টাকা মূল্যে (অফসারযোগ্য) ০১/১২/২০২৪ তারিখ হতে ১৪/১২/২০২৪ তারিখ পর্যন্ত অফিস চলাকালীন সময়ে জর্য করা যাবে। দরপত্রের সাথে টেন্ডার সিডিউলটি মালি হিসাবে বাংলাদেশ ডেভেলপমেন্ট ব্যাংক পিএলসি এর অনুবৃত্তে দরপত্র সিডিউলে উপস্থাপিত মুদ্রামানদে পেম-অর্ডার জমা দিতে হবে। আগামী ১৫/১২/২০২৪ তারিখ বেলা ২:৩০ টা পর্যন্ত ব্যাংকের লেভেল-৯ এ দরপত্র জমা দেয়া যাবে এবং ঐ দিন বেলা ৩:০০ টায় দরদাতাদের উপস্থিতিতে (যদি কেহ উপস্থিত থাকেন) দরপত্রসমূহ খোলা হবে।			
০৩। ব্যাংক কর্তৃক কোন কার্য নশীলো ব্যতিরেকে যে কোন দরপত্র গ্রহণ অথবা যে কোন বা সকল দরপত্র বাতিল করার ক্ষমতা/অধিকার সংরক্ষণ করে। উল্লেখ্য, আলোচ্য দরপত্র পাবলিক প্রকিউরমেন্ট আইন, ২০০৬ এবং পাবলিক প্রকিউরমেন্ট বিধিমালা, ২০০৮ এর আলোকে সম্পাদিত হবে।			
(আম্বুদ্রাঃ-আল-বাসেন)			
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Australia passes social media ban for under 16s

Tech giants face fines of A\$49.5m for non-compliance

AFP, Melbourne

Australian lawmakers yesterday passed landmark rules to ban under 16s from social media, approving one of the world's toughest crackdowns on popular sites like Facebook, Instagram and X.

The legislation ordering social media firms to take "reasonable steps" to prevent young teens from having accounts was passed in the Senate with 34 votes in favour and 19 against.

The firms -- who face fines of up to Aus\$50 million (US\$32.5 million) for failing to comply -- have described the laws as "vague", "problematic" and "rushed".

The new rules will now return to the lower house -- where lawmakers already backed the bill on Wednesday -- for one final approval before it is all but certain to become law.

Speaking during the Senate debate, Greens politician Sarah Hanson-Young said the ban would not "make social media safer for young people".

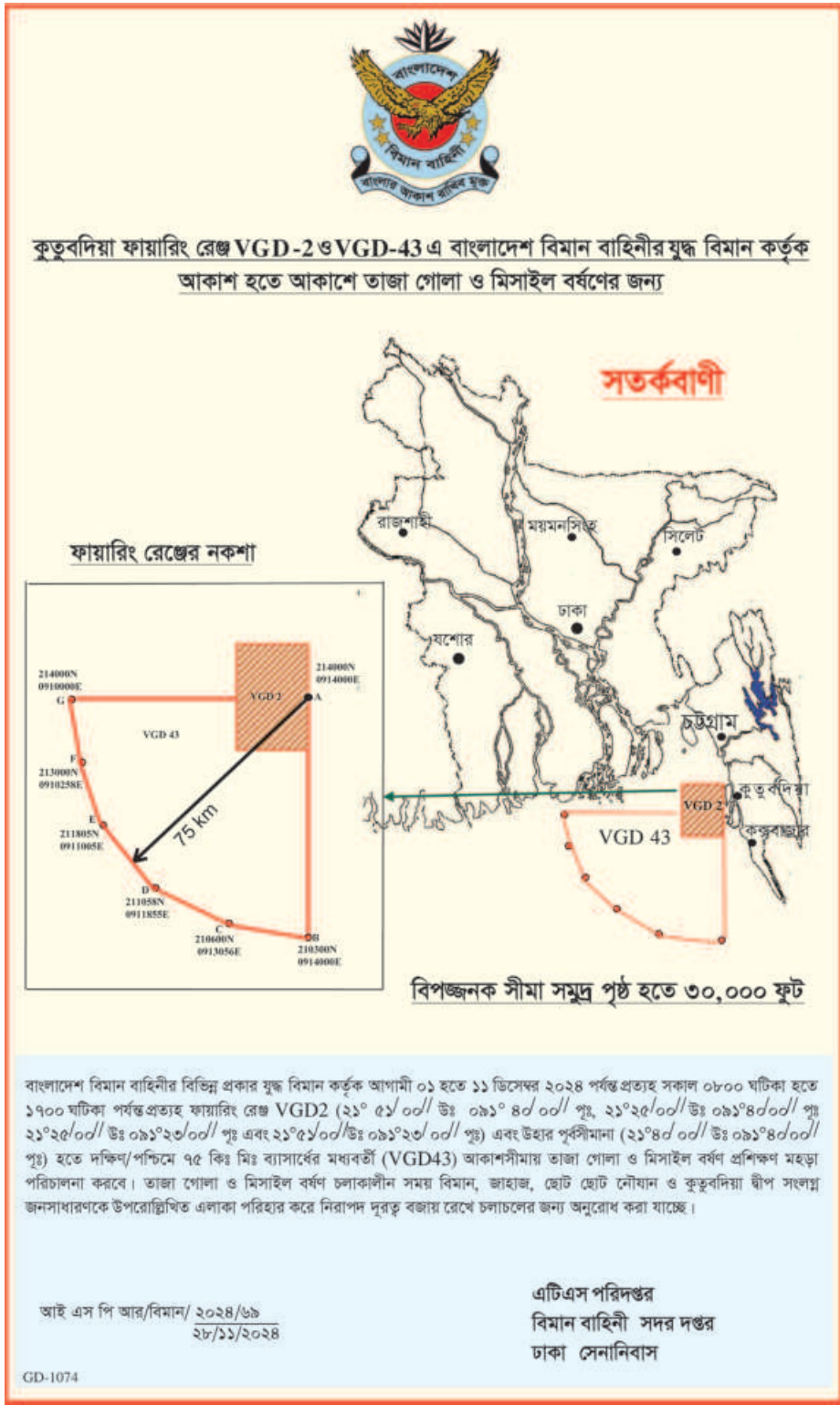
She said it was "devastating" that young people were "finding themselves addicted to these dangerous algorithms".

Centre-left Prime Minister Anthony Albanese, eyeing an election early next year, has enthusiastically championed the new rules and rallied Aussie parents to get behind it.

In the run up to the vote, he painted social media as "a platform for peer pressure, a driver of anxiety, a vehicle for scammers and, worst of all, a tool for online predators".

He wanted young Australians "off their phones and onto the footy and cricket field, the tennis and netball courts, in the swimming pool".

But young social media users, like 12-year-old Angus Lydom, are not impressed.



Unity is vital as tensions spill over

Rising unrest is preventing us from achieving desired progress

We welcome the call for national unity amid rising tensions over seemingly unconnected reasons in different parts of the country. Both Chief Adviser Professor Muhammad Yunus and top BNP leaders have underscored the importance of peace and unity as the nation grapples with post-uprising challenges. At a recent meeting, Prof Yunus has emphasised the need to deescalate tensions across societal divides, while BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhru Islam Alamgir called for dialogue with political parties to bridge divisions and build unity. However, unity is easier sought than achieved—it requires decisive action, collective resolve, and an unwavering commitment to addressing the underlying causes of unrest.

While remnants of the ousted regime may be partly to blame for the recent turbulence, the alarming frequency of disruptions suggests deeper fissures within our society. In recent weeks, we have seen attacks and hostile mobilisations targeting media houses as well as violent clashes among college students. On Tuesday, unrest surrounding the arrest of a former ISKCON leader led to the brutal killing of a lawyer. Frequent public demonstrations by various groups have also become routine. Though these incidents may appear isolated, they form part of a broader pattern of instability following August 5. While the uprising reignited hopes for democracy, it also exposed the fragility of our sociopolitical fabric, with dissent and disillusionments festering in various quarters. The question is, if the accomplices of the fallen regime are indeed weaponising their divisions, why haven't they been conclusively identified yet? Or are there other forces also at play?

Adding fuel to this fire is the unchecked proliferation of incendiary narratives on social media. The newfound freedom of expression under the government—while commendable—has also become a double-edged sword thanks to minimal oversight, creating a fertile ground for propaganda, hate speech, and baseless rumours. Some are openly advocating destructive action, while others are sowing division under the guise of activism. These digital battlegrounds are making conflicts more likely and resolutions more elusive. Compounding this issue is a perception among many that they can disrupt public life without consequence, taking advantage of the government's relatively lenient approach to protests.

So, how can we navigate these complex challenges to achieve peace and unity? Dialogue, as BNP leaders have suggested, is indeed essential, not just between the government and political parties but also among sociopolitical groups with competing interests. But for the sake of national interest, all must be sincere so that their interests are aligned with the common goal of peace. That said, dialogue alone is not enough. The authorities must prioritise enhancing law enforcement, ensuring that laws are enforced strictly and impartially to deter and punish those inciting violence. Misuse of freedom of expression, especially online, must also be addressed carefully but firmly to curb the spread of hate and misinformation. At the same time, the call for a Truth and Peace Commission deserves serious consideration. Such a commission could play a pivotal role in rebuilding trust, fostering reconciliation, and promoting restorative justice.

The challenges we face today require us all to act responsibly and judiciously. A failure to do so risks undermining the gains of the uprising achieved through so much sacrifice and struggle.

Act now to check air pollution

It is taking a heavy toll on our lives

We are once again at that time of the year when the air we breathe becomes dangerously polluted, not just in the capital but across the country. This year is no exception. Over the past few days, Dhaka's air quality has consistently been classified as unhealthy or hazardous, and there is a concern that pollution levels will worsen as winter intensifies. For instance, on November 27, the concentration of PM2.5 in the city exceeded the WHO standard by 43 percent—an ominous sign for public health.

According to a report by IQAir, a Switzerland-based organisation, Dhaka has ranked among the top two or three most polluted cities globally throughout November. On November 24, Dhaka's air was rated the second worst in the world, with an IQAir pollution score of 291. Just two days later, the score rose to 324, indicating hazardous conditions. The situation is clearly dire, and without immediate action, we risk a public health crisis in the near future.

It's unthinkable that we have come to a point where air pollution has become so dangerous, thanks to the failure of successive governments. Between 2000 and 2019, \$6.5 crore was reportedly spent on two major projects to combat air pollution, in addition to other initiatives funded by hundreds of millions of dollars in foreign aid. Yet, despite these efforts, Dhaka remains one of the most polluted cities globally. High Court directives aimed at curbing air pollution—over 20 rulings, summons, and orders—have also been ignored, reflecting a failure of accountability and enforcement.

Today, illegal brick kilns continue to operate on the city's outskirts, spewing toxic smoke into the air. Outdated vehicles emitting black smoke ply the roads, while poorly planned construction projects scatter dust and debris throughout the capital. These persistent issues reveal the mismanagement and inefficiencies of successive governments.

Therefore, it is imperative for the interim government to take decisive action to combat this invisible yet deadly threat. We welcome the recent formulation of a national action plan to tackle air pollution. However, its immediate and effective implementation is critical. Additionally, the government must provide clear guidelines to citizens on how to protect themselves from the health hazards posed by polluted air. The time to act is now. Failure to address this crisis will only deepen its impact on public health and the economy.

Takeaways from COP29

The climate clock is ticking faster than ever for countries like Bangladesh



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SELIM RAIHAN

COP29 convened in Baku amidst worsening climate disasters and was touted as a turning point in global climate action. However, its outcomes highlight some very systemic shortcomings of the international climate regime. Though COP29 finally managed to agree upon a historic deal intended to accelerate climate finance and decarbonisation, the agreement falls frustratingly short of the urgency needed to combat the escalating climate crisis.

A deal too little, too late

On paper, the COP29 agreement promises more climate financing and ambitious decarbonisation goals for wealthier countries. However, the \$300 billion in annual climate finance it pledges by 2035 has been criticised as a “paltry sum” because it falls short of what is needed to tackle the scale of the crisis. For a country like Bangladesh—struggling to keep its head above rising sea levels amidst wild weather—the deal offers little hope for respite. Poorer countries continue to bear disproportionate burdens of a climate crisis they did not cause, underscoring ongoing inequities in global climate action.

The agreement also contains no binding commitments and no real mechanisms for implementation. For this reason, it has been called “a band-aid on a gaping wound,” as it treats symptoms rather than causes. Despite these commitments, record-high carbon emissions persist, and the agreement does little to alter this trend. Scientific consensus indicates that the world is teetering dangerously close to the 1.5 degrees Celsius warming threshold, beyond which lies a cascade of tipping points with devastating consequences. This requires urgent, immediate action—not in some undefined future. Yet, the results of COP29 fail to rise to this challenge when concrete measures are urgently needed. Time is running out, and every delay worsens the global predicament.

Once again, the voices of developing countries were drowned out by priorities set by richer nations. Issues like funding for loss and damage, support for adaptation to climate change, and technology transfer remain inadequately addressed.

The need for COP reform

How election can be a tool of accountability



Dr Samiul Hasan is an academic with interests in human security issues in Muslim-majority countries.

SAMIUL HASAN

The purpose of a “free” and “fair” election is to ensure accountability of those participating in it. In the past, parties in Bangladesh won elections with around one-third of the votes cast, while a third of the constituencies were won with around 30 percent of the votes cast. The problem lies in putting the emphasis on the election, not its purpose. Hence, the electoral system must be reformed carefully.

Among the three commonly used methods of determining the outcomes of legislative elections—plurality, majority, and proportional representation—the third one seems to be most effective. A study of elections in Muslim-majority countries reveal that the re-democratisation in Indonesia has been peaceful and uninterrupted since 1997 because of the proportional representation system in its parliament; the parties must cooperate to get any bill passed, becoming a “check” on one another.

In a proportional representation voting system, votes are cast for the parties, either in an open or a closed list system. The voters can give preference to a particular candidate in the former system, but not in the latter. An individual or a party must get a minimum threshold of votes to enter the legislature (e.g. one percent for individuals, two to seven percent



People in Feni seek shelter on August 21, 2024, as continuous heavy rainfall caused severe floods in multiple districts of Bangladesh.

FILE PHOTO: STAR

There certainly is a growing sense that COP climate talks are no longer “fit for purpose” and urgently need reform. The deep structural and functional flaws evident in COP29 highlight these shortcomings. These so-called inclusive summits frequently marginalise smaller countries, often at the behest of global powers and corporate interests. Procedural inefficiencies, a lack of enforceable commitments, and rampant lobbying by fossil fuel companies undermine the process's integrity.

To regain credibility, COP must transition from a platform of rhetorical commitments to one of binding agreements and fair representation. Crucially, such talks should not be hosted in countries that cannot—or will not—support the phase-out of fossil energy.

Who can lead the climate fight?

disrupted US role poses a very real risk of eroding fragile trust among countries and imperilling future climate talks.

This raises the question, with the US role in doubt, who will drive global climate action? The European Union has long taken the lead on climate change, but fragmentation in its politics significantly limits its capacity for transformative change. China, while a major emitter, has assumed leadership in renewable investment but faces credibility challenges. The most plausible leadership could emerge from coalitions of vulnerable nations and emerging economies, leveraging their collective voice to push for more ambitious commitments.

What should countries like Bangladesh do?

Bangladesh and other developing

nations to demand just financing and technology transfer. They must also pursue greener growth on a low-carbon development trajectory to attract climate-friendly investment and gradually reduce dependence on fossil fuels.

Additionally, regional cooperation with neighbouring countries will help combat common challenges and build shared climate resilience for a more sustainable future. As the global climate regime faces existential challenges, the need for reform and equitable participation has never been greater. Bangladesh and other vulnerable countries must amplify their voices, hold powerful polluters accountable, and pursue self-reliant strategies to safeguard their futures.

The climate clock is ticking—and for countries like Bangladesh, it's ticking faster than ever.

of women in the party list (even at the top at a defined percentage). Women's winning chances are doubly protected in a closed list system.

It may also prevent “one person” parties from claiming to be “people's” parties or issuing threats against every government policy. In 2001, 77 percent of the total candidates got their deposit money forfeited for not getting the minimum 12.5 percent of votes. In fact, 27 political parties received fewer than 1,000 votes each. The minimum threshold requirement to enter the parliament in the proportional system would force the parties to join hands to prepare the list prioritising the candidates most likely to secure the maximum number of votes. It may also prevent over-representation and the loss of the voice of the unheard. It would

League and BNP would have won 143 and 146 parliamentary seats (including the reserve seats) in 2001, and 182 and 123 seats (including the reserve seats) in 2008, respectively.

However, a reformed electoral system may bring the desired political effects only with an accountable, independent, and honest Election Commission that is adequately funded and staffed to regulate the political parties and election candidacy. A survey of dozens of constitutions shows that many countries, because of having political will and experience, have provisions that the constitution of a political party must have a time limit for executive positions (including the party presidency), and restrictions on directly inheriting party presidency (or senior executive positions). Moreover, a political party or group should not be able to participate in an election if it has been disrespectful to the country and its constitution, or has to leave the government under political compulsion (before completing its tenure in office).

Eligibility of election candidacy includes, among others, loyalty to and residency in the country, high moral standing, financial credibility, distance from criminal activity, and so on. Disqualification for election candidacy includes, among others, involvement in financial crime or in acts and ideas against the interest of the country, among others.

The reformed electoral system should focus on making the election beneficial to the voters, not the party, and the election candidacy laws should promote inclusion of the best persons in every party candidate list. Rule of law begins with laws, not arbitrary rules, and would save the government from making arbitrary decisions regarding the elections.

A simple calculation shows that with the total numbers of votes polled, in a proportional system, the Awami

INTERNATIONAL DAY OF SOLIDARITY WITH THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE

Anatomy of erasure: The unmaking of Palestine



Sumaya Mashrufa
is sub editor at The Daily Star.

SUMAYA MASHRUFA

“The project of settler colonialism eventually was a simple one. Colonisers wanted the land and everything else the Indigenous people are burdened with daily, the legal or policy or economic or social discrimination the residential schools or gender violence are all part of the machinery that was designed, to create a perfect crime, a crime where the victims were unable to see or name the crime itself as a crime.”

— Leanne Betasamosake Simpson, an Indigenous scholar from Turtle Island, known to us as Canada.

Every time I open a YouTube video, it's there—ads asking my help, a Palestinian mother, a child, sometimes a girl—framed by rubble. They start to talk: “Don't skip.” Or softer: “Skip if you must.”

I skip. Quickly. After dealing with news all day when my midnights march in I feel angry, I don't know at whom, I feel shame, for not listening to the mothers of ruin. I tell myself it's exhaustion. I tell myself I need mindless joy, a brief escape. Everyone has their reasons, I suppose. I know why the algorithm sends me these, I know if I skip enough times it'll stop.

Today is the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People. It was established by the United Nations General Assembly in 1977. The interesting thing is the date was chosen as it marks the anniversary of the UN General Assembly's adoption of Resolution 181 in 1947, which proposed the partition of Palestine into separate Jewish and Arab states. The decision that started all this.

The war since then spiralled, seemingly merging into genocide. Lands, as Edward Said once described, “lived on and owned by others,” are stripped away under the guise of right, erasing histories etched into the soil. The denial from the West is not accidental, it is deliberate, woven into the fabric of imperial complicity. What unfolds is not chaos, but a design—a slow, systematic unmaking of a people.

Using law as a weapon of subjugation, Palestine has become a grim textbook: “Genocide for Dummies,” an oral chronicle of annihilation. In Bethlehem, Eid, Christmas, and Hanukkah now share a shroud—wrapped in *kafon*, the white cloth of the dead. Last year, Christmas was cancelled in Gaza, and oh goody another one is coming up!

Statistics lay bare the scale of a tragedy, yet I am exhausted by the endless numbers—the steady, grim count of lives lost as time in



FILE PHOTO: REUTERS

A Palestinian man carries a wounded girl at the site of Israeli strikes, in Khan Younis in the southern Gaza Strip on October 14, 2023.

Palestine flows only to measure death. What's the point of anything anymore, if the slaughter of thousands of children cannot extinguish the flames of violence? Must it fall upon Palestinian mothers to cry the fire away with their tears?

Since October 7, 17,000 children have been killed, including 700 infants under the age of one, as reported by the UN. What do you call it if not extermination? When 700 babies, still learning to coo, are killed before they can crawl—how do you process that? What do you do with 17,000 childless mothers? How do they carry on knowing that their crawling babies were deemed dangerous to an Israeli existence?

Nothing exemplifies gross human rights violations more starkly than the reality of Palestinian women, stripped of their dignity and subjected to unimaginable horrors. But where is the West's indignation now? These

same voices, so quick to condemn and paint Muslim men as oppressors who apparently all cover their women in burqas, are deafeningly silent when Palestinian women are raped, murdered, and buried in shrouds. Is it more palatable to drape them in *kafons* than burqas? But I guess one has to be in a hurry to judge, but slow to act when the perpetrators of violence do not fit their convenient narrative of barbarism.

spreading like a virus. Mass arrests without charge or trial—because what greater crime exists than being Palestinian? That alone is charge enough. This isn't collateral damage; it's sacrifice on the altar of supremacy. And chaos, as we know, is a ladder.

In March 2024, Francesca Albanese, an international lawyer and expert in Middle Eastern human rights serving as the UN Special Rapporteur on Palestinian human

I shouldn't have to seek the West's condemnation, nor wait for permission to call the deaths what they are—genocide! I shouldn't need anyone's approval to count my own loss. I can see with my own eyes that my mothers and brothers are gone. Yet this is the world we live in, where the veto-wielding powers must grant me the right to mourn my unbloomed sisters, my brothers who will never fulfil their potential.

Under the scorching Gazan sun, a body decomposes—does it rot slowly or swiftly? How many passersby stop to look each day? Isn't it “nice,” this grotesque ease with which a human is reduced to an “it,” stripped of names?

This abandonment is emblematic of a world that thrives on deliberate chaos—a human-made catastrophe designed with precision. Patterns of violence replicate geometrically,

rights since 2022, presented her fourth report to the United Nations, titled, “Anatomy of a Genocide.” Supported by three prominent Israeli scholars of genocide and the Holocaust—Professors Raz Segal, Amos Goldberg, and Omar Bartov—the report concluded that Israel is committing genocide. The challenge lies not merely in acknowledging that genocide is taking place but in proving it to a world that demands evidence while turning a blind eye to the atrocities unfolding.

Simply labelling these acts as “crimes against humanity” is insufficient now, that term has echoed ineffectively since 1949, long before the recent surge in violence.

The erasure of suffering is no accident, it is essential to sustaining the colonial and imperial systems. If we cannot see it, we cannot confront it. This is not just a genocide—it is a settler-colonial genocide, built on breaking

the people to take the land. And yet, for those of us who have been reduced to “it” in the past, it is all too easy to see the pattern. The machinery of power dehumanises and disposes, ensuring that many more will become “it” in the future under the guise of neoliberal progress. The erasure is the weapon, the silence is its accomplice, and the land its ultimate prize.

Francesca said accurately in a lecture that contrary to the somewhat detached and logical Western mind thinking land is where people live, to the Easterners the land is who they are.

Capitalism, in its imperial form, doesn't just exploit, it erases. It forces us into the conditioned acceptance of the unthinkable—turning atrocities into mere statistics, suffering into background noise.

And as I think all struggles are interconnected, bound by the same system, I can look at my own country and trace the parallels. I see and understand the pain of Palestinians—one once colonised to another still enduring the chains of colonisation.

Holocaust survivor Primo Levi said that at the root of everything is “a colossal cowardice which masks itself as worrying virtue, love of country and faith in an idea.” What should be the idea of our future? Standing in the Global South, can we dream that future for ourselves?

A murderer is an individual, but genocide? Genocide is systemic, calculated, a machine of annihilation. And there's no parallel to the devastation of Palestine in world history. Leaders change, names shift, but policies remain the same. And I see no difference between Trump, Biden, and Obama when it comes to the issue of Palestine. It's all a revolving door of empty talk, their “concern” wrapped in pretty language that means nothing. The truth is clear: words are powerless against the weight of history when action never follows.

As Gaza has been turned into an Israeli wasteland, how do you even begin to mourn 17,000 children? I can barely process the loss of the children killed in our July-August uprising. All these lives stolen—how do you grieve without being consumed by guilt? I feel it—an unbearable, gnawing guilt that cuts deeper than the crashing sadness I once felt for Palestine. It's more than grief now. I feel complicit, part of the machine that lets this happen. This survivor's guilt is a weight I can't shed, it's not washable and is pointless.

I'm done trying to process any of it anymore. We're already drowning in this endless saga of death that defines our time. So, let's just let Ghassan Kanafani speak for us, shall we?

“I wish children didn't die. I wish they would be temporarily elevated to the skies Until the war ends. Then they would return home safe. And when their parents ask them: ‘Where were you?’ They'd say: ‘We were playing with the clouds.’”

16 DAYS OF ACTIVISM AGAINST GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

When digital space becomes a paradise for harassers



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MAHIYA TABASSUM

In the heart of Digital Bangladesh, where technology promises progress and connectivity, a darker reality lurks in the shadows of social media platforms and messaging apps. Women across the country often face digital violence with devastating consequences that ripple through their lives, families, and society at large.

Farzana Sithi, who became a familiar face during the July-August uprising for raising her voice against the authoritarian Awami League regime, faced severe cyberbullying in what appears to be a targeted attempt to discredit her advocacy. “They posted trimmed clips of me and turned them into weapons against me. While the officer present at the scene received a medal for ‘handling the situation well,’ I became the target of relentless online attacks, trolling and bullying,” she recounted. The scale of the assault was staggering. “I discovered 117 fake accounts using my name and photos on Facebook. They used AI to create deepfake videos of me that gained millions of views,” she shared. The most disturbing part of it was that the majority of those attacking her—questioning her character, clothes, and her very existence—were other women.

Her experience demonstrates a disturbing pattern where online violence is deliberately used to intimidate women activists and distort public narratives around their contributions to social movements.

Recent statistics paint a disturbing picture: Since 2016, gender-based case consideration has shown that 70 percent of women have faced cyberbullying, while the number for men has been 30 percent so far. A 2019 study published in the *Asian Journal of Psychiatry* found that cyberbully victimisation affects up to 55 percent of users globally, with

Bangladesh showing a concerning 32 percent prevalence rate among youth aged 14-17 years. More troubling still, 27.3 percent of these victims developed psychiatric disorders, with major depressive disorder being significantly higher among victims compared to non-victims.

Moreover, fear of victim-blaming often prevents women from seeking justice in cybercrime cases. Dhaka University student Promiti Sankar Atri recently discovered that an unknown person had accessed her private social media photos and created a fake account to distribute these personal images without her consent. When encouraged to pursue legal action, Promiti's response revealed a deeper systemic issue, “I am going to get blamed for it and harassed with inappropriate questions instead. It would be of no help.” Her hesitation reflects a common predicament faced by female victims of digital harassment, who must weigh the trauma of their privacy violation against the potential for further victimisation within the legal system. Recent data from the Police Cyber Support for Women, which was formed in 2020, reveals the scope of institutional failure. Between 2020 and April 2023, the unit received 34,605 complaints, with 26,592 from women. Alarming, 8,947 victims explicitly refused to pursue legal action, indicating a deep distrust in the system.

Fighting the fear and considering the hassle, when victims do pursue legal help, it often leads to dead ends. Farjana Akter, a Dhaka-based writer, shared her experience from 2022, “When I received explicit content from someone using their real account, I decided to take legal action. But the system seemed designed to discourage victims.” Police initially refused to file her complaint

due to jurisdictional issues, and even after she could register the case, it was an endless loop of hollow assurances. After her three-month pursuit of justice, the system's sluggishness essentially helped the perpetrator escape accountability.

Digital violence against women is increasingly amplified by coordinated campaigns of misinformation and disinformation. Initial harassment often



VISUAL: DEEANA MAQSOOD

escalates with the creation and spread of false narratives, manipulation of content, mass distribution through fake accounts, and the use of deepfake technology to create compromising content. Deepfakes pose significant security risks across international, national, and personal domains, potentially destabilising political environments, manipulating elections, and disproportionately harming women through non-consensual explicit content.

According to ActionAid's 2022 report, the consequences are severe: 65.07 percent of victims suffered psychological trauma, including depression and anxiety; 42.79 percent lost confidence in online expression; and nearly a quarter experienced a devastating loss of self dignity.

The existing legal framework reveals critical gaps in addressing digital violence against women. There are no clear definitions for various forms of online harassment, making it difficult for victims to prove their cases. Additionally, the requirement for victims to file complaints in person, coupled with the absence of anonymous reporting mechanisms, creates significant barriers for women who fear social stigma. The

absence of specific timelines for investigation and prosecution means cases can drag on indefinitely, leading many victims to abandon their pursuit of justice. Perhaps most critically, there are no provisions for emergency protection orders or immediate content removal, leaving victims vulnerable to ongoing harassment while their cases slowly move through the system.

Addressing digital violence and creating safer digital spaces require a comprehensive, innovative approach that goes beyond traditional legal frameworks. Legal reform must begin by reclassifying cyberbullying as a cognisable offence and establishing specialised cybercrime units with gender-sensitive training. Fast-track courts for digital violence cases and stricter penalties for

creating and spreading deepfake content are essential steps forward.


A mandatory AI ethics training programme should be established, requiring social media and tech platform employees to undergo rigorous certification in digital consent and gender-based harassment prevention. Simultaneously, the government should develop a unified, encrypted national reporting platform powered by advanced AI tools capable of detecting and flagging potential harassment patterns, with blockchain technology ensuring evidence preservation.

Education must be a cornerstone of this strategy, integrating comprehensive digital safety and consent modules into the curricula from primary to tertiary levels. These programmes should teach responsible digital citizenship, focusing on understanding consent, recognising harassment, and promoting respectful online interactions. Complementing this, a corporate accountability framework would impose legal penalties on social media platforms that fail to respond to harassment reports promptly, with mandatory quarterly transparency reports and the establishment of a national digital ombudsman office.

To support victims, the government should create a tech-enabled support network featuring counselling resources, anonymous support groups, and real-time legal consultation channels. Free digital security audits and protection services would provide immediate assistance to those experiencing online harassment. Additionally, international collaboration will be crucial, with cross-border mechanisms for tracking and reporting digital violence, enabling the sharing of technological solutions and best practices across different jurisdictions.

The promise of Digital Bangladesh cannot be fully realised until digital spaces are safe for all citizens, regardless of gender. As we advance technologically, we must ensure that progress doesn't come at the cost of women's safety and dignity in the digital landscape. This requires not just institutional change, but a fundamental shift in how society views and responds to digital violence.

17TH BPL

- 

➤ Former champions Sheikh Jamal and Sheikh Russel are not playing

➤ Abahani playing without foreign players

➤ 10 teams to play a total of 90 matches across five venues

➤ Only three teams have foreign coaches

➤ New venue Gazipur included with Dhaka, Mymensingh, Munshiganj, and Cumilla

➤ Players' payment reduced

➤ Dhaka Wanderers Club and Fakirerpool Youngmens are two debutants

Season reboots today amid challenges

SPORTS REPORTER

The Bashundhara Group Bangladesh Premier League begins today, amid concerns over diminished competitiveness due to the absence of two former champions, subpar pitch conditions, and reduced player wages.

On the opening day, five-time champions Bashundhara Kings face Chittagong Abahani at the Bashundhara Kings Arena in Dhaka, runners-up Mohammedan SC meet promoted Dhaka Wanderers Club in Gazipur, while Brothers Union host Bangladesh Police SC in Mymensingh.

The withdrawal of three-time champions Sheikh Jamal DC and one-time champions Sheikh Russel KC has added to the league's challenges. Meanwhile, six-time champions Abahani are competing without foreign players for the first time, further diminishing the league's competitiveness compared to last season.

Despite these setbacks, Kings technical director BA Jubair Nipu believes the league will remain competitive, despite the absence of two major clubs and Abahani's decision to forgo foreign players.

"It might seem that it's going to be easy [to win the league], but we lost some quality players this season. And the standard of local players of all clubs are almost the same," said Nipu, adding that Mohammedan, Abahani -- even without foreign players -- Fortis FC and Police are capable of going the distance.

Mohammedan coach Alfaz Ahmed noted that with the withdrawal of Sheikh Jamal and Sheikh Russel, along with a redistribution of quality players, most teams -- except Kings and Mohammedan -- now have comparable strength.

"Our target is to improve on last season's second-place finish," Alfaz said.

Fortis coach Masud Parvez Kaiser, however, reckons "the financial crisis affecting most clubs" will make it "challenging for coaches to consistently keep players motivated."

Five of the league's venues, excluding the Kings Arena, are reportedly not up to professional standard. Kaiser, also a former national team assistant coach, added that "substandard" grounds in Dhaka will "make it difficult to distinguish between top-tier and lower-tier players".



PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

"You know how special it is to play against a club that won this Champions League so many times, are the reigning champions and were a pain in the ass for Liverpool many times as well,"



Liverpool coach Arne Slot on what the win against Real meant for The Reds.

"It's a difficult moment for him, we've got to support him and give him our love, he'll soon be fine. People miss penalties, it happens a lot. It could be a lack of confidence maybe. You can't put too much grief on him for that,"



Real Madrid coach Carlo Ancelotti on Mbappe's form.



LIVERPOOL end 15-year Real drought

Second-half goals from Alexis Mac Allister and Cody Gakpo saw Liverpool register a 2-0 win in the Champions League over Real Madrid in front of a raucous home crowd at Anfield on Wednesday, ending the Reds' 15-year winless streak against the reigning European champions. The defeat saw Real drop down to 24th in the standings, the final spot to earn a place in the play-offs in the new-look Champions League format. Liverpool moved to the top and are well on course for being one of the top eight teams that will directly qualify for the round of 16.

➤ Liverpool are just the fifth side to win their opening five games of a Champions League campaign and concede no more than one goal after Milan in 1992-93, Juventus in 2004-05, Atletico Madrid in 2016-17 and PSG in 2017-18.

➤ Liverpool are also the only side with a perfect record in this Champions League.

➤ This victory marked Liverpool's first win over Madrid since 2009, breaking an eight-match winless run against the reigning European champions. Real had won seven times and saw one game end in a draw (in 2021) against the Reds in the previous eight matches.

➤ Arne Slot has led Liverpool to 17 wins in his first 19 games in charge and did something his predecessor Jurgen Klopp was unable to do in his

six attempts as a Liverpool manager -- beat Real Madrid.

➤ Kylian Mbappe's missed penalty in the 61st minute meant the French forward is still one shy of his 50th Champions League goal.

➤ Real Madrid are the first reigning champions in Champions League history to lose as many as three of their first five games of a campaign (W2).

➤ Each of Alexis Mac Allister's last four goals for Liverpool in all competitions have come at Anfield.

➤ Luka Modric is the seventh player to start 100 games for Real Madrid in the Champions League, the joint-most by a side in the competition's history along with Barcelona.

SHORT CORNER



Bangladesh go down 6-0 against Pakistan

A hattrick from Sufyan Khan saw Bangladesh suffer a massive 6-0 defeat to Pakistan in their second match of the Men's Hockey Junior Asia Cup in Muscat on Thursday. Bangladesh will face Malaysia on Saturday.

Swiatek suspended one month for positive doping test

World number two and French Open champion Iga Swiatek has accepted a one-month suspension after testing positive for banned substance trimetazidine (TMZ), the International Tennis Integrity Agency said on Thursday. "The player was provisionally suspended from Sept. 22 until Oct. 4, missing three tournaments, which counts towards the sanction, leaving eight days remaining," the ITIA said in a statement.

'My target's a secret'

Bangladesh women's team pacer Marufa Akter was confident that her team can carry the momentum from the comprehensive win over Ireland in the first WODI and seal the three-match series in the second game, set to take place at the Sher-e-Bangla National Cricket Stadium in Mirpur on Saturday. Marufa claimed more than one wicket in an ODI after a gap of eight matches in the first ODI against Ireland. When asked what she planned to do in the second ODI, the youngster replied, "My target's a secret".

42 all out: Sri Lanka crash to lowest Test total

Fast bowler Marco Jansen took 7-13 as South Africa skittled Sri Lanka for just 42 in their first innings on the second day of the first Test at Kingsmead in Durban on Thursday. It was the lowest innings total in Sri Lanka's history, eclipsing their previous lowest total of 71 against Pakistan in Kandy in 1994.

Read full stories on The Daily Star's website



Captains of the eight teams, including Bangladesh's skipper Azizul Hakim Tamim, pose with the ACC U-19 Men's Asia Cup 2024 trophy at the ICC Academy Ground in Dubai on Thursday. With hopes of defending the title, the young Tigers will take on Afghanistan in today's tournament opener at the Dubai International Stadium.

PHOTO: ACC

This NCL, I tried to give 200 percent: Anamul

SAMSUL AREFIN KHAN

For more than five months, pace bowler Anamul Haque had to patiently wait for an opportunity to play a professional game.

The 24-year-old, who had been a regular face in both the High Performance Unit and the Bangladesh Tigers' programme in the last few years, struggled to get matches in both white and red-ball domestic competitions last season.

Anamul featured in five first-class matches in the National Cricket League (NCL) and Bangladesh Cricket League (BCL) combined in which he captured only 10 wickets.

In white-ball competitions, Anamul featured in three matches for Shinepukur in the Dhaka Premier League (DPL) and could take only one wicket while he went wicketless in his lone appearance for Durdanto Dhaka in the Bangladesh Premier League (BPL).

The right-arm pacer, without any hesitation, accepted that his poor performances led to him getting drop from the HP Unit and Bangladesh Tigers camps and also miss out on the HP team's tour of Australia and 'A' team's tour in Pakistan.

"I didn't play enough matches and also didn't perform well enough. That's why I wasn't part of their [selectors'] plans," Anamul told The Daily Star.

After some much needed self-reflection, Anamul focused all his efforts on maintaining his fitness and improving his skills so that he is ready when the next opportunity arrives.

"I maintained my processes properly so that I can give my all on the field. I always go to sleep early and after practice I take ice baths, I sometimes do swimming and sometimes I take a hot bath. My trainer and doctors are happy with my disciplined life," said the right-arm pacer.

"I tried to take tips from four to five top local coaches regarding different topics. I consulted one to develop my pace, I talked to another about my swing and even spoke to another coach to improve my bowling in different match scenarios.

"I even had a personal trainer with whom I worked on improving my fitness. I worked continuously in these five months under their guidance," he added.

When the opportunity finally arrived during the ongoing NCL 2024-



25, Anamul grabbed it with both hands.

Representing Dhaka Division, he is currently the leading wicket-taker in the competition with 32 wickets from six matches at an average of 14.93, with two five-wicket hauls to his name.

Anamul said that he had a plan to go to the next level in this year's NCL and so far, he has succeeded.

"Throughout my career, I have always tried to give my 100 percent. This year in the NCL, I tried to give my 200 percent.

"Those who saw me bowl can vouch that I bowled with the same aggression throughout the day. Sometimes I felt tired but still I tried to bowl with the same pace and aggression. Compared to previous years, this year my dedication is next level.

"Along with my inswing, I have improved my outswingers quite a lot. I have also learnt to bowl a delivery that goes straight after pitching... I hope that the selectors will look at my performance and give me an opportunity, seeing the variations in my bowling," he said, adding that he wants to finish the tournament with 40 wickets.

Anamul is likely to get an opportunity to do so when his side takes on Barishal Division in the last round match of the NCL in Bogura, starting on Saturday.

"When I started the tournament, I planned to be in the top three. Now I want to set a benchmark of 40 wickets this year. I will definitely try to take eight wickets in the next match," Anamul concluded.

Injury concerns pile up for Tigers

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh are dealing with a few injury crises ahead of the white-ball part of the ongoing series against hosts West Indies, with middle-order batter Towhid Hridoy the latest to be included in the list of injury concerns.

"We have a few injury concerns. Hridoy got injured yesterday [Wednesday] during a practice session [in Mirpur]. As only a short time has passed, we are still awaiting updates from the medical team," a BCB official told The Daily Star yesterday.

The Tigers' white-ball assignments in the Windies begin on December 8 with the ODI series and it is understood that Hridoy's injury might now delay the squad announcement.

Earlier, skipper Najmul Hossain Shanto and experienced wicketkeeper-batter Mushfiqur Rahim were ruled out of the two Tests against West Indies due to a groin strain and a finger injury, respectively.

However, Shanto, who missed the third and final ODI against Afghanistan in the UAE due to his injury, was seen doing light running sessions at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur yesterday.

The dearth of middle-order batters may see Bangladesh look to familiar faces for the three-match ODI series and as many T20Is against the Windies. Jaker Ali played the last two ODIs against Afghanistan following Mushfiqur's injury and may get the nod for the white-ball part of the Windies series after getting some runs in the first Test in Antigua.

Meanwhile, ace left-arm paceman Mustafizur Rahman, who returned to training in Mirpur yesterday, was granted leave from the Windies tour for family reasons.

"Mustafizur will not be playing the white-ball series," a BCB official confirmed.





It's time to rebuild the nation

Says Tarique

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Lalmonirhat

BNP acting chairman Tarique Rahman said yesterday that it is time to concentrate on rebuilding the nation as the country is no longer under dictatorship.



He made the remark while delivering his speech as the chief guest after the final match of the "Shaheed Zia Memorial Football Tournament-2024" at the Shaheed Abul Kashem College ground in Barobari, Lalmonirhat Sadar, in the afternoon.

Highlighting the importance of nurturing talent across various sectors, Tarique said, "There are many talented doctors and engineers in Bangladesh. However, developing skilled professionals should not

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FISH OF ALL WATERS

A small goby fish spotted near a coral in the Bay of Bengal. Gobiidae, or gobies, is one of the largest fish families with over 2,000 species. Most gobies are small in size, typically less than 10cm in length. These little fish are generally bottom-dwellers and can be found all over the world in tropical and temperate near shore-marine, brackish and freshwater environments. On coral reefs, gobies make up 35 percent of the total number of fish. They feed on small invertebrates, although some of the larger ones eat other fish, while a few feed on planktonic algae.

PHOTO: SHARIF SARWAR

JUDGES' APPOINTMENT SC proposes formation of judicial council

Writes to law ministry for taking steps to issue ordinance incorporating a provision

ASHUTOSH SARKAR

The Supreme Court yesterday formally proposed the formation of a Judicial Appointment Council led by the chief justice through an ordinance to select judges for recruitment to both divisions of the apex court.

The court sent the proposal to the law ministry to incorporate the provision for constituting the council that will select competent candidates for the judges' posts in the Appellate and High Court divisions.

The council, at the request of the president, will issue a public notice inviting applications from the candidates, according to the proposed ordinance. After receiving applications, the council will send recommendations to the president for the appointment of judges under articles 95 and 98 of the constitution.

The draft of the proposed ordinance states that the council will be able to invite any person concerned to its meeting to take opinions or suggestions about the candidates. It will also be able to instruct any government and private organisation to present information about

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Hezbollah, Israel trade blame over truce violations

IDF tank shells hit six areas along border; Lebanese urged not to return home yet

REUTERS, Beirut

Hezbollah and Israel traded accusations that their ceasefire had been breached yesterday, a day after a truce went into effect halting more than a year of fighting in Lebanon.

The Israeli military said the ceasefire, brokered by the United States and France, was violated after what it called suspects, some in vehicles, arrived at several areas in the southern zone.

Hezbollah lawmaker Hassan Fadlallah accused Israel of violating the deal.

"The Israeli enemy is attacking those returning to the border villages," Fadlallah told reporters after a parliament session, adding, "there are violations today by Israel, even in this form".

A Lebanese military source said the armed forces deployed troops and tanks across the country's south. Israeli army spokesman Avichay Adraee on X repeated a warning to Lebanese residents not to return to areas adjacent to the border, listing a series of villages and towns along the frontier.

Israeli tank fire hit six areas within that border strip yesterday morning, striking Markaba, Wazzani and Klarchoubah, Khiyam, Taybe and the agricultural plains around Marjayoun, state media and Lebanese security sources said.

Two people hurt in Israeli strikes at border village

Lebanon military deploys troops, tanks across south

Efforts on to identify violence instigators on social media

Says army, urges all to verify all information

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The army has said efforts are ongoing to identify those who are instigating violence through social media.

It gave an update on its efforts to maintain law and order over the past two weeks at a press conference held at Dhaka Cantonment yesterday.

"Each incident needs to be evaluated separately," said Colonel Intekhab Haider Khan, colonel staff of the Military Operations Directorate at the Army Headquarters, while responding to journalists' questions about incidents of violence that took place in the past few days.

"Three types of people are mainly involved in the incidents deteriorating law and order, or the protests or unrest. One is those who are identified criminals; another is the instigators, who are doing a lot of things on purpose.

"And the other is the general



It is our, the ordinary people's responsibility not to be provoked.

Colonel Intekhab Haider Khan, colonel staff, MOD, Army HQ.

public. Students are protesting, garment workers are staging agitations, but they are ordinary citizens like you and me. When we have to stand against these general citizens, we have to think a lot before taking any step," he said.

Colonel Intekhab further explained the army's position on clashes between groups of students, saying, "These students have brought such a change through a movement that we all hope that the country will move in

a better direction.

"When the students are temporarily derailed at someone's instigation without understanding the situation, we need to think a lot before using force against them [students]."

Asked if the army was taking any measures to prevent the instigations on social media, he said, "Of course. Efforts are on to identify them."

"But there's also the issue of our

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Don't pave way for the return of fascism

Warns Fakhrul

UNB, Dhaka

BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir has warned that the disunity among those who contributed to the success of the student-led uprising threatens a fascist resurgence.

"Fascism has been defeated, but it can return at any time. We must not pave the way for that. Unfortunately, we are engaging in activities that have created a significant chance for it [fascism] to return," the BNP leader said during a views exchange programme at the Jatiya Press Club yesterday.

Jatiyo Kobita Parishad arranged the event titled "Role of Writers and Artists in Reforms".

Fakhrul said that fascist forces are systematically working to destabilise the country. "But, why are we, who fought, now creating division?"

The conflicting narratives from various quarters are deeply unsettling, he said, adding that street protests are

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MEETING WITH DMP CHIEF OCs demand logistical support to curb crimes

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Officers-in-charge of the police stations in the city said crime prevention activities are being seriously hampered because of damaged stations, shortages of vehicles, manpower, and poor logistical support.

They made the statements at a meeting with newly appointed Dhaka Metropolitan Police Commissioner Sk Md Sazzat Ali yesterday.

Almost all the OCs of 50 police stations in the city raised the issue and demanded immediate supply of vehicles and other logistical support for proper crime prevention activities, meeting sources said.

Commissioner Sazzat said some logistical support have already been provided. He also assured the OCs of supplying all necessary vehicles and others in a quick possible time.

During the July-August student-led mass uprising, 21 out of 50 police stations under the DMP came under attack and some of them were left in ruins. Officials said 97 police vehicles were torched while 187 others were vandalised.

Besides, computers, furniture, and other equipment in the badly affected police stations were destroyed.

"The completely damaged police stations still lack 50 percent vehicles and other logistical support," said an OC, wishing anonymity.

Five OCs, who joined the meeting, said almost all the police stations have poor logistical support and the shortage of the required number of police personnel, though the situation is improving.

At the meeting, the commissioner instructed the OCs to be transparent and not to make money by illegal means, said the sources.

He also asked them to serve the people effectively,

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Israel steps up bombing of central Gaza

21 Palestinians killed; tanks push deeper into the north, south of enclave

REUTERS, Cairo

Israeli military strikes killed at least 21 Palestinians across the Gaza Strip yesterday, medics said, as forces stepped up their bombardment of central areas and tanks pushed deeper into the north and south of the enclave.

Six people were killed in two separate air strikes on a house and near the hospital of Kamal Adwan in Beit Lahiya in the northern Gaza Strip, while four others were killed when an Israeli strike hit a motorcycle in Khan Younis in the south.

In Nuseirat, one of Gaza's eight historic refugee camps, Israeli planes carried out several air strikes, destroying a multi-storey building and hitting roads outside mosques. At least seven were killed in those strikes, health officials said.

Medics said at least two people, a woman and a child, were killed in tank shelling that hit western areas of Nuseirat, while an air strike killed five others in a house nearby.

In Rafah, near the border with Egypt, tanks pushed deeper into the northwest area of the city, residents said. There has been no Israeli comment on the latest fighting.



Fractions of a second before an Israeli missile hits a residential building at Nuseirat refugee camp in the central Gaza Strip yesterday.

PHOTO: REUTERS

The harmony among people here will never be broken

Says HC bench, refrains from passing order on plea for ban on ISKCON

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday did not pass any order on banning ISKCON's activities in Bangladesh, saying that the government had taken steps following Tuesday's violence in Chattogram.

The court also said they would not make any interference as the Attorney General's Office informed them that the authorities concerned of the government are looking into it.

While hearing an appeal seeking a suo motu rule, the bench of Justice Farah Mahbub and Justice Debasish Roy Chowdhury said the country's people are very cordial and they have very friendly relations with each other.

"Although the majority of the people are Muslims; Hindus, Buddhists, Christians, and the residents of the hilly areas have very friendly relations with each other.

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