

## 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 surge

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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.

## SC upholds

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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 their inaction in protecting the mangroves in Sonadia Island and its adjacent areas should not be declared illegal and 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".

## NHRC must be free

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"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 Yasmeen 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

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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

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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

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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.

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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 <sup>th</sup> 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](http://www.eximbankbd.com)) within 03(three) working days.

Sd/-  
Md. Monirul Islam  
Company Secretary

Dated, Dhaka  
November 28, 2024.

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TIMING  
NOVEMBER 29

Fazr

Juma

Asr

Maghrib

Esha

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JAMAAAT 5-45 1-15 4-00 5-22 7-30

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কর্মচারী প্রশাসন পরিদপ্তর

সদর দপ্তর ভবন, নিকুঞ্জ-২, খিলক্ষেত, ঢাকা-১২২৯।

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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