

## Inclusive public finance needed

Says finance adviser

BSS, Dhaka

Finance Adviser Dr Salehuddin Ahmed yesterday underscored the need for a triangular approach to public financial management, integrating the efforts of the public sector, private sector, and citizens to ensure efficient, transparent, and accountable financial services.

"In our country, the main bottleneck is the institution itself. We have good programmes and plans, but we must focus on implementation by aligning these with our institutional capacity and commitment," he said.

He made the remarks while speaking as the chief guest at the "Review Workshop on the 3rd PFM Reform Strategy 2025-2030" at a training centre in Gazipur, according to a press release.

The workshop, organised by the Finance Division with support from the World Bank, aimed to finalise technical notes based on insights gathered from 31 consultation workshops held in recent months.

Salehuddin Ahmed stressed that the upcoming reform strategy should be straightforward, actionable, and tailored to address Bangladesh's unique challenges.

Finance Secretary Dr Md Khairuzzaman Mozumder presided over the event.

In his speech, Khairuzzaman highlighted the government's achievements in public financial reform. He pointed out how automation in salary disbursement and pension management has enhanced efficiency and transparency.



An open drain along a road in the capital's Moghbazar poses a serious risk to passing vehicles and pedestrians. The photo was taken recently.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

## Roads grow deadlier

Crashes, fatalities rise by 10pc, reports Jatri Kalyan Samity

ARAFAT RAHMAN

Bangladesh has witnessed a 10 percent rise in road crashes and fatalities so far this year.

According to Bangladesh Road Transport Authority, 4,153 people lost their lives in 4,494 road accidents between January and September this year, compared to 4,016 deaths in 3,727 crashes during the same period in 2023.

In October alone this year, the Bangladesh Jatri Kalyan Samity recorded 475 fatalities from 452 road crashes nationwide.

Experts have urged for data-driven interventions and collective action to solve the issue.

**ROOT CAUSES OF THE CRISIS**  
The surge in crashes highlights persistent issues, including unfit vehicles, unlicensed drivers, inadequate infrastructure, and lax enforcement of safety rules.

PROBLEMS	SOLUTIONS
Unfit vehicles	Data-driven strategies
Unlicensed drivers	Rest facilities for drivers
Driver fatigue	Stricter enforcement
Infrastructure gaps	Collaborative efforts
Transport syndicates	Upgraded road infrastructure
Weak rule enforcement	Driver training programs
Persistent political barriers	Standard vehicles

Md Hadiuzzaman, former director of Buet's Accident Research Institute, blamed transport owners for ignoring safety standards.

"Many operate purely as businessmen, disregarding the risks posed by unfit vehicles and unqualified drivers," he said.

He also criticised the lack of political will to dismantle the powerful transport syndicates that resist reforms.

**DRIVER SHORTAGE AND POOR WORKING CONDITIONS**  
The transport sector has

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## Arrange virtual court to save time, resources

Justice Imman Ali tells BLAST discussion

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

It is essential to institutionalise the Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) system in judicial reforms to reduce backlogs of cases and long delays in their disposals, Justice M Imman Ali, a former judge of Supreme Court's Appellate Division, has said.

"Virtual court functions should be arranged in order to save time and resources. Separate courtrooms can be made to produce the accused before the judges to ensure their safety and reduce state expenditures," he said.

Hewasspeakingasaguest of honour at a discussion meeting, titled "Proposed Recommendations on Judicial and Police Reforms," organised by Bangladesh Legal Aid and Services Trust (BLAST) at Bishwa Sahitya Kendra in Dhaka on Tuesday.

Justice Imman Ali said lawyers need to be trained on new laws regularly so that the laws become operational and judges can also learn about new laws through lawyers.

He also emphasised the importance of establishing a transparent and merit-based system in the appointment of judges.

"It is important to have an independent body for appointing judges based on qualifications. It is also necessary to regularly evaluate the performance of judges so that it does not influence the litigants in

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## DEATH IN RAB CUSTODY 19 months on, no justice for Sultana Jasmine

ASHUTOSH SARKAR

Sultana Jasmine, a 41-year-old land office employee from Naogaon, was picked up by the members of Rapid Action Battalion on March 22 last year. Two days later, she died in custody at Rajshahi Medical College Hospital. At the time of her detention, there were no cases against her. She was later charged under the controversial Digital Security Act (DSA), accused of "siphoning money from job seekers using a Facebook account."

Jasmine's family has consistently claimed she was tortured in custody. "She died due to torture. She had an injury mark on her head. Before detention, she was perfectly healthy," said her son Shahed Hossain Saikat, a Chittagong University student.

Following criticisms, the Rab withdrew 11 of its personnel, including a major, from active duty and attached them to the headquarters over the death of Jasmine.

The then Rab director general M Khurshid Hossain had said Jasmine's "murder" tarnished the image of the country, the government and the force.

"The thing was done from the [local] camp; the battalion or the headquarters knew nothing about it," he added.

But nineteen months have passed since the High Court issued a rule questioning the legality of her detention and directing action against the Rab personnel responsible for the incident.

Yet, justice remains elusive due to bureaucratic and judicial delays.

**JUDICIAL LIMBO**

Following a writ petition by Supreme Court lawyer Manoj Kumar Bhowmick, the HC bench of Justice Farah Mahbub and Justice Muhammad Mahbub UI Islam issued the rule on April 5 last year.

The government was asked to explain why Jasmine's detention without a case should not be declared illegal and unconstitutional. The court also directed the formation of a high-powered committee to investigate her death.

The government's investigation report, submitted on August 17 last year, was sharply criticised by the HC bench for being vague and failing to provide a clear account of her arrest or specific findings. The bench called the report unsatisfactory and set November 29 last year for further hearings.

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PHOTO: AURITRO SATTAR

Students of Jahangirnagar University display a large Palestinian flag made of boards as part of a rally to mark the "International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People" yesterday. The JU chapter of the Anti-Discrimination Student Movement organised the event at the Shaheed Minar premises on the university campus.

## DU students march for Palestine

DU CORRESPONDENT

A section of students of Dhaka University, along with general people, organised the "March for Palestine" programme yesterday, where they brought out a procession holding large Palestine flags on the campus.

The programme began at the Raju Memorial Sculpture under the banner of "Where Palestine Met July", marking "International Palestine Day".

Leaders of the programme along with students demanded that Palestinians be freed from Israel, who have been carrying out barbaric attacks in Gaza.

They expressed their solidarity with the Palestinian people and marched through different

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## VOA SURVEY 64pc think minorities more protected now 92pc respondents Muslims; 33.9pc minorities think their security declined

STAR REPORT

A survey by Voice of America (VOA) conducted in late October, found that 64.1 percent of 1,000 respondents think the interim government is offering greater protection to religious and ethnic minorities than the previous administration.

In contrast, 15.3 percent believe the situation has worsened, while 17.9 percent feel it remains unchanged.

It, however, says that the perceptions of security vary between Muslims and non-Muslims.

Notably, 92.7 percent of respondents identified themselves as Muslims.

The sample was evenly split between men and women. Slightly over half of the respondents were under the age of 34, and about a quarter resided in urban areas.

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## Five-day Jor Ijtema begins in Tongi

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Gazipur

The first phase of Jor Ijtema began in Tongi Biswa Ijtema Maidan in Gazipur yesterday.

Habibullah Raihan, media coordinator of the first phase organiser Shurai Nejam, Tabligh Jamaat Bangladesh (Jobayer faction), said the five-day Jor Ijtema began at the tinsed mosque in Tongi after the Fazr prayers. The Ijtema will end on December 3.

Every year, this gathering is held as a preparation for the Biswa Ijtema.

According to the government's announcement, the Biswa Ijtema will be held in Tongi, Gazipur next year in two phases.

The first phase will be held from January 31 to February 2, and the second phase from February 7 to 9.

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