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## Tourist ships resume from Cox's Bazar to St Martin's

STAFF CORRESPONDENT,  
Cox's Bazar

With the beginning of December, tourist ships have resumed trips to Saint Martin's Island in Cox's Bazar after a nine-month halt.

At around 10:00am yesterday, a ship named Bar Aulia departed for Saint Martin's Island with around 700 passengers from the Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority (BIWTA) terminal at Nunyarchhara in Cox's Bazar town.

Cox's Bazar Deputy Commissioner Mohammad Salahuddin, present at the launch, said trips to the

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## Jamaat chief criticises 'political elite'

OUR CORRESPONDENT,  
Bagerhat

Jamaat-e-Islami Ameer, Shafiqur Rahman, criticised political elite for prioritising personal gain over national welfare, claiming they have "changed their own fortunes at the expense of the nation."

He made the remarks during a roadside rally at the Malibagh intersection in Narail, on his way from Khulna to Faridpur.

Addressing the crowd, Shafiqur Rahman said, "Those who promised to change the destiny of the nation have only altered their own. The very people who were meant to serve the nation have become its masters."

He outlined his vision for a new Bangladesh, where people of all faiths, genders, and backgrounds could live with dignity. "We will see everyone as the best of creations, regardless of wealth or poverty," he added.

On women's safety, he said, "We want a Bangladesh where women can work safely, free from harassment."



Debapriya Bhattacharya, head of the committee responsible for preparing the white paper on the economy, presented its report to Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus at the latter's Tejgaon office in Dhaka yesterday.

PHOTO: PID

# Clear newsroom policies needed for gender equality

Speakers tell event

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

There should be clear policies in the newsrooms to ensure gender equality and dignity in Bangladesh's media industry, speakers said at an event yesterday.

They stressed the need for written guidelines promoting equal representation in decision-making, recruitment, and training, while fostering a safe and inclusive work environment. Greater coverage of underreported gender issues and eliminating harmful stereotypes in advertisements and content were also emphasised.

The remarks were made during the launch of a gender charter of commitment for news media, prepared by the Management and Resources Development Initiative, at The Daily Star Centre in Dhaka.

Twenty media organisations have already signed the charter, with more expected to join.

Introducing the initiative, Prof Giti Ara Nasreen, head of the Gender Charter Working Group and professor at Dhaka University's Department of Mass Communication and Journalism, expressed concerns over the decline in female enrolment in journalism programmes in Bangladesh.

"Globally, female enrolment in journalism schools is rising, but here, fewer women are studying journalism. This is alarming, and we need to identify the reasons behind it. What about our media environment is deterring

women? What obstacles have we created?" she asked.

She added, "This charter aims to ensure its principles are practised in every newsroom. Equality in participation means transparency in recruitment, equitable pay and benefits for all genders, and assessing gender sensitivity alongside qualifications."

Dr Nasreen also addressed gender biases,

stories," she added.

Journalist and trainer Quratul-Ain-Tahmina highlighted that signing the charter is just the first step. "We must ensure inclusion in internal structures and content while enforcing written policies for meaningful change. This requires a mindset shift," she said.

Shaheen Anam, executive director of Manusher Jonno Foundation, pointed to the



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PROF GITI ARA NASREEN

saying, "When men age, they are seen as more mature, but ageing women often find their competence overshadowed by perceptions of their age."

She stressed the importance of workplace facilities such as separate toilets, childcare support, and protections against discrimination for employees returning from maternity leave.

"In terms of content, we must avoid stereotypical portrayals and ensure women's voices are adequately represented in news

challenges women face in journalism. "The stereotype persists that women can't handle tough jobs. Security risks, family issues, and societal challenges deter many from entering the field. Does she receive the support she needs -- from her institution, family, and society?" she asked.

She also called for the gender charter to be linked to sexual harassment and gender policies, encouraging editors to advocate for legislation ensuring these protections.

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## CPD strives for a democratic, just society

Says Prof Yunus marking 30 years of the think tank

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus, a trustee member of the Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD), yesterday lauded the organisation, calling it a reputed think tank both at home and abroad.

He made the remarks in a video message played at a programme titled "The CPD Journey: Commemorating Thirty Years of CPD," organised by the think tank at BRAC Centre Inn in Dhaka.

"CPD has consistently stood against the tide, offering independent advice to policymakers for the betterment of the country," Yunus said.

He added, "CPD has always strived to establish a democratic, just, and accountable society. Its research and public awareness activities have played an important role in shaping the mindset of the recent mass upsurge."

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## 'Cadre' to be replaced with new titles

Says Public Admin Reform Commission chief

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bureaucrats themselves are often the perpetrators of the injustice they face, said Abdul Mueed Chowdhury, head of the Public Administration Reform Commission, after a meeting at the Secretariat yesterday.

"We often say, 'Crows do not pick out crows' eyes.' Yet, bureaucrats face the most oppression from their peers," he said.

Mueed added that those misusing power have significantly hindered progress. "We will identify and remove such individuals from the mainstream," he said.

The commission plans to propose structural reforms, including replacing the term "cadre" in civil service with specific designations like "civil service administration" or "civil service health".

Md Mokhles Ur Rahman, senior secretary of the public administration ministry, claimed that "cadre" carries negative connotations and its removal could enhance public perception.

Mokhles highlighted widespread corruption, particularly in offices like the registry office, where bribery is normalised. He said, "The culture of corruption has persisted for too long. People

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