

ACC must be overhauled Mujgunni Highway

FROM PAGE 3
He added that the interim government is currently working on state reforms and a new political settlement, while the younger generation has taken on the role of a vigilant watchdog.

"The potential for a new Bangladesh has emerged, with its key driving force being the nation's youth," he said.

According to Iftekharuzzaman, a commission has already been formed to reform the ACC, which needs a complete restructuring — from appointments to operational processes. Other key institutions also require significant reforms to ensure accountability and effectiveness.

However, he stressed that true change will not come until there is a positive transformation in Bangladesh's political culture, bureaucratic ethos, and a widespread adoption of anti-corruption principles.

"This is a lesson rooted in the spirit of our student movements against inequality — a spirit that must inspire our political leaders and bureaucrats.

"We must align ourselves with the youth's demand to instil an anti-corruption ethos across politics, bureaucracy, and society at large. The younger generation has shown us that they will relentlessly dismantle anything they find unacceptable," he said.

Addressing the interim government, Iftekharuzzaman said, "We trust that the current government has no political ambitions of its own. Therefore, we urge this

interim administration to implement reforms across state structures, including the ACC, in a way that future governments, elected through democratic means, operate within a framework that inherently promotes anti-corruption and ensures integrity. This is the crucial responsibility of the current interim government."

In his keynote speech, Zafor Sadiq, deputy programme manager of TIB, emphasised that the core objective of state reform and a national political settlement must be the eradication of corruption, abuse of power, and impunity.

He said, "The essence of a 'new Bangladesh,' envisioned through unprecedented sacrifices and loss of life, lies in continuing the fight against corruption, inequality, and oppression. Our goal is to build a corruption-free, egalitarian, well-governed, and humane nation."

Zafor Sadiq also presented a 14-point demand for reforms during the human chain, calling for structural changes to institutions and policies to support the vision of a corruption-free Bangladesh.

Efforts on to bring

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The foreign secretaries, marks the first high-level engagement since Sheikh Hasina's ouster in August. Discussions will cover a range of issues, with Shaiful asserting that "everything is important" in fostering mutual interests.

H reiterated the interim government's commitment to seeking justice against Hasina for alleged "mass

murder" during the July uprising and the siphoning of \$16 billion annually. Efforts are underway to bring her back under the extradition treaty with India.

Meanwhile, Deputy Press Secretary Aporbo Jahangir said there is a possibility of Misri meeting the Chief Adviser. However, he added that discussions on "uneven treaties" with India, may occur later.

He also invited Indian journalists to visit Bangladesh to counter disinformation, urging them to report from the ground.

Advocate Babul Howladar, member secretary of Khulna Nagarik Samaj, a citizens' platform, called for an investigation into potential irregularities and misuse of funds in the road's renovation work.

"If anyone is found to be

involved in irregularities, they must be held accountable," he added.

Acknowledging the road's state, KCC Chief Engineer Mashuuzzaman Khan said rainwater had accumulated on some parts of the road and caused damage during the monsoon.

"The contractors have been instructed to repair the affected portions, and steps are on to prevent waterlogging on the road in the future," he added.

Begum Rokeya

FROM PAGE 3
President Mohammed Shahabuddin and Chief Adviser Professor Muhammad Yunus yesterday issued separate messages, paying respect to the memory of Begum Rokeya for her contribution to the spread of education for women.

Both the President and the Chief Adviser congratulated the women who are going to receive the "Begum Rokeya Padak 2024."

Begum Rokeya, who was a fierce champion of gender equality, was born at Pairaband village in Mithapukur upazila, Rangpur, on December 9, 1880. She died on the same day in 1932 in Kolkata.

The birth and death anniversaries of Begum Rokeya have been officially observed as Rokeya Day since 1994.

27 EU envoys

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time, they will also present their concerns the interim government may have," he told The Daily Star yesterday.

On Thursday, Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Rafiqul Alam said both sides will explore new areas of cooperation, how to address the Rohingya crisis, climate change, GSP+ facilities in the post-LDC era and how to take forward the comprehensive partnership with Bangladesh.

Reform

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The commission aims to use the findings to propose measures to prevent such issues in future elections.

"Around 2,000 officers served as returning and assistant returning officers in the last three elections. It's not feasible for the commission to collect opinions from all of them. Therefore, 30 officers from various regions of the country have been selected," said an official of the reform commission.

Revive Saarc

FROM PAGE 3
intra-regional trade, speakers, including Brig Gen (ret'd) Mohammad Hasan Nasir, called for overcoming India-Pakistan tensions to strengthen cooperation.

The seminar featured insights from former FBCCI President Abdul Awal Minto and journalist leaders, urging collective action for regional integration.

PRAYER TIMING					
DECEMBER 9					
Fazr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib	Esha	
AZAN 5-15	12-45	3-45	5-19	7-00	
JAMAAT 5-50	1-15	4-00	5-22	7-30	
SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION					

Aman harvest brings smiles

FROM PAGE 5
is being sold at Tk 1,200-1,400 per maund," he said.

Abu Tareq, another farmer of the same locality, said the straw produced alongside paddy, which is a high-price fodder for cattle, will help cover the production cost incurred.

Talking to this correspondent, many other farmers in neighbouring Char Laxmipur, Char Anandipur and Char Bhavanipur villages, also echoed the same.

Aman cultivation is profitable as it costs less than Boro cultivation, while the straw generates extra income, they added.

Nasrin Akter Banu, deputy director of DAE in

Mymensingh district, said a total of 2,68,490 hectares of land were brought under Aman cultivation in the district this season with a production target of 7,79,738 tonnes of paddy.

"Although Aman paddy on 25,795 hectares of land was damaged completely or partially due to recent flash floods in three upazilas, it will not affect the total production," she added.

M o h a m m a d Nuruzzaman, deputy director of DAE in Netrokona, said 24,667 hectares of Aman fields were affected in recent flash floods out of the total 1,35,900 hectares of land cultivated this season, but the production target of

6,20,000 tonnes will not be affected much due to good yield.

Mohammad Shakhath Hossain, deputy director of DAE in Sherpur, said the total production could be a little less than the target, as flash floods damaged crops on around 33 percent of the total 93,708 hectares of land cultivated for Aman paddy.

"However, the price is reasonable in the market, while the farmers will be able to cultivate winter crops on the lands once all the paddy is harvested," he added.

The picture has also been similar in Jamalpur and Kishoreganj districts so far, according to DAE sources.

Shot, blinded

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various government offices for assistance but has yet to receive any meaningful support.

"I've knocked on many doors, but no one has responded. I am in desperate need of financial aid to survive and seek further treatment," he said.

Dashmina Upazila Executive Officer Irtiza Hasan said that if Saidul submits a formal application, the local administration would facilitate help through social services and the deputy commissioner's office.

However, such promises often ring hollow for many, like Saidul, trapped in bureaucratic limbo.

Battling bias at every step

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couldn't make a single sale," she recounted.

"People would come and surf through my products, but no one bought anything. Some even filmed me from a distance, showing more interest in me than in my creations."

Finding someone to share a stall with her has also proven difficult, as other entrepreneurs often hesitate. "They tell me directly that customers might not visit if they share a stall with me," she explained.

This forces her to pay the full amount for a stall, despite it not being profitable given the limited sales potential in such a short time.

"It was evident that when I wasn't at the stall, my products received a much better response, but hiring someone isn't profitable for me due to my small business size."

However, despite the setbacks, she found moments of success.

"There were times I did make a good profit from

people who appreciated my art, like at Dhaka Makers and Art Summit."

Unfortunately, similar issues sometimes plagued her online sales. When delivering products nearby, customers would stop her to ask irrelevant and inappropriate questions about her body. Tithi has also been harassed multiple times while sourcing materials for her business.

In the male dominated wholesale market in Islampur, she is often met with stares.

"On one occasion, I found a man putting his hand inside my jacket. When I looked at him, he smiled unapologetically and mockingly said, 'Sorry.'"

Tithi also said she is frequently overcharged for the same materials compared to her peers from other genders.

Tithi often hauls 50 kg sacks of cloth down four flights of stairs, encountering refusals to assist her due to her hijra identity, even when she offers payment for help.

"In New Market, wholesale shopkeepers typically prioritise female entrepreneurs, engaging them in conversation and offering business tips, while I'm largely overlooked and spend entire days trying to buy just Tk 10,000 worth of products."

Currently, Tithi's average monthly income is Tk 15,000, constrained by inconsistent online sales. Last month, she earned around Tk 20,000 from selling a few saris and a shipment of patchwork bags to Japan.

Tithi believes hijra entrepreneurs could thrive if the government created a supportive environment, offering access to fairs, loans, and skills training. "Those without formal education should be given vocational training and job opportunities."

However, she finds existing social welfare programmes to be mostly token gestures.

"For instance, a cooking course I attended was rushed and lacked

substance, intended mainly for donor optics rather than real skill-building."

She also said ICT sector courses overlook hijras, who need these skills to succeed in the digital space.

Despite all, Tithi aspires to grow as an entrepreneur and proudly represent her identity.

"Many hijra entrepreneurs hide their identities, even while producing for top brands. I want to change that narrative and help train others in my community."

Her appeal to the new government is clear — fulfil the promise of anti-discrimination by providing hijras with genuine opportunities to work and thrive based on qualifications and expertise.

MSF seeks

FROM PAGE 3
Atique Hasan Sardar, 39, died on December 3 in Jashore, while Hazrat Ali, 27, a Dubai expatriate, died on December 6 in Brahmanbaria's Bancharampur.

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26th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF PLFS INVESTMENTS LTD.

This is to inform all concerned that notice of the 26th AGM for the calendar year 2024 of the company has already been sent to all shareholders at their respective addresses through the registered AD of Bangladesh Post. The AGM will be held on Monday, December 30, 2024, at 03:00 PM [Dhaka Local Time] through the digital platform.

Meeting Link:
<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/82571380022?pwd=dB8qzjUnoZ6z4hpof3zmP2Ty6Omff.1>

Meeting ID : 825 7138 0022
Passcode : 570095

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IMPLEMENTATION AGREEMENT OPPORTUNITIES

International Labour Organization (ILO) Dhaka invites applications from relevant interested organization for an **Implementation Agreement on Strengthening Tripartite National Consultation Framework and Advancing Occupational Safety and Health Initiatives in Bangladesh.**

The Terms of Reference (ToR) can be downloaded from the **United Nations Global Market Place (UNGM)** at <https://www.ungm.org/Public/Notice/254732>

The deadline for submission of proposal is **Monday, December 30, 2024, by 04:30 PM (BST time).**

Request for Quotation: Security Information and Event Management (SIEM)

BRAC Bank PLC. delivers a full array of banking services to individuals as well as business entities with a network of 187 Branches, 63 Sub-branches, 329 ATMs, 446 SME Unit Offices and 1,114 Agent Banking Outlets. Currently, the Bank is seeking for vendor(s) to provide Security Information and Event Management (SIEM)

A Request for Quotation (RFQ) for Technical Offer Submission is issued for the mentioned purpose. The RFQ along with details of the bidding process can be found on the bank's website <https://www.bracbank.com/en/information/e-tender>

Interested eligible bidders are requested to submit the technical offer as per the mentioned bidding process.

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IN LOVING MEMORY OF

Barrister Mainul Hosein
(1940-2023)

Today marks the first death anniversary of Barrister Mainul Hosein, Founder Trustee of Independent University, Bangladesh (IUB). On this solemn occasion, we honor his remarkable contributions to education, journalism, and public service.

Born in Pirojpur in January 1940, Barrister Mainul Hosein, son of the legendary journalist Tofazzal Hossain (Manik Mia), pursued his education in Kolkata, Pirojpur, and Dhaka. After completing his Honours in Political Science at Dhaka University, he studied Law at the Middle Temple Inn, London, and returned to Dhaka in 1965 as a Barrister-at-Law.

In 1969, he became Editor of The Daily Ittefaq, continuing as Chairman of the Board of Editors even after returning to his legal career in 1973. He also served as a Member of Parliament in 1973 and held leadership roles in the Supreme Court Bar Association and the Press Council of Bangladesh. In 2007, he served as the Law, Information, and Land Adviser in the Caretaker Government.

Barrister Mainul Hosein passed away on December 9, 2023, at the age of 83, leaving behind a legacy of service and integrity. The IUB family remembers him with deep respect and heartfelt prayers. May the Almighty grant eternal peace to his soul.

Independent University, Bangladesh