



Dhaka, Delhi eager to take ties forward

Yunus asks India to help clear the clouds over bilateral relations

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka and New Delhi committed to advancing bilateral relationship for mutual benefit in the first high-level official talks since Bangladesh's political changeover.

In a meeting with visiting Indian Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri yesterday, Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus elaborated on how students, workers, and people joined hands in the July-August uprising to end Sheikh Hasina's corrupt regime, said the CA's press wing.

"Our job is to keep their dreams alive. It is a new Bangladesh," he said and briefly outlined the reform initiatives undertaken



Vikram Misri



Md Jashim Uddin

by the interim government when Misri called on him at state guest house Jamuna.

Describing Bangladesh-India ties as "very solid" and "close", Prof Yunus asked India to help clear the "clouds" that have

cast a shadow over the relationship in recent times.

Misri said Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi was among the first foreign leaders to greet Prof Yunus after he assumed office. "We wish you every success," the Indian foreign secretary said.

"We want to carry on from where we left off," Misri said, adding, "We have to do business with the government of the day."

SEE PAGE 2 COL 5



Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus and a delegation of envoys from 19 European Union countries pose for a photo at an interactive session at his office yesterday.

PHOTO: PID

ACC, judiciary were slaves to Hasina

Says law adviser

STAR REPORT

Law Affairs Adviser Prof Asif Nazrul yesterday accused the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) and the judiciary of being subservient to the Awami League during its time in power, alleging that they failed to ensure justice and accountability in most cases.

"There was an ACC, there was a High Court, but there were no trials except for Khaleda Zia. Corruption has become entrenched in society due to this lack of accountability," he told a discussion at the Institution of Diploma Engineers, Bangladesh, marking the International Anti-Corruption Day, reports UNB.

The programme was organised by the ACC, with its Secretary Khorsheda Yasmin in the chair. Dr Iftekharuzzaman, executive director of Transparency International Bangladesh and head of the ACC Reform Commission, was a special guest.

Nazrul highlighted the prevalence of corruption during the last 15 years under the AL government, stating that

SEE PAGE 2 COL 7

MEETING WITH EU ENVOYS Yunus hints at announcement on polls this month

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Chief Adviser Muhammad Yunus yesterday hinted that there would be "some kind of announcement" regarding the direction of his government's reform process and the next parliamentary election.

The disclosure came at an interactive session with the envoys of 19 European countries at the Chief Adviser's Office in Tejgaon. The Delhi-based heads of missions and representatives of Belgium, Bulgaria, Estonia, Luxembourg, Slovakia, Cyprus, Hungary, Poland, Portugal, Slovenia and Romania were present at the meeting along with the Dhaka-based heads of missions of Denmark, France, Germany, Italy, Spain, Sweden and the Netherlands.

However, before holding the next election, necessary reforms should be carried out, Yunus told the envoys.

When the interim government took charge, it was assigned two responsibilities: transferring the power to the elected government and reforming the whole apparatus of the nation, policies and institutions and so on.

The twin responsibilities are progressing in the same direction, Yunus said.

As many as 15 different commissions are working. The commissions are expected to hand in their reports by the end of December or the

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

World cautious as post-Assad era begins in Syria

AGENCIES

Damascus stirred back to life on Monday at the start of a hopeful but uncertain era after rebels seized the capital and President Bashar al-Assad fled to Russia, following 13 years of civil war and more than 50 years of his family's brutal rule.

Busy traffic returned to the streets and people ventured out after a nighttime curfew, but most shops remained shut. Rebels milled about in the centre.

The main rebel commander Ahmed al-Sharaa, better known as Abu Mohammed al-Golani, met overnight with Assad's Prime Minister Mohammed Jalali and Vice President Faisal Mekdad to discuss arrangements for a transitional government, a source familiar with the discussions told Reuters.

Al Jazeera television reported that the transitional authority would be headed by Mohamed Al-Bashir, who ran the administration in a small pocket of rebel-held territory before the 12-day lightning offensive that swept into Damascus.

Syria's banks would reopen today and staff had been asked to return to offices, according to a Syrian central bank source and two commercial bankers. Syria's currency would continue to be used, they said.

At the Interior Ministry that ran Assad's police force, furniture had been looted and staff stayed away. Armed rebels were there to maintain order.

The advance of a militia alliance spearheaded by Hayat Tahrir al-



SEE PAGE 7 COL 5

ELECTORAL REFORM COMMISSION BNP places 17-point recommendation

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The BNP has submitted a 17-point recommendation to the Electoral Reform Commission, including changes to party registration policies, electoral code of conduct, and transferring control of the National Identification (NID) server back to the EC.

Addressing a press briefing at the BNP chairperson's office in Gulshan yesterday, Standing Committee Member Abdul Moyeen Khan outlined the party's recommendations, highlighting the significance for creating a level playing field.

"We believe electoral reform is the most important issue right now. Of the 17 points we've raised, 10 are particularly critical for ensuring transparent and credible elections."

For the 13th national polls, the BNP prefers "upgrading" the voter list over the method of "door-to-door visits".

"Honestly, we want a true and accurate voter list to be prepared. Instead of door-to-door campaign, we proposed using computer and AI ... Today, if we give instructions to a computer, it can do the work on its own ... and it will be absolutely accurate," said Moyeen.

"A computer can even determine when someone turns 18. For that, there is no need to visit the homes

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

Edible oil prices up by Tk 8 per litre

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government yesterday raised the retail prices of soybean



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When men cook, care, and connect: THE ERA OF NEW MASCULINITY

RBR

The new buzzword in town is 'inclusive.' It doesn't refer only to gender inclusion; rather, from a more relevant and broader point of view, being inclusive makes us learn about disability inclusion, social and workplace inclusion, and parental inclusion, to name a few.

There are social and religious considerations to be taken into cognizance, about how far you are willing to refract from your stereotypical ideas of a society to embrace the modern norms about social inclusion.

From being a caring father to embracing differences to being informed about mental well-being, you are now much more diversified and considerate of accommodating people or ideologies that were not normally common for you earlier on.

Let's not dwell on diverse inclusion that much, but focus on how today's men have redefined masculinity and their role in the societal framework of a family.

One thing I must compliment Dhaka's men (also men from other cities) on is how they are breaking free from the traditional mold of the disciplinarian, strict, reclusive family man to a more friendly, easily approachable, inclusive father and hands-on husband.

Today's men are not shy to change diapers, cook dinners, or communicate with their families. They are not expected to only focus on career



PHOTO COURTESY: SHARARAT ISLAM, COMMUNICATIONS ANALYST, UN WOMEN BANGLADESH

and financial stability, while women concentrate on domestic duties and child-rearing only. Instead, they are encouraged to make a father-inclusive family.

It is exactly to celebrate this "inclusive fatherhood" that the Embassy of Sweden in Bangladesh, in collaboration with UNDP, UNFPA, and UN Women, is launching a photography exhibition titled "Bangladeshi and Swedish Baba" at

Gulshan Lake Park on December 12.

Sumon Jacob D'Costa, school secretary of Sunbeams, Middle School, saw an advert on the Swedish Embassy page about a competition based on the diaspora of bringing the "Swedish Dads" concept to Bangladesh. He was inspired to share his version of "Bangladeshi Baba" stories that resonated with the exhibition's criteria to encourage and exchange views on parenting practices,

gender equality, and work-life balance with Bangladeshi audiences.

"What makes me a role model is my unwavering dedication to my family and my community. I believe that a father's role extends beyond providing financial support. It involves being present, being involved, and being a positive influence. I strive to be a source of strength, guidance and love for my child, and I hope to inspire others to do the same," he said.

By showcasing stories that challenge traditional perceptions of fatherhood and highlight the positive impacts of engaged fathers, D'Costa thinks that his story is one of the everyday hero, the unsung champion of the family, the father who works to build a better future for their children.

"I believe that a father's role is not merely to provide for his family, but to instil values, foster dreams, and empower the next generation. By instilling a sense of empathy, compassion, and responsibility in my child, I hope to contribute to a more humane and just society."

Based on the award-winning work of renowned Swedish photographer Johan B vman on Swedish Dads, this exhibition showcases powerful visual stories of Bangladeshi fathers that encourage a rethinking of modern fatherhood.

Through a month-long digital competition held by the four agencies, 25 fathers out of 100 submissions were selected based on their photographs and stories of fatherhood.

Edible oil prices up by Tk 8 per litre

FROM PAGE 1

prices came amid a supply crunch. Millers said they reduced imports as costs went up despite tax cuts.

The government had earlier reduced VAT on imports of soybean and palm oil twice to 5 percent from 15 percent since October 17.

A commerce ministry statement yesterday said the National Board of Revenue (NBR) would extend the rate from December 15 to March 31 next year.

It also fully exempted VAT at the production and trading stages of the highly import-based commodity. As a result of the reduction, the import cost of crude edible oil fell from around Tk 18 to Tk 7 per kg, according to market insiders.

But Mustafa Haider, president of the Bangladesh Edible Oil Association, said the government agreed to raise the retail prices

considering the price hike of crude edible oil in the international market, shipping charges and processing fees.

Speaking at a press conference at the commerce ministry in the presence of Commerce Adviser Sheikh Bashiruddin, Haider said the price of crude edible oil has neared \$1200 a tonne.

As of November 2024, the price of soybean oil of any origin was \$1,145.17 per tonne — a 4.59 percent increase from the previous month and a 2.39 percent increase from the previous year, according to YCharts, an investment research organisation.

Importers and refiners said they recently requested the interim government to adjust the price of soybean oil in line with the international market.

The commerce ministry in its statement said the Bangladesh Trade and

Tariff Commission would send recommendations on reviewing edible oil prices to the commerce ministry on the 5th of every month.

Adviser Bashiruddin said the local millers and dealers delayed supply apprehending the price hike.

He also said the market was almost stable except for edible oil and potato. The prices of some other commodities like poultry, sugar, fish, and vegetables were somewhat stable.

Admitting that potato prices were extremely unstable, he hoped the situation would normalise when new potatoes hit the market within four weeks.

Rice and egg prices were also stable now and sugar price is expected to decline further soon, Bashiruddin said.

NBR Chairman Abdur Rahman Khan, however, lamented that prices of

essentials were yet to decrease to expected levels despite significant tax exemptions at the import stage.

Speaking at his office yesterday, he said the prices of eggs and sugar have reduced to some extent, but no change is noticed in the prices of other products, including soybean oil.

Mentioning the government's steps to stabilise foreign exchange rates, he sought cooperation from all, including the commerce ministry, consumers' rights body, journalists, and the consumers.

"Market irregularities will increase if existing irregularities are tolerated. Someone has to protest it," he said, noting that the NBR is providing estimates of tax cuts per kg of each product so that the consumers can find any mismatch.

Dhaka, Delhi eager to take ties forward

FROM PAGE 1

This is a major relationship."

In another statement, India's Ministry of External Affairs said Misri expressed New Delhi's desire to increase engagements with Bangladesh's interim government and make "joint and concerted efforts" to boost relationships between the two neighbours.

"There is no second thought about increasing engagements. We see this as beneficial for both countries," Misri said.

Syeda Rizwana Hasan, the adviser for environment, forest and climate change, told the media after the meeting between Prof Yunus and Misri that both sides emphasised their eagerness to strengthen bilateral relations.

"They [India] closely monitored the events of July and August and expressed their awareness of the situation," she added. Misri arrived in Dhaka yesterday morning to hold the annual Foreign Office Consultation (FOC) with Bangladesh Foreign Secretary Md Jashim Uddin. Officials from other ministries, including water resources, commerce, and home affairs from both countries were present.

After the FOC at state guest house Padma for over three hours, Misri called on Foreign Adviser Touhid Hossain at his office and then met Yunus.

Misri read out a statement after his meeting with Touhid, while Jashim separately briefed the media about the meetings with Misri.

Misri said India wants to see the relationship with Bangladesh as people-centric, which was also reflected in the development projects supported by India and the engagements on trade, commerce, connectivity, power, water, energy, development and cultural cooperation.

"There is no reason why this mutually beneficial relationship should not continue to develop in the interest of our people."

P R O P A G A N D A , MINORITY ISSUE

The visit by the Indian foreign secretary, who flew back to New Delhi last night, came amid strains in relationship after Hasina was toppled and she fled to

India. The arrest of Hindu priest Chinmoy Krishna Das Brahmachari in late November triggered demonstrations in various parts of India, while an attack on the Bangladesh Assistant High Commission in Agartala sparked protests in Bangladesh.

The chief adviser said the interim government is committed to protecting every citizen and safeguarding their rights irrespective of their creed, colour, ethnicity and gender. "We're a family. We have to work together," Yunus said.

Misri also discussed certain recent developments and issues and conveyed India's concerns, especially those related to the safety and welfare of minorities, Indian foreign ministry said.

He also raised some "regrettable" incidents of attacks on cultural, religious and diplomatic properties.

Dhaka has accused the Indian media of carrying out propaganda on a global scale on alleged attacks on minorities in Bangladesh.

Adviser Rizwana said, "We raised concerns about the ongoing misinformation campaigns aimed at damaging Bangladesh's reputation as a nation of harmony."

She said most incidents were either political or personal, but they were portrayed as communal violence. Bangladesh government is neither involved in such incidents nor does it condone them. "Legal actions have been taken against those responsible," she said.

Secretary Jashim said he requested the Indian side to take steps against false media reports about Bangladesh.

"We emphasised that people of all religions in Bangladesh can freely exercise their faith ...," he said.

"We said this is our internal issue, and it is not appropriate for any other country to interfere in our internal issues. We also asked foreign journalists to visit Bangladesh and see the ground realities."

Asked about Miris's concerns about minorities, Jashim said, "There is a gap in understanding the

ACC, judiciary

FROM PAGE 1

institutions like the ACC and judiciary failed to act independently, especially in cases that we not politically motivated.

"In casual discussions, we would hear about Sheikh Hasina's cashiers, Rehana's cashiers, Salman's cashiers, how Joy's money was transferred, and who managed Palak's funds. The ACC and High Court were there but no trials ever took place [with regard to these]."

"Whose trials did take place? Khaleda Zia's. She had Tk three crore in a bank account — no one embezzled or touched a single penny. Yet, due to procedural errors, the ACC and judiciary sentenced the three-time former prime minister to 10 years in prison."

Nazrul further said, "That thief, [former] prime minister Sheikh Hasina, whose entire family were 'thieves,' accused Khaleda Zia of embezzling funds meant for orphans! No one could speak a word in front of that thief. The ACC and judiciary had become her subservient tools."

The law adviser added, "Corruption became an accepted norm because there were no trials for it.... We witnessed a shameless prime minister laughing in front of the nation while saying her office assistant had Tk 400 crores."

"Awami League leaders would say, 'Apa [Hasina] can't really do anything because of her younger sister'. Such concern for her sister! She couldn't do anything because her sister is a thief!"

Stressing the urgent need for reform, he said, "We cannot leave the ACC dormant. The new commission must be empowered to tackle corruption effectively. Time is of the essence."

Addressing ACC officials, Nazrul said, "The [previous] ACC commissioners, before stepping down, had approved investigations against over a hundred ministers and businesspersons who acquired thousands of crores of taka through the theft enabled by the previous regime. Conduct those investigations now and prove that you can work effectively in a better environment. This is the expectation we and the entire nation have of you."

TIB Executive Director Iftekharruzzaman said, "The type of information we are receiving while carrying out our responsibilities in the ACC Reform Commission is extremely embarrassing. It's a thousand times worse than what we've heard before."

"I r r e g u l a r i t i e s , misconduct, inequality, corruption, and a system of plundering.... I am embarrassed. This institution must be dismantled and overhauled with a decisive operation," he said.

"Right now, the ACC is practically non-existent. Three commissioners have resigned.... The ACC is an institution where no decisions can be made without commissioners. It has been over a month since any decisions were made at the commission."

I f t e k h a r u z z a m a n criticised the opportunities provided in the past for legitimising black money. He also lambasted the ACC officials for playing the role of accomplices in corruption, asking why reforms should be necessary for such an institution.

"Could there be a greater humiliation for the ACC than this? The reason is that, on one hand, the ACC has facilitated corruption, and on the other, it has been deeply entrenched in corruption itself."

Yunus hints at announcement this month

FROM PAGE 1

middle of January.

Certain reforms have to be finished before the election, particularly the recommendations that would come from the election reform committee commission, Yunus told the envoys.

Once all the election-related reforms are done, the government will be ready for election.

If all reforms cannot be done now, the government will "ask the nation whether they will wait for further reforms or they will go ahead with the election".

"I can't give you the date now. I can only say that this is the process we are going on.

We can come up with some kind of announcement this month on how the process will go."

Yunus also urged the European countries to relocate their visa centres from Delhi to Dhaka or another neighbouring country as many students are unable to travel to Delhi to get their visas due to India's restrictions on visas for Bangladeshis.

In the two and a half-hour long meeting, he also outlined the oppression, exploitation, forced disappearances and human rights violations that have occurred over the past 15 years to the EU envoys, according to a statement

from the chief adviser's press wing.

He discussed corruption, money laundering and disruption of the banking system during the period, accusing the former prime minister of using laundered money to destabilise the country after she was ousted.

Yunus also sought cooperation from all to prevent the large-scale misinformation that is being spread about Bangladesh. He also urged the EU to provide support for Bangladesh to transform its energy sector.

Issues pertaining to labour rights, trade benefits, climate change, human rights, the International Crimes Tribunal Act,

Rohingya repatriation and mutual commitments toward building a sustainable future were discussed.

Michael Miller, ambassador and head of the EU delegation to Bangladesh, welcomed the interim government's commitment to a "peaceful and inclusive" transition, underpinned by good governance, democratic values and respect for human rights.

"The EU is committed to supporting Bangladesh's democratic transition the best way we can. We ask that the government is mindful of the need to uphold the rule of law and respect due process and fundamental rights."

Moyeen said the BNP also submitted proposals on election observation policies and the media code of conduct during polls.

He added that they do not think the government would need over three-four months to hold elections after completing the necessary reform work in the administration, judiciary, and police.

Moyeen said the BNP also submitted proposals on election observation policies and the media code of conduct during polls.

the NID server. The last government handed its control to the home ministry. We proposed that the control of NID server be returned to the Election Commission immediately," the BNP leader said.

The BNP has also suggested measures to ensure neutrality of government officials during the election process, Moyeen added.

"We have recommended that after investigations,

steps be taken against those responsible for their misdeeds during the July-August uprising and it be ensured that they could not take part in the upcoming election process," said Nazrul Islam Khan, another BNP standing committee member, while speaking at the press briefing.

Standing Committee member Salahuddin Ahmed said it would not take more than two-three months to scrutinise fake

FROM PAGE 1 of 18 crore people in Bangladesh. Door-to-door visits are extremely time-consuming, unnecessary, and prone to errors."

About the delimitation of parliamentary constituencies during the 1/11 caretaker government, the BNP expressed concerns whether there were any political motives behind it.

"Previously, the Election Commission controlled

minority issue. I hope it will be minimised after our discussion."

India clarified that their government is not responsible for the activities of certain media outlets or organisations that are spreading misleading narratives, Jashim said.

"We expect India's active role in curbing negative propaganda against Bangladesh and rebuild trust and confidence among the peoples of the two countries," he added.

The CA's press wing said Misri stated that media narratives and the Indian government's perception about India-Bangladesh relations are different.

HASINA'S STAY IN DELHI Prof Yunus raised the issue of Hasina in the meeting with Misri, the CA's press wing said. "Our people are concerned because she is making many statements from there. It creates tension."

Misri said it was a wrong perception that India had ties with one particular party in Bangladesh. "They are not meant for one particular party, but for every one."

On Hasina's statements, Jashim said he conveyed that Bangladesh government is not liking it and the Indian authorities should convey this to her.

"The Indian side said her presence has no bearing on our relations. They will engage with the government of the day."

The chief adviser also expressed Bangladesh's unease about provocative statements being made by other individuals from abroad.

"These statements seem to aim at inciting tension, and we made our position on this issue very clear," said Rizwana.

OTHER ISSUES

The Bangladesh officials discussed many other issues, such as border killings, water sharing, visa and cooperation in different fields with Misri.

Bangladesh called upon India to bring to zero the number of border killing, Jashim said, adding that such killings do not go in line with friendship.

India referred to crimes in the border, but Bangladesh said it condones neither crimes nor killings. "We

spoke of long-term solution to border crimes including drug smuggling," Jashim said.

The FOC highlighted the signing of a deal on Teesta water sharing, renewal of the Ganges treaty ending in 2026 and resolving issues related to other transboundary rivers.

"We sought India's cooperation on flood forecast, sharing of water data and proposed formation of a high-level mechanism on this," Jashim said.

The Indian High Commission in Dhaka has significantly restricted visas for Bangladeshis, which is affecting those seeking treatment in India and doing business.

Jashim said fully-fledged operation of visas and consular services may take some time because of the "deficit of trust".

Misri said India doubled the number of visas for Bangladeshis last month and would increase the number further in the coming days.

Dhaka also stressed removing tariffs and para-tariffs in bilateral trade and sought an uninterrupted supply of commodities from India.

Bangladesh currently imports 2,656 megawatts of electricity from India and this cooperation can be further boosted in the current geopolitical reality, Secretary Jashim said.

"India's cooperation is also needed for us to import hydroelectricity from Nepal via India," he said.

Bangladesh also sought India's cooperation on Rohingya repatriation as its sustainable solution is critical for the peace and stability of this region.

"As our nearest neighbour, we sought to settle all the unsettled issues in our relationship at the quickest possible time," Jashim said.

Prof Yunus called for close bilateral cooperation in floods and water management, urging India to join in his initiative to revive SAARC. "We want to build a prosperous new future for all of us," the chief adviser said.

Misri said that India continues to engage with SAARC, but there are some obstacles.

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Kidney dialysis beyond reach for many

Tk 46,426 average cost per month in Bangladesh, says BIDS study

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Kidney patients in Bangladesh have to bear an average monthly expense of Tk 46,426, with costs ranging between Tk 6,690 and Tk 2,10,000, according to a study by Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies (BIDS).

The study revealed that 92 percent of families with kidney patients faced distress trying to finance dialysis treatment in Bangladesh.

While out-of-pocket expenditure is higher for rich households, the cost burden is greater for poorer households, according to the study titled, "Out-of-pocket Cost of Kidney Dialysis in Bangladesh", presented at a hotel in the capital's Gulshan yesterday.

Abdur Razzak Sarkar, research fellow of BIDS, presented the study's findings.

He said a kidney patient has to bear an annual cost of Tk 80,280 to 25,20,000 for dialysis.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

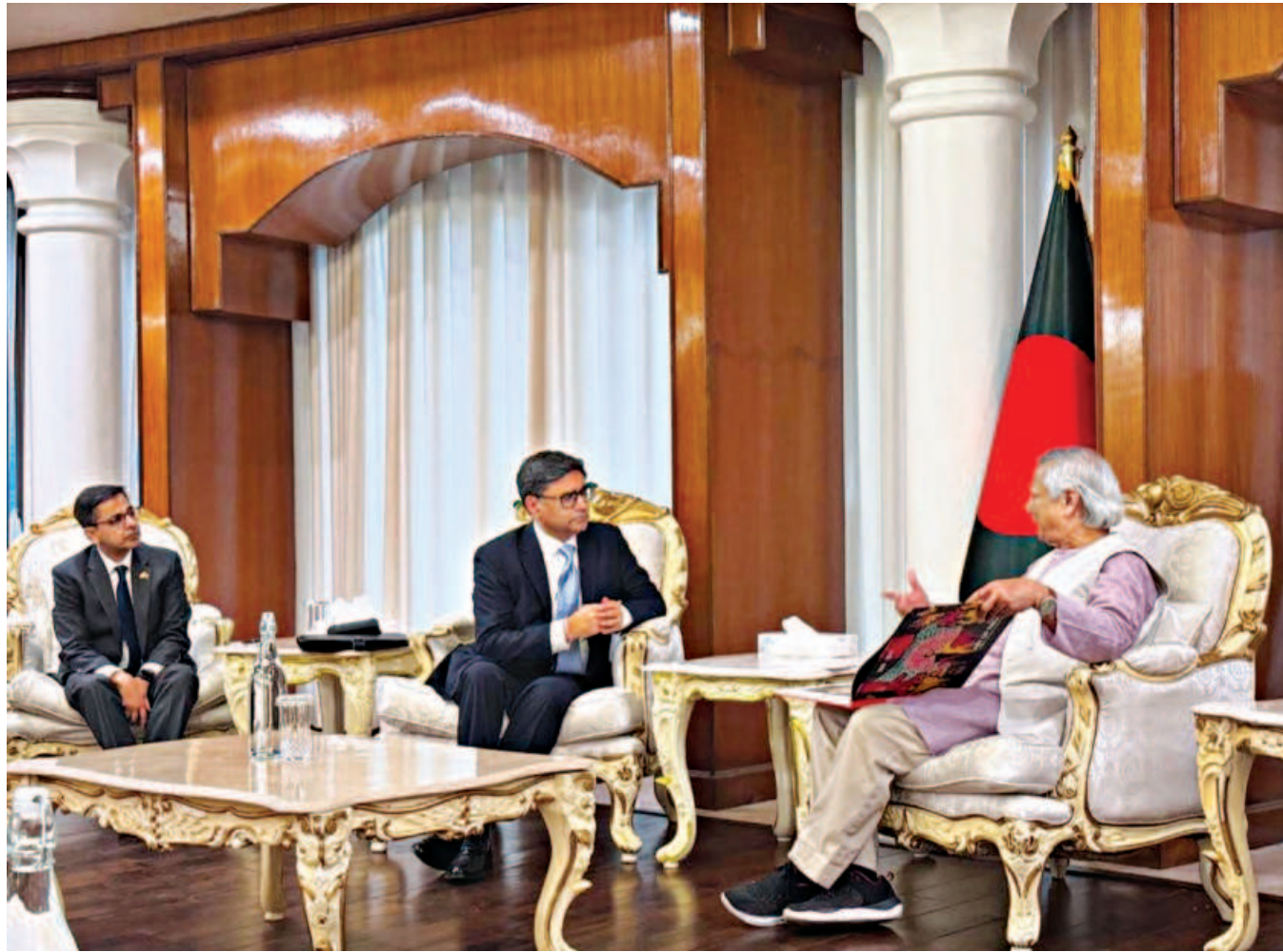
RECOMMENDATIONS

Subsidise dialysis facilities in private hospitals

Include dialysis patients in safety net programme

Bring dialysis treatment under insurance mechanism

More production of expensive drugs by state-owned pharmaceuticals



Indian Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri called on Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus at the state guest house Jamuna yesterday.

PHOTO: CA'S PRESS WING

'Her works, thoughts surprised me'

Says Prof Yunus about Begum Rokeya

BSS, Dhaka

Recalling Begum Rokeya's contribution to social reform, Chief Adviser to the interim government Professor Muhammad Yunus yesterday said her works and thoughts surprised him.

He made the remarks while addressing a ceremony organized at Dhaka's Osmani Memorial Auditorium to confer the Begum Rokeya Padak-2024 to the recipients.

He lauded Begum Rokeya's courage and vision at a time when girls did not get enough scopes to continue their study.

Noting that reality is impossible without a dream, Prof Yunus said proposed introduction of 'Sultanar Swapna (dream) Award'.

This year, the Begum Rokeya Padak was conferred to four women for their outstanding contributions to society, women's education and empowerment. They are: Dr Parvin Hasan, vice chancellor of Central Women's University; Shirin Parvin Haque, founder of women's rights organisation Nari Paksha; Taslima Akhtar Lima, a noted labour and women's rights activist; and Rani Hamid, the country's first female international chess master.

80,000 cops appointed politically in 15 years: DMP chief

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Over 80,000 members of the police force, which comprises around 2 lakh personnel, were recruited over the past 15 years based on their political affiliations, said Dhaka Metropolitan Police Commissioner SM Sazzat Ali yesterday.

"In the last 15 years, different types of scrutiny have been done before appointments to know the political affiliation of candidates, their fathers, grandfathers, and even their predecessors," he said replying to a query at his maiden "meet the press" at the DMP media centre.

"Approximately 80,000-90,000 members were recruited through the process. We cannot tell 80 to 90 thousand police personnel to go home," he said.

The commissioner, however, said many of those who committed actions outside their professional duties have fled, and police are taking steps against many of them.

He expressed regret over the

SEE PAGE 4 COL 6

Cultural shift needed to combat authoritarianism

Speakers tell conference

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Risks to gender-bender diversity in the country have intensified since August 5, said Iftekharuzzaman, executive director of Transparency International Bangladesh, at an event yesterday.

"The risks to gender-based diversity existed even before August 5. However, with profound embarrassment and sorrow, I must admit that these risks have intensified since then. Those who perceive themselves as victorious after the July-August movements now seem to believe they hold authority. Yet, their actions demonstrate a lack of commitment to the core principles of anti-discrimination movements," he said.

"Instead, they are pushing agendas rooted in discriminatory indoctrination and conceptualisation, which is inherently opposite of the spirit of equality and inclusivity," he added while speaking at a citizen conference titled "People-Centric Reform for Good Governance: Aspirations of Disadvantaged Communities."

We claim to oppose authoritarianism, but the practice of authoritarianism persists. Even today, I am told the term 'Adivasi' [indigenous] cannot be used. Who has imposed this restriction? Despite discussions on diversity, the administration has failed to establish a Diversity or a Minority Commission.

IFTEKHARUZZAMAN
Executive director, TIIB

The Citizen Platform for SDGs, Bangladesh, organised the event at the Bangabandhu International Conference Centre in Agargaon, Dhaka.

Iftekharuzzaman expressed his embarrassment at the government's failure to ensure the representation of

women and minority communities in the reform commissions, including the Anti-Corruption Reform Commission.

"We claim to oppose authoritarianism, but the practice of authoritarianism persists. Even today, I am told the term 'Adivasi' [indigenous] cannot be used. Who has imposed this restriction?" he asked.

"Despite discussions on diversity and disadvantaged communities, the current administration has failed to establish a Diversity Commission or a Minority Commission," he said.

Termining the Ministry of Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) Affairs a "misnomer", Iftekharuzzaman said, "This ministry not only marginalises indigenous communities in the plains but has also become a tool to undermine the rights of hill-tract communities. We do not need this ministry. Instead, we need a diversity ministry with a specific mandate to safeguard the rights of all communities, including indigenous peoples."

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3

How did they get to India?

Says Hasnat about allegedly detained AL leaders

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Anti-Discrimination Student Movement yesterday alleged that primarily detained 626 Awami League men were transferred to India, demanding a probe into how they managed to go there and who was involved in the procedure.

In a press conference, Hasnat Abdullah, the platform's convener, said, "India has become a sanctuary for the fugitive 'terrorists' involved in the mass killings during the July uprising."

"The officials who were involved with the proceedings of sending them to safe houses in India by crossing the border must be held accountable and face trial," he said.

"If India continues sheltering and supporting such individuals, we will raise questions about the relationship between our two countries. India must focus on improving relations with the government that was formed by a popular uprising and its people," he added.

The press conference was held at their central office in the capital's Banglamotor, demanding a probe into the "continuous attacks" on the organisers of their platform.

Alleging such attacks as a "complete failure of intelligence," Hasnat demanded an investigation into this intelligence failure.

Two cops withdrawn over bribery

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The officer-in-charge and a sub-inspector of Adabor Police Station were withdrawn over the incident of taking bribe from an accused in a case filed after August 5.

SI Shaheen Parvez was closed and attached to the office of Deputy Commissioner of Tejgaon Division Police on Sunday night as he allegedly took money from an accused.

The SI was tasked with the investigation of a murder case filed with the police station after August 5, police officials said.

Meanwhile, Talebur Rahman, deputy commissioner (media) of DMP, said OC Imtiaz Parvez has been withdrawn and attached to the DMP headquarters.

Yesterday, the DMP Commissioner SM Sazzat Ali said he has taken action against a police member for taking money from an accused.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1



A large crowd gathers around a TCB truck, seeking essentials at subsidised prices. Amid soaring inflation and shortages of commodities like soyabean oil, many struggle to find affordable alternatives. The photo was taken on Satmasjid Road, Dhanmondi yesterday.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

Ensure accountability within NHRC: MJF

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The human rights of all individuals, particularly vulnerable groups, must be protected urgently, said Manusher Jonno Foundation (MJF) in a press release yesterday.

The press release was issued in recognition of International Human Rights Day, which is to be celebrated today.

MJF emphasised the need to strengthen and ensure accountability within key institutions, such as the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) and the judiciary.

Shaheen Anam, executive director of MJF, stated that the NHRC has been rendered ineffective due to rampant politicisation, leaving it unable to prevent significant human rights violations.

"The commission has largely failed to address the crimes of the previous regime, including extrajudicial killings, enforced disappearances, and widespread abuses like violence and torture against women and children, as well as discrimination against marginalised groups," she said.

MJF called for a transparent reconstitution of the NHRC and an expansion of its mandate to effectively address all forms of human rights violations, particularly those impacting marginalised populations who are subjected to discrimination and abuse based on their socio-economic status, physical condition, race, ethnicity, religion, or profession.

MJF also urged the immediate enactment of the "Anti-Discrimination Law" to provide essential protections for vulnerable groups.



Two cops withdrawn Cultural shift needed to combat 80,000 cops appointed

FROM PAGE 3

The city police chief said the complainants of the cases filed after August 5 made several hundred accused and are now taking extortion from the accused, promising to drop the names.

"Not all of my force members are good. I got reports that my force members were taking money from the accused,"

he said, adding that the complainants who are taking money from the accused will be sued with extortion charges.

Talking to The Daily Star, OC Imtiaz said the authorities transferred him as his SI was closed earlier for the offence.

Shaheen could not be contacted as his phone was found switched off.

FROM PAGE 3

"The government formed a curriculum review committee, which was later disbanded under pressure from a certain group because one of the members advocated for gender diversity rights. It was shameful that the interim government disbanded the committee under pressure," he said.

"The interim government was established under the doctrine of necessity, and its legitimacy is unparalleled. Therefore, we must hold it accountable for upholding the core principles of the anti-discrimination movement and defeating all forces of inequality," he said.

Iftekharuzzaman identified corruption, impunity, and the concentration of power as the primary drivers of authoritarianism in the country.

He called for a cultural shift to combat corruption and authoritarianism.

Prof Mustafizur Rahman, distinguished fellow of CPD, said in 1990, during a significant

political transition, Prof Rehman Sobhan put forward recommendations on various aspects of Bangladesh's politics and economy through 29 task forces for the following 20 years.

"We observed that subsequent political governments came and went, but none of them utilised those recommendations," he said.

He added that Debapriya Bhattacharya and Prof Rehman Sobhan, during 2006-07, travelled across Bangladesh and drafted the Vision 2021 document, which was incorporated into the Awami League's manifesto.

However, it resulted in no tangible outcomes, he said.

"The dominant narrative highlights significant leaps in growth, portraying Bangladesh as a development role model. But in reality, inequalities in income, consumption, and wealth have increased. This parallel narrative of inequality is precisely what the anti-discrimination movement reflects," he explained.

He emphasised that the changes following August 5 have opened a window of opportunity that must be seized for progress.

Debapriya Bhattacharya,

convenor of Citizen's Platform and distinguished fellow at CPD, said bureaucrats now appear before people in various identities, which has become a problem.

"A person who is a bureaucrat today turns into a politician tomorrow and then a businessman the next day. It has become a problem that they come before us in many forms," he said.

Badiul Alam Majumder, chief of the Election Reform Commission, said the main problem regarding elections is the irregularities of the nomination business.

To address this, the political parties need to change their mindset, he said.

He also advocated increasing women's participation in the parliament.

Prof Rounaq Jahan, a distinguished fellow at CPD and chair of the event, said it is not possible to exclude bureaucrats, politicians, and businessmen.

"We need to think about how we can make them better. We had to keep them under our accountability," she said.

Sonali Dayaratne, deputy resident representative, UNDP, Bangladesh, also spoke at the event, among others.

Kidney dialysis

FROM PAGE 3

The study focused on finding out and estimating the health and financial burden of kidney dialysis patients in the country.

It highlighted that in Bangladesh, 8 lakh kidney failure patients require dialysis, but only 30,000 are able to receive it due to a lack of availability and financial limitations.

Abdur Razzak said chronic kidney disease (CKD) is a major cause of disability and death globally.

He said, "Kidney dialysis facilities in private hospitals should be subsidised so that resource-poor households can also access the service. Thus, it will ensure equity in receiving dialysis."

A total of 477 hospitalised patients from public, private, and NGO healthcare facilities participated in this cross-sectional hospital-based study with face-to-face interviews conducted between November 1 and December 31 last year.

The study found that dialysis fees (35.3 percent) and medication costs (23 percent) are the largest contributors to total treatment expenses.

In total, medical costs account for 78.79 percent of the total expenditure for kidney dialysis patients.

The study also revealed that around 90 percent of the households faced catastrophic health expenditure (CHE) to finance dialysis treatment, and about 19.5 percent of the patients received fewer dialysis than the recommended number. The incidence of taking fewer dialysis than recommended was highest (30 percent) among the

poorest households.

The high cost of dialysis was the most prevalent reason for those receiving fewer dialysis treatments than they need, added the study.

Abdur Razzak urged the government to allocate a budget to protect patients from financially catastrophic shocks.

"Kidney patients requiring dialysis should be included in a safety net programme so that financing the treatment would be easier," he said.

Dialysis treatment should be brought under an insurance mechanism to make it more affordable, he also said.

State-owned pharmaceuticals should produce more of the drugs that are currently expensive, to reduce their cost, he added.

NBR conducts

FROM PAGE 5

Opening on September 3, 2021, the 30-acre resort sits on haor or wetland areas of Mithamoin upazila and has 40 air-conditioned suites in 20 two-storey cottages, alongside facilities such as restaurants and playgrounds.

It was alleged to have been constructed with wealth acquired illegally and through the forced occupation of land. The owners are also alleged to have evaded taxes.

On December 4, an eight-member committee was formed by the CIC to conduct investigations, to unearth the investment made into the resort and verify the owners' income tax returns.

The allegations were primarily found to be true, and various pieces of evidence were collected, CIC Director General Ahsan Habib told The Daily Star.

A joint initiative

FROM PAGE 5

and tree plantation programmes will be conducted in different parts of the island, he also said.

Dr Ramiz Uddin, head of experimentation at UNDP, said, "UNDP is always working to ensure a sustainable environment. At first, UNDP collected plastic waste on the island, but the work accelerated with the addition of the PRAN-RFL group."

Nurul Afser, head of corporate brand of PRAN-RFL Group; Sumaiya Tabassum Ahmed, head of sustainability; and Ahammad Ullah Kabir, data analytics officer of UNDP, were among others, present.

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FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

Position Vacancy Announcement

Position: Development Outreach and Communication (DOC) Specialist, FSN – 10

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) in Bangladesh is seeking applications from qualified Bangladeshi nationals for the position of **Development Outreach and Communication (DOC) Specialist, FSN – 10** in the Program Office Location: USAID/Bangladesh, Deadline for application submission: January 09, 2025; 04:30PM.

For a complete job description, required qualifications and detailed information on how to apply please visit USAID/Bangladesh website: <http://www.usaid.gov/bangladesh/work-with-us/careers> and www.bdjobs.com

D-40

World Health Organization
Bangladesh

VACANCY NOTICE

World Health Organization (WHO) invites applications from the interested and eligible candidates for the following positions under following contractual modalities:

- Executive Assistant (Human Resources) / G5**
- National Professional Officer (Labs) / NO-A**
- NPO (Non-Communicable Diseases & Mental Health) / NO-A**

For further details on submission of applications including detailed post description please visit our websites:
<https://www.who.int/bangladesh/about-us/employment>
<https://careers.who.int/careersection/ex/jobsearch.ftl>

Qualified **female candidates** are highly encouraged to apply.

WHO has a smoke-free environment and does not recruit smokers or other tobacco users.

গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার
নৌপরিবহন অধিদপ্তর

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ওয়েব সাইট: www.dos.gov.bd

স্মারক নম্বর: ১৮.১৭.০০০০.০০৮.১১.০১.২২.৯৪৭ তারিখ: ০৯ ডিসেম্বর ২০২৪ খ্রিঃ

সংশোধিত নিয়োগ বিজ্ঞপ্তি

অনলাইনের মাধ্যমে আবেদন শুরু তারিখ ১০-১২-২০২৪খ্রিঃ এবং শেষ তারিখ ০৯-০১-২০২৫খ্রিঃ।

নৌপরিবহন মন্ত্রণালয়ের অধীনস্থ নৌপরিবহন অধিদপ্তর ও এর আওতাধীন অফিসসমূহের নিম্নবর্ণিত অস্থায়ী শূন্য পদসমূহ অস্থায়ীভাবে পূরণের নিমিত্তে বাংলাদেশের সকল জেলার প্রকৃত নাগরিকদের নিকট হতে নিম্নবর্ণিত শর্ত সাপেক্ষে অনলাইন ফরম পূরণপূর্বক দরখাস্ত আহ্বান করা যাচ্ছে। অনলাইন ব্যতীত কোন আবেদন গ্রহণযোগ্য নয়।

ক্রমঃ	পদের নাম, বেতনকেসল এবং গ্রেড	পদের সংখ্যা	বয়সসীমা	শিক্ষাগত যোগ্যতা ও অভিজ্ঞতা
১।	অফিস সহকারী-কাম-কম্পিউটার মুদ্রাক্ষরিক, বেতনকেসল টাকা ৯,৫০০-২২,৪৯০/-	৩ (তিন)টি (অস্থায়ী)	অনুর্ধ্ব ৩২ (বত্রিশ) বৎসর তবে বিজ্ঞানীয় প্রার্থীদের ক্ষেত্রে বয়সসীমা ৪০ (চল্লিশ) বৎসর পর্যন্ত শিথিলযোগ্য	ক) কোনো বীকৃত বোর্ড হতে অনুলিখিতীয় বিজ্ঞান বা সমমানের জিপিএতে উচ্চ মাধ্যমিক সার্টিফিকেট বা সমমানের পরীক্ষায় উত্তীর্ণ; খ) কম্পিউটার ব্যবহারে দক্ষতা; এবং গ) কম্পিউটার মুদ্রাক্ষরিক প্রতি মিনিটে গতি বাংলায় ২০ শব্দ এবং ইংরেজিতে ২০ শব্দ এবং ইংরেজিতে ২০ শব্দ।
২।	ডাটা কন্ট্রোল অপারেটর, বেতনকেসল টাকা ৯,৫০০-২২,৪৯০/- গ্রেড-১৬	১ (এক)টি (অস্থায়ী)	অনুর্ধ্ব ৩২ (বত্রিশ) বৎসর	কোন বীকৃত বোর্ড হতে উচ্চ মাধ্যমিক সার্টিফিকেট বা সমমানের পরীক্ষায় উত্তীর্ণ এবং কম্পিউটার মুদ্রাক্ষরিক প্রতি মিনিটে গতি বাংলায় ২০ শব্দ এবং ইংরেজিতে ২০ শব্দসহ সর্বমোট বিখ্যাত Standard Aptitude Test-এ উত্তীর্ণ হতে হবে।
৩।	অফিস সহায়ক, বেতন কেসল টাকা ৮,২৫০-২০,০১০/- গ্রেড-২০	১০ (দশ)টি (অস্থায়ী)	অনুর্ধ্ব ৩২ (বত্রিশ) বৎসর	কোন বীকৃত বোর্ড হতে মাধ্যমিক স্কুল সার্টিফিকেট বা সমমানের পরীক্ষায় উত্তীর্ণ।

** নিয়োগ সংক্রান্ত সকল শর্তাবলী অত্র অধিদপ্তরের ওয়েবসাইটে (www.dos.gov.bd) দেওয়া আছে ;
১। অনলাইন আবেদনকালে কোন সমস্যা হলে ফোন নং: +৮৮০২২২৩৭৪৩৭০ এ অফিস চলাকালীন সময়ে যোগাযোগ করা যেতে পারে।
২। গত ২৯-০৪-২০২৪ তারিখে প্রকাশিত বিজ্ঞপ্তির প্রেক্ষিতে যে সকল প্রার্থী ইতোপূর্বে অনলাইনে আবেদন করেছেন তাদের পুনরায় আবেদন করার প্রয়োজন নেই।

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মহাপরিচালক

INDEPENDENT UNIVERSITY, BANGLADESH (IUB)

VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

School of Engineering, Technology and Sciences
Department of Computer Science and Engineering

- Associate Professor/Assistant Professor
- Lecturer A
- Research and Development Officer
- Laboratory Technician

School of Law

- Lecturer

Application Deadline
Monday, December 23, 2024

For detailed information and to apply, please visit:
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Deeply condolence

Md. Khalid Hossain
(1954 - 2024)

It is with deep sorrow and sadness that we inform that **Mr. Md. Khalid Hossain**, Honorable Sponsor Director of Purabi General Insurance Company Limited passed away due to cardiac arrest on **Saturday 7 December 2024 at 4:20 PM (Inna Lillahi Wa Inna Ilaihi Raziun).**

He has contributed immensely to the progress of our organization. His intelligence, ethics and leadership will forever be a source of inspiration for us. In his death we have lost an able director and a guardian of humane qualities.

On behalf of Purabi General Insurance Company Limited, we pray for the forgiveness of his departed soul and extend our deepest condolences to his bereaved family.

Purabi General Insurance Company Limited
Board of Directors and all officers/employees

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সতর্কীকরণ বিজ্ঞপ্তি

পাওয়ার গ্রিড বাংলাদেশ পিএলসি কর্তৃক বাস্তবায়নধীন "বড়পুকুরিয়া-বগুড়া-কালিয়াকৈর ৪০০কেভি লাইন প্রকল্প" শীর্ষক প্রকল্পের আওতায় বড়পুকুরিয়া-বগুড়া ৪০০ কেভি ডাবল সার্কিট সঞ্চালন লাইনটি বগুড়া (পশ্চিম) ৪০০/২৩০ কেভি গ্রিড উপকেন্দ্র, কাহালু, বগুড়া হতে নির্মাণাধীন পার্বতীপুর (হলদিবাড়ী) ২৩০ কেভি সুইচিং স্টেশন, পার্বতীপুর, দিনাজপুর পর্যন্ত আগামী ১২ ডিসেম্বর ২০২৪ রোজ **বৃহস্পতিবার সকাল ৯:০০ ঘটিকায় ৪০০০০০** ভোল্টেজ দ্বারা চালু করা হবে। চালু করার পর উক্ত বৈদ্যুতিক লাইনটি সার্বক্ষণিক ৪০০০০০ ভোল্টেজে বিদ্যুতায়িত থাকবে।

নবনির্মিত ৪০০ কেভি লাইনটি বগুড়া জেলাধীন কাহালু, দুপচাঁচিয়া ও শিবগঞ্জ উপজেলাসমূহ, জয়পুরহাট জেলাধীন জয়পুরহাট সদর, পাঁচবিবি, ক্ষেতলাল ও কালাই উপজেলাসমূহ এবং দিনাজপুর জেলাধীন পার্বতীপুর, নবাবগঞ্জ, বিরামপুর ও হাকিমপুর উপজেলাসমূহের বিভিন্ন গ্রাম/এলাকার উপর দিয়ে অতিক্রম করেছে।

উক্ত সঞ্চালন লাইনের টাওয়ারসমূহে আরোহন, পবাদিশপু বাধা, টাওয়ারে রশি বেঁধে কাপড় শুকানো, লাইনের নিচে ও পাশে বাঁশবাড়ি ও বড় বৃক্ষাদি রোপন বা কেটে লাইনের উপর ফেলা, ঘুড়ি বা ড্রোন ওড়ানো প্রভৃতি ঝুঁকিপূর্ণ কাজ হতে বিরত থাকার জন্য এবং সঞ্চালন লাইন হতে নিরাপদ দূরত্ব বজায় রাখার জন্য সর্বসাধারণকে অনুরোধ করা যাচ্ছে। উক্ত ভোল্টেজে বিদ্যুতায়িত উক্ত সঞ্চালন লাইন/টাওয়ারের সংস্পর্শে এসে কেউ দুর্ঘটনার শিকার হলে পাওয়ার গ্রিড কর্তৃপক্ষ দায়ী থাকবে না।

মীর মোতাহার হোসেন
প্রকল্প পরিচালক
বড়পুকুরিয়া-বগুড়া-কালিয়াকৈর ৪০০কেভি লাইন প্রকল্প

Government of People's Republic of Bangladesh, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare
Office of the Upazilla Health & Family Planning Officer
Satkania, Chattogram.
E-mail- satkania@uhfpo.dghs.gov.bd

Ref No: UHC/Satka/Chat/MSR/2024-25/7552 Date: 09.12.2024

e-Tender Notice

This is an online Tender, 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 (<https://www.eprocure.gov.bd>). For more details, please contact support desk contact numbers. e-Tender are invited in e-GP system portal (www.eprocure.gov.bd) by UH&FPO, Office of the Upazilla Health & Family Planning Officer Satkania, Chattogram for the Procurement of;

Tender Id	Name of Goods	Tender/Proposal Publication Date and Time	Tender/Proposal Closing/Opening Date & Time
1048156	Procurement of Medicine (Non Edcl) FY 2024-2025	10-Dec-2024 10:00	24-Dec-2024 12:30
1048157	PROCUREMENT OF SURGICAL INSTRUMENT FY 2024-2025	10-Dec-2024 10:00	24-Dec-2024 12:30
1048158	PROCUREMENT OF GUAZE BANDAGE, COTTON FY 2024-2025	10-Dec-2024 10:00	24-Dec-2024 12:30
1048159	PROCUREMENT OF LINEN FY 2024-2025	10-Dec-2024 10:00	24-Dec-2024 12:30
1048160	PROCUREMENT OF CHEMICAL RE-AGENT FY 2024-2025	10-Dec-2024 10:00	24-Dec-2024 12:30
1048161	PROCUREMENT OF FURNITURE FY 2024-2025	10-Dec-2024 10:00	24-Dec-2024 12:30

❖ e-Tender details can be downloaded on e-GP system portal (<https://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) for pursuer.

❖ e-Tender will be accepted only as stated in above list; accepted tenders will be opened online immediate as stated in above list.

Dr. K. M. ABDULLAH-AL-MAMOON
UH&FPO
Upazilla Health & Family Planning Officer
Satkania, Chattogram.

GD- 1145

Two more die of dengue

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

At least two dengue patients died in the 24 hours till yesterday morning, while 478 patients were hospitalised during this period.

Among the deaths, one took place in Dhaka division and another in Dhaka North City Corporation.

According to the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS), with the new deaths and cases, the total number of deaths rose to 531, while the total number of cases rose to 96,706, of which 58,021 are from outside Dhaka.

Currently, 2,113 dengue patients are undergoing treatment, of whom 1,232 are from outside Dhaka. A total of 94,062 patients have been released till Sunday, 56,596 of whom are from outside Dhaka.

Broader approach needed to tackle corruption: TIB

UNB, Dhaka

Executive Director of Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB) Dr Ittekkharuzzaman yesterday said preventing corruption requires more than just the rule of law, accountability for the accused, and institutional capacity.

The public must also take a strong stand against corruption. In particular, the innovative power of youth, their protests, and awareness are crucial. Cartoons serve as an essential part of that protest, he said.

The TIB chief was speaking at the prize awarding ceremony of cartoon, comic strip competition, featuring artworks held at TIB Dhanmondi office. The event also included the inauguration of a 13-day exhibition and virtual gallery.

The organisation arranged the cartoon and comic strip competition, featuring artworks by young participants from various age groups, aimed at promoting anti-corruption messages among the nation's youth.

In the 19th Anti Corruption Cartoon Competition on "Corruption and Immorality," the winners received Tk 75,000, Tk 50,000, and Tk 40,000, along with crests and certificates.



PHOTO: STAR

Customers browse through the various products on sale at this farmers' market which has been set up opposite the Kalapara Press Club in Patuakhali. The market allows marginal farmers to sell their produce directly to consumers without the intrusion of middlemen, thereby ensuring fair prices. The photo was taken recently.

'Krishak Bazar' breaks free from middlemen

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Patuakhali

A "Krishak Bazar" (farmers' market) has been set up in Patuakhali's Kalapara upazila to enable marginal farmers to sell their produce directly to consumers without the intrusion of middlemen, thereby ensuring fair prices.

Under the management of the upazila administration, the market was set up adjacent to the Kalapara Press Club from Saturday, with support from Amra Kalaparabasi, a local voluntary organisation.

Farmers from different villages across the upazila went to the market and were happy to be able to sell directly to buyers at a fair price. The prices are, however, still relatively lower compared to regular markets.

Buyers and sellers thanked the organisers for the initiative.

"This is a very good initiative and arrangement. People from middle- and low-income families can buy vegetables directly from farmers at a fair price at the market, which in turn benefits both the farmers and the buyers," said Baki Billah, a shopper.

Maulana Abul Kalam, who came to buy vegetables, said, "Currently, the markets of vegetables and daily necessities are overrun by syndicates who manipulate the prices and keep the products largely beyond our reach. Local initiatives like this Krishak Bazar can bring much respite to the common people."

Nazrul Islam, a member of Amar Kalaparabasi, said, "We have launched the market with the cooperation and management of the upazila administration to bring respite to consumers amid spiraling prices of essentials while ensuring fair prices to the farmers."

Md Rabiul Islam, upazila nirbahi officer of Kalapara, said, "The market has been set up to benefit local marginal farmers by allowing them to sell their products without intrusion from any brokers or middlemen and without paying any toll."

NBR conducts drive at resort of ex-DB chief's relatives

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

The National Board of Revenue's (NBR's) Central Intelligence Cell (CIC) yesterday conducted a drive at "President Resort" in Kishoreganj, around 100km north of the capital.

The drive was conducted as part of its investigation into several allegations against the owners, including occupation of land by force.

Different documents, four hard disks, and 16 registers were seized while evidence from alleged victims was collected during the drive, assisted by police, the land office, and other state agencies.

The resort is allegedly owned by close relatives of former chief of the Detective Branch of police Harun-or-Rashid.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 5

UNDP, PRAN-RFL A joint initiative to protect Saint Martin's Island

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Cox's Bazar

United Nations Development Program and PRAN-RFL will work together to protect Saint Martin's Island.

The two organisations have jointly undertaken an initiative, titled "Saint Martin's: Environmental Conservation and Sustainable Economy", in this regard.

Mohammed Solaiman Haider, director of the Department of Environment, inaugurated the initiative in Saint Martin's Island yesterday.

Kamruzzaman Kamal, marketing director at PRAN-RFL Group, said under this initiative, volunteers of PRAN-RFL will collect waste from the island and bring it to designated dumping stations where it will be compressed and brought to Teknaf by sea. It will then be brought to the recycling plant at Habiganj Industrial Park and Danga Industrial Park of PRAN-RFL and will be recycled.

Pure drinking water will be provided for the people of the island through rainwater harvesting

SEE PAGE 4 COL 5



THE SECURITY PRINTING CORPORATION (BANGLADESH) LTD.
GAZIPUR-1703

Ref: 19/2024

Dated: 10/12/2024

LOCAL TENDER NOTICE
Web site: www.spchl.org.bd

NAME OF THE WORKS: CONSTRUCTION AND MAINTENANCE OF INTERNAL ROAD AND DRAIN (PHASE I)

Local tender of above mentioned works are hereby invited from the Contractors having experience of construction work in the departments of PWD/MES/Other Government, Semi-Government/Autonomous organizations/Bank/Insurance organizations as per under noted schedule. Tender documents including terms and conditions with specification will be available at the website www.spchl.org.bd. For more details please contact +88-02-223375570. Necessary information are given below:

1. Price per Tender Schedule	: 5000.00 (Five Thousand) Taka only (Non Refundable)
2. Date of publish of Tender	: 10/12/2024.
3. Last date & time for submission of Tender	: 08/01/2025 up to 11.00 A.M.
4. Date & time for opening of Tender	: 08/01/2025 at 11.15 A.M.

Bidders are required to download the Tender schedule from the above mentioned website and prepare Tender document. Bidders need to submit earnest money Tk 24,00,000.00 (Twenty Four Lac Taka) only in the form of Bank Guarantee/Pay Order in favour of the "Managing Director, The Security Printing Corporation (Bangladesh) Ltd." along with the price of Tender schedule in the form of a Pay-Order/DD in the tender box kept at Corporation's office in Gazipur on or before the scheduled deadline for submission of Tender. Tender(s) without earnest money and price for tender schedule shall not be acceptable. Offer(s) shall be opened as per schedule mentioned above in presence of the tenderer(s) if any. The authority reserves the right to reject or accept any or all tenders without assigning any reason whatsoever. Submission of tender after the specified time shall not be acceptable under any circumstances.

(Md. Mahbubul Haque)
General Manager (Engineering Department)
Phone : +88-02-223375570

GD- 1143



পাওয়ার গ্রিড বাংলাদেশ পিএলসি
POWER GRID BANGLADESH PLC
(An Enterprise of Bangladesh Power Development Board)

Grid Bhaban, Avenue-3, Jahurul Islam City, Aftabnagar, Badda, Dhaka-1212

www.powergrid.gov.bd

Ref. No.: 27.21.0000.201.11.002.24.6251

Date: 08/12/2024

JOB OPPORTUNITY

Power Grid Bangladesh PLC, entrusted with the responsibility of operation, maintenance and development of national power grid, invites applications from Bangladeshi citizens for appointment against the post of **Executive Director (Finance)**.

Salary & allowances (per month)	Qualification & Experience
Basic Pay TK. 1,45,000/- and House rent allowance: 50% of basic. Income tax-payable by the employee.	a) At least Master Degree in Commerce (Finance/Accounting/MBA (Finance/ Accounting)/ MBS (Finance/Accounting) from any university recognized by Govt. & UGC or FCA / FCMA with Master Degree in any subject from any university recognized by Govt. & UGC. b) No third Division/Class or equivalent at any stage of the academic career shall be acceptable. Candidates passed in the grading system must possess at least a CGPA 3.5 on a scale of 5.0 and a CGPA 2.5 on a scale of 4.0 and passed in the conventional system (class/division) must possess at least 2nd class/division. c) At least five years' experience in senior managerial position in relevant field (DGM or equivalent) d) At least 20 years of work experience in the relevant field of which at least 5 years in generation/ transmission/ distribution utilities. e) Must demonstrate knowledge in Govt. financial rules & regulations, PPA, PPR etc. f) Must demonstrate strong participatory leadership ability. g) Able to demonstrate knowledge in Company Laws, Tax/VAT Laws, TQM, Corporate Governance, Strategic Management etc. will get preference. h) Must have strong communication skill in Bengali & English (written & spoken) including working experience using computer.

For the above position the basic salary, house rent, medical reimbursement, full time transport and other allowances will be provided as per Power Grid Pay Scale-2016. In addition to the above facilities, company provides two festival bonuses and Bengali new year allowance (20% of basic salary) in a year, contributory provident fund, group insurance, leave encashment, annual increment, gratuity etc. as per service rule of Power Grid Bangladesh.

Terms & Conditions:

- To apply for the position of Executive Director (Finance), the maximum age limit will be 60 (sixty) years. **Age would be calculated as on 08/12/2024.**
- Applications accompanying Bio-Data, three passport size photographs, attested photocopies of all educational and experience certificates, NID, citizenship certificate and pay order Tk. 2000/- (Two thousand only) in favor of Power Grid Bangladesh PLC should be reached to the Executive Director (HRM) at the above address **on or before 31/12/2024.**
- Candidates employed in Govt. /Semi Govt. /Autonomous organizations or any government owned organizations have to apply through proper channel.
- The appointment will be made as permanent post on contractual basis initially for a maximum period of five years where **maximum age limit will be 62 years.**
- The service contract will be **renewable up to the age of 62 years** subject to the satisfactory performance as per service rule of Power Grid.
- The authority of Power Grid reserves the right to cancel the circulation and no explanation for such action will be provided to the applicant.
- If any fake declaration is found at any level of screening the authority has reserves the right to cancel the candidature of the applicant.

Deputy General Manager (HRM), Power Grid

PRO-BNP BODIES Long march towards Akhaura tomorrow

UNB, Dhaka

Three BNP associate organisations – Jubo Dal, Swachchasebak Dal, and Chhatra Dal – will stage a long march towards Agartala from Dhaka tomorrow, protesting "Indian aggression".

On behalf of the organisations, Jubo Dal President Monayem Munna made the announcement at a press conference at the BNP's Nayapaltan central office yesterday.

"We're announcing a long march from Dhaka towards Agartala on December 11 to protest against Indian aggression and the misinformation campaign against Bangladesh," he said.

Munna said they will begin their peaceful long march from Nayapaltan at 8:00am and end at the Akhaura border.

The march is also a protest against the attack on the Bangladeshi mission in Agartala and the desecration of the country's national flag in Kolkata, he added.

He called upon students, youths and volunteers to participate in the long march.

On Sunday, the BNP affiliated organisations submitted a memorandum to the Indian High Commission in Dhaka protesting the attack on the Bangladesh mission in Agartala, the desecration of the national flag in Kolkata, the ongoing "information terrorism" against Bangladesh by Indian media, and urging India to refrain from undue interference in Bangladesh's internal affairs.

PRAYER TIMING
DECEMBER 10

Fazr Zohr Asr Maghrib Esha

AZAN 5:20 12:45 3:45 5:22 7:00

JAMAAT 5:55 1:15 4:00 5:25 7:30

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION


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Mirpur Road
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Kakrail

SAPPHIRE SERIES
Projects

SHELTECH




SYLHET CITY CORPORATION
Nagar Bhaban, Sylhet
www.scc.gov.bd

Memo No. 46.07.0000.018.99.025.19.2717

Date: 09/12/2024

e-Tender Notice-12/2024-25

1. Ministry/ Division	Ministry of the Local Government, Rural Development & Co-operatives.	
2. Agency:	Sylhet City Corporation.	
3. Budget and source of funds:	Local Government COVID-19 Response and Recovery Project, Sylhet City Corporation financed by World Bank.	
Tender ID No.	Name of the work	Last date of tender submission
1048742 (OTM)	Upgrading of RCC Road at Notun Bazar to Junaki Point Ch. 00-690m, Ward No. 36.	02/01/2025
1048833 (OTM)	Upgrading of RCC Road at Tamabil Road to Bohor Jame Mosjid Ch. 00-810m, Ward No. 34	02/01/2025
1048857 (OTM)	Construction of RCC Retaining Wall at Shahporan Chorarpar Ch. 00-594.00m	02/01/2025
4. Name, designation & address of PE	Engr. Md. Ali Akbar Superintending Engineer Sylhet City Corporation. +8802 996 640 486	
5.	This is online tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and offline/hard copies will not be accepted. Interested persons/firms can see details in the website: www.eprocure.gov.bd	
6.	The fees for downloading the e-Tender documents from the National e-GP System Portal have to be deposited online through any registered banks branches.	
7.	Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal and from e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).	


Superintending Engineer
Sylhet City Corporation

GD-1144



জাতীয় মানবাধিকার কমিশন

বিটিএমসি ভবন (৯ম তলা), ৭-৯ কারওয়ান বাজার, ঢাকা-১২১৫
ইমেইলঃ info@nhrc.org.bd; ফোনলাইনঃ ১৬১০৮



রাষ্ট্রপতি

গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ

বাণী

জাতীয় মানবাধিকার কমিশন, বাংলাদেশ কর্তৃক বিশ্বের অন্যান্য দেশের ন্যায় বাংলাদেশেও মানবাধিকার দিবস ২০২৪ উদযাপনের উদ্যোগকে আমি স্বাগত জানাই।

মানুষের সর্বজনীন, সহজাত, অহত্যাভাবযোগ্য ও অলঙ্ঘনীয় অধিকারই হলো মানবাধিকার। মানবাধিকার মানুষের মৌলিক অধিকার ও চাহিদা নিশ্চিতের পাশাপাশি, সরকারের নিরাপত্তা বিধান এবং স্বাধীনতা ও মর্যাদা সমুন্নত রাখা। ১৯৪৮ সালের এই দিনে মানবাধিকার রক্ষা ও উন্নয়নের লক্ষ্যে জাতিসংঘ কর্তৃক মানবাধিকারের সর্বজনীন ঘোষণাপত্র গৃহীত হয়। একটি মানবিক রাষ্ট্র গঠনের লক্ষ্যে ১৯৭২ সালে প্রণীত গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশের সংবিধানেও মৌলিক মানবাধিকার, স্বাধীনতা, মানবসত্তার মর্যাদা ও মূল্যের প্রতি শ্রদ্ধাভোধ নিশ্চিত করা হয়েছে। তবে অত্যন্ত পরিচাপের বিষয় হচ্ছে বর্তমান তথ্যপ্রযুক্তির যুগেও ফিলিস্তিনসহ বিশ্বের বিভিন্ন স্থানে মানবাধিকার লঙ্ঘিত হচ্ছে। মানবাধিকার প্রতিষ্ঠা ও রক্ষায় প্রতিনিয়ত আন্দোলন-সংগ্রাম করতে হচ্ছে। দেশে মানবাধিকার সুরক্ষা ও উন্নয়নের লক্ষ্যে স্বাধীন ও নিরপেক্ষ প্রতিষ্ঠান হিসেবে জাতীয় মানবাধিকার কমিশন প্রতিষ্ঠা করা হয়েছে। মানবাধিকার সমুন্নত রাখতে সরকারের উদ্যোগের পাশাপাশি জনসাধারণের সম্পৃক্ততা ও সচেতনতা বৃদ্ধি এবং তৃণমূল পর্যায়ে কমিশনের কার্যক্রম আরও জোরদার করতে হবে। সমাজে মানুষের মধ্যে পারস্পরিক সম্প্রীতি, সহমর্মিতা, ধৈর্য ও সহিষ্ণুতা বৃদ্ধি করতে হবে। বিশ্বের সকল নির্যাতিত-নিপীড়িত মানুষের অধিকার রক্ষায় সকলকে সোচ্চার হতে হবে।

জাতীয় মানবাধিকার কমিশনকে একটি গণস্বীকৃত ও কার্যকর প্রতিষ্ঠানে পরিণত করতে নিয়মিত গণতন্ত্রনি আয়োজন, বিভিন্ন আন্তর্জাতিক ফোরামে মানবাধিকার পরিস্থিতি পর্যালোচনা ও প্রতিবেদন দাখিল, বিভিন্ন সম্মেলনের মানবাধিকার বিষয়ে উপযুক্ত কর্তৃপক্ষকে সুপারিশ প্রেরণ; মানবাধিকার বিষয়ে গণসচেতনতা বৃদ্ধিকল্পে বিভিন্ন জেলার কমিটির সঙ্গে মতবিনিময় সভা আয়োজন, শিশু ও নারীর প্রতি সকল ধরনের সহিংসতা বন্ধে কার্যক্রম গ্রহণসহ বিভিন্ন কর্মসূচি পালন করতে হবে। মানবাধিকার সম্পর্কে সচেতনতা বৃদ্ধি এবং মানবাধিকার লঙ্ঘনের ঘটনায় ভুক্তভোগীদের প্রতিকার পাওয়ার পথ সুগম করতে জাতীয় মানবাধিকার কমিশনসহ সংশ্লিষ্ট সরকারি-বেসরকারি প্রতিষ্ঠানগুলো নিরপেক্ষভাবে কার্যকর অবদান রাখা—এটাই সকলের প্রত্যাশা।

আমি মানবাধিকার দিবস উপলক্ষ্যে গৃহীত সকল কর্মসূচির সাফল্য কামনা করছি।
বাংলাদেশ চিরজীবী হোক।

মোঃ সাহাবুদ্দিন



রাষ্ট্রপতি

সচিব
সেজিসলিটিভ ও সংসদ বিষয়ক বিভাগ
গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার

বাণী

মানবাধিকার মানুষের সহজাত ও জন্মগত অধিকার। এই অধিকারগুলো জাতি, ধর্ম, বর্ণ, লিঙ্গ নির্বিশেষে সকল মানুষের জন্য সমানভাবে প্রযোজ্য। ১৯৪৮ সালে জাতিসংঘ কর্তৃক ঐতিহাসিক মানবাধিকারের সর্বজনীন ঘোষণাপত্র গৃহীত হয়। সে থেকে প্রতিবছর ১০ ডিসেম্বর বিশ্বব্যাপী মানবাধিকার দিবস পালিত হয়ে আসছে। মানবাধিকার দিবসে বিশ্বের সকল মানুষের জন্য রইল শুভেচ্ছা ও অভিনন্দন।

মানবাধিকারকে সুসংহত ও সুরক্ষিত রাখা আমাদের সকলের দায়িত্ব। সকল মানুষের নাগরিক, রাজনৈতিক, সামাজিক ও সাংস্কৃতিক অধিকারগুলো নিশ্চিত করতে সব ধরনের কর্মপ্রয়াস অব্যাহত রাখতে আহ্বান জানাই। আমরা সম্মিলিতভাবে সকল মানুষের অধিকার রক্ষা ও ন্যায়ভিত্তিক কর্মকাণ্ডের জন্য প্রতিজ্ঞাবদ্ধ হই।

বৈষম্যহীন বাংলাদেশ গড়ার স্বপ্ন নিয়ে ছাত্র-জনতার অভ্যুত্থান সংঘটিত হয়। এই স্বপ্নকে বাস্তবায়ন করতে হলে মানবাধিকারের প্রতি শ্রদ্ধাশীল থাকা আবশ্যিক। একটি মানবিক ও সমৃদ্ধ সমাজ প্রতিষ্ঠা করা এখন সময়ের দাবি। দেশে সকল পর্যায়ে মানবাধিকার চর্চা ও জ্ঞান বিনিময় অব্যাহত থাকবে বলে আমার বিশ্বাস। আমাদের মানবাধিকার বিষয়ক প্রয়োজনীয় গবেষণা, পর্যবেক্ষণ ও অনুসন্ধান কার্যক্রম চালিয়ে যেতে হবে। জাতীয় মানবাধিকার কমিশন মানবাধিকার সুরক্ষিত ও সমুন্নত রাখতে অর্পিত দায়িত্ব পালন করবে এবং বিস্তৃত পরিসরে কর্মকাণ্ড চালিয়ে যাবে বলে আমি আশা করি।

আজকের এ দিনে মানবাধিকার সুরক্ষা ও সমুন্নত রাখার লক্ষ্যে বিশ্বের সকল ধরনের আন্তরিক প্রয়াসকে আমি স্বাগত জানাই। বিশ্বের সকল মানুষ নিজ নিজ অধিকার নিয়ে জীবিত—এই প্রত্যাশা করি।

মানবাধিকার দিবস ২০২৪ উপলক্ষ্যে গৃহীত সকল কর্মসূচির সফলতা কামনা করি।

ড. হাফিজ আহমেদ চৌধুরী



আমাদের অধিকার, আমাদের ভবিষ্যৎ, এখনই



রাষ্ট্রপতি

উপদেষ্টা
আইন, বিচার ও সংসদ বিষয়ক মন্ত্রণালয়
গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার

বাণী

বিশ্বের অন্যান্য দেশের ন্যায় বাংলাদেশেও ১০ ডিসেম্বর ২০২৪ তারিখে যথাযোগ্য মর্যাদায় মানবাধিকার দিবস উদযাপন হচ্ছে। মহান এ দিবস উপলক্ষ্যে সকলকে আন্তরিক শুভেচ্ছা ও অভিনন্দন জানাচ্ছি।

মানবাধিকার শাস্ত্র, সর্বজনীন, সহজাত ও অবিচ্ছেদ্য অধিকার যা জাতি, ধর্ম, বর্ণ ও লিঙ্গ নির্বিশেষে সকলের জন্য সমানভাবে প্রযোজ্য। ১৯৪৮ সালে অর্থাৎ ৭৬ বছর আগে আজকের এই দিনে জাতিসংঘের সাধারণ পরিষদে মানবাধিকারের সর্বজনীন ঘোষণাপত্র গৃহীত হয়েছিল। বাংলাদেশের স্বাধীনতার ঘোষণাপত্রে জনগণের জন্য সাম্য, মানবিক মর্যাদা ও সামাজিক সুবিচার নিশ্চিতের যে অঙ্গীকার রয়েছে তা মানবাধিকারের ধারণাটির সাথে গভীরভাবে সম্পর্কিত।

জুলাই-আগস্টে ছাত্র-জনতার আন্দোলন ও গণঅভ্যুত্থান-পরবর্তী অস্বাভাবিক সরকার অগ্রাধিকার ভিত্তিতে মানবাধিকার সুরক্ষা ও উন্নয়নে নিরলসভাবে কাজ করে যাচ্ছে। পাশাপাশি মানবাধিকার সমুন্নত রেখে বৈষম্যমুক্ত সমাজ গড়তে বিভিন্ন পদক্ষেপ নিয়েছে সরকার। মানবাধিকার সুরক্ষার তগিদে সম্প্রতি গৃহনিরাপত্তা আন্তর্জাতিক সনদে স্বাক্ষর করেছে অস্বাভাবিক সরকার যা বাংলাদেশে মানবাধিকার প্রতিষ্ঠায় অনন্য পদক্ষেপ হিসেবে চিরস্মরণীয় হয়ে থাকবে। এছাড়া বিভিন্ন সংস্কার কমিশনের মাধ্যমে অন্যান্য বিষয়ের মধ্যে মানবাধিকারকে আরও সুরক্ষা দেওয়ার উদ্যোগ নেওয়া হয়েছে। মানবাধিকার দিবসে আমি বিশ্বের সকল প্রান্তের নিপীড়িত, শোষিত ও বঞ্চিত মানুষের সাথে সংহতি প্রকাশ করছি; পৃথিবীর সব মানুষের মানবাধিকারের প্রতি শ্রদ্ধাশীল থাকার আহ্বান জানাচ্ছি। সেই সঙ্গে মানবাধিকার সুরক্ষিত ও সমুন্নত রাখতে সকলকে পারস্পরিক সহযোগিতা, সহমর্মিতা ও কল্যাণকামী মনোভাব নিয়ে কাজ করার আহ্বান জানাচ্ছি।

Asif Nazrul
ড. আশিফ নজরুল

সর্বজনীন মানবাধিকার ঘোষণাপত্র-১৯৪৮

১. জন্ম থেকেই বেঁচে থাকার সমানজনক অধিকার
২. কারও প্রতি কোনো বৈষম্য নয়
৩. স্বাধীন ও নিরাপদ জীবনের অধিকার
৪. কোনো প্রকার দাসত্ব নয়
৫. নিষ্ঠুর নির্যাতন, অবমাননাকর আচরণ নিষিদ্ধ
৬. মানুষ হিসাবে পৃথিবীর সর্বত্র সমান অধিকার
৭. আইনের চোখে সবাই সমান
৮. বিচার আদালতে প্রতিকার লাভের অধিকার
৯. বৈআনিভাবে আটক বা দেশ থেকে নির্বাসন নয়
১০. নিরপেক্ষ বিচার লাভের অধিকার
১১. আদালতে দোষী প্রমাণিত না হওয়া পর্যন্ত নির্দোষ
১২. ব্যক্তিগত গোপনীয়তা সুরক্ষার অধিকার
১৩. নিজ দেশে স্বাধীনভাবে চলাচলের অধিকার
১৪. নিজ দেশে নির্যাতিত হওয়ার আশঙ্কা থাকলে ভিন্নদেশে আশ্রয় লাভের অধিকার
১৫. জাতীয়তা লাভের অধিকার
১৬. বিবাহ এবং পরিবার গঠনের অধিকার
১৭. সম্পত্তির মালিক হওয়ার অধিকার
১৮. ধর্ম, বিবেক ও চিন্তার স্বাধীনতার অধিকার
১৯. মতপ্রকাশের স্বাধীনতা
২০. শান্তিপূর্ণ সভা-সমাবেশ ও সমিতি গঠনের অধিকার
২১. গণতান্ত্রিক অধিকার
২২. সামাজিক নিরাপত্তা লাভের অধিকার
২৩. স্বাধীনভাবে কাজ বেছে নেওয়ার অধিকার
২৪. বিশ্রাম ও অবসরের অধিকার
২৫. মাদা, বস্ত্র, বাসস্থান, চিকিৎসা ও প্রয়োজনীয় সেবাপ্রাপ্তির অধিকার
২৬. সবার জন্য শিক্ষার অধিকার
২৭. মেধাস্বত্ব সংরক্ষণের অধিকার
২৮. মুক্ত বিশ্বে সকলের অংশীদারত্বের অধিকার
২৯. অন্যের অধিকার সুরক্ষায় নিজের দায়িত্ব
৩০. মানবাধিকার কেউ কেড়ে নিতে পারে না

- মানবাধিকারবিষয়ক বিভিন্ন আন্তর্জাতিক দলিলের ওপর গবেষণা করা এবং সেগুলোর বাস্তবায়নের জন্য সরকারকে সুপারিশ প্রদান;
- আন্তর্জাতিক মানবাধিকার আইনের সঙ্গে দেশীয় আইনের সামঞ্জস্য ও সমন্বয়বিধানে প্রয়োজনীয় উদ্যোগ গ্রহণ;
- মানবাধিকার বিষয়ে গবেষণা করা এবং শিক্ষা ও পেশাগত প্রতিষ্ঠানে উদ্ভাবন বাস্তবায়নে ভূমিকা পালন করা;
- প্রচার, প্রকাশনা, সেমিনার, সিম্পোজিয়াম, ওয়ার্কশপ এবং অনুরূপ অন্যবিধ ব্যবস্থার মাধ্যমে মানবাধিকার বিষয়ে জনসচেতনতা সৃষ্টি;
- আগসের মাধ্যমে নিম্নলিখিত কোনো অভিযোগ মধ্যস্থতা ও সমঝোতার মাধ্যমে নিষ্পত্তি করা;
- মানবাধিকার সংরক্ষণ সংক্রান্ত বিষয়ে আইন প্রয়োগকারী সংস্থার সদস্যসহ অন্যদের প্রশিক্ষণ প্রদান করা;
- মানবাধিকার লঙ্ঘনের ঘটনায় সংশ্লিষ্ট ব্যক্তি/সেবাপ্রার্থীকে প্রয়োজনীয় পরামর্শ ও দিকনির্দেশনা প্রদান;
- মানবাধিকার লঙ্ঘনের দায়ে আদালতে বিচারার্থীন কোনো মামলায় বা আইনগত কার্যধারায় প্রয়োজনে পক্ষ হয়ে প্রতিক্রিয়া করা বা ভুক্তভোগীকে আইনি সহায়তা প্রদান করা।

জাতীয় মানবাধিকার কমিশনে অভিযোগ দায়েরের পদ্ধতি কে অভিযোগ করতে পারেন?

জাতি, ধর্ম, বর্ণ নির্বিশেষে যে কোনো বয়সের দেশি বা বিদেশি যে কোন ব্যক্তি কমিশনে অভিযোগ করতে পারেন। অর্থাৎ গ্রামের বা শহরের, সমতলের বা পাহাড়ি জনগোষ্ঠীর ধনী, গরিব, কৃষক, শ্রমিক, শিক্ষিত অথবা অশিক্ষিত যে কেউ কমিশনে অভিযোগ করতে পারেন। ক্ষতিগ্রস্ত ব্যক্তি নিজে অথবা তাঁর পক্ষে অন্য কোনো ব্যক্তি বা প্রতিষ্ঠানও অভিযোগ করতে পারেন। অবস্থা বিবেচনায় কমিশন ঋ-উদ্যোগেও অভিযোগ গ্রহণ করতে পারে।

কী ধরনের অভিযোগ করা যায়?

গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশের সংবিধানে যে অধিকারগুলো সব নাগরিককে দেওয়া হয়েছে তার লঙ্ঘন হলে বা লঙ্ঘনের আশঙ্কা তৈরি হলে বা স্বীকৃত আন্তর্জাতিক মানবাধিকার আইনে বর্ণিত অধিকারসমূহ লঙ্ঘিত হলে জাতীয় মানবাধিকার কমিশনে অভিযোগ করা যায়। কেউ যদি মনে করেন, মানুষ হিসাবে রাষ্ট্রের কাছে তাঁর জীবন, সমতা ও মর্যাদার যে অধিকার পাওনা আছে তা ক্ষুণ্ণ হয়েছে কিংবা ক্ষুণ্ণ হওয়ার আশঙ্কা দেখা দিয়েছে অর্থাৎ রাষ্ট্রীয় বা সরকারি সংস্থা বা প্রতিষ্ঠান বা সংগঠন বা কোনো জনসেবক বা কোনো ব্যক্তি কর্তৃক মানবাধিকার (জীবন, অধিকার, সমতা ও মর্যাদা সংক্রান্ত অধিকার) লঙ্ঘন করা হয়েছে বা লঙ্ঘনের প্ররোচনা দেওয়া হয়েছে বা এসব অধিকার লঙ্ঘন প্রতিরোধে অবহেলা করা হয়েছে তাহলে মানবাধিকার কমিশনে অভিযোগ করা যায়।

মানবাধিকার দিবস

১০ ডিসেম্বর ২০২৪

ক্রোড়পত্র



রাষ্ট্রপতি

প্রধান উপদেষ্টা
গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার

বাণী

বাংলাদেশে 'মানবাধিকার দিবস ২০২৪' উদযাপন উপলক্ষ্যে সকলকে শুভেচ্ছা জানাই। অন্যান্য দেশের ন্যায় বাংলাদেশেও এই দিবসটি উদযাপিত হচ্ছে জেনে আমি আনন্দিত। বৈষম্যহীন নতুন বাংলাদেশ বিনির্মাণের উদ্যোগে মানবাধিকার দিবস পালনের গুরুত্ব নতুন মাত্রায় উপনীত হয়েছে।

ছাত্র-শ্রমিক-জনতার গণ-অভ্যুত্থানের মাধ্যমে গঠিত অস্বাভাবিক সরকার সকল প্রকার বৈষম্য ও মানবাধিকার লঙ্ঘন নিরসন করতে বদ্ধপরিকর। প্রতিটি নাগরিকের মানবাধিকার সমুন্নত রাখতে এই সরকার প্রতিশ্রুতিবদ্ধ।

মানবাধিকার হলো ক্ষুধা ও ভয় থেকে মুক্তি এবং স্বাধীনতা। মানবাধিকার সুরক্ষা না পেলে কোনো দেশ ও জাতির উন্নয়ন সম্ভব হয় না। অন্ন, বস্ত্র, বাসস্থান, শিক্ষা, চিকিৎসার মতো মৌলিক অধিকার সুরক্ষার পাশাপাশি, নাগরিক ও রাজনৈতিক অধিকার, বাক ও চিন্তার স্বাধীনতা নিশ্চিত করার মাধ্যমেই একটি দেশের সমৃদ্ধি নিশ্চিত করা যায়।

বর্তমান অস্বাভাবিক সরকার দেশের মানুষের ভাণ্ডা উন্নয়নে তাদের মানবাধিকার নিশ্চিত করতে কাজ করে যাচ্ছে। মানবাধিকার কমিশনের সার্বিক কাজকে বেগবান করার জন্য সরকারসহ সকল অংশীজনের সহযোগিতা অব্যাহত থাকবে বলে আমি বিশ্বাস করি।

আমি 'মানবাধিকার দিবস ২০২৪'-এর সর্বাঙ্গীণ সাফল্য কামনা করি।

প্রফেসর মুহাম্মদ ইউনুস



সচিব

জাতীয় মানবাধিকার কমিশন

বাণী

আজ ১০ ডিসেম্বর, মানবাধিকার দিবসে আসুন সকল মানুষের অধিকার প্রতিষ্ঠার জন্য আমরা অঙ্গীকারবদ্ধ হই। ১৯৪৮ সালের এই দিনে জাতিসংঘের সাধারণ পরিষদে 'সর্বজনীন মানবাধিকার ঘোষণাপত্র' (Universal Declaration of Human Rights) গৃহীত হয়, যা মানবজাতির অধিকার এবং মর্যাদা রক্ষায় একটি গুরুত্বপূর্ণ মাইলফলক। এই তাৎপর্যপূর্ণ দিনে মানবাধিকার সমুন্নত ও সুরক্ষিত রাখতে দায়বদ্ধতা এবং প্রতিশ্রুতির বিষয়ে সকলকে স্মরণ রাখার আহ্বান জানাই।

মানবাধিকার সর্বজনীন এবং জাতি, ধর্ম, বর্ণ নির্বিশেষে সকলের জন্য সমানভাবে প্রযোজ্য। সামাজিক, রাজনৈতিক, অর্থনৈতিক অধিকার ও অন্যান্য অধিকারগুলো মানবাধিকারের অন্তর্ভুক্ত। মানবাধিকার সুপ্রতিষ্ঠিত রাখতে সকল ধরনের নির্যাতন ও বৈষম্যের বিরুদ্ধে কার্যক্রম, সমাজের অনগ্রসর ও অবহেলিতদের পাশে দাঁড়ানো এবং সমাজের প্রতিটি স্তরে জনসাধারণ ও মানবাধিকার কর্মীদের সচেতনতা বৃদ্ধি ও সক্রিয়তা প্রয়োজন। এটি ইতিবাচক পরিবর্তন আনতে ভূমিকা রাখবে।

জাতীয় মানবাধিকার কমিশন সর্বদা প্রতিটি নাগরিক এবং জনগণের অধিকার প্রতিষ্ঠায় প্রতিশ্রুতিবদ্ধ এবং দৃঢ়তার সাথে কাজ অব্যাহত রাখবে এই প্রত্যঙ্গা ব্যক্ত করছি। কমিশন মানবাধিকার বিষয়ে জনগণের মধ্যে সচেতনতা বৃদ্ধি এবং মানবাধিকার সংস্কৃতি রক্ষায় চেষ্টা চালিয়ে যাচ্ছে।

মানবাধিকারকে সম্মান প্রদর্শন এবং চর্চার মাধ্যমে সমাজে মানবিক মর্যাদা, শান্তি ও স্থিতিশীলতা বজায় থাকে এবং শোষণ, বৈষম্য, নিপীড়নমূলক সমাজ প্রতিষ্ঠা সম্ভব হয়। মানবাধিকার সমুন্নত রাখতে রাষ্ট্র, জাতীয় ও আন্তর্জাতিক সংস্থা, সুশীল সমাজ, গণমাধ্যমসহ সকলকে একযোগে কাজ করতে হবে। সরকারের সম্মিলিত প্রচেষ্টা ও বৈশ্বিক সহযোগিতার মাধ্যমে মানবাধিকারের সুরক্ষা নিশ্চিত করা সম্ভব।

মানবাধিকার দিবসের সকল কার্যক্রমের সর্বাঙ্গীণ সাফল্য কামনা করছি।

সেবাষ্টিন রেমা

বাংলাদেশ রাষ্ট্রটি প্রতিষ্ঠা হয়েছে মানবাধিকার সুরক্ষার লক্ষ্য নিয়ে। মানুষের জীবন, অধিকার, সমতা এবং মর্যাদাপূর্ণ জীবনযাপনের জন্য অত্যাবশ্যকীয় সুযোগ-সুবিধাগুলোই মানবাধিকার। মানবাধিকার মানুষের জন্মগত অধিকার। অধিকারগুলো কখনো কেউ কারও কাছ থেকে কেড়ে নিতে পারে না।

জাতীয় মানবাধিকার কমিশন কী ও কেন

মানবাধিকার রক্ষা এবং তার উন্নয়নের প্রশান দায়িত্ব রাষ্ট্রের। রাষ্ট্র তার প্রশাসন, বিচার ও আইন বিভাগের মাধ্যমে জনগণের মানবাধিকার রক্ষায় কাজ করে। বিশ্বের বিভিন্ন রাষ্ট্র নিজ দেশের মানবাধিকার পরিস্থিতির উন্নয়নে রাষ্ট্রকে প্রয়োজনীয় সুপারিশ প্রদানের জন্য জাতীয় মানবাধিকার প্রতিষ্ঠান গঠন করে। রাষ্ট্র কর্তৃক গঠিত হলেও জাতীয় মানবাধিকার প্রতিষ্ঠানসমূহ স্বাধীনভাবে কাজ করে। তারা দেশের সার্বিক মানবাধিকার পরিস্থিতি পর্যবেক্ষণ করে এবং যথাযথ পর্যালোচনা শেষে রাষ্ট্রকে এ বিষয়ে প্রয়োজনীয় সুপারিশ প্রদান করে। বিভিন্ন বিষয়ে নিজস্ব পর্যবেক্ষণের মাধ্যমে সরকারকে মানবাধিকার পরিস্থিতি উন্নয়নে প্রয়োজনীয় সুপারিশ প্রদান করে এবং মানবাধিকার লঙ্ঘনের জন্য দায়ী ব্যক্তিদের তদন্তের মাধ্যমে চিহ্নিত করে তাদের বিরুদ্ধে প্রয়োজনীয় ব্যবস্থা গ্রহণ করার জন্য সরকারকে পরামর্শ প্রদান করে। দেশে দেশে এ ধরনের প্রতিষ্ঠানের গুরুত্ব দিনদিন বৃদ্ধি পাচ্ছে।

বাংলাদেশে ২০০৮ সালের ১ সেপ্টেম্বর জাতীয় মানবাধিকার কমিশন অধ্যাদেশ ২০০৭ জারির মাধ্যমে জাতীয় মানবাধিকার কমিশন আয়ত্বপ্রকাশ করে। জাতীয় মানবাধিকার কমিশন আইন-২০০৯ দ্বারা ২০১০ সালের ২২ জুন একজন চেয়ারম্যান, একজন সার্বক্ষণিক সদস্য এবং পাঁচজন অবৈতনিক সদস্যের সমন্বয়ে জাতীয় মানবাধিকার কমিশন গঠিত হয়।

জাতীয় মানবাধিকার কমিশনের কার্যাবলি

বাংলাদেশের জাতীয় মানবাধিকার কমিশনের এখতিয়ার যথেষ্ট বিস্তৃত। জাতীয় মানবাধিকার কমিশন আইন এবং আন্তর্জাতিক মানবাধিকার চুক্তিসমূহ বাংলাদেশ যার পক্ষভুক্ত, ইত্যাদি দলিলপত্রে এই এখতিয়ার সঙ্গতিতে। জাতীয় মানবাধিকার কমিশন আইন ২০০৯ এর ধারা-১২ অনুযায়ী কমিশনের কার্যাবলি নিম্নরূপ:

- দেওয়ানি কার্যবিধি, ১৯০৮ এর অধীন একটি দেওয়ানি আদালতের অনুরূপ ক্ষমতাবলে যে কোনো ধরনের মানবাধিকার লঙ্ঘনজনিত অভিযোগের তদন্ত করা। কমিশনে অভিযোগ দায়ের না করা হলেও কমিশন স্বতঃপ্ররোচিত হয়ে (suo moto) অভিযোগ গ্রহণ করতে পারবে;
- জেলবাণী, থানা হেফাজত ইত্যাদি আটকের স্থান পরিদর্শন করে তার উন্নয়নের জন্য সরকারের কাছে সুপারিশ করা;
- হাসপাতাল, শিক্ষাপ্রতিষ্ঠান ইত্যাদি সেবামূলক প্রতিষ্ঠান পরিদর্শন করে সেসবের উন্নয়নে সরকারকে সুপারিশ প্রদান;
- দেশের প্রচলিত আইনের আওতায় স্বীকৃত ব্যবস্থাসমূহ পর্যালোচনা করে এর কার্যকর বাস্তবায়নের জন্য সরকারকে সুপারিশ প্রদান;

কীভাবে অভিযোগ দাখিল করবেন?

কমিশনের নির্ধারিত ফরমে অথবা সাদা কাগজে হাতে লিখে বা টাইপ করে, কমিশনের অফিসে নিজে অথবা প্রতিনিধির মাধ্যমে উপস্থিত হয়ে অথবা ডাক মারফত, ফ্যাক্স অথবা ই-মেইলের মাধ্যমে অভিযোগ পাঠানো যায়। অভিযোগের সাথে অন্যান্য কাগজপত্র, ছবি, অডিও, ভিডিও ক্লিপ ইত্যাদি সংযুক্ত করা যেতে পারে।

অনলাইনে অভিযোগ দাখিল করবেন কীভাবে?

অনলাইনে অভিযোগ ব্যবস্থাপনা পদ্ধতি সফটওয়্যারের মাধ্যমে অভিযোগ দাখিল করা যায়। অনলাইনে অভিযোগ দাখিল করার জন্য ভিজিট করুন: <http://cms.nhrc.org.bd/> এরপর পরবর্তী নির্দেশনা অনুসরণ করুন।

অভিযোগ দেওয়ার পর কী হয়?

- (১) অভিযোগ গ্রহণ করার পর কমিশনের যাচাই-বাছাই কমিটি অভিযোগটির আইনগত দিক পরীক্ষা করে দেখাবে;
- (২) যাচাই-বাছাই কমিটি যদি দেখে যে আবেদনটি কমিশনের এখতিয়ারের বাইরে তাহলে অভিযোগকারীর কী করা উচিত সে বিষয়ে পরামর্শসহ অভিযোগকারীকে জানাবে;
- (৩) অভিযোগটি কমিশনের এখতিয়ারের মধ্যে হলে কমিশন অভিযোগের বিষয়টি তদন্ত করে দেখাবে;
- (৪) তদন্তে যদি মানবাধিকার লঙ্ঘনের বিষয় প্রকাশ পায় তাহলে কমিশন অভিযোগকারী এবং অভিযুক্তের মধ্যে উভুত বিরোধটি প্রয়োজ ক্ষেত্রে মধ্যস্থতা ও সমঝোতার মাধ্যমে নিষ্পত্তির চেষ্টা করবে;
- (৫) মধ্যস্থতা সফল না হলে মানবাধিকার লঙ্ঘনকারী ব্যক্তির বিরুদ্ধে মামলা বা অন্য কোনো কার্যধারা দায়ের করার জন্য কমিশন যথাযথ কর্তৃপক্ষের কাছে সুপারিশ করবে।

মনে রাখবেন

- (১) অভিযোগ করা বা অভিযোগ সম্পর্কে খোঁজ নেওয়া, অভিযোগ করার আগে পরামর্শ করা ইত্যাদির জন্য অভিযোগ দায়ের থেকে নিষ্পত্তির কোনো পর্যায়েই কোনো আর্থিক লেনদেন/খরচ করার প্রয়োজন হয় না।
- (২) কমিশনের মূল লক্ষ্য হচ্ছে রাষ্ট্রীয় প্রতিষ্ঠান যেন তার ক্ষমতার অপব্যবহার করে নাগরিকের মর্যাদা, সম্মান, সমতা ইত্যাদির অধিকার লঙ্ঘন করতে না পারে তার প্রতি লক্ষ্য রেখে দেশে মানবাধিকার সংস্কৃতি গড়ে তোলা, সার্বিক মানবাধিকার পরিস্থিতির সংরক্ষণ ও উন্নয়ন করা।

মো. আশরাফুল আলম
পরিচালক (অভিযোগ ও তদন্ত)
জাতীয় মানবাধিকার কমিশন

GAZA OFFENSIVE

1m displaced Palestinians face extreme cold: UN

AGENCIES

Nearly one million displaced Palestinians in Gaza are at risk from extreme cold and rain this winter, the UN agency for Palestine refugees (UNRWA) has warned.

“Displaced people in Gaza need protection from the rain and cold. Only around 23 percent of this need has been met, leaving 945,000 people at risk of exposure this winter,” the UN agency said in a statement on Sunday. “Aid is urgently required to



address the overwhelming needs as the crisis deepens.”

The United Nations also renewed its call for a ceasefire in Gaza as Israeli airstrikes demolished homes and casualties increased.

The health ministry in Hamas-run Gaza said yesterday that at least 44,758 people have been killed in more than 14 months of Israeli offensive in the enclave.

“In Deir Al Balah and across Gaza, people search through the rubble of their destroyed homes, trying to salvage what little remains after an Israeli airstrike,” the UN’s agency for Palestinian refugees said in a post on X.

“As strikes continue, civilian casualties rise, and homes and vital infrastructure are reduced to ruins. The human cost of this war is unbearable. We need a ceasefire now.”

In a separate development, more than 4,000 amputations and 2,000 cases of spinal and brain injuries have been recorded in Gaza since the start of the Israeli offensive last year, a news agency reports.



Protesters attend a rally calling for the impeachment of South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol, who declared martial law which was reversed hours later, in front of the National Assembly in Seoul, South Korea yesterday. Yeol has been banned from leaving the country.

PHOTO: REUTERS

Israel bombs Syria chemical weapons sites

Aims to prevent rebel groups seizing advanced weaponry; Kremlin says Putin authorised Assad’s asylum

AGENCIES

Israel has struck suspected chemical weapons sites and long-range rockets in Syria in order to prevent them from falling into the hands of hostile actors, the foreign minister said yesterday.

Syrian rebels reached Damascus over the weekend and overthrew president Bashar Assad’s government following nearly 14 years of civil war, raising hopes for a more peaceful future but also concerns about a potential security vacuum in the country, which is still split among armed groups.

In a separate development, the Kremlin said Russia has granted political asylum to Assad, a decision it said was taken by President Vladimir Putin. Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov declined to

comment on Assad’s specific whereabouts and said Putin was not planning to meet with him, reports AP.

Kremlin also said that it was too early to say what the future would hold for Russia’s military bases in Syria, adding that it would be the subject of discussion with the new rulers in Damascus.

Israelis have welcomed the fall of Assad, who was a key ally of Iran and Lebanon’s Hezbollah group, while expressing concern over what comes next.

Israel says its forces temporarily seized a buffer zone inside Syria dating back to a 1974 agreement after Syrian troops withdrew in the chaos. The military published photos of Israeli commandos in the Syrian Mount Hermon area. Saar said the troop presence was strictly limited.

Meanwhile, Turkey-backed Syrian opposition groups took control of the northern Syrian town of Manbij from US-backed Syrian Kurdish forces (SDF), a Turkish security source said yesterday.

The SDF had been holding the town in recent days amid intense fighting with the Syrian National Army (SNA) and other Turkey-backed groups, reports Reuters.

President Joe Biden said later on Sunday that the sudden collapse of the Syrian government under Assad is a “fundamental act of justice” after decades of repression, but it was “a moment of risk and uncertainty” for the Middle East.

The outgoing Biden administration and President-elect Donald Trump were working to make sense of new threats and opportunities across the Middle East.

Taiwan military on high alert

China deploys 90 ships in likely drills

REUTERS, Taipei

Taiwan raised its alert level yesterday saying China has set up seven zones of reserved airspace and deployed naval fleets and coast guard boats in what a security source described as the first military drills across a broad swathe of the region’s waters.

A senior Taiwan security official told Reuters that China currently has nearly 90 navy and coast guard ships in waters near Taiwan, the southern Japanese islands and the East and South China Seas, of which around two-thirds were navy vessels.

Beijing’s defence ministry did not immediately respond to a Reuters request for comment.

China, which claims democratically governed Taiwan as its own territory, had been expected to launch another round of exercises in response to Taiwan President Lai Ching-te’s trip to the Pacific, which included stopovers in Hawaii and the U.S. territory of Guam, security sources had told Reuters.

India bolsters naval fleet with new Russia-built warship

AFP, Moscow

India’s defence minister watched the commissioning of his country’s latest naval vessel at a Russian shipyard yesterday, hailing it as a “significant milestone” in ties with a longstanding defence ally.

Indian defence minister Rajnath Singh took part in the commissioning ceremony of the country’s latest multi-role stealth guided missile frigate, INS Tushil, in the Baltic port of Kaliningrad. “The ship is a proud testament to India’s growing maritime strength and a significant milestone in long-standing bilateral relations with Russia,” Singh posted on X.

Tushil, or “Shield” in English, weighs 3,900 tonnes and carries “an impressive blend of Russian and Indian cutting edge technologies”, the defence ministry in New Delhi said last week.

It also said the ship would reach India in a “near-combat ready condition” since all Russian equipment on board had been already tested successfully.

New Delhi has walked a diplomatic tightrope since the beginning of the Ukraine conflict in February 2022.

An endless wait for justice

FROM PAGE 12

With the new interim government in place, there is an opportunity to revisit the case and ensure justice for the family.”

However, the former chairman of the National Human Rights Commission Dr Mizanur Rahman, said, “When I visited the site, the unnaturally clean and orderly state of the area where the body was found raised serious questions. The issue is clear – critical evidence has been destroyed.

“When evidence is tampered with or erased, proving a crime becomes extraordinarily difficult. The court relies on evidence to deliver justice, and without it, the process is severely undermined.”

Tonu’s father said, “The case wasn’t filed the way I wanted. My daughter went to Sergeant Jahid’s house for tuition [on the day of the incident], but they listed unidentified persons instead.”

Intellectually challenged Samia’s father had to consider settling the case out of court for Tk 200,000 due to his financial struggles.

“But they [the perpetrators] offered only Tk 50,000, so I refused,” he said, highlighting how low-income families often have to compromise on justice.

Women with Disabilities Development Foundation (WDDF) took up Samia’s case, but systemic barriers made progress difficult.

“The first hurdle was obtaining the forensic report, which requires persistent lobbying to obtain, delaying the process,” said WDDF founder Ashrafun Nahar Mishiti.

“The court environment was not accommodating to Samia’s disability and failed to meet her needs. The interrogation was offensive and traumatising.... The stress caused her to lose consciousness at one point.”

A sign language interpreter from a local school for the disabled was appointed by the court.

“The interpreter wasn’t familiar with Samia’s communication style. An interpreter who understands her, like a family member, should have been provided”, Mishiti added

Former public prosecutor Naresh Mukherjee said, “The next court

date is February 6. After the defence presents their arguments, the case may proceed to a verdict, but the accused has requested to present witnesses. If [the request is] granted, the verdict may be delayed.”

Meanwhile, the accused continues to threaten the family, warning he will go to jail only after harming or killing them.

“My only son could be stabbed any time – he [the accused] always carries a knife,” the father said.

Even cases with quick verdicts under close monitoring of rights organisations’ fail to ensure proper justice or improvements to victims’ lives.

The Crime Victims Compensation Act, which recommended a district fund for victims of violent crimes, including rape, was proposed in 2006. However, it remains unaddressed since its submission in 2007, leaving survivors without state support.

After the Noakhali gang rape case received widespread media coverage, many falsely assumed the victim had received significant financial aid from the government or NGOs.

“In reality, I survive on Tk 5,000 a month from some women’s rights activists in Dhaka,” said Nasima.

“I had to pull my son out of college because I couldn’t afford it. The former deputy commissioner had promised me cattle or a shop, but nothing ever came of it. The new deputy commissioner doesn’t even let me meet him.”

Nasima lives in a house provided by the local MP, but recent floods have taken that away too.

“My home was submerged.... All my goats and chickens died. I had to take shelter at my sister’s house and came back to find I had nothing left.”

Additionally, she can no longer earn a living through her previous work.

“Ever since they [the rapists] injured my head, I can’t even thread a needle, let alone stitch quilts like I used to.”

The three cases are reflective of the harsh reality survivors and families of survivors or victims (who were murdered after rape) must confront, with the legal system and societal prejudice that perpetuate an endless wait for justice.

37pc want to skip classes

FROM PAGE 12

Among those surveyed, 36.5 percent of respondents said primary students became inattentive to studies and 28.6 percent said experienced mental harm.

The survey further found that political and social instability caused various mental changes among children.

Around 45.8 percent respondents said children experienced mental instability, 19.2 percent stated that children became inattentive to education, 15.3 percent said they noticed unruly behaviour, 13.8 percent mentioned that children were addicted to devices, 6.9 percent said children remained fearful, 23.2 percent mentioned that children were panicked, and 19.7 percent stated that a sense of insecurity prevailed among children.

To improve the mental health of children, CAMPE has recommended that parents adopt a friendly approach towards students, keep them away from mobile addiction, and encourage their participation in local sports and cultural practices.

The event was chaired by CAMPE Executive Director Rasheda K Choudhury. In her closing remarks, she said, “To ensure their education, children need to maintain their mental health. Therefore, we will present the proposals received from the event to the government so that the government can take the necessary measures.”

She also highlighted the importance of working together with the government and stakeholders to maintain the mental health of children.

Speaking as the chief guest at the event, Bidhan Ranjan Roy Podder, adviser to the Ministry of Primary and Mass Education, said, “If we cannot bring social changes, it will not be possible to improve the mental health of children by only counselling. The government is doing the necessary work.”

Mentioning that “10 beautiful schools” will be inaugurated this month, the adviser said, “We are also working on beautification of other schools as well. These will help maintain the mental health of children.”

Ex-minister, allies took out Tk 2,000cr

FROM PAGE 12

charge of the bank’s executive committee. This allowed Saifuzzaman to act as the de facto chairman of UCB and direct its operations for personal gain, according to the letter.

One such instance of interference involved providing loans to Adnan Imam’s companies Genex Infosys, Genex Infrastructure, A&P Venture and AWR Developments without proper scrutiny or adherence to the bank’s lending policies.

Under the direction of individuals like Saifuzzaman and Alamgir Kabir (Apu), the bank’s management bypassed critical internal controls and approved the loans without adequate collateral or necessary assessments, it said.

The irregularities also extended to a controversial share purchase involving Genex Infosys in late 2021.

UCB approved the purchase of 6,083,626 locked-in shares of Genex Infosys at inflated prices from two shareholders closely related to Adnan Imam.

The transaction bypassed the normal due diligence procedures and was even discussed as a “miscellaneous agenda” in the board meetings without being formally listed.

The shares, which had been

purchased at Tk 172.50 each, rapidly lost value, causing the bank to incur significant financial losses.

Within a year, the value of the shares plummeted to Tk 37.9 per share, resulting in a loss of Tk 78.25 crore.

Moreover, Imam’s influence extended beyond this single transaction. He is believed to have manipulated the loan approval process, exerting undue pressure on bank officials to expedite and approve loans that benefited him and his affiliates.

An investigation led by Zahir, who assumed the role of chairman on August 29, found evidence that indicated the actions were part of a broader pattern of fraudulent activities orchestrated by Saifuzzaman, Imam and other individuals in positions of power within the bank.

The letter also highlighted the role of Alamgir Kabir, a close relative of Saifuzzaman, who played a pivotal role in facilitating the approval of the loans.

Kabir’s rapid promotion within the bank despite a lack of merit is believed to have been part of a strategy to place him in a position where he could manipulate loan approvals and circumvent the bank’s internal controls.

His actions, according to the letter, contributed significantly to the bank’s exposure to risky loans, many of which have now defaulted.

Given the scale of the alleged financial mismanagement and the involvement of high-profile figures in the scandal, the new UCB management has called for a thorough investigation into the actions of the former board members, including Saifuzzaman, Imam, Kabir and others.

ACC Director General Md Akhtar Hossain and Zahir could not be reached for comment.

Ashikur Rahman Habibe Rabbi, head of corporate and regulatory affairs at Genex Infosys, said the allegations raised in the letter are baseless.

“Requesting a loan from a bank is a fundamental right of any organisation, and the onus for approving loans rests entirely with the bank. Genex cannot be held responsible for the management of that approval process. It seems that unwarranted accusations are being directed at Genex.”

The loans obtained by Genex were approved in full compliance with the bank’s regulatory framework.

The acquisition of Genex shares by UCB was conducted with all necessary approvals from the Bangladesh

Securities and Exchange Commission and adhered to all regulatory and board protocols, Rabbi said.

“These transactions were conducted on an arm’s length basis, and Genex has honoured all dividend payments to its shareholders. The choice by UCB to purchase and later sell the shares during a market downturn was solely their decision, and Genex cannot be held liable for that.”

One out

FROM PAGE 12

accounting, sociology, and finance and banking have lower unemployment rates.

Around 36 percent of NU graduates are employed as teachers, while 43.13 percent aspire for government jobs.

The study also pointed out several challenges, most prominently low student attendance, poor quality of education, lack of incentives and training for teachers, and education programmes in misalignment with job market demands.

SM Zulfiqar Ali recommended ensuring quality teaching and learning, introducing teachers’ feedback and market-based learning facilities, alongside the inclusion of co-curricular and soft-skill activities at NU-affiliated colleges to improve education quality.

Accused makes confessional

FROM PAGE 12

filed with Kotwali Police Station.

During the clash, Saiful was beaten and hacked to death outside the court premises.

Kotwali police later registered three cases in connection with assault on police, vandalism, and obstructing police personnel in discharging their duties during clashes between police, lawyers, and followers of Chinmoy.

Following the murder, Saiful’s father, Jamal Uddin, filed a murder case naming 31 individuals. Saiful’s brother also lodged another case accusing 115 people.

So far, a total of six cases have been lodged with police and courts in connection with murder and clashes.

Police have arrested 40 people. Ten suspects, mostly cleaners by profession, were also held in the murder case, said police.

World cautious

FROM PAGE 1

Sham (HTS), a former al-Qaeda affiliate, was a generational turning point for the Middle East.

It ends a war that killed hundreds of thousands, caused one of the biggest refugee crises of modern times and left cities bombed to rubble, countryside depopulated and the economy hollowed out by global sanctions. Millions of refugees could finally go home from camps across Turkey, Lebanon and Jordan.

Meanwhile, international diplomats reacted cautiously yesterday to the prospect of the HTS group taking control in Syria after the fall of President Bashar al-Assad.

HTS has its roots in the Syrian branch of Al-Qaeda and is proscribed

as a “terrorist” organisation by Western governments, including the European Union.

Although HTS and its leader Abu Mohammad al-Jolani have promised to protect minorities and respect people’s rights, Europe is not ready to trust them just yet.

Assad’s fall also wipes out one of the main bastions from which Iran and Russia wielded regional power. Turkey, long aligned with Assad’s foes, emerges strengthened.

The Arab world faces the task of reintegrating one of the Middle East’s pivotal states, while containing a brand of militant Sunni Islam that has in the past metastasised into the sectarian violence of Islamic State.

A new dawn for Syria

The country’s future must be determined by Syrians

With the end of former Syrian President Bashar al-Assad's brutal 24-year reign on December 8, the Syrian people finally have an opportunity to now rebuild their nation. Islamist-led rebel groups swept into Damascus, forcing Assad to flee to Russia, marking a spectacular end of five decades of Ba'ath Party rule in the country. After more than 13 years of civil war, during which Assad's forces ruthlessly suppressed protesters, his government collapsed in the face of a surprising 11-day offensive launched by rebel groups. Only weeks ago, few could have anticipated this dramatic turn in Syria's fate, which now stands at a crossroads as the Middle East grapples with widespread chaos and instability.

Following Assad's ouster, huge crowds were seen cheering in the streets of Damascus. Prisoners held in notorious black sites were reportedly freed by the rebels. Notably, Assad's reign ended after Hayat Tahrir al-Sham (HTS)—listed as a terrorist organisation by Western governments and others, including Russia—captured the strategic city of Homs. However, HTS and other rebel groups themselves have dubious human rights records. Given this reality, the UN war crimes investigators have urged those now taking charge in Syria to ensure that the atrocities committed under Assad's rule are not repeated.

Since the start of the most recent rebel offensive, it is estimated that at least 910 people have been killed, including 138 civilians. The war in Syria has already claimed a conservative estimate of 500,000 lives and displaced nearly half of the country's population. It is, therefore, imperative that, with the fall of the previous regime, the country moves forward and begins to heal. The first step towards stability is ending the violence, with all parties in Syria engaging in dialogue to reach a solution that reflects people's will. Moreover, it is crucial that the transition of power proceeds peacefully and that all ethnic, religious and social groups in the country are protected from persecution.

Despite Assad's ruthless actions against his own people, internal factors were not the sole drivers of his regime's collapse. Syria became a battleground for geopolitical rivalries, as external powers exploited the crisis to further their own agendas. Already after the regime change, Israel has seized territory in Syria-controlled areas of the Golan Heights, with its prime minister ordering forces to establish a buffer zone in the region. Reports also indicate that Israel has resumed bombing campaigns in Syria, violating international law and further exacerbating uncertainty both within the country and across the region.

Given the years of suffering endured by the Syrian people—caused by both internal and external factors—it is imperative that foreign interference in the country comes to an end. While the international community should step forward to provide aid and funding for Syria's reconstruction, foreign powers must cease using the country as a pawn in their geopolitical chessboards. The future of Syria must be determined by its own people. Only then can the nation truly reap the benefits of ousting a brutal dictator.

Extortion using dubious cases must stop

Authorities must end the legal harassment of innocent people

It is a matter of deep concern that a section of complainants who filed questionable cases after the August 5 political changeover in the country are now extorting money from the accused. According to the DMP commissioner, some of these complainants are now calling the accused and demanding money, promising to remove their names from the cases or withdraw the cases, for which they do not have the authority. Consequently, even though we appreciate the DMP commissioner's honest admission that some police personnel are also involved in this unlawful practice, the practice itself is worrying. The police chief's assurance that action will be taken against those involved in such extortion is appreciable. And we hope to see concrete action taken to address this problem.

After the fall of the Awami League regime, many cases were reportedly filed by family members, neighbours, and activists of different political parties, accusing several thousand people of the killings during the July-August uprising. This daily, on September 22, reported at least six cases where the killings took place in the capital, but most of the accused in the cases were found to be residents of the complainants' home districts and upazilas. For instance, a man named Labhlu Mia was shot dead during protests in Uttara on August 5. A month later, his cousin Dukhu Mia filed a murder case against 221 individuals—mostly local Awami League leaders—who were residents of their hometown, Rangpur. The other cases are also quite similar.

Clearly, these cases were filed for reasons other than seeking justice which, as legal experts have opined, will only weaken the credibility of the charges. Many of the accused have alleged that they were framed with the sole intent of harassing them—and it seems that filing complaints for the purpose of extorting people is also one of the motives in some cases. The question, however, remains: shouldn't the police have been more careful in registering such cases?

We urge the DMP commissioner to take concrete action on this issue. Experts have previously recommended compiling a list of dubious cases and submitting it to the Supreme Court authorities so they can issue the necessary directives in this regard. This should be done without delay. We also expect the home ministry to look into the matter and ensure that innocent people do not suffer from being falsely implicated in cases or subjected to extortion.

THIS DAY IN HISTORY

Niazi’s escape plan busted

On this day in 1971, fearing defeat, Lt Gen Amir Abdullah Khan Niazi tried to plot an escape but BBC leaked his plan. To conceal his weakness, he went to Hotel Intercontinental and said proudly, “Where are the international journalists? I want them to know that I will never leave my army behind.”

HUMAN RIGHTS DAY

‘We must challenge not just regimes, but also oppressive legal machinery’

Taqbir Huda, a human rights lawyer who is currently pursuing graduate legal studies at Harvard University and has previously served as the South Asia regional researcher at Amnesty International, talks about the current state of human rights in Bangladesh and the potential way forward, in an exclusive interview with Noshin Nawal of The Daily Star.

What were the most rampant human rights violations that characterised the Awami League rule?

Extrajudicial killings and enforced disappearances were undoubtedly the most egregious and systematic violations that were instrumentalised as tools of repression, with at least 708 people forcibly disappeared during the Awami League's 15-plus years of rule, according to conservative estimates by Odhikar. Human Rights Watch dubbed this period as a “decade of disappearance.”

At the same time, thousands were killed extrajudicially, usually under the guise of anti-drug or counterterrorism campaigns. All this happened against the wider backdrop of suppressing dissent, with freedom of expression being systematically dismantled through draconian laws like the Digital Security Act. These laws allowed the regime to criminalise dissent under the guise of legality, creating an atmosphere of fear and silencing opposition voices.

How was dissent silenced during the Awami League rule, and what were the implications for freedom of speech?

The Awami League was alarmingly effective in eradicating dissent, particularly in the online sphere. I can refer to two cases I directly investigated and campaigned for while serving at Amnesty. Take the case of Khadija, a university student who hosted a webinar when she was 17 where a retired army officer criticised the Awami League. Since they couldn't target him—as he was abroad—they went after her. Khadija endured nearly 15 months of pre-trial detention before being released under immense national and international pressure.

During her imprisonment, Khadija was subjected to inhuman treatment. She was forced to do manual labour, placed in solitary confinement, and denied basic medical treatment for kidney-related illnesses. This highlights how authoritarianism had trickled down to the lowest levels.

Another striking example is the case of Anisha Siddika, a victim of arbitrary detention whose case I investigated while working at Amnesty. She was a 58-year-old woman who was arrested at the dead of night in August 2023, after her son made a Facebook post critical of the Awami League and procedural irregularities of the international crimes tribunal. Her son was residing in the US at the time. The state sent a chilling message: no matter where you are, if you criticise the Awami League, they will retaliate by targeting your loved ones who remain in Bangladesh.

They arrested his mother under trumped-up terrorism charges using the draconian Special Powers Act, accusing her of conspiring to commit sabotage against the government. Although Anisha observed the full-face veil as a matter of religious practice, the police forcibly unveiled her face, photographed her, and uploaded her image to their Facebook page. Such a blatant violation of her dignity should have sparked public outrage. Yet, there was a conspicuous silence from the usual circles of civil society and human rights defenders. I would like us to reflect on why we failed to stand in solidarity with Anisha Siddika, despite the very public manner in which the state violated her human rights.

Have you personally been affected by this clampdown on dissent?

Between August 2022 and August 2024, I was working as the Bangladesh researcher at Amnesty International, investigating and reporting on human rights violations perpetrated by the state under the former ruling party. For my own safety and that of my family, I was forced to keep my affiliation with Amnesty a well-guarded secret from the outset. The last thing I wanted was to have a criminal case filed against me for “spreading propaganda” or “tarnishing the image of the state”—which had become the former government's default response to even the slightest bit of critique. Awami League had essentially blacklisted Amnesty, and high-ranking party officials would frequently accuse it of conspiring against Bangladesh



Taqbir Huda

PHOTO: COURTESY

whenever its human rights violations were exposed. To avoid risk of persecution, I had to use a pseudonym and burner phones for external communications, request my non-Bangladeshi colleagues to front our outputs on Bangladesh, and avoid any public-facing engagements which would risk putting me on the state's ever-broadening radar of surveillance. There were even moments when I added and then removed my Amnesty affiliation from my LinkedIn profile. That's how successful the state was in catalysing a culture of fear.

All this changed on July 16, 2024, a day after the crackdown on the student protesters started, when I decided to accept the first media interview (as a spokesperson for Amnesty) to highlight how the state had used Chhatra League and police to brutalise students, including the killing of Abu Sayeed, on DW News—the first international media outlet to cover the July uprising in any detail. At a moment when the state began killing children while simultaneously imposing a total internet shutdown to block international monitoring, seizing any available opportunity to expose the truth seemed like a moral obligation. So I began seizing every such opportunity that followed, despite the inherent risks which I had assiduously sought to avoid so far.

Human rights defenders should not have to navigate their work under the constant shadow of state retaliation. We must create a culture where questioning authority is seen as a vital part of our national integrity, not a threat to it. In our quest for accountability, we would do well to remember that any attempts to ensure justice must be fair, transparent, and in compliance with international human rights standards. Anything less would dishonour the legacy of those who shed blood for our collective freedom.

What systemic factors allowed such widespread human rights violations to persist for so long?

The roots of this issue lie in the colonial-era criminal laws that the postcolonial state inherited and expanded upon. These laws grant sweeping powers to the police, such as arresting and searching

individuals without warrants, seizing their devices, and denying them bail, leading to lengthy arbitrary detention awaiting a trial.

At least 708 people forcibly disappeared during the Awami League’s 15-plus years of rule, according to conservative estimates by Odhikar. Human Rights Watch dubbed this period as a ‘decade of disappearance.’ At the same time, thousands were killed extrajudicially, usually under the guise of anti-drug or counterterrorism campaigns. All this happened against the wider backdrop of suppressing dissent, with freedom of expression being systematically dismantled through draconian laws like the Digital Security Act.

Alarmingly, the latest available statistics show that almost 80 percent of Bangladesh's prison population consists of pre-trial detainees—individuals who haven't even been convicted of any crime. This is a direct result of an authoritarian penal system where human rights of the accused are violated by the state with full legal sanction. Additionally, we lack an independent prosecutorial system; prosecutors are often ad-hoc political appointees, while the police and judiciary have been compromised through partisan recruitment.

If the police, prosecution and judiciary are effectively under partisan control, how can the criminal justice system be anything other than an instrument of oppression at the beck and call of whichever party is in power? The Awami League used the same colonial policing model that the British Raj introduced to quash native rebellion, against protesters during the July uprising and beyond.

We would be remiss if we did not acknowledge that the mass arrests, mob assaults, prolonged remand and detention of former Awami League ministers and high-ranking officials on legally dubious charges are also a cause for concern. The right to a fair trial is not conditional; it is absolute, no matter how egregious the alleged crime may be or how detestable the person accused may be. We owe it to all the victims of Bloody July to ensure that justice for their killings is obtained through a fair and transparent process, rather than one that reproduces injustices. We cannot allow their deaths to be exploited for the settling of political vendettas. We cannot allow the legal system to be misused in the same way that the Awami League had misused it.

Authoritarians come and go, but authoritarian institutions and laws remain intact. True emancipation requires dismantling these systems. We must challenge not just regimes but also the oppressive legal machinery that sustains and justifies the state's sweeping punitive powers.

How do you evaluate the role of the National Human Rights Commission?

The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) has been largely irrelevant in the course of my human rights work in Bangladesh. We were aware of its existence but, as Dr Shahdeen Malik once aptly described it, the NHRC had become “a

retirement home for top bureaucrats.”

Given that the NHRC does not possess formal executive powers or direct investigative powers over law enforcement agencies (who are accused of committing the bulk of human rights violations), the only possible role it could meaningfully serve is that of a watchdog. Unfortunately, we currently lack robust human rights statistics, relying instead on data published by certain NGOs. Even those are often methodologically dubious because they are primarily based on newspaper-reported incidents, which are not the most reliable sources. If the NHRC were to adopt a methodology for documenting and enumerating human rights violations, it could provide a vital resource (and perhaps even serve as a contact point) for international human rights organisations working on Bangladesh (which typically lack a field presence and are reliant on ground sources), such as Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, Civicus, etc.

which have worked persistently to push for accountability for human rights violations in Bangladesh at the international level.

Equally important is shifting our understanding of justice. Victims of human rights violations often require reparations—compensation, rehabilitation, and restitution—but these mechanisms are almost non-existent in our legal framework. For example, the Crime Victims Compensation Act, proposed in 2007, remains a draft even after 17 years. The NHRC could consider taking the lead in ensuring reparative justice for victims of human rights violations.

Have human rights defenders been reduced to mere political pawns?

Not pawns, but human rights defenders were systematically restricted and silenced. The government allowed activism on certain “apolitical” issues—those involving non-state actors—but cracked down on work that exposed state complicity. NGOs working on sensitive issues like extrajudicial killings or enforced disappearances faced defunding, deregistration, intimidation, and freezing of assets.

One does not have to look further than the retaliation faced by Odhikar. Its leaders were targeted, jailed and its operations crippled, sending a chilling message to others. Human rights organisations had to choose between reporting on the most pressing human rights violations or avoiding state crackdown. Most opted for the latter, perhaps as a matter of survival.

What is your vision for the future regarding freedom of dissent and human rights in Bangladesh?

I dream of a Bangladesh where dissent is no longer criminalised but celebrated, and where human rights work is allowed to thrive instead of being self-incriminating. Human rights defenders should not have to navigate their work under the constant shadow of state retaliation. We must create a culture where questioning authority is seen as a vital part of our national integrity, not a threat to it. In our quest for accountability, we would do well to remember that any attempts to ensure justice must be fair, transparent, and in compliance with international human rights standards. Anything less would dishonour the legacy of those who shed blood for our collective freedom.

Read the full version of this interview on our website.

Politics of Indian propaganda regarding Bangladesh



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KALLOL MUSTAFA

Ever since the fall of the Bangladeshi dictator Sheikh Hasina in the student-citizen uprising of July-August, Indian news outlets and social media platforms have been spreading various types of disinformation about the persecution of religious minorities in Bangladesh. The disinformation includes portraying attacks on Awami League (AL) leaders as attacks on Hindus, arson attacks on AL offices as burning of temples, spreading images of past attacks or fires as images of recent events etc.

According to an investigation by Rumor Scanner, a Bangladeshi fact checking organisation, as many as 49 Indian media outlets spread at least 13 false reports about Bangladesh between August 12 and December 5, 2024. Out of this, Republic Bangla has propagated a maximum of five rumours. The *Hindustan Times*, *Zee News*, and *Live Mint* each spread three false reports. Meanwhile, Republic, *India Today*, ABP Anand, and Aaj Tak each broadcasted two false reports. The remaining 41 media outlets spread one false report each.

The rumours spread by these Indian media, according to Rumor Scanner, included: a fake letter from Sheikh Hasina after her resignation; a video of a Muslim man falsely claimed as Hindu during a search for his son; false reports about Bangladesh's Chief Adviser Muhammad Yunus's health and location; baseless claims of withdrawal of bans on militant groups; arms smuggling via a ship from Pakistan; misrepresentation of lawyer Saiful Islam's murder; alleged ban on Indian TV channels; idol immersion in India misrepresented as a reaction to attacks on Hindu idols in Bangladesh; an alleged attack on a Shyamoli Paribahan bus from India; and false UK travel advisories for Bangladesh.

The political motive behind Indian propaganda on the allegations of minority persecution in Bangladesh can be understood by looking at the statistics of attacks on minorities during the previous Awami League government led by Sheikh Hasina.

As many as 3,679 attacks on the Hindu community took place in the nine years, between January 2013 and September 2021, according to a compilation of data from the annual reports of the human-rights organisation Ain o Salish Kendra (ASK) during that period. The attacks included vandalism and setting fire to 559 houses and 442 shops and businesses of the Hindu community. At least 1,678 cases of vandalism and arson attacks on Hindu temples, idols and places of worship were also reported in the same period.

Recent ASK data shows the number of attacks on minorities in 2022 and 2023 was 12 and 22, respectively, and between January to July 2024, there were 28 such attacks. The attacks are random in nature, influenced by various local and national political and economic factors. For example, during the first six months of 2024 when Sheikh Hasina was in power, attacks on minorities in January, February and March were 10, seven and four, respectively, while incidents of attack in April, May and June were zero, three and three, respectively. It must be noted that news reports are one of the sources of ASK data.

After the current interim government assumed responsibility, there were 10 and 11 attacks on minorities in September and October 2024, respectively, based on ASK statistics. A year ago in September and October 2023, there were eight and three attacks. But three years ago, in just three days of October 2021, while Hasina was in power, 70 puja venues, 30 homes and 50 shops

were vandalised, torched and looted in different parts of the country. The Hindu community faced the highest number of attacks in 2014; as many as 761 Hindu homes, 193 businesses and 247 temples and places of worship were attacked that year.

Therefore, attacks on minority groups in Bangladesh have not started suddenly after the fall of

accused of patronising communal violence.

Now the question is, why have the Indian Hindutva groups, engaged in attacking and torturing the minority population in their own country because of communal hatred, suddenly become so agitated about the allegations of minority persecution in Bangladesh? What

Bangladesh, using the Bangladeshi seaports, hydropower transmission from their northeastern to the southern, western and northern regions, economic zones, businesses in the energy sector etc are now facing uncertainties. On the other hand, BJP and its affiliated organisations are carrying out anti-Bangladesh propaganda in a planned manner to

people of the minority community in Uttar Pradesh's Sambhal. Many Muslim political leaders and social activists including Abu Bakr, Umar Khalid, Gullisha Fatima, Sharjeel Imam have been put in jail. By taking away OBC reservation, bringing waqf bill, making uniform civil rules, and digging up temples under mosques, many rights of minorities have been or are being taken away. Thousands of minority families have been displaced by bulldozers in Uttar Pradesh and Assam."

That's why, the APDR stated that the Indian government's statement about protecting the right of expression of minorities in Bangladesh is nothing but crocodile tears. The Modi government has no right to demand equal rights for minorities in other countries by turning minorities into second class citizens at home. This is just an attempt to spread political dominance over Bangladesh and create opportunities for unfair interference.

People of both countries should be aware and careful about this Hindutva agenda of the BJP and its affiliates. Meanwhile, communal attacks in Bangladesh must not be justified just because India's minority population is being attacked or because Hindus were attacked during Hasina's tenure in Bangladesh. People, political organisations and the government of post-Hasina Bangladesh have the responsibility to bring down the attacks on all religious and ethnic minorities, including Hindus, to zero, ensure that the attackers are brought to book and given exemplary punishment.

Furthermore, the government should take the initiative to debunk every kind of misinformation propagated by the Indian media and communicate it to both Indian and International media. For this, a special monitoring team can be formed to investigate each incident through local and foreign independent fact-checkers and bring out the real facts. Most importantly, unity and solidarity should be enhanced with the secular and democratic people and organisations of India who are fighting against the communal politics.



In 2016, religious zealots physically assaulted over 100 people and vandalised and looted over 100 homes and 17 temples of the Hindu community in Nasirnagar, Brahmanbaria.

FILE PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

Sheikh Hasina. Over the years, various motives—from land grabbing to local political conflicts and even posts about religion on Facebook—led to attacks on the Hindu community and sometimes other marginalised groups in Bangladesh. Of course, these are very sad and unacceptable incidents and many Bangladeshis are fighting and protesting against these attacks, just like many Indians protest attacks on minorities in their country. However, an important difference between the situation in Bangladesh and India is that there is no communal political party in power in Bangladesh like India's Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) which itself is

was their reaction when the Hindu community was regularly attacked during Sheikh Hasina's regime? Did they attack the High Commission of Bangladesh in India then as they recently did in Agartala? Did they stop the export of onions and potatoes to Bangladesh and urge the United Nations to send peacekeeping forces to Bangladesh?

In fact, all this is being done for political gain by creating communal tension. On the one hand, the Indian ruling class cannot accept the painful reality of losing dominance over Bangladesh after Hasina's fall. India's various strategic interests such as road, sea and rail transit through

portray themselves as the protectors of the Hindu community.

A statement issued by the Association for Protection of Democratic Rights (APDR), a human rights organisation of West Bengal, on December 1 is important to understand the political motive behind this. The statement read "the Indian government or the BJP has no moral right to say anything about the oppression of minorities in Bangladesh. Minority Muslims, Christians, and Buddhists are being persecuted continuously in India. Dalits and tribal people are also suffering. Just a few days ago, the Uttar Pradesh police shot dead six

India's 'concern' over Bangladesh's internal affairs and beyond



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SHAMIM A. ZAHEDY

Imagine if Bangladesh's Ministry of Foreign Affairs had issued a note of concern regarding an incident in India's Uttar Pradesh last month, where at least four minority Muslims were gunned down allegedly by police during violence linked to a court-ordered survey of a centuries-old mosque. Some Hindu groups claim the mosque was built on the site of a destroyed temple. New Delhi would likely have reacted with the strongest possible language, accusing Dhaka of interfering in its internal affairs.

No, Bangladesh did not express its reaction at the disturbing incident that took place in its neighbouring country, ostensibly considering its internal affairs. Moreover, in the last 10 years, numerous incidents involving religious minorities, ranging from repression to killings, have occurred in India, with Bangladesh showing no diplomatic concern, perhaps.

Last month, India responded to the arrest of Hindu monk Chinmoy Krishna Das Brahmachari in Bangladesh by expressing "deep concern," claiming it was part of a broader pattern of attacks on Hindus and other minorities in the country. Bangladesh, however, was forced to respond to India's statement with utter dismay, stating that it was its internal affair.

India's Ministry of External Affairs statement on Chinmoy Das rather displays a pattern that the Indian administration has adopted since the fall of Sheikh Hasina's autocratic regime on August 5, 2024 through a student-led mass uprising. Hasina, considered an all-weather ally of the Indian administration, was replaced



FILE VISUAL: SALMAN SAKIB SHAHRYAR

For a lasting relationship with Bangladesh, India must build a friendship based on equality and mutual respect.

in the aftermath of this upheaval following more than 15 years of rule, during which she dismantled Bangladesh's electoral system, allowed enforced disappearances—an act unimaginable in the democratic world—using security forces, and facilitated the laundering of money from banks through her cronies. Notably, after her regime collapsed like a house of cards, Hasina sought refuge in India, to which New Delhi

President Joe Biden, stating that they discussed Ukraine and "also talked about the situation in Bangladesh, emphasising the need for early restoration of normalcy and ensuring the safety and security of minorities, especially Hindus, in Bangladesh." However, the White House's readout of the same conversation made no mention of Bangladesh.

Yes, minorities—whether based on religion, language or ethnicity—

campaign speeches?

It is the responsibility of the majority to protect the minority. When it comes to protecting and caring for religious minorities, both Bangladesh and India—which share a 4,096 km border—should work together rather than engage in unnecessary bickering in public, especially since many people in both the countries have family ties across the border.

It is understood that public statements and rhetoric favouring majorities while undermining minorities are often made by ultranationalist politicians in every country to woo populist votes.

Regarding rights issues, while human rights are primarily a country's internal matter, they are also a concern for the international community, particularly in countries that have adopted or are in the process of adopting democratic systems.

Countries that sign international human rights treaties are bound to uphold, safeguard, and ensure the fulfilment of human rights. They are responsible for protecting individuals and groups from violations and for taking measures to prevent and address such abuses. If national legal systems fail to resolve these issues, individuals have the option to seek recourse through regional or international mechanisms.

Every country is under watch. Human Rights Watch in its 2024 report says, "The Indian government undermined its aspirations for global leadership as a rights-respecting democracy during 2023 with its persistent policies and practices that discriminate and stigmatise religious and other minorities."

Establishing a deeply rooted democracy can significantly help combat practices that stigmatise religious and other minorities. However, in recent years, the quality of Indian democracy has dwindled. US based non-profit Freedom House downgraded India's status from a free democracy to a "partially free democracy" in 2021, while the Sweden-based V-Dem Institute classified India as an "electoral autocracy." The Economist Intelligence Unit ranked India 53rd in its 2020 Democracy Index, which made it a "flawed democracy," citing factors such as the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA), National Register of Citizens (NRC), and the revocation of special status in

Indian-administered Kashmir. The EIU's 2023 Democracy Index put India in the 41st position, putting it in the flawed democracy category.

For Bangladesh, when it comes to restoring democracy, a golden prospect beckons in the aftermath of Sheikh Hasina's fall. The Hasina regime gradually ruined democracy through deeply flawed national elections in 2014, 2018, and 2024.

India itself is beset with numerous challenges related to democracy, human rights, and overall good governance. Therefore, it could work jointly with its neighbours to address these issues. In this context, reviving SAARC could serve as an effective launching pad, fostering cooperation and eradicating hostility in the region. Divisive and discriminatory Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) and National Register of Citizens (NRC) are not going to help India either.

Can the European Union—a union of 27 nations that has accomplished political and economic integration through a shared currency and a cohesive foreign and security policy—act as a model for South Asia in fostering peace and democracy?

For a lasting relationship with Bangladesh, India must build a friendship based on equality and mutual respect—the policy that Dhaka has repeatedly sought after Prof Muhammad Yunus, a Nobel peace laureate, took over as the chief adviser of the interim government.

After being summoned by the Bangladesh authorities following a security breach by zealots at the Agartala mission, Indian High Commissioner in Dhaka Pranay Verma told journalists that the wide-ranging and multifaceted Indo-Bangla relationship cannot be stuck on one issue.

It is time now for Dhaka to adopt a wait-and-see approach, as Verma stated, "We are ready to engage with Bangladesh's interim government and are committed to working together."

Gender and Genocide in BANGLADESH

AZRA RASHID

History is complicated; simplifying it is the work of politicians. My research on Bangladesh challenges the national memory of the 1971 war, as represented at the Liberation War Museum. The national archive on display at the museum feeds nationalism by creating a national memory of the 1971 war and reminds people of the common suffering encountered by the collectivity. My work investigates how gender has operated in service of Bangladeshi nationalist ideology. The representation of women's experiences at the museum lacks complexities of gender and seeks erasure of any experience that deviates from the nationalist narrative. The images in the archives of the war museum tell the story of a nation's unease with women's place in nationalist discourse.

Gender in Bangladesh, similar to everywhere else, is not a homogenous or unified category. Gender as a social construct creates social subjects whose experiences vary based on their belonging to different identity groups. Examining gendered experiences of war helps us understand the complex social relationships that construct gender in the first place and lead to the gendered experiences of war situated at the intersection of religion, ethnicity and class.

Aroma Dutta and her mother Prati Devi Ghatak come from a prominent political and cultural Hindu family in South Asia. The partition of India divided Ghatak's family, as some members of her family migrated to Calcutta, India and others remained in Dhaka, East Pakistan. Her brothers, Ritvik Ghatak, an acclaimed filmmaker, and Manik Ghatak, a Bengali poet and novelist left Dhaka. Mahasweta Devi is Manik Ghatak's daughter and an influential postcolonial feminist writer whose work has been translated from Bengali to English by Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak. The stories featured in Mahasweta Devi's *Imaginary Maps* concern women in tribal India haunted by the region's colonial history, or as Spivak calls them "gendered subaltern subjects." Spivak writes, "Mahasweta invites us to realize that, in the context of this fiction, for the subaltern, and especially the subaltern woman, 'Empire' and 'Nation' are interchangeable names." For subaltern gendered subjects, the empire-nation reversal means the substitution of one system of difference for another as the political goals of the old colony are carried forward by the new nation, as was the case in 1947 when the British left India. In post-1947 Pakistan and in Bangladesh after the liberation war of 1971,

Hindus not only found themselves targeted due to their religion but their experiences have also been excluded from the dominant narratives on nationalism.

Aroma Dutta's grandfather Dhirendranath Dutta, a renowned Congressman from East Bengal, was against the partition of India. At the time of the partition, he was offered the position of the first Chief Minister of West Bengal, which meant opting for India instead of Pakistan, but more importantly it would mean leaving his home in Comilla. He declined the offer and played a crucial role in the politics of East Pakistan. When Urdu was declared the state language of Pakistan, despite the fact that only 10 per cent of the entire country's population had any knowledge of Urdu and the majority spoke Bengali, Dutta started what is now remembered as the Language Movement. In the 1960s many Bengali politicians, including Dutta, were barred from participating in politics and put under house arrest. Three days after the war started in 1971, Dutta and one of his sons were picked up by the Pakistani army, tortured and killed. While Aroma Dutta clearly remembers the events leading up to 1971, Dhirendranath Dutta's contributions to the independence of Bangladesh have been minimized, if not entirely forgotten, in the displays at the war museum. Challenging the national forgetting, Aroma Dutta's daughter and Dhirendranath Dutta's great-granddaughter, Esha Aurora wrote an opinion piece for *The Daily Star* on 27 March 2015 in which she candidly shared her frustration over omissions of contributions made by Hindus in the 1971 liberation war. History in South Asia is written and reproduced along the divisive line of Hindu and Muslim and that is the narrative on display at the war museum.

When examining the archives of the war museum, it is impossible to miss the fact that rape took place in 1971. Instead of silencing the stories of wartime rape, the war museum offers evidence, invokes the history of rape and appropriates the rape of women for the nationalist cause. The rape of Bangladeshi women is narrated as a way of acting out power relationships by the Pakistani army – a policy implemented to humiliate the Bengali nation and to change the racial makeup of Bengalis who were considered Hindu-like and an inferior race. The highly evocative images on display remind us about the many women who were raped and killed during the war and seek justice, but these representations remain limited and they only show women who are no longer alive. Additionally, the namelessness of the women in the pictures gives rise to an ambiguity, which marks the trajectory of post-war experiences of many women.

Ferdousi Priyobhashini became a household name in the 1990s when she publicly acknowledged that she had been raped in the war and demanded accountability. While her entire life has been crystallized in a moment when the rape took place during the nine-month-long war, her experiences before and after the war have been largely considered insignificant to an exploration of gender constructions in Bangladeshi society. Priyobhashini narrates a complex story of her troubled childhood and a marriage that came to an end in 1971 after years of physical and verbal abuse by her husband. Her economic needs made her vulnerable to abuse at workplace, which took the form of sexual abuse when the war started. During the war, she was young and alone and seen as sexually available not only by the Pakistani army but also by Bangladeshi men and women who refused to provide her shelter. She was accused of killing a university professor, arrested and taken to a camp where

killers, rape and looting. After the war, for a majority of Bangladeshis, the entire Bihari community came to be perceived as enemy and traitors. Many Biharis were killed and much of their property was seized. Those who survived were forced to seek refuge in camps set up by the International Committee for Red Cross and were labeled as "Stranded Pakistanis." There are approximately 160,000 members of the Bihari/Urdu-speaking community who live in 116 refugee camps across the country.

I met Saira Bano in the Central Relief Organization (CRO) camp in Dhaka. The living conditions inside the camp are challenging as the camp has a crumbling infrastructure, unclean water, scant garbage pick-up, communal toilets, footpaths that are often broken, staircase that appears to be deteriorating and roofs that are collapsing. For Saira Bano and other Bihari women refugees, the trauma of the 1971 war remains visibly present today. Bano, originally from Calcutta,

fighters and recipients of "Bir Protik" award were women. During the war of 1971, many women were militarized and wanted to defend their nation in the war efforts, but they were not able to find an entry point into a male-dominated battlefield. They were encouraged to provide support in assisting and nurturing roles, instead of engaging in combat.

The gendered nature of women's militarization is evident in the testimony offered by Taramon Bibi, one of the two recipients of the Bir Protik award, who talks about the familial structures that were reproduced in battlefield. After joining the militia, Bibi started calling Muhib Habilder "father" and her primary role was to cook for the freedom fighters. The sexual division of labour during the war remained and shifted only temporarily when the group came under attack and the roles went back to "normal" after the war ended. Sultana Kamal, a lawyer, human rights activist and the Executive Director of Ain-o-Salish Kendra, also confirms that women were generally pushed out of the battlefield and encouraged to offer support in secondary roles as care providers and nurses. Kamal remembers, "The leadership in the war also had a particular idea of men's role and women's role. Like we were immediately engaged to build a hospital and run the hospital rather than them thinking that we could be trained in arms to really fight the guerrilla warfare." The photographs of women raising their arms and holding rifles, despite being inaccurate, provide for a moving imagery, depicting women as equal participants in the war against a common national enemy. However, the exhibit shows ambivalence towards the gender politics that ensued after the war which led to a national forgetting of women fighters like Taramon Bibi.

The archives of the Liberation War Museum of Bangladesh through their inclusion and omission perform the function of narrativizing the war as a unified account of history where all the outliers are muted and a generalization is forced upon women. The nationalist discourse on display at the war museum performs the act of selecting from life and death the stories that are worth telling and subjects women to a double marginalization within the ideologies of nation and nationalism. The images of war memorialized and widely circulated at the museum perform the function of assigning significance to shared experiences, common ideas and nationalist formations in an attempt to create a nationalist history of the war, but gender representations in the exhibits remain problematic. The testimonies of female survivors resist the national memory and help to create an account of the war which is more inclusive.

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Ferdousi Priyobhashini

During the war of 1971, many women were militarized and wanted to defend their nation in the war efforts, but they were not able to find an entry point into a male-dominated battlefield. They were encouraged to provide support in assisting and nurturing roles, instead of engaging in combat.



Saira Bano



Bir Protik Taramon Bibi

she was raped repeatedly by Pakistani soldiers. Priyobhashini's ordeal came to an end with a friendly encounter with a Pakistani army officer, who after rescuing her proposed a marriage. But Priyobhashini saw that as a betrayal to her nation and declined the proposal. After the war, Priyobhashini was betrayed by her nation and abandoned as she was seen complicit in the crime of rape. Even though the rape survivors were given the title "Birangana," in the local memory, as Yasmin Saikia's research points out, Birangana (meaning female hero) transformed into "Baranganas" (meaning prostitutes) soon after the war.

Also subject to erasure and selective remembering are the refugees from the 1971 war. The images of refugees on display at the war museum comprise primarily women who became refugees in India but without any markers of identification or any mention of the Bihari refugees who have been living in refugee camps in Bangladesh for over five decades. During the war of 1971, a number of Biharis, loyal to their nation-state, collaborated with the Pakistani army; some created their own militia and participated in mass

remembers arriving in Dhaka as a child, but does not remember her exact age, her life before the war and what she saw during the war. The significant gaps in her memory depict her relationship to the violence that was committed during the war, the denial of her suffering which became commonplace in the post-war remembering, and her complex relationship with the society at large. The denial of suffering of the Urdu-speaking Biharis of Bangladesh has resulted in a mourning that is endless. Mourning, according to Dominick LaCapra, brings the possibility of engaging trauma in order for life to begin again. However, LaCapra notes, "When mourning turns to absence and absence is conflated with loss, then mourning becomes impossible, endless, quasi-transcendental grieving, scarcely distinguishable (if at all) from interminable melancholy." Bano suffered personal losses in 1971, but her story is considered insignificant because of her identity as an Urdu-speaking Bihari woman. Without an opportunity to share her haunting story and mourn for her loss, Bano's trauma remains unengaged and she is unable to work through it. The trauma for Bano endlessly continues in her present life.

The Liberation War Museum also has on display numerous images of women holding guns, but it downplays the fact that only two out of the 426 officially recognized freedom



A woman emerges from hiding for the first time, carrying a rifle and accompanied by her children.

© PENNY TWEEDIE/PANOS PICTURES.
COURTESY: AMIRUL RAJIV.

Tigers’ must-win clash after MIDDLE-OVERS LAPSE

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh will feel a little disheartened following their five-wicket loss to the West Indies in the first ODI in St. Kitts, perhaps feeling they did not falter much. Sherfane Rutherford’s turnaround performance was a game-changer on Sunday, but on flat decks such as the one on offer at Warner Park, there are a few areas the Tigers must improve to bounce back in the second fixture of the three-match series at the same venue today.

Bangladesh felt that their score of 294 for six was enough. Runs came from opener Tanzid Tamim, who struck a run-a-ball 60. Mehedi Hasan Miraz came in at number four after two quick wickets and steadied the ship. The Bangladesh skipper tried to consolidate at the beginning after getting a life on one, and then another loose shot saw him almost get caught at point on 31. But in trying to push the tempo, he departed for a 101-ball 74.

In fact, the only bit of real acceleration came from the 74-ball 96-run sixth-wicket stand between Mahmudullah Riyad and Jaker Ali. In reply, the home side made a strong comeback despite a slow start,



proving once again that the tempo of the 50-over format is evolving.

Despite a tight and effective start with the ball, Bangladesh were lulled into a sense of comfort when the Windies’ required rate climbed to eight runs per over. There appeared to be more of an impetus with a conservative approach instead of going for wickets in the middle overs, and the plan backfired. Rutherford and Justin Greaves completely took the game away with a 57-ball 85-run stand at the death, the former hitting eight sixes

during his tremendous 80-ball 113.

“It is challenging in their own backyard, and our bowlers, despite bowling well, could learn a lot from these kinds of matches, like how to handle pressure... they will learn from these kinds of matches, and I feel there are lots of positives from this game for us,” Miraz said after the game.

The bowlers put in the hard lengths as the Windies needed to dig deep early, but the lack of wickets in the middle overs saw set batters take the game on.

There is a feeling Miraz’s 74 off 100 was not the tempo required, but he had held the innings together. The Windies learned early where he can be nullified. He had added the pull shot, but in ODIs, dot balls can hurt, and the Tigers played a lot more of them than the hosts.

“Our batsmen did well, and the bowlers bowled well initially, and we could have won the game if we had improved in certain areas,” Miraz opined.

For a batting-friendly pitch, Bangladesh’s key areas for improvement include pushing for more runs during the middle overs and showing more intent with the ball.

Posting 294 would have given some faith, but the spinners were taken to the cleaners, and the pace trio, who were tight at the beginning, had no answers later on. Despite the setback, Miraz said they can still come back to win the series.

“We still have a chance because we have just lost one game, and if we can win the next game, we can have the opportunity to win the series,” he opined, as the Tigers seek to square the series in a do-or-die affair.

Tigresses end dreadful year with another awful performance

SAMSUL AREFIN KHAN

The recently concluded three-match WT20I series against Ireland marked the end of a forgetful year for the Bangladesh women’s team, which witnessed an extraordinary downfall in their performance in both white-ball formats compared to the preceding year.

A lack of depth in the batting department, which remained overly dependent on skipper Nigar Sultana Joty, inconsistent bowling performances, poor fielding and some surprising team selections were all big factors in the Tigresses’ lacklustre results in 2024.

The Tigresses played 19 WT20Is this year and lost 16 of them, with their three wins coming against weaker teams like Thailand, Malaysia and Scotland.



PHOTO: SHEIKH NASIR

Although they qualified for the semifinal of this year’s Women’s T20 Asia Cup and also ended their 10-year wait for a victory in the T20 World Cup with a win over Scotland in October, they remained winless in home WT20Is throughout the year, losing all 11 matches, with the latest humiliation being the crushing 3-0 defeat against Ireland.

Bangladesh’s participation in WODIs was limited to only six matches in 2024, in which they lost three games to Australia before somewhat turning things around against Ireland late in the year when they beat them 3-0, with both series being played on home soil.

Just last year, Bangladesh beat teams like South Africa, India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka in the shortest format, even clinched a 2-1 series win over Pakistan and drew a WT20I series 1-1 against South Africa in South Africa.

Moreover, the women’s team enjoyed a decent time in WODIs, winning four out of their 11 matches which included a 2-1 series win against Pakistan and a 1-1 drawn series against India. They also defeated South Africa for the first time in the format and they did so in away conditions.

However, their performance suddenly took a U-turn this year and the women’s wing head Habibul Bashar did not attempt to deny it.

“This year the batting didn’t click at all. Not only against teams like Australia and India, the batters failed in the Asia Cup and the World Cup as well. It was the main reason behind the poor results,” Bashar told The Daily Star yesterday.

“Batters consistently failed in the games. We are witnessing a big gap in the middle-order, especially in number five and six along with the opening position. If we can’t get an immediate solution, we may see similar dismal performances in the coming days as well.”

Meanwhile, Bashar added that the team’s catching has also been below par.

“I think those dropped catches did matter a lot and those missed chances really hurt us,” said Bashar, mentioning Ritu Moni dropping Laura Delany in the final over of Monday’s WT20I against Ireland, who later hit three successive fours to snatch the win away from the hosts in a thrilling contest.

“Ireland isn’t a top side. If we make such mistakes against them, it’s difficult to expect good results against top sides,” Bashar concluded.



Daffodil win Ispahani-Prothom Alo Inter-Uni football

SPORTS REPORTER

Daffodil University beat American International University, Bangladesh (AIUB) 2-1 to win the Ispahani-Prothom Alo Inter-University Football Tournament at their home ground in Birulia, Savar yesterday.

Daffodil, who were eliminated from the group-stage in the last edition, were pegged back when AIUB skipper Foyez Ahmed found a clinical finish inside the box in the 13th minute. But Daffodil took no time to get back in the contest as Amit Hasan fired home long-range just two minutes later. Mahmudur Rahman Jewel took Daffodil ahead just moments before half-time and they held their own throughout the second half to send the home crowd into absolute elation.

Daffodil started the tournament with a 5-2 thrashing of Independent University, Bangladesh (IUB) and followed it up with an 8-0 demolition of Sher-e-Bangla Agricultural University to qualify for the group final, in which they edged International University of Business Agriculture and Technology 1-0 to cement a spot in the quarters. They beat Science and Technology University 1-0 to make the semifinals where they comprehensively defeated last edition’s runners-up Fareast University by a 3-0 margin.

Cabrera excited about facing India in Asian Cup Qualifiers

SPORTS REPORTER

Javier Cabrera expressed quiet optimism regarding Bangladesh’s fixtures in the third round of Asian Cup Qualifiers, which pitted his charges against India, Hong Kong and Singapore in Group C.

The Spaniard said he was excited to get India as an opponent while exclaiming that the makeup of the group has left each team with a chance to qualify for the final round.

The draw was held in Malaysia yesterday, splitting 24 teams into six groups, with only the group winners slated to join the 18 teams already qualified for the Asian Cup to be



BANGLADESH'S ASIAN CUP QUALIFYING FIXTURES	India vs Bangladesh	25 Mar, 2025
	Bangladesh vs Singapore	10 Jun, 2025
	Bangladesh vs Hong Kong	9 Oct, 2025
	Hong Kong vs Bangladesh	14 Oct, 2025
	Bangladesh vs India	18 Nov, 2025
	Singapore vs Bangladesh	31 Mar, 2026

held in Saudi Arabia in 2027.

Each team will get to play six games against three opponents – home and away – starting on March 25, 2025 and concluding on March 31, 2026.

“I think it’s a very exciting group, challenging also. Everyone in this group can lose points with everyone. The level between India and Hong Kong is very similar, even Singapore. I think we have enough level to compete with all of them,” the 40-year-old coach told reporters at the BFF House following the draw.

Despite Bangladesh being the lowest-ranked team (185) in the group, Cabrera feels that his team can snatch points in home matches from India (127), Hong Kong (156) and Singapore (161), taking inspiration from some fighting displays against higher-ranked sides in the World Cup

Qualifiers earlier this year.

“We know we are very strong at home. We have to be very very reliable in our home games. We did a great job in the home games in the World Cup Qualifiers Round 2 with opponents much stronger than the ones we are going to face. So definitely the first target would be to get many points from the home games,” Cabrera said.

The Bangladesh coach was especially excited about the prospect of facing India, against whom the Red and Greens have put on some spirited displays over the last decade despite the widening gap in ranking.

“It’s always a very special game for everyone in the country, especially for the players,” Cabrera said of the two matches scheduled against the Blue Tigers – away to India on March 25 next year and at home on November 18 next year.

“It’s a great opportunity for us to see where we are against India. The team has performed at a great level against India in the last years, even in the Asian Games last year we played against them,” Cabrera added.

Meanwhile, the Spaniard, whose contract with BFF runs out at the end of this year, was looking positively ahead towards an extension.

“It’s not still decided. We are in conversation. I’m very positive. Everyone knows I’m very happy to be the coach of this team. We have gone a long way already, developing this team and evolving. And I believe the next year can be a great opportunity for this cycle of three years to confirm the work that we have done,” the coach said.



Proteas ascend as WTC table evolves

South Africa captain Temba Bavuma said a lot of his teammates had a “proper taste of what Test cricket is about” after their 109-run win over Sri Lanka in the second Test in Gqeberha on Monday.

The victory, inspired by a five-wicket haul from spinner Keshav Maharaj, secured a 2-0 series win for the Proteas and propelled them to the top of the World Test Championship standings, with an average points tally of 63.33, overtaking Australia (60.71).

South Africa can make certain of qualifying for the final at Lord’s in England next June if they beat Pakistan in

a two-match series, starting December 26.

Australia had a brief stint at the top of the standings following a terrific performance against India (57.29) in Adelaide, leading to the losing side slipping to the third spot.

England’s back-to-back wins over hosts New Zealand (44.23), combined with slow over-rate penalties, saw the Black Caps drop from fifth to sixth in the WTC standings, severely hurting their chances of reaching the final. Sri Lanka (45.45) and England (45.24), meanwhile, occupy the fourth and fifth spot, respectively.

Troubled Real await stiff test at Atalanta

Defending champions Real Madrid are up against it as they brace for a stiff test on a trip to reigning Europa League winners Atalanta on Tuesday. The record 15-time winners have lost three of their first five matches and find themselves 24th in the standings with six points, with places 25 to 36 eliminated at the end of the group phase. In-form Atalanta lead Serie A and have not been beaten yet in the Champions League, sitting fifth courtesy of three wins and two draws. Meanwhile, league leaders Liverpool travel to Girona, looking to extend their winning run.

If Carlo Ancelotti’s side lose this match, it would be the first time in European Cup/Champions League history that the winners of the previous edition have had a three-game losing streak the following season.

Real have been severely thinned down in defence as they will be without Ferland Mendy, Eduardo Camavinga and David Alaba.

Los Blancos, however, welcomed back Brazilian wing wizards Vinicius Jr and Rodrygo from injury. Both had missed the trip to Liverpool last game week.

Atalanta are fresh off a 2-1 win at home against Milan in the weekend and top Serie A, courtesy of a club-record run of nine straight wins in the league.

Meanwhile, Liverpool are the only team with a 100% record coming into Matchday six. They’ve won all five of their league-phase games and top the table with just one goal conceded overall.

Arne Slot’s winning run is already the longest by a manager from the start of a spell with an English club in the competition (5).





Ex-minister, allies took out Tk 2,000cr from UCB

Bank's chairman states in a letter to ACC

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Genex Infosys Chairman Mohammed Adnan Imam has secured loans amounting to about Tk 2,000 crore from United Commercial Bank through a series of irregularities and manipulations with assistance from former land minister Saifuzzaman Chowdhury, according to the bank's current chairman.

Between 2018 and 2024, Saifuzzaman, despite his official position as a cabinet minister, is said to have orchestrated a takeover of UCB by placing his family members and associates in key positions, according to the complaint filed by the UCB Chairman Sharif Zahir on November 11 to the Anti-Corruption Commission.

Saifuzzaman's wife, Rukhmila Zaman, was made the chairman of the bank's board, while his brother Anisuzzaman Chowdhury took

SEE PAGE 7 COL 1



Syrians who live in Turkey wait in a queue at the Cilvegözü cross-border gate before entering Syria at Reyhanlı district in Hatay yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

Burden of 40yrs finally lifted

SC clears Harendranath, 79, of embezzlement charges, orders Sonali Bank to pay Tk 20 lakh

ASHUTOSH SARKAR

Harendranath Chandra, a 79-year-old man, has finally received justice after a gruelling four-decade legal battle. Falsely accused of embezzling funds from Sonali Bank, Harendranath endured years of hardship, including imprisonment and financial ruin.

In 1985, Sonali Bank initiated a departmental proceeding and filed three cases against Harendranath and eight others, alleging the misappropriation of Tk 16.16 lakh. This accusation eventually led to the loss of Harendranath's job and a five-year prison sentence.

Over the past four decades, Harendranath has tirelessly fought to clear his name. Yesterday, the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court upheld a lower court judgement, acquitting him of all charges and ordering Sonali Bank to pay him Tk 20 lakh as compensation for legal expenditures.

The bank authorities have been directed to pay this amount within three months of receiving the order.

A three-member bench of the Appellate Division headed by Justice Md Ashfaque Islam also dismissed a leave to appeal petition filed by Sonali Bank Limited challenging the HC verdict.

"I was forced to sell my home and land to fund my legal defence... Now, at the age of 79, I am homeless and destitute."

Harendranath Chandra



According to the case documents, Harendranath, a BA graduate, began his career at Sonali Bank in Dhaka as a cashier-cum-clerk on December 31, 1979. After three years, he was promoted to senior cashier-cum-clerk and subsequently transferred to the Jatrabari branch.

During his time at Jatrabari, a remittance of Tk 16.16 lakh was transferred to the Motijheel branch his branch. The receiving branch officer acknowledged the full amount in writing, complete with their seal and signature. However, a few days later in 1985, an internal bank investigation revealed that the funds were missing.

In late 1985, Sonali Bank initiated departmental proceedings and filed three cases against nine individuals, including Harendranath, accusing them of embezzling the missing funds.

The ordeal has taken a severe toll on Harendranath's life. "I was forced to sell my home and land to fund my legal defence. To support my family, I worked as a ticket seller at a bus stand for nearly 15 years. Now, at the age of 79, I am homeless and destitute," Harendranath lamented.

Seeking payment of all due salaries and benefits from Sonali Bank, Harendranath has also filed a writ petition with the High Court, which is pending trial.

Barrister Md Omar Farouq, Harendranath's legal representative, expressed disappointment at the bank's persistent pursuit of the case, even after multiple court rulings in Harendranath's favour. "My client has spent more than half his life in court, fighting for justice," Farouq said.

Despite repeated attempts, Abdus Sobhan, the lawyer representing Sonali Bank, could not be reached for comment.

Harendranath's story is a stark reminder of the devastating impact of false accusations and the importance of a fair and impartial justice system. His unwavering determination to seek justice, even in the face of adversity, is an inspiration to all.

An endless wait for justice

How the society, legal system fail rape victims and survivors

NILIMA JAHAN

Nine years have passed since Sohagi Jahan Tonu was raped and murdered inside the restricted Cumilla Cantonment on March 20, 2016.

The case filed for her murder was supposed to be resolved within 180 days. However, nine years on and there has been no significant progress.

Intellectually challenged Samia's (not her real name) fight for justice has dragged on for eight years, since she was raped by a neighbour in November 2016 in Bogura.

Meanwhile, the perpetrator served just three months before being granted bail.

In Noakhali's 2020 gang rape case, the convicted rapists are also out on bail, while the survivor Nasima (not her real name) lives in constant fear, with police protection withdrawn and public humiliation continuous.

A follow-up into the three cases shows prolonged delays, insensitive court practices and the absence of state compensation, leaving the victims and their families in a relentless struggle for justice.

The perpetrators, meanwhile, exploited systemic loopholes, securing bail or using influence, to evade accountability. They intimidated victims and their families or walked free without facing any real consequences.

A 2021 study by Manusher Jonno Foundation analysed 25 rape cases in Bangladesh from 2012 to 2016 and found that, despite rape being a non-bailable offense, the accused were granted bail within 15 days of

their arrest in all cases.

In the Tonu murder case, though two autopsies failed to determine the cause of death, DNA tests confirmed Tonu was raped before being murdered – sperm from three unidentified individuals were found on her clothes. However, none of the sperm samples matched that of any suspect.

The case, initially handled by local police, has bounced from the Detective Branch to the Criminal Investigation Department, and then to the Police Bureau of Investigation since 2020, with six different investigation officers. The latest IO PBI's Tariqul Islam.

"I've just taken over the case. The investigation is still ongoing," he said.

"There are still some requirements that need to be addressed, but once we progress, we'll make sure to update the media and the public."

Tonu's father Md Yaar Hossain, however, said, "This investigating officer doesn't

even keep me updated. What kind of investigation is he conducting? When I call him, he acts annoyed. They should hand the case to someone else if they can't handle it.

"I desperately want to meet Dr Yunus.... I want to ask him why my case has been left to languish for so long."

Advocate Salma Ali, who visited the family, said, "They faced immense pressure and couldn't speak freely, even during our visit, as they were constantly monitored."

"High-profile cases may draw attention, but they rarely advance when powerful individuals are involved."

SEE PAGE 7 COL 1



A thick layer of dust covers the leaves of a tree at an intersection on Beribandh road at Basila, Mohammadpur, yesterday. Dhaka's air quality has been among the worst in the world for quite some time and the dry winter weather has worsened the situation.

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

PRIMARY SCHOOL CHILDREN 37pc want to skip classes

Finds survey, blames political instability, pandemic

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A survey on the state of primary school children's mental health reveals a grim picture with nearly 37 percent of respondents stating that children tend to skip classes due to recent political instability, natural disasters, and the impact of Covid-19.

Around 55 percent of respondents said that children have become fearful in this situation, according to the survey conducted jointly by the non-governmental organisations, Campaign for Popular Education (CAMPE) and BRAC Institute of Educational Development.

Explaining the survey process, the two organisations said the study was conducted through a questionnaire with the opinions of stakeholders from a total of 203 support organisations in the eight divisions of the country.

At the same time, these opinions were collected through 12 discussions, opinion collection, and a total of four meetings at the divisional and national levels.

Prof M Nazmul Haq, director of the Teacher Development Institute, and Abdur Rouf, programme manager of CAMPE, presented the findings at an event at the Bangabandhu International Conference Centre in Dhaka yesterday.

SEE PAGE 7 COL 5

NATIONAL UNIVERSITY GRADUATES

One out of four unemployed

Finds BIDS survey

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A recent Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies (BIDS) publication revealed that 28 percent (one out of four) of National University students remain unemployed after graduation.

Moreover, a majority of the ones who secure employment are primarily engaged in low-paying jobs, the study further revealed.

The study titled, "Understanding unemployment among college graduates" was unveiled at the BIDS annual conference at a Dhaka hotel last morning.

The findings of the study – featuring an in-depth analysis of labour market outcomes and economic activities of NU graduates, teaching-learning environment, challenges, and way forward – were presented by the institute's research director, SM Zulfiqar Ali.

A total of 1,340 graduates, 670 existing students, and the principals of 61 of the total 608 NU-affiliated colleges, alongside 100 employers, participated in the study.

According to the study, most NU students specialise in social sciences, humanities, and business studies, with a few (3.82 percent at undergraduate and 3.10 percent at postgraduate levels) pursuing science subjects.

A significant 44.26 percent are business studies graduates, of whom 42.29 percent are job holders, while 16.24 percent are self-employed.

The study also found unemployment to be more prevalent among women and students in rural areas. The students who skip higher secondary certification also face high unemployment rates. However, the rates were lower for technical or madrasa (Dakhil) background graduates.

BA pass course graduates and the ones majoring in political science, library management, Bangla, and Islamic history and culture face higher unemployment. However, those specialising in English, economics,

SEE PAGE 7 COL 4

CTG LAWYER KILLING Accused makes confessional statement

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Chandan Das, accused of killing lawyer Saiful Islam Alif during a clash in Chattogram city court premises on November 26, made a confessional statement before the Chattogram Metropolitan Magistrate Kazi Shariful Islam yesterday.

"After recording his statement, the court sent him back to jail," Shakila Soltana, deputy commissioner (South) of Chattogram Metropolitan Police (CMP), told The Daily Star.

Earlier, Chandan was placed on a seven-day remand on December 6.

On December 5, police arrested Chandan from Bhairab, Kishoreganj.

Sources claimed that in video footage of the murder incident, Chandan, wearing a helmet, an orange T-shirt and black trousers, was seen attacking Saiful with a machete.

The clashes erupted on the court premises on November 26 after the bail plea of ex-ISKON leader Chinmoy, also the spokesperson of the Sammilito Sanatoni Jagoron Jote, was rejected in a sedition case

SEE PAGE 7 COL 5