

"Occupation forces have taken three hospitals out of medical service because of the repeated attacks... and destroyed parts of them." Says Munir Al-Bursh, director of health ministry in Gaza Strip

The Daily Star

YOUR RIGHT TO KNOW

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Restoration of caretaker system to be proposed

Constitution reform commission likely to submit report Jan 7

MD ABBAS

The restoration of the caretaker government and the introduction of a bicameral system in parliament will be among the recommendations to be proposed by the Constitution Reform Commission.

The commission, led by political scientist Ali Riaz, is likely to recommend the inclusion of equality, human dignity, and social justice in the preamble to the constitution.

Its proposal, which is currently being prepared along with the rationale, is scheduled to submit its recommendations by January 7.

"I would say the biggest consensus we received is on the caretaker government. If I were to say 100 percent, it would not be an exaggeration," Riaz told The Daily Star.

Additionally, the commission will propose a two-term limit for the office and curbing the prime minister's absolute power.

It will also recommend establishing a balance of power between the prime minister and the president.

The commission plans to strengthen the parliamentary standing

Additionally, the commission will propose a two-term limit for the office and curbing the prime minister's absolute power.

committees to enhance their ability to monitor and hold the government and the prime minister accountable.

It will also recommend repealing Article 70 of the constitution.

Asked whether the commission is amending or rewriting the constitution, Riaz clarified that it is not drafting a new constitution but rather compiling recommendations so that the constitution would guarantee that no one can snatch the voting rights of the masses and no potential autocrat can grab power.

So far, the commission has received proposals from 28 political entities, including 25 political parties and three alliances.

It has also held discussions with 43 organisations, including civil society groups, some of which have provided written submissions.

Moreover, the commission consulted seven constitutional experts and sought opinions from 27 prominent citizens.

It also took opinions from 10 youths who contributed songs, poems

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'TIS THE SEASON ... The nativity scene -- a special exhibition, particularly during Christmas season, of art objects representing the birth of Jesus Christ -- shining bright at The Saint Mary's Cathedral in the capital's Kakrail on Christmas Eve yesterday.

PHOTO: ARUN DEVNATH

'We're not drafting constitution'

Says Ali Riaz

MD ABBAS

Ali Riaz, a distinguished Bangladeshi-American political scientist and acclaimed author heading the constitution reform commission, sat down with Star to inform on the commission's progress and some of the key consensus obtained.

DS: What is the progress of the commission?

AR: We have been entrusted with two main tasks: one is to review the existing constitution

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Next step after reply from Delhi

Says foreign ministry spokesperson about Hasina's extradition

BSS, Dhaka

Dhaka will send a reminder letter to New Delhi if the Indian government does not respond to the diplomatic note sent on Monday regarding the extradition of ousted prime minister Sheikh Hasina.

"So far, we have not received any response from

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We will safeguard rights of all people

Yunus tells US nat'l security adviser

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Chief adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus and US National Security Adviser Jake Sullivan during a phone conversation on Monday expressed their commitment to respecting and protecting the human rights of all people, regardless of religion.

Sullivan re-iterated the United States' support for a prosperous, stable, and democratic Bangladesh, and offered the United States' continued support in meeting the challenges Bangladesh faces, said a White House readout.

Sullivan thanked Yunus for his leadership during the challenging period.

Chief Adviser's Press Wing in a statement yesterday said both the

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The first Dhaka-Khulna train to use the Padma Bridge was formally inaugurated yesterday at the capital's Kamalapur station. It takes less than four hours for the train to travel between the two cities. Before the bridge was built, the journey used to take almost eight hours. Story on page 3.

PHOTO: STAR

Six factories of S Alam Group closed
Shortage of raw materials cited for temporary closure



STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Six factories of the controversial business giant S Alam Group in Chattogram were abruptly shut down yesterday until further notice.

The factories declared closed are S Alam Refined

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

Advisory council okays draft of new cyber security act

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The interim government's advisory council yesterday passed the draft of the Cyber Surokha Adhyadesh 2024 to ensure the security of vulnerable people in cyberspace.

The new cyber security law "will protect media freedom", said Shafiqul Alam, the chief adviser's press secretary, at a briefing.

All controversial sections of the previous law that were used by the last government to muzzle the press and dissent voices have been dropped in the new draft of the cyber security law, he said.

"The new law will in no way curtail the freedom of the press. You can be sure of this -- we want to make cyberspace safe for all vulnerable people in the country. There are incidents of many people being cheated -- many women and children are being bullied," he added.

On November 7, the advisory council decided in principle to repeal the Cyber Security Act which has been used

to curb press freedom and suppress political dissent.

In September 2023, parliament passed the CSA, replacing the Digital Security Act (DSA) 2018.

Rights defenders and journalists pointed out at the time that the provisions used to repress dissent were carried over from the DSA to the CSA.

The advisory council also decided to implement the recommendation from the "Promotion Committee for Retired Officers Deprived of Promotion", Alam said.

Earlier this month, the committee in its report recommended the promotion of 764 retired officials to various ranks, including deputy secretary, joint secretary, additional secretary and secretary with retrospective effect.

The officials, who retired between 2009 and August 4 this year, believe that they had been deprived by the AL regime.

The government started the legal process to extradite the fallen autocrat

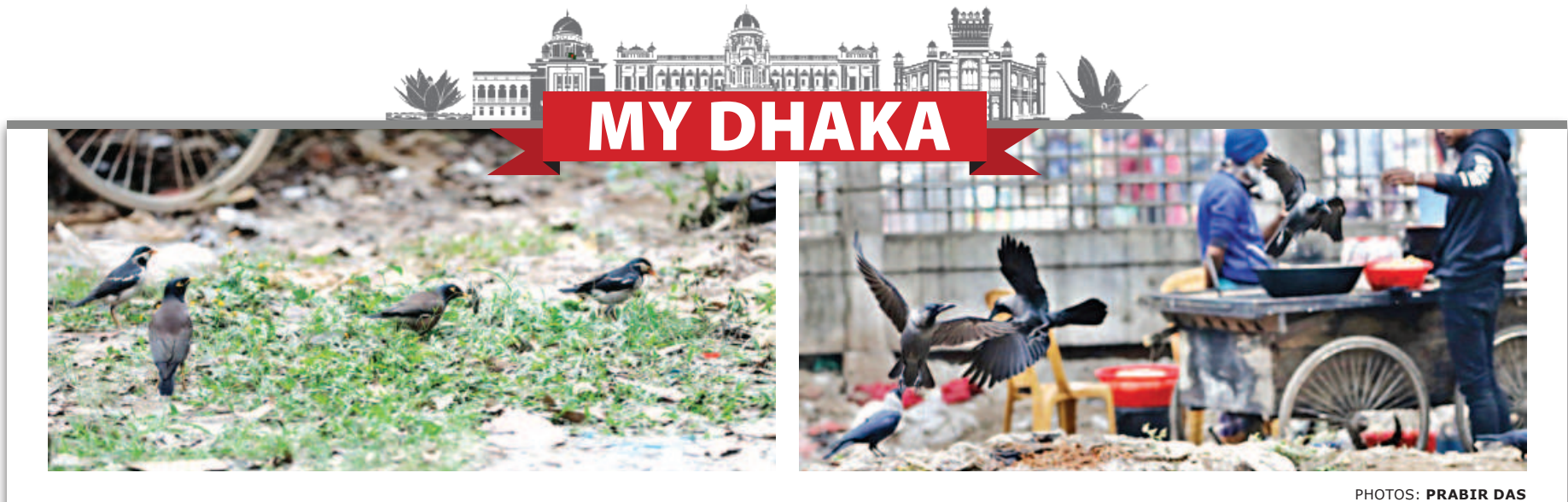
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ফজলুর রহমান
(১৯৪৭-২০২৩)
প্রতিষ্ঠাতা চেয়ারম্যান ও ম্যানেজিং ডিরেক্টর

কীর্তি তোমার রবে
চিরকাল

সিটি গ্রুপের স্বপ্নদ্রষ্টা জনাব ফজলুর রহমানের
প্রথম মৃত্যুবার্ষিকীতে আমাদের শ্রদ্ধাঞ্জলি

citygroup



BEYOND CATS AND DOGS

The overlooked wildlife of Dhaka

JANNATUL BUSHRA

Often in Dhaka, when we think about animals around us, we most think about lazy cats basking in the sun or brave dogs patrolling neighbourhoods with their ever-watchful eyes.

However, if you pause for a while and look closer, you will see that the city is home to so much more than just its familiar feline and canine residents.

The sparrow is the first bird I frequently encounter if I only start with the birds! This tiny creature has made its place in our homes, workplaces, and balconies.

It is difficult to avoid them because they are practically everywhere! You will see them leaping from one balcony to another from dawn to dusk. I, once, longed to hold them by the hands when I was a child. As they are tiny and jittery, it was impossible to do so!

Another master of the sky you might also notice in Dhaka is the cheel (kite). My mother used to scare me with this one: “Cheel chokh niye jabe (the kite will snatch your eyes),” she would say whenever we were caught misbehaving.

The kite glides above the bustling streets while scanning for prey with its sharp eyes. They often choose the city’s tallest structures for their nests.



One memorable tale I heard from a colleague is of a fiercely protective mother kite that swooped down and delivered a swift, painful bite to an unsuspecting soul who dared to open a window beneath her carefully guarded nest!

And then there are the crows, often dismissed as a noisy nuisance. These black-winged custodians are the city’s unsung heroes, performing essential ecological services.

There is this interesting relationship between monkeys and crows in the city. If you see a gang of crows shouting, be

sure that there must be a monkey teasing them somewhere nearby!

However, monkeys are perhaps the most visible yet misunderstood animals in Dhaka.

These chaotic, yet, utterly resilient urban primates still rule in some places of Old Dhaka like Bangshal, Raisaheb Bazar, Narinda, Gandaria, Shankhari Bazar, Wari, and possibly some other locations I am not aware of.

Their presence sparks irritation rather than admiration.

Interestingly enough, despite their annoyance, most of the people of

Dinanath Sen Road at Gandaria still adore them.

In the quieter corners of Dhaka’s parks and open fields, squirrels can often be seen darting gracefully along sunlit tree branches, flicking their bushy tails as they take in their surroundings.

These tiny, playful creatures have been an endearing part of my university life, often brightening my days as I caught glimpses of them scurrying about on campus.

Reptiles, too, carve out their place in this urban jungle. Gui shaap (Bengal monitor), with its sinuous movements and dinosaur-like appearance, is a surprising resident of Dhaka’s watery margins. I recently spotted one in the Dhanmondi Lake area! And honestly, the child in me was dead scared at the sight of it.

Speaking of Dhanmondi Lake, let’s not forget to mention the small group of ducks that glide across the calm waters and if you look closely, you might also notice tadpoles darting through the water as well.

One thing I have realised is that Dhaka’s wildlife may not roar, chirp, or rustle as loudly as its traffic but it is there, enduring, and adapting every day.

MUGGING MENACE IN CITY

Star replies to CA press wing’s Facebook post

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The chief adviser’s press wing has contested a report by The Daily Star titled “City dwellers on edge as mugging runs rampant” published on its December 22 issue as the lead piece, terming it misleading.

Citing data sourced from a DMP official, the newspaper reported that a total of 96 cases were lodged with Dhaka metropolitan police stations over mugging incidents in the three months after August. Of those cases, 22 were filed in September, 43 in October, and 31 in November.

A post uploaded Monday on the Facebook page “CA Press Wing Facts” challenged The Daily Star report, stating that seven “dosyuta” cases were filed in August, 16 in September, 27 in October, and 31 in November, totalling 81. (Police translate robbery as “dosyuta” and dacoity as “dakati” in their documents.)

In comparison, last year, 30 “dosyuta” (robbery) cases were filed in August, 27 in September, 25 in October, and 20 in November, totalling 102 cases, the post added.

The press wing then drew the conclusion that the number of “dosyuta” cases has actually fallen this year compared to last year.

OUR REPLY

The Daily Star finds the CA press wing’s conclusion misleading. In fact, when considering the September-November period, the data presented by the CA press wing points to a rise in the number of “dosyuta” (robbery) cases this year compared to last year.

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Commission formed to probe BDR massacre

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government issued a gazette notification yesterday forming a seven-member commission to reinvestigate the 2009 BDR (now Border Guard Bangladesh) massacre and uncover the nature of the crimes committed during, before, and after the killings.

The commission will also identify the individuals and entities – both domestic and foreign – that were involved in the incident on February 25 and 26, 2009, according to the gazette issued by the Cabinet Division and signed by Cabinet Secretary Sheikh Abdur Rashid.

Former BGB director general Maj Gen (retd) ALM Fazlur Rahman will lead the commission, with retired Maj Gen Jahangir Kabir Talukder and retired Brig Gen Md Saidur Rahman serving as members.

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Christmas today

FROM PAGE 1

The festival is the celebration of rebirth, a new beginning, forgiveness and peace, and a renewed relationship with God and human beings.

Decoration of Christmas trees with colourful lights, special prayers, distribution of gifts among children, and exchange of pleasantries are the main features of the day’s festivities.

Christmas carols and hymns will be sung before and after the prayer sessions at the churches on the day.

The day is a public holiday.

In separate messages, President Mohammed Shahabuddin and Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus greeted members of the Christian community on Christmas Eve, reports BSS.

President Shahabuddin, in his message, said Bangladesh is a country of communal harmony and here people of all faiths practice their religions and rituals independently, urging all to work together for a happy, prosperous, and non-communal Bangladesh.

Six factories

FROM PAGE 1

The notice signed by S Alam Sugar Industries, S Alam Power Plant, S Alam Cold Rolled Steels, S Alam Cold Rolled Steels Limited-NOF, S Alam Power Generation and Infinity CR Strips Industries. Two of those are located in Kalarpool in Karnaphuli Upazila of Chattogram, three in Ichhanagar and one in Banskhali upazila.

The factories were closed due to a shortage of raw materials, said Ashish Kumar Nath, deputy manager of S Alam Group. However, the salaries of workers and employees will continue as usual.

At least 12,000 workers and employees work in the six factories.

“Even though everything is running normally in our factory, a sudden notice of closing the factory was issued – I don’t know for what reason the factory has been closed,” said Nazim Uddin, production manager of S Alam Cold Rolled Steels.

Restoration of caretaker system

FROM PAGE 1

and graffiti during the July uprising. They were not associated with the Student Against Discrimination movement or the Jatiya Nagorik Committee.

The commission has undertaken two broader initiatives.

Riaz said, “First, we collected public opinions through our website, receiving 50,573 responses. While these inputs were helpful, they had limitations due to the lack of demographic information about the respondents, such as age, gender, location or profession, which weakened their scientific credibility.”

To address this, the commission collaborated with the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics to conduct

a household survey using a methodologically sound and scientifically rigorous process.

“This survey collected 45,925 opinions, which we are now analysing. This approach ensured a more representative and inclusive understanding of public sentiment,” Riaz added.

Thus far, the commission has conducted 46 meetings: 23 for consultations and 23 among its members.

“Through these efforts, we have extensively and inclusively gathered opinions and analysed 121 countries’ constitutions – we are working toward making well-informed recommendations,” Riaz also said.

‘We’re not drafting constitution’

FROM PAGE 1

and the other is to propose recommendations. The foundation of the recommendations is to make the constitution more democratic, ensure the participation of the people and reform it in a way that prevents the possibility of autocratic rule in the future.

In my opinion, it has essentially been rewritten twice: once through the Fourth Amendment and again through the Fifteenth Amendment. I emphasise the notion of “rewriting” the constitution because, with the Fourth Amendment, the character of the state, the rights of its citizens and the structure of power were fundamentally altered.

The same fundamental changes were made through the Fifteenth Amendment. The core character of the constitution was altered and the rights of the people were not adequately protected. Essentially, this means the constitution was rewritten.

In reviewing Bangladesh’s constitution, we also studied the constitutions of 121 countries to compare and analyse the unique provisions of our constitution and identify similarities or differences with other countries.

For example, Bangladesh’s constitution includes provisions like displaying Bangabandhu’s portrait in government offices and incorporating the Declaration of Independence. Our researchers analysed these aspects thoroughly.

This analysis involved two approaches. First, we examined how the constitution evolved into its current form. Second, we are focused on what the commission will propose.

I believe the commission’s recommendations will not be the final word as the constitution is a political document that reflects the people’s aspirations and provides guidelines for the state.

To develop these recommendations, we engaged with the largest stakeholders: the people. This also involves discussions with political parties, civil society groups, professional bodies and eminent individuals.

DS: What are the key points of consensus among stakeholders, or what proposals is the commission planning to recommend?

AR: I won’t say what we will propose but I can share the areas where I have observed significant consensus. The most prominent consensus I have seen is that people want a participatory government system that ensures voting rights. They want these rights to be constitutionally protected so no one can undermine or take them away.

There is also a strong desire to prevent excessive concentration of power in the hands of a single individual.

As for solutions, there are various opinions. Some emphasise the importance of balancing power, while others point out that the prime minister has become overly powerful due to the constitution.

To address this, it has been suggested to empower and strengthen parliamentary standing committees to prevent the misuse of power.

Additionally, some stakeholders believe the prime minister should not hold multiple positions to avoid accumulating excessive authority.

DS: Many people have discussed the idea of a bicameral parliamentary system. Is the commission planning to propose it?

AR: A significant number of stakeholders have proposed a bicameral parliamentary system. Their reasoning is rooted in a desire to decentralise power, believing that such a system could help prevent the misuse of authority.

The proposals for a bicameral system and limiting the prime minister’s tenure to a maximum of two terms reflect the people’s aspirations to curb the concentration of power, establish constitutional safeguards against autocracy and create institutions that protect their rights.

Ultimately, we will make recommendations based on the political and cultural context, the aspirations of the Bangladeshi people and the political behaviour of the country.

DS: Have you received proposals for amending or rewriting the constitution? What is the commission planning to recommend: amend or rewrite?

AR: I would suggest not framing it that way. First of all, we are not drafting the constitution. Our role is to present what our stakeholders and analyses have indicated needs change.

How these changes will be implemented is a political process and is to be carried out by the political parties that govern the country.

They will draft the constitution, consulting stakeholders in their ways. We are not specifically proposing amendments or a complete rewriting of the constitution.

What we are saying is that, for a democratic Bangladesh, certain principles and provisions need to be incorporated into the constitution.

Whether this is done through political consensus or an electoral process is up to the political parties.

DS: The president’s role has largely been symbolic. Did the stakeholders propose increasing the president’s powers? Will the commission recommend balancing the powers of the president and the prime minister?

AR: This issue was raised significantly. It came up in discussions about reducing the absolute power of the prime minister.

One suggested approach is to grant more powers to the president. However, there are both positive and negative aspects to this.

As a political science teacher, I see two potential approaches. One is vertical power distribution: granting some power to the president (at the top) and empowering the people (at the bottom) by ensuring their voting rights.

The focus should be on distributing power in a way that ensures the prime minister is accountable not only to the people but also to the system itself.

To achieve this, we need robust institutions. Strengthening parliamentary standing committees is essential, as they can monitor not just the prime minister but the entire government.

Additionally, we need constitutional institutions such as a stronger National Human Rights Commission to protect human rights and a more effective Anti-Corruption Commission to combat corruption.

We are considering the broader picture. Distributing power alone will not solve everything; institutional reforms are critical for balancing power.

DS: Some have proposed the idea of a second republic, inspired by the spirit of the July Uprising, similar to how the constitution reflects the spirit of the Liberation War. Is the commission planning to recommend including this in the constitution?

AR: Some stakeholders have proposed the inclusion of a second republic. However, as a commission, it is not our responsibility to decide on this matter. This is a political decision.

DS: Will the commission propose changes to the preamble of the constitution?

AR: The most important aspect of the preamble is its foundation. We believe the foundation lies in the Declaration of Independence during the Liberation War, which emphasised equality, human dignity and social justice. These ideals are the foundation of our state.

This foundation was not created in a single day or suddenly on April 10, 1971. It emerged from the long struggles of the Bangladeshi people: the anti-British movement, the struggle against Pakistan and the movements of peasants and labourers. These aspirations must be included in the preamble.

Unfortunately, these ideals were not fully reflected in the constitution of 1972, even though they were part of the pledges made during our independence.

The state is essentially [based on] a social agreement. We created this agreement to build a state that ensures equality, human dignity and social justice.

It won’t happen overnight, but these

foundational principles are what we aim to propose for inclusion in the preamble of the Constitution.

DS: Will the commission recommend the caretaker government system?

AR: We did not encounter any dissenting views regarding the caretaker government. Most stakeholders expressed their support for reinstating the caretaker government system.

DS: Is the commission hopeful that its proposals will be reflected in the constitution?

AR: We are hopeful because this stage has been reached through an unprecedented mass uprising. History will not chart our path, but we can ignore the bloodshed, the sacrifices of lives and the pain of those who are still suffering?

These sacrifices must have meant something and they give us hope.

DS: Compiling these extensive proposals, analysing them and preparing recommendations is a long and rigorous process. Do you think you will be able to complete it within the stipulated timeframe of January 7?

AR: We are hopeful for two reasons. First, we have received significant support from the people, institutions, political parties and researchers. This support gives us confidence that we will be able to submit our draft proposals within the stipulated timeframe.

Advisory council

FROM PAGE 1

Sheikh Hasina from India, Alam said.

“But it is a long process – we are hopeful that Sheikh Hasina’s extradition will take place soon and she will face trial.”

Hasina’s crimes in the last 15 years were “horrible”.

“About 3,500 people faced enforced disappearance. Thousands of people have been extrajudicially killed. About 1,500 people died during the July uprising,” Alam added.

Asked about Adviser Mahfuj Alam’s controversial Victory Day Facebook post, Apurba Jahangir, deputy press secretary to the chief adviser, said the post was deleted within hours of posting and “was entirely his personal opinion and it was not government’s opinion”.

Mahfuj later shared another post from his Facebook account where he made things clear, Jahangir said.

Also at the press conference, Alam said Bangladesh has launched a negotiation with South Korea on an Economic Partnership Agreement in an effort to open a broader window for economic cooperation between the two countries.

“Bangladesh is looking for a bigger market going beyond the European and American markets.”

‘We all are one big family’

Says Prof Yunus on occasion of Christmas

BSS, Dhaka

Chief Adviser Professor Muhammad Yunus yesterday said people of all religions are like one big family in this country.

“We do not want to hear the words – minority and majority. In this country, we all are one family; we will all live together – this is our dream. Everyone has to come forward to realise this dream,” he said.

“We are the same people. Our identity as people comes first, then religion. Every religion has a message of peace. We have to establish that message of peace within ourselves. Only then the differences will be removed,” the chief adviser said.

Prof Yunus made the remarks while exchanging greetings with representatives of the Christian community on the occasion of Happy Christmas Day at the State Guest House Jamuna.

He said if the message of peace of religions can be established in everybody’s minds, they will find it in their respective religions too.

“Then there will be no more differences with other religions. Our children will get a beautiful childhood,”

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Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus exchanges greetings with representatives of the Christian community on the occasion of Christmas at the State Guest House Jamuna yesterday.

PHOTO: CHIEF ADVISER’S OFFICE

Army chief for unity, peaceful coexistence

Visits Archbishop’s house on Christmas Eve

UNB, Dhaka

Chief of Army Staff General Waker-Uz-Zaman visited the Archbishop’s House in Kakrail, Dhaka, yesterday to extend his wishes to the Christian community on the occasion of Christmas and the New Year celebrations.

During the visit, General Waker-Uz-Zaman conveyed his warm Christmas greetings to the Christian community.

He said that all individuals, regardless of their faith, should be able to celebrate their religious festivals peacefully and with enthusiasm.

He assured that the army, along with other law enforcement agencies, is working tirelessly to ensure the safety and security of these celebrations.

The army chief expressed his strong belief that people from all communities will extend their sincere cooperation in helping the Christian community celebrate Christmas and the New Year, fostering a spirit of peace and harmony. He called upon all to unite and contribute towards building a prosperous, happy, and developed country, living together in peaceful coexistence.



ASSAULTING FREEDOM FIGHTER 30 eminent citizens seek justice

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Expressing anger and condemnation, 30 eminent citizens yesterday demanded immediate arrest and punishment of those responsible for assaulting a freedom fighter in Cumilla.

On Sunday evening, a video that went viral on the Awami League’s official X account (formerly Twitter) showed a group of men ordering Kanu to leave the area by nightfall.

The men are seen putting a string of shoes around his neck.

“We would like to make this clear: we earnestly call upon the people of the country to ensure that heinous incidents like these are not condoned under any circumstances, regardless of personal or political vendettas. The interim government, administration, and all concerned parties must remain vigilant and resolute in building a strong resistance against such acts,” said the eminent citizens in a statement.

The statement also said the Cumilla incident is not an isolated one. “It must be remembered that over the past 16 years, the authoritarian government has trampled on the spirit

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Politicisation hindering public admin

Speakers tell CGS event

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Politicisation remains the biggest challenge to Bangladesh’s public administration, with both politicians and bureaucrats contributing to its entrenchment, speakers said at a discussion yesterday.

They criticised the isolation of public administration from the people and called for sweeping reforms to ensure accountability and merit-based appointments.

The public administration system is heavily influenced by a “broker culture”, undermining its effectiveness, speakers said at the discussion, organised by the Centre for Governance Studies at the CIRDAP auditorium in Dhaka.

Hossain Zillur Rahman, former advisor to a caretaker government, said, “Our public administration suffers from significant deficiencies and is trapped in a broker system.”

Criticising the state of local governance, he added, “Political parties and bureaucrats have reduced local governments to low-class servants.”

He said without granting autonomy to institutions, economic progress would remain stagnant.

“Bangladesh is experiencing instability and uncertainty, but also an opportunity to bring about change,” said Zillur, also executive director of CGS.

Badiul Alam Majumdar, head of the Election Reform Commission, linked the current state of public administration to its colonial legacy.

“The administration was a tool of

governance and exploitation for the British, and we still see its legacy. It was meant to serve the people but has failed to achieve that goal,” he said.

Dr Muhammad Abdul Mazid, former Secretary and Chairman of the National Board of Revenue (NBR), urged political parties to include reform commitments in their election manifestos.

Political parties and bureaucrats have reduced local governments to low-class servants. Without granting autonomy to institutions, economic progress would remain stagnant.

HOSSAIN ZILLUR RAHMAN

“National institutions must not be politicised. The persistence of a brokerage culture undermines accountability,” he said.

Former Secretary AKM Abdul Awal Majumdar traced the roots of administrative decay to the post-independence period.

Former FBCCI President Mir Nasir Hossain highlighted the lack of inter-ministerial coordination and emphasised the importance of holding corrupt individuals accountable.

Advocate Subrata Chowdhury,

general secretary of Gono Forum, cautioned against wasting time under the guise of reform efforts.

Student representative Tahmid Al Mudassar criticised the servility and pettiness of officials in public administration, particularly within the secretariat.

Maj Gen (ret’d) ALIM Fazlur Rahman, former director general of Bangladesh Rifles, proposed forming an all-party government for five years to implement reforms before the next national elections.

The discussion also included remarks from Ibrahim Khan, former Secretary and general secretary of the Officers’ Club, and Mahmudul Islam Chowdhury, former mayor of Chattogram City Corporation and a former lawmaker. They called for institutional reforms.

Other speakers included Dr Jamal Uddin Ahmed, former general secretary of the Bangladesh Economic Association, Mujibur Rahman Manju, member secretary of the Amar Bangladesh Party, former secretary Sultana Afroz, and major general (ret’d) AMSA Amin, an organiser of Ethical Society Bangladesh. Monira Khan, chair of CGS, and Abdullah Hil Rakib, former BGMEA vice president, stressed the importance of ethical governance.

Dhaka University’s Public Administration expert Dr Nazmul Ahsan Kalimullah, NDM Chairman Bobby Hajaj, and senior assistant editor of Daily Jugantor Mahbub Kamal also shared their perspectives.

Edn cadre exclusion proposal rejected

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The BCS General Education Cadre Association yesterday demanded the immediate withdrawal of the Public Administration Reform Commission’s reported recommendation to exclude the General Education Cadre from the BCS system.

At a press conference at Dhaka Reporters Unity yesterday, the association warned of protests if their demands were not met by December 29.

Acting General Secretary Mohammad Tajib Uddin presented a 15-point demand, expressing concern over remarks by the commission’s chairman suggesting plans to remove the General Education and Health Cadres from the BCS structure.

Tajib Uddin said the proposal had caused significant distress among the 16,000 members of the General Education Cadre, creating an atmosphere of uncertainty and anxiety.

He described the proposed reforms as a “suicidal plan,” warning that such a move would destabilise the cadre and risk the stability of the state.

The demands include halting any efforts to exclude the cadre, ensuring

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Project costs higher here than in India

Says adviser, launches new train on Dhaka-Khulna route

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Railways Adviser Muhammad Fouzul Kabir Khan yesterday said the cost of any project in the country is higher than in other neighbouring countries, including India.

He urged everybody concerned, including railway engineers, to work sincerely so that project costs can be reduced. Otherwise, Bangladesh Railway will not be able to give expected services to its passengers, he added.

He was speaking at a programme at Kamalapur Railway Station to formally inaugurate a train on Dhaka-Khulna route via Padma Bridge for the first time. Before his inauguration, a Dhaka-bound Jahanabad Express left Khulna carrying over 500 passengers, spending around four hours.

BR also launched another intercity train, Ruposhi Bangla, on Dhaka-Benapole route yesterday, ending a long wait for the shorter route between Dhaka and the south-western regions.

The 169-km line from Dhaka to Jashore has cut short the travel time by half. The Tk 39,246 crore project, formally known as Padma Bridge Rail Link Project, is the biggest project for BR in terms of cost, over half of which is being provided by China as a loan.

Fouzul said railway is the most cost-effective transport, but rail is facing many problems, including a crisis for locomotives, carriages, and manpower. Saying misuse of money is the main reason behind the problem, he said many stations were built and the network was expanded without ensuring the required number of locomotives, carriages, and manpower.

Addressing the programme, Chinese Ambassador Yao Wen said China is committed to continuing its support for Bangladesh’s development and deepening cooperation in infrastructure projects, including railways, reports UNB.

IJTEMA CLASH Zubair faction announces indefinite sit-in

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A faction of the Tablighi Jamaat loyal to Maulana Zubair Ahmad has announced an indefinite sit-in starting tomorrow morning in Kakrail, demanding a state ban on Maulana Saad Kandhalvi and his followers.

Identifying themselves as “Shura-e-Nizam,” the Zubair faction declared that no activities by the Saad faction would be allowed at the Tongi Biswa Ijtema ground or the Tablighi Jamaat’s Kakrail Mosque.

At a press conference held at the Kakrail Mosque yesterday, Kefaetullah Azhari, principal of Jamiyatul Manhalul Qawmiya Madrasa, read a statement calling for a state ban on the Saad faction. He demanded the arrest of those allegedly involved in the December 17 attack

SEE PAGE 4 COL 6

Postgrad trainee doctors reject Tk 5,000 stipend raise

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Postgraduate trainee doctors yesterday staged a protest rally rejecting the Tk 5,000 increase in their monthly stipend.

The proposed raise would take their stipend to Tk 30,000, but they called for raising the stipend to Tk 50,000, warning that they will continue their movement until their demands are met.

The Finance Division on Monday issued a circular increasing the salary to Tk 30,000 from Tk 25,000 for the postgraduate trainee doctors.

Yesterday afternoon, the postgraduate trainee doctors organised a protest rally at Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University (BSMMU) in Dhaka’s Shabbagh. Hundreds of doctors participated in the protest, voicing their dissatisfaction with the Tk 5,000 raise.

At around 2:45pm, the protesting doctors brought out the rally at BSMMU, chanting different slogans saying that they rejected the government’s decision.

Regarding the decision, Suja Uddin, a postgraduate trainee doctor at Dhaka Medical College Hospital, told The Daily Star, “A mere Tk 5,000 increase in stipend is a mockery of us. We do not accept this decision. Our monthly stipend must be raised to Tk 50,000.”

While briefing the reporters, Jabir Hossain, president of Doctors Movement for Justice – the platform under whose banner these protests are being organised – announced an indefinite period of work abstention nationwide, demanding their monthly stipend be raised to Tk 50,000 or be the same as a 9th-grade salary for government employees.



Pedestrians cross a busy road near the Uttara flyover in Dhaka, ignoring a footbridge just a few yards away. This not only endangers their lives but also puts others in danger. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

Jouro Reaz Uddin's death anniv today

STAR REPORT

Today is the 3rd death anniversary of senior journalist Reaz Uddin Ahmed, said a press release. Reaz was the founding chief editor and managing director of The Financial Express and the founding editor and publisher of The News Today and The Financial Herald.

A four-time president of Jatiya Press Club, he also served two terms as the president of the Bangladesh Federal Union of Journalists.

In recognition of his contributions to journalism, he was awarded the Ekushey Padak in 1993.

To mark the day, prayers will be held at mosques and orphanages in his village in Manohardi. His son, Dr Masrur Reaz, requested all to pray for his departed soul.



Volunteers display a banner during the St Martin's Island Coastal Cleanup, an initiative by Unilever Bangladesh and Kewkradong Bangladesh, where 350 participants removed 1,500kg of marine debris to protect the island's ecosystem.

PHOTO: COURTESY

Overcoming

FROM PAGE 5

Across Cox's Bazar, 5,493 adolescents attend 104 Unicef-established multi-purpose centres, offering education, vocational training, and courses on child protection, nutrition, and climate change awareness.

CHRONICLES OF CHANGE

Eighteen-year-old Tarjina Akter Tasmin is another shining example.

Initially met with obstacles, Tarjina completed her computer training and is now a skilled photo editor, social media manager, and social activist.

"When I started, many questioned my decision. They said women shouldn't do such work. But after my training, the same people began appreciating my

efforts," she said.

Today, Tarjina works part-time for an NGO and advocates for women's and children's rights.

Her activism has led to tangible results, such as helping a family file a case against a local boy accused of harming a young girl. "I address issues like stalking, child marriage, and violence against women by working with community elders," she said.

Meanwhile, after completing an MS Office course, Sayef Hanafi Adil, 17, began working part-time in a computer shop, funding his education.

Similarly, Ishrat, who only studied up to class five, used her tailoring training to improve her family's financial situation.

30 eminent citizens

FROM PAGE 3

of the Liberation War by politicising it, and the responsibility for this lies squarely with the outgoing government and its associates," it read.

However, the statement added that this is no way justifies any form of disrespect towards the greatest sons of the nation -- the freedom fighters.

"We strongly demand that the interim government, all political parties, and other entities concerned take effective measures to combat such malicious activities."

The statement also mentioned that two persons have been expelled from Jamaat-e-Islami in connection with the incident, but this is not enough.

"We believe that a clear and specific policy by Jamaat regarding the recognition and honour

Member Shireen Huq, DU teachers Prof Zobaidda Nasreen, Robaet Ferdous and Tasneem Siraj Mahboob, ALRD Executive Director Shamsul Huda, photographer Shahidul Alam, singer Farzana Wahid Shayan, journalist Saydia Gulrukh, writer Rehnuma Ahmed, Nagarik Uddyog Executive Director Zakir Hossain, SSF Executive Director Advocate Saidur Rahman, Bangladesh Hindu Buddhist Christian Oikya Parishad acting General Secretary Manindra Kumar Nath, writer Pavel Partha, and Supreme Court lawyers Faustina Pereira, Minhazul Haque Chowdhury, Barrister Ashraf Ali, Barrister Shahadat Alam, Nazmul Huda, indigenous rights activist Hana Shams Ahmed, and Agrani Bank PLC Chairman Syed Abu Naser Bakhtiar Ahmed.

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2nd Edition

We all are one big family

FROM PAGE 3

Prof Yunus said.

On the occasion, Christian leaders expressed hope that generosity and communal harmony would develop in Bangladesh under the leadership Prof Yunus and assured him of giving optimum cooperation from the Christian community.

Bishop Bejoy N D'Cruze, head of the

Catholic Christians of Bangladesh, hoped under Prof Yunus' leadership, Bangladesh might become a democratic, secular and non-communal country.

The Christian leaders thanked the interim government for donating Tk 2.5 crore to the Christian Religious Welfare Trust on the occasion of Christmas. Christian leaders

presented a copy of Bible to the chief adviser.

Religious Affairs Adviser Dr AFM Khalid Hossain conducted the greeting exchange ceremony.

Law Adviser Professor Dr Asif Nazrul, Industries Adviser Adilur Rahman Khan, and Environment Adviser Syeda Rizwana Hasan were present on the occasion.

Zubair faction announces

FROM PAGE 3

in Tongi, which left three dead and many injured.

"The culprits must be apprehended within 24 hours, and law enforcement agencies' role during the attack remains questionable," Azhari said.

He also demanded that Tablighi activities

at Kakrail Mosque and the Tongi Jtama ground be conducted under the Shura-e-Nizam's supervision.

The sit-in, set to begin at 9:00am on Thursday, will be peaceful, avoiding road blockades, Azhari assured.

The faction blamed the Saad group for the

December 17 clash over control of the Tongi ground, which resulted in violent confrontations between the two groups.

Tablighi Jamaat leaders, including Shahriar Mahmud and Maulana Zubair Ahmad, were present at the press conference.

নালন্দা উচ্চ বিদ্যালয়

ছায়ানটের সংস্কৃতি-সম্বন্ধিত সাধারণ শিক্ষা কার্যক্রম

নিয়োগ বিজ্ঞপ্তি

পদ: সহকারী শিক্ষক (বাংলা, সামাজিক বিজ্ঞান, ইংরেজি, পদার্থবিজ্ঞান, রসায়ন, গণিত), বিজ্ঞানাগার সহকারী, কর্মসহকারী

আবেদনের শেষ তারিখ ২০/০১/২০২৫

বিস্তারিত তথ্য: www.chhayanaut.org

ভর্তি বিজ্ঞপ্তি — শিক্ষাবর্ষ ২০২৫

নালন্দায় প্রাক-প্রাথমিক থেকে নবম শ্রেণি পর্যন্ত ভর্তি চলছে

* প্রাক-প্রাথমিক: অক্টুর (৩-৫ বছর), কিশোর (৪-৫ বছর), মঞ্জুরী (৫-৬ বছর)

প্রথম শ্রেণি: (৬-৭ বছর), দ্বিতীয় থেকে নবম: শ্রেণি অনুযায়ী বয়স

বিস্তারিত তথ্য ও ভর্তির আবেদনপত্র: www.nalonda.org

ফেসবুক পেজ www.facebook.com/nalonda.org

যোগাযোগ: ০১৭৯৫ ৭৬০৩৭৬

ছায়ানট সংস্কৃতি-ভবন, বাড়ি ৭২, সড়ক ১৫এ, ধানমন্ডি আ/এ, ঢাকা।

Edn cadre exclusion

FROM PAGE 3

merit-based promotions without quota-based discrimination, and opening deputy secretary-level positions to merit-based competition. They also urged the government to place the cadre in a

prestigious position in the Warrant of Precedence and ensure cadre-specific appointments to relevant posts. Other demands include elevating the position of professor within the cadre to Grade 3, creating proportional

positions in grades 1, 2, and 3, establishing regional administrative offices, and implementing regular, biannual promotions.

The association also called for the withdrawal of non-professional and non-educational officials.

ক্রয়/বিক্রয়-ভাড়া-বিজ্ঞপ্তি

১/ হাইড্রোলিক প্রি-কাস্ট পাইল ড্রাইভ মেশিন ভাড়া দিতে ইচ্ছুক ব্যক্তি/কোম্পানি যোগাযোগ করুন।

যোগাযোগ করুন : ০১৭০৭৯৬৬৬৯৯৯

email : sms.dtmx15@gmail.com

NOTICE

IN THE SUPREME COURT OF BANGLADESH
HIGH COURT DIVISION
(STATUTORY ORIGINAL JURISDICTION)
MATTER NO. 1497 OF 2024
An application under section 241(ii) read with Section 245(c) of the Companies Act, 1994..

AND

IN THE MATTER OF:
Advantis Singapore Pte. Ltd......PETITIONER

-VERSUS-

The Registrar of Joint Stock Companies and Firms and others.....RESPONDENTS

Notice is hereby given that an application under Section 241(ii) read with Section 245(c) of the Companies Act, 1994 has been filed before the Hon'ble Company Judge of the High Court Division of the Supreme Court of Bangladesh on behalf of Advantis Singapore Pte. Ltd. His Lordship Mr. Justice Ahmed Sohel was pleased to admit the said application vide order dated 28.11.2024.

Any person wishing to contest or oppose the aforesaid application may appear before the Hon'ble Court either in person or through a duly appointed Advocate. A copy of the said application may be obtained from the undersigned on payment of requisite costs.

Md. Anisul Hassan
Advocate, Supreme Court of Bangladesh
Syed Ishtiaq Ahmed & Associates
Concord Ovalash (1st Floor), House No.-62, Road No.-11A
Dhanmondi Residential Area, Dhaka-1209.
Mobile : 01755606972

TENDER NOTICE

Sealed tenders hereby invited by Prime Bank PLC. from reputed companies in the relevant field for providing below item:

Name of Work	Period of Sale		Last Date of Submission
	From	To	
Data Platform with Enterprise Data Warehouse, Enterprise Data Lake, and BI Solutions for Prime Bank PLC.	26.12.2024	26.01.2025	26.01.2025

Details are given on the Prime Bank website.
<https://www.primebank.com.bd/tenders>

Head of Facility Management Division

4th DEATH ANNIVERSARY!

It's been 4 years we lost our honorable former Director, Veteran Industrialist Engr. REAZAT ALI BACHCHU

on 25th December 2020.

We remember him on this day.

We all pray to Almighty Allah for granting him Jannat.

Directors and All Employees of

AUSTRALIAN INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL

LEGAL NOTICE

IN THE SUPREME COURT OF BANGLADESH
HIGH COURT DIVISION
(STATUTORY ORIGINAL JURISDICTION)
COMPANY MATTER NO. 1700 OF 2024

Kamrun Nahar alias Kazi Kamrun Nahar Hoque

-----Petitioner

-VERSUS-

Orion Infrastructure Ltd. Change from Belhassa Accom and Associates Ltd and others-----

Respondents

Notice is hereby given to all concerned that an application under section 81(2) read with section 85(3) of the Companies Act 1994 was filed by the petitioner mentioned earlier before the Hon'ble High Court Division of the Supreme Court of Bangladesh praying for admission of the said application. Mr Justice Ahmed Sohel of the Hon'ble High Court Division vide order dated 15 December 2024 was pleased to admit the same.

Any person interested in the said application may appear either personally or through his duly authorized Advocate. A copy of the said application may be obtained from the undersigned.

Muhammad Nawshad Zamir
Advocate
Supreme Court of Bangladesh

For the petitioner
Suite No:11A (11th floor)
Saham Sky View Tower
45/Bijoynagar, Dhaka-1000

ওয়েস্ট জোন পাওয়ার ডিস্ট্রিবিউশন কোম্পানি লিমিটেড

West Zone Power Distribution Company Ltd.
(An Enterprise of Bangladesh Power Development Board)

ব্যবস্থাপনা পরিচালক এর দপ্তর

বিদ্যুৎ ভবন, বররা মেইন রোড, খুলনা-৯০০০।

www.wzpdcl.gov.bd, e-mail: md@wzpdcl.gov.bd

স্মারক নং-২৭.২২.৪৭৮৫.০০২.২৭.০০১.২৪-৩৩৯৩

তারিখ-২৪/১২/২০২৪ খ্রি:

বিজ্ঞপ্তি

ওয়েস্ট জোন পাওয়ার ডিস্ট্রিবিউশন কোম্পানি লিমিটেড (ওজোপাডিকো)-এ নিম্নে বর্ণিত পদে সরাসরি নিয়োগের লক্ষ্যে বাংলাদেশের প্রকৃত নাগরিকদের নিকট হতে দরখাস্ত আহ্বান করা যাচ্ছে:

পদের নাম	মূল বেতন	পদ সংখ্যা
নির্বাহী পরিচালক (পরিচালন)	১,৪৯,০০০/-	০১ (এক) টি

আবেদনের সর্বশেষ সময়সীমা: ০৯/০১/২০২৫ খ্রি: তারিখ বিকাল ০৪:০০ ঘটিকা পর্যন্ত।

বিস্তারিত দেখতে ভিজিট করুন: ওজোপাডিকোর ওয়েবসাইট লিংক-<http://www.wzpdcl.gov.bd>

মো: রুহুল আমিন

কোম্পানি সচিব (অতি: দায়িত্ব)

ওজোপাডিকো, খুলনা।

ই-মেইল: cs@wzpdcl.gov.bd

GD-1264

LEGAL NOTICE

IN THE SUPREME COURT OF BANGLADESH
HIGH COURT DIVISION
(STATUTORY ORIGINAL JURISDICTION)
COMPANY MATTER NO 1653 OF 2024

Bishawjit Ghosh -----Petitioner

-VERSUS-

Summit Power Limited and others -----Respondents

Notice is hereby given to all concerned that an application under section 81(2) read with section 85(3) of the Companies Act 1994 was filed by the petitioner mentioned earlier before the Hon'ble High Court Division of the Supreme Court of Bangladesh praying for admission of the said application. Mr Justice Ahmed Sohel of the Hon'ble High Court Division vide order dated 11 December 2024 was pleased to admit the same.

Any person interested in the said application may appear either personally or through his duly authorized Advocate. A copy of the said application may be obtained from the undersigned.

Karishma Jahan
Barrister-at-Law
Room No.311
Bar Association Main Building
Bangladesh Supreme Court Premises, Dhaka-1000
Phone: 01730713833

‘We have many things to offer each other’ Says Pranay Verma on Indo-Bangla ties

UNB, Dhaka

Indian High Commissioner to Bangladesh Pranay Verma has said he remains optimistic about Dhaka-Delhi relations despite changes happening around.

The two countries can really offer each other something that they do not need to go elsewhere to find, he said.

“This is how we look at the relationship. We have so many things to offer each other with our growing capabilities and rising ambitions to grow and develop,” he said.

He reiterated that they strongly support a “democratic, stable, peaceful, progressive, and inclusive” Bangladesh.

Pranay Verma made the remarks during an interaction with diplomatic correspondents at the High Commission yesterday evening, following their participation in a two-phase training programme in New Delhi.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 7

RAPE CASE Tufan Sarkar held in Bogura

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bogura

Detectives yesterday arrested Tufan Sarkar, a former Sramik League leader notorious for allegedly raping a college student and shaving the heads of both the victim and her mother in Bogura.

The rape case, which sparked outrage, is still under trial, said police.

Tufan, accused in 14 cases – including murder, extortion, drug, explosives, and corruption charges – was held at his home in the town’s Chakstutapur, according to a press release from district police.

On November 27, he was sentenced to 13 years in prison in a corruption case filed by the Anti-Corruption Commission on December 31, 2018.

The case was filed with Bogura Sadar Police Station.

Tufan had been absconding since August 5.



On a chilly winter morning in Barishal, 70-year-old Rabeya Begum tenderly wraps a shawl around her 90-year-old husband, Sikandar Sardar. The photo was taken at Charbaria in Sadar upazila recently.

PHOTO: TITU DAS

Christmas brings no joy for Khasis Betel farmers devastated by plantation destruction in Moulvibazar

MINTU DESHWARA, Moulvibazar

Christmas this year carries a shadow of uncertainty for the residents of South Dimai Punjee village, a local Khasi community in Moulvibazar’s Barlekha upazila.

The residents are reeling after miscreants destroyed around 350 trees from three betel plantations last week.

For the Khasi community, betel cultivation is their primary source of livelihood, and the destruction has brought deep shock and financial hardship for them ahead of Christmas.

Confirming the incident, Kennedy Sumer, the punjee headman, said the damage is estimated at Tk 6 lakh.

“This happened just three days after 6-7 sacks of betel leaves were stolen from the punjee. We have filed a formal complaint, but we are unsure who is responsible as there is no known conflict,” he said.

The affected farmers shared their distress. Nami Lamarang, a betel farmer in the punjee, said, “Our family relies entirely on growing betel leaves for income. We had nurtured the trees over the past 10 years. We were hoping to sell the leaves ahead of Christmas. Now everything is destroyed.”

Bruce Lamin and Mindu Sumer, two other farmers, echoed



her.

The incident has been met with widespread condemnation from locals, who called upon the authorities concerned to identify the perpetrators promptly and ensure their appropriate punishment.

Dulal Sarkar, a sub-inspector of Barlekha Police Station, said he visited the crime scene and spoke to the victims. “The trees were destroyed at night with no witnesses, but we are pursuing leads,” he said.

Saju Marchiang, publicity secretary of the Khasi Social Council and also a betel grower, said, “This year was already difficult, as hailstorms caused extensive damage to the trees earlier, while betel leaves prices have been low. Even now, the prices are still going much lower compared to last year.”

“The recent incident would further plunge the victims into severe financial distress,” he added.

Subimol Lindokiri, former assistant public prosecutor at Moulvibazar Judge’s Court, called for swift and permanent measures to address such recurring incidents within the punjee villages that endanger the community’s security, stability and future. There are around 80 punjee villages in Moulvibazar, 10-12 in Sylhet, and another in Habiganj.

Overcoming hardship thru skills development Unicef programme equips youths with training, skills to change their lives

SAJJAD HOSSAIN, back from Cox’s Bazar

At just 18 years old, Monir Hossain has become a beacon of hope for the village of Samitipara in Cox’s Bazar.

Monir’s journey from hardship to success has inspired his community, offering a glimpse of what’s possible with determination and opportunity.

Samitipara, one of the poorest villages in Cox’s Bazar, is a place where children often grow up amid uncertainty, with even basic needs unmet.

Yet, Monir has defied these odds, transforming his life and inspiring those around him.

With the training and opportunities he received through the Unicef Adolescent Development Programme, funded by the European Union, he changed his life and impacted those around him.

The programme, designed for out-of-school adolescents aged 15 to 18, equips youth in host communities and Rohingya refugee camps with skills. For Monir, this meant learning computer applications and freelancing – tools that opened doors to international opportunities and self-sufficiency.



Tarjina



Monir

“I’m the only one in my village with a computer,” Monir shared.

“At first, children came just to see it, curious about what it could do. After my training, I’m working on international freelancing platforms and have a part-time job at a local computer shop. I pay for my education and support my family,” he said.

“Many job seekers come to me for assistance. I help them apply online, and they pay me for my service,” he said.

Monir’s influence extends beyond employment. In a community where early marriage is common, he’s a vocal advocate against the practice.

“Early marriage has long-term negative effects on children and families. I’ve convinced several parents to delay their daughters’ marriages, emphasising the importance of education and stability,” he said.

His mother, Aleya Begum, said, “Everyone knows me as ‘Monir’s mother’. It makes me so proud.”

Monir isn’t the only one transformed by the programme.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1

Proper trial of Hasina depends on repatriation Says ICT chief prosecutor

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A fair trial of Sheikh Hasina would be possible if the government succeeded in bringing her back from India, Chief Prosecutor of the International Crimes Tribunal Muhammad Tajul Islam said yesterday.

Addressing a question about the government’s diplomatic note to India seeking the return of the ousted prime minister, Tajul Islam said, “The state is doing its duty, and so am I, as part of a state organisation. If Hasina is brought back, her trial can proceed effectively.”

The ICT also issued arrest warrants yesterday against former Dhaka-19 MP Muhammad Saiful Islam and four police officials in connection with crimes against humanity during the July-August mass uprising in Ashulia, Savar.

Tajul said investigations had uncovered the involvement of Saiful and the police in a brutal incident where six students were reportedly shot dead, their bodies burned, and the crime staged to appear as the work of protesters.

A viral video from early August showed six burnt bodies piled onto a police van. Investigators found that Saiful allegedly fired shots personally, aided by four officers. After the shootings, the bodies were taken in a rickshaw, later loaded onto a van near the police station, and set alight using petrol.

The names of the implicated police officials remain undisclosed to prevent their escape. Tajul Islam said that while the officers are currently posted in different locations, their arrests are expected soon.

“Such actions appear to have been an attempt to avoid accountability,” he added.

2 killed in road accident

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Narayanganj

Two men were killed and another was injured when a three-wheeler, locally known as Nisimon hit a motorcycle in Narayanganj’s Araihaaz upazila yesterday.


The incident occurred around 12:00pm on Madanganj-Narsingdi road at Mollarchar, said police.

Araihaaz Police Station Officer-in-Charge Enayet Hossain said the three were heading to Narsingdi passport office on the bike.

The deceased were identified as Sohan Mia, 26, and Uzzal Hossain, 40.

The injured – Mithu, 20 – was undergoing treatment at the upazila health complex.

The three-wheeler driver fled with the vehicle.



বাংলা একাডেমি
৩, কাজী নজরুল ইসলাম এভিনিউ, ঢাকা ১০০০

বিজ্ঞপ্তি
অমর একুশে বইমেলা ২০২৫
স্থানঃ বাংলা একাডেমি প্রাঙ্গণ ও সোহরাওয়ার্দী উদ্যান

অমর একুশে বইমেলা ২০২৫-এ অংশগ্রহণ করতে আগ্রহী প্রকৃত প্রকাশনা প্রতিষ্ঠানকে স্টলের আবেদনপত্র জমা দেওয়ার জন্য আহ্বান করা হচ্ছে। আবেদনপত্র অনলাইনে www.ba21bookfair.com-এই ওয়েবসাইটে পূরণ করা যাবে। পুরোনো (২০২৪ সালের বইমেলায় অংশগ্রহণকারী) যেসব প্রকাশনা প্রতিষ্ঠান পূর্বের আকারের (১, ২, ৩ ও ৪ ইউনিটের স্টল বা প্যাভিলিয়ন) স্টল পেতে আগ্রহী তারা অনলাইনে ২৬.১২.২০২৪ থেকে ০৪.০১.২০২৫ তারিখ পর্যন্ত আবেদন করতে পারবে। আবেদনপত্রের সঙ্গে হালনাগাদ ট্রেড লাইসেন্স, আয়কর সনদ, লেখকের সঙ্গে সম্পাদিত সর্বশেষ একটি চুক্তিপত্রের ১ম ও শেষ পাতা, লেখককে প্রদত্ত সম্মানির সাম্প্রতিক প্রমাণক, আর্কাইভস্ ও গ্রন্থাগার অধিদপ্তরে গ্রন্থ জমা প্রদানের রসিদ/প্রত্যয়নপত্র এবং অগ্নি-সাইক্লোন বীমার প্রমাণক আপলোড করবেন।


নতুন প্রকাশনা প্রতিষ্ঠান অথবা যেসব প্রকাশনা প্রতিষ্ঠান পূর্বের আকার থেকে বর্ধিত স্টল বা প্যাভিলিয়ন পেতে আগ্রহী সেসব প্রতিষ্ঠান বাংলা একাডেমি থেকে তথ্যফরম/আবেদনপত্র সংগ্রহ ও পূরণ করে উপর্যুক্ত প্রয়োজনীয় তথ্যাদিসংবলিত আবেদন প্রকাশিত বইসহ জমা দিতে হবে।

নতুন আবেদনকারীকে পৃথক আবেদন ফরমে হালনাগাদ ট্রেড লাইসেন্স, আয়কর সনদ, লেখকের সঙ্গে সম্পাদিত সর্বশেষ একটি চুক্তিপত্রের ১ম ও শেষ পাতা, লেখককে প্রদত্ত সম্মানির সাম্প্রতিক প্রমাণক এবং আর্কাইভস্ ও গ্রন্থাগার অধিদপ্তরে গ্রন্থ জমা প্রদানের রসিদ/প্রত্যয়নপত্র, অক্টোবর ২০২৪-এর মধ্যে প্রকাশিত কমপক্ষে ২৫/৩০টি মানসম্মত বই একাডেমিতে জমা দিতে হবে। বইয়ের মান ও অন্যান্য কাগজ/দলিল যাচাই শেষে স্টল বরাদ্দের ব্যাপারে বইমেলা পরিচালনা কমিটি সিদ্ধান্ত গ্রহণ করবে।

অনলাইনে আবেদনপত্র জমা দিতে অপারগ প্রতিষ্ঠানসমূহ একাডেমির ড. মুহম্মদ এনামুল হক ভবনে সরাসরি আবেদনপত্র জমা দিতে পারবে।

সরাসরি আবেদনপত্র (বই ও অন্যান্য কাগজ/দলিলসহ) ২৯.১২.২০২৪ থেকে ০৫.০১.২০২৫ তারিখ (ছুটির দিনসহ) সকাল ১০:০০টা থেকে সন্ধ্যা ৭:০০টার মধ্যে সংগ্রহ ও জমা দেওয়া যাবে। এরপর কোনো আবেদনপত্র গ্রহণ করা হবে না। অনলাইনে বা সরাসরি প্রাপ্ত আবেদনপত্র অমর একুশে বইমেলা ২০২৫ পরিচালনা কমিটি যাচাই-বাছাই করে ০৯.০১.২০২৫ তারিখ অনলাইনে প্রকাশ করবে। বরাদ্দপ্রাপ্ত স্টলের ভাড়া ব্যাংকে জমা দিয়ে জমার রসিদ ১০.০১.২০২৫ থেকে ১৫.০১.২০২৫ তারিখের মধ্যে আপলোড করতে হবে এবং ০১ (এক) কপি প্রতিষ্ঠানের নামসহ একাডেমির বিক্রয় ও বিপণন উপবিভাগে জমা দিতে হবে। যেসব প্রতিষ্ঠানের স্টল ভাড়া উপর্যুক্ত সময়ের মধ্যে জমা হবে না, সেসব প্রতিষ্ঠানের নাম লটারির তালিকার বাইরে থাকবে। ভাড়া বাবদ প্রদেয় টাকা অগ্রাধী ব্যাংক পিএলসি-র যে কোনো অনলাইন শাখা থেকে অগ্রাধী ব্যাংক পিএলসি, বাংলা একাডেমি শাখার বাংলা একাডেমি অমর একুশে গ্রন্থমেলা সঞ্চয়ী হিসাব নম্বর ০২০০০১৪০৪৯২৩১'-এ জমা দিতে হবে। টাকা জমার রসিদে প্রতিষ্ঠানের নাম ও অনলাইন রেজিস্ট্রেশন নম্বর থাকা অপরিহার্য।

অংশগ্রহণকারী প্রকাশনা প্রতিষ্ঠানকে অমর একুশে বইমেলা ২০২৫-এর নীতিমালা ও নিয়মাবলি মেনে চলতে হবে। এই নীতিমালা ও নিয়মাবলি ওয়েবসাইটে থেকে সংগ্রহ করা যাবে।



ড. সরকার আমিন
সদস্য-সচিব

অমর একুশে বইমেলা ২০২৫ পরিচালনা কমিটি
বাংলা একাডেমি, ঢাকা ১০০০

GD-1271

GD-1261

Mosharraf Karim stars in latest ‘Dui Shaw’ episode on Chorki

The new *Dui Shaw* episode, titled *Bhaggo Bhalo*, premiered on Chorki today. It addresses the question, “Why can’t an astrologer predict their own fate?” through Mosharraf Karim’s character, an astrologer who computes others’ destinies.

Directed by Nuhash Humayun, this episode centres on an astrologer who unexpectedly goes viral. The cast includes Jebunessa Sobhan, Adnan Adib Khan, and Samia Othoi.

Nuhash previously shared that *Dui Shaw* explores contemporary fears within society, a theme he has aimed to capture throughout the series.

This is Mosharraf Karim’s first collaboration with Nuhash. The actor stated, “I felt it was something I had to be a part of.”



Grammy to honour Prince with Lifetime Achievement Award

Late American singer-songwriter, multi-instrumentalist, record producer, and actor Prince Rogers Nelson, widely known as Prince, will be honoured with a Grammy Lifetime Achievement Award next February.

This prestigious recognition, usually reserved for artistes who have been under appreciated, will celebrate Prince’s iconic and influential career.

With seven Grammy wins to his name, Prince has earned more than the other six honorees combined: Beverly, Shanté, and Valli have never won a Grammy, while The Clash and Jones each have one. Taj Mahal has won four Grammys in his career.

The recipients of this prestigious Lifetime Achievement Award were selected by a vote of the Recording Academy’s national trustees.

The Lifetime Achievement Awards will be presented on February 1, the day before the main Grammy ceremony in Los Angeles.



Banned film ‘Makeup’ receives clearance after 5 years



After five long years, Anonno Mamun’s film *Makeup* has been approved for release with some scenes cut, the director confirmed to local media.

Last October, the Appeals Committee banned the film under the 2023 Certification Act after reviewing it, the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting had announced.

The director then finally submitted *Makeup* to the newly formed Certification Board, which approved its release on December 17 with a “U” (signifying Universal) grade, suitable for all audiences.

In January 2021, the Bangladesh Film Censor Board banned *Makeup*, citing offensive content that negatively depicted the film industry, as noted by former member Khorshed Alam Khosru.

CHRISTOPHER NOLAN to direct Homer’s ‘The Odyssey’ film adaptation



Universal has announced Christopher Nolan’s next film, an adaptation of Homer’s *The Odyssey*. The epic will follow Odysseus’ perilous journey home after the Trojan War and is set for a global IMAX release on July 17, 2026.

Touted as a “mythic action epic,” the film will feature a star-studded cast, including Matt Damon, Tom Holland, Zendaya, Anne Hathaway, and Charlize Theron, among others.

Known for historical dramas like *Oppenheimer* and *The Prestige*, this marks Nolan’s first venture into Greek mythology. His stellar year began with his first-ever Oscar wins for *Oppenheimer*, and ended on a high note as well, with Nolan being Knighted by King Charles in a ceremony last week.

Duronto TV’s special programme for Christmas

Duronto TV is spreading holiday cheer with a delightful lineup of Christmas specials today through these shows:

Hoi Hoi Holla Season 3: Dr Safdar Chowdhury and the kids in his building gear up for a grand Christmas. Dressed as Santa, Safdar plans to surprise everyone with gifts—until the presents and costume mysteriously vanish. Suddenly, two Santas appear with the stolen gifts! Who are they? Find out today at 11:30am and 8:30pm.

Banai Mojar Khabar Ma Baba Ar Ami: Join Hanschen Lucas Adhikary Tomon and his mom as they cook up festive treats—fruit cake, duck steak, and more at 2:30pm and 7:30pm.

Aji Shubhodine: A special dance show will air at 9am.



WHAT’S THE HAPS?



A special screening of the film *Noya Manush* will be held at TSC, Dhaka University on the occasion of Christmas. Directed by Shohel Rana Boyati, it features Rawnak Hasan and Mousumi Hamid among others. The story is about the struggling lives of the people of *char* area. Tickets are priced at Tk 100 and at Tk 50 for students.

Time: 2pm and 4pm
Venue: TSC
For tickets check the film’s official Facebook page.

COUNTRYWIDE

Early variety pumpkin brings smile to farmers

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Lalmonirhat

Early variety of pumpkin has brought fortune to the farmers in Rangpur region as good yield and fair price of the item this year has come as a boon to them.

Cultivation of pumpkin, both usual and early varieties, is gradually becoming a profitable crop for farmers living along the rivers—Brahmaputra, Teesta, Dharla, Jinjiram, Dudhkumar and Gangadhar—in Rangpur region as it brings much better returns compared to the expenses.

As a result, several thousand farmers, especially landless, in the char areas of the region are inclining towards pumpkin cultivation for the last few years.

According to the Department of Agricultural Extension (DAE), pumpkin has been cultivated on a total of 9,300 hectares of land in greater Rangpur region’s five districts Kurigram, Lalmonirhat, Rangpur, Gaibandha and Nilphamari, with a target to produce 3,34,800 tonnes of the crop.

Of the land, about 1,500 hectares have been brought under early variety of pumpkin cultivation.

Out of the total production, nearly 85 to 90 percent of the vegetable is produced in the char areas of the region.

The yield has been very good this year as more farmers leaning towards pumpkin cultivation, DAE sources said.

Farmers said harvest of early variety pumpkin is almost completed, but they

will harvest the usual variety in February and March next year.

Farmer Rasul Mandal of Char Shoulmari in Kurigram’s Roumari upazila said he planted hybrid breed usual variety of pumpkin on three acres of land, early variety on one acre this season, spending Tk 1 lakh.

He has already harvested about 7,000kg of the early variety and sold them to buyers in local wholesale market at Tk 30 per kg, Rasul said, adding that he will harvest the usual variety in mid-February.

Meherul Islam of Char Kalmati in Lalmonirhat Sadar upazila said alongside the usual one, he planted the early variety of pumpkin on his decimals land.

He got 1,650kg yield from the small piece of land and sold each kg of the vegetable for Tk 30.

Another farmer Dhiren Chandra Sen of Char Madhupur in Rangpur’s Kaunia upazila said char farmers are now making good profits from early variety pumpkin on sandy lands.

Although the production is a bit low in his locality, but the price is quite good, he said.

Rangpur DAE Additional Director Obaidur Rahman Mandal said pumpkin cultivation on sandy lands is helping many farmers in 500 char villages along the Brahmaputra, Dudhkumar, Jinjiram, Gangadhar, Teesta and Dharla rivers to overcome their poverties.



Like him many farmers in the region are happy as harvesting of early variety pumpkin has given them opportunity to earn good money. The photo was taken from Mahipur in Rangpur’s Gangachara upazila.

PHOTO: STAR

ACC seeks info on Hasina, family

FROM PAGE 16

Mujib Industrial City, establishment of an Indian economic zone in Mirsarai, a development project at Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Industrial City in Mirsarai, and two modern fire station projects in the same area.

The ACC has requested documents from the CAO, including project proposals, approved plans, budget approvals, allocated budgets, fund disbursement details, expenditures, and the current status of these eight projects. It also sought copies of any investigation reports on these projects, as well as a summary of project timelines.

Additionally, the ACC has sent a letter to the BFIU requesting all documents related to local and international financial transactions involving Hasina, her son Sajeeb Wazed Joy, her younger sister Sheikh Rehana, and Rehana’s daughter Tulip Siddiq, a UK lawmaker.

The ACC’s investigation team has requested

details on offshore bank account statements and other accounts linked to the individuals under investigation.

An ACC official, requesting anonymity, said the investigation team has sought personal information about these individuals from the EC and the passport department.

On December 17, the ACC opened an investigation into allegations of corruption against them over amassing Tk 59,000 crore from the Rooppur Nuclear Power Plant Project.

‘PROBE AGAINST HASINA UNDERWAY’

Shafiqul Alam, press secretary of the chief adviser, yesterday said the interim government was probing graft allegations against Hasina.

“This is our top priority. She had established a system of corruption here. The people of Bangladesh want to know who were involved in this massive theft. It is our moral responsibility to inform them. You will definitely learn about the extent of

her theft in the future,” he said at a press briefing at the Foreign Service Academy.

“There is a white paper that gives an idea of how much money has been siphoned off from Bangladesh. Every year, \$16 million has been laundered. This is the money of the people of Bangladesh. And you have seen how the banks have been looted. We are investigating this matter with utmost seriousness,” Shafiqul added.

SWAPAN, MANSUR SUED

The ACC yesterday filed two cases against former state minister for LGRD Swapan Bhattacharjee and his wife Tandra Bhattacharjee for amassing illegal wealth and laundering money.

According to a case statement, Swapan illegally acquired assets worth Tk 2.49 crore and laundered Tk 41.65 crore through transactions in 19 bank accounts.

In the second case, Swapan and Tandra have been named as accused. Tandra is accused of amassing illegal assets

worth Tk 5.55 crore and laundering Tk 10.36 crore through transactions in 10 bank accounts.

The ACC said Tandra’s wealth is a result of her husband’s illicit assets.

The graft watchdog yesterday filed another case against former Awami League lawmaker Mansur Rahman for possessing illegal wealth worth Tk 3.60 crore and laundering Tk 6.10 crore through transactions in three bank accounts.

In another development, the ACC yesterday decided to launch an investigation against eight individuals, including former prime minister’s military adviser Maj Gen (retd) Tarique Ahmed Siddiqi and ex-senior secretary Mohibul Haque, over embezzling funds in the name of developing the Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport, officials said.

On August 5, Hasina fled to India in the face of a student-led mass uprising, bringing an end to 15 years of AL rule. Her sister Rehana was with her at the time.

Student

FROM PAGE 16

station did not respond to repeated requests for comment.

The incident has intensified fear among journalists in the wake of the revolution.

One journalist, Omar Faroque, who had been a senior editor of the television station, said he was among the five who received a termination letter citing no reasons.

“The television authorities requested a few of us to step down for the greater good of the station,” Faroque told AFP.

“We demanded an explanation for the decision, but the authorities refused to provide any.”

Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus has repeatedly insisted he wants media freedom.

CA’s Press Secretary Shafiqul Alam sought to distance the government, saying that if someone “takes any action, the responsibility lies with them.”

Press watchdogs say many journalists—seen by critics as having supported Hasina when she was in power—face police investigations in apparent retaliation for their past work.

At least four journalists were imprisoned, and scores are facing legal cases across the country.

Hasina and her government were frequently accused of exerting undue pressure on the handful of independent media outlets, including shutting down newspapers and TV channels and imprisoning journalists.

After Hasina’s government fell, several TV channels, including Somoy TV, came under attack for their alleged allegiance to her Awami League.

In November, protesters besieged the offices of Prothom Alo, the largest Bangla-language newspaper, and threatened to shut it down, as well as The Daily Star.

Press freedom in Bangladesh has long been under threat.

Bangladesh ranks 165 out of 180 countries in press freedom, according to Reporters Without Borders.

Reforms should be left to an elected govt

FROM PAGE 16

They also called for initiatives to bridge the gap among the parties.

The leaders criticised the formation of a new political party and vowed to continue opposing the government until their demands are met, meeting sources said.

Speaking anonymously, one of the leaders at the meeting said the interim government is likely to take time to form a new party, raising concerns for BNP and others.

After the meeting, Gono Adhikar Parishad General Secretary Rashed Khan accused the interim government of avoiding the banning of AL by putting

the blame on BNP.

“Our clear statement is that we’ll build a mass resistance against those who rehabilitate the Awami League.” He too blamed the government of “wasting time to form a party.”

Mostafa Mohsin Montu, president of a faction of Gono Forum, called for unity based on the spirit of the 1971 Liberation War.

“There is no alternative to unity in the current political situation. For the last 15 years, people have been deprived of their voting rights. After August 5, the opportunity for change has come.”

Montu also said that reform proposals must be

discussed in parliament, adding, “We want to solve the problems through an elected government.”

Shamsul Alam, coordinator of Bam Gonotantrik Oikya, said, “The government will be requested to hold elections as soon as possible,” while Ismail Samrat, convener of Bangladesh Sadharon Chhatra Odhikar Songrokkhon Parishad, demanded that the election be held by next June or July.

“Awami League loyalists are still in the administration. Prices of goods are rising, and the law-and-order situation is worsening,” Samrat added.

Meanwhile at a separate

event yesterday, BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir said there was no place in his party for those who were involved in killings, corruption and terror activities.

He made the comment at the Thakurgaon Public Library during a blanket distribution programme.

About removing autocracy, corruption and fascism from the country, he said, “The only way to overcome corruption and fascism is by establishing the people’s rule. In other words, there is no alternative to governing the country through a parliament elected by the people.”



Building a Disability-Inclusive and Supportive Workplace Culture in Bangladesh

Access Bangladesh Foundation, in collaboration with The Daily Star, organised a roundtable titled “Building a Disability-Inclusive and Supportive Workplace Culture in Bangladesh” on October 23, 2024. Here, we publish a summary of the discussion.



Albert Mollah, Co-Founder and Executive Director, Access Bangladesh Foundation

According to the Labour Force Survey 2022, only 27.29 per cent of persons with disabilities aged 15 and older were employed. Meanwhile, the National Survey on Persons with Disabilities 2021 suggests that the percentage is 33.78 per cent. The Labour Force Survey 2022 also reveals that the employment ratio for persons with disabilities is highest in the agriculture sector (52.61 per cent), followed by the service sector (36.71 per cent) and the industry sector (11.13 per cent).

However, only 12.81 per cent of persons with disabilities are employed in the formal sector, while 87.19 per cent work in the informal sector. Around 80.91 per cent of persons with disabilities do not have the entry-level educational qualifications required for admission to TVET institutes, with only a small percentage (0.21 per cent) receiving vocational training. The enrolment of women with disabilities in vocational training is even lower (0.13 per cent).

The losses incurred by excluding persons with disabilities from the workforce are significant. A study conducted by the International Labour Organisation (ILO) in ten low- and middle-income developing countries found that the economic losses from excluding persons with disabilities are estimated to be between 3 and 7 per cent of a country's GDP.

Yet, they continue to be excluded from the workforce. This exclusion persists despite various legal frameworks that support employment opportunities for persons with disabilities, such as the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UN CRPD). The overarching principle of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) – “Leave No One Behind” – also aligns with these issues.

Persistent negative perceptions and stereotypes limit work opportunities for persons with disabilities. The lack of

Eventually, I was given the opportunity to complete a six-month internship at Access Bangladesh Foundation. In 2021, I joined Access Bangladesh Foundation as a full-time staff member, where I have now been working for four years. There are many people like me across the country, so I have one request for employers: please come forward and provide job opportunities for persons with disabilities.



Hawa Islam, Job Seeker

I am a woman with hearing and speaking disabilities, and this has hindered my career progression. I sought work in various sectors, starting with a restaurant and then moving on to IT companies, furniture shops, and even RMG factories. However, in most instances, employers would not offer me a suitable role after the three-month training period due to my disability.

Accommodation issues also arose. I could only work at the RMG factory for eight months, as my disability was exploited to assign me additional tasks, resulting in work hours nearly every day from 8:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m.

My experience highlights that women with hearing and speech disabilities face even greater discrimination in the workforce due to communication barriers present in almost every sector.



Nazmus Sakib, Diversity and Inclusion Officer, UNDP

An educational barrier exists that discriminates against persons with disabilities compared to those without, even before they enter the workforce. The quota system has never truly helped us in this regard. It is important to recognise that job seekers are also users of digital products, and companies should factor this into their recruitment processes. It is the responsibility of organisations to ensure digital accessibility and reasonable accommodations in recruitment exams and interviews for persons with disabilities, making the job-



identify areas where they can be employed without difficulty. The findings of such analyses should be disseminated among employers. At the same time, employers need to be educated and trained on the abilities of persons with intellectual disabilities. Persons with intellectual disabilities require job security, support, and coaching facilities, which employers must ensure.

Meanwhile, the Special Education Programme should prioritise rehabilitation rather than focusing solely on teaching basic life skills. It needs to be more relevant and tailored to vocational training and employment opportunities.



Ridma Khan, Director, Women Chamber of Commerce and Industry

Systemic discrimination against persons with disabilities prevents them from accessing mainstream education and employment opportunities. Women with disabilities face multiple layers of marginalisation – for being women and for having disabilities. Creating awareness to remove the stigma associated with disabilities is extremely crucial.

Businesses are profit-driven ventures, and they need proper incentives for hiring and training persons with disabilities. Affirmative action involves more than just quotas. Providing employment opportunities for persons with disabilities is the first step; however, it is equally important to sensitise the workplace to meet their specific needs. We must ensure that we are actively advocating for these issues while implementing women-specific policies to facilitate their inclusion in the workforce, including as entrepreneurs.



Muhammad Habibur Rahman, Assistant Secretary-General (Legal Affairs), Bangladesh Employers' Federation (BEF)

I believe that, just as employers have a responsibility to include persons with disabilities in their companies, we also have a responsibility to give our best to the job. The government also bears the responsibility of implementing the legal provisions for persons with disabilities.

It is not only about enforcing existing laws but also about fostering social acceptance. For instance, the law mandates reserving 5 per cent of seats on public transportation for persons with disabilities. However, in my experience, attempting to claim these rights often leads to unpleasant consequences. These issues require attention, and raising awareness is key in this regard. Bangladesh's Labour Law should properly address the challenges faced by employees with disabilities.



Dr Mohammad Sohrab Hossain, Executive Director, CRP

Workplace modifications through accessibility audits are essential for creating disability-friendly environments. Currently, many young individuals have been admitted to the CRP following injuries sustained during the July uprising. Our plan is to rehabilitate them after their treatment by offering access to training, employment opportunities, and additional support such as microcredit schemes. This is undoubtedly a challenging undertaking, and we hope to gain your support in this endeavour.

I am confident that today's discussion will lead to valuable recommendations and promote collaboration to address accessibility issues. This initiative is a significant step in raising awareness and driving meaningful change. Moving forward, it is essential to prioritise actionable strategies that can effectively improve accessibility and foster more inclusive environments.



Md Ayub Ali Sarker, Senior Specialist, TVET & Skills Development, UCEP

The National Skill Development Policy 2022 must be implemented effectively to ensure the inclusion of persons with disabilities in the skills system. Ensuring accessibility is one

of UCEP's core responsibilities, and we are working on infrastructural accommodation in collaboration with relevant organisations. However, our capacities are also limited. Capacity development is crucial when it comes to ensuring accessibility and inclusion.



Tasmiyah Tabassum Rahman, Associate Director, BRAC Skills Development Programme

BRAC's current module provides 70 per cent of informal training for persons with disabilities through the STAR model. It is based on a pedagogical method that relies on the relationship between a mentor and a mentee. For example, we send our beneficiaries to a tailoring shop to learn the craft from the head of the business.

We focus on informal training because research shows that most persons with disabilities are employed in the informal sector, largely due to the barriers they face in accessing mainstream education. Additionally, it is often easier for them to secure employment in informal sectors than in more technical fields.

The real challenge begins after the training period concludes. Securing employment or establishing a business can take an additional three to four years. The difficulty often lies in obtaining the necessary funding and ongoing support during this extended phase. To address these challenges, it is crucial to update training materials and methodologies to be more disability-friendly. Trainers should also be educated in disability-sensitive practices to ensure the training process is inclusive and effective.



Rtn Md Mashequr Rahman Khan, PHF, President, Bangladesh Society for Human Resources Management (BSHRM)

We should focus on the abilities of persons with disabilities rather than their disabilities to address employment challenges. It is worth remembering that some of the brightest individuals the world has known, such as Stephen Hawking and Helen Keller, had disabilities.

Our organisation includes HR professionals from across the country, enabling collaboration through our network to make workplaces accessible and inclusive.



A. B. M. Faqurul Alam, Group Sustainability Lead, Urm Group

We need to restructure or redesign jobs to make workplaces more inclusive. Accessible workstations, stairs, dormitories, regular training, and social support should also be prioritised. Additionally, employing family members is a key strategy to help retain staff and maintain a stable workforce. Rather than treating these measures as CSR (Corporate Social Responsibility) activities, we need to incorporate them as routine practices.



Farjana Reza, National Programme Officer, Social Protection, ILO

We are deeply committed to promoting social justice and ensuring that all workers, including persons with disabilities (PWDs), have the opportunity to lead decent and fulfilling lives. However, societal barriers often hinder the inclusion of PWDs in the workforce.

Bangladesh has made significant strides in recognising the rights of PWDs, such as ratifying the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in 2007. Despite this, challenges persist in translating these commitments into tangible actions. For example, while the government has implemented a 1 per cent employment quota for PWDs in public and semi-public sectors, the actual employment rate remains significantly lower due to underreporting and limited data.

To address these issues, the government has initiated programmes such as the Inclusive National Employment Policy 2023 and the 8th Five-Year Plan, which provide vocational

rehabilitation and microcredit support for PWDs. Partnerships with organisations like the Inclusive Job Centre (IJC) and the Bangladesh Business Disability Network (BBDN) are also encouraging private sector participation in inclusive employment practices.

Despite these efforts, systemic barriers—including societal stigma, lack of awareness, and bureaucratic hurdles—continue to limit opportunities for PWDs. To overcome these challenges, it is crucial to strengthen data collection systems, evaluate the effectiveness of existing programmes, and address systemic issues hindering the inclusion of PWDs.

The ILO is actively working to promote inclusive employment for PWDs through initiatives such as developing service-based employment models, providing access to education and skills development programmes, and advocating for inclusive workplaces. By prioritising the inclusion of PWDs, Bangladesh can create a more just and equitable society. We urge all stakeholders, including the government, employers, and civil society organisations, to work together to realise this vision.



Murteza Rafi Khan, Chief Executive Officer, Bangladesh Business and Disability Network (BBDN)

The National Action Plan on Disability recognises the role of employers in making the workforce more accessible and inclusive for persons with disabilities. However, the implementation of these plans is not always consistent. Nonetheless, the initiative represents a positive step towards involving multiple sectors in creating an inclusive environment.

One of the key challenges is upskilling individuals with disabilities and integrating them into the workforce. This remains a significant issue in employment, and we aim to adopt a demand-driven approach to address it. Such an approach would involve close collaboration with employers to ensure that the training provided is aligned with market needs and meets established quality standards.

It is essential to recognise that disability is simply another human experience—a form of diversity. The business incentive to include persons with disabilities lies in building a diverse workforce that embraces cross-sectional perspectives and innovative approaches.



Mohua Paul, Co-Founder and Chairperson, Access Bangladesh Foundation

Instead of creating new job opportunities, we should focus on assimilating persons with disabilities into existing jobs by matching their abilities and skills. I have been working for 42 years, and accessibility remains a persistent issue. Transportation is another crucial area that demands attention. Currently, only the metro rail system is fully accessible for persons with disabilities. The situation is even more challenging in rural areas, particularly for women with disabilities and individuals with severe conditions such as cerebral palsy, autism, intellectual, visual, speech, and hearing impairments. It is imperative to address these issues comprehensively.



Tanjim Ferdous, In-Charge, NGOs & Foreign Missions, Business Development Department, The Daily Star & Moderator

In Bangladesh, persons with disabilities face numerous obstacles in various spheres of society, especially in employment. They are often deprived of services and opportunities due to social prejudice, discrimination, negative mindsets, and infrastructural limitations.

The challenges are even more pronounced for women. Women with disabilities are at increased risk of violence and social isolation due to exclusion from employment, education, and social activities.

Through this discussion, we hope to drive positive change and promote equity and inclusion for persons with disabilities in the workplace.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- » Ensure that infrastructure and information at all levels are accessible and disability-friendly.
- » Enforce existing policies adequately and provide comprehensive support.
- » Promote awareness-raising programmes highlighting the capacities of persons with disabilities, particularly women, to reduce stigma and stereotypes.
- » Undertake targeted employment programmes for persons with severe disabilities.
- » Recognise employers who champion inclusive hiring and workplace accommodations, showcasing their contributions as role models for others.
- » Ensure the implementation of employment quotas for persons with

- disabilities in both government and private sectors.
- » Formulate career-centric special education and training programmes.
- » Conduct audits to assess the accessibility of infrastructure and information.
- » Ensure digital accessibility, particularly for employing visually impaired persons.
- » Design disability-friendly training modules.
- » Make financial products more accessible for persons with disabilities.
- » Focus on safe accommodation and disability-friendly transportation.
- » Provide sufficient vocational training opportunities for persons with disabilities.

accessibility, necessary accommodations, and opportunities for skill development, quality education, and vocational training make it even more difficult for them to receive education and find work. While the country has laws and policies supporting persons with disabilities, inadequate enforcement of these policies and the lack of comprehensive support systems hinder their progress in employment and education.

Some key strategies can be implemented to enhance employment opportunities for persons with disabilities. One is to increase awareness and training for employers. Employers should be educated about the benefits of hiring persons with disabilities and trained in inclusive hiring practices. Employers and HR professionals can play a crucial role in fostering an inclusive workplace culture by improving accessibility, providing reasonable accommodations, and developing and implementing supportive policies and practices.

The government also needs to strengthen existing laws and policies and ensure their implementation to promote employment opportunities for persons with disabilities. Sufficient budgetary and resource allocation is also crucial for fostering inclusive employment. Investments should be made to make workplaces and public spaces more accessible.



Akash Rahman, Assistant Admin and HR Officer, Access Bangladesh Foundation

I completed my SSC in 2010 and my HSC in 2012 from the Dhaka board. Subsequently, I earned my bachelor's degree in 2016 and my master's degree in 2017 from Jahangirnagar University, under the Faculty of Sociology in the Department of Government and Politics.

Following my studies, I began my job search, facing discrimination and harassment at every step of the process. I participated in over 50 recruitment exams, yet employers consistently chose other candidates over me due to my disability.

seeking process fair for them.

Another important point to remember is that disability is not homogeneous. The struggles of someone with a disability from a remote area in the country are significantly different from my struggles as a person with a disability from an urban area. The types and levels of disabilities are also key factors. People's unconscious biases prevent us from reaching our full potential. Our productivity relies on accommodation and accessibility. Ensuring these factors are in place will enable us to contribute more effectively to the country's economy.



Nazma Ara Begum Poppy, National Project Support Officer, UN Women Bangladesh

The barriers encountered by women with disabilities are significantly heightened in a system that already discriminates against women without disabilities. This is largely due to our lack of awareness of the issue.

In our society, women face numerous security concerns, which are exacerbated for women with disabilities. These challenges can result in a severe shortage of appropriate accommodation and transportation options. These are the reasons why women with disabilities do not receive the necessary moral support from their families when they wish to enter the workforce.

In my opinion, accommodation and transportation are two areas on which employers need to focus. We also need documented research to inform policymaking in these aspects.



Mahmudul Hasan, Assistant Director, SWID Bangladesh

The Neuro-Developmental Disability Protection Trust Act 2013 is not active enough. The government must be held more accountable on this front. It should also analyse the skill levels of this population and

Star replies to CA press wing’s Facebook post

FROM PAGE 2
According to the data used by the press wing, there were 74 “dosyuta” cases from September to November this year, compared to 72 during the same three-month period in 2023.

The Daily Star did not include the number of cases filed over mugging incidents in August as the police barely functioned following the fall of the Awami League regime. In the aftermath of the July uprising, police stations in the capital were either left in ruins or vacant for a significant period.

In the absence of police, the robbery and mugging incidents saw a sharp rise in August, with the

army having to respond to distress calls of city dwellers. Neighbourhoods also formed nightwatch committees to guard themselves through the night.

The data used in The Daily Star report came from an assistant commissioner at the Dhaka Metropolitan Police, who wished to remain unnamed citing the “sensitive nature of the matter”.

He told this newspaper that police record cases in connection with mugging incidents under two separate laws – the Penal Code and the Speedy Trial Act.

Cases are registered under the Speedy Trial Act when a person is caught red-handed in the act or when there has

been a snatching incident.

And when less than five people are alleged to have been involved in a mugging or robbery incident, the case is filed under the Penal Code. Police call these “dosyuta” cases.

The official supplied the number of cases filed under both laws, and thus the number stood at 96 in three months – from September to November this year.

Naturally, there were other cases filed under these two laws; however, The Daily Star specifically sought the number of cases filed exclusively over mugging incidents from the assistant commissioner.

Of the 22 cases filed

over mugging incidents in September, 14 were under the Penal Code and eight under the Speedy Trial Act.

Of the 43 such cases in October, 20 were filed under the Penal Code and 23 under the Speedy Trial Act.

Of the 31 mugging cases in November, 27 were filed under the Penal Code and four under the Speedy Trial Act.

The DMP official provided the data to The Daily Star via WhatsApp messages.

The officer went on to mention that the actual number of mugging incidents would likely be much higher as many such incidents went unreported, while many file general diaries instead of cases,

citing lost items to avoid legal hassles.

As the CA press wing contested The Daily Star report, this paper talked to the assistant commissioner again. The police official said the press wing possibly counted only the cases filed under Penal Code, not under Speedy Trial Act.

Meanwhile, the authorities themselves, on multiple occasions, admitted that the incidents of mugging and snatching have significantly increased recently.

At a programme on December 21, a day before the report was published, Dhaka Metropolitan Police Commissioner SM Sazzat Ali

said mugging incidents have increased recently and that the muggers mainly target mobile phones.

“You have to take care of your mobile phones and handbags when you are walking on the street or shopping or having snacks on the streets,” he said, drawing attention to foreign students present at the programme.

On December 15, Home Adviser Jahangir Alam Chowdhury also said the muggings have increased in the city and that such incidents occurred mainly in the early hours.

After careful examination, we have decided to stand by our report.

Commission formed

FROM PAGE 2
Other members include former joint secretary Munshi Alauddin Al Azad, former DIG M Akbar Ali, Associate Professor of Dhaka University Shariful Islam, and Assistant Professor of Jagannath University Shah Nawaz Khan Chandan.

The commission was asked to submit a report to the government within 90 days.

The commission will identify the individuals, groups, organisations, institutions, departments, or associations that were responsible for the

killings, assisted in the crimes, conspired, or destroyed evidence.

The commission will also identify who is responsible for failing to take measures to prevent the killings and other crimes.

The actual guilty, who were previously not brought to book, will be investigated by the commission.

The commission has the authority to visit any location in Bangladesh and summon and question any suspect. If necessary, it may include more members.

Cops say they were

FROM PAGE 16
of members of law enforcement agencies, especially Ansar members, installing of CCTV cameras at polling centres, holding local government polls before the national election, and access to polling stations for journalists.

The Kazi Habibur Awal-led Election Commission had been at the centre of a controversy as it held the most recent national polls in January this year amid boycott by the major opposition parties, including the BNP. The AL had to field dummy independent candidates, many of whom were AL leaders, to make the polls appear participatory.

The KM Nurul Huda-led commission became controversial after the December 2018 general election as opposition parties alleged ballot-box

stuffing the night before election day. In January 2019, the Jatiya Oikyafront, the opposition alliance, alleged that between 30 and 60 percent of the votes were cast the night before.

The same month, Transparency International, Bangladesh, in a study found that stamping of ballots took place the night before election day in more than one centre in 33 of the 50 surveyed constituencies.

The Kazi Rakiubuddin Ahmad-led commission held a lopsided national election in January 2014, in which 153 lawmakers out of 300 were elected unopposed as most of the opposition parties, including the BNP, boycotted the polls.

The Awami League-led alliance won more than two-thirds majority in all three national elections held under Hasina’s government.

Next step after reply from Delhi

FROM PAGE 1
New Delhi through official channels. We will wait for their reply, and if we don’t receive one within a certain period, we will send a reminder letter,” said Mohammad Rafiqul Alam, spokesperson for foreign ministry.

He made the comments during a media briefing at the ministry yesterday afternoon.

On Monday, the foreign ministry, through its mission in New Delhi, sent a diplomatic note requesting

the Indian government to extradite Hasina for judicial proceedings in Bangladesh.

Responding to a question, the spokesperson said Dhaka’s next steps would depend on Delhi’s reply. “We don’t want to comment on this at the moment or speculate on the situation.”

Indian media outlets reported on Monday evening that the country’s external affairs ministry had received Bangladesh’s diplomatic note. However, the ministry refrained from making any

official comment on the matter.

Hasina faces over 100 cases on charges of murder, genocide, and crimes against humanity committed during the July uprising, which led to the fall of her government on August 5.

Bangladesh and India signed an extradition treaty in 2013, which was amended in 2016, providing a legal framework for such requests. ‘BANGLADESH WILL SECURE ITS BORDER’

When asked whether Dhaka would consider engaging with

non-state actors in Myanmar, such as the Arakan Army, to manage border issues along the Bangladesh-Myanmar frontier, the spokesperson said, “Bangladesh will do whatever is necessary for its border security.”

The Arakan Army (AA), a rebel group in Myanmar’s Rakhine state, has taken control of the frontier from the Myanmar junta after weeks of intense fighting. Since November of the previous year, the AA has seized control of 13 out of 17 townships in

Myanmar’s Rakhine state, according to media reports.

About the possibility of reinforcing military presence along the border, Rafiqul said, “We will have to wait a couple of days for a decision.”

He said a high-level meeting on the issue had been held earlier in the day, but declined to provide further details.

On Sunday, Foreign Adviser Md Touhid Hossain said he had communicated to his Myanmar counterpart that Dhaka could not engage with

non-state actors like the AA to address border control issues.

Regarding concerns over a potential new influx of Rohingyas, Rafiqul reaffirmed Bangladesh’s position against allowing more Rohingyas into the country.

Bangladesh is hosting over one million forcibly displaced Rohingyas in Cox’s Bazar. Most of them arrived in 2017 after a military crackdown by Myanmar.

In the last seven years, not a single Rohingya had returned to Myanmar.

We will safeguard rights of all people

FROM PAGE 1
leaders discussed issues of mutual interest.

Sullivan praised him for the progress that the country has already made in turning around the economy and for initiating vital political, election, and other reforms.

Sullivan thanked Prof Yunus for announcing the possible election dates, and

he offered US support for the democratic process of the country.

They also discussed the overall development situation in the country. Prof Yunus thanked the US for its generous support to Bangladesh in overcoming the inherited problems.

He recalled his meeting with President Joe Biden and Secretary of State

Antony Blinken during his visit to New York in September.

Prof Yunus said he was expecting reports of six major reform commissions within January. After that, the consensus-building process will begin, so that the people are prepared for the reforms and elections.

Families of the slain

FROM PAGE 16
Ekramul Siddique to investigate the matter.

Deputy Commissioner Mohammad Mohsin Uddin said the probe committee will submit its report within 10 working days.

Unidentified assailants stabbed the victims in their sleep with sharp weapons on MV Al-Bakhera, police said based on initial findings.

The deceased are Sheikh Shobuj, 27; Golam Kibria, 65; Salahuddin Molla, 40; Majedul Islam, 17; Sajibul Islam, 24; Aminul Islam Munshi, 41; and Rana, 27.

The sole survivor, Jewel, 35, from Faridpur, is expected to provide critical information about the perpetrators.

Sadiqur Rahman, younger brother of victim Shobuj and nephew of the vessel master Kibria, said, “We demand a thorough investigation and justice.”

Ruhidul Islam, Majedul’s uncle, echoed him.

Jahangir Alam, another ship master and cousin of deceased engine driver Salahuddin, said, “We learnt about the brutal attack on the Al-Bakhera vessel through Facebook yesterday

afternoon (Monday). Upon arriving here, we noticed nothing was stolen during the murders. This was not a robbery; it was a planned crime.”

“The mid-river island, where the incident occurred, is notorious for extortion. Non-payment of extortion fees often results in assaults. The authorities are aware but take no action, forcing everyone to comply,” he added.

Meanwhile, a Bangladesh Chemical Industries Corporation (BCIC) official and contractor have sought the administration’s help to recover the ship’s 720 tonnes of fertiliser, which remain unreleased due to legal procedures.

Last night, Mahbub Morshed, an owner of the vessel, filed a case in this connection with the Haimechar Police Station, accusing eight to 10 unidentified people of murder and robbery, said Syed Mushfiqur Rahman, superintendent of Chandpur river police.

Separate investigations are underway by the district administration, district police, and river police, said the SP.

Five held over

FROM PAGE 16
“They dragged me by the collar to the school, placed a sharp knife at my neck, and then threatened to kill me,” Kanu told The Daily Star.

“They also beat me, forced me to wear a garland of shoes around my neck, and ordered me to leave the district by nightfall.”

Meanwhile, the Chief Adviser’s Press Wing yesterday afternoon issued a statement condemning the incident.

“We strongly condemn

the defamation of Freedom Fighter Abdul Hai in Chaudhagram on Sunday. The police and local administration have been directed to investigate the incident and ensure the perpetrators are brought to justice,” reads a Facebook post from the CA press wing.

However, the post noted Kanu stands accused in nine cases, including one for murder.

“We urge everyone to refrain from taking the law into their own hands,” it added.


2 dead, 500 houses

FROM PAGE 16
Eight firefighting units joined the effort to douse the fire, Shafiqul said.

Shafiqul said at least 546 houses of Rohingya refugees were burnt

down and many shanties were damaged while extinguishing the fire.

He said they primarily suspect the fire might have originated from a cooking stove.



নৌবাহিনী মেডিকেল কলেজ, চট্টগ্রাম

২০২৪-২০২৫ শিক্ষাবর্ষে ১ম বর্ষ এমবিবিএস কোর্সে ভর্তি বিজ্ঞপ্তি

বাংলাদেশ নৌবাহিনীর নৌ কল্যাণ ফাউন্ডেশন পরিচালিত নৌবাহিনী মেডিকেল কলেজ, চট্টগ্রাম সশস্ত্র বাহিনী কর্তৃক পরিচালিত আর্মড ফোর্সেস মেডিকেল কলেজ (AFMC) ও বাংলাদেশ সেনাবাহিনী ওয়েলফেয়ার ট্রাস্ট পরিচালিত পাঁচটি বেসরকারি আর্মি মেডিকেল কলেজের সাথে ২০২৪-২০২৫ শিক্ষাবর্ষে ১ম বর্ষ এমবিবিএস কোর্সে ভর্তি কার্যক্রম শুরু করেছে।

ভর্তির আবেদনের নির্দেশনাবলিঃ

- ১। বাংলাদেশ মেডিকেল এন্ড ডেন্টাল কাউন্সিল কর্তৃক প্রণীত শিক্ষার্থী ভর্তি নীতিমালা-২০২৫ অনুযায়ী অনলাইনে <http://afmc.teletalk.com.bd/> নির্ধারিত ছকে এবং নিম্নলিখিত শর্তাধীনে এমবিবিএস কোর্সে ভর্তিচ্ছু শিক্ষার্থীদের আবেদন করতে হবে ঃ
 - ক। ২০২৪ সালে এইচএসসি/এ’ লেভেল/সমমান ও ২০২২ সালে এসএসসি/ও’ লেভেল/সমমান অথবা ২০২৪ সালে এইচএসসি/এ’ লেভেল/সমমান ও ২০২১ সালে এসএসসি/ও’ লেভেল/সমমান অথবা ২০২৩ সালে এইচএসসি/এ’ লেভেল/সমমান ও ২০২১ সালে এসএসসি/ও’ লেভেল/সমমান পরীক্ষায় উত্তীর্ণ ছাত্র/ছাত্রীদের জিপিএ কমপক্ষে সর্বমোট ৯.০০ হতে হবে।
 - খ। শুধুমাত্র ‘উপজাতীয়’ প্রার্থীর ক্ষেত্রে জিপিএ এর যোগফল ন্যূনতম ৮.০০ গ্রহণযোগ্য হবে। তবে এককভাবে কোন পরীক্ষা একটিতে শ্রেড পেয়েও ৩.৫০ এর নিচে গ্রহণযোগ্য হবে না।
 - গ। প্রার্থীকে এসএসসি/ও’ লেভেল/সমমান পরীক্ষায় বিজ্ঞান বিভাগে উত্তীর্ণ হতে হবে এবং এইচএসসি/এ’ লেভেল/সমমান পরীক্ষায় বিজ্ঞান বিভাগসহ অবশ্যই জীববিজ্ঞান, পদার্থবিদ্যা ও রসায়ন থাকতে হবে।
 - ঘ। সকলের জন্য এইচএসসি/এ’ লেভেল/সমমান পরীক্ষায় জীববিজ্ঞানে (Biology) ন্যূনতম জিপিএ ৪.০০ না থাকলে আবেদনের যোগ্য বলে বিবেচিত হবে না।
 - ঙ। শর্ত থাকে যে, এইচএসসি/এ’ লেভেল/সমমান পরীক্ষায় পাশের পূর্ববর্তী ০৩ (তিন) বছরের মধ্যে এসএসসি/ও’ লেভেল/সমমান পরীক্ষায় পাশ হতে হবে। ২০২১ সালের পূর্বে এসএসসি/ও’ লেভেল/সমমান পরীক্ষায় উত্তীর্ণ শিক্ষার্থীগণ আবেদনের জন্য যোগ্য বিবেচিত হবে না।
 - চ। যে সকল ভর্তিচ্ছু শিক্ষার্থী ইতোমধ্যে আবেদন করেছেন, তারা নৌবাহিনী মেডিকেল কলেজ, চট্টগ্রামকে পছন্দের তালিকায় অগ্রাধিকার দিতে চাইলে নির্ধারিত কি প্রদানপূর্বক আগামী ২৭ ডিসেম্বর ২০২৪ এর মধ্যে <http://afmc.teletalk.com.bd> পুনরায় অনলাইনে আবেদন করতে হবে।
 - ছ। অনিবার্হ কারণবশত ভর্তি প্রক্রিয়া বাতিল হলে কর্তৃপক্ষ দায়ী থাকবে না।
 - জ। অনলাইনে আবেদন শুরুর তারিখ : ৮সন্ধ্যা
 - ঝ। অনলাইনে আবেদনের শেষ তারিখ : ২৭-১২-২০২৪ শুক্রবার (রাত ১১:৫৫ মি.)
 - ঞ। অনলাইনে আবেদনের ফি জমাদানের শেষ তারিখ : অনলাইনে আবেদনের সময় হতে পরবর্তী ২৪ ঘণ্টা।
- ২। ভর্তি পরীক্ষার তারিখ : ২৪-০১-২০২৫ খ্রি: (শুক্রবার, সকাল ১০.০০ হতে ১১.০০ টা পর্যন্ত মোট ০১ ঘণ্টা))
- ৩। আর্মড ফোর্সেস মেডিকেল কলেজের ভর্তি পরীক্ষা কমিটির সাথে সমন্বয়পূর্বক ভর্তি পরীক্ষার প্রক্রিয়া, লিখিত পরীক্ষার নম্বর বন্টন, প্রার্থী মূল্যায়ন, উত্তরপত্র যাচাই সম্পন্ন করা হবে।
- ৪। অনলাইনে আবেদনপত্র/ফরম পূরণ করার সময় ভর্তি সংক্রান্ত নির্দেশাবলি (www.afmc.edu.bd) যথাযথভাবে পড়ে বুঝে নির্দেশনা অনুযায়ী সতর্কতার সাথে পূরণ করতে হবে। পরীক্ষা ফি টাকা ১০০০/- (এক হাজার) শুধুমাত্র Prepaid টেলিটকের মাধ্যমে জমা দিতে হবে (অক্ষেরভযোগ্য)।
- ৫। অনলাইনে আবেদনের ফি জমাদানের পর কোন তথ্য পরিবর্তন বা সংশোধন করা যাবে না। যে কোন ধরনের তথ্য সংশোধনের জন্য প্রার্থীকে পুনরায় ফি প্রদান সাপেক্ষে নতুনভাবে আবেদন করতে হবে এবং সর্বশেষ আবেদনপত্রটি চূড়ান্ত বলে বিবেচিত হবে।
- ৬। O-Level/ A-Level পাশ করা প্রার্থীগণকে Director General of Medical Education, Mohakhali, Dhaka হতে Equivalence Certificate ও ID নম্বর সগ্রহ করে আবেদন করতে হবে।
- ৭। ভর্তি সংক্রান্ত যাবতীয় তথ্যাবলি নৌবাহিনী মেডিকেল কলেজের ভর্তি সংক্রান্ত সহযোগী প্রতিষ্ঠানের ওয়েব ঠিকানায় (<http://afmc.teletalk.com.bd>) পাওয়া যাবে। জরুরি প্রয়োজনে ভর্তি সংক্রান্ত তথ্যের জন্য afmc.amc.admission@g-mail.com ঠিকানায় ই-মেইল এবং ০১৭৬৯৭০২৭৮৮ মোবাইল নম্বরে যোগাযোগ করা যাবে।

চূড়ান্ত প্রার্থী নির্বাচনঃ

- ১। লিখিত পরীক্ষার প্রাপ্ত নম্বরের মেধা তালিকা ও মৌখিক পরীক্ষার ভিত্তিতে চূড়ান্ত প্রার্থী নির্বাচন ও পরবর্তীতে অপেক্ষমাণ তালিকা প্রকাশ করা হবে।
- ২। ভর্তি সংক্রান্ত যে কোন বিষয়ে ‘ভর্তি পরীক্ষা কমিটি’ এর সিদ্ধান্তই চূড়ান্ত বলে বিবেচিত হবে।

আইএসপিআর/০১/২০২৪/১৭৫

২৫.১২.২৪

GD-1369

Protests erupt in Syria over X-mas tree burning

AFP, Damascus

Hundreds of Syrians took to the streets in Christian areas of Damascus early yesterday to protest the burning of a Christmas tree near Hama in central Syria, AFP journalists witnessed.

"We demand the rights of Christians," protesters chanted as they marched through the Syrian capital towards the headquarters of the Orthodox Patriarchate in the Bab Sharqi neighbourhood.

The protests come a little more than two weeks after an armed coalition led by Islamists toppled the government of Bashar al-Assad, who had cast himself as a protector of minorities in the Sunni-majority country.

A demonstrator who gave his name as Georges told AFP he was protesting "injustice against Christians".

"If we're not allowed to live our Christian faith in our country, as we used to, then we don't belong here anymore," he said.

The protests erupted after a video spread on social media showing hooded fighters setting fire to a Christmas tree in the Christian-majority town of Suqaylabiyah, near Hama.

According to the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, the fighters were foreigners from the Islamist group Ansar al-Tawhid.

In another video posted to social media, a religious leader from Syria's victorious Islamist group Hayat Tahrir al-Sham (HTS) addressed residents, claiming those who torched the tree were "not Syrian" and promising they would be punished.

"The tree will be restored and lit up by tomorrow morning", he said.



Scouts hold placards ahead of the arrival of Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem, Pierbattista Pizzaballa, to attend Christmas events near the Church of Nativity in the Old City of Bethlehem in the Israeli-occupied West Bank yesterday.

PHOTO: REUTERS

Pope Francis launches Jubilee year

AFP, Vatican City

Pope Francis marked Christmas Eve yesterday with a special ceremony launching Jubilee 2025, a year of Catholic celebrations set to draw more than 30 million pilgrims to Rome.

The 88-year-old, who has been suffering from a cold in recent days, opened the "Holy Door" of St Peter's Basilica at the Vatican, in front of 30,000 people and a live TV audience around the world.

Over the next 12 months, pilgrims will pass through the large and imposing bronze door, which is normally closed, by tradition benefiting from a "plenary indulgence", a type of forgiveness for their sins.

The Argentine pontiff presided over the Christmas Eve mass in St Peter's, before delivering his traditional Christmas Day blessing, Urbi et Orbi (to the city and the world), at midday today.

More than 25,000 Syrians returned home

Says Turkey's interior minister since Assad's fall

AFP, Istanbul

More than 25,000 Syrians have returned home from Turkey since Bashar al-Assad was overthrown by Islamist-led HTS rebels, Turkey's interior minister said yesterday.

Turkey is home to nearly three million refugees who fled the civil war that broke out in 2011, and whose presence has been an issue for President Recep Tayyip Erdogan's government.

"The number of people returning to Syria in the last 15 days has exceeded 25,000," Ali Yerlikaya told the official Anadolu news agency.

Ankara is in close touch with Syria's new leaders and now focussing on the voluntary return of Syrian refugees, hoping the shift in power in Damascus

will allow many of them to return home.

Yerlikaya said a migration office would be established in the Turkish embassy and consulate in Damascus and Aleppo so that the records of returning Syrians could be kept.

Turkey reopened its embassy in Damascus, nearly a week after Assad was toppled by forces backed by Ankara, and 12 years after the diplomatic outpost was shuttered early in Syria's civil war.

Yerlikaya said one person from each family will be given the right to enter and exit three times from January 1 to July 2025 under regulations to be drafted upon Erdogan's instructions.

Syrians returning to their country will be able to take their belongings and cars with them, he added.



Russian cargo ship sinks in Med after explosion

Two of its crew missing

REUTERS, Moscow

A Russian cargo ship called Ursa Major sank in the Mediterranean Sea after an explosion ripped through its engine room and two of its crew are still missing, the Russian Foreign Ministry said yesterday.

The vessel, built in 2009, was controlled by Oboronlogistika, a company that is part of the Russian Defence Ministry's military construction operations, which had previously said it was en route to the Russian far eastern port of Vladivostok with two giant port cranes lashed to its deck.

The Foreign Ministry's crisis centre said in a statement that 14 of the ship's 16 crew members had been rescued and brought to Spain, but that two were still missing. It did not say what had caused the engine room explosion.

Russia's embassy in Spain was cited by the state RIA news agency as saying it was looking into the

S KOREA POLITICAL CRISIS

Opposition puts off plan to impeach acting president

REUTERS, Seoul

South Korea's main opposition party yesterday vowed to impeach acting president Han Duck-soo but reversed an earlier plan and decided to wait until later in the week, party officials said, as the risk of further political uncertainty heightened.

The move comes as the country is reeling from impeached President Yoon Suk Yeol's short-lived bid to impose martial law on December 3 that he partly blamed on the opposition's propensity to impeach government officials.

Opposition Democratic Party (DP) floor leader Park Chan-dae said the party will wait until later this week to decide whether to go ahead with the plan to impeach Han. The DP is taking the step after Han postponed signing legislation to launch a special counsel investigation into President Yoon Suk Yeol's failed bid to impose martial law.

TECHNICAL ISSUE

American Airlines resumes flights after ground stop


AFP, Washington

American Airlines yesterday resumed flights after a technical issue forced the world's largest carrier to ground all its US flights for an hour during the busy year-end travel period, officials said.

"American Airlines reported a technical issue this morning and requested a nationwide ground stop. The ground stop has now been lifted," Bridgett Frey, assistant administrator for communications at the Federal Aviation Administration, said in a statement.

The flight halt between 1150 GMT and 1250 GMT came on Christmas Eve, a day of exceedingly heavy air travel in the United States and elsewhere.

The FAA and American Airlines had yet to describe the nature of the technical issue and why it led to a nationwide ground halt.

**Bangladesh Space Research and Remote Sensing Organization (SPARRSO)**
Mohakash Biggyan Bhavan
Agargaon, Sher-E-Bangla Nagar, Dhaka-1207
Bangladesh.

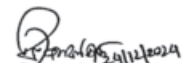
Memo No: 23.04.0000.013.07.007.24-1629Date: 24/12/2024

e-Tender Notice (OTM)

e-Tender is invited in e-GP portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) by the Store & Procurement officer of Bangladesh Space Research and Remote Sensing Organization (SPARRSO), Agargaon, Sher-e- Bangla Nagar, Dhaka-1207 for the procurement of Works mentioned below:

Sl. No.	Tender Id & Ref. No.	Name of the Package	Last Date and Time for Tender Security Submission	Tender Closing Date and Time
1.	APP ID:207530 Tender ID: 1055678 Ref: 23.04.0000.013.07.007.24	Procurement of Raw Materials and Spare Parts	08 January, 2025, 13:00 PM	08 January, 2025, 14:00 PM

This is an online tender, where only e-tender will be accepted in e-GP portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted to submit e-Tender, Please register on e-GP system portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>)


Rubel Kanti Dey
Store & Procurement Officer
(Additional Charge)
SPARRSO.

GD-1265

12 killed in blast at Turkey plant

Five injured

AFP, Istanbul

A powerful blast ripped through an explosives plant in northwestern Turkey yesterday, killing 12 people and injuring five others, officials said.

Footage showed shards of glass and metal scattered outside the plant, where ambulances stood by.

"According to initial reports, 12 employees died and four were taken to hospital with injuries as a result of the explosion" in the Karesi district of Balikesir province, local governor Ismail Ustaoglu said.

"I wish God's mercy upon our deceased citizens and a speedy recovery to our wounded," he added.

Officials later revised the number of the injured as five and added they were not in a serious condition.

There were no staff members left inside the factory and the blaze was put out, they added.

The blast took place at 8:25 am (0525 GMT) at a section of the plant which local officials said collapsed under the force of the explosion.

Interior Minister Ali Yerlikaya said the cause of the blast at the factory, which is located away from residential areas, was not immediately known.

"We are trying to find out what caused it," he said.

Local officials pointed to "technical reasons" without elaborating as experts were still investigation at the scene.



circumstances of the sinking and was in touch with the authorities in Spain.

Oboronlogistika and SK-Yug, a company LSEG lists as part of the group and the ship's direct owner and operator, declined to comment on the sinking. Both entities were placed under sanctions by the United States in 2022 for their ties to Russia's military as was the Ursa Major itself.

Unverified video footage of the ship heavily listing to its starboard side with its bow much lower down in the water than usual was filmed on December 23 by a passing ship and published on a Russian news outlet yesterday.

**Bangladesh Krishi Bank**
Head Office
83-85 Motijheel C/A, Dhaka-1000.
ADC Management Department
Phone: 02-223356651;
E-mail: dgmadc@krishibank.org.bd

BKB/HO/ADC/ATM-07(5)-21(02/2024-2025/380)Dated: 24/12/2024

"e-Tender Notice (OTM)"

This is to notify all concern that the following tender has been published through National e-Government Procurement Portal (<https://www.eprocure.gov.bd>)

Sl	Tender ID, Tender Package No. and Reference No.	Name of Tender	Tender Documents Last Selling Date and Time	Tender Closing & Opening Date and Time	Tender Method
01	Tender ID: 1054723 Tender Package No: 04/2024-2025, Reference No. BKB/HO/ADC/ATM-7(5)-21(02/2024-2025/379	Supply of ATM Debit Card, PIM Mailer and Pouch for ADC Management Department of Bangladesh Krishi Bank	Date: 07-01-2025 Time: 16:00	Date: 08-01-2025 Time: 15:00	OTM

This is an online tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the national e-Government Procurement Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-Tender registration in the National e-Government Procurement Portal (<https://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) is required.

Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-Government Procurement Portal (<https://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) and you can also ask help from e-gp help desk(helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).

-Signed
(Md. Farid Hasan)
Deputy General Manager (ICT)

GD-1267

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GOVERNMENT OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF BANGLADESH
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER
EDUCATION ENGINEERING DEPARTMENT, JHENAIDAH
E-mail: ee_jhe@eedmoe.gov.bd

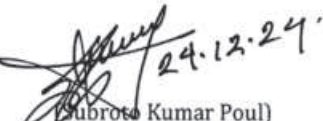
Memo No:37.07.4400.001.34.001.24-0579

Dated: 24-12-2024

e-TENDER NOTICE NO. 06/2024-2025
(Limited Tendering Method)e-Tender is invited in the National e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) for the procurement of the following Packages Tender:

Sl No.	Tender ID	Name of Work	Last Selling Date & Time	Opening Date & Time
01.	1053711	Package No. EED/JHE/REV/7016/NON-GOVT/SHED/2024-25/PW-02: Construction of Single Storied Academic Building with 4-Storied Foundation including Sanitary, Water Supply and Electrification Works to Selected Dhawra Secondary School Under Shailikupa Upazila of Jhenaidah District.	08.01.2025 17:00	09.01.2025 12:00
02.	1053712	Package No. EED/JHE/REV/7016/NON-GOVT/SHED/2024-25/PW-03: Construction of Single Storied Academic Building with 4-Storied Foundation including Sanitary, Water Supply and Electrification Works to Selected Hazi Bisharot Ali Secondary School Under Harinakundu Upazila of Jhenaidah District.	08.01.2025 17:00	09.01.2025 12:00
03.	1053713	Package No. EED/JHE/REV/7016/NON-GOVT/SHED/2024-25/PW-04: Construction of Single Storied Academic Building with 4-Storied Foundation including Sanitary, Water Supply and Electrification Works to Selected Barek Ali Secondary School, Surat Under Sadar Upazila of Jhenaidah District.	08.01.2025 17:00	09.01.2025 12:00
04.	1053714	Package No. EED/JHE/REV/7016/NON-GOVT/SHED/2024-25/PW-05: Construction of Single Storied Academic Building with 4-Storied Foundation including Sanitary, Water Supply and Electrification Works to Selected S.B.L Junior Secondary Girls School Under Kotchandpur Upazila of Jhenaidah District.	08.01.2025 17:00	09.01.2025 12:00
05.	1053715	Package No. EED/JHE/REV/7016/NON-GOVT/SHED/2024-25/PW-06: Construction of Single Storied Academic Building with 4-Storied Foundation including Sanitary, Water Supply and Electrification Works to Selected Narikelbaria Z A Secondary School Under Sadar Upazila of Jhenaidah District.	08.01.2025 17:00	09.01.2025 12:00
06.	1053716	Package No. EED/JHE/REV/7016/NON-GOVT/SHED/2024-25/PW-07: Construction of Single Storied Academic Building with 4-Storied Foundation including Sanitary, Water Supply and Electrification Works to Selected Raigram Banikanto Secondary School Under Kaligonj Upazila of Jhenaidah District.	08.01.2025 17:00	09.01.2025 12:00
07.	1053717	Package No. EED/JHE/REV/7016/NON-GOVT/TMED/2024-25/PW-01: Construction of Vertical Extension of Existing Academic Building (1st Floor & 2nd Floor) including Sanitary, Water Supply & Electrification Works to Selected Mandia Ideal College under Harinakundu Upazila of Jhenaidah District.(2021-22)	08.01.2025 17:00	09.01.2025 12:00

This is an online Tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP portal and no offline/Hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-Tender, registration in the National e-GP system portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) is required. The fee's for downloading the e-Tender Documents from the National System portal have to be deposited, online through any registered Bank's branches. Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP system portal and from e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).


Subroto Kumar Poul)
Executive Engineer
Education Engineering Department,
Jhenaidah.
Phone: 02-477746133

GD-1263

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Dhaka South City Corporation

Office of the Project Director, PIU

Dhaka City Neighborhood Upgrading Project (DCNUP)- IDA Cr 6361 BD
Nagar Bhaban (Level 10), Fulbaria, Dhaka-1000

Memo: 46.207.014.09.10.351.2024/925

Date: 22/12/2024

REQUEST FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST (CONSULTING SERVICES-FIRMS SELECTION)
BANGLADESH DHAKA CITY NEIGHBORHOOD UPGRADING PROJECT

IDA Credit No. 6361-BD

Assignment Title: Consulting service for Design and Engineering works for completing the subprojects under preparation, define and design new scope of work (Firm) (International)

Consultancy Firm- International
Reference No.: DCNUP/S-02A

The People's Republic of Bangladesh has received credit US\$ 75.5 million financing from the World Bank toward the cost of Dhaka City Neighborhood Upgrading Project (DCNUP) to be implemented by Dhaka South City Corporation (DSCC) and intends to apply part of the proceeds for consulting services.

The consulting services ("the Services") include, but not limited to:

- Develop a framework for the identification of a blue-green network for DSCC based flooding hotspots;
- Develop a Riverfront District Development Strategy for a selected stretch along the Buriganga River in Old Dhaka; and
- Prepare studies, design briefs and drawings for a long-list of investments for about US\$150 million and feasibility studies, bid ready documents, for about for US\$30 million worth of priority investments.

Expected date for commencement of the services is March 01, 2025 and completion by December 31, 2025. The tentative duration of the entire assignment is about 10 (Ten) months. Estimated Key Professional staffs is about 38 (Thirty Eight) months.

TOR can be found at the following website: (www.dscc.gov.bd or can be obtained at the address given below).

The Dhaka City Neighborhood Upgrading Project (DCNUP) to be implemented by Dhaka South City Corporation (DSCC) under Local Government Division, ministry of Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperatives, Government of Bangladesh now invites eligible Consultancy Firm to indicate their interest in providing the Services. Interested consulting firm should provide information demonstrating that they have the required qualifications and relevant experience to perform the Services. Key Experts will not be evaluated at the short listing stage. The short listing criteria are:

- A registered consulting firm with minimum 10 years of general experience and substantial experience of working in urban area;
- Similar nature assignment experience within last 10 years from the date of submission of EOI;
- Experience in preparation of feasibility studies, design briefs and drawings for investments.
- The consulting firm shall have sufficient and relevant managerial, financial and organizational capabilities and logistics for the assignment;
- Availability of appropriate skills among staff.
- Have experience in development partner's funded similar projects;

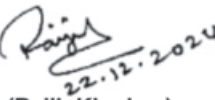
The attention of interested Consultants is drawn to the Section III, para 3.14, 3.16 and 3.17 of the World Bank's "Procurement Regulations for IPF Borrowers, July 2016 and updated in September 2023," setting forth the World Bank's policy on conflict of interest.

Consultancy Firm may associate with other firms to enhance their qualifications, but should indicate clearly whether the association is in the form of a Joint Venture and/or a Sub-consultancy. In case of a joint venture, all the partners in the joint venture shall be jointly and severally liable for the entire contract, if selected. It is preferable to limit the maximum number of joint venture partners in 03 (three) including the Lead partner. Although the lead firm in the joint venture will provide the core expertise, each partner of the JV has to be reasonably qualified to take over the responsibilities and role of any of the partners that may fail to perform or withdraws.

A Consultancy Firm will be selected in accordance with the "Quality Based Selection (QBS) method set out in the Procurement Regulations.

Further information can be obtained at the address below during office hours (9:00 AM to 17:00 PM BST).

Expression of Interest must be delivered in a written form to the address below (in person, or by mail, or by fax, or by e-mail) by 03:00 PM (BST), January 16, 2025.


22.12.2024

(Rajib Khadem)

Project Director

Dhaka City Neighborhood Upgrading Project (DCNUP)

Dhaka South City Corporation,

Nagar Bhaban (Level-10), West Block

Fulbaria, Dhaka-1000, Bangladesh

Tel: +880-2223350461;

Email: pddcnupdscc24@gmail.com

(12 X 4)

ডিএসসিসি/পিআরডি/১৮৫/২০২৪-২০২৫



Savar Paurashava

Savar, Dhaka

(www.savarmunicipality.gov.bd)

E-mail: mayor.savarmunicipality@gmail.com

Phone: 02-7741813

Memo No. sps/prok/2024-2025/291

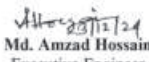
Date: 23.12.2024

e-Tender Notice No. 04/2024-2025(OTM)

e-Tender is invited in the National e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) for the procurement of:

Package No.	Tender ID No.	Description of the works	Last selling date & time	Last date and time for tender security	Closing & opening date & time
LGCRPS/AVAR24-25W-18	1039645	(1) Construction of RCC Drain with slab at starting from Dhaka-Aricha Highway near Savar Adhunik Hospital (Ex. Rabeya Clinic) to Raribari Road Amtola Mor Ten Brothers Society Mr. Kalam House in Ward No. 03, Savar Pourashava, Savar, Dhaka. (Ch-0.00-440.00m). (2) Upgrading of RCC Road at starting from Dhaka-Aricha Highway near Savar Adhunik Hospital (Ex. Rabeya Clinic) to Raribari Road Amtola Mor Ten Brothers Society Mr. Kalam House in Ward No. 03, Savar Pourashava, Savar, Dhaka. (Ch-0.00-440.00m).	27-Jan-2025 17:00	28-Jan-2025 13:00	28-Jan-2025 14:00

This is an online tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-Tender, registration in the National e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) is required. The fees for downloading the e-Tender document from the National e-GP System Portal have to be deposited online through any registered bank branches. Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal and from e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd). The Tender Notice also uploaded in the Savar Pourashava website www.savarmunicipality.gov.bd


Md. Amzar Hossain
Executive Engineer
Savar Paurashava, Dhaka

GD-1269



Dhaka South City Corporation

Office of the Executive Engineer

Dholpur, Dhaka.

www.dhakasouthcity.gov.bd

Ref. No. 46.207.000.09.23.05.2024

Date: 22/12/2024

e-Tender Notice

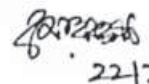
e-Tenders are invited in the National e-Gp Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) for the procurement of :

Sl. No.	Package No.	Name of works	Tender ID No.	Last Selling Date & Time	Tender Closing & Opening Date & Time
1	egg/dscc/z-08/24-25/p-12	Improvement work of road including drain from sanarpar bank colony holding no. 617 to holding no. 618/4 and holding no. 616 to holding no.615/17 under ward no 66	1052120	06-Jan-2025 13:30	06-Jan-2025 15:30
2	egg/dscc/z-08/24-25/p-11	Improvement work of road and drain from Shaheed milon road panchayet mor to Nexus Tower Lane bylane and from Mahmudnagar New Town Road Holding No. 265 to Shaheed Milon Road and Jamiatul Ibrahim Madrasa Road under ward no 66	1052118	26-Jan-2025 13:30	29-Jan-2025 15:30

This is an online Tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-Tender, registration in the National e-GP system portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) is required.

The fees for downloading the e-Tender Documents from the National e-GP System Portal have to be deposited online through any registered Bank's Branch.

Further information and guideline are available in the National e-GP System portal and from e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).


22/12/2024
(Mohammad Khalilur Rahman)
Executive Engineer
Zone-08
Dhaka South City Corporation.
Phone-01911306205
e-mail: dsccen08@gmail.com

ডিএসসিসি/পিআরডি/১৭৭/২০২৪-২০২৫

গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার

স্বাস্থ্য শিক্ষা অধিদপ্তর

মহাখালী, ঢাকা-১২১২

www.dgme.gov.bd

স্মারক নং- ৫৯.১৪.০০০০.১০০.৩১.০০১.২৪.৯৬৩

তারিখ: ২৪/১২/২০২৪ খ্রি.

২০২৪-২০২৫ খ্রি. শিক্ষাবর্ষে বিভিন্ন কোর্সে ভর্তির বিজ্ঞপ্তি

(সরকারি ও বেসরকারি ডেন্টাল কলেজ/মেডিকেল কলেজ ডেন্টাল ইউনিটসমূহের জন্য প্রযোজ্য)

বাংলাদেশ মেডিকেল এন্ড ডেন্টাল কাউন্সিল (বিএমএডভিসি) কর্তৃক প্রণীত 'মেডিকেল কলেজ এবং ডেন্টাল কলেজ/ইউনিটে এমবিবিএস এবং বিভিন্ন কোর্সে শিক্ষার্থী ভর্তি নীতিমালা ২০২৫' অনুযায়ী নির্ধারিত হতে অনলাইনে (<http://dgme.teletalk.com.bd>) আবেদন আহ্বান করা হচ্ছে:

- আবেদনকারীকে বাংলাদেশের নাগরিক হতে হবে।
- (ক) ২০২৪-২০২৫ খ্রি. শিক্ষাবর্ষে ভর্তি পরীক্ষায় অংশগ্রহণে ইচ্ছুক প্রার্থীকে ২০২৩ সাল অথবা ২০২৪ সালে এইচএসসি/এ' সার্কেল/সমমান পরীক্ষায় উত্তীর্ণ হতে হবে। ২০২১ সালের পূর্বে এসএসসি/এ' সার্কেল/সমমান পরীক্ষায় উত্তীর্ণ শিক্ষার্থীরা আবেদনের যোগ্য বলে বিবেচিত হবেন না।
(খ) প্রার্থীকে এসএসসি/এ' সার্কেল/সমমান পরীক্ষায় বিজ্ঞান বিভাগে উত্তীর্ণ হতে হবে এবং এইচএসসি/এ' সার্কেল/সমমান পরীক্ষায় বিজ্ঞান বিভাগসহ অবশ্যই জীববিজ্ঞান, পদার্থবিজ্ঞান ও রসায়ন থাকতে হবে।
- এসএসসি/এ' সার্কেল/সমমান এবং এইচএসসি/এ' সার্কেল/সমমান দুটি পরীক্ষায় মোট জিপিএ কমপক্ষে ৯.০০ হতে হবে।
- উপজাতীয় ও পার্বত্য জেলায় অ-উপজাতীয় প্রার্থীদের ক্ষেত্রে এসএসসি/এ' সার্কেল/সমমান এবং এইচএসসি/এ' সার্কেল/সমমান পরীক্ষা দুটিতে মোট জিপিএ কমপক্ষে ৮.০০ হতে হবে। তবে এককভাবে কোনো পরীক্ষায় জিপিএ ০.৫০ এর কম হলে আবেদনের যোগ্য বলে বিবেচিত হবেন না।
- সকলের জন্যে এইচএসসি/এ' সার্কেল/সমমান পরীক্ষায় জীববিজ্ঞান (Biology) ন্যূনতম গ্রেড পড়েট ৪.০ না থাকলে আবেদনের যোগ্য বলে বিবেচিত হবেন না।
- নির্ধারিত ভর্তি পরীক্ষা এইচএসসি পরীক্ষার সিসেবাস অনুযায়ী অনুষ্ঠিত হবে। নির্ধারিত ভর্তি পরীক্ষায় ১০০ টি ধরনের প্রতিটি ০১ (এক) অঙ্ক করে মোট নম্বর ১০০ (একশত)। বিষয় ভিত্তিক নম্বর বিতরণ: জীববিজ্ঞান ৩০; রসায়ন ২৫; পদার্থবিজ্ঞান ২০; ইংরেজি ১৫; সাধারণ জ্ঞান (বাংলাদেশ ও আন্তর্জাতিক বিষয়াদি) ১০। পরীক্ষার সময়কাল ০১ (এক) ঘণ্টা। নির্ধারিত পরীক্ষায় প্রতিটি সঠিক উত্তর প্রদানের জন্য ০১ (এক) নম্বর প্রদান করা হবে। কোনো প্রশ্নের একাধিক উত্তর প্রদান করলে উত্তরটি ভুল বলে গণ্য হবে। প্রতিটি ভুল উত্তর প্রদানের জন্য ০.২৫ নম্বর কাটা হবে। নির্ধারিত পরীক্ষায় ৪০ (চল্লিশ) নম্বরের কম প্রাপ্তরা দেশে ভর্তি ও বিদেশে বিভিন্ন/সমতুল্য কোর্সে ভর্তির অযোগ্যতা জানা অকৃতকার্য হিসাবে বিবেচিত হবেন। নির্ধারিত পরীক্ষায় কৃতকার্য পরীক্ষার্থীদের যোগ্যতাসহ ফল প্রকাশ করা হবে।
- এসএসসি/এ' সার্কেল/সমমান এবং এইচএসসি/এ' সার্কেল/সমমান পরীক্ষায় প্রাপ্ত জিপিএ মোট ১০০ (একশত) নম্বর হিসেবে নির্ধারিত করে নির্দেশিতভাবে মূল্যায়ন করা হবে:
(ক) এসএসসি/এ' সার্কেল/সমমান পরীক্ষায় প্রাপ্ত জিপিএ এর ১০ গুন=৫০ নম্বর (সর্বোচ্চ)
(খ) এইচএসসি/এ' সার্কেল/সমমান পরীক্ষায় প্রাপ্ত জিপিএ এর ১০ গুন= ৫০ নম্বর (সর্বোচ্চ)
- নির্ধারিত ভর্তি পরীক্ষায় প্রাপ্ত নম্বর এবং অনুচ্ছেদ ০৭-এ বর্ণিত পদ্ধতিতে এসএসসি/এ' সার্কেল/সমমান এবং এইচএসসি/এ' সার্কেল/সমমান পরীক্ষার জিপিএ ভিত্তিক প্রাপ্ত নম্বরের যোগফলের ভিত্তিতে যোগ্যতাসহ প্রদান করা হবে।
- পূর্ববর্তী বছরের (২০২৩ সালে) এইচএসসি/এ' সার্কেল/সমমান পরীক্ষায় উত্তীর্ণ পরীক্ষার্থীদের ক্ষেত্রে সর্বমোট প্রাপ্ত নম্বর থেকে ০৩ (তিন) নম্বর এবং পূর্ববর্তী বছরের (২০২৩-২০২৪ খ্রি. শিক্ষাবর্ষে) সরকারি মেডিকেল কলেজ/ডেন্টাল কলেজ/মেডিকেল কলেজ ডেন্টাল ইউনিট এ ভর্তির পরীক্ষার্থীদের ক্ষেত্রে সর্বমোট নম্বর থেকে ০৬ (ষোল) নম্বর কর্তন করে যথা তালিকা অনুযায়ী নির্ধারণ করা হবে।
- BDS কোর্সে ভর্তির জন্য online ফর্ম পূরণের নিয়মাবলি ও ভর্তি সূচনাস্থ স্থান নির্ধারিত তথ্য যাচাই শিক্ষা ও পরিবার কল্যাণ বিভাগের ওয়েব সাইট www.mefwd.gov.bd, স্বাস্থ্য শিক্ষা অধিদপ্তরের ওয়েবসাইট www.dgme.gov.bd, স্বাস্থ্য অধিদপ্তরের ওয়েবসাইট www.dghs.gov.bd ও টেলিটক বাংলাদেশ লিঃ এর ওয়েবসাইটে <http://dgme.teletalk.com.bd> হতে জানা যাবে।
- অনলাইনে আবেদন করার তারিখ : ২৪/১২/২০২৪ খ্রি. রবিবার সকাল ১০.০০ টা
- অনলাইনে আবেদনের শেষ তারিখ : ২০/০১/২০২৫ খ্রি. সোমবার রাত ১১.৫৯ মিনিট
- অনলাইনে আবেদনের কি জমাানের শেষ তারিখ : ২১/০১/২০২৫ খ্রি. মঙ্গলবার রাত ১১.৫৯ মিনিট
- প্রাপ্ত পত্র ডাউনলোড পূর্বক রবিন স্মিট করার তারিখ : ২০/০২/২০২৫ খ্রি. রবিবার রাত ২৫/০২/২০২৫ খ্রি. মঙ্গলবার পর্যন্ত
- ভর্তি পরীক্ষার তারিখ : ২৮/০২/২০২৫ খ্রি. শুক্রবার সকাল ১০.০০ টা হতে ১১.০০ টা পর্যন্ত
- আবেদন ফর্ম অনলাইনে ওয়েবসাইটে প্রদত্ত নির্দেশনা অনুযায়ী সতর্কতার সাথে পূরণ করতে হবে।
- ভর্তি পরীক্ষার ফি ১০০০/- (এক হাজার) টাকা শুধু বি-শেইড টেলিটকের মাধ্যমে জমা দিতে হবে।
- বাংলাদেশে নাগরিক যারা 'এ' সার্কেল/সমমান এবং 'এ' সার্কেল/সমমান পরীক্ষায় উত্তীর্ণ হয়েছেন তাদের মার্কশীটসমূহ বাংলাদেশে প্রাপ্ত জিপিএতে রপান্তর করে Equivalence Certificate সনাক্ত করার পর অনলাইনে আবেদন করতে পারবেন। সেখানে তাদেরকে পরিচালক, ডিক্রিটাস শিক্ষা, স্বাস্থ্য শিক্ষা অধিদপ্তর, মহাখালী ঢাকা বরাবরে ২০০০/- (দুই হাজার) টাকার ব্যাংক ড্রাফট/পে-অর্ডারসহ আবেদন করে Equivalence Certificate সনাক্ত পূর্বক ID নম্বর দিতে হবে। উক্ত সার্টিফিকেট সনাক্ত করার সময় 'এ' সার্কেল/সমমান এবং 'এ' সার্কেল/সমমান পরীক্ষার ফুল সনদ, নম্বরপত্র এবং সনদপত্রসমূহের প্রদানকারী কর্তৃক কৃত সত্যায়িত কপি সাথে আনতে হবে। আবেদনকারী জমা প্রদানের মূল স্বাস্থ্য শিক্ষা অধিদপ্তরে ডেন্টাল এডুকেশন শাখার কক্ষ নং ২০৪ (স্বাস্থ্য অধিদপ্তরের পুরাতন কক্ষের ২য় তলা, অফিসী, ঢাকা)। Equivalence Certificate সনাক্ত আবেদন জমা প্রদানের শেষ তারিখ ০৪/০১/২০২৪ খ্রি. ২০২৪-২০২৫ খ্রি. শিক্ষাবর্ষে এমবিবিএস ভর্তি পরীক্ষায় অংশগ্রহণের জন্য প্রদানকৃত Equivalence Certificate ২০২৪-২০২৫ খ্রি. শিক্ষাবর্ষে বিভিন্ন কোর্সে ভর্তি পরীক্ষার ক্ষেত্রে প্রযোজ্য।
- বাংলাদেশে নাগরিক যারা বিদেশ থেকে এসএসসি/সমমান এবং এইচএসসি/সমমান পরীক্ষায় উত্তীর্ণ হয়েছেন, তাদের নম্বরপত্রসমূহ স্মিট দেশের বাংলাদেশের জন্য নির্ধারিত দুতাবাস/হাইকমিশন এবং শিক্ষা অধিদপ্তর/পরিচালক মহাখালী, ঢাকা, বাংলাদেশ কর্তৃক আধিকারিকভাবে সত্যায়িত হতে হবে। বাংলাদেশের কোনো প্রতিষ্ঠানে অধ্যয়নকারী বাংলাদেশি ছাত্র/ছাত্রী দেশি/পাশ্চাত্যধর্মী শিক্ষার্থী/পাশ্চাত্যধর্মী কোনোভাবেই বিদেশী শিক্ষার্থী হিসাবে ভর্তির জন্য বিবেচিত হবেন না। তবে যাদের 'হেড নাসটিক' রয়েছে তারা বাংলাদেশী পাসপোর্ট ব্যবহার করে জাতীয় ভর্তি পরীক্ষায় অংশগ্রহণ করতে পারবেন।
- বাংলাদেশে নাগরিক শিক্ষার্থী এইচএসসি/এ' সার্কেল/সমমান পরীক্ষায় উত্তীর্ণ হওয়ার পর দেশের বাইরে বিভিন্ন বা সমতুল্য কোর্সে অধ্যয়ন করতে চাইলে বাধ্যতামূলকভাবে জাতীয় ভর্তি পরীক্ষায় অংশগ্রহণ পূর্বক ন্যূনতম ৪০ (চল্লিশ) নম্বর পেতে হবে। অন্যথায় তিনি বিএমএডভিসির রেজিস্ট্রেশনের জন্য বিবেচিত হবেন না।
- কোটার ক্ষেত্রে বিএমএডভিসির 'মেডিকেল কলেজ এবং ডেন্টাল কলেজ/ইউনিটে এমবিবিএস এবং বিভিন্ন কোর্সে শিক্ষার্থী ভর্তি নীতিমালা-২০২৫' এর বিধি-বিধান প্রযোজ্য হবে।
- পরীক্ষায় অসংশ্লিষ্ট/উত্তীর্ণ/নির্ধারিত কোনো প্রার্থী মোতা তথ্য (যে ফলাফল নির্ধারণে বিবেচিত হতে পারে) অসম্পূর্ণ ও ভুল প্রমাণিত হলে তার পরীক্ষা/ফলাফল/ভর্তি যে কোনো সময়ে বাতিল বলে গণ্য হবে।
- নির্ধারিত শিক্ষার্থীদের ভর্তির পর দেশের প্রাপ্তি আইন, বিএমএডভিসির নীতিমালা ও স্মিট ডেন্টাল কলেজ/মেডিকেল কলেজ ডেন্টাল ইউনিটের সিদ্ধান্তসমূহ মেনে চলতে হবে।
- যে কোনো বিষয়ে ভর্তি পরীক্ষা কমিটির সিদ্ধান্ত ইচ্ছাকৃত বলে বিবেচিত হবে।

অধ্যাপক ডাঃ মোঃ মাহিউদ্দিন মাহুভুর
পরিচালক (ডিক্রিটাস শিক্ষা)
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The Daily Star

» Industry associations should develop a comprehensive roadmap for the adoption of GRI standards within a public-private framework

The adoption of GRI standards can enhance Bangladesh's reputation, improve compliance, and bolster accountability on the global stage. Constructive dialogues on this subject are essential to raise awareness and encourage more factories to embrace sustainability reporting.

Civil service unrest unacceptable

Disgruntled officers must help in the administrative reform process

We are concerned about the escalating tensions among various cadres of the Bangladesh Civil Service (BCS) following the disclosure of some draft proposals by the Public Administration Reform Commission. On Tuesday, officers from 25 BCS cadres, excluding the administrative cadre, staged an hourlong pen-down strike as part of a series of protests announced earlier. On Monday, an association representing the health cadre held a press conference. And on Sunday, another association representing the admin cadre held an “unprecedented showdown” where hundreds of officers demonstrated outside the Secretariat. These platforms have various objections about the proposals as well as scores to settle among themselves.

This means that the reform commission, formed to streamline public services and establish discipline within the administration, finds itself entangled in disputes even before submitting its recommendations to the government. Despite assurances that no proposal would be finalised without consultations with key stakeholders, unrest continues, deepening divisions among the cadres and the various sectors they represent. But why this premature agitation? If disgruntled officers felt the need to voice their concerns before formal discussions, there are mechanisms to do so without disrupting daily operations. They could have followed institutional procedures to raise these concerns in an orderly manner. Instead, their reactions—through public meetings, demonstrations, work abstentions, and threats of tougher measures—not only violate conduct rules for government employees but also undermine the very reforms sought through this exercise.

Various cadre groups reacted to the commission's draft proposals—including introducing exams for promotions to deputy secretary and joint secretary positions, ensuring a 50:50 ratio between admin and non-admin cadres for deputy secretary promotions, and excluding health and education services from cadre structures—for various reasons. For example, the promotion ratio currently stands at 75:25 in favour of admin cadre officials, who now want full control. On the other hand, officers from the 25 cadres are demanding competitive exams for promotions to deputy secretary and higher positions, which they believe should be quota-free. There were already pre-existing tensions over perks and promotions among various cadre groups. The present controversy has again brought these inter-cadre disputes to the fore.

That the reform commission is being forced to focus on such parochial issues, rather than enhancing public service, highlights the difficulty of escaping the shadow of Awami League's misrule that deeply corrupted the administrative environment. Fifteen years of autocratic rule, partisanship, and nepotism transformed the administration into a partisan structure, and its disruptive effects are still being felt. We must say that we had expected the interim government to be more resolute and judicious in overhauling this structure, particularly in terms of establishing discipline, which it has failed to do.

That said, the officers must take responsibility for their disruptive activities. It is unacceptable that vested interests are taking precedence over public service and further weakening an already struggling administration. The government should also resolve the disputes through dialogue, but must not lose sight of its promises of reform in the process.

Assault on freedom fighter disturbing

Those responsible should be held accountable

We condemn the assault and humiliation of Freedom Fighter Abdul Hai Kanu in Chauddagram, Cumilla. On December 22, he was reportedly beaten and forced to wear a garland of shoes around his neck by a group of Jamaat activists and supporters—two of whom were later expelled from the party. The group also ordered him to leave the district by nightfall. Following the incident, a video surfaced on Facebook showing two individuals dragging Abdul Hai while he was wearing the garland. We must say, such indignity for a freedom fighter is an affront to not just the person himself but also all freedom fighters and the very ideals of our Liberation War. This heinous act has rightly sparked outrage and demands for justice.

Fifty-three years after our liberation, it is unimaginable that our freedom fighters—whose sacrifices brought us to where we are today—could still be subjected to such treatment. Following the incident, Abdul Hai fell ill and is now receiving treatment at a private hospital in Feni. He expressed his frustration asking, “For whom did I fight to achieve the country's independence? Certainly not to wear a garland of shoes like this.”

The Liberation War of 1971 is the most significant event in our history. It was a people's war, and those who fought in it should be the most honoured individuals in our country. Regrettably, we have fallen short in extending the respect they deserve, as evidenced by the public humiliation of Abdul Hai. Over the decades, our nation has often failed to meet the expectations of the Liberation War, and we must hold our political leaders accountable for not fulfilling people's dreams and aspirations. However, this does not justify tarnishing the spirit of the Liberation War in any way—certainly not by assaulting a freedom fighter.

It is encouraging to see BNP stage a demonstration protesting the incident. The chief adviser's office has also condemned it, directing the police and local administration to launch an investigation. This sends a positive signal that such incidents will not be tolerated in an independent country. Going forward, we must be more vigilant and prevent any repeat of such humiliation for freedom fighters or other symbols of our independence struggle.

THIS DAY IN HISTORY



President of Soviet Union resigns

On this day in 1991, Mikhail Gorbachev resigned from the presidency of the Soviet Union, which ceased to exist at the end of the year.

Bangladesh's feasibility study fallacy

Why so many 'feasible' projects become utterly infeasible and environmentally disastrous



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SAYEED AHMED

A recent white paper on Bangladesh's economy has reported that seven mega-projects drained Tk 80,569 crore (approximately \$7 billion at today's rates) more from the state coffers than the initial estimates due to cost escalations and time overruns.

Unfortunately, not only mega projects show such appalling scenarios. Most government initiatives with public money (note “public money”) would miserably fail post-project performance evaluation. It is not only time and cost overruns; the justification for undertaking them in the first place is often flimsy at best and dubious or non-existent in some cases.

We have recently seen several media reports about the unviability of the Karnaphuli tunnel project. Was a feasibility study not undertaken before the country's highest policymaking body approved the project? Did the study not include elaborate cost and benefit streams, return on investment, and an environmental and social impact assessment (ESIA)? The outcome is a 27 percent cost overrun and a white elephant eating up taxpayers' money. The revenue is far below, and the cost is much higher than those stated in the feasibility study.

The Dohazari-Cox's Bazar Railway Project's price tag shot through the roof, as its cost at completion was almost nine times the initial estimate! Then, it exposed the sorry state of the standards by which Bangladesh conducts ESIA. The alignment ran through floodplains without adequate cross-drainage arrangements, resulting in massive damage to the tracks immediately after completion as monsoon waters rushed down the hills, hitting it with full force. Interestingly, the parallel-running roads have been operating satisfactorily for several years. Certainly, an economic feasibility study, including a rigorous ESIA, was conducted before an international financial institution (IFI) approved the loan for the railway project.

Hailed as an all-weather link that connects Itna, Mithamoin, and Astagram upazilas in Kishoreganj, a 30 km road running through a huge natural water body (“haor”) has instead been wreaking havoc, causing untimely flooding and damaging crops on thousands of hectares of land. The road has impeded natural water flow into the rivers through



The Karnaphuli Tunnel has become a white elephant eating up taxpayers' money.

FILE PHOTO: RAJIB RAIHAN

the haor, causing waterlogging and flooding, which was never seen before in the area. Gobbling up Tk 874 crore (about \$100 million at 2022 rates) from public funds, the road has adversely impacted local livelihoods, which depend on fishing when the land is inundated and farming at other times, making both difficult. Littering has become another problem as visitors mindlessly dump waste in the water. The project, reportedly undertaken at a president's behest, also had a feasibility study and ESIA conducted prior. However, it simply glossed over such adverse social and environmental impacts and cooked up its economic viability to get through the government's checkbox-ticking approval process.

The list is endless. Project preparatory studies are never conducted with the professional rigour, ethical standards, or integrity they deserve, whether funded by the government, IFIs (such as the World Bank or the Asian Development Bank) or bilateral financing agencies. The post-project evaluation mechanism is

the government ever asked the implementing agency, the consultant, or the contractor why their work was unsatisfactory? Was the outcome of any study ever questioned when such studies turned out to be grossly faulty? Has the responsible agency or persons ever been made accountable?

All these lead to another question, which is more to the point. Was any project dropped because the economic feasibility study found it infeasible, or the ESIA reported that it would have adverse impacts if implemented?

Let's delve deeper into the project screening process. In a classic case of potential conflict of interest, the same organisation (government, IFI or a bilateral financing agency) that intends to extend the fund usually pays for the feasibility study (which includes an ESIA). Such a study will be inherently biased and likely find the project feasible, toning down the adverse social and environmental impacts with impractical mitigation measures and monitoring mechanisms. A glaring

tonnes of coal annually, the power plant would be among Bangladesh's largest sources of air pollution. The ritualistic feasibility study and its ESIA (commissioned by those with a stake in its go-ahead) played on like actors in a meticulously scripted sequence, producing volumes of reports without mentioning these unpalatable facts.

How can Bangladesh screen out projects that are infeasible, detrimental to the environment, and harmful to society? What mechanism will facilitate utilising public money more efficiently and sustainably? I will mention two broad measures in this piece, though there will be others. First, a performance audit mechanism should be set up, and accountability should be instilled in the relevant government implementing agency, its officials, and all external parties involved. Second, all feasibility studies should be conducted independently, without bias following the highest professional standards and ethics.

Ultimately, reform is a bitter pill that must be swallowed if the intent is sincere.

The daily dread of protests and gridlock



Barrister Noshin Nawal is a member of the editorial team at The Daily Star and an environmental activist.

NOSHIN NAWAL

If Dhaka had a national sport, it wouldn't be cricket—it would be protests. Democracy apparently requires shutting down Mirpur Road on a regular basis. Their cause? Vital. Their timing? Always during peak rush hour.

Every year, like clockwork, the city erupts into a festival of placards, slogans, and strategic hartals—the unofficial tradition of turning roads into human parking lots. This year protests have escalated to another level. You know it's serious when your morning starts with a Traffic Alert group update that goes something like, “Avoid Farmgate, Shahbagh, and basically every other place you need to be today.” Simple.

By now, the chaos has become so routine, we could probably set up a Dhaka Protest Traffic Toll Pool. Winner takes home a month's worth of Uber fare, only to be stuck in the centre of the storm of vehicles again, alternating between outrage and apathy.

The inauguration of protests was with the students. When they took to the streets earlier this year, it wasn't about a fancy ideological battle like the Titumir protest (I simply cannot/will not accept that they had to throw stones at a train injuring toddlers just for a university conversion!)—it was about survival. Rising tuition fees,

joblessness, quota on the jobs that were available, and that ever-present monster called corruption pushing them over the edge. Armed with nothing but their voices, they blocked roads and demanded justice, fairness, and a future from the crutches of the tyrant toying with it.

Then came the garment workers, fighting for something as basic as a living wage. While we sat comfortably

in rickshaws this year, supposedly to ease traffic, as if Dhaka's legendary jams were caused by rickshaws and not the endless SUVs carrying exactly one person to their yoga class. The protests that followed were a masterclass in resilience—rickshaw pullers banded together to protect their livelihoods while the rest of us grumbled about walking to the corner store.

But the pièce de résistance of this year's protest season was, of course, the political rallies blocking the major intersections, featuring enough megaphones to drown out a cyclone. The irony? The rally was about improving public services. Public services that half the city couldn't access that day because no one could actually get anywhere to do their jobs.

And yet, amidst the chaos, there's something oddly inspiring about

Will this year's protests lead to meaningful change, or will they be another chapter in Dhaka's endless cycle of barbarity and inaction? It's hard to say. But one thing is for sure: as long as there's inequality, injustice, and a city full of people with nothing left to lose, Dhaka's protest season will return.

in air-conditioned cars and offices, they were out in the blistering heat, risking everything to demand what should already be theirs. Brands post glossy ads about “ethical fashion,” but behind the hashtags lie the women who stitch those clothes while barely earning enough to eat.

And let's not forget the rickshaw pullers. Their humble three-wheelers were declared enemies of “modernisation” by Dhaka's elite planners. Entire streets banned

Dhaka's protest season. It's a reminder that despite everything—despite the smog, the traffic, the endless power struggles—people here refuse to be silenced. Whether it is students demanding jobs, workers fighting for dignity, or citizens simply saying, “We've had enough,” Dhaka's streets remain a stage for resistance.

There is something oddly unifying about these disruptions. Imagine this: you're crammed into a bus that hasn't moved in 30 minutes. The

conductor is yelling about change, and someone's armpit is dangerously close to your face. But then, a stranger catches your eye, shrugs, and says, “*Shob politics-er khela.*” Suddenly, you're comrades in misery, bonded by your mutual disdain for both traffic and politicians.

But let's not romanticise it too much. Protesting in Dhaka is a privilege not everyone can afford. The most vulnerable—domestic workers, day labourers, and rural migrants—often don't have the time or resources to join the fight. For them, survival takes precedence over slogans, and their struggles remain invisible in a city that thrives on spectacle.

Will this year's protests lead to meaningful change, or will they be another chapter in Dhaka's endless cycle of barbarity and inaction? It's hard to say. But one thing is for sure: as long as there's inequality, injustice, and a city full of people with nothing left to lose, Dhaka's protest season will return.

CONTROVERSY OVER MODI'S TWEET

Communal narrative is a no-go zone!



Shahab Enam Khan
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SHAHAB ENAM KHAN

A recent tweet from Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi has ignited controversy in Dhaka regarding the historical context of the 1971 war, which resulted in the liberation of Bangladesh. While Modi’s rightful praise for the Indian soldiers involved in the war is noteworthy, it raises questions about the broader historical narrative and attempts to rewrite history. The war, which began on March 26, 1971, with the participation of mass Bangladeshis, culminated in Bangladesh’s independence on December 16, 1971. Dhaka sees this carefully crafted tweet as another foreign policy misstep that could further increase anti-India sentiment.

It is essential to acknowledge that the narratives from New Delhi too often fail to recognise the contributions of over 1,500 individuals who sacrificed their lives for freedom—among thousands of others—during a challenging 15-year period marked by the Awami League’s transactional collaborations with the BJP. The use of communal narratives in Mr Modi’s tweets on Bangladesh is most certainly causing phenomenal reactions. At the same time, the track record of minority persecution under the BJP, as reported by the US State Department’s reports on religious freedom, is not a forgotten phenomenon. AL remained silent on the minority persecution in India while India saw a phenomenal decline in Muslim participation in Indian politics.

Hence, communal narratives perpetuated by the political cheerleaders or propaganda machines in Delhi will only cement the anti-India sentiment, in which the far-rightists and the extremists will gain momentum in the future. These groups, like the Hindutva extremists or the ethnonationalist extremists in Myanmar, will comfortably hold enough control over the perception by displaying vivid examples of minority persecution, notably the Muslims and the communities in the Indian Northeast. It is still a surprise that communal narratives, which the international community has already debunked remain a core tool for

Delhi’s propaganda machines.

While AL’s ousting by the mass uprising was an apparent shock for the Indian political agencies, anti-Bangladesh narratives further question the foreign policy acumen of the BJP. If the BJP and its security tools are consciously creating ground for extremist bloopsto justify AL’s return to Dhaka, this will be another classic blunder that Delhi will have to bear for a long time to come. On a positive note, Dhaka has consistently shown positive gestures to continue equal-handed and win-win relations with Delhi since August 8, 2024, recognising the importance of this crucial bilateral tie. I guess that idea of equal relationships is hurting political machoism.

Like Bangladesh’s Western partners and trade confidant China, Delhi should note that the interim government is new, the political situation is still fluid, and the government requires a reasonable time to fix the nuts and bolts of democracy. Here, the buzzword is “democracy,” which has always been the least priority for BJP and AL ties. The interim government came to power at a time when the democratic institutions, judiciary and law enforcement agencies, and electoral systems essentially became one-party enterprises.

On top of that, Bangladesh had practically no functional law enforcement agencies between August 5 and 8, and some attacks against AL affiliates continued in between. These attacks included AL politicians and beneficiaries, be they Muslims or Hindus. At the same time, the economy that the interim government inherited continues to be challenging, requiring sustained international support. One would have expected Delhi’s forthcoming role in Bangladesh’s economic reconstruction and institutional reforms, but the train has left the platform.

Instead, media narratives (one would say it is media terrorism), recent attacks on Bangladesh consulates, and the desecration of the Bangladesh flag continue openly. The

Bangladesh foreign secretary had to take a bold stance to remind his counterpart that religion and its practice are Bangladesh’s internal affairs, and other countries are not expected to comment on our internal matters.

That means the Indian communal narrative and misleading history projects deeply affect its neighbourhood and foreign policy. These narratives come as South Asia

Chinese economy perhaps gives an informed anecdote of foreign policy frailties. The other major political party, the Congress, has demonstrated relatively better political maturity despite its struggles to balance a need for stable Dhaka and familial ties between the Gandhi family and former Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina.

The West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee’s misleading appeal for stationing

Trump and Modi administrations could prioritise communal issues and security concerns and routinely position Dhaka’s tie with Beijing as a significant threat.

Despite ongoing pessimism, there is hope for improved bilateral relations if Delhi adjusts its foreign policy in the coming months. Delhi needs to acknowledge that adopting a more inclusive foreign policy aligns with mutually acceptable interests. Assisting the interim

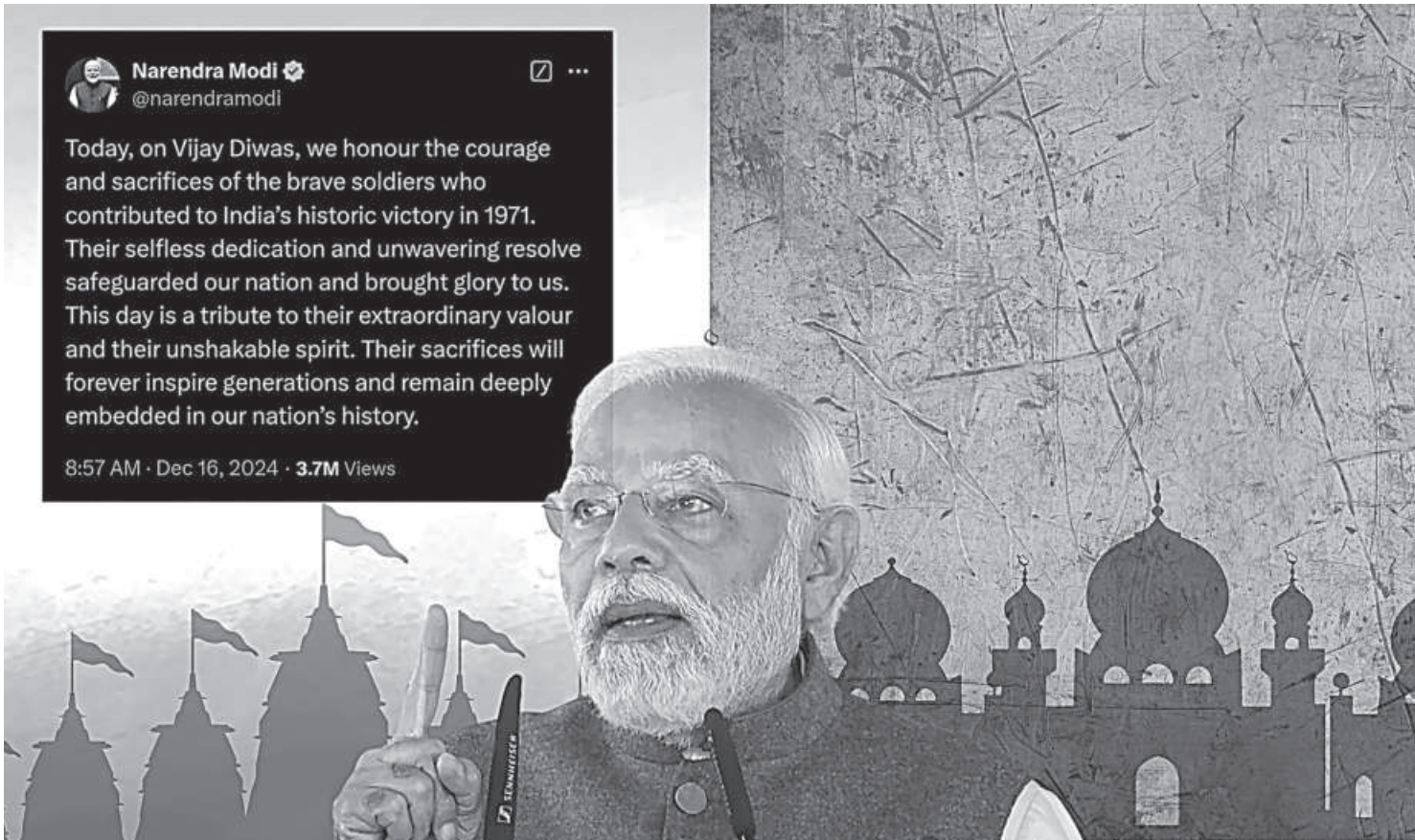


ILLUSTRATION: NOSHIN NAWAL

undergoes massive transformation, which puts the BJP in a position where it must justify its actions to its political allies and adversaries in Delhi. The party’s Herculean position of having an absolute majority in parliament is being challenged. It faces a decline in regional partnerships, exemplified by the closure of its embassy in Kabul or the animated ties with the failing Buddhist military in Myanmar accused of genocide.

Indeed, Sri Lankan and Maldivian tilts toward China and the West, or Nepal’s rewriting of the map, can’t go unnoticed. BJP’s heightened dependence on the

peacekeepers underscores Kolkata’s mounting desperation. After the Indian High Commission in Dhaka closed visas for general Bangladeshis, the state experienced alarming economic declines, and its prosperity was heavily intertwined with its economic relations with Bangladesh.

Moreover, after President-elect Donald Trump’s tweet on attacks on Hindus in Bangladesh, there is wide speculation that Mr Modi’s cabinet will go the extra mile to put pressure on Dhaka using channels with the White House. Just a heads-up, Dhaka would perceive that the tie between the

government in stabilising the economy and reinforcing political institutions can facilitate a quicker return to a democratic framework. An emerging national unity regarding legal actions to reform AL and transform it into a reformed political entity distanced from its past leadership is a reality. Hence, advocating for free and fair elections and remaining open to any changes the Bangladeshis choose to bring in are also key to India’s interest. Indeed, refraining from exaggerated communal rhetoric would serve as its best deterrence against perceived extremist threats.

Bangladesh and ASEAN: A bridge too far?



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RAKIB AL HASAN

It seems that recently, Bangladesh has been trying to redefine its foreign policy with a pivot towards Southeast Asia, signalling its intent to strengthen diplomatic and commercial ties with countries in the region. Bangladesh’s strategic decision to align itself more closely with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) highlights the country’s desire to diversify its foreign relations and assert itself as a regional player. The move reflects a more pragmatic approach in Bangladesh’s quest for economic growth and geopolitical relevance, but it also exposes deep-seated challenges that could impede its progress towards ASEAN membership.

Bangladesh’s foreign policy has long been characterised by the guiding principle of “friendship to all, malice towards none.” Historically, this approach has resulted in an alliance structure heavily shaped by its reliance on India and its dependence on Western markets, particularly for its booming RMG industry. However, as the geopolitical landscape has evolved, Bangladesh has recognised the need to reduce its over-reliance on these traditional allies and diversify its economic and strategic partnerships. ASEAN, with its dynamic economies, strategic location, and integrated market, represents an attractive alternative.

For Bangladesh, the rationale behind this pivot is multifaceted. The global economic landscape is undergoing significant changes, and Bangladesh’s reliance on Western markets for exports, primarily textiles, has made the country vulnerable to shifting trade dynamics and economic volatility. The growth trajectories of ASEAN economies



Chief Adviser Muhammad Yunus receives Malaysian Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim at the Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport in Dhaka on October 4, 2024.

PHOTO: CA’S PRESS WING

offer new trade opportunities, and its collective GDP of over \$3 trillion presents a significant opportunity for Bangladesh to tap into vibrant markets. Furthermore, ASEAN’s focus on regional integration aligns well with Bangladesh’s economic priorities, which include expanding foreign investment, increasing exports, and developing its infrastructure.

The desire to engage with ASEAN is not just aspirational but pragmatic. Bangladesh’s position in South Asia, with its strategic access to the Bay of Bengal and its proximity to major global trade

routes, offers ASEAN countries valuable partnerships. Moreover, Bangladesh’s booming garment industry, which forms the backbone of its economy, complements ASEAN’s manufacturing base, opening avenues for deeper economic collaboration. Beyond economic interests, Bangladesh’s closer ties with ASEAN could amplify

its voice in regional security and diplomatic matters as the country seeks to enhance its geopolitical influence.

However, the pathway to ASEAN membership is fraught with complexities. One of the most pressing challenges is Bangladesh’s internal governance issues, which have raised concerns among both regional and international observers. In the past decade, Bangladesh has faced serious democratic setbacks, with three consecutive controversial elections marred by allegations of rigging, voter suppression, and a lack of political pluralism. The Awami

League’s dominance, often seen as authoritarian, had raised questions about the country’s commitment to democratic principles. Bangladesh’s inability to resolve these issues has not only tarnished its domestic political climate but also raised doubts about its readiness to join a bloc like ASEAN, which prioritises good governance, stability, and

consensus driven decision making.

Corruption remains a significant hurdle. Bangladesh is consistently ranked among the most corrupt countries in the world, with systemic graft permeating nearly every level of government. Public institutions are plagued by inefficiencies, and economic opportunities are often hijacked by powerful elites with political connections. This corruption has stymied development, alienated foreign investors, and tarnished Bangladesh’s international reputation. It is a reality that cannot be overlooked if Bangladesh is to have a serious shot

at ASEAN membership.

In addition to governance challenges, Bangladesh faces concerns over migration and its potential impact on ASEAN member states. Historically, Bangladeshi migration has been predominantly directed toward Western countries, with millions of Bangladeshis living in countries like the US, UK, and the Middle East. However, if Bangladesh succeeds in joining ASEAN, this migration trend could shift, with many Bangladeshis opting to migrate to ASEAN countries, particularly the more developed ones like Singapore, Malaysia, and Thailand.

This potential increase in migration raises significant concerns about maintaining social cohesion within ASEAN, an organisation that places a high premium on regional stability and harmony. The influx of migrants could strain social services and trigger concerns about unemployment and ethnic tensions in host countries. ASEAN countries, with their diverse cultures, religions, and political systems, are highly sensitive to these issues, and Bangladesh must be proactive in addressing these concerns. Ensuring that migration is managed responsibly and does not burden ASEAN countries’ social and economic systems will be crucial for Bangladesh’s integration into the bloc.

Moreover, Bangladesh’s pursuit of ASEAN membership is complicated by the unresolved Rohingya crisis, which could further strain its relations with some ASEAN members. Myanmar, a full member of ASEAN, has been a staunch opponent of Bangladesh’s efforts to repatriate the Rohingya refugees currently living in Bangladesh. The ongoing political tensions over the Rohingya crisis could create significant friction within ASEAN, especially as Myanmar could oppose Bangladesh’s accession to the bloc in retaliation for its criticism of Myanmar’s handling of the crisis. The complex nature of ASEAN’s decision-making process, which requires unanimous approval from all members, means that this could

be a major stumbling block for Bangladesh’s aspirations to join the organisation.

Despite these challenges, Bangladesh’s engagement with ASEAN is not without merit. Bangladesh’s growing influence within the region, coupled with its strategic geographic location, provides significant opportunities for collaboration. The country’s burgeoning garment industry, along with its rapidly expanding infrastructure and manufacturing sectors, aligns with ASEAN’s goals for regional economic integration. Furthermore, Bangladesh’s commitment to climate change mitigation, sustainable development, and regional cooperation could offer synergies with ASEAN’s broader strategic objectives. If Bangladesh can demonstrate that it is capable of resolving its internal governance issues, tackling corruption, and managing migration responsibly, it could become a valuable partner in ASEAN’s quest for greater regional unity and economic stability.

The potential benefits of ASEAN membership for Bangladesh extend beyond economic considerations. Closer ties with ASEAN could open up new avenues for collaboration in areas such as technology, education, public health, and infrastructure. These partnerships would not only drive economic growth but also contribute to a more resilient regional landscape capable of addressing shared challenges. Bangladesh’s engagement with ASEAN could also serve as a platform to amplify its voice in global discussions, particularly in forums like the United Nations and the World Trade Organization.

The coming years will be crucial in determining whether Bangladesh can navigate its complex challenges and successfully integrate into ASEAN, balancing its ambitions with the realities of governance, regional dynamics, and international diplomacy. For now, Bangladesh stands at a crossroads, with the potential to reshape its future and play a more prominent role in Southeast Asia—if it can overcome the obstacles that stand in its way.

YEAR-END REVIEW

startup events that made the headlines in 2024

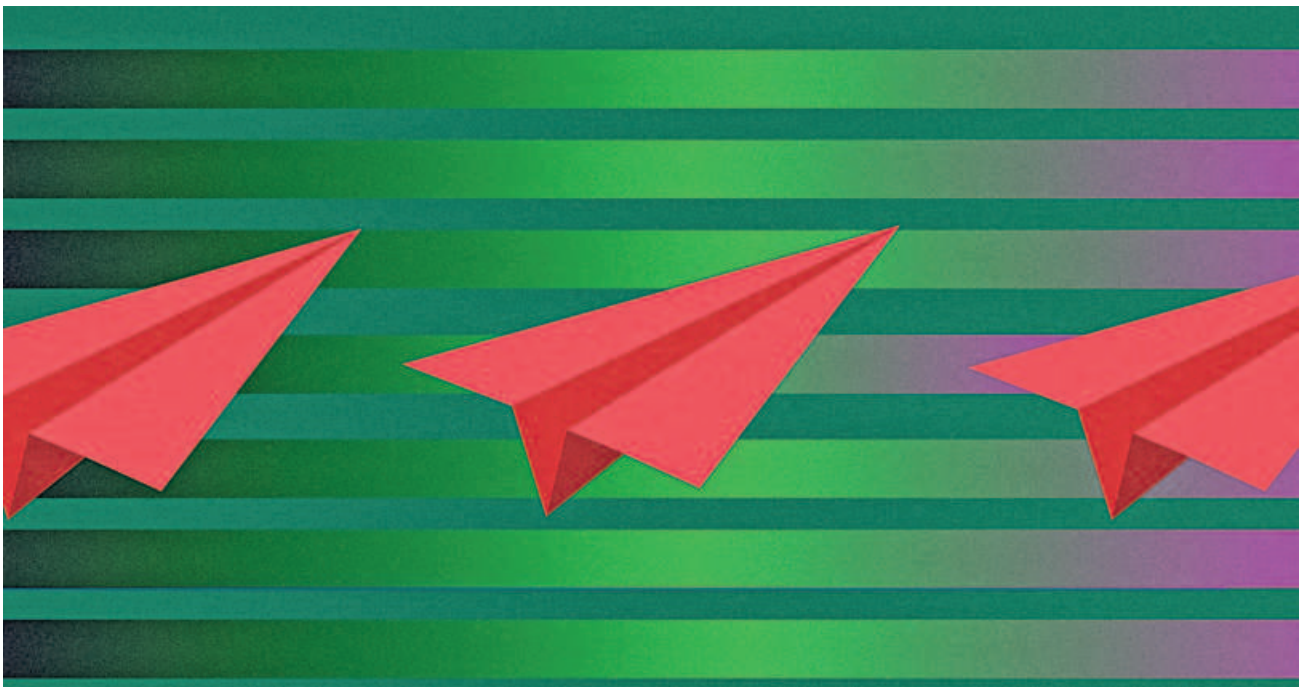


ILLUSTRATION: ZARIF FAIAZ

The Dhaka Startup Summit, hosted by BASIS, attracted over 5,000 attendees and offered \$1 million in funding to promising startups through its “Pitch Perfect” competition.

SHARTAJ AZIZ HOSSAIN

Bangladesh's startup ecosystem surged forward in 2024, gaining unprecedented global recognition. Alongside individual startup successes, the ecosystem demonstrated resilience and innovation through transformative programs, events, and partnerships.

Navigating a volatile political and economic landscape

The year saw a dramatic shift in Bangladesh's political landscape, driven by protests against a controversial quota system, widespread economic instability, and growing public dissent over authoritarian governance. These movements culminated in the formation of an interim government tasked with steering the nation towards reform and stability.

Amidst this turmoil, Bangladesh's startup ecosystem defied challenges to report a 1.2x quarter-on-quarter (QoQ) growth in Q3, finds a report by LightCastle Partners, reflecting the resilience of local entrepreneurs and continued investor confidence. Although deal activity declined, the average deal size increased, with notable late-stage investments dominating the funding landscape.

Shark Tank comes to Bangladesh

Fifteen years after its international debut, Shark Tank finally arrived in Bangladesh, creating a much-needed platform for local entrepreneurs to pitch their ideas to top-tier investors. This milestone led to over a dozen startups securing funding, with standouts including EcoSolve, which focuses on sustainable climate-tech solutions, and MediAI, an AI-powered health diagnostics platform. Beyond funding, the show spotlighted Bangladesh's entrepreneurial talent and inspired a new wave of innovators.

Government-backed growth initiatives

The government also played a pivotal role in fostering innovation. Startup Bangladesh, the nation's flagship startup initiative, expanded its grant program to Tk 100 crore in 2024, benefiting over 50 startups across sectors such as edtech, agritech, fintech, and healthtech. Notable beneficiaries included TeleDoc, a telemedicine platform catering to rural communities, and ArtisansConnect, an e-commerce venture supporting local artisans and small businesses. These efforts underscore the government's commitment to creating a robust entrepreneurial ecosystem.

However, systemic biases in funding

decisions emerged as a key concern. Several founders highlighted cases of political interference, with funding being withheld for startups perceived to be aligned with opposition ideologies. For instance, Shikho and 10 Minute School faced abrupt funding withdrawals from Startup Bangladesh Limited (SBL), allegedly due to political affiliations. This has sparked calls for greater transparency and meritocracy in government-backed initiatives.

Global accolades and investments

Bangladeshi startups also made waves internationally. Two startups, Tiger New Energy and iFarmer, were featured on Forbes Asia's 100 to Watch 2024 list. Tiger New Energy is revolutionizing EV infrastructure with over 100 battery-swapping stations nationwide, supported by \$3.5 million from ADB Ventures and Wavemaker Partners. Meanwhile, iFarmer has empowered over 10,000 small-scale farmers through its app, Sofol, connecting them to wholesalers, resources, and advisory services.

The Q3 2024 Startup Investments Report by LightCastle Partners highlighted a surge in late-stage funding, amounting to USD 19 million—a 567% rise from earlier quarters. This reflects growing confidence in the ecosystem's maturity, though early-stage funding declined sharply, signaling a need for recalibration to nurture emerging ventures.

The Dhaka Startup Summit, hosted by BASIS, attracted over 5,000 attendees and offered \$1 million in funding to promising startups through its “Pitch Perfect” competition. Similarly, four Bangladeshi startups, including Chhaya and Palki Motors, secured spots in the Accelerating Asia Ventures 10th cohort, receiving \$100,000 each alongside mentorship and networking opportunities.

These events, alongside consistent international investor participation—accounting for 99% of total funding in Q3—highlighted Bangladesh's emergence as a promising destination for global capital.

Balancing promise with challenges

Despite these advancements, challenges persist. Political favoritism and opaque decision-making processes continue to undermine equitable access to resources for startups. Additionally, the significant decline in early-stage funding raises concerns about long-term ecosystem sustainability.

AI firm Databricks reaches \$62 bln valuation following \$10 bln funding round

NEXT STEP DESK

Databricks, an artificial intelligence (AI) and data analytics firm, has reached a \$62 billion valuation after completing a \$10 billion funding round, one of the largest in venture capital history, according to a recent report by Reuters.

The round was led by Thrive Capital,

the investment firm founded by Joshua Kushner. Major investors included Andreessen Horowitz, DST Global, GIC, Insight Partners, and WCM Investment Management. Other participants included existing backer Ontario Teachers' Pension Plan and new entrants ICONIQ Growth, MGX, Sands Capital, and Wellington Management.

According to the Reuters report, the funding marks a pivotal moment for the 11-year-old company, which expects to achieve positive free cash flow for the first time in the quarter ending January 31, 2024. Databricks also anticipates reaching a \$3 billion revenue run rate by January and generating \$3.8 billion in revenue in the following fiscal year.

First Web and Data Summit 2025 to bring together tech leaders in Dhaka

NEXT STEP DESK

The Web and Data Summit 2025 is set to take place on January 3, 2025, at the KIB Complex in Dhaka. This inaugural event will gather professionals from the fields of web development and data science, offering a platform for knowledge-sharing, collaboration, and networking within the tech community.

The summit's program includes keynote speeches, panel discussions, interactive Q&A sessions, and case studies focused on real-world applications of emerging technologies. Topics will cover advanced web development frameworks, data analytics, artificial intelligence integration, and other innovative advancements.

A lineup of notable speakers has been announced, featuring prominent industry figures such as M Manjur Mahmud (President, DataSoft Systems), Hasin Hayder (CTO, HappyMonster), Raisul Kabir (CEO, Brainstation 23), Hussain Elius (Founder, Pathao), Sumit Saha (CEO, Learn with Sumit), and Ayman Sadiq (CEO, 10 Minute School). Their insights are expected to provide valuable perspectives on the latest industry trends and practices.

The event also aims to facilitate networking among participants, allowing professionals to connect with industry leaders, potential employers, and peers. Attendees will benefit from opportunities to explore career paths, exchange ideas, and build professional relationships.

TikTok can be a top marketing tool for small businesses in 2025

NEXT STEP DESK

TikTok, one of the most downloaded apps globally with over a billion active users, is increasingly positioned as a valuable marketing tool for small and medium-sized businesses (SMBs). Its wide demographic reach, spanning both younger and older audiences, offers businesses a unique opportunity to engage diverse customer segments and access niche markets.

In 2025, TikTok is expected to solidify its role as an essential platform for SMBs looking to enhance their marketing efforts. The app's extensive user base, high engagement rates, and cost-effective marketing options provide a competitive advantage for businesses aiming to grow their brands.

High engagement potential

TikTok's short-form video format, combined with its algorithm-driven content delivery, fosters high levels of user engagement. The platform encourages extended user activity and frequent interactions, such as likes, shares, and comments. For SMBs, this level of engagement offers greater visibility and the opportunity to leverage trends and viral content to expand their reach organically.

Cost-effective marketing solutions

TikTok provides budget-friendly marketing opportunities, making it accessible to SMBs with limited financial resources. Businesses can achieve organic reach by creating engaging content with the platform's built-in tools. Additionally, TikTok's paid advertising options, such as in-feed ads and branded hashtag challenges, allow for precise audience targeting at a relatively low cost.

Trend adaptability

TikTok's ecosystem is defined by rapidly changing trends, including viral challenges, popular sounds, and cultural memes. SMBs that adapt to and participate in these trends can enhance their visibility and maintain relevance in competitive markets. This adaptability allows businesses to align their strategies with evolving consumer interests, ensuring their content remains engaging and timely.



Transforming lives through inclusive skill development in Bangladesh

Inclusion is a cornerstone of sustainable development, yet achieving it remains a significant challenge in Bangladesh. The nation's journey towards economic growth is deeply intertwined with fostering a skilled and inclusive workforce. However, barriers rooted in gender inequality, social identity, and disability often prevent marginalized groups from accessing opportunities. Recognizing this, the Building Youth Employability Through Skills (BYETS) project, implemented by Swisscontact, has been a beacon of hope, addressing these issues through targeted interventions in vocational training programs.

Tackling Gender Stereotypes in ICT

Women's participation in the ICT sector in Bangladesh is markedly low, hindered by societal stereotypes and gender norms. Despite growing demand for digital skills, women are often discouraged from pursuing careers in ICT, perceived as a male-dominated field. BYETS is working to break these barriers by collaborating with training providers to design programs in graphic design, digital marketing, and web design. Currently, 30% of BYETS trainees are women, a significant step towards gender parity.

By encouraging women to become freelancers, these programs not only equip them with technical skills but also challenge the long-held societal taboo against women's involvement in ICT. Women trained under BYETS are beginning to carve out successful careers, inspiring others and creating a ripple effect in communities.

Empowering Persons with Disabilities (PwD)

For persons with disabilities, traditional training programs often fall short, failing to address specific challenges like

mobility restrictions and accessibility. To bridge this gap, BYETS partnered with the Centre for the Rehabilitation of the Paralysed (CRP) to launch a five-month residential ICT training program. Conducted at CRP's facility in Manikganj, the program provides participants with skills in Microsoft Office, graphic design, and other digital tools, enabling them to pursue freelancing and remote work opportunities.



Beyond training, BYETS and CRP also support participants in job placements and entrepreneurship. This comprehensive approach ensures that PwD can overcome physical and societal barriers, fostering independence and financial stability.

Integrating Indigenous Communities

Indigenous communities, constituting about 1% of Bangladesh's population, face systemic marginalisation that limits their access to education and employment. Geographic isolation and linguistic barriers further exacerbate their exclusion from formal job sectors. BYETS, in collaboration with Educo,

another international NGO working with youth, and e-Learning & Earning Ltd., a private training service provider, has tailored market-driven ICT training programs to address these challenges.

These culturally sensitive programs leverage local networks to identify beneficiaries and provide training aligned with market demands. Youths from local Santal communities are participating in the training. By equipping indigenous youth of Rajshahi with digital skills, BYETS enables them to access employment opportunities and entrepreneurial ventures, fostering inclusion in the workforce and contributing to community development.

A Collaborative Approach to Inclusion

The success of BYETS underscores the importance of a multi-stakeholder approach to inclusion. By bringing together NGOs, private sector partners, and local communities, the project has created opportunities as diverse as the populations it serves. From tackling gender stereotypes to addressing mobility challenges and integrating indigenous youth, BYETS demonstrates that true inclusion requires innovation, commitment, and collaboration.

As Bangladesh strides towards a digital future, initiatives like BYETS highlight the potential of inclusive skill development to transform lives and build a more equitable society. By investing in marginalized groups, the nation not only fulfills its social responsibility but also unlocks untapped potential, driving growth and progress for all.

The BYETS project is funded by the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands and implemented by Swisscontact.

JOBS SPOTLIGHT



UNHCR

Communication and Social Media Specialist

Deadline: December 29

Eligibility:

🔗 Bachelor degree or equivalent in Bachelor's degree in journalism, communications, media management, international relations, social science or a related field. Masters degree in those relevant subjects will be an asset.

Minimum experience: 3 years

BRAC University

Officer, Admissions Office

Deadline: January 4

Eligibility:

🔗 Bachelor's Degree from any reputed university with excellent academic credentials.

Minimum experience: N/A



ITN-BUET

Communication Associate

Deadline: December 31

Eligibility:

🔗 Bachelor's degree in Graphic Design, Fine Arts, Mass Communications, or any other related field.

Minimum experience: N/A

GPH Ispat

Engineer/Sr. Engineer/
Assistant Manager -
SMS (Production).

Deadline: January 3

Eligibility:

🔗 Bachelor of Science (BSc) in Materials & Metallurgical Engineering/ Materials Science and Engineering/Mechanical Engineering.

Minimum experience: 3 years



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LINKS, SCAN THE
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**“Action is the
foundational
key to all
success.”**

PABLO PICASSO

BCB hopes to unveil more talent via NCL T20

SPORTS REPORTER

Rangpur Division decimated the challenge from a strong Dhaka Metro to clinch the inaugural NCL T20, winning the final by five wickets in Sylhet yesterday.

Pacers Mukidul Islam Mugdho and Alauddin Babu sent a few stumps flying, picking up three wickets apiece. Robiul Haque and Mohammad Rizwan also bagged one wicket each, alongside spinner Arif Ahmed, to bowl Dhaka Metro out for just 62 in 16.3 overs.

In response, Rangpur were reeling on 18 for four, but Ariful Haque and Tanbir Hayder steadied the chase before Mohammad Enamul hit the winning runs during a 9-ball 14 at the Sylhet International Cricket Stadium.

"I think the full team deserves the trophy; not only me. The kind of support our players provided in the tournament despite a few of them not having played enough matches ensured a positive vibe in the dressing room, and that's why we won the title," Rangpur skipper Akbar Ali reflected.

For the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB), a low-scoring final or the low-scoring affairs in the qualifiers and eliminator rounds took some lustre away from the intended purpose the tournament would serve. But overall, the tournament served its crucial purpose, according to the chief coordinator of BCB programmes, Minhajul Abedin Nannu.

"Can't give it hundred out of hundred, maybe 90 in 100. The wicket for the final match was not up to standard since it was



PHOTO: SHEIKH NASIR

CHAMPIONS: Rangpur (Prize Money: Tk 20 lakh)
Runners-up: Dhaka Metro (Prize Money: Tk 10 lakh)
Top Scorer: Naim Sheikh (316 runs)
Top Wicket-taker: Alauddin Babu (19 wickets)
Most dismissals: Akbar Ali (12)
Most Sixes: Jishan Alam (22)
Highest Score: Anamul Haque Bijoy (101 not out)
Centuries: 2 (Jishan Alam, Anamul Haque Bijoy)
Best bowling figure: Alauddin Babu (4-9)
Player of the final: Mukidul Islam Mugdho (3-12)
Player of the tournament: Abu Hider Rony (123 runs, 13 wickets)

very challenging. Four games took place every day on two grounds. Still, I think the behaviour [of the wicket] was okay; just the final was low-scoring," Minhajul said yesterday.

"Overall, the tournament has brought many players into the focus of the selection panel. We hope to consistently organise the tournament in the future and hope that the deficiency that we have in the T20 format will be fulfilled," he added.

Bangladesh had been looking to create the player base for Twenty20 cricket in particular, a format that they have lagged behind in international cricket. The works with the High Performance (HP) unit had been carried forward to the NCL T20 -- a

tournament that would also lend support to local players in terms of preparations for the upcoming Bangladesh Premier League.

Jishan Alam of Sylhet, who hit a ton, played some eye-catching knocks. There were other knocks of importance, such as Akbar's or his counterpart in the final, Mohammad Naim's. Another U-19 star from Jishan's batch, Ariful Islam, also came to focus for his T20 prowess.

Abu Haider Rony showed he was no mug with the bat, while also churning out displays with the ball. Spinners such as Rakibul or Aliss Islam showed their mettle in the shortest format.

"Our HP has gone through a lot of players in the last four years and they are

being noted now. If we keep playing more matches, more players will be found."

Minhajul said that they will try to ensure participation from national team players in the coming editions. Players such as Mushfiqur Rahim, Towhid Hridoy, Najmul Hossain Shanto, and Mustafizur Rahman featured sporadically during this edition.

Minhajul hoped the tournament would be organised more effectively in the future.

"We want to play in this tournament in at least three venues. It would help the players rest and [improve] their mentality too. We couldn't manage [more venues] since the tournament was organised within a small window," he concluded.



FEDERATION CUP Goals galore as Jibon hits hat-trick

SPORTS REPORTER

Mohammedan SC and Rahmatganj MFS enjoyed goalfest in the Federation Cup Yesterday, smashing their respective opponents for six goals each in their Group B fixtures.

Rahmatganj, who had beaten Mohammedan 1-0 in their opening group fixture, handed a 6-0 drubbing to Young men's Fakirerpul Club, courtesy of a hat-trick from on-form striker Nabib Newaz Jibon, at the Rafique Uddin Bhuiyan Stadium in Mymensingh.

The former national team forward has already scored four goals in the Bangladesh Premier League with the Old Dhaka outfit after having gone goalless in the league with Abahani last season.

After Maraz Hossain Opi opened the scoring in the 12th minute, Jibon scored in the stoppage time of the first half and then twice in the second half to complete his hat-trick. Samuel Boateng and Fahim Nur Toha scored the other two goals for Rahmatganj.

Mohammedan, meanwhile, saw six different players score a goal each in their 6-0 thrashing of Chittagong Abahani at the Bashundhara Kings Arena.

Muzaffarov and Souleymane Diabate gave the Black and Whites a 2-0 lead early in the match before Arif Hossain, Razu Ahmed, Sourav Dewan and Juwel Mia scored one apiece for the premier league leaders.



***Sam Konstas will open the batting for Australia in the fourth Test against India, coach Andrew McDonald said Tuesday, while voicing confidence leading batsman Travis Head will be fit to play. Konstas was called up after selectors dumped Nathan McSweeney after just three Tests, with the 19-year-old tasked with fending off Indian pace spearhead Jasprit Bumrah alongside an under-performing Usman Khawaja. Konstas will become Australia's youngest Test debutant since current skipper Pat Cummins took the field against South Africa at Johannesburg in 2011.

* **India and Australia have played 14 Tests at the Melbourne Cricket Ground (MCG), with Australia winning seven, India four, and three ending in draws.

***Of the nine Boxing Day Tests played at the MCG, Australia has won five, India two, and two have been drawn.

***India's unbeaten streak at the venue dates back to 2011, with wins in their last two Tests (2018 and 2020) and a draw in 2014.

BOXING DAY TEST

Rohit wants to only focus on Melbourne

SPORTS DESK

After a stupendous start to their tour Down Under, winning the opening Test in Perth by 295 runs, India lost the advantage soon after in Adelaide against Australia.

India crashed to a 10-wicket defeat in Adelaide before battling to a draw in the rain-hit third match in Brisbane.

"At 1-1, I think it's a fair reflection," India captain Rohit Sharma told the reporters ahead of the Boxing Day Test.

"Both teams have played solid cricket and these two Tests are going to be so important for both teams. We want to break it down to Melbourne and focus on what we can achieve here, get things right and play well."

Rohit was coy Tuesday on how his team will line up for the Boxing Day Test against Australia, with the option of a second spinner on the table.



Temperatures are forecast to reach 40 degrees Celsius (104 Fahrenheit) on Thursday, and the Melbourne Cricket Ground curator said during the week he expected the pitch to offer plenty for the fast bowlers.

But Rohit left the door open to a second spinner.

With off-spinning allrounder Ravichandran Ashwin announcing his immediate retirement from international cricket after the third Test in Brisbane, Ravindra Jadeja is expected to keep his place. Washington Sundar is the other spin option.

India skipper backed Yashasvi Jaiswal, Shubman Gill, and Rishabh Pant to do well, ahead of the Melbourne Test as well as has backed Virat Kohli to overcome his problems with deliveries outside the off-stump in Australia, saying on Tuesday that players of his calibre always find a way to succeed.

"They know what is expected of them," he said.

SHORT CORNER

Rajshahi rope in 'axe man' Ijaz as head coach

Bangladesh Premier League (BPL) franchise Durbar Rajshahi have appointed former Pakistan batter Ijaz Ahmed as head coach for the fast-approaching season, beginning December 30. Ijaz was a key member of Pakistan's 1992 World Cup-winning team, and was part of the squad that finished runners-up in the 1999 edition.

Argentine Fernandez finally thriving at Chelsea

Chelsea midfielder Enzo Fernandez struggled to live up to his hefty price tag following his arrival at the club in January last year but the Argentine says his recent upturn in form is down to developing a good understanding with coach Enzo Maresca.

Stokes to miss three months with torn hamstring

England Test captain Ben Stokes faces at least three months out after tearing his left hamstring during the tour of New Zealand, team management announced on Monday. The 33-year-old all-rounder had already been ruled out of next year's Champions Trophy one-day international tournament in Pakistan and the preceding white-ball tour of India.

Read full stories on The Daily Star's website.

Champions Trophy fixtures announced

Bangladesh open campaign against India

SPORTS DESK

Bangladesh will start their Champions Trophy 2025 campaign against India in Dubai on February 20.

The fixtures and groupings of the ninth edition of the tournament have been announced by the International Cricket Council (ICC) on Tuesday, with the tournament set to begin on February 19 in Karachi with the final on March 09.

The eight-team tournament will feature 15 matches, and will be played across Pakistan and in Dubai.

In Pakistan, Rawalpindi, Lahore, and Karachi will be the three venues to host tournament play. Each Pakistan venue will feature three group games apiece, with Lahore hosting the second semi-final.

Lahore will also host the final on March 09, unless India qualify, in which case it will be played in Dubai. Both the semi-finals and the final will have reserve days.

The three group matches involving India, as well as the first semifinal (March 4), will be played in Dubai. The second semifinal will be held in Lahore on March 5.

Pakistan take on New Zealand in the Group A tournament opener in Karachi on February 19. The Dubai leg begins the following day with India taking on Bangladesh.

Group B begins on February 21, with Afghanistan squaring up against the Proteas in Karachi.



GROUPS

A: Pakistan, India, New Zealand and Bangladesh.
B: South Africa, Australia, Afghanistan and England

BANGLADESH FIXTURES

February 20: Bangladesh v India, Dubai
February 24: Bangladesh v New Zealand, Rawalpindi
February 27: Pakistan v Bangladesh, Rawalpindi
*All matches will be day-night encounters and start from 3.00pm (Bangladesh Time)

A big weekend then kicks off with rivals England and Australia set to clash in Lahore on Saturday (February 22), with the much-anticipated Pakistan-India clash set for the day later.

The eight sides in the Champions Trophy competing for the famous white winners' jackets are the teams that finished in the top eight positions on the points table of the ICC Men's Cricket World Cup 2023.



The Bangladesh Police players celebrate with team flag following their 26-16 points victory over Bangladesh Ansar & VDP in the women's final of Victory Day Kabaddi Competition at the Shaheed M Mansur Ali Handball Stadium yesterday. (Inset) In the men's final, Bangladesh Navy edged Bangladesh Air Force by 38-36 points.

PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED



7 MURDERS ON VESSEL Families of the slain crew demand justice

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Chandpur

Family members yesterday demanded justice for the killing of seven crew members who were killed in a brutal attack aboard a bulk carrier in the Meghna in Chandpur on Monday.

They gathered at the 250-bed Chandpur General Hospital where the bodies of seven crew members were kept for autopsy.

Since early morning, the family members and relatives of the seven victims were seen rushing to the hospital to claim the bodies.

Dr Farid Ahmed Akhand, the hospital's residential medical officer, said, "The bodies were brought in last night (Monday), and we completed the preliminary examinations. They were sent to the morgue for autopsy around 9:30am."

Following autopsies and legal procedures, the bodies were handed over to the families in the afternoon at the morgue located beside the city's Swarnakhola Road, reports UNB.

Meanwhile, the district administration has formed a probe committee headed by Additional District Magistrate (ADM)

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Women labourers drying recently harvested Aman paddy in Ghona Madardanga area of Khulna's Dumuria upazila. After harvest, farmers sell the paddy for Tk 1,100-1,300 to traders, who process it by drying and then send it to different parts of the country. The photo was taken recently.

PHOTO: HABIBUR RAHMAN

Student protesters entered Somoy TV owner's offices, journos sacked

AFP, Dhaka

A gang of Bangladesh student protesters entered the offices of the investor of a television station, accusing it of "propaganda", protesters said yesterday, with at least five journalists subsequently fired.

The students had taken part in the August revolution that toppled prime minister Sheikh Hasina, whose tenure was marked as one of the worst periods for media freedom.

Hasnat Abdullah, convener of the Anti-Discrimination Students Movement, led around 15 to 20 students on December 17 to the offices of City Group, which invests in Somoy Television.

"Somoy Television was spreading propaganda, twisting my comments, and accommodating the views of a fallen political party," Hasnat told AFP.

"We are staunch supporters of press freedom, but the press must remain unbiased," Hasnat said, adding that he saw no issue in making demands – but rejecting reports that the students had handed over a list of those they wanted to be fired.

The managing director of the business conglomerate that funds the television

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Reforms should be left to an elected govt Says BNP leader Khasru, underscores need for nat'l election at the earliest

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Reforms should be implemented through an elected parliament, who, once in power, could swiftly address the economic, social, political and foreign challenges the country is currently facing, BNP standing committee member Amir Khasru Mahmud Chowdhury said yesterday.

Stressing the need for polls at the earliest, he also said the reports by the reform commissions formed by the interim government should be discussed in parliament.

The BNP leader made the remarks while speaking to reporters after a meeting with some other political parties at the party chairperson's Gulshan office.

At the meeting, leaders of Gono Odhikar Parishad (Rashed); Gono Forum, Bam Gonotantrik Oikya; Bangladesh Sadharon Chhatra Odhikar Songrokkhon Parishad; Peoples Party; and National Awami Party (Bhashani) – parties that previously organised joint movements with BNP against the former Awami League government – expressed their dissatisfaction with the interim government's performance so far.

They urged the interim government to hold discussions with political parties and announce an election date, adding that reforms should be carried out through an elected parliament after the polls.

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Impatience over polls hurting reforms Says Asif Mahmud

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinaipur

Impatience of political parties regarding elections is hurting the reform

government's efforts, said Adviser Asif Mahmud Sojib Bhuiyan yesterday.

"We call on political parties to support the reform process, as it is inclusive and aims to build a more equitable and democratic system," he said while speaking as the chief guest at a winter clothing distribution event in Kaharol, Dinaipur.

He said elections will be held according to the government's timeline, between late 2025 and mid-2026, after the completion of reforms.

"The reform commissions have been actively working for the past three months. Once their reports are published, the interim government



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LAST 3 NATIONAL POLLS Cops say they were used by higher authorities

Group of field-level, sr officials sit with polls reform commission

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A section of police officials admitted yesterday that they were under pressure from higher authorities while performing duties during the last three national elections, which were marred by controversies.

They also alleged that there were "financial transactions" during the 2014, 2018, and 2024 parliamentary polls.

Thirty field-level and senior officials of police, BGB, and Ansar met the Electoral Reform Commission at the parliament complex yesterday.

Most of them were tasked with maintaining law and order during the polls, said the commission members after the meeting.

"Some of them admitted that they had been used during the past elections, and there were incidents of financial transactions," Badiul Alam Majumdar, chief of the Electoral Reform Commission, told The Daily Star.

He said law enforcers expressed the desire that "such use of police" would stop for the sake of the country, future generations.

Badiul added that law enforcers' had a positive attitude, and were determined to avoid repeating past mistakes.

According to meeting sources, several members of the police said they had "no option but to obey the orders of the higher authorities during elections or any other time".

"If you don't follow even their wrong instructions, you have to face harassment in

many ways," a police official was quoted by a meeting source.

Some accused the returning officers and assistant returning officers of irregularities during the last three elections.

An official said members of law enforcement agencies and election officials were "given money during the elections".

Asked who distributed the money, police

"Some of them [cops] admitted that they had been used during elections in the past. And there were incidents of financial transactions."
BADIUL ALAM MAJUMDAR
Chief of Electoral Reform Commission

officials said they have no specific information about it, said the meeting sources.

According to sources at the Electoral Reform Commission, members of the law enforcement agencies made several proposals at the meeting.

They proposed appointing EC officials as returning officers and assistant returning officers instead of government officials.

They also sought increasing the honorarium

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GRAFT ALLEGATIONS ACC seeks info on Hasina, family from CA's office, govt agencies

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Anti-Corruption Commission yesterday sent letters to the Chief Adviser's Office (CAO), Bangladesh Financial Intelligence Unit (BFIU), Election Commission, and the Department of Immigration and Passports seeking information about deposed prime minister Sheikh Hasina and her family members to conduct investigations into corruption allegations.

This development follows the ACC's December 17 decision to investigate Hasina over corruption involving Tk 21,000 crore in eight projects.

The ACC has requested details from the CAO about the eight projects, financial transaction records from the BFIU, and personal information from the EC and the passport department, according to officials.

"Our investigation teams routinely reach out to various departments for information on individuals in question under investigation for corruption allegations. This case is no different," Akhtar Hossain, director general (prevention) of the ACC, told reporters yesterday.

The eight projects include Mirsarai Economic Zone, Khurushkul Special Shelter Project, Ashrayan-2 project, Mirsarai BEPZA Economic Zone, installation of a water treatment plant and deep tube wells at Bangabandhu Sheikh

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2 dead, 500 houses gutted in Rohingya camp fire

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Cox's Bazar

Two people were burnt to death and many injured in a devastating fire that broke out at a Rohingya camp in Cox's Bazar's Ukhiya yesterday.

Over 500 shanties were burnt down in the fire that broke out at C block of Camp-1 west (Lambasia) around 12:35pm, said Additional Refugee Relief and Repatriation Commissioner Md Shamsud Douza.

The charred bodies of two people, including a child, were recovered from the burnt shanties but their identities could not be confirmed yet, the additional RRRC said.

"The blaze has been brought under control completely and we are estimating the damages," he told The Daily Star around 4:00pm.

The cause behind the fire is yet to be known, he said.

"We received information about the fire around 12:35pm and moved to the spot. Around 3:00pm, firefighters brought the fire under control completely," said Shafiqul Islam, an officer of the Ukhiya Fire Service Unit.

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A Palestinian woman is helped out of an ambulance after she was wounded during Israeli strikes in Deir el-Balah in the central Gaza Strip yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

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Five held over humiliation of freedom fighter Main culprit still at large

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Cumilla

Five people were arrested yesterday in connection with the assault on freedom fighter Abdul Hai Kanu in Cumilla's Chaudagram upazila.

They are Ismail Hossain Majumder, 43, Jamal Uddin Majumder, 58, Ilias Bhuiyan, 58, Abul Kalam Azad, 48, and Imtiaz Abdullah Sajjad, 19.

Arafatul Islam, additional superintendent of police in Cumilla, said, "We have arrested five men in connection to the assault of a freedom fighter. They will be produced before a court tomorrow [today]."

Contacted, Abdul Hai Kanu told The Daily Star, "I have urged the government to ensure justice. If they don't take any steps, they will have to answer for it in due time."

On Sunday evening, a video went viral on social media in which a group of people ordered Kanu to leave the area by nightfall. They were seen putting on a garland of shoes around his neck.

Kanu said he was on his way to buy medicine around 11:30am when one Hashem obstructed him and took him to Kuliara Primary School.